



# RAMDAS

Translation  
of  
Mahipatis

## SANTAVIJAYA

JUSTIN E. ABOTT



**The Poet-Saints of Maharashtra**  
**No. 8**  
**RĀMDĀS**  
**TRANSLATION**  
**MAHIPATIS SANTAVIJAYA**  
**BY JUSTIN E, ABBOTT**

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# The Poet-Saints of Maharashtra

No. 8

## RĀMDĀS

TRANSLATION

OF

MAHIPATI'S *SANTAVIJAYA*

BY

JUSTIN E. ABBOTT

1932

Price Rupees 2

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महाराष्ट्रकविसंतमाला

नं ८

## रामदास

महिपतीकृत संतविजयाचे

जस्टिन इ. अवदकृत इंग्रजी भाषातर

१९३२

किंमत २ रुपये

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# FOREWORD

THE LATE DR. JUSTIN E. ABBOTT

*By J. F. Edwards*

## A Personal Tribute

On Tuesday morning, June 21, 1932, while this book was going through the press, we received a cable stating that Dr. Justin E. Abbott had passed away at Summit, New Jersey, U. S. A. on Sunday, June 19, in his 79th year. When Dr. Abbott left India on April 1st, 1910, he had spent forty years in India, during twenty-five of which he was English editor of the *Dnyanodaya*. In 1920 Dr. and Mrs. Abbott returned to India for a visit during which Mrs. Abbott passed away at Miraj on June 26, 1921. After his return to America during that same year the lonely scholar lived among his many books in the lovely home at Summit, save for those visits he paid to Europe in the interests of the helpless lepers in whom he took such a deep interest. For the work among these lepers Dr. Abbott gave munificent donations, as he did also to other worthy causes, especially medical work at Wai and Miraj. One of his gifts in early 1930 was of Rs. 15,000 for the Reading Room and Library of the New Gokhale Hall, Poona, the Deccan Sabha headquarters for social and political reform in Western India. One of the many enterprises nearest to the hearts of Dr. and Mrs. Abbott was the institution founded by them and named the Clarke-Abbott School and Little Boys' Home, now in the capable charge of Mr. and Mrs. T. Buell at Byculla. Another of the causes owing a great debt to our learned friend was the cause of Marathi Bible revision in which

for a large number of years he took a leading part in intimate association with the late Dr. Mackichan who predeceased him by only a few weeks. One of the present writer's most stimulating memories will be that of a month's Marathi study in Dr. Abbott's home in America two and a half years ago. We like to think of him as we last saw and heard him which was in the great Presbyterian Church in Fifth Avenue, New York, where the frail scholar, full of years and of ancient lore, was reading a paper he had prepared for the annual meeting of the American Mission to Lepers, those friends of need whom he never forgot. 'I was sick and ye visited Me :' those words of Jesus have had few more beautiful illustrations than are provided by the last few years of Dr. Abbott's long and busy life.

### **Dr. Abbott's Best Legacy**

Fearlessness and modesty were two of the outstanding traits of Dr. Abbott's Christian character. In the last article from his pen as English editor of the *Dnyanodaya* on March 31, 1910, he said: 'The editor who dreads criticism, and so follows the path of least resistance, is not worthy to be a leader of thought.... The greatest privilege of our twenty-five years of editorship of this paper, we count that of holding up to Indian thought the ideals that Christ brought to the world. Mindful though we are of the many noble ideals to be found in India's sacred literature and in the lives of her spiritually great men, yet Christ does stand supreme, and the world will not and cannot reach its goal until it makes Christ the ideal of its life.' As for his modesty, this was in grave danger of preventing him from committing to paper his vast knowledge of the treasures of Marathi literature, and so robbing others of this knowledge. In this connection we may be permitted to divulge the secret of what led him to over-

come this natural modesty by beginning his invaluable series of books on the Poet Saints of Maharashtra. During his visit to India in 1920-21 we became convinced that some special plan was necessary to overcome his deep shrinking from writing on the subject. During a visit to 'Norheim' at Mahableshwar just before the Christmas of 1920, we set ourselves to win Mrs Abbott's able co-operation in persuading the learned doctor to write a simple series of articles on the subject, as the beginning for a series of books. To our delight he promised to undertake the task which he began three months later by contributing a column each week to the *Dnyanodaya*. He was in the middle of the series when the death of Mrs. Abbott took place, but so solemnly did he regard his promise that when the articles finished he began his series of books which are now the most authoritative English translations of the Marathi poets, and which are an indispensable part of the library of every worker among the Marathi-speaking people. They can all be obtained at Mr. N. R. Godbole, G27 Sadashiv Peth, Poona, 2. Here are their titles with prices in brackets: *Bhavudis* (Rs. 1), *Eknath* (Rs. 1/8), *Bhukhugila* (Rs 1/8), *Disopant Digambar* (Rs. 1/8), *Bihinabu* (Rs. 1/8), *Stotramala* (Rs. 1/12), *Tukaram* (Rs. 1/8). The present volume *Ramdas* is published at Rs. 2. As to future volumes, see below. This remarkable series of books with their literary notes (theology being almost entirely excluded), constitutes a splendid legacy and we can imagine the dying scholar offering up one of his favourite prayers, that of Dayaneshwar at the close of his commentary on the *Bhagavadgita*: 'And now may God.... be pleased with this my offering of words. And being pleased may He give me this favour in return; that the crookedness of evil men may cease, and that the love of goodness may grow in them.'

## Dr. Abbott's Last Will and Testament

Space forbids printing the whole of Dr. Abbott's last will and testament, and, moreover, several items are intimately personal, but a part of it reads as follows :

'I wish my body to be cremated. I wish my ashes should be brought back to my home, and there without any ceremony my faithful gardener Leopold Carlson should scatter them over the lawn and flower-beds. I do not wish for a grave anywhere. I do not wish for a tombstone anywhere. ... Though born an American, long contact with the people of India has strengthened my love for them and their land. I have chosen as nearly as I could their way of disposing of my body because I approve of the method and also because it is the Indian method.' One of Dr. Abbott's executors writes :

'Everything was carried out as he wished. We had a simple service at his home on June 21st, conducted by Dr. Brank the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Summit and Dr. Abbott's nephew Dr. Edward Dean who came from Nebraska. The friends whom he wished to be invited were present as well as his brother, his nephew, his two great-nephews and their mother and Mrs. Abbott's brother. After the service his family, Dr. Brank and I went to the Crematory and had the Committal Service in the chapel there. The following day his gardener scattered his ashes over the lawn and flower-beds as he desired. Dr. Abbott's was a wonderful character and we will always remember the courage and cheerfulness with which he bore the long months of illness. His friends in America join with those in India in gratitude for the privilege of his companionship.'

In his last will and testament Dr. Abbott bequeathed the large sum of 343,000 dollars to various friends and institutions he loved. The amount available for these-

bequests will be determined on the basis of the following important statement by his executors: 'At the time Dr. Abbott drew his will (August 11, 1931), his securities seemed to be sufficient to cover the legacies made by him, but since that time and up to the time of his death, his securities have very much depreciated in value, so that the legacies cannot be paid in full. As nearly as we can estimate, and this is only a rough figure, the estate will not total more than forty per cent of what Dr. Abbott figured it would be in making his bequests. The legacies therefore will have to be abated accordingly.' In addition to bequests made by Dr. Abbott to his deceased wife's special friends, his own relatives and servants and friends, among the latter being his Indian Pundit, Mr. N. R. Godbole, the following bequests each reduced to the forty per cent figure will interest the readers of this book; all the amounts are given in dollars:—

#### Dollars

- 50,000 The A. M. Hospital at Wai.
- 20,000 The American Mission to Lepers.
- 10,000 Y. W. C. A. in Summit, New Jersey.
- 10,000 Y. M. C. A. in the same place.
- 15,000 American Oriental Society.
- 5,000 Overlook Hospital, Summit, N. J.
- 15,000 Sanatorium for Lepers in France.
- 30,000 The *Bharata Itihas Samshodhak Mandal*, Poona,  
for housing manuscripts.
- 5,000 The purchase of books for the Gokhale Hall  
Library, Poona, to which he gave Rs. 15,000  
in 1930.
- 1,000 Social Service League, Bombay.
- 1,000 Mission for Depressed Classes, Mangalore.
- 1,000 Prof. Karve's Widows' Home.
- 1,000 The Servants of India Society.

- 1,000 The Seva Sadan Society.  
 10,000 The Rev. J. F. Edwards, for completing the translation of the Poet Saints of Maharashtra.  
 10,000 The A. M. Mission Nagpada Neighbourhood House, Byculla.  
 5,000 School for Coloured Children, Newark, N. J.  
 Dr. Abbott also bequeathed to the A. M. Mission his beautiful Mahableshwar bungalow, 'Iona,' with all its belongings. The Clarke-Abbott Little Boys' Home at Byculla was already provided for by the Clarke-Abbott Fund with the American Mission Board. All his Oriental books he left to the library of Columbia University, New York.

### Dr. Abbott's Magnanimity

In these days of India's national upheaval it has been a special pleasure to note the deep appreciation which so many Indian newspapers have expressed regarding the munificent bequests made in the will of the late Dr. Justin Edwards Abbott and regarding the generous heart that inspired the gifts. Our own desire is to pay tribute to the Christlike magnanimity of spirit which he displayed so conspicuously towards those who held different opinions from those he held. A failure to understand this magnanimity lies behind the only harsh note we have observed in the Indian press comments, appearing in an editorial paragraph of the Marathi *Kesari* of August 16 which translated into English conveys the idea that although the late scholar 'came to India for the spreading of religion, it was as if a doll of salt had entered the ocean to fathom the deep places of Hinduism but itself got dissolved in the attempt.' Could the *Kesari* have heard his judgment concerning some of his critic's social and political views as we sometimes did, the 'Lion' of Maharashtra would realise it was dealing with no 'doll' nor with one that had 'dissolved.' That his appreciation of certain *Bhakti* religious ideals

never meant that his disapproval of certain Hindu practices was any the less is shown by the following from his pen in the very last issue of the *Dnyanodaya* which he published after 25 years' editing of its English columns. Having written in no mincing terms of 'the unholy Holi' (just going on as he wrote), of 'this vilo festival' of the Hindus, and of 'the vulgarity of its observance,' he went on to say :

'Perhaps sadder than the observance itself of the Holi is the apathy shown by those who should care for the moral elevation of India. Why is there no effort among those who pride themselves over their patriotism to arouse the Indian conscience to condemn the obscene revels, the drunkenness, and the filthy actions of the millions who abandon shame? India is not going to advance in any substantial degree when her millions grovel in filth physical and moral. The Holi festival is an exhibition of the distressing moral degradation of the Indian conscience. Some great change must take place before India can claim an honoured name as a nation, loving purity and righteousness'

An editor who in such words said farewell to India had hardly become 'a doll of salt dissolved in the ocean of Hinduism.' The tragedy is that the words are still so applicable to shameful practices in India today, the difference being that Indian editors are themselves now making the noble protest and that Indian organizations are seeking to banish such practices.

### The 'Seva Marg' or Way of Service

We cannot refrain from giving the due meed of praise to one not afraid to say that many years of study of the Marathi Poet-Saints had convinced him that these 'vilo festivals' of certain sections of the Hindus are departures from the highest ideals of their own teachers, and that in his own missionary work in India he had not sufficiently realized the help he might have derived from these teachers by recognizing the point of contact between their *Bhakta* ideals and Christian truth. This is the meaning of a con-

fession he has made in the preface he wrote a few months ago to this present book, the eighth in the Poet-Saints series. There he states:—

'I witnessed in India as all do the outer forms of worship in temples and by shrines, but I had no idea of the ideals provided by the Marathi Saints both in their approach to God and their attitude to men. Indeed I now see the mistake I made in my discussion in both my writings and in my conversations, expressing so confidently my opinions on the ideals of these Saints when I had not familiarized myself with their history or writings. It is rather late to do so but a confession of error is always good for one.'

This does not mean that the writer of those words had changed his mind about India's revolting practices. The days we spent with him on our last furlough were sufficient proof of that: and it is worthy of note that his munificent bequests include nearly a lakh and a half of dollars bequeathed to those Indian institutions, both Christian and those under other names, whose chief aim is the alleviation of these sad practices by *constructive* methods, and not a single pie in support of those noisier methods of a certain school of Indian politicians whose methods he so disliked. Frequently (but in vain) did he urge us to correct what he deemed misstatements about India by correspondents to American newspapers. One of his favourite religious expressions arose from discussion of the three-fold Hindu path, the *Dnyan Marg* (Way of Knowledge), the *Karma Marg* (Way of Works), the *Bhakti Marg* (Way of Devotion); in contrast with these he preferred to speak of religion as being the *Seva Marg*, or the Way of Service.

### The Remainder of the Series

One of the sins Dr. Abbott condemned most was 'the sin of the refusal of the brother's hand to those who happen to think differently.' These are among his farewell words in the *Dnyanodaya* of 1910 and this same magnanimity of spirit is illustrated in the list of names he inserted in his

last will and testament as indicating the friends he wished to be present at the last simple solemn rites over his emaciated frame, for they included the names of those who held diametrically opposite religious views from his own. And despite all his theological differences, despite also his profound appreciation of many *Bhakti* ideals of the Marathi Poet-Saints, he wrote in his editorial farewell to India in 1910 : 'Christ is the most complete revelation of the moral character of God, and hence furnishes the supreme ideal of the moral and spiritual that man can aim for.' To ourselves the most striking illustration of all regarding his magnanimity towards those from whom he differed is the fact that he has requested us to complete the series on the Marathi Poet-Saints, for he knew there were polar differences between him and ourselves in the realm of theology. The thought of those differences nearly caused us to decline the heavy task laid upon us, but we have accepted it because we are convinced that a knowledge of the religious literature of the Indian people is more than ever before an essential qualification for a missionary to India, and also because the more we come to know of this literature the more are we convinced of India's need of Christ and of His power to satisfy India's aching heart. The remaining volumes of this Poet Saints series, two of which are ready for the press, will be published as soon as they can be prepared. We append below some resolutions and press tributes. *J. F. Edwards*

## RESOLUTIONS AND PRESS TRIBUTES

### Dr. Abbott's Work on the Bible

The General Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Bombay Auxiliary, has recorded the following appreciation :—'The chairman and members of the Bombay Auxiliary of the Bible Society note with extreme

regret the passing of the Rev. Justin Edwards Abbott, D. D. on June 19th in America. He was a missionary of the A. B. C. F. M. whose missionaries from the beginning have taken an active interest in the work of the Society, particularly in translation work and the revision and publication of the vernacular Bible. The Society now places on record its gratitude for and appreciation of the service rendered by the late scholar, philanthropist, author, journalist and friend of India, the Rev. Dr. J. E. Abbott, who was a member of the Auxiliary Committee for thirty years, and especially for the leading part he took, in intimate association with the late Dr. Mackichan, in the revision of the Marathi Bible in which he was engaged for many years.'

### The Deccan Sabha Resolution

'The Council of the Deccan Sabha places on record its deep grief at the death of the Rev. Justin E. Abbott, M.A., D.D., who was a gentleman of wide and catholic views. His munificent gift towards the erection and equipment of the Deccan Sabha Library in the Gokhale Hall greatly facilitated the Sabha's task in the matter of the completion of the Gokhale Hall building. The Sabha offers its sincere condolences to Dr. Abbott's family in their bereavement.'

### Resolution of the Social Service League, Bombay

'This meeting of the Managing Committee of the Social Service League, Bombay, places on record its deep sense of loss in the death of the Rev. Justin E. Abbott who was a supporter of the League for a number of years and although far away in America always remembered the League when distributing his annual charities; and, further, this meeting authorizes the General Secretary to forward this resolution to the nearest relatives of the late Dr. Abbott.'

## The Indian Social Reformer's Tribute

'When a man after a life lived in the pursuit of great aims dies at the age of 79 the appropriate feeling is one of praise and thankfulness and not one of grief. After forty years of active work among us in the American Marathi Mission, Justin Abbott retired many years ago to his native country. He made his home at Summit, New Jersey, and there he devoted himself to the study and translation into English of the Maratha Saints. Ranade said that these saints were a potent force in the great movement which in its political aspect found expression in the Maratha Empire of Shivaji. Abbott's translations show an insight into and sympathy with the spirit of the saints of Maharashtra, which is impossible to one who adhered to the exclusive views general among the generation of worthy Christian missionaries which is passing away. Abbott wished and intended these admirable translations to be his contribution to the better understanding of India, and particularly of Maharashtra, by the English speaking world. He concluded with a touching tribute to the spiritual greatness of the Indian saints, his introduction to the *Stotramala* or collection of hymns from their writings, the manuscript of which he completed on Christmas Day, 1928. "It is my 75th birthday," he wrote. "On Christmas Day in 1853 I came, I know not whence, into this world. My Hindu friends may perhaps picture for me some other birth, though which I have passed. I will not quarrel with them, but I know not whence I came. As I approach the years of the utmost uncertainty, and know full well that few live beyond the age of 75, I want to make a gift to India on Christmas Day. I give this book to the land and the people I love. It is a small gift, but India has some beautiful stories of small gifts given, and accepted in the generous spirit that made them great. The handful of rice of poor Sudama and his wife, given to Krishna out of

Love, is the beautiful picture of ideal gifts and ideal receiving of gifts." Mr. Edwards in the *Dnyanodaya*, which Justin Abbott edited for over a quarter of a century, concludes his appreciation of the latter's life with one of the favourite prayers, that of Dnyaneshwar at the close of his commentary on the *Bhagavadgita*. "And now may God be pleased with this my offering of words. And being pleased may He give me this favour in return; that the crookedness of evil men may cease, and that the love of goodness may grow in them." Justin Abbott's life and work is one and not the least of many auspicious signs of growing concord among men of true religion. It is a high privilege to have known him.'

*Indian Social Reformer, July 2, 1932*

### 'The Servant of India' on Dr. Abbott's Bequests

'THE great love that the late Rev. Dr. Justin E. Abbott cherished for India and, in particular, the Maharashtra is shown by the bequests he made to several institutions in India in his last will and testament. The beneficiaries include several institutions in Poona and among them, the Servant of India Society to which he left \$1000. The fact that his property has since depreciated in value and the beneficiaries can expect no more than 40 per cent. of the bequests does not in the least affect our appreciation of the large-hearted and generous character of the late Mr. Abbott. The habit of bequeathing property to public institutions deserves to grow in India, where it is not so strong as in some western countries. The reasons are partly religious and deeply engage the religious faith of the people. The belief that the obsequies and annual ceremonies performed by sons will save the souls of the departed from purgatory and secure for them peace and happiness and a place in heaven is a powerful motive with Hindus who, even if they have no sons, will

adopt them and leave them their property. There is then the equally strong desire for the preparation of the family line, which also leads to adoption of sons and the bequest of property to them. There is reason to believe that these forces of orthodox belief are gradually weakening in modern times and that public institutions for social service of one kind or another will share increasingly in bequests.'

*The Servant of India*, Aug. 18, 1932

#### Thanks from 'The Mahratta'

'As there are bolts from the blue, so good things also sometimes take people by surprise. The will of Dr. Abbott of the U. S. A. is an illustration of this. Dr. Abbott breathed his last in June last. He had come to India first as a missionary. He loved the works of Marathi saints and himself published seven books on them in English. He very much appreciated the work of the *Bharat Itihasa Samshodhak Mandal*. He came to have a peculiar liking for the Indian people and he has directed in his will that his dead body should be cremated according to the Hindu system. In all, he has disposed of 3,43,000 dollars by way of charity in the U. S. A. and in India. In India public institutions receive 1,40,000 dollars. The *Bharat Itihasa Samshodhak Mandal* gets thirty thousand dollars and the Deccan Sabha, the Servants of India Society, Nagpada Neighbourhood House, American Marathi Mission at Wai, and other institutions also, receive smaller or larger amounts. Dr. N. B. Parulekar, editor of the *Sakal*, Poona, had the privilege of being acquainted with the great and generous Dr. Abbott and naturally the paper has published more detailed information about the will. There is no doubt that Dr. Abbott's name will be cherished with gratitude in India and particularly in Maharashtra which benefits more from his liberal charities.'

*The Mahratta* of August 21, 1932.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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The five poet-saints who have contributed the most to the religious life of Mahārāshtra, are undoubtedly Dnyāndeva, Nāmdev, Eknāth, Tukārām and Rāmdās.

DNYĀNDEV'S great work, believed to have been written in 1290, was a commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*. The knowledge of Sanskrit was at that time at a low ebb. The common man could not read it. That the ignorant, the Shūdra and women should not be deprived of a knowledge of the *Bhagavadgītā* he prepared a Marāthī version of it, and a commentary that further explained its meaning. At that time the commentary was undoubtedly in the vernacular of the common people. But for the reader of today it is full of obsolete words, and few find it easy reading. The commentary has the name of *Dnyāndevi*. He is also called Dnyāneshvar and his commentary *Dnyāneshvari*.

NĀMDEV is the centre of much controversy, as to his date, and as to whether there may not have been two or more poet-saints of that name living in different centuries, but whose poetry is ascribed to a Nāmdev, a contemporary of Dnyāndev. The Nāmdev poetry may perhaps be best described as an appeal to the religious emotions.

EKNĀTH was a saint and a philosopher. His great work is the Eknāthī *Bhāgavata*. This is a commentary on the Eleventh Skandha (chapter) of the *Bhāgavata Purāna*. Being a commentary, its subject-matter is naturally that of the *Purān*, but his comments are very extended and cover subjects that are outside of the *Purān*. It is a rich mine of moral, religious and philosophic thinking, of a very high order.

TUKĀRĀM is the poet par excellence of Mahārāshtra, loved by all, honoured by all, and a moral power in the Marāthī country.

RĀMDĀS was a saint of a very different type from any of the foregoing. Eknāth confined himself to his home at Paithan. Tukāram left his home to seek the solitude of the forest that he might get far away from his wife's scolding tongue, and sing undisturbed in his ecstatic devotions. But Rāmdās was a true lover of Nature. As a boy he loved to climb trees, becoming as skilful as a monkey. He loved to swim in the river that flowed by his home, and when refusing to be married he ran away, it was to hide in the depths of the forest where none could find him. Later in life, in the mountainous regions of the southern Marāthī country, his home was the forest where he baked his own bread, slept on the ground, found shelter in caves, made friends with the wild beasts of the forest, with tigers, bears, wolves and monkeys.

The translator is familiar with that mountainous region where Rāmdās loved to roam : Mahābleshwar, and its all-inspiring, awe-producing cliffs and crags reaching far below into the Konkan; the sources of the Krishnā and Koynā rivers; and Parali near Sātārā, where he lived in his old age on that beautiful mountain top, in a house given him by King Shivāji, where he died, and where his ashes lie buried underneath the temple dedicated to Rāma.

Though thus living apart from men, going only into the towns to beg his food, yet men were drawn to him, and his disciples were many. He believed in organization. He was anxious that the worship of Rāma should prevail. To him Rāma was God-Supreme, who for the salvation of the world had become an *avatār* millenniums ago, but who is ready now to come to the aid of anyone in distress who calls upon him.

Mr. Pāngārkar has recently published a volume containing the complete works of Rāmdās. His most important book is the *Dāsabodha*, a book that touches almost every phase of human life, and holds up ideals of moral rightness that cannot but appeal to the heart of every one. I consider him India's greatest saint, and the story of him in the *Santavijaya* whether true or legendary, it matters little, is a mine from which jewels of noble thought can be obtained.

Rāmdās was a worshipper of Rāma, while Eknāth, Nāmdev and Tukārām were worshippers of Krishna. To them, both were essentially the same. Both were *avatārs* of God-Supreme, but at different times in the world's history. It is difficult, nay impossible to appreciate, the ideals of these saints without first becoming familiar with their writings. I have lived many years in India. I have read the Vedānta philosophy through Sanskrit. I have discussed religious problems with Pandits, with the simple farmer in his field, and with the wild men of the forest, and gained a certain amount of knowledge of the essential spirit of Hindus learned and unlearned. But I was not aware of the flood of light that has come to me through the close contact with the saints through their histories and writings. I witnessed as all do the outer forms of worship in temples and by shrines, but I had no idea of the ideals provided by the saints both in their approach to God and their attitude to men. Indeed I now see the mistake I made in my discussions in both my writings and in my conversations, expressing so confidently my opinions on the ideals of these saints when I had not familiarized myself with their history or writings. It is rather late to do so, but a confession of error is always for one. Possibly, I might plead an excuse in that I led a busy life, and to read their writings readily requires hard study and the time to do so.

but it is better to acknowledge my ignorance and gain the forgiveness of those whom I might have offended through my confident assertions, while claiming a knowledge I did not possess.

The completion of this volume brings me to No. 9 in the series of the Poet-Saints of Mahārāshtra. Hitherto Pandit Narhar R. Godbole has stood guard, as it were, to prevent errors of translation in my works. In the meantime he has been familiar with the history and writings of the Marāthā saints and after the publication of this book he will appear as my collaborator, we working together. My thanks are due to the Rev. J. F. Edwards for his help in reading the final proofs\*

*Justin E. Abbott*

SUMMIT, N. J.

October 26th, 1931.

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\*My reading of final proofs in this volume began with page 177.

J. F. EDWARDS

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# RĀMDĀS

Translation of Mahīpati's Santavijaya

## CHAPTER I

### INVOCATION.

1. Victory to Thee, Assumer-of-such-forms-as-pleaseth Thee, Cloud-of-mercy, Pānduranga, Husband-of-Rukmini. Even the Vedas do not know Thy limits, O Thou, the self-pleased Guru-of-the-Universe. 2. In attempting to describe Thee, O God-Supreme [Devādhi-devā], the serpent Shesha grew weary (in the effort). Brahma-deva even was overwhelmed with astonishment. Then what can a mere man do ? 3. In singing Thy glory, O Shripati [Vishnu], the descriptive powers of the Vedas and Shāstras failed them. They could not comprehend the limits of Thy being, and so were compelled merely to say : "It is not this, It is not this". 4. Thus Thou the Unconquered, the Lord-of-all, art to be recognized as appearing in the form of the Universe. But O Lord-of-the-Universe, Thou hast become *saguna* (possessing human qualities), in order to fulfil the desires of Thy loving *bhaktas*. 5. Thou, without name, without form, without *gunas* [*satva, raja, tama*], without parts, yet possessed with a feeling of love for *bhaktas*, hast manifested Thyself in Thy marvellous *saguna* form. 6. Thou, O Hari, hast taken the form of many an *avatāra*, and hast given protection to very many *bhaktas*. Through the Purānas written by

Vyāsa, Thy praiseworthy deeds have become everywhere known. 7. Now in this Kali Yuga Thou didst found the sacred city of Pandharpura, and Thou art standing there, O Shārangadhara [ Krishna ] with Thy hands on Thy hips. 8. Thine eyes are directed to the tip of Thy nose. Thy two hands adorn Thy hips. Thy feet lie parallel on the brick. Thy beautiful form is an attractive sight.\* 9. The ignorant, the simple-minded and the pious come to see and worship Thee. Thou dost fulfil the longings of their hearts. Thou takest them across the sea of this earthly existence, seeing, as Thou dost, their heart's devotion. 10. So now, O Lord-of-Pandhari, give me the assurance that I need not fear, and relate through me the stories of Thy *bhakta*s. There is nowhere any enlightener of intellect, except Thyself. 11. Thus placing complete confidence in Thee, I have begun this book, the Santavijaya [ The Victory of the Saints ]. So through Thy favour O Vitthala, cause it speedily to reach completion. 12. O God-Supreme, Husband-of-Rukmini, Thou art my intellectual faculty. My poetic art is in Thy hands. I, by name of Mahipati, am merely Thy instrument. 13. Listen now, you wise hearers, how Rāmdās became the *avatāra* of Māruti, and how he appeared on this round earth, to save the world. 14. I related his story as far as I was able, in the book called the Shri Bhaktavijaya, but it was a very brief account. I made no attempt at an extensive story. 15. I, therefore, now begin (the story of Rāmdās) in very commonplace language, through the authority given me by the saints. The Husband-of-Rukmini has given me the command, and I am therefore unable to hold back the expression of my thoughts. 16. The World-Guru, The-Mine-of-Mercy, is very fond of the stories of His *bhakta*s.

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\* The above is a description of the image of Vithobā at Pandharpura.

So, He has seated himself in my heart in order to make me His instrument. 17. Thus Panduranga is the real relator of this story, as also He is the loving listener. He is the only one that gives remembrance to my mind. There is no other. 18. Listen now with due attention. In the district round about the banks of the Ganga [Godavari], is the sacred village of Jamba, known throughout the world. 19. The town-clerk, a *bhiksha* of God, possessed the name of Suryajlpanta. Ranubri, his dutiful wife, was always obedient to the wishes of her husband. 20. Although he was a householder, yet his mind occupied itself with the means of acquiring the supreme spiritual-richest. He made a rule governing his speech, that he would never speak an untruth. 21. If anyone appeared at noontime, he regarded him as if he were the equal of Vishnu. He, generous in his hospitality, would worship him in the authorized manner. 22. He felt compassion for all creatures. He had supreme love for all the *bhaktas* of Vishnu. If saints or sādhus came to his house, he paid them due honour. 23. Both (the husband and the wife) were very fond of the Purāṇas and of services of song in praise of Hari [Vishnu]. The husband worshipped the Sun in body, speech and mind. 24. In the early morning after his bath, he made his offerings to the Sun, of red flowers, red sandal-wood paste, accompanied with the appropriate *mantras*. 25. He was constantly reading the *Adyayahridaya* [a praise to the Sun], and without ceasing his mind contemplated the Sun with love. 26. After doing all this he would make a thousand *namaskāras* (to the Sun). By them the power of his brightness exceedingly increased. Consequently he never omitted them. 27. Concentrating his mind, he would every day repeat the *mantra* twelve thousand times. In this way full twelve years having passed, he met the Sun in a direct revelation.

• THE SUN BESTOWS HIS BLESSING

28. The Sun was seated in His chariot, in His form of excessive brilliancy, as His natural appearance. Seeing the Sun, when by himself, Sūryājī's heart was overjoyed.

29. To the Sun, thus revealing Himself, Sūryājīpanta made a prostrate *namaskāra*, and was full of joy. 30. With hands joined palm to palm Sūryājī stood before the Sun, and with heart, inspired with love, he began to praise Him.

31. He said: "Victory, Victory, to Thee O Sun, victorious in all the Three-worlds, Thou Mine-of-diamonds. By Thy light, O Sun, the earth appears as if made of light.

32. Through Thy assistance the great *rishis* perform their acts, and by the performance of their various sacrifices all the gods are satisfied. 33. It is true that owing to the influence of Kāla [the Prince of evil and death] of the Kali-yuga very many are living untruthful lives and for fear of them the gods flee away, and the *rishis* go to Badari-kāshrama. 34. But Thou art the ruler of the Prince-of-evil of this Kali Yuga. Thou art directly visible to all mankind. From age to age events have taken place in Thy presence, O Nārāyana. 35. Other gods are imagined, but Thou art seen by the eye, O Nārāyana. I have in every way failed in my service of Thee, but in Thy grace Thou hast given me this revelation of Thyself. 36. No one can see the way clearly that leads to this earthly life and the way that leads to final deliverance". The sun listened to Sūryājīpanta's words of praise, and replied: 37. "I am pleased with you. Ask me for some particular blessing. Do not hesitate in the least. I will give you what you may desire." 38. Sūryājīpanta answered: "I am wholly content with having seen Thee. But my wife has a desire. She wishes for a good son. 39. There are sons who are of bad character, fallen into sinful ways, and characterized by evil habits, who dishonour their parents, who grasping the weapon of harsh language stab them in their hearts.

40. There are sick and short lived sons, sons that become relatives in the family line, sons who cause their parents pain. Do not give us such sons." 41. Rānubāī joined her hands palm to palm and thus besought Him: "A beautiful woman does sometimes give birth to an evil son, but I think that to be a barren woman would be better than that." 42. After listening to the words of both, Nārāyana smiled and said: "According to one's actions one receives results. 43. Your religious activities have been very pure, and therefore I am manifesting myself to you to-day. You will assuredly have two sons, both *bhakta*s of God. 44. The son, who will be a portion of myself, will carry on both worldly pursuits and the pursuit of the supreme spiritual riches. And he will always be ready to serve you with affection. 45. The younger son, who will be wholly a portion of Māruti, will possess the characteristic of indifference to worldly things. Stressing *bhakti* and knowledge, he will save the whole world." 46. Thus speaking the Sun vanished from sight. The couple felt great joy, and both took comfort. 47. There are those who perform austerities and other religious rites, and the divinities grant them favour. But after their heart's desire has been fulfilled, they drop the worship of that divinity. 48. Not so this couple. Their *bhakti* was without desires, and was accompanied with love. They observed the festival of Rathasaptami (the 7th day of the bright half of Māgha (February), and their worship extended over the seven days during which the Brahmans were feasted. 49. On every Sunday of the week they gave a feast to Brahmans and distributed gifts to them. And when the wife conceived, her heart was full of joy.

#### THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF THE ELDER SON

50. When nine months were complete a beautiful son was born, adored with every noble trait, and lacking in

none. 51. The parents looked into the face of their son. They distributed gifts according to their ability. They engaged Brahmans as Rātrivarga [Reciters of prayer of peace], because of their love. 52. On the thirteenth day they placed the child in a cradle. A great many women, whose husbands were living, assembled to celebrate the occasion, and sang cradle songs. 53. They gave these women the saffron and other fragrant pastes, and other gifts. In their love for the child they named him Gangādhara. 54. Gradually he grew in stature. In his seventh year he was invested with the sacred thread. And now for the second time the dear wife became pregnant. 55. The father provided Gangādhara with a good education. He sought for a family of fortune into which he could marry his son, and all went to the wedding. 56. In accordance with the boon of the Sun his house was full of fortune; and all his relatives gathered for the marriage occasion. 57. When Rānubāī saw the face of her daughter-in-law, her heart rejoiced. Then taking the young couple, they returned home.

#### THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF NĀRĀYANA [RĀMDĀS I]

58. Rānubāī was with child, but she suffered no inconveniences. When her days were complete, she brought forth a beautiful son. 59. At the time of the birth she did not experience the least suffering. When the birth was reported outside, Sūryājipanta became full of joy. 60. Brahmans of the highest rank assembled. Auspicious music of sweet instruments filled the air. For twelve days the festal occasion was celebrated. 61. The ceremony regarding the naming of the child was performed. His father feasted a great multitude of Brahmans. He also fed all the Shūdras of his town. 62. The beautiful child was put into his cradle. Gifts were given to the women, whose husbands were living, and

with loving thoughts the name of Nārāyana was given to the babe. 61. After the Brahmins and priests had been made happy with gifts, Rānubāī called her husband apart, and whispered to him: 64. "At the end of the child's spinal cord a little tail is to be seen, that is all the time wagging. I am amazed at it." 65. Sūryājī replied: "I remember now what the Sun said that Māruti would enter into your womb. 66. The child is therefore an *avatāra* of Māruti, who by good fortune has come through your womb. But do not let this thing be known to any one". 67. The child was always in a happy mood. It never cried the least bit. Day by day it grew in stature, and with an extraordinary lustre to its body. 68. In five months it learned to sit up. In seven months it learned to creep. When called, it would reply, giving his parents great joy. 69. In two years the boy learned to walk and talk. Not for a single moment did he remain quiet, always wandering in and out of the house. 70. He was nimble and agile in his actions, every now and then jumping about. He would make his face look like a monkey's, with a grimace exactly like its. 71. His mother used to say to him: "Play only in our own grounds, hobgoblins are found outside. They will make you afraid". 72. To this Nārāyana would reply: "Mother, how does a hobgoblin look? Show me one at once, I will certainly kill it." 73. At these words of the child the mother and father would laugh heartily. The mother would take the child up on to her side, and it would call for a drink from its mother's breast. 74. They made all kinds of playthings for the boy, but he never would remain indoors. He wanted to rush outside. 75. The mother sought to dissuade him: "If you go away to play at a distance, a thief will some day steal the ornaments that are on you." 76. Nārāyana would reply: "Then, mother, take off these ornaments. I cannot endure staying

in the house, I must go outside." 77. This he would say in his lisping words, and his parents would laugh in their joy. They remarked, however: "He will be affected by an evil eye," and so they waved over him the leaves of the bitter-nimba and salt ( in order to avert the evil eye ).

### THE BOYHOOD OF NĀRĀYANA [ RĀMDĀS ]

78. When the boy was five years of age, the parents chose an auspicious time, and put him in school. In a year's time, he completed all the studies taught in the school. 79. In his seventh year the father decided to invest him with the sacred thread. Jupiter was favourable to the event, and they began the preparations. 80. The astrologers announced their calculations, and appointed the day for the thread investment. Invitations were sent to all guests and all came to honour the occasion. 81. Sweet instruments made auspicious music at the door. The divinity presiding over investitures was duly installed. Brahmans were feasted on the occasion with many kinds of dainty food. 82. The boy's head was shaved, leaving a tuft of hair, and the mother and the son were feasted together and when the appointed moment arrived, Brahmans said to one another: "Listen now with attention." 83. The Brahmans repeated the names of the family deity, and invested the boy with the sacred thread. The musical instruments now pealed forth, the drums were beaten. 84. After the distribution of the *pāna-supāri*, the people returned to their homes. The sacrifices and offerings having been rendered, gifts were distributed to the officiating Brahmans. 85. Such sweets as the *talave* and *lādu* in great quantities, as also cakes of different kinds, there were; and when the mother put these into her son's begging bowl, she was overwhelmed with intense joy. 86. Then some more women with the honoured title of wifehood put food into the child's begging bowl. The

band now began to play, and all were filled with joy. 87. The priest said to Nārāyana: "From henceforth act as a wise boy should. Earn your livelihood by begging, and study the Vedas. 88. When attending to the calls of nature, or when eating, never utter a word. Your body will be purified by the sipping of water. 89. Don't jump around too much. Do not climb trees." To this Nārāyana replied, and I ask you to listen to the reply with respect. 90. "I will beg, and thus obtain my food. I will learn to repeat the Vedas, but I cannot bear the thought of not climbing trees." 91. Thus spoke the little student, and all the Brahmans laughed. Said they: "He appears to be uncontrollable. We do not know what he will do." 92. In this manner the investiture was carried out. The feasting of Brahmans lasted for four days. Generous gifts were distributed to all the Brahmanas. 93. Gifts were then given to the relatives and intimate friends; they then took leave of Sūryajīlpanta and returned to their home. 94. Nārāyana now sat daily with the family guru and committed the Vedas to memory. It was no effort for him to commit to memory. His intellect was extraordinary.

### RĀMA REVEALS HIMSELF TO GANGĀDHARA

95. The name of Sūryajīlpanta's elder son was Gangādhara. He carried on all the family domestic affairs, and all duties connected with his profession. 96. He took pleasure in his morning and evening devotions, in the study of the Vedas, in his worship of Vishnu, in Kīrtanas in praise of Hari, and in obeying the wishes of his parents. 97. Just as in milk, in nectar, or in holy river water the whole sky is seen reflected, yet the sky is not in the least touched by the water. It is entirely separate, wholly untouched. 98. Such was Gangādhara's mind. His body was seen environed by worldly affairs, but

his mind was absorbed in the divine form of Rāma. He lost all consciousness of possessing a body. 99. In order to worship Rāma, the Sun became an *avatāra*, in part (as Gangādhara). And how he (Gangādhara) lost all consciousness of body, one day, I ask you, good people, to listen to an account of that event. 100. All the landowners were sitting on the stone platform, built around the sacred *pimpala* tree. The mayor, the officials and the *shūdra* servants were carrying on their official duties. 101. Gangādhara was seated among them with his ink, pen and the wrapping cloth. His appearance was beautiful, shedding light, and he seemed superior to anyone there. 102. After the business was finished the people returned to their homes, but Gangādhara remained in contemplation of Rāma. When suddenly the enemy of Rāvana [Rāma] manifested Himself. 103. His form was so brilliant and beautiful that it made the Sun appear pale. Around his waist was the yellow robe, and in his crown divine diamonds gave out their lustre. 104. On his abdomen were the three beautiful creases. Over his lotus heart the ornament of the jewel Kaustubha glittered. On his feet little bells tinkled. On his forehead was the *tilaka* mark made of musk. 105. When Gangādhara saw this Divine form before him, he embraced His feet. He could not contain himself for joy. God and His *bhakta* began embracing one another. 106. Gangādhara's soul became a part of Rāma, and there remained to him not the least consciousness of possessing a body. The people had all gone to their homes, so that without any effort on his part Rāma could meet him alone. 107. While in this condition, even God no longer remembered His own Divinity. The *bhakta* forgot who he was. The illusion of duality flew away. 108. After a while Gangādhara came to consciousness and looking with his open eyes he saw before him Rāma, Sītā, Lakshmana, and Hanumāna.

109. Rāma then said to Māruti [ Hanumāna ] : "Gangādhara has become one with me in essence, so from now Gangādhara should be called Rāmī Rāmdās." 110. Having said this, the Cloud-dark Rāma vanished out of sight. And God, the self-pleased Guru-of-the-world, took away from Gangādhara the illusions of this worldly life. 111. Then he remembered, and said to himself : "My mother and father must be waiting for me. I must hasten home." And with that he hastily arose. 112. Two *ghatikās* of the night had already passed when he reached home. His father at once asked him why he was so late? 113. Gangādhara whispered in private to him : "Today Rāma conferred a great favour on me. He has changed my name, so no longer call me Gangādhara. 114. My soul became one with Rāma, and, therefore, He gave me the name of Rāmī Rāmdās." Such was the account he gave to his father. 115. And as Sūryājipanta looked closely at him, he remarked : "His appearance seems changed. One cannot express one's joy in words. His good fortune has no limit". 116. And when Rāmī Rāmdās looked at Nārāyana he seemed to be Māruti himself, and he was filled with joy. 117. After this Gangādhara wrote many books himself of which the one, called *Bhaktirahasya*, is known to the wise and saints. 118. Aside from this he composed many verses on spiritual themes. According to his own heart's experience he expressed them in words full of emotion. 119. The nine days of the festival, called Rāma Navami, he celebrated with great joy Vaishnavas gathered for the occasion, and kept the loud music of the *kirtanas*. 120. Feasting the Brahmans continued during the festival. On the tenth day there were dramatic representations of Rāma's doings, and saints and *mahanatas* were glorified with hearts full of respect for them. 121. And Rāma made it possible for him to have his body in the midst of worldly things, but his soul seeking-

after the supreme-spiritual-riches. In this way even through Him all the fears of this worldly existence vanished, and the idea of 'I' was clean wiped away. 122. His soul having but one purpose, lost all desire. Worldly riches and the supreme-spiritual-riches both disappeared in Rāma. Anger and lust both vanished, and his love centered in worship. 123. If Hari bestows His favour, He can change one's worldly riches into the supreme-spiritual-riches. What lack can there be in any home where Rāma is the one in control, and who is in everything ?

### NĀRĀYANA'S [RĀMDĀS'] BOYISH PRANKS

124. It has already been related how Nārāyana the younger son's investiture of the sacred thread was celebrated. He was a boy always without fear. 125. He was continually playing without control with the boys of the town. If there was a tree difficult to climb, he would climb up to its very top. 126. The boys would look up into the tree and cry out: "He is fallen, he is fallen". But he would come down at once to the ground, and then go and sit on the wall. 127. If there was a flat roof in the neighbourhood, he would jump on it. Even if there was an alley between, of three or four cubits wide, he would jump across without any fear. 128. The boys would sometimes say to his mother: "He jumps about every where! If he should fall, don't blame us." 129. The mother would say: "You dear one, how you succeed in your worldly affairs! I see no one in this town as daring as you are. 130. You have forgotten how to read and write. You take no thought of wordly affairs. What am I to do with such a character as you have got?" 131. After listening to his mother's words what did Nārāyana do but go into the corner where the earthen jars were placed one above the other and hide in the dark. 132. His mother

hunted for him all over the house, but she could not find him. She sent men into the town to find him, but he was not with the boys. 133. Sūryājī learned of this while in his office. In the meanwhile the mother went to the pile of jars for something. 134. It was very dark in the room. She could see nothing on the floor. Just then her foot touched her boy, to the great surprise of the mother. 135. She exclaimed "What is here? A cat or a dog?" "It is I," said Nārāyana. "You do not recognise me?" 136. The mother replied "My dear boy, why have you hidden yourself here? I have been hunting for you my babe, everywhere. 137. The master of our house has become greatly concerned. Men are hunting over the town to find you. Tell me why you have hidden yourself here." 138. Nārāyana answered his mother "I have not been sitting idle hero. I have been thinking of how to carry on one's worldly affairs, but I do not see clearly how it is to be done." 139. Hearing her son's words, the mother laughed, and in her love took him up on to her side, and brought him out. 140. She sent word to Sūryājī that Nārāyana had been found in the house. The father was full of joy, and came running to his home. 141. His wife told him what had happened, how she had found him sitting in the dark. Sūryājī said to her "Don't scold him for this. 142. As he grows older, he will naturally grow wiser." Hearing this, Nārāyana said to his mother "What is it to be wise?" 143. The mother replied "You must learn to bring money and grain into the home. Only so will you be able to get a good wife. You must think rightly." 144. Thus his mother taught him, and he assented to it. Immediately the next day he did something, which I ask you to listen to. 145. Nārāyana went to a threshing floor. The farmer had put his grain in bags. Each contained one and a quarter maunds. He took up a bag and ran away with it. 146. He went running as fast as the wind, and the farmer could

not catch up with him. Nārāyana dropped the bag of grain on the verandah, and said to his mother: 147. "Mother, I have brought you some grain. Store it somewhere in the house." While he was thus talking, the farmer arrived. 148. He said to Rānubāī: "Your boy's strength is most remarkable. He lifted up the bag and ran with it. I am astonished at it. 149. I don't know whether he is an imp, or a powerful demon. One surely cannot call him a human being". Nārāyana replied to the farmer: "Why are you talking such nonsense? 150. Take away your bag of grain". The farmer took up his bag, and then was witnessed a most extraordinary thing. Listen to it you pious ones. 151. As he lifted up one bag, another one appeared beneath it. He lifted up more than fifty bags, to the amazement of the mother. 152. Nārāyana said to the farmer: "Take your bag and go. My father will return very soon, and will give you a beating." 153. The *Shūdra* farmer hastened away. With the help of men the bags of grain were piled up. There was no end to them, the men worked until their hands grew weary. 154. By this time Sūryājī returned, and his wife told him all that had happened. Said he: "You have given birth to an *avatāra*. But we must have the good fortune to possess him."

#### THE PARENTS PLAN FOR [RĀMDĀS'] MARRIAGE

155. Thereupon Rānubāī replied: "We must arrange quickly for his marriage. If we can get him entangled in the domestic life, he will naturally remain at home." 156. Sūryājī approved of this proposal, and searched for a family of high rank, in which to marry his son. The marriage was decided upon, and the priest was sent for, for the occasion. 157. All the preparations were made. Relatives were invited. Garments and ornaments were made ready, and the musicians were chosen. 158. The bridegroom's marriage procession was made up of large numbers.

The musical instruments began their loud sounds. Cantele, horses, and chariots formed a great moving procession. 159. In the chariot the mother of the bridegroom sat. The bridegroom made a beautiful show on his horse. The road was crowded so that there was no space in which to walk. 160. When the procession of the bridegroom arrived near the town of the bride, they camped in a grove. As soon as the bride's party heard of their arrival they came out to meet them and escort them. 161. The music made by both parties made a sound that more than filled the air. After the mutual welcoming, the bridegroom was worshipped by the bride's party. 162. Garments of gold and silver threads were given to the bridegroom. Pāna supari was distributed, and the bride's party, in gay procession, escorted the bridegroom's party to the lodgings prepared for them. 163. The mother of the bride sent undressed articles of provisions to the party of the bridegroom. When they beheld the appearance of the bridegroom, the hearts of all rejoiced. 164. The night passed. With the rising of the Sun music began in both pavilions. Saffron paste was smeared on both bride and bridegroom. 165. The marriage divinity was installed; the Brahmins were feasted. The bridegroom's party had all they could eat of dainty cooked food. The hearts of all rejoiced. 166. The sun was now setting, and the inviting party made themselves ready, carried baskets full of gifts for the bridegroom, and marched in slow procession to the pavilion of the bridegroom, and escorted his party to the bride's home. 167. They carried tightly fastened banners, and rockets were let off. Wooden files made their music, so that the sound overset the air. 168. Men and women made a gay procession with trumpets, horns and other instruments playing. The bridegroom's lodging place was now crowded. The loud noise of the sweet instruments filled the place. 169. The bride-

groom's father had supplied a great number of seats, and after rising to receive the bride's party all were seated.

170. The day was now waning, and it was proposed that the worship of the bridegroom should at once take place. Garments were given to the family *guru*, and Ganesha, the God who prevents hindrances, was worshipped.

171. The bridegroom was now clothed in his wedding garments and ornaments and seated on a horse. Men of both parties were watching the sun. The procession moved to the home of the father of the bride. 172. The bride was brought outside. The ceremony of marriage contract was performed. The bride was worshipped, and sweetmeats were put in her lap, and the marriage string and *sari* (an ornament) were put around her neck.

173. The bride and bridegroom were now brought forward and made to stand on the raised seat. The curtain was placed between them, and the Brahman priests began to repeat the eight auspicious stanzas. 174. Carrying in her hand the platter with lights, the sister of the bride threw rice on them, and the priest called on them to be mindful of what they were doing.

175. The bride and bridegroom listened attentively to the verses repeated by the priests. They possessed good qualities, for the Lord of Heaven was their protector.

176. "O You rivers, Gāṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Kṛishṇā, Venyā, Bhāgīrathī, Tāpi, Narmadā, Bhīmarathī, protect the bride and bridegroom".

177. After repeating these verses (*ashatakas*) the priest ended with the word *Sāvadhāna* (beware). There was nothing now left to be done before completing the marriage. This much Nārāyaṇa heard.

#### NĀRĀYANA [RĀMDĀS] RUNS AWAY FROM HIS WEDDING

178. A curtain was held between the bride and bridegroom. Around stood the marriage party, including the

brothers of the bride 179 Nārāyana turned to them and said: "The Brahman repeats again and again the words 'Sāvadhāna, Sāvadhāna. Tell me whom they are for?"

180 Hearing his question, his to-be-brothers-in-law jokingly remarked: "Listen attentively to the inner meaning of the word, Sāvadhāna." 181. From to-day on, the shackles of domestic life will bind your feet. So quickly beware" This was their reply 182 In the depths of Nārāyana's heart there was already the fire of repentance, and a violent wind in the form of the words of those evil men blew on this fire 183 This made the flame to flare up greatly, and burning the forest of Ignorance, and by an inrush of Indifference to worldly things, scorched the heart's zeal for final deliverance 184. Nārāyana said to himself, in his perplexity "My mother and father are my enemies as they seek to entangle me in the snare of domestic life, to be drowned in the ocean of sorrow" 185. There was very little time for the 'Om dūnyāham' ceremony to commence, but just then he met numbered Rāma. 'Deliver me quickly, O Merciful one. 186 It is the habit of all mankind that if any one gets entangled, they want to entangle others. There is no one who can deliver me, but Thee, O Rāma.' 187 Thus thinking of Rāma, the bridegroom slipped from behind the curtain, and ran away. He ran with the swiftness of wind. It did not take him a moment's time 188 When the priests, the men of the wedding party, and the bride's maids did not see him there, they exclaimed. "There is no bridegroom. He has run away" Some cried: 'Catch him, catch him' All were dazed by the event 189 The mother of the bridegroom was sitting in the pavilion provided for the bridegroom's party. As soon as she heard of it, she burst into loud cries and hysterics. 190. She exclaimed: "My babe, where have you gone? In what forest shall I find you? My breasts are bursting

with milk, to whom shall I give to drink save you?" 191. As soon as the priest heard the cry that Nārāyana had fled, he stopped repeating the verses. Said he: "In the midst of the auspicious, the inauspicious has entered. This is a most unusual happening." 192. The bridegroom's party rushed through all the streets and alleys, calling out: "Where has the bridegroom gone?" Some mounted horses, and rode rapidly searching everywhere in fields and jungles. 193. But Nārāyana was nowhere to be seen. The mother and father wept. The pavillion where the bridegroom's party lodged became empty. The bridegroom's party had all run off. 194. A great many had gone to hunt for the bridegroom, but they all came back. They remarked that the darkness was intense, as the moon had set. 195. "As soon as the sun rises, we shall search for him, and bring him back. Do not mourn:" they said to Sūryājipanta. 196. "He was a wild boy from the very beginning. He has gone into some forest. When the sun rises we shall search for him and bring him back." 197. When the horsemen and police said this, the parents were quieted. Said they: "We cannot from now show any one our faces." 198. Remembering the good characteristics of their child, the mother every now and then burst out into crying: "My dear babe, you are perhaps in some wild jungle. 199. Wild beasts prowl through the jungles. How will you survive this night?" Thus the couple spent the night in anxiety, wishing for the rising of the sun. 200. There are three classes of people, and they gossiped in different ways in their homes. Some said: "Luckily the bride has not become a ruined cow. Consider that thought. 201. Luckily for the bride, Nārāyana had his understanding just in time. For, if the marriage had taken place, she would have become a widow all her life." 202. "A Brahman woman", said another: "can have but one experience of domestic life. She cannot marry a-

second time. She is of no more use than a broken piece of pottery." 203. There were those who answered: "The Fates are against the mother of the bridegroom. She came to get a daughter-in-law, but the son has run away." 204. Others remarked: "It is the boy who is deserted by Fate and Fortune, though his father is rich. He has pushed aside the full platter, and has run away into the jungle," 205. Thus the three classes of people gossiped among themselves, while the parents were in deep concern, longing for the sun to rise.

206. In the next chapter the story will describe how Nārāyana [Rāmdās] met Māruti. Mahipati pleads with his hearers to listen with close attention. 207. Svasti. This book, the Santavijaya, by merely listening to it, fulfils all the longings of one's heart. May the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the first delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER II.

### STORIES OF THE SAINTS BRING SALVATION.

1. Whatever may be the fruit of loving *bhakti*, or whatever may be the root of indifference-to-worldly-things, or whatever may be the power of knowledge, all these can be obtained from a full account of the saints. 2. There have been many who have become indifferent to worldly things, who have turned away from sensual things, and have become God-loving *bhaktas*. Their interesting histories have been listened to by all good people. 3. But here we have a story of one who, while the priest was reciting the sacred verses, slipped away from behind the marriage curtain and ran away, as soon as he heard the words of the priest, "Sāvadhāna, Sāvadhāna." 4. The saints have varied experiences. One saint is not like another. And their varied histories, when listened to, bring salvation to dull minds.

### UNSUCCESSFUL SEARCH [FOR RĀMDĀS]

5. At the close of the last chapter an account was given of how, when Nārāyana was being married, he threw aside all thoughts of affection and love, and ran away into the jungle. 6. Horsemen and police hunted everywhere to a distance of four miles. Some sought for him every where in the town, but this *videhi* [One unconscious of body] was nowhere to be seen. 7. The parents were anxious, and they could not sleep. But when the sun arose they felt encouraged. 8. Relatives and friends said to Sūryājīpanta: "We have sent horsemen to hunt for him. Do not feel troubled." 9. But the mother sobbed and cried: "I will not now insist on his marrying. Once let me see him, and I will not separate him from me." 10. The officials of his town now said to Sūryājī: "Let us now

return to our town." Suryāsi replied "How shall I be able to show my face there?" 11 People replied "What is to happen will happen without fail. Do not mourn any more. 'All earthly life causes sorrow.' This so many saints and sādhus have said." 12 But we have sent horsemen to search and also men on foot accustomed to gain information. As soon as he is found, they will bring him along, so let us return." 13 And so the bridegroom's procession, together with the father and mother of the bridegroom, returned to their town. But those who were sent to hunt for the boy reported that they had not found him. 14 When the father and mother heard this report they wept bitterly. The elder son now said them "Do not now mourn in vain. 15 Nārāyana is probably happy. You will meet him again sometime in the future. Rāma is his protector, and he is the *sāguna avatāra* of Māruti. 16 If you had not insisted on his marriage, he would have remained here with us for life. But that which has already happened cannot in any possible way be changed. 17 Mother, you showed me his tail. That means he is the *avalāra* of Māruti, manifested for the salvation of the world. 18 He will perform many deeds of which you will hereafter hear. You do not seem to remember the wonderful things he did in his childhood. 19 How Nārāyana went to a threshing floor, and brought back with him a bag of grain. It became a never-ending supply. It is still unexhausted. 20 When he saw a tree very hard to climb, he would climb it, and sit on the topmost branch. He jump'd over wall four cubits high. Boys were frightened as they saw him doing these things. 21 Such deeds are not those of a man. In him the Son-of-the-wind [Māruti] has descended as an *avalāra*. He will have ten million families. Your fortune is most extraordinary." 22 Hearing these words of their good son, the father and mother were comforted. They exclaim-

ed: "Be he wherever he may be, Rāma is his protector." 23. And with this thought the parents remained at home.

### MĀRUTI MANIFESTS HIMSELF TO [RĀMDĀS]

Listen with reverence, you wise people, to what happened to Nārāyana in the jungle. 24. When Nārāyana ran away from behind the curtain, he was thinking of the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. He who pervades the universe will protect him. All the marriage guests were dazed. 25. Although seeing Nārāyana running away, he seemed to bewitch them all. So if the Life-of-the-World will continue to show His favour, how can there be any longer bondage to this worldly life? 26. The snares of *Māyā* cannot do harm to him who is protected by Rāma, for, in the past, present, future, and for ever the Merciful-to-the-lowly is his protector.

27. Nārāyana [Rāmdās] had no clothes or vessels with him. He ran away altogether by himself, this *videhi* [One unconscious of body]. He neither grew hungry nor thirsty. This was most extraordinary. 28. When he fled into the jungle, he had the same feeling of joy as a deer would have, when it escaped from a snare without effort, and plunged into the forest. 29. Or the same feeling of joy as a serpent would have, when it escaped from the juggler and crawled into an ant-hill in a forest. Or like a parrot, escaping from his cage, goes and sits on a branch. 30. Such was Nārāyana's happiness. Said he: "I am well freed from the snare of a worldly life." It was a dense frightful jungle where Nārāyana was. There were many wild beasts there. 31. Tigers, wolves, and bears he saw, but he felt no fear, for he had the favour of the Life-of-Jānaki Rāma ] to free him from all evil happenings. 32. He wore a clout and his sacred thread. He had nothing besides these. He had no thought or hunger or thirst, because his indifference to worldly things was so excessive.

33. He thought to himself: "I have of my own accord given up all worldly things, and have chosen to seek for the supreme-spiritual-riches. Now when shall I have a direct revelation of God, I, who am so dull-minded and ignorant?" 34. He then began to think how he should contemplate by himself alone, how he should worship without an image before him, how to make it possible to listen to the sacred books, and meditate on them and study them. 35. How to make possible a direct manifestation of God, how to have a vision of Rāma in actual form and with the qualities belonging to Him? How to cross in safety the ocean of this worldly existence?" Such were his anxious thoughts. 36. Thus thinking in mind, his thoughts now turned to Māruti, and with the feeling of love he began rendering him praise. Listen to it with reverence, you saints.

37. "Victory, Victory, to Thee, the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti], Protector-of-the-helpless, Ornament-of-the-saints, Destroyer-of-the-sorrow-of-Sita, protect me, Thy lowly one. 38. Rāvana imprisoned the gods, and caused much trouble to the saints, and, therefore, the Husband-of-Lakshmi became an *avatāra* in the Sun's family line. 39. In order to help him, the eleventh Rudra, Māruti, gladly overcame Rāvana, and burned up the whole of Lankā [Ceylon]. 40. When Lakshmana was about to lose his life Māruti, without a moment's delay, brought the mountain named Dron. Then why dost Thou not rush to my help? Thou hast cast me off in a foreign land."

41. Although he thus praised Māruti, still He did not manifest himself to him. Then Nārāyana devised a plan, to which the saints should listen with reverence. 42. Said he to himself: "One should abandon all love of his own body. Then only will God give a revelation of Himself. But I have kept my life happy. I see that is the reason.

43. With this thought in his mind, he broke off supple vines at once, twisted them into a rope with his own hands and fastened it around his wrist. 44. He looked for a tall tree, and hang himself up by this vine-rope. Then contemplating Māruti, he called out: "O God, give me a sight of Thee. 45. When Shri Rāma was going to His own home [dying] He entrusted his *bhaktas* to Thee. Hast Thou forgotten this? Dost Thou not recollect this? 46. O Māruti, Thou alone art my mother, my brother, and uncle. It is in order to have a revelation of Thyself that I have left all my affections and loves. 47. If Thou dost not come, I will no longer preserve my life. Hearing this pitiful plea, Māruti appeared at a bound. 48. It was a brilliant statue of light. In his ears were crocodile-shaped earrings. If one looked towards him, he had to close his eyes. He looked as if he were the sun descended on the earth. 49. Manifesting Himself in this form, and at once freeing him ( Rāmdās ) He gave Dāsa ( Rāmdās ) a loving embrace. 50. Māruti caressed him, and said : "Why do you sorrow ?" Nārāyana composed an *abhangā* which the saints should listen to with reverence.

1. My soul was in sorrow. Then I remembered Māruti.

And Māruti appeared before him at a bound.

2. The ocean of this worldly life seemed about to overwhelm me,

When Māruti came making his Monkey cry of Bhu, Bhu.

3. I have no one except Māruti. Seeing my extremity He leaped to my aid.

4. My soul is attached to my Māruti, and He has brought me comfort.

5. Seeing His form, my eyes lost their unrest. Says Rāmdās : "The form seemed that of Rāma."

51. Such were the first blessed words composed by Nārāyana, and as Māruti listened to them, he felt comforted. 52. Māruti said to him : "You, who are as dear to me as life, why have you brought yourself into such an extremity ? Come at once with me to Panchavati, and I will cause you to meet Rāma. 53. You are a portion of me, so, Rāma will give you His *anugraha*. On account of His merciful character Rāma has no thought of duality. 54. So, come along to Panchavati, for, there you will meet Shri Rāma". Hearing these words of Maruti, Nārāyana's heart could not contain its joy. 55. Taking Nārāyana by the hand the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] walked quickly along. Just like the Dawn and the Sun, there was no thought in them of duality. 56. Like a jewel and its brilliancy, a pearl and its lustre, Sandal wood paste and its perfume the two were one. 57. As the moon and its coolness are never separated from one another, so Nārāyana and Hanumāna [Māruti] were different in name only. 58. Nārāyana came to save the world in this *kṛtiyug*, otherwise there was no difference between them. There was no such thought as though they were two separate beings.

#### NĀRĀYANA [RĀMDĀS] HAS A REVELATION OF RĀMA

59. Māruti and Rāmdās arrived quickly at Panchavati. The sun had set; so, they seated themselves by the Rāmakunda. 60. They said their evening prayers, performed their regular worship with God, only in their minds and unseen by people they started to meet with God. 61. But lo ! they found that there was a pilgrimage there, and many musical instruments were being played. In the assembly-hall a *kīrtana* was going on, and the Haridāsa was calling out very loudly the names of Rāma. 62. When Nārāyana saw this his heart rejoiced. Said he to Māruti : "It looks to my sight that there is a band of pilgrims here." 63. Māruti replied : "The festival of Rāmanā-

vāmī is being celebrated. Rāma dwells here in person, and therefore, they have come here to meet him. 64. After half the night had passed, and the people had retired to their places, Māruti said to Nārāyana : "I will now cause you to meet Rāma by Himself alone". 65. Then holding Nārāyana to his heart, the Son-of-the-wind arose, and entering the inner sanctuary, opened his eyes and looked. 66. The form before them was dazzling with its light. The divine jewels gave out their lustre. In His hand were His bow and arrows, in His ears were crocodile-shaped earrings. 67. On His head was a brilliant crown. When looked at, the sun paled before it. Around His wrist was the thread heroes wear. Around His waist was the belt that gave one joy to look at. 68. On His feet were the ornaments worn by heroes. Around His waist was the divine yellow robe. When the Son-of-the-Wind saw Him thus, he made Him a reverent *namaskāra*.

69. The Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma] said : "Māruti, why have you come to-day ? And who is this whom you have brought with you ? Tell me. 70. You have left the bridge at Rāmeshvara, and come from so great a distance". To this question of Rāma, Māruti replied: 71. "In accordance with your command I have by a portion of myself become an *avatāra*. And I have come that I may place him at your feet." 72. Nārāyana listened to this conversation between God and His *bhakta* but Rāma was not visible to him. Listen to the reason of this. 73 Unless a *sadguru*'s hand has been placed on the head of the one seeking Salvation, he cannot meet the Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma]. Knowing this, Māruti said to Rāma : " Give him at once your *anugraha* (evidence of favour). 74. At the close of the Tretāyuga you bestowed on me your favour. In the same way, O Rāma, save this Nārāyana." 75. The Husband-of-Sitā listened to what Māruti said, and replied : "I cer-

tainly will." Then placing his assuring hand on Nārāyana's head, He gave him the *mantra* of divine names. 76. The good that comes from indifference to worldly things, the good that comes from worship accompanied with *bhakti* and love, that good was given him as a gift by the Life-of-the-World, through His tender mercy. 77. With this bestowal of His favour, Rāma gave him a direct revelation of Himself. The joy, when God and His *bhakta* meet together, has never been adequately described.

#### RĀMA CHANGES BOYHOOD NAME OF NĀRĀYANA TO RĀMDĀS

78. Shri Rāma said to Māruti: "From now on his name is Rāmdās. His mission is to save the world. 79. The followers of Rāmdās will in the future increase all over the world. Men and women will be led to worship Māruti and study his life." 80. The life of the world then took off his ochre coloured garment, and gave it to Rāmdās, and said: "I install you with this. Carry on now your organization of disciple. 81. In order to make my father's promise true I endured the hardships of a forest life. The garments that I wore at that time I give to Rāmdās as a token of my favour." 82. As Rāma thus talked with them, these two servants of His fell at His feet. Then taking His leave, the two left His presence.

83. They bathed in the Gangā, [Godāvari] and in love fulfilled all other usual rites. Their thoughts were no where except on the Husband-of-Sitā.

84. The two then came to Tākali, a town to the East of Nāsik. Listen, you pious people, to what occurred at this place. 85. Hanumanta [Māruti] looked toward Rāmdās, and saw he was choked with emotion. Tears were flowing from his eyes, at which Māruti was amazed. 86. Rāmdās said to Hanumanta: "I cannot endure life at all without Rāma. Let us at once return to Panchavati, O Svāmi."

87. The loving Māruti recognized Rāmdās' state of mind, and both at once started to go back. They came to Rāma's temple and prostrated themselves on the ground. 88. The Husband-of-Sītā said to Rāmdās: "Why have you returned?" Rāmdās replied: "O Sadguru, I cannot endure separation from you. I feel sorry for you. 89. O Rāma, if I can only continually see Thy beautiful *saguna* form, my soul will have joy. Who will fulfil this desire of mine?" 90. Thus pleading with Rāma, Rāmdās composed a hymn of eight verses. I quote them in this Chapter, so full of love they are. Listen attentively to them, you pious ones.

( Verses not translated )

### RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO TĀKALĪ

91. The Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] replied to Rāmdās pleading : "You have conceived a desire which I, Lord-of-the-World, can fulfil. 92. Whenever you contemplate Me in love, I, Rāma, will meet you in visible *saguna* form ; I will rid you of the illusions of this worldly life, and point you to the easy path. 93. Go now with Māruti. No longer be sorrowful at heart. I shall always be close to your heart." 94. The Husband-of-Sītā then said to Māruti : "I have put Rāmdās in your charge. Whatever longings he may have, do you supply them."

95. The two servants of Rāma made Him a *namaskāra*, and taking one another by the hand, started on their way to return to Tākali. 96. Rāmdās had seen God in His *saguna* form, and he kept that image in the receptacle of his heart, and hearing the story of Rāma's life, he kept it in the receptacle of his ear. 97. Māruti had composed a drama in poetic form, containing the story of the Rāmāyana ; and he, having committed the whole to memory, sang its verses. 98. And Rāmdās would listen with earnest loving attention. At night *kīrtanas* took place, and people came to

listen. 99 Māruti would relate the story of Rāma, and Rāmdās would listen to it always. Rāmdās would then compose the story in Marāthi verses, and sing it in the *kirtanas* with great zest 100 His rendering of the story of Rāma was from God's blessing, and inspiration. As people listened, it pierced their hearts, and let them to exclaim "Such joy out of love even Brahmadeva and the other gods do not understand"

101 Rāmdās was seen by men, but Māruti was not visible to any one. The two conversed in private, and always manifested their intense love for one another

### MĀRUTI LEAVES RĀMDĀS

102 Many days thus passed. Finally, however, Māruti said to Rāmdās "I must be returning to Setubandha [Rāmeshvara] So now give me leave to go" 103. While the Son of the Wind was thus talking, tears of love flowed from Rāmdās' eyes. Illed with emotion, he exclaimed "Take me along with you 104 The Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rām] at Panchavati put me in your charge. You have certainly forgotten that, and have quickly decided on neglect" 105 Māruti replied to Rāmdās "Do not use those discouraging words. You are still the dear life of my life. Do not think of such a thing as duality between us 106 Rāma conquered Rāvana and established Bibhishana over the kingdom. At that time Rāma said to me 'I want you to protect him 107 Devils and demons may come and give trouble to Bibhishana' So, Rāma told me to protect Bibhishana 108 It is absolutely necessary therefore, for me to go, but do not be at all sorrowful. At the time of worship, when you remember me I will at once come and manifest myself 109 Go at once to the South, and behave like one possessed by a devil. But if any devout-minded person comes as a suppliant to you, give him your *anugraha*. 110 Do not go where men

go. 'Remain indifferent to wordly things. Influence people to worship God, by whatever method you are able.' 111. Māruti having thus instructed Rāmdās, the latter made him a loving *namaskāra*, and said: "I am always at your service. Do not forget me." 112. After this conversation the Son-of-the-Wind flew away and in less than a moment's time he arrived at Rāmeshvara.

### THE EVENTS AT TĀKALĪ

113. Rāmdās remained for some days at Tākali. He carried on daily *kirtanas*, and people came to listen. 114. Even pandits, and Brahmans, learned in the *Vedas* and its *shāstras* came there from Nāsik, and pious men and women listened constantly to these *kirtanas*. 115. He went around the town himself and begged his food, and some people brought and gave him the materials needed for cooking a feast. He, therefore, feasted Brahmans, and the feeding of the hungry was properly observed. 116. Seeing his unselfish spirit, every one began to honour him.

There was a Brahman householder in the town, who came as a suppliant to Rāmdās. 117. He was one possessing devotion, knowledge, and indifference-to-wordly-things. Rāmdās noticed his character, and at once gave the kindly hearted man his *anugraha* [ *mantra* admitting discipleship ]. 118. His name was Uddhava Gosāvi. He became most faithful in the service of his *svāmi*. He put aside all worldly desires and in love worshipped Rāma.

119. On one occasion Rāmdās, the God loving *bhakta* made with his own hands an image of Māruti, when suddenly the Son-of-the-Wind appeared in visible form, and said: "Install me here." 120. The leading Brahmans assembled, and every preparation was made. The idol was bathed with five nectars, with every expression of love. 121. The Brahmans repeated the *mantra* of installation,

and Māruti entered into the idol, and the idol appeared all bright to the great joy of all present. 122. Then worshiping the God with the repetition of Rudra, they clothed him, and adorned him with ornaments. They placed beautiful garlands of flower around his neck, to look on which brought joy to the soul. 123. They marked him with the *tilaka* in their love. They offered to him incense and lights and cooked food, and in love sang his praises. 124. Placing before the idol pāna-supāri and the gifts of money, they all circumambulated the idol. Rāmdās' heart was full of joy on seeing the Son-of-the-Wind. 125. Over a thousand Brahmans were feasted with various daintily-cooked foods. Pāna-supāri and gifts of money were made to them, and at night the *kirtana* began. 126. Rāmdās related the story of Māruti as related in the Ramayana. The night service continued until the fourth watch, and then the wave offering was made to the Son-of-the-Wind. 127. All were filled with the spirit of *bhakti*. Many people came to see and worship Māruti. After Rāmdās had finished the *kirtana*, he called Uddhava aside, and said: 128. "After your early morning bath regularly worship Māruti. Make your round of the town begging, and then feed the hungry. 129. Preach to the people in a way that will especially increase their *bhakti*. Do not trouble any one, and do not have in your hearts the snare of material desires." 130. Receiving this instruction, Uddhava bowed his head on Rāmdās' feet and exclaimed: "Your Greatness, your command is my authority. And you are the one through whom I am to accomplish this."

### RĀMDĀS DISAPPEARS INTO THE FORESTS

131. That night Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* in praise of Hari, and, as he was wont to do, repeated the names of God. Then when half the night was passed, Rāmdās got up, and went out. 132. Uddhava looked bitter and

thither, but could not see Samartha\* [Rāmdās]. People came to meet him, and asked for him. 133. Uddhava replied to them : "Samartha left here during the night and has gone. Some went to Panchavati to look for him, but he was not there." 134. Those men who were truly given to worship, continually sorrowed for him. In the meanwhile they worshipped Māruti, and waited for Rāmdās to appear.

### RĀMDĀS' LIFE IN THE FORESTS

135. Turning now to Rāmdās, he remembered what Māruti had said to him, and so turned his steps southward, living in the dense forests. 136. If he happened to find any wild fruit, he would eat it at the noon hour. He even ate the leaves of the bitter *nimba* tree, having gained the victory over his tongue. 137. He acted as if he were possessed by a demon. He felt no distinction between the honour or dishonour paid to him. He remained in the forest at night, and felt no fear. 138. Tigers wolves, and bears in large numbers accompanied Rāmdās. They dropped all mutual enmity, and listened to Rāmdās' loud repeating of the names of God. 139. Aside from his waist cord and clout he wore no clothing and yet neither heat nor cold harmed him in the least, because of his utter indifference to material comforts. 140. He said to himself : "If I die, so let it be. But I want the favour of God-Supreme." He avoided places where man's footsteps were found. 141. It was a great joy, however, for him to see different sacred places and divinities. If he found some beautiful spot, he would remain there for a night. 142. Then in the early morning, without letting any one know, he would rise, and continue his journey.

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\* Samartha meaning powerful, great, mighty, was a name given to Rāmdās as a title, "Your Greatness, Your Highness, etc." Rāmdās, Dāsa and Samartha are the names by which he is known.

Before long he arrived at Jafri, and there saw the Husband-of-Milki (Khandib) 143. He next arrived at Moreshvara and there he worshipped Ganesha. Furthermore he saw the mountain peak called Sankar, and quickly climbed it 144. He enjoyed hearing wild animals around him. He had for his mattress this vast world. For his covering he had the sky. There was nothing to blinder than simple life.

145 He conceived the desire of going to the Krishna river. He journeyed about it, because he enjoyed it. His mind was in a continual state of joy. 146 As he walked along, he would repeat to himself the story of Rama. The only listener was Rama in Himself. Who gives better slaps to His beloved? 147. The delight of Rama was the object of his contemplation. It was Rama who taught him, Rama when he slept, Rama in his waking moment, Rama in his dreams, and in his dreamless sleep. He had no other thought, but Rama. 148 Said he to himself "Rama is my mother and father. Shri Rama is my own dear uncle. He is my near relative, sister and brother. I have no one, but Rama. 149 Shri Rama is my family Guru, Shri Rama is my supreme guru, He will take me to the other side of the limitless ocean of this material life. 150 Shri Rama is my tribal and family line, Rama is my family duty. I have truly no one else, but Him, just as an infant has no one, but its mother." 151 This sang Rāmdev in play-awaking words, and the Lord-of-Ayodhya [Rama] listened attentively, but unseen.

152 While thus singing of Rama's deeds, Brunartha arrived at Jarindā. There was here an old temple of Hanumāna [Maruti]. Rāmdev saw it with delight 153. With true devotion Rāmdev worshipped him, and the Son-of-the-Wind was pleased. Said he to Rāmdev, "I will carry to an uninterrupted end the results of your devotion."

154. Then Rāmdās composed a verse, which I am glad to quote in this book. Let the pious listen to it, for it will destroy their doubts.

When the King of Kings [Rāma] went to His own place [died], He appointed Hanumāna to the duty of protecting. So He always appeared when Rāmdās needed Him. If any evil person troubled Rāmdās, He would put aside his contemplation, and rush to his help.

155. Rāmdās continued his journey from there in obedience to Māruti's wish, and in his thoughts and contemplation there was nothing but Rāma. 156. Rāmdās lived on fruit and leaves, a visible *avatāra* of God. He had a beautiful body, with a fine lust, giving pleasure to one looking at him. 157. He ate what he enjoyed, hence his body was strong. So, although he wandered about in the forests day and night, he was never in the least wearied.

158. He was in the company of tigers and wolves. Bears and monkeys played around him. All were moved by the spirit of Rāma, and all enmity was forgotten. 159. The indifference of Rāmdās to desires made him kick with disdain Riddhi and Siddhi [Personification-of-Accomplishments]. Even when he heard of the joys of Heaven, he was disgusted with them. 160. His love was in the worship of Rāma. He despised the thought of Vaikuntha [Vishnu's Heaven] and Kailās [Shiva's Heaven]. He waved off as an offering over the feet of his *sadguru* the four kinds of deliverances.

161. In this way this Brahmachārī [Young chaste student] worshipped with enthusiasm and love. He was an *avatāra* in human form, in order to save the world. 162. All creatures were alike to him. He never spoke of one as small, another as large. He was full of desire to meet with saint, and the story of Rāma delighted him.

## RĀMDĀS ARRIVES AT MĀHULĪ.

163. Thus journeying along, Rāmdās arrived at Māhull [Junction of the Krishnā and Venyā rivers] In this sacred place he performed his bathing, and in his contemplation worshipped Māruti. 164. And Māruti met with Rāmdās in His visible form, giving great joy to his heart. Said he to Māruti: "I have no one to protect me, but Thou O Mercy-in-visible-form." 165. Māruti, the-son-of-the Wind, said to Rāmdās: "Now I want you to repeat the *mantra* of thirteen syllables with the full concentration of your mind. 166. After you have repeated it thirtyfive million times, Rāma will appear to you in person. In accordance with His wish compose books in Marāthi. 167. It should conform to the Bhāgavata Purāna. It should gather into it the meaning of the Vedas, so that by the mere listening to it the feeling of devotion may be aroused."

168. Thus instructing Rāmdās, Māruti vanished out of sight, and Rāmdās wandered about in the region around Māhull in its forests. 169. He sometimes appeared near a town having a tiger with him, seeing which the people would run away, trembling with fear. 170. Boys, taking stones in their hands, would throw them at him, shouting: "The crazy fellow has come," and then they would run away, in all directions. 171. Thus having abandoned the hunts of men, this Vaishnava *bhakta* lived in an unusual way in the forest, but to Rāmdās' sight it meant peace. 172. Said he: "This is a suitable place for religious rites. I would remain here, always." Thus saying, this God-loving *bhakta* constantly carried on there the worship of Rāma. 173. The Husband-of-Sitā lovingly dwelt in his thoughts, his mind and his heart. In his dreams, his dreamless sleep and his waking hours there was nothing, but Rāma. 174. To people he seemed a crazy man, but possessed infinite mental ability. He did not let

any one know of it, but it could not be hidden. 175. Supposing a *parisa* [ touch-stone ] were lying in a jungle, it would seem to all an ordinary pebble. But if a horse shoe came in contact with it, it would at once naturally turn to gold. 176. In consequence if people would say : "There is a touch-stone somewhere here." So they would gather mere pebbles and apply them to horse-shoes. But no change taking place, their laboured efforts would be in-vain. 177. Or just as a touch-stone in a dream, so is a saint among men. The devout recognize him, but to ordinary people he seems a crazy man.

178. Rāmdās retired alone into the jungle and began his religious rites. Bringing Shri Rāma's image into his mind, he repeated the *mantra* day, and night. 179. He repeated the *mantra* of thirteen syllables, the cream of all *mantras*. Just as Shuka, the great Yogi, repeated his *mantras* in purity of heart, so did Rāmdās. 180. Abandoning all desire for even the highest form of Deliverance [ Sāyujya ], abandoning all care of his body, he worshipped Rāma with love, for he cared for no one else. 181. His mind forgot all about hunger and thirst. Inactivity and sleep ran away from him. Rāma filled his soul, and he no longer had the least bodily consciousness. 182. His love was in worshipping Rāma. His body assumed a lustre. The God Indra even began to fear, lest Rāmdās should take his title away from him. 183. And so he said to his *guru* : "The Kāla of the Kaliyuga is intolerable. Who is he, who in the world of mortals is performing austerities ? Tell me, my Lord." 184. The Son-of-Angira replied : "Hanumanta has descended as an *avatāra* to save the world, and he in his love, is worshipping. 185. Indra was frightened by this, and said : "If he is making Vishnu the object of his worship, he will ask Him for my place and title. So I shall place a hindrance in his way."

186. The true relator of the next chapter is the Husband-of-Rukmini [ Krishna ]. Through His blessing Mahipati is describing the lives of the saints. 187. Svasti. This book is the Santavijaya. By merely listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving pious *bhakta*s listen. This is the second delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

### MAHIPATI'S PRAYER

1. Victory. Victory to Thee Shri Hari, Dweller on the bank of the Bhīmā. Thou art the brother of the helpless, and their advocate. Thou didst come to the home of Pundalika, and founded the city of Pandhari. 2. Simple-minded *bhakta*s have wishes, and Thou dost fulfil them. The time does not matter to Thee, because Thou art merciful--to-the-lowly. 3. When a *bhakta* with love begins to worship Thee, his care is then Thy concern. Thou dost keep many adversities away from him, and finally bringest him to the Home-of-Final-Deliverance. 4. The saints have thus described Thy power, and so, with that same hope in my heart, I express my prayer to Thee in many forms, O Husband-of-Rukmini, O Pānduranga. 5. O Lotus-eyed one, it is Thou who art relating the acts of Thy servant. I am a dull minded person. My own mind bears witness to this. 6. But trusting in Thee, O God, I have begun this book. Carry it to completion by Thy power. I have no other wish, but this. 7. If Thou bestowest Thy favour, a dumb person might repeat the Vedas. The touchstone [*parisa*] may be found on a stony path. Thy power has been described by the saints. 8. By Thy will O *sadguru*, a babul tree can become a Wish tree. When clouds in the sky are dropping rain, they could sprinkle nectar. 9. Such is Thy almighty power, O husband-of-Rukmini. Before Thee my wish is a very small thing. So now give me inspiration accompanied with love. This is all that Mahipati is asking for.

### INDRA SENDS MOHINI TO TEMPT RĀMDĀS

10. In the last chapter we have had the intensely interesting story of Rāmdās being the *avatāra* of Māruti,

the noblest of Brahmachāris [the chaste student], and a mine of *bhakti* and knowledge. 11. His enduring ornaments were forgiveness, peace of mind and mercy. He was free from all desires, and lived always in a forest. 12. Riddhi and Siddhi [Accomplishments personified] were ready at his feet, but his heart was not set upon them. He despised the thought even of joys of Heaven, and he had no longing even for Final Deliverance. 13. He felt joy in no other thought than that of the worship of Rāma. He delighted in contemplating Māruti and Rāma. 14. Seeing this condition of Rāmdās' mind, Indra's mind became fearful. Said he : "He will by his worship gain the favour of the Husband-of-Lakshmi [Vishnu], and will demand of Him my place and title." 15. Recognizing this possibility, Indra, consulted with the gods saying : "In the world of mortals a hero among men has become an aratīra of Māruti. 16. In all this Kaliyuga there is no yogī equal to him. The Recliner-on-Serpent-Shesha [Vishnu] will take away from us our places and titles and give them to him." 17. To this speech of Indra's the gods at once replied : "In order to destroy the effect of his austerities send Mohini at once. 18. In the Kritayuga the Mighty Vishnu's favour was obtained by contemplation. In the Tretā Yuga Krishna was rendered pleased by repetitions of *mantras* and sacrifices. 19. In the Dvāpāra Yuga it was by worship through proper rites that Hrishikeshī [Vishnu] was pleased, and now in the Kali Yuga the Dweller-in-Heaven [Vishnu] becomes favorable by the repeating of His names. 20. Therefore, His *bhakta* Rāmdās is ever keeping in his mind the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] worshipping Him day and night, and always without desires. 21. Therefore, listen, O King-of-Heaven [Indra], he will certainly take away from us our places and titles ; therefore, send at once some hindrance in the way of his worship. 22. The primal Māyā, Mohini, has

séduced many great *munis*. It took but a movement for her to destroy the value of the austerities of the son of Gādhi and return. 23. Get her ready, and send her to the land of the mortals, and let her devise some scheme by which to seduce the heart of Rāmdās.” 24. To these suggestions of the gods, Indra gave his assent. He, therefore, said to Mohini : “You have been able to seduce the Three Worlds. 25. In that same manner seduce Rāmdās, and make him subject to you”. And in giving this command to Mohini Indra felt great joy. 26. She adorned herself. She took Cupid along with her in his visible form. Spring-time went before her, and made the forest beautiful. 27. Mohini then followed along with Cupid. She began by singing sweetly in the forest, while the gods in their chariots of light hovered over the scene and watched. 28. In the mean time Rāmdās was worshipping Rāma in the midst of a dense forest. *Kāma* [lust] filled his heart, and he had no consciousness of body whatever. 29. When Cupid saw Rāmdās, he was alarmed. That deceitful fellow remembered some past events, and remarked : “Shiva was angry with me. 30. He opened his third eye, and burned me to ashes. I feel a certainty in my heart that the same thing will take place at this time. 31. Māruti, the chaste Brahmachārī, *avatāra* of Shiva, is lovingly protecting Rāmdās in many ways. 32. If I enter into his heart, I shall, in a single moment, be burned to ashes.” With this fear in his mind, Cupid sat still. 33. But lust cannot come near him in whose heart and mouth Rāma is, for Rāma is the resting place for every heart, and He gives His love to His servants. 34. Springtime had adorned the forest. The forest was beautiful with flower and fruit, and when Samartha saw all this, he understood its inner purpose. 35. “Indra has surely sought to put hindrance in my way,” thought Rāmdās, and then holding his mind to peaceful thoughts, he composed words of blessing.

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claimed: 'Blessed, blessed,' and showered flowers upon him.

48. The Son-of-Angirā said to Indra : " Your attempts at hindrance are of no avail before a *bhakta* of Vishnu, Rāmdās is a *Vaishnava*, a full *avatāra* of Māruti. 49. This same thing occurred when Nārāyana was worshipping at Badrikāshrama. Indra attempted to hinder him, but his heart was unmoved." 50. Thus expressing themselves on this occasion, the gods returned to their abodes. The temptress Mohini, ashamed of her failure, reentered her heavenly home.

#### MĀRUTI AGAIN REVEALS HIMSELF TO RĀMDĀS

51. Following the above event, Samartha [ Rāmdās ] began his contemplation of Māruti. As he brought Māruti to his mind in less than a moment He arrived. 52. Rāmdās tightly embraced the feet of the slave of Rāma [Māruti]. In their mutual embrace, the idea of their duality disappeared. 53. In the two thus together, one seemed the body, and the other the soul. Or the one the ear, and the other the listening. There was no real difference whatever. 54. Or as there is no difference between the eye and the divinity [ the object of sight ], or between the nose and the one smelling, or as there is no difference between the tongue and the expression of thought, so there was no difference between the two. 55. So Rāmdās and Māruti were indifferentiated in their unity, and as *avatāras* had descended to this earth for its salvation. 56. Rāmdās told Māruti how Mohini had attempted to harm him. Māruti replied : " Blessed, blessed are you. May Rāma continue to bless you." 57. After Rāmdās had worshipped Māruti, the two feasted on the wild fruit. Both were supremely happy, engrossed in the worship of Rāma. 58. Māruti then took leave of Rāmdās and vanished out of sight.

#### RAMDAS SEEKS A REVELATION OF RĀMA

Let saints now listen with reverence to what happened after the above events. 59. Rāmdās continued his

austerities in the forests along the banks of the Krishnā river. He lived on bulbs and roots, and entirely rejected cooked food. 60. He held in control every sense organ, and concentrated his mind on one thing. He refused sleep and all inactivity, and continually thought of Rāma. 61. In his walking moments, in his dreams, and in his dreamless state, he thought only of Rāma. Twelve years passed in this way, and yet Rāmdās had no direct vision of Rāma. 62. In contemplating Māruti he had a revelation of Him thrice a day, but he had no direct revelation of Rāma in his *saguna* form. 63. He counted the number of times he had repeated the *mantra* of thirteen syllables, and he found he had reached thirtyfive million. Māruti then said to Rāmdās : 64 "Now fill your heart with love and continue to plead with Rāma. That will be sufficient to bring about the wish of your heart. Do not attempt other means. 65. Among all the varied means, such as repetition of *mantras*, austerities, rites, ceremonies, sacrifices and pilgrimages, the supreme means is pleading with God with a repentant heart. 66 When the *Vaishnava bhakta* in his distress called on Vishnu to come to his help, God-Supreme [ Vishnu ] took pity on him and descended as an *avatāra*. 67. He recognised the pleading of his *bhakta*. He Who-reclines-on-the-serpent Shesha [ Vishnu ] was pleased with him and not waiting for further time or occasion, He quickly appeared in his *saguna* form. 68 So, listen, Rāmdās. In love plead with Rāma. He will, of his own accord, become *saguna*, of this I am fully convinced." 69. Thus Māruti explained with love the importance of *saguna* worship, and vanished out of sight. Samartha accepted this form of worship, and composed pleading verses called *ashtaka*.

( *Ashtakas* not translated )

70. And as Rāmdās, alone in the forest, composed these pleading verses, the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] listened to

them in love. 71. Just as a mother rushes to the cradle when her infant cries, just so, the Lord-of-Ayodhyā manifested Himself directly, and in His *saguna* form. 72. Jewels glittered in His crown as if millions of suns had just arisen. In his ears hung earrings in the form of crocodiles, and beautiful. 73. His beautiful face was shining. Around his neck was glittering the beautiful *kaustubha* jewel. His hands extended to his knees. Around his waist was the yellow robe. 74. He who was the object of contemplation by Sanaka and others, He, Whom Shiva worshipped, held a bow and arrow in His hand, and His personal appearance was the expression of beauty. 75. His lotus eyes were very large, around His neck was the *vaijayanti* garland of jewels. On His feet sparkled the *vānkī* and *vāle* ornaments. He was smiling, and he had the lustre of a dark blue cloud. 76. His reputation is that of the Savior-of-the-sinner. The Divine Sītā was seen standing at His left. As soon as Rāmdās saw them, he fell at their feet. 77. Although there was no real separation between God and His *bhakta*, yet the two had not met for many days. So with hearts full of emotion, they fell on one another's necks. 78. As the feeling of reverence and the feeling of loving devotion are the same, as a worshipper and his daily practice are the same, so Rāma and His *bhakta* embraced one another as one. 79. Or as Life and life-giving nectar are not different, as sugar and sweetness are not different, as the sun and brightness are not different, but are united in one another. 80. As the lotus and the sun's rays, as mother and her infant, as the moon and the longing for it by the chakor bird, what lack of joy could then be in their union? 81. So the meeting of the two, Rāma and Rāmdās, taking place after many days, God and His *bhakta* could not cease their embrace. The Lord-of-the-world then thought to Himself: 82. "If Rāmdās and I become one in essence, then who will there be to long-

for me, and then there will be no one to whom to whisper my secrets. 83. Who will there be to call for my help in times of dire distress? Who will cry: 'Rush to my help O God,' and to whom shall I be able to give a *saguna* revelation of myself. 84. Who will instal a *saguna* image of myself? Who will sing of my deeds, and then how can the salvation of the world take place?" 85. With this thought in His mind, He turned, God and His *bhakta*, back into two persons, for if the two became one, how could a seeker attain its supreme-spiritual-riches? 86. So, for the good of the world God and His *bhakta* became separate. Ceasing therefore, His embrace, He continued to caress His servant. 87. And as Shri Rāma's lotus hand passed over Rāmdās' face a flood of love came into Rāmdās' heart. 88. And he sat before God joyfully composing pity producing words. There is an *abhangā* connected with that event. One should make an effort to listen to it.

1. I am a transgressor, a transgressor. My heart is not fixed.
2. My sins are without number. Who is there who can number them?
3. Thou hast in every way protected me, Thou hast cared for me, Thy lowly one.
4. Even though my deeds have been evil, I, Rāmdās, prostrate myself before Thee.

89. Hearing these words of His *bhakta*, Rāma replied: "Whatever blessing you ask of me, that I will certainly give you." 90. Rāmdās answered: "May my heart never forget Thee. Give me continual love in my heart for the singing of Thy praise. 91. Just as Shiva repented, and repeated Thy names, so may I by day and night have Thy names on my lips. 92. If I have any different wish, I swear by Thee that I have not." Hearing these words of His servant, Rāma was pleased. 93. Shri Rāma said: "My

dear *bhakta*, I am now to vanish out of your sight." Rāmdās replied: "If I am in distress, who will be my protector?" 94. Hearing this, the Merciful-to-the-lowly replied: "I am with you always. I take with me the disk and the club, and will punish the evil ones, and the wicked demons. 95. I gave them Final Deliverance at the end, even to those who treated Me evilly, but for those who persecute my *bhaktas*, there is no escape from Hell. 96. In no way should anyone give trouble to *Vaishnava bhaktas* who are my *bhaktas*. If they do, there will be enmity between us. They cannot escape my anger. 97. The Kauravas did no injustice to Me, but because they hated the Pāndavas, I destroyed them. 98. I am *nirguna* (without qualities), without form, without acts, and indifferent to the various forms of worship, but in order to be the advocate of my *bhaktas* like you, I become *saguna* and assume human form. 99. For the sake of Brahmadeva I became a fish and destroyed Shankhāsura. In order to give nectar to the gods, I became the tortoise *avatāra*. 100. Hiranyaksha gave trouble to the world, and by it all living things were suffering. For that occasion I became a boar *avatāra* (Boar), and by my power killed the demons. 101. When Hiranyakashyapu persecuted my *bhakta* Pralhāda, I manifested myself in the pillar, and tearing Hiranyakashyapu to pieces, I quickly rescued my servant. 102. In order to be Indra's advocate, I became the Vāmana *avatāra*, and depriving Bali of all his property, became his door-keeper. 103. In order to be the advocate of Renukā, I became Bhārgava, and freeing the world of all Kshatriyas, I gave it as a gift to the Earth-gods [Brahmans]. 104. When Rāvana was giving intolerable trouble, I became an *avatāra* in the line of Sun-descendents. I killed the ten headed monster, and freed the gods by my power. 105. Through the womb of Devakī and Vasudev, I became the Krishna *avatāra*. I protected the Pāndavas in many ways. How

impossible to relate all the details ? 106. Hearing of the unhappy conditions in the Kaliyuga, I, Rāma, became the Buddha *avatāra*. But when distress falls on my *bhaktas*, I feel the weight of it, and in answer talk in love." 107. Thus speaking, Rāma placed his hand on Rāmdās' head, and the Soul-of-the-Universe communicated to him his divine and secret knowledge. 108. By those nectar words the heart of Rāmdās came to a state of peace. Rāmdās then placed his head on Rāma's feet, and felt his heart full of love. 109. Then Rāma, rising up, gave his command to Rāmdās to plan how to save this world. He said : 110. "Live now near a town, and eat food obtained by begging. And if any pious minded person comes as a suppliant to you, give him your *mālā* as sign of your favour." 111. Saying these words to Rāmdās, the Life-of-the-world vanished out of sight.

In the development of the next chapter I desire the saints to give me their attention. 112. Mahipati is describing the lives of the saints, because of the assurance given him by Digambara [Krishna]. Who lives by the bank of the Bhīmā, Whose hands are akimbo. 113. Svasti. This book is the Santavijaya. By the mere listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the god-loving, wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the third delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EAGERNESS OF SAINTS TO LISTEN TO STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1. Just as ants swarm with eagerness on a pile of sugar, so hearers stand attentive to the lives of the saints. 2. Or just as jewel-experts rush to the place where a box of jewels lies, so God-loving *bhaktas* have assembled at this time to listen. 3. Or as when the ocean was churned, and eyes rested finally on the pure nectar, crowds of gods sat around anxious to drink it. 4. Or as when in the forest of Naimisha, Sūta was relating the Purānic stories, Shaunaka and other *Munis* sat around intent on listening. 5. So you, wise *bhaktas*, are listening to my uncouth words, because you regard the story of the lives of the saints as the chief means of purification of the heart.

### PEOPLE THINK RĀMDĀS A CRAZY MAN

6. In the last delightful chapter we saw Rāmdās speaking to Rāma in loving tender words, and how the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] met with him, having assumed a *saguna* form, 7. Rāma gave him his blessing [in the form of a *mantra*] and commanded him to save those men who were pious and God-loving.

8. Following this event, Rāmdās continued his worship in the forests by the banks of the Krishnā river. Wild animals of the forest and birds of the trees were always with him. 9. The sky was his pavilion. The earth was his vast seat. Here he thought of Rāma in his love, and here was his heart's delight. 10. He used to rise early in the morning, and go into the town to beg, shouting out: 'Victory to Rāma.' And then he would hurry along, as if possessed with a devil. 11. From ten or so houses

pious people would give him some trifling gift of food, and then the giver of salvation [Rāmdās] would run away from there 12. Some would cry out. "The crazy man has come" Others exclaimed "He is one indifferent to worldly things. Even if he was asked his town or name, he makes no reply" 13 After experiencing such treatment from men, he would retire to the forest, perform his bath, and then do his cooking Listen how he did it 14 Where there was water near by, he would light a fire, then knead the flour on a rock, and bake the cakes on leaves, placed over the coals of fire 15 Having thus prepared his meal, he meditated on Rāma, and as he made his offering the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma] would present himself 16 Seeing the pure sincerity of his *bhakta*, God would assume His *saguna* form, the extraordinary sweetness of which even none of the gods know. 17 He who dwells on the Ocean of-Milk He who e devoted slave is Lakshmi, even He, Lord of the heart, sat eating the cakes cooked on leaves This seems to me very strange 18 He, the Supreme Vishnu, of dark complexion, who cares for this universe, He ate such common food without distaste, because He is Merciful to-the-Lowly 19 The Life-of-the-World was enticed by His *bhakta* otherwise, what reason could He have had for doing so? Indra invited Him to drink nectar 20. But Shripati did not go He, in His love for Rāmdās, ate even the dry cakes cooked on leaves The gods sitting in the Pushpal a chariot-of-light, looked on the scene, wishing for, but not receiving, the favor of a portion 21 Thus God and His *bhakta* ate until their appetite was satisfied For the cleansing of his mouth Rāmdās gave him some *tulasī* leaves with which He was delighted 22 Having thus comforted His servant, God vanished from sight, or shall I say rather that the Life of the-World made His happy abode in the heart of His *bhakta*?

## KING SHIVĀJI GOES TO MEET RĀMDĀS

23. Samartha [ Rāmdās ] through inspiration now began with the composing of poetry. He took pen and ink, and wrote on the *palasa* leaves. 24. After writing his verses, Samartha would carefully read them over, and Rāma, in the form of birds and wild animals, listened with pleasure to them. 25. When it was evening, he would take the leaves on which he had written, and throw them into the water of the Krishnā river. In its stream they would float away.

26. While Samartha was thus living in the great forest after his usual manner, suddenly King Shivāji arrived there on a hunting expedition. 27. Up to the third watch of the day, however, he had been unable to shoot any game. The king was exhausted from the intense heat of the day, and his attendants became scattered hither and thither. 28. From fear of the king all the beasts had come for protection to Samartha. They had put aside all enmity between themselves, and were wandering about without fear. 29. Suddenly, however, the king in his hunt for game came to that place. And there he saw a great crowd of animals. 30. Tigers, wolves, bears, leopards, great monkeys, dogs, rabbits, and little monkeys gathered together and were playing with fearless minds. 31. Among them the king saw the great man, and thoroughly astonished, he exclaimed : "Blessed is this day." 32. The king in his astonished mind said : "He surely is not a man. He must be God in part." Such was his decision. 33. To go at once near Rāmdās seemed very dangerous, because of his fear of these wild beasts, and so, from a distance he prostrated himself on the ground with feelings of reverence. 34. The king now said to his Minister : "Let my soldiers cross to the other side of the river. I wish to remain here alone." And so he sat there

for a few ghatikās. 35. The king had a very great wish to go near Rāmdās at once, but he was afraid of the tigers and wolves. And so, he did not come near Rāmdās. 36. While in this anxious state of mind, the sun had begun to set, and so, the king with his soldiers went back to his camp. 37. But his mind was in a disturbed state. Thought he: "When shall I meet my dear *guru*? If my good fortune is rising, then only shall I succeed in meeting with him." 38. Such were the troubled thoughts of the king. He was unable to enjoy any mode of entertainment. He was unable to sleep that night. But finally the sun arose.

#### THE KING FINDS RĀMDĀS' VERSES ON FLOATING LEAVES

39. The king performed his early morning bath, and as usual repeated the names of God. He took a light breakfast, and then started on his way. 40. He said to his Minister: "I have no mind to hunt to-day. I want a meeting with that great man. There is no need of many attendants." 41. So the king started on alone, and rode rapidly. He had no music sounding, and soon reached the region of the Krishna river. 42. Suddenly he saw Samartha with eyes closed, sitting worshipping Rāma. The king looked at him from a distance, and prostrated himself on the ground before him. 43. He would have gone at once near Rāmdās, but he was afraid of the great tigers. He would not fire bolts at them, for fear that it would anger the holy man. 44. Just as a child has the protection of its mother, so Rāmdās cared for these wild beasts. "If I should cause them harm, he will curse me." 45. Thus thinking, the king sat still for one watch of the day. Then said he to himself: "When it will please God to favor me, he will fulfil my heart's longing." 46. Not seeing any way to accomplish his purpose of meeting with Rāmdās, he returned to the bank of the Krishna.

A 'strange and seemingly impossible thing had occurred,' seen by the king's secretary. 47. He had noticed some *palasa* leaves floating along the edge of the Krishnā river. He could see writing upon them. He put out his hand and drew them out. 48. He read the writing, and the king saw him do so. Quietly sitting, the king then listened to his reading. They seemed words of blessing. 49. Among them there were several forms of *abhangas*. As the king listened, he felt repentant, and tears of love flowed. That indeed was a rich blessing. 50. There were on the leaves words, in both, poetry and prose. There were very many *shlokas* and *ashtakas*, which, when the king read, he felt great satisfaction. 51. Then mounting his horse, he returned with his attendants to Sātārā. Here the king gave his command to the copyist who could write the best. 52. He gave him the best of paper, and had him make a copy, and as he read them over again and again, he found he did not grow weary of them. 53. As he himself read the *abhangas*, he discovered the name of Samartha, but he did not discover the region where he was born, nor the name of his town. 54. He understood, however, that the author of the verses was a worshipper of God, and a vaishnava *bhakta*. His writings appeared to be on the authority of the *Vedas* and *Shāstras*. 55. For this reason he thought he should go as a suppliant to him, in order that he might be saved in his crossing the sea of this worldly existence. "If I have good deeds laid up in a former birth, I shall succeed in meeting him. 56. At the first sight of the great man, I had a suspicion. He is the great man. But I am unable to make out what order he belonged to. 57. There are many kinds of seekers, and there are many different beliefs. They worship many different divinities. Some perform low forms of austerities, and do not fail to go to Hell. 58. Some are Brahmans, strict in their duties. They perform sacrifices and make offerings. By this they gain Heaven,

but when their good deeds are exhausted, they have to go to Hell. 59. There are some with long matted hair. Others are Sanyāsis. Some practise penance with their hands held up; but as these are unable to avoid lust and anger, they cannot have the rest of Final Deliverance 60. There are some who put on black clothes, but hate God. They stir up controversy, but Shri Hari separates Himself from them. 61. Some hold in their breath, and think they can deceive Kāla, but they do not understand the perishableness of the body, and they miss meeting with the Life-of-the-World. 62. Some practice Vāyūma, and make the great accomplishments [siddhis] favorable, and pronounce a curse, and commute the same in order to get respect in the world.

63. Rāmdās is not like them. He is a true *bhakta* of God. Possessed with *bhakti*, knowledge, and indifference-to-worldly things, his love is on the *siguna* God. 64. As one reads his *abhanga*s, the state of his heart becomes revealed. If my good deeds are of the true kind, I will be able to worship at his feet." 65. With this purpose in his mind, the king went every day to worship Rāmdās. He would also step into the water of the Krishna, and draw out the *palasa* leaves. 66. He then would take them at once to the copyist, and have him make a copy. He would then sit reading the verses with fixed attention. 67. Then when it was morning, he would again go with the hope of meeting Rāmdās. He lost his desire for kingship and for ruling. So that it became a matter of concern to the Ministers.

#### PEOPLE THINK THE KING BEWITCHED

68. People now began to gossip: "The king's mind is affected. The ascetic who is performing austorities has made him crazy. 69. He has abandoned horseback riding and hunting. He gives no thought to the government

of the kingdom. He rises early every morning, and goes to meet him ( the crazy man ).”

70. The people decidedly said : “The actions of the great man are wicked. He has made the tigers and wolves crazy. He has bewitched the big and the little monkeys.” 71. So some said : “He knows the *mantras* by which to bewitch. He has turned men into wild beasts, and caused them to wander in the forests. 72. If he is able to make wild beasts crazy, why should he not be able to make man crazy ? He has turned our king’s head. The outlook is not good. 73. The king is the only son of his mother, and the protector of many lives. What has happened to his Fate we do not know.” 74. Thus the three kinds of people gossiped back and forth. The eight Ministers became terribly concerned, as they saw the king’s actions. 75. Finally the Vedic, and the Puranic Brahmans and the eight Ministers came together, and made bold to speak to the king, as follows : 76. “The burden of the kingdom is upon you. It is for you to carry on the duties of the *Kshatriyas*. So you should not continually go to see that great man.” 77. The Pandits remarked : “Hear, O king, you have become fond of his poetry. But whatever interests you in it, we can show you the same in Sanskrit books. 78. To cast aside the words of Vyāsa, and spend your time in reading through the verses of one composing in Marāthi, seems to us an unworthy thing for you to do. 79. Your kingly duty is, supposing some good man came to your palace, to make him pleased with your gift of money, but you should not go after him. 80. But if you allow yourself to fall in love with him, he will make you like himself. We tell this to you for your good, that you, O King, may beware, what you do.” 81. The pandits’ talk to him created confusion in the king’s mind. He would make no reply. Remaining dumb, he would leave the

room. 82. When an elephant walks along the king's highways, dogs bark fiercely, but that does not make him stop. He walks steadily along. 83. Or as the ocean roared in derision at the Muni Agasti, but he, without the least fear, sat in contemplation through self-confidence. 84. So the king listened to the advice of the pandits and Ministers but felt no unkind thoughts in his mind, because, he was a *bhakta* of his *sadguru*.

85. (One morning) the king mounted on his horse, and alone started for the forest. In his heart he had the longing for a sight of his *sadguru*. 86. When he arrived at the bank of the Krishna, he gave his command to his attendants to wander along the stream, and find other inscribed leaves. 87. "I am going at once to meet my *arathi*. No one is to go with me." In obedience to his command, his servants remained at a distance.

#### THE KING MEETS RĀMDĀS

88. The king came before Samartha, and began looking closely at his form, suddenly a most extraordinary event occurred. Listen to it, you pious *bhaktas*. 89. He saw Mūruti revealing Himself to the sight, and Rāmdās worshipping Him. But as he was not able to behold the dazzling light, the king's eyes had to close. 90. It was the third watch of the day, and King Shivāji was amazed. When he did open his eyes, he saw no one but Rāmdās. 91. Then joining his hands, palm to palm, before Rāmdās, he stood there, tears of joy flowing from his eyes, as he gazed into the face of his *srīmu*.

92. Samartha looked at him and thought: "He has been back and forth many times." Then the kindly man called the king to come near him, for, he recognized his purity of heart. 93. Seeing this, the King's heart was full of joy. He prostrated himself on the ground, and continuing his prostrations, he approached Rāmdās with joy in his

heart. 94. As he came close to Rāmdās, his throat was choked with emotion, caused by repentance. He exclaimed : "I have fallen into the difficulties of this worldly existence. Forgive me." 95. Seeing the condition of the king's mind, the *sadguru* felt deep sympathy for him, and giving him his hand of assurance said : "Rise, O king." 96. Hearing these assuring words, the king's heart felt great joy. With hands joined together, palm to palm, he stood before Rāmdās and pleaded as follows :

97. "O Samartha, I am in great agony from the three afflictions that trouble mankind. I am drowning in the ocean of this worldly existence. Draw me, Sir, out without fail, O Protector-of-the-Helpless, dear Guru. 98. If one has performed good deeds, made pilgrimages, and without selfish thought of gain has performed sacrifices, and made offerings, and even may have served the saints, he may obtain the privilege of worshipping a *sadguru*'s feet. 99. Such are the successive outcomes of good deeds, but I have not to my credit a single one of them. On the contrary, I have committed millions of sins. Forgive me. 100. Dvaipāyana was, as it were, a mass of good deeds. Nārada gave him his *mantra* as his blessing, and also to Vālhā [Vālmiki] that evil murderer. Did he neglect him (because he was cruel)? 101. O *Sadguru* dear, O Saviour-of-the-Fallen, O Thou, whose feet give assurance of salvation, place Thy assuring hand on my head, and let me be in the shadow of Thy grace."

102. To this Samartha replied : "On your shoulder is the Government of this kingdom. There is unceasing enmity between worldly living and the desire for the supreme-spiritual-riches. 103. To become the disciple of a *sadguru*, it is necessary to change your habits. Your kingdom is prosperous. You are fated to enjoy it". 104. Hearing this, the king made him a *namskāra* and said : "All

this kingdom belongs to my *Stāmī*. I am ready to obey in every way."

105. Samartha answered : " Listen to my words. If you associate with one 'possessed with a devil', all evil-minded people will laugh at you, and call you a veriest fool. 106. In the presence of people of high rank you will naturally feel ashamed to prostrate before me. Under such conditions how will you be able to accomplish your purpose of attaining the supreme-spiritual-riches ? Give thought to this. 107. If you are openly proud of connection with me, blame will fall on your head. Therefore, O King, I will explain to you your duty. Listen, I will tell you. 108. There are other great men from whom you may listen to Purānic stories and *kirtanas*, and who wear clothes and ornaments. Choose from among these some worthy one, and go as a suppliant to him. 109. Those, who associate with me, are tigers, wolves, and bears. Deers and hares play around me. I belong to the Monkey class. 110. You are the Lord of the earth. You have wise pandits about you. You have Brahmans learned in the *Vedas* and *shāstras*, but who, however, throw far away the supreme-spiritual-riches". 111. In reply to this, the king bowed before him, and said : "I have come as a suppliant with my body, mind, and wealth. Besides that I am lowly and lacking in goodness, O Merciful one, cleanse me." 112. The Merciful-one, recognizing the king's sincerity, felt very deeply towards him, and said : "Go and take your bath and quickly return. It is Thursday, your good day." 113. Hearing these assuring words of the *stāmī*, he was made very happy. He went down to the bank of the Krishnā river, and bathed with his clothes on. 114. As he had but one garment on, he tore it into two pieces. One he used to wipe himself with, and the other he put on, after drying it. 115. He made a paste by rubbing a flint pebble on a stone, and made the Vaishnava mark on his forehead. And hav-

ing finished all the preliminary rites, he went to that part of the forest (where Rāmdās was). 116. Whatever of fruits or flowers he found, he picked to be used in the worship of his *sadguru*; and these he carried in *palasa* leaves stitched together. 117. He had no vessel in which to carry water, so he made a coneshaped cup from large leaves. The prince filled this with water, and returned to Rāmdās. 118. Coming near Samartha, he stood before him with palm joined to palm. Rāmdās asked him to make eleven obeisances. 119. The king made the eleven obeisances, prostrating himself on the ground. He determined from his heart that he would offer his body, mind, wealth, and kingdom to his *sadguru*. 120. "I shall consider myself so fortunate, if only you make me a carrier of your wooden shoes." With these words the king joined palm to palm, and sat down. 121. Samartha placed his hands on his head, and whispered in his ear the *mantra* consisting of divine names. The Giver-of-Final-Deliverance [ Rāmdās ] taught him the secrets of the *mantra*, seeing that he was fitted for such instruction. 122. "I will instruct you in the outer practices of my order, which you must scrupulously observe. 123. Give up all killing of animals, and show compassion towards all creatures. If *sādhus* or saints come to your home, make yourself a suppliant before them. 124. On the eleventh day of the fortnight you should worship Vishnu, and have a nightwatch service in honour of Hari. And you must be regular in your daily worship of Māruti." 125. Thus instructed by the *sadguru*, the king accepted the authority of his command. He then washed his *guru*'s feet with his own hands, and in love drank the water. 126. He made a garland of *tulsi* leaves and flowers woven together, and put it around the neck of the *sadguru*. He imagined incense and lights, and offered them before his *sadguru*. 127. He had found some sweet fruit in the forest, and with love he offered them to

him. The Giver-of-Final-Deliverance recognized the king's devout feelings, and tasted the fruit. 128. The many fruits that remained uneaten, the king threw to the monkeys, and Shivāji ate with pleasure that which the śūra half ate

129. Samartha now said to the king: "Return now at once into the city, and perform your royal duties. Come to see me some other time" 130. The king replied to the sadguru : "I am not going to carry on my kingdom any longer, I am going to stay here in order to serve you. My mind has decided upon this. 131. I have already offered the glories of my kingdom to Rāma. So you sit on the throne, and I, as a servant, will hold your shoes 132. If I continue to rule the kingdom, there is nothing at the end for me but Hell. This is what people say. I do not know whether this is true or false. You, who are the personification of mercy, tell me". 133. Hearing this question of the king, the Giver-of-Final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] replied: "It is bad for a king to remain in a forest free from desires and silent 134. Although he is free from outward hindrances, yet he can not escape the going to Hell. O king. On the contrary, Janaka ruled his kingdom, and he became one unconscious-of-body [vidēhu] 135. Rukmāngada observed the festival of the eleventh day, and took his city to heaven. Because Ambarisha strictly observed the twelfth day of the fortnight, the Soul-of-the-Universe took his rebirths upon Himself 136. The famous noble king, earnest in observing the teachings of the Bhāgavata, reduced the city of Vaivasvata (God of Death) to ruins for ten thousand years. 137. The good king Harishchandra is known through the Purān for his righteousness. Dvaiḍyāyana has described in the Mahābhārata the virtuous Nala and Damayanti. 138 In Dharma's luxurious home Shri Krishna zealously gathered the left-over food. Krishna with his own hands washed Arjuna's horses. God has great love for loving devotion [bhakti] 139. Through

the mouth of Shuka, Parikshiti listened for a week to the reading of the Mahābhāgavata; and while listening attained Final-Deliverance, though he met with an accidental death. 140. O King, you have listened to these famous Paurānic stories. Now then without further doubts start on the path of your personal duties. 141. You have made an offering of body, mind, wealth, and kingdom to your *sadguru*. Therefore, no longer speak of anything as your own, and carry out my commands."

142. At these words of Samartha the king prostrated himself on the ground, and his eyes filled with the tears of love. 143. Again Samartha commanded him: "Rise up, O King, and go. Your Ministers are waiting for you. Night will overtake you on your journey." 144. The king arose to start, but again and again looked back at Rāmdās. He could not bear the thought of separation, and yet he did wish to disobey Rāmdās. 145. Although his heart was bound to his *Sadguru*'s feet, yet his material body had to walk along. His feet had to move, and he arrived where his company of soldiers were stationed. 146. Seeing the king, the councillors and ministers were glad. The band of sweet instruments began to play a welcome. 147. King Shivāji took his seat naturally in his palanquin, but with the form of his *sadguru* in his heart, he no longer loved power and wealth. 148. It was four *ghatikās* of the night when he arrived at his palace. The rumour was whispered from ear to ear that he had received the discipleship *mantra* from his *guru*. 149. His attendants had been watching him from a distance. They saw his worship, his offerings, and his obeisances, and in their homes they related in detail what they had seen.

#### KING SHIVĀJI'S DAILY VISITS TO RĀMDĀS

150. Gāgā Pandit, with hatred in his heart, exclaimed, "What is all this I hear? I am not at all pleased. That

saint is not one highly recognized. 151. The king, without inquiring as to his caste, has accepted instruction from him. We see that his head is turned. All this seems to me worthy of disdain " 152. So gossiped the three classes of people among themselves But the people like owls feared to go in the king's presence 153. The king's mind, however, was on the feet of his *guru*. His mind was totally absorbed in that thought So as soon as the sun arose, the king started again to visit Rāmdās. 154. The king took with him garments and ornaments, garlands of flowers, sandal-wood paste, and other materials 155. All the eight ministers went with him, also the merchants of the city, together with many pious men to meet Rāmdās 156. They carried banners, and flags. The band played loud music Thus with his attendants the king arrived at the banks of the Krishna 157. Longing to see his *sadguru* the king suddenly spied him He leaped from his palanquin 158. Keeping Samartha in view, the king walked barefooted He now saw, Rāmdās had his eyes closed, sitting unconscious of body 159. With a motion of his hand the king had the music cease, and himself stood before Rāmdās with palm joined to palm 160. Wild beasts were wandering about, so, the king's attendants remained at a distance, but the king's heart was without fear. And he watched his *sadguru*'s form

161. It had now reached the third watch of the day. Samartha opened his eyes. The king made him a *namaskāru*, and with his own hands washed Rāmdās' feet. 162. He made the *tilaka* mark on Rāmdās' forehead, and smeared his person with thin paste of divine perfume. He placed a garland of flowers around his neck, and wound around his waist the yellow robe 163. The king in his love put on him ornaments studded with jewels. He offered him the plate with incense and lights. There was nothing lacking.

to this form of worship. 164. The king presented as an offering many kinds of cooked food prepared in ghee. He placed before him the *pānasupāri* and gifts of money, and finally circumambulated him. 165. According to his usual custom he made him eleven *namaskāras*. After doing all this, the king stood before him. 166. Samartha now said to him : "Return now to your city, you are only increasing hindrances, O king. My mind does not approve your course." 167. The king replied : "Until I see and worship you, I will take no drink of water. Without you no one can accomplish my purpose, O Samartha."

168. Thus every day the king came to worship him. Rāmdās did not consider it as wearisome, because, the king's loving devotion was so unlimited. 169. But Samartha thought to himself : "Hindrances have increased here." So, he left all his garments and ornaments there, and went into the deep forest. 170. He climbed up a mountain and there sat worshipping. In the meantime the king with all his materials for worship arrived at Rāmdās's usual place. 171. And lo ! and behold ! all his garments and ornaments were lying there, and Samartha had gone, who knows where ? The king became very anxious, and together with his army of attendants began to search. 172. Some on horse back, some on foot scattered through the forest, but the Merciful-one was nowhere to be seen, and the king was in great distress. 173. The king was three days without food, and would drink no water. He was continually exclaiming : "When shall I see again that Cloud-of-mercy ? When I see him, I shall feast my eyes on him." 174. The king said to himself : "Let all that I have, go, but may your name remain forever. O Mother. (*Sadguru*), grant me the favour of your sight." 175. The Giver-of -Final-Deliverance [Rāmdās], hearing the king's pleading voice, manifested Himself then and there, and the king, seeing his *sadguru*'s



## CHAPTER V.

### THE GOOD LOVE THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1. If throughout the infinite number of rebirths, there has been laid up a store of good deeds, then only there would be pleasure in listening with a reverential mind to the lives of the saints. 2. Shri Rāma became an *avatāra* and Vālmiki composed a work with seven divisions regarding Him. The book is called the Rāmāyana. 3. Dvaipāyana composed the Shri Bhāgavata, in which is related the deeds of the Krishna *avatāra*. As *bhaktas* listen to those heart-purifying stories, they create in them a sense of joy. 4. *Bhaktas* are fond of stories about God, so the desire was aroused in Shri Hari's mind to listen to the deeds of the saints. This is what Pandharinath also thinks. 5. So making me His instrument, the Husband of Rukmini is the one actually relating these stories. He is putting the thoughts in my mind. This the wise saints recognize.

### RĀMDĀS ACTS LIKE A MONKEY

6. In the last chapter there was related the extraordinary story of how Samartha recognized the intense desire of King Shivāji, and giving him the needed instruction, started him on the path for attaining the supreme spiritual-riches through *bhakti*.

7. There are three characteristic behaviours of Super-men. They are actions like those of a child, like those of one possessed, and like those of one intoxicated. Samartha discarded one of them, but voluntarily used the remaining two. 8. Yogis say that those, whose behaviour is like that of intoxicated men, show pride of knowledge. So Rāmdās discarded that special behaviour, and adopted at first that of one possessed. 9. The Giver-of-Final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] left the place where he had met the king, and

came to Māhuli, the junction of the Krishnā and the Venyā. And there began his strange antics 10 He climbed the trees by the banks of the Krishnā and there acted as one crazy. The boys of the town gathered in numbers to see him, and all laughed heartily at his antics 11 He would look at the boys and wink at them. He would break off branches and leaves, and throw them to the ground 12 Boys threw stones at him up in the tree, and he bore it with pleasure. He would glare at them, and make faces at them 13 He would let go a branch, and appear as if he were about to fall to the ground, and then would fly backwards, and sit on a topmost branch 14 Seeing such antics, a great crowd assembled. They all remarked that he did not seem to have the least fear for his life 15 While the people were talking thus, he was wildly leaping from branch to branch. He would let go his hold on some easily held branch, and then again sit on a topmost bough 16 Men and women said among themselves "In a former birth he must have been a monkey. Now God has given him birth with a human body, but he cannot escape the effects of his former birth" 17 Hearing what the people were saying to one another, Samartha came down from the tree. The boys pestered him severely, and threw dung at him 18 But he bore it all pleasantly, for he was supremely happy in his heart. The stāmu laughed heartily at their acts. Just then some one remarked "He may be a superman" 19 Hearing this remark, Rāmdās thought to himself 'Perhaps some one will want to worship me, and that will work against this crazy behaviour I have adopted' So he picked up a few stones, 20 and ran in a lively fashion after the boys, throwing the stones at them. But the boys dodged him, and then complained to their mothers 21 One said "Mother, he is a crazy man who has come here. He runs after us with stones in his hands. We have been greatly frightened by

him, and so have come to tell you." 22. The mother replied : " Do not go far from here. It is not well to have anything to do with a crazy person. If you do, you will yourself some day become a *jogi* or a mendicant. 23. If that crazy, demon-possessed fellow comes into the town, do not go near him. He leaps about like a monkey, and might suddenly throw stones." 24. Suddenly, however, Samartha appeared in the town, and a crowd assembled to look at him. They remarked : " It seems to us, his life is being spent uselessly. 25. In appearance he is supremely beautiful. His age must be less than twenty five. One does not know with what demon or ghost he is possessed." 26. While they were talking thus, Rāmdās increased his curious antics. He made faces at the people. This made the people exclaim : " A mighty figure, indeed !" 27. The women of the town said among themselves : " If his mother had given birth to thorn bushes, they would at least have made a good strong fence". 28. As Rāmdās heard these remarks, he was made exceedingly happy. He rolled his eyes and made faces at the people. 29. When many people crowded around to look at him, Samartha would hold some stones in his hand to throw at them, while the boys would scamper off into the side alleys. Rāmdās then would go back into the forest, 30. and there, all alone with love in his heart, meditate on Rāma. Again the next day he would come into the town to beg his food. 31. He would visit in turn eleven houses. At no place would he remain more than a moment. If anyone at once brought him something, he showed he was pleased with it. 32. Out of the eleven houses, at a few only he was quickly served. And then this great *yogi* would retire to the forest. 33. He had no vegetables or salt to eat. He drank water and ate the cakes he baked on leaves. He did not call them either good or bad, as he had completely conquered his ~~longing~~

34. The King's infernals hunted all over the forest for Rāmdās. Searching among the valleys and mountains, at last they were fortunate in discovering him. 35. They suddenly saw Samarth taking his cakes on leaves. When the king heard the news, he was very happy. 36. Alone on horseback he quickly arrived there, and according to custom he made his *rājastha*. 37. Rāmdās had made three cakes on leaves. Samarth ate two of them, and set the third aside. The king then began his worship. 38. The king brought costly offerings which he distributed to people. Samarth gave to the king the leaf cake that had been set aside as his gift in return. 39. The King took it eagerly, and there and then ate it all. It was sweeter than nectar. It is the miserable, ignorant people who cannot understand this. 40. People now began to say among themselves: "The king has made him his guru, and he (Rāmdās) seems to have been hunted by a devil. It does not seem a right thing." 41. Samarth now said: "O king, go back to your place." And so saying, Rāmdās went off into the forest.

42. The king went back to his place, and Samarth adopted another form of behaviour. He came to the river junction at Māhuli, and behaved as one indifferent-to-worldly-things. 43. He had at first behaved like one possessed by a demon, but now he adopted childish actions. When the boys of the town gathered, he called out loudly to them: 44. "Friends, I want to play with you from now on." And when they heard this, a great crowd assembled. 45. Just as one smiles on children, so Rāmdās did. He played *Hututu* with the boys, but none could catch him. 46. And as he played, he would repeat some blessing-bestowing abhangas. They would contain some spiritual meaning, but there were but few fortunate ones who could understand them.

47. For example, "In the river of Māyā there are many dangerous whirlpools. If one falls in them, it is almost impossible to come out of them. 48. Sensual desires encircle him most truly, the whirl-pool swings him around, involving his soul in temptations, and he ends in the eighty-four rebirths." 49. Thus Rāmdās the crazy man, like Krishna in his *avatāra* form, played with the boys, but was untouched by any fault.

50. The wheel of Māyā spins around at random by force of the string of ignorance, and hence compels one to go from door to door. 51. Then he dug the holes of right and wrong thinking, and many people gathered to take part in the game of marbles. 52. When it came the turn of Rāmdās, he would sit on boys' backs as they walked on all fours; he holding their ears, and they did the same thing to him. 53. Such is the game of Ignorance. It makes one bend down on all fours for ever which makes the waist ache, but none has the power to withstand it. 54. The Kite in the form of human body flies high up beyond the skies, with the blowing of the violent wind of deeds of past and present births. 55. The kite would rise so exceedingly high as to reach the heavenly regions of the blest, and then return down to the earth on account of one's adverse fortune.

#### BOYS ACCIDENTALLY KILL AND BURY RĀMDĀS IN THE SAND

56. He then played *viti dāndu* [ bat and a piece of wood sharpened at both ends ], of all games the most dangerous. Rāmdās proposed the game, and all the boys stood around to play. 57. A *viti* [ sharpened piece ] flew up and struck Rāmdās on his forehead. This caused him to faint away, and fall on the ground. The boys rushed to his aid. 58. They placed their hands to his nostrils, but could not feel any breathing. His body lay lifeless. The boys

exclaimd: "O God, what shall we do ?" 59. Some one went to the Krishnā river and dipping a cloth in the water brought it, and twisting it, dropped water in his mouth, but the Giver-of-Final-Deliverance [ Rāmdās ] uttered not a word. 60. Another one raised him up, but he seemed wholly lifeless. Some began to sob, saying: "He is dead". 61. Some began to cry out loud, but knowing ones told them to cease: " If the affair is noised abroad, we may be punished. 62. We do not know who this crazy man is, nor whence he comes. What connection have we with him ? Why do you needlessly cry about him. Think only of what might happen to you. 63. If the rumour reaches the city, the people will blame us. They will say: "Why did you murder him ? and our parents will give us a beating at home. 64. It is true, a very serious thing has happened, and the Chief of police is not a good man, and if he hears of what has happened, he will make the whole city pay for this. 65. So let us make an agreement that this affair shall not become known. And let us quickly dig a hole in the sand, and bury him in it. 66. Let every one swear by his mother and father that he would not speak of this in the town. If he did, the accusation of killing the crazy man will certainly fall on him." 67. All this time the Merciful to-the-lowly [Rāmdās] was listening to the talk of the boys.

His whole thought was on Rāma, and all his other feelings had disappeared. 68. But he said to himself : "Let me watch the fun". And so Samartha became like one dead, just as when Ceylon was burning, Hanumān lay lifeless. 69. So when Samartha heard what the boys were talking about, he said to himself : "Let me see the fun with my own eyes." And so he remained in a bodily unconscious condition.

#### RĀMDĀS IS BURIED ALIVE

70. Though much frightened about doing it, the boys dug a hole in the sand, and buried the Giver-of-Final-

Deliverance in it. But some passing travellers saw what was done. 71. They said among themselves : "We wonder what curious thing those boys are doing, but it is no business of ours to ask". So deciding among themselves, the travellers kept on their way. 72. All the boys bathed near the bank of the river Krishnā, and agreeing among themselves not to tell, they returned to their homes. 73. The next day the boys returned early, and looking at the place where they had buried Rāmdās, they saw that it was just as they had left it. Then they continued their games, but at a distance.

74. Now king Shivāji with a great desire to see his *svāmi* sent out many scouts, but Samartha was no where to be seen. 75. His horsemen visited twentyfive villages, but they returned without finding him. They, then in company with the king, hunted through the mountains and forests. 76. Some of the scouts went to Māhuli, and on the way met the travellers. The King's scouts asked them whether they had seen the *svāmi*. 77. "Rāmdās is a crazy man, but the king has made him his *guru*. We have been hunting for him seven days, and our feet are all wearied in hunting for him. 78. Perhaps some wild animal has killed him in the jungle, or perhaps he is sitting in the forest somewhere in meditation. If you have seen him anywhere, let us at once know." 79. The travellers replied, but with fear : "At the junction of Māhuli boys dug in the sand, and buried a *sanyāsi*. 80. There were no adults there. Go and search the place". After hearing what the foot travellers said, the scouts left. 81. They came to the steps leading down to the river, and searched both banks, but they did not discover the place. So finally they returned to the city. 82. The Mayor of Māhuli then called all the people together and said: "Your boys have killed the king's *guru*. 83. While we were searching in the forest, we met some foot travellers along the path. Though very



business to dig the body out." Thus they discussed among themselves. 97. One suggested that the body should be dug out, tied together into a bundle, carried to a distance and there burned, and thus completely wipe out every trace of him. 98. This advice given by the elder men was accepted by all. They dug into the sand, and there they saw Samartha, and the sight was a most strange one.

### RĀMDĀS COMES OUT OF THE SAND ALIVE

99. As they were digging into the sand, Rāmdās gave a loud cry, enough to deafen their ears, and some even fainted. 100. Giving a leap, Samartha made for the forest. All the towns people were frightened out of their wits. 101. Some one now remarked: "It has turned out well. Fate has saved us from a great disaster." Another remarked: "We have seen an unexplainable thing. 102. How could a person live for seven days under ground?" Some fortunate pleasure-seeker sent word to the king about the affair.

103. In the mean time King Shivāji, accompanied by his army of attendants, was searching for his *svāmi*. He was fasting all these seven days. 104. The rumour of what had occurred on the bank of the Krishnā, now had spread everywhere. People talked of it in their homes. They exclaimed: "What a wrong thing has taken place. 105. Since the time the king has made this crazy man his *guru*, he himself has become crazy. Through great and small forests he is continuing his search and fasting. 106. If the *garu* is not conscious of himself, can he save the king?" Such was the conversation of the ignorant people among themselves. 107. But the king with his limitless *bhakti* thought to himself: "When shall I see my *sadguru's* face?" Spies sent from town to town now began to return, but no one spoke of finding Rāmdās. 108. Suddenly, however, informants from Māhuli arrived, and they related the



There he would make *namashkāras* to the God. At night-fall he would perform enthusiastic *kirtanas*, and here he drew pious people to himself. 131. If, however, sensible, pious people spoke to him, he would tell them to constantly repeat God's names, and not to forget to do so at any time.

132. Now there was a certain man, by name of Jayarāma Gosāvi Vadgāvkar, who was a *bhakta* especially devoted to Krishna; and the Husband of Rukmini, seeing his devotion, gave him a direct visible manifestation of Himself. 133. He had heard a list of the good deeds of Rāmdās through the mouths of saints. He conceived a desire to meet him, and so came into the forest to seek him. 134. Suddenly he saw him sitting by himself and worshipping Shri Rāma. The moment they saw one another, both were filled with joy. 135. They made *namashkāras* to one another. They expressed their exceeding love in embraces. It seemed as though they were the moon and the sun. 136. Or as if they were Vishnu and Shiva in reality, who had come to meet one another. Or as it were, the accidental meeting of Shri Rāma and Krishna, in which their essential oneness came together. 137. So Jayarāma and Rāmdās in a loving meeting for both, conversed on those interesting themes of soul, personal experiences and the essence of *bhakti*. 138. Rāmdās went as usual into the city, and begged his food at eleven houses, and on returning to the forest would, with his own hands, make cakes baked on leaves. 139. Food obtained from begging is sacred food, and both of them partook of it. Neither of them called it good or bad. They had learned to control their sense of taste and mind. 140. Both enjoyed the good association of the other, and through the joy of that association they lived without fear. Aside from the wild animals, they had no association with anyone. 141. Some days passed in talking of personal experiences of soul,

and the joy arising from *bhakti*. Then on one occasion Rāmdās said to Jayarāma:

142. "Let us give a feast in this forest to a thousand Brahmins." Jayarāma agreed, but added: "You will have to go and bring the Brahmins." 143. Samartha went into the town, and saw sitting there a great crowd of Brahmins. He bowed to all of them, and invited them to come to a feast of a thousand. 144. The Brahmins asked: "Who is going to act as the host on the occasion of the feast of a thousand?" Samartha replied: "Jayarāma Gosāvi." 145. The Brahmins hearing this laughed. "Both are alike one another, precious crystals. They met one another in the forest. 146. Just as Nārada and Tumbara did, always repeating the name of God, and with nothing on but cloths. You both are just like them. 147. For a feast all kinds of materials are necessary. A feast is not a Hari-kirtana, where you can use stones for cymbals and dance without shame." 148. But Samartha continued to invite them. "All preparations have been made. Come along at once;" and with this he held their feet. 149. The Brahmins replied: "You crazy fellow, you are acting towards us with your monkey tricks. It is useless to associate with you. The poor fellow who does, will become a beggar. 150. King Shivāji was in every way a good man. You gave him instruction. You have made him a wanderer through the forest. That is what you have planned for us. 151. You are planning to take us into the forest on the pretext of a feast to a thousand. The wild beasts there will devour the Brahmins. We can already see what is going to happen." 152. To this Samartha replied: "You need have no fear of the wild beasts. Rāma has placed all of them under control. Have no doubts of this in your minds." 153. One of the Brahmins replied: "Let us go as far as the forest, and see what there is there. If the feast has been prepared, then we

can take back with us the big crowd." 154 Samartha answered "If my statement is not true, then I am not the servant of Rama." This statement was accepted by all. 155 All the Brahmans of the city, trusting to Ramdās' word, took with them their dining clothes, their vessels, and plates, and started for the forest. 156 They said among themselves "We have accepted this liar's invitation. We shall not regard it as true until we partake of his feast." 157. While they were thus talking among themselves, Ramdas proceeded forward He announced to Jayarama that the Earth-gods (Brahmans) were about to arrive at the ashrama [ place of his abode ] 158 "We must now plan to pay them respect and reverence, with worship, feasting and gifts, so that the noble twice-born will be satisfied." 159 At Ramdas' command Jayarama invoked the eight Siddhis ( accomplishments personified ) The ashrama with many forms of decorations was adorned 160 The trees formed a pavilion. It was decorated with most beautiful flowers and fruits He arranged raised seats on all sides. To look at the scene brought a sense of peace to one's heart 161 Having smoothed and cleaned the floor, he made designs on it with coloured powders according to the usual usage, but all with varying drawings The sitting boards were also placed around 162 In the meantime all the Brahmans now arrived, and as they beheld the ashrama, they were exceedingly pleased They noticed Jayarama sitting alone by himself in a thicket. 163 The Brahmans seeing this became anxious They said "We see no smoke in the ashrama We listened to the invitation of that crazy fellow, and we have arrived here in this forest far from home" 164 Ramdās said to them: "O Earth gods, go now and take your baths The feast is now ready, why let it grow cold needlessly?" 165. The Brahmans returned from their baths, and immediately took their seats in arranged lines. Samartha began with

their worship with expressions of love. 166. Finally, he washed their feet, marked them with divinely perfumed pastes; and with the kasturi paste on their foreheads, he placed garlands of flowers around their necks. 167. Incense, lights, and the platter with lights were waved about the Brahmans, and Jayarāma placed before each one a plate with daintily cooked food. 168. There were delicious dishes, vegetables of various kinds, and also in addition ghee and sugar. And at the end of the rite of offering he (Jayarāma) said: "Shri Hari is the enjoyer of the feast." 169. Whatever dish any one liked, there was no lack of it on anyone's plate. And after all were satisfied, there took place the washing of their hands. 170. In receiving the *pānasupāri* and gifts the Brahmans were made very happy. They exclaimed: "You have given us a most delightful feast. Blessed is the greatness of the saint." 171. The fame of that good deed now spread far and wide. Even the scorners, the crooked-minded and the evil doers, on hearing of the miracle, began making *namaskāras* to Rāmdās.

#### JAYARĀMA LEAVES, AND A BARBER BECOMES A DISCIPLE

172. The Servant-of-Krishna [Jayarāma] now asked Samartha leave to return to his own home. "But I have a great desire to see you again," he said. 173. Rāmdās replied: "If there is mutual love in hearts, then though there may be separation of body, one should not speak of distance between the two." 174. Thus speaking to one another and making *namaskāras* to one another, Jayarāma Gosāvi Vadgāvkar started at once to return. 175. Samartha then sought for a lonely forest, when he gave himself wholly to the thinking of Rāma, and pleaded with Him in pitiful words.

176. The king's scouts returned to Sātārā, carrying the tidings that they had found Rāmdās. The king came

bringing with him the materials for worship, and met with Rāmdās. 177. The king made him a prostrate obeisance, and worshipped him with all the materials he had brought. He worshipped his *guru* just as *bhaktas* worship God. 178. The king joins his hands, palm to palm, and spoke words of praise. He reminded Rāmdās that he had promised to come to Sātāra. 179. Samartha replied, "Return now. I will come some time." The king made him a *naukārī* and at once left.

180. As Rāmdās was wandering about the Māhull forest, he suddenly met a barber. He made a *naukārī* to Samartha and said: "Let me shave you 181. I have a desire in my heart to serve a saint." Samartha replied: "You may;" and the barber shaved his head. 182. Then joining palm to palm, and standing before Rāmdās, but at a distance, he exclaimed: "A desire has arisen in my heart to be with you always. 183. I have no wife or child. God has destroyed every snare. Now I have the wish to be day and night in the company of the good." 184. Samartha recognized his sincerity, and said: "You may. If you should ask for instruction at once, I am not able to give it. 185. It is first necessary to serve with sincerity of purpose, and then to ask your *guru* for instruction." The barber replied: "I have no other desire. 186. I will in every way serve you, and remain with you day and night. I shall want no instruction aside from this." And with this he fell at his feet 187. Samartha laughed heartily and asked him his name. He replied: "This your slave is called Datta, and I am not going to leave these (your) feet."

188. In the next chapter will appear the peacefulness of Samartha. I shall speak of it as best I can, and the saints must give me their attention. 189. The Husband-of-Rukmini, who lives on the bank of the Bhīma, a lover

of his *bhaktas*, and a bestower of mercy. He has given me, Mahipati, His assuring blessing, and is causing me to relate the deeds of the saints.

190. *Svasti*. This book is the Santavijaya, the mere listening to which fulfils the longings of the heart. May the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the fifth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MAHIPATI ASKS GOD'S BLESSING ON HIS BOOK

1. Victory to Thee, Voluntary-assumer-of-a-human-body, Infinite one, Recliner-on-the-serpent-Sesha (Anant), Husband-of-Lakshmi, Merciful-to-the-lowly, Lord-of-Pandhari. Thou art the protector of the helpless in their distresses. 2. In Thy various *avatāras* Thou hast protected Thy *bhaktas*. Dvaitāyana has very fully described their voluntary deeds. 3. In the Sanskrit language, and in many forms, he composed the eighteen *Purānas*. Still the description of the lives of the saints is still far from complete. Even Vyūsa's mind was unable to cope with them all. 4. O God-Supreme, in describing Thy attributes serpent Shesha failed through weariness. Even Brahmadeva was overwhelmed with wonder. Then what chance can a mere man have? 5. Yet I, Mahipati, dull of mind, of a little intellect in every respect, have become a vessel containing the gift of Thy assurance. This is also what my own people say. 6. So now being proud of that fact, O Shri Hari, give my mind the power of remembrance, so that I may properly relate in Marāthi the stories of Thy saints. 7. O God-Supreme, do this for me. I have no other desire in my heart. By Thy favour carry to completion this book, the Santavijaya.

### THE FORGIVING SPIRIT OF RĀMDĀS

8. In the last chapter there was related the extraordinary event of Rāmdās having been buried in the sand, of the feast to a thousand Brahmans in the forest, and how the barber began to serve Rāmdās.

9. After those events, Samartha continued his wanderings through the forests, indifferent to all worldly things.

All the Siddhis [Divinities of Accomplishments personified] became his slaves, but he paid no attention to them. 10. If he heard any one speak of the joys of heaven, he regarded them as dog's dung. He was without desires, a Muni without passions, and reverential in his worship of Rāma.

11. He initiated Dattu [the barber] as a disciple, and then said to him: "Go into the town now and beg for food." He himself sat down in the forest, meditating on Rāma. 12. Dattu visited eleven houses, and brought back some flour. Samartha made it into cakes baked on leaves, and both partook of them.

13. In the mean time the king was continually thinking: "When will the *Svāmi* favour me with a visit"? Samartha was aware of his loving devotion, and said to Dattu: 14. "It is now my duty to go to Sātārā. The king has a great desire that I should come." He gave to Dattu his bag, and walked ahead. 15. As he walked along, he sang verses, composed in various meters, verses in praise of Shri Rāma. It is not possible to describe in words the supreme joy of that occasion.

16. While walking in this manner, a very remarkable event took place along the path. Samartha was delighted to see some water, and descended to it for a bath. 17. remarking to Dattu that Sātārā was now only two miles away, and he thought it well to perform here his devotions and bath. 18. Dattu replied to Samartha: "The field here is very ripe. The pods have turned a greenish gold. I will at once roast them over a fire. 19. You can eat a few mouthfuls, and I am overcome with hunger myself." The *Svāmi* replied: "The food obtained from begging is the food that is most fitting for us. 20. To take ears of corn without asking the owner is bringing down great blame on one's head. The city is now very near.

Why do you needlessly make such an effort?" 21. After saying this to Dattu, he at once went down and bathed. Then with his thoughts on Rāma he sat meditating. 22. Dattu disobeyed him. He immediately collected dry dung cakes. He piled them, and set them afire. He broke off ears of corn and began roasting them. 23. The owner of the field of grain was at a distance, but he saw the smoke. And the wind was blowing towards him, he also smelt it. He came running. 24. Whilst still far off he yelled and cursed and swore. Full of anger the Shūdra [Low casta] came near where Rāmdās was. 25. There he saw Dattu roasting the ears of corn. He gave him a severe beating. The Shūdra then came to Rāmdās, and with his sling began striking him on his back. 26. Rāmdās paid no attention to the pain, and laughed heartily to himself. The Shūdra demanded: "What an improper thing you have done. 27. I have not as yet offered a portion of the crop to the water deities and Mhasobā. And if it is eaten before the offering, my prosperity is sure to suffer. 28. You have worn the garb of a superman, such as a clout, a waist cord and a garland of tulsi beads, and when struck with a sling you laughed, therefore, you must really be called a crazyman. 29. Having done and said all this, the owner of the field went back to his watching seat. At this Dattu felt very sad in his heart. 30. Dattu came close to Rāmdās, and looked at the welts on his back. Said he: "If I had not done what was wrong, this misfortune would not have happened." 31. With this confession the tears from his eyes flowed freely. Samartha said to Dattu: "Why do you feel badly? 32. When you are dishonored, do not be troubled. When you are insulted, do not get angry. When you are despised, do not sulk. He only is a man of God who acts thus. 33. People try to make you ashamed, because of your poverty, but do not let your mind be troubled at that. If they should slap

you on your face, you should not feel badly. One only who has this spirit, is to be called a saint. 34. If a thief steals your goods, and you make no effort to recover them, the evil-minded may laugh at you, but it means added love in the worship of Shri Rāma. It is a person of such a spirit that is to be called a saint. 35. You were very happy at the thought of eating the tender roasted corn. But when you were beaten, you felt pain. That is not a good form in which to possess Indifference-to-worldly-things. 36. A man is always doing good and bad things. Joy and pain are their results. But those who are wise, do not make a fuss over them." 37. Dattu replied: "O Samartha, if I had not done wrong, that man would not have beaten you with the sling. My heart sorrows on that account. 38. I have remained with you to serve you, but I have given you, O *sadguru*, pain instead. There is no other transgression equal to this. Now what will my life hereafter be!" 39. With this confession his tears flowed freely from his eyes, Samartha sought to comfort him. Said he: "Such things cannot be avoided by those who come as *avatāras*. 40. Now I am going to tell you one thing. Listen. And my command is your authority for doing what I tell you. Do not by any means tell the king what has happened here. 41. If any one presses you to tell, then be silent by adopting dumbness. The king will have the Shūdra beaten, and that will be a loss to our good reputation. 42. You must swear by me that you will tell no one." In reply to these words of Samartha, Dattu held his feet.

43. In the meanwhile, at the command of the king, some of his scouts arrived there. As soon as they saw Samartha, they prostrated before him from a respectful distance. 44. Returning, they reported to the king that they had wandered here and there in the jungles to find Samartha, but found him sitting close by. When

the king heard this, he was glad. 45. The king at once gave orders to his minister to have all the army in readiness. He himself went ahead barefooted. Blessed was the sincerity of his devotion. 46. Elephants, horses, chariots, and on the elephants gilt embroidered cloths and banners. Beaten drums made loud music. The eight Ministers went with the army. 47. There were many flags with the seven colors. Dancers sang songs. The Haridāsa shouted aloud the names of Hari. Their enthusiasm was great. 48. The eight Ministers walked on foot. The inhabitants of the city flocked behind them. As soon as the king saw the face of the *Sadguru*, he with love in his heart made a *namaskāra*. 49. Then the soldiers of the army and the Ministers made him a prostrate *namaskāra*. They garlanded him with flowers, and scattered fragrant powders all about. 50. At the king's request Rāmdās seated himself in a palanquin. The sound of the musical instruments filled the air, and drums were loudly beaten. 51. The king laid one hand on the palanquin, and with the other he waved over him a fly-wisp. As they entered into the city, cannons were fired. 52. Citizens stood in the upper stories and on roofs to watch the scene. Flowers and perfumed powders were thrown into the air even at a distance from him. Blessed is that holy ground. 53. The procession thus moving along, the *svāmi* entered the king's palace. At the king's request Rāmdās was seated on the royal throne.

54. In another part of the palace a feast was being prepared, with delicious dainties of many kinds. The Brahmans returned from their baths, and were seated in long lines. 55. The king with all the materials for worship began the loving worship of his *sadguru*. There were among the guests Vedic Brahmans, and they repeated the Vedic *mantras*. 56. Instruments made sweet music. The sound was even too great for the air to contain it. The

*svāmi* was quickly seated, and the king washed his feet. 57. He wiped them with clean cloths, and touched his own eyes with his ( Rāmdās ) great toe. He lovingly drank the water with which Rāmdās' feet had been washed, and felt great joy in so doing. 58. The king with his own hands rubbed him with perfumed oil, mixed with *argaja* to which was added the perfumes of *keshara* (saffron) and musk.

59. At that moment the king discovered welts on Rāmdās' back. He was amazed, but kept the matter to himself. 60. After he had been rubbed with oil, much hot water was brought, and the king bathed him with his own hands. 61. He wiped him thoroughly with cloths, and placed sandals before him. Finally, he dressed him in a gay robe of divine yellow. 62. As the *svāmi* took his seat, the Brahmans repeated the *mantras*. The king worshipped him with very great love. 63. On his brow were made the three upright marks, and his person was smeared with a thin paste of sandal wood. A garland was placed around his neck. To look at him gave the eyes a feeling of peace. 64. The king with loving gestures adorned him with ornaments studded with jewels. Fragrant powders were sprinkled on his forehead, and incense, lights, and camphor were lighted before him. 65. Ripe dates, bananas prepared in ghee, pomgranates, custard-apples, fresh cocoanuts, and the Rāmphala, were all offered to him. 66. Then with songs of praise the lights were waved about the *sadguru*, he was circumambulated, and lovingly bowed to. In doing so the king was very happy. 67. In the same way the king's secretaries worshipped the Brahmans. Their plates were placed before them in lines, and the vegetables and the other cooked food were served. 68. As the *ghee* was being served, Samartha performed the rite of offering. "The enjoyer of this food is Rāma;" and the Brahmans repeated this *mantra*. 69. Sometimes some one feasts his *sadguru*, and performs the rite of offering himself. But that is be-

cause of ignorance, he not knowing the proper custom. 70. When all one's body, soul, and possessions have been offered to one's *sādguru*, then they all belong to the *sādguru*. The king understood the significance of this. 71. So when the *śūmi* performed the rite, the Brahmins offered food to the five vital airs before they commenced to dine, and then they partook of whatever pleased their taste, until all were satisfied. 72. Thus in joy the feast took place, and the *pāṇisupāni* and gifts were distributed to each one. The king then took up the plate on which Samartha's leavings remained, and ate them.

73. Retiring to a private room, the king called in Dattu, the barber. He asked him in this privacy to tell him what had happened on the way. 74. Said he: "What is the cause of that welt on Samartha's back?" Dattu remembered what his *śūmi* had told him, and answered not a word. 75. But finally he did say that Rāmdās had made him swear that he would not tell. The king replied: "If you do not tell me, I shall never touch food." 76. Seeing the strong determination of the king, Dattu was in great perplexity. Said he: "I am, as it were, between two fires. What shall I decide to do?" 77. The king replied: "Tell me at once or I shall commit suicide". Seeing the determination of the king, he told him all from the beginning to the end. 78. As the king listened, he was greatly disturbed in his mind. However, he partook of the bliss-giving food on his *guru*'s plate, and was happy over it. 79. After the act of cleansing his mouth, the king had a letter written, ordering all the people of the field owner's town, together with the *Patil* [Mayor], to come to Sītāmī. 80. The householders of the city, the officials, the Ministers, the army officers, and all the men and women who had been left out, together with Shūdras, then sat down to eat. 81. The feast was thus finished, and the sun was now setting. The Ministers then made preparation for a *kirtana*.

‘ 82. While the feast was going on, two officials at the king’s command went to the grain-field-owner’s town, and there collecting the *patil* and town officials, told them that the king had summoned them. 83. When the king’s letter was read, the report spread at once throughout the town. The people remarked: “It appears a fact that the *guru* of the king was beaten. We shall now have to suffer disaster.” 84. The farmer, who had done the wrong, was called by a Mahār messenger. They said to him: “You have committed a great wrong, and the king, therefore, is very angry.” 85. The farmer, who was an ignorant blockhead, replied: “How could I, an ignorant man, know anything about the king’s *guru*? Now what shall I do ? 86. The *gurus* of others come sumptuously dressed, but he seemed a crazy man. That is what I thought. 87. And when I lashed him with my sling, he laughed aloud. I took comfort from that, but what is it that God has now brought upon me.” 88. The town officials replied: “Whatever you have done, you must suffer for it.” The king’s messengers fastened his hands together, held him from behind and made him walk before them. 89. When they saw him in this condition, there was a great outcry at his home. His children and servants all wept aloud. 90. The owner of the field said to the *patil* of the town: “The king will not leave me alive; and now I leave my children and others to you to care for”. 91. The king’s messengers brought the farmer to Sātārā along with the people of the town, in the meantime the king was sitting listening while the Haridāsa performed a *kirtana*. 92. The first watch of the night had already passed. Rāmdās then arose to carry on the *kirtana*. In his heart he kept thinking of the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ], and sang with love and joy.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

93. While Samartha was singing the praises of Hari with his gracious voice, the king stood before him with

hands joined palm to palm, and listened with earnest attention. 94. Vedic Brāhmaṇas, Shāstris, Purāṇics, the eight Ministers, the army officials, women, shūdras, and children, all pious people gladly sat down to listen. 95. The great noise made by cymbals, drums, and the sweet sounding tīrṇas, filled the air. Besides this, there was the clapping of hands, as all hearts were filled with enthusiasm. 96. Rāmdās spoke of *Bhakti*, Knowledge, and Indifference-to-worldly-things, showing for this the authority of the Vedas, Shāstras, and Purāṇas. And as people saw the beating of the cymbals and the dancing, and heard the singing, they were lost in attention. 97. In the midst of this joy the *kirtana* ended at the second watch. The platter with lights was then brought in, and waved over the Husband-of-Jānaki [Rāma]. 98. And after the shouts of "Victory! Victory!" and the waving of the lights before Rāma, they seated Samartha on the throne, and distributed sweet-meats.

99. While the whole assembly were thus listening with close attention, the officers came and told the king that they had brought the Shudra who had beaten Samartha. 100. The king made a motion to the effect that a guard should be placed about him. The king's eyes now became bloodshot through anger, and this fact was understood by Samartha. 101. The Sūnu then said to the king: "Tell that Shudra to come to me" At the king's command to his servants, they brought the man into Rāmdās' presence. 102. As the Ocean-of-Mercy [Rāmdās] looked at him, he felt great pity for him. The Giver-of-final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] unloosed the binding cord, and he spoke comforting words to him and seated him near him. 103. Rāmdās took off the costly shawl he was wearing, and put it around the man. The whole assembly were amazed. Blessed was Rāmdās' forgiving spirit. 104. Samartha said to the king: "As your Guru, I am going to ask you for a

gift. Give in writing that that field is hereby given to this farmer in perpetuity." 105. The king was non-plussed on hearing his *svāmi*'s request, and then remarked: "The whole kingdom belongs to Samartha. None of it now belongs to me." 106. The king called in his secretary, who prepared a writing giving that field to that man in perpetuity. And the king with his own hand signed it, and affixed the royal seal to it, and placed it before his *svāmi*. 107. The respect due to Samartha was very great, therefore, the king did not speak; but he said to himself: "This Shūdra has committed a great fault. I wonder what should be done about it?" 108. Samartha divined that the king's heart was not yet as pure as it should be, and so he said to the King: "I know all that is in your heart. 109. You are angry, because this Shūdra beat me, but in the beginning the fault was mine. You are not going to let him off a single mite. 110. Now you have become my disciple. The traditional doctrine of our order is: "He only is blessed in this life, who, though having power to revenge, forgives." 111. There are those who claim to be unconscious-of-body, and outwardly show a forgiving spirit, but who feel in their hearts the wound, and are always complaining about it. 112. Pure knowledge without corresponding action, is like a mime. Or it is like the perfectly beautiful wife in the dramatic play, who bears no children. 113. A man whose body is infirm, even if he should be stirred by his sense organs, yet even in his dreams will he be able to gain the satisfaction of their use? 114. You have accepted for yourself the doctrines of our order. And this most excellent praiseworthy step is known everywhere. But you must put away both desire and anger. Then through association with the good, you will be freed from evil. 115. The farmer put my reputation as a superman to the test". At this remark of Samartha's every one laughed. 116. The king fell pro-

strate before him. From a deep sense of remorse his very hair stood on end. Then he remarked: "I understand now the true meaning of my svāmī's words".

117. The king gave to the farmer a written deed to his field. Samartha then said to him: "Go in peace, and in happiness carry on your domestic life." 118. As the farmer heard these words, he was very happy. Then as an act of worship placing his head on Rāmdās' feet, he left at once for his village. 119. When his relatives saw him coming, they thought it very strange, and exclaimed: "How is it, you have escaped from the jaws of Death?" 120. His mother and sister came rushing to the scene. With loud cries, they fell on his neck. "You have been born again," they cried, and the people of the town came flocking to see him. 121. The farmer in great joy told the people of what had happened. "Blessed is the spirit of that superman. He made the king give me the field in perpetuity" And with this he showed the people the letter. 122. One who returns good for evil, one who holds alike enemies and friends, is God's perfect *ānūtā*. Merely by beholding him the world is saved.

### RĀMDĀS GOES TO TRIMBAK

123. Seeing the king's great desire, Samartha came to Satāra. He remained there for three days. During those days most unusual festivities took place. 124. By day there were feasts for Brahmins. At night kirtanas in praise of Hari. Every one came to listen, and their hearts were pierced. 125. Rāmdās made pandits, Brahmins, and the Haridāsa happy by gifts. He himself, however, was utterly indifferent to worldly things. When it was night, he awakened Dattu. 126. He gave Dattu his bag, and started for the forest. When it was morning, the king came to visit him. 127. All his garments and adornments were lying there, and the svāmī had left

with Dattu. The king searched for him in the city. Not finding him, the king reasoned: 128. "Samartha, having fulfilled my wish, must now have gone back to his forest abode." He, therefore, sent his scouts into the forest to search for Rāmdās, and report to him where he was. 129. Just then some one told him that Samartha was in a certain forest. The king then took with him the materials for worship, and went to meet with Rāmdās. 130. The king made him a prostrate *namaskāra*, and worshipped him in accordance with his usual custom.

Samartha said to the king: "I must go to Trimbak for the *Sinhastha* festival". 131. The king replied: "Take me along with you." Samartha answered: "Remain in your city and carry on your royal duties. 132. If you should come with me, it would become a cause of dissatisfaction. The Muhammadan rule is very severe. But you may come later on a pilgrimage." 133. The king responded: "Your command is my authority." Then with his hands, palm to palm, he made a request of Samartha. "The Pandits, Vedics, Purānics, and Brahmans are constantly asking me: 134. 'Of what line of ancestry and caste is this Samartha. We are without information regarding him.' This is what they are all the time asking me. So please, O Statue-of-Mercy, tell me." 135. At this request of the king, Samartha laughed and said: "I belong to the Monkey caste. Up to now the Brahmans do not seem to recognize it. 136. But the Lord-of-Ayoddhyā, the Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma] lived in company with Monkey. He has no caste and is quite separate from the four castes.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

137. Hearing this reply of Samartha's, the king was for a time lost in thought, then joining his hands together, and standing before him, made the following request: 138. "As you are going to the

Sinhastha festival on the bank of the Godāvari, you should carry with you some money. At that sacred city it is necessary to give gifts and perform acts of charity, and you should have in your possession money for necessary expenses. 139. Having heard of your fame, the Brahmans will come rushing to you." The *Svāmi* replied: "But no one will recognize me there at all." 140. The king responded, "Can the sun hide itself in the darkness? All this kingdom belongs to the *Svāmi*. Why should you hesitate to carry money with you? 141. When the *Svāmi* performs his *kirtanas*, many will come to listen, and I know of nothing to which I could compare the incomparable blessed influence of your *kirtanas*. 142. And when you perform a *kirtan* in Panchavati, near the Temple of Rāma, a great crowd will gather and fall at your lotus feet. 143. The Brahmans there will then say: "This is Samartha, the *guru* of the king. But he gives no gifts or charities. Why has he come thus empty-handed?" 144. The treasury is here, and all its contents belong to you, Samartha. Why do you hesitate to carry money with you?" 145. Seeing the king's wish, Samartha replied: "Whatever is your pleasure, do it at once". 146. Hearing these assuring words, king Shivāji was made very happy. At the king's command the Ministers arrived, bringing the materials for worship. 147. Then the king through the lips of the Brahmans worshipped the *sadguru* according to the prescribed custom, just as Dharma worshipped Krishna at the close of the sacrifice made by the Monarch of the universe. 148. He was clothed with a gold embroidered yellow robe, adorned with ornaments, set with jewels. His crown was set with diamonds, so dazzlingly brilliant that after looking at them, people had to close their eyes. 149. The king with his feeling of love clothed Rāmdās with his own hands. And with garlands, bouquet of flowers and anointing with sandal oil, he continued the worship of Samartha. 150.

The king placed offerings before him, incense, lights, and the platter of light, and bowed prostrate before him as custom prescribed. 151. He gave two hundred horsemen to go with Samartha, and an efficient secretary, an officer who had proved himself diligent in service. 152. He had two palanquins made ready, a carriage, and two elephants. On one was fastened a canopied tower and on the other a flag with the emblem of Māruti. 153. The king gave him for his expenses four hundred thousand in coined silver rupees. He seated Samartha in the royal carriage, and lovingly walked beside him to see him off. 154. The king walked at his side for twentyfour miles. Samartha then said to him, in his kindly manner: "Return now to your city". 155. The king, choked with emotion, replied: "I cannot bear the thought of separation. Now do what will soon bring about a meeting with you again". 156. Samartha responded: "Always keep me in your remembrance. I shall always be in your heart. We are no longer two persons". 157. The king replied: "That is a true statement, but the heart wants a visible form in order to feel its comfort. Grant this, O Merciful One." 158. While uttering these words, tears of love filled his eyes. His throat choked with emotion, the king stood sobbing. 159. He placed his head on Rāmdās' feet, as the latter hastened to start on his way. The king stood still as long as Rāmdās could be seen in the distance. 160. The king then made a prostrate *namaskāra* towards his *guru*, and returned to Sātārā.

Now listen with reverence to what happened, you pious people. 161. As Samartha journeyed along, the people of the towns came out to see him. Samartha, however, accompanied by his disciples went regularly into the towns to beg his food. 162. He had provisions with him given by the king, and he used it for feeding the Brahmans, but he himself ate only the sacred

food obtained by begging 163 In whatever town he lodged for the night, he performed a *kirtana*. All the people came to listen, that their hearts might be filled with love to God. 164 A great crowd of pilgrims went along with Samartha. He looked carefully after their needs. Saints have tender hearts 165 Also Brahmins of very high rank joined the pilgrims out of love for him. The king's secretary saw to all their wants 166 In this way the procession of pilgrims approached near Trimbakeshvar. Suddenly there appeared the Brahmins of the sacred city, who had come forward to welcome them 167 They reverently approached Samartha, and asked ; "From what town are you ? What are the names of your father and mother ? What is your family name ? Tell us." 168. Samartha replied "My father is Rāma My good mother is Jānaki I am called Rāmdās" 169 The Brahmins looked over the list of names in their memoranda books, but they were unable to find the names of his forebears. Rāmdās, however, said "The first Brahman to meet me, I accept as my officiating priest." 170 He then went down to Kushavarta, and bathed with his clothes on. Immediately after this, he gave his garments and adornments to his officiating priest 171 The Brahman priest then said to Rāmdās "You should now be shaved" Samartha replied "One should not be shaved while his parents are alive".

(*Abhangas* not translated)

172 He then with his own hands distributed more than a hundred thousand rupees to the Brahmins, and made mendicants and beggars happy (by his gifts) 173 Then taking his begging bag, Samartha went into the sacred city, accompanied by his disciple After crying 'Victory to Rāma', he hurried away, but taking whatever was given him

174. In the meantime the Secretary had given orders for cooking. All the Brahmans of the city came to the banquet. 175. The Brahmans were worshipped with all usual ceremonies, and cows were given them. Then various kinds of daintily cooked food were served on the plates, and every one was feasted. 176. But Samartha along with his disciple ate only the food they had obtained by begging. The town's people expressed great surprise at this, which seemed a course of action impossible for anyone. 177. They said: "With all that amount of money in his possession, yet he goes begging from house to house. That is a crazy performance of his, and how is it he does it?"

178. When Rāmdās performed the *kirtanas* at night, all the Brahmans were intensely interested, and the hearts of women, Shūdras, and of other people were deeply touched. 179. In this manner *kirtanas* were regularly performed, full of loving enthusiasm. Sādhus and saints, those desiring salvation, those indifferent to worldly things, and lovers of God came to listen.

( *abhangas* not translated )

#### RĀMDĀS RAISES A DEAD BIRD TO LIFE

180. Some days thus passed, and then a special event took place. One day Rāmdās went out for recreation. 181. He took a *galul* (pebble firing bow) in his hand, and had his disciple set up a mark. He made a pile of sand, and on it fixed a banyan tree leaf as his mark. 182. When Samartha shot a pebble at the leaf on the sandy pile, he at the first trial made a hole in it; and all the people cried: "Well done! well done! He never misses the mark". 183. Then they set up another leaf as a target. Just then a turtle dove alighted behind the leaf target. Without intending to do so, Samartha hit the bird and killed it. 184. At this Samartha laughed aloud. "I have hit my mark well", he exclaimed. The Brahmans, on the contrary, heartily

condemned Rāmdās. 185. They said: "What sort of a superman is this? He has come to this sacred place, and here takes a life. He seems to have no regard for a life. His heart feels no pity". 186. Samartha said to the Secretary: "Bring the bird to me". As he took the bird in his hand, and looked at it, his heart felt pity. 187. He covered it with a handkerchief, and then said to the Brahmans: "You, dwellers of this sacred city, are omniscient. Therefore, bring this bird to life at once. 188. You abound in good deeds. You regularly perform austerities. Now spend a little of your good deeds, and preserve the life of this bird. 189. By so doing, you will be praised for a good deed, and I shall be freed from blame. And I will at once give you whatever amount of money you may ask." 190. The Brahmans replied: "If one should spend ten million rupees, its life could not be brought back. You, however, sing with enthusiasm the praises of God. 191. Under whose feet the slab of stone became Ahilyā, a human being. Rāma caused Lankā (Ceylon) to be captured by monkeys. 192. Rāma made Hanumanta and Bibhishana to live for ever. So, Samartha, think of your Rāma, and raise this bird to life." 193. To this challenge of the Brahmans Samartha said in reply: "Is Rāma not able to do this simple thing?" This Rāmdās did as follows. 194. He took the dead bird in his hand, and fed it with water from the Godāvarī. Immediately it flew off into the air, while all the assembled Brahmans looked on. 195. The bird flew up into the air, and Samartha flew after it, quickly caught it, and seated it on his shoulder. 196. He then said to the Brahmans: "You prescribe various penances. You make people again and again shave their head, but you possess no direct manifestation of God. 197. But now by my merely repeating the name of Rāma, the bird's life returned. How can there be a more powerful method? I truly see none". 198. The Brahmans, after listening to Samartha, exclaimed:

"He is a true *bhakta* of Rāma, an *avatāra* of Māruti". {199. Thus praising Samartha they all bowed down to him, and exclaimed: "This noble Vaishnava has arisen to save the world."

### RĀMDĀS WORSHIPS TRIMBAKESHVARA

200. Samartha now went to pay his respects to Trimbakeshvar, the form of whose image Rāmdās has described in verse. Let saints listen to it with reverence.

( Verses not translated )

201. Rāmdās remained here for one month. By day there were feasting for Brahmans, and at night *kirtanas* in honor of Hari. In listening to them hearts were deeply moved.

202. One day, without telling any one, Rāmdās slipped quietly away. He went barefoot and unclad. He arrived at Panchavati. 203. The Secretary followed after him with his elephants, horsemen and palanquins. He made Samartha *namskāra*, and said to him: "Why did you leave without telling any one?" 204. Rāmdās replied to him: "The one whose leave I should take is Rāma, who dwells in the heart. I have come to Panchavati to meet with Him." 205. Thus speaking, Samartha went on to pay his respects to Rāma. At the great door of the temple he prostrated himself with loving thoughts. 206. God and his *bhakta* met here together. They looked at one another face to face. Rāmdās embraced His feet. Their joy was greater than their hearts could contain. 207. Rāmdās then composed a description of the image of Rāma, which I take pleasure in quoting. Listen, pious people.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

208. After Rāmdās had thus described the image of Rāma, he worshipped Him with the usual ceremonies, and

offered Him garments and ornaments. 209. Flowers and repeating of *mantras*, and the sound of many musical instruments were included in the worship. After making Him a *namaskāra*, Rāmdās worshipped Māruti. 210. Māruti then appeared in visible form and spoke words of assurance to Rāmdās. "Whenever you think of me, consider me as present with you." 211. As this *bhakta* of Rāma thus spoke, the heart of Rāmdās filled with joy. He gave gifts to Brahmans 212. He satisfied the appetites of the citizens of the sacred city with various kinds of deliciously cooked food. And in giving them *pānasupāri*, and other favors, he pleased the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. 213. Rāmdās spent in the sacred city all the money the king had given him; and whatever else he possessed, he put it to benevolent uses.

214. In the next chapter will be told how Rāmdās performed delightful *kirtanas* in the presence of Rāma. Hearers must listen attentively. 215. The Merciful-to-the lowly, the Lord-of-Ayodhyā is hereby singing the praises of his servants. Mahipati is merely used as an instrument. The wise understand this.

216. *Svasti*. This book, the Santavijaya, makes the hearer indifferent to worldly things by merely listening to it. Listen then to it, you God-loving pious *bhaktas*. This is the sixth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### GOD AND HIS BHAKTAS ARE ONE

1. Just as the moon and its coolness, just as nectar and its sweetness, so God and his *bhaktas* are two persons in one. 2. Or as a sacred bathing pool and its water, or as a pearl and its lustre are essentially one, so God and his *bhakta* are essentially one. They are in no respect different. 3. Or as the sky and its expanse are one, or as there can be no juices without water, so Rāmdās and Rāma were different in no respect from one another. 4. Or as the sun and the dawn are known by two names, but are not seen as two in the vault of the sky, being of but one essence. 5. So God and His *bhakta* are always one in essence, and out of love become *avatāras* in this world of mortals, in order to save the world.

### RĀMDĀS PERFORMS KĪRTANAS AT PANCHAVATĪ

6. In the last delightful chapter it was stated that Rāmdās went to Trimbaka, and remained there a month. He then went to Panchavati. 7. He there looked upon Rāma's image, and worshipped Him with the sincerity of a loving heart. He sang the praises of this object for contemplation, and satisfied the Brahmans with food.

8. When the sun had set, he began the performance of his *kīrtana*. When the Panditas, Vedicas and other distinguished people heard of this, they came to listen. 9. A dense crowd of women, Shūdras, both men and women, Gujaratis, and pious pilgrims, gathered at the great door of the temple. All were most anxious to hear him. 10. The sound of the musical instruments swelled to a great volume by cymbals, *vīnās*, and loud sounding drums. Rāmdās then began the *kīrtana* with keen delight. 11. He

sang *abhangas* with his gracious voice. I quote them. Listen to them. For his deeds were like his words. And therefore his good fame had spread among men.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

12. Hearing Rāmdās' words of praise, Rāma was pleased, and giving him a direct manifestation of Himself in visible form, met with him. 13. The people did not see Him, and so He talked with Rāmdās, in private, of confidential things. He said: "You and I will constantly meet one another. Do not think of me and yourself as two persons. 14. Māruti is truly my very life. Only for the sake of service is there the appearance of duality. You are his *avatāra* in this *kaliyuga*, for the salvation of the world. 15. If ever you are in distress, bring my form to your mind. And as soon as that hindrance has been put away from you, make known to men my praise." 16. Thus did the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] with a loving thought give Rāmdās the assurance that he need not fear, and then vanished out of sight. Rāmdās now came back to consciousness. 17. Although it was but for a moment that Rāmdās was in this condition of bodily unconsciousness, yet he saw much of wonderful things. After coming to consciousness, he continued the worship of Rāma. 18. He made the wise and pious listeners repeat God's names. In a loud utterance they worshipped, so that all space was overflowed with it. 19. He fastened little bells to his ankles and danced as he sang. There was clapping of hands and snapping of fingers. Hearers in their interest lost their bodily consciousness.

#### RĀMDĀS PREACHES THE POWER OF GOD'S NAME

20. Rāmdās preached to his hearers thus: "I am going to tell you the supreme way by which God is to be attained. It is through the purifying name of Shri Hari

[ God ]. 21. One should repeat His name all the time. Even the washing of the face and bathing is not necessary, for, in Him, whose name is used, all holy waters consist. 22. In the repeating of God's names there is the equivalent of all outer forms of religious acts and austerities. One who repeats God's names is unharmed by hindrances, for the Life-of-the-world drives them away.

23. The Lord-of-Kailāsa [ Shiva ] drank the poison, and as a consequence his whole body was on fire. He made the Ganges river flow on to his head, but that did not cool him off. 24. He then placed the moon on his head, and enveloped himself in an elephant's skin. He tried many other remedies, but was not helped by any of them. 25. Then repenting, he exclaimed : "All these things are in vain." But finally he repeated Rāma's name, and became cooled.

26. Kuntanī was simply a mass of every form of sins. She called to her parrot, whose name was Rāghobā [ Rāma ], and immediately God sent a chariot of light for her, and took her to Vishnu's Heaven, 27. Ajāmila was a Brahman, but he misbehaved with a low caste woman ! Yet in calling his son he remembered Nārāyana, and he was immediately saved. 28. Benares, the City of Salvation, was where Vishveshvāra preached the power of God's name. By it souls are saved. There is no question about this. 29. The great Yogi Shuka, who had attained final deliverance, read the Bhāgavata repeatedly, and in singing the goodness of Shri Hari from a loving heart, he became one full of joy. 30. He who loves the taste of *kīrtanas*, loses the repetition of births and deaths, and God is always near him day and night. 31. Therefore with sincerity in one's heart one should sing the praises of God's deeds, and the Lord-of-heaven, being pleased thereby, will help such an one in his devotion to Him."

32. Such were Rāmdās' *kirtanas*, and his hearers were absorbed in interest. Tears flowed from their eyes. Sobs of love were heard. 33 Rāmdās then repeated the final verses of praise, and waved lights over the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma]. After shouts of "Victory, Victory," sweetmeats were distributed.

### RĀMDĀS REVISITS TĀKALI

34. Samartha then went into the temple and asked the God's permission to depart "Hu-ba id-of-Sītā, let Thy love continue, and again in the future give me the privilege of seeing Thee. 35 Thou hast a great multitude of *bhaktas*, but I have no God but Thee Rāma, In order to attain Thee, I have abandoned all who are dear to me. 36. Shri Rāma, Thy visible form is my chief treasure I know no other means of salvation but Thy name. Thy heart naturally discerns." 37 While saying these things, tears of love filled his eyes. Shri Rāma then drew Rāmdās close to His heart, and in loving words gave him comforting words. 38. Rāmdās then circumambulated Him, and bowed prostrate on the ground before Him. Then circumambulating and keeping the temple to the right, he departed.

39. At the request of the Secretary, Rāmdās was seated in the palanquin with expressions of love. On each side a man waved a fly-whisk, and many kinds of musical instruments were played. 40 Two elephants led the procession. On the cloths covering them, there was embroidered the emblem of Māruti. The Haridās shouted aloud God's names, saying "Rāma is all powerful".

41 Thus accompanied with a large multitude, Samartha arrived at Takali. Here Uddhava Gosāvī hastened to meet him. 42. Along with him came the men of the town, and all of them bowed prostrate on the ground before Rāmdās. The multitude in the procession pitched their tents near

the temple of Māruti and there encamped. 43. Samartha gave orders to the Secretary to prepare at once a feast and to invite all the Brahmans in the neighboring towns to the banquet. 44. The Secretary accepted the order, and immediately began to prepare for the occasion. But Samartha, taking his begging bag in his hand, went into the town. 45. Seeing Rāmdās doing this, his disciples hastened after him, and quickly brought back their begging bags full of food. Samartha then sat for his bath. 46. Having completed all prescribed rites, he then anointed the image of Māruti, pouring over it the five nectars, and dressed it in beautiful garments. 47. By means of the fragrant pastes, rice, garlands of flowers, incense, lights, camphor, and daintily cooked food offered to Him, Māruti was pleased. 48. He circumambulated the image and prostrated himself before it. By this time the Brahmans had come from their baths, and plates for them were arranged in long lines. 49. After the Brahmans had been duly worshipped, the food was served on their plates. Then after the offering ceremony, all the Brahmans sat down to eat. 50. There were many kinds of delicious dishes, and the Brahmans ate until fully satisfied. And having given them *pāna supārī* and various favours, again Māruti was pleased. 51. Then the other citizens of the town who had to wait, now sat down in the same line with Samartha. The king's attendents also sat down with him to eat, and all were fully satisfied. 52. As soon as the sun began to set, Rāmdās began his *kīrtana*, Uddhava Gosāvi, the *bhakta* of his *sadguru* first lovingly sang the names and the epithets of God. 53. Other Vaishnavas also led in the *kīrtana*. Then finally Samartha arose to perform in his kindly way, to the joy of all hearts present.

54. The Giver-of-final-Deliverance [Rāmdās] lovingly shouted aloud: "Victory, Victory to the noble Rāma". While

performing the *kirtana* he danced to the music of the instruments. 55. In listening to his *kirtana* hearts became indifferent to worldly things, and through *bhakti* and knowledge men started on the path that leads to final-deliverance. 56. To begin with, Rāmdās repeated some *abhangas*, containing thoughts on love to God. I have quoted these attractive verses in this chapter. Listen attentively to them, you pious ones.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

57. As hearers listened to Samartha's gracious voice, they were filled with joy. Some had the desire aroused to become his disciples and received from him the initiatory *mantra*. 58. Men and women were enraptured, and to them Samartha said: "Worship Shri Rāma without ceasing, and then you can carry on in joy your domestic life. 59. Rāma should be worshipped with all your heart. There are ten millions of hindrances that cross one's path in life, therefore, you should worship Māruti with a sense of pleasure, and no sins will remain in you." 60. Following these words, hands clapped and cries of Victory, Victory were uttered. By the sound of those cries all space was densely filled. 61. Then lighting the lights and singing the final hymns of praise, Shri Rāma and Māruti had the lights waved over them. They were bowed to, and the final distribution of sweetmeats took place. 62. Then Samartha sat before the image of Māruti, and composed an *abhang*a. Listen to it with attention. It contains a promise of gracious blessing.

1. I bow to Hanumāna, who cause me to meet with Rāma.

He quietst the millions of hindrances.

2. Rāma greatly loves his worshippers.  
He becomes their advocate and protects them.

3. He is for Rāmdās the great and supreme object for thought.

In a moment's time the longings of his sincere heart are fulfilled.

63. While thus performing his *kīrtana* the sun arose, and the people of the towns around, who had come there, now went back to their homes.

#### RĀMDĀS GOES TO SEE HIS PARENTS

64. After remaining three days at Tākali, Samartha, with all his following, left with the intention in his heart of visiting his mother and father. 65. They, therefore, marched along the bank of the Godāvarī river in a happy mood. *Kīrtanas* were performed regularly, and people came out from their villages to see and honor Rāmdās.

66. In this way they arrived at Jāmba, and encamped outside of the town. Messengers were then despatched to call at once the Patila [Mayor] of the town. 67. Invitations also were sent to the Deshmukhas, Deshpandes, and Mahajanas [Government officials] to come and meet Rāmdās. With the exception of the Kulakarnī [Rāmdās' father] all were to be brought to meet Rāmdās. 68. The obedient messengers went at once into the town. The Jumedār [A Government official] was sitting in the town hall. The messengers said to him: 69. "Rāmdās, the *guru* of King Shivājī, is encamped outside of the town. Come at once to welcome him". 70. Hearing this message, the town officer made himself ready, and came to meet Rāmdās with joy in his heart. 71. Many of the men and women of the town assembled to go, and welcomed him, as also the Brahmans of the town. Just then the messengers said to the Kulakarnī [Rāmdās' father]: "You are forbidden to come." 72. Thus the inhabitants of the town, assembling in a great crowd, came out of the town. Samartha was seated

on a throne, and all seeing him made him a *namaskāra*. 73. The Patila presented him with an offering, and Samartha returned it to him. The Patila looked intently at him, and then the people began to talk among themselves: 74. "I see a wen on his forehead. Sūryājipanta's son had one just like it. It is many days since he went far from here, and lived to the full his life of indifference-to-worldly-things. 75. Another said: "While his marriage was being performed, he slipped away from behind the curtain, and abandoned his wife. His brother and parents have been mourning for him ever since." 76. Now suddenly the Brahman town astrologer recognized Rāmdās, and addressed this question to the *svāmī*: "In what town do you live?" 77. Samartha looked upwards and smiling said: "My town is Panchavati. I have come to visit you." 78. Hearing this, the man said: "You are Sūryājipanta's son, I know, and your name is Nārāyana. Now I remember you." 79. The Patila then gave an order to go at once and call his father. Samartha opposed it and remarked: "Why do an improper act? 80. One should not call his *sadguru* and parents to come to him. He should go to visit them." And with this Samartha hastily arose, 81. and with a supreme desire in his heart walked rapidly away on foot. In the meanwhile some of the towns people ran and told his father, 82. When his mother heard the news that was to her joy her heart was full of happiness. It was like return to Ayodhyā of Rāma after he had endured his long abode in the forests. 83. On that day his mother Kausalyā felt her breasts swell with love. It was just such joy that the parents of Rāmdās felt when they heard the news.

#### THE MEETING OF RĀMDĀS AND HIS PARENTS

84. Just then Rāmdās, accompanied by a crowd, arrived at his parents' home. The Vaishnava *bhakta* prostrated himself on the ground before his father. 85. He bowed to his

brother, and they then lovingly embraced one another. Just then his mother came out of the house, and Rāmdās bowed to her. 86. The mother could not contain her feelings. Rānubāī was overcome by her love. She embraced Rāmdās, and lovingly held him to her heart. 87. Tears flowed from her eyes. She tried to restrain her sobs, but could not. Then she exclaimed: "O Nārāyana, how was it that you deserted me? 88. In the very midst of your marriage you displayed your indifference to worldly things, and you ran off into the forest. You did not take notice of us, and now you return as a Gosāvī". 89. Seeing his mother's intense love, Samartha was disturbed in mind. Then thinking to himself that he should remove from her mind her wrong ideas, he there and then composed *abhangas*.

( *Abhangas* not translated)

90. After listening to Rāmdās' expression of his thoughts, his parents felt happy. They said: "Into our family line has been born a Saviour of our race, a chief jewel of *bhaktas*." 91. Samarth's brother's name was Rāmī Rāmdās. Both were of one mind. There was no difference of thought between them. 92. As in the case of Rāma and Bharata, each loving the other intensely, so was it with Rāmī Rāmdās and Samartha. There was no difference of thought between them.

#### RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO SĀTĀRĀ

93. Such was the meeting together of Samartha with parents and brother. He then went into the town to beg his food. The people looked at him in astonishment. 94. They remarked: "The king and his subjects are his suppliants, and yet he, (Samartha), eats what he gains by begging. His indifference to worldly things is strict. It is the gift of God".

95. A feast was prepared at Rāmdās' home, and delicious dishes of many kinds were cooked. All the Brahmins of the town came to the feast. Samartha performed the ceremony of worshipping them. 96. When all the plates were served, Sūryājipanta made the offering ceremony. All ate and were satisfied, and then Samartha began a *Litana*. 97. Rāmdās remained there three days, then taking his mother, father and brother with him, he started to return, riding on horseback. 98. Rānubāl rode in the palanquin, Sūryājipanta sat in the chair on an elephant. His brother was carried in an easy chair. Samartha rode horse back. 99. All the officials of the town came a long distance with them to see them off. They pleaded with Samartha that he would make them another visit soon. 100. Rāmdās said to them "I have no reason for coming back here. After I introduce my parents to the king, I shall send them back here to their home." 101. With those words Rāmdās sent the people of the town back to their homes. Rāmdās' procession moved forward while the band played vigorously. 102. In whatever town they encamped, there they honoured the Brahmins with feasts and gifts. There was always a *Litana* at night, and then they offered their respects to slumber. 103. Samartha attended to the wants of his parents with his own hands. Continuing their journey in this manner, they finally reached Sītārā.

#### KING SHIVĀJI WELCOMES RĀMDĀS' PARENTS

104. Samartha encamped in a garden outside of the city, and there performed his bath. In the meantime the Secretary sent two messengers to inform the king. 105. When the messengers informed the king that Samartha was encamped in the garden along with his mother, father, and brother, he was very delighted. 106. He gave orders to his Ministers to go and escort the *sāmi*, to have the army ready, and all preparation made to

honor them. 107. As soon as the command was given, every thing was in readiness. The elephants, chariots and horses started, the Ministers accompanying them. The king went on foot. 108. Thus in great joy the king arrived at the garden. As soon as he saw Samartha, while yet at a distance, he prostrated himself on the ground before him. 109. As soon, however, as he approached near him, he made him eleven *namaskāras*. The Merciful-one [Rāmdās] raised the king up and cordially embraced him.

110. The king then said: "Samartha, where are your-parents"? The Secretary pointed them out with his hand, and the king felt very glad to see them. 111. The king bowed prostrate on the ground before the three. He embraced them lovingly and exclaimed: "Blessed is this auspicious day. 112. Samartha has brought about just what I had wanted," and then with pleasure worshipped them. 113. With his own hands he sprinkled fragrant powders on them, and placed garland of flowers around their necks. After this welcoming ceremony, the procession again took up its march.

114. Sūryājīpanta with his elder son sat in the chair on the elephant. Samartha was seated in a palanquin, and Shivājī himself walked beside him, flourishing over him the fly-whisk. 115. The eight Ministers came along with them, and all space was more than filled by the sound of the musical instruments. The people of the city, young and old, hurried to pay their respects. 116. When they arrived at the great gate of the palace, the king did a most unusual thing. He took a handful of gold coins and waved them over his *sadguru*. 117. He then scattered them about, which mendicants hastened to pick up. As Samartha entered the palace, guns were fired. 118. The *svāmī* was then seated on the throne. The king held his shoes in his hands. The Ministers flourished the fly-whisks

about him, and preparations were started for feasting. 119. The king bathed Rāmdās, and then began to worship him. He clothed him in a bright yellow garment, and put on him ornaments studded with jewels. 120. Garments of gold brocade, garlands of flowers, incense, lights, and offerings were presented to him. The Brahmans repeated *mantras*, and people shouted : "Victory, Victory." 121. Samartha ate the food that was given him as an offering. The king gave him water for the washing of his hands. The lights for the wave offering were then lighted, and the king waved them over his *sadguru*. 122. The king gave him a bouquet of flowers, and then circumambulated him. The king was supremely happy. Furthermore he honored Samartha's father and mother in the same way. 123. He gave the three guests garments and ornaments. In the meantime the feast was made ready, and the Brahmans were seated in rows. 124. The king's Secretary performed the ceremony of worshipping the Brahmans. The delicious food was then served. The *svāmī* made the offering ceremony. 125. Whatever any one wanted that was served to him, and all were well satisfied. The king distributed to all the *pāna-supārī*, and *dakshinā*. 126. The king showed his love by eating from off the same plate Samartha had used. He cast aside the *Brahma* juice and accepted his *sadguru*'s gracious gift. 127. The king performed the ceremony of cleansing the mouth, and then the feasting of all was finished. When it was night, a *kirtana* was commenced, and all sat down to listen. 128. Rāmī Rāmdās [the brother] performed a *kithā*, its subject being in agreement with the Vedas, Shāstras and Bhāgavata. The Brahmans listened to it with pleasure. Panditas wagged their heads to express their delight. 129. There were songs in various metres, and dancing, in harmony with the singing. There was the music of cymbals and drums all carried on at the same time. 130. The deeds of Rāma

and Krishna, and other *avatāras*, were fully set forth, and there were frequent outbursts of repetition of God's names and cries of "Victory, Victory." 131. In this way the *kīrtana* lasted until the third watch of the night, as a Hari watch night service. The lights were then lighted, and waved, over the Husband-of-Jānaki [Rāma]. 132. After the *kīrtana* was finished, sweetmeats were distributed to all present. Samartha then laid down to rest, and the king stood by him. 133. Samartha said to the king: "The Brahmans were asking you about my family connections. You can now inform them. 134. I have brought my parents here because there was a suspicion in their minds. So now question my parents, and put an end to their doubts." 135. After listening to Samartha's remark, the king placed his head at his feet, and said: "Because of remarks of those strict observers of religious formalities, I took an undue liberty, and asked (about your parents). 136. You *Svāmī*, who knows the hearts of all, have removed the doubts of all."

#### RĀMDĀS' PARENTS RETURN TO THEIR HOME AT JĀMBA

After a month had passed in this way, during which the king served him. 137. Samartha said to the king: "I have made you acquainted with my parents. Now start them on their way home. I have to go into the forest." 138. The king replied: "Your wish is my command." He then worshipped the parents and gave them garments, ornaments, and adornments. 139. He supplied them with a horse and carriage, and some money for the expenses of the journey. The king also honored the members of their family at home. 140. He had copper plates made and had them inscribed, giving them the deed of ownership of Jāmba, and placed his royal seal upon it. In this way he gave them exceptional honor. 141. The king placed the copper plates in Sūryājipanta's hands, and to Samartha's mother he

said: 142. "Blessed, blessed are your good deeds of a former birth, in that you gave birth to Samartha. He has saved the world, O mother. In the future he will save countless numbers. 143. Dhruva was born to Sumati. The *bhakta* Pralhāda was born to Kayādhu, Hanumanta was born to Anjani and joined himself to Rāma. 144. In that same way, you Mother, have given us a Universal Guru before our very eyes." After praising her thus, the king fell at her feet. 145. The king alone on horse back saw them off on their way.

In the mean time Samartha took Dattu with him, and retired into the forest. 146. He cast aside all his garments and ornaments, and gladly wore only his clout, and made his way into the forest where it was the most dense.

147. In the next chapter the Giver-of-eternal-life will Himself be the narrator in words that give delight. Mahipati merely obeys his command, and utters the words that carry favors.

148. *Svasti*. This book, the Santavijaya, by merely listening to it, all the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the wise hearers listen. This is the seventh delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MAHIPATI DESCRIBES HIS UNFITNESS FOR HIS TASK

1. The innocent babe babbles meaningless words before its mother. But the mother is merely amused by it, and supplies the babe with what it wants. 2. And so I have no skill, no cleverness, no power of imagination. I have not listened to many philosophical books. I have not the poetic talent, nor have I a great intellect. I do not know ways of forming similes. 3. My heart is also not pure. My mind is entangled in domestic affairs and occupations. There is no God-loving friend who would carefully examine my book. 4. I am constantly employed in this miserable little town. I am without association with good men. I am dull minded, and of weak understanding, such is the lame Mahipati. 5. But although I am such, I have conceived the strong desire to narrate the good deeds of Thy saints, so, O God, fulfil the desire of my heart. 6. Trusting in Thee, O Shri Hari, I compose in uncouth words, but Thou pervadest every heart, and this is my firm belief. 7. And so now by Thy power, and because Thou art a Cloud-of-Mercy, cause my mind to recollect, and give me the gift of loving expression, such as will be acceptable to saints and all good men.

### RAMDAS GLORIES IN HIS SIMPLE FOREST LIFE

8. In the last delightful chapter we learned of Samartha's going to his birthplace, where he met his parents, whom he brought to Satarā. 9. He remained a month with his parents, and honored them in many ways. The king saw them off on their way ( back to Jamba ), and then returned to Satarā. 10. Here he found to his surprise that his Sadguru left all his garments and adorn-

ments, and had gone into the forests. The barber Dattu was also not to be found. The king now understood what it all meant.

11. Samartha, with a joyous heart, began again his happy life in the forest. He thoroughly enjoyed this mode of living in complete indifference to worldly things. 12. His thought was : "Father, mother and brother are without doubt a part of the illusion of *Māyā*. The honor paid me by the king is illusory. It is Rāma alone who is with me. 13. The devotion of men to things of this life is illusory. How can one find in it eternal joy ? People, with hearts full of desires, worship whatever they think is miraculous. 14. For a few days I was entangled in earthly things, because of deeds I had done in a former birth. But now whether among men or alone in the forests, I want Rāma alone. 15. Shri Rāma is my mother and father. Rāma is my close friend and brother. He is my best friend, my sister and uncle. I have no one, but Rāma. 16. Shri Rāma is my ancestry. Rāma is my dearest relative. The all powerful *Sadguru* Rāma is my saviour from the ocean of this worldly existence." 17. With such thoughts, this dweller in the forest happily occupied his mind. He also sang songs in praise of Rāma, that even bewitched the wild animals. 18. Tigers, wolves, hares and deer, wandered about him, and forgetting all enmity, came as suppliants to Samartha.

19. Dattu, the barber went daily into the town to beg for food, and brought back the flour given him. Samartha made this into cakes, baked on leaves and then the two ate them with pleasure. 20. Because of his association with tigers and wolves, people were afraid and dared not come near him. But the king, leaving his body-guard at a distance, used to come alone into Samartha's presence. 21. After feasting his eyes on his *sadguru*, he would worship

him in his usual way. Samartha would then ask him to leave, and he would then return to his palace.

### A WORLDLY MINDED BRAHMAN VISITS RĀMDĀS

22. There was a Brahman belonging to Māhuli who was absolutely illiterate. On that account he was unable to earn money, and consequently had to remain unmarried. 23. He used to wander alone from house to house, to get his belly full. But in his heart there was the snare of worldly desires. How then could he possess the Supreme-spiritual-riches ? 24. This snare of worldly desires was a great hindrance to him. It brought him dishonor. A saint who possesses worldly desires meets with popular disapproval and scorn. 25. A householder, with such desires, may try to please his patron. But his wife is ungrateful, and shows no feelings of regret (for her ingratitude). 26. A man may have studied the Vedas, and become a wise and expert pandita, but because his desires lead to malice, he fails to attain the Supreme-spiritual-riches. 27. One becomes a naked mendicant, and wanders in the forest. But even here that desire hinders him, and he stretches out his hand for gain. 28. One enters the order of a *sanyāsī*, but his tongue does not like common food. So through his longing for good food, he becomes separated from God. 29. One performs austerities, holds his arm upright, or hangs head down over a smoking fire. Even he may stretch out his hand towards men for the sake of gain. Thus he also is hindered by Desire. 30. Thus Desire is an arch enemy. She has deceived many a seeker after final-Deliverance. If Shri Hari will have mercy on any one, then only his mind will be at rest, without this Desire for worldly things.

31. Now God had placed this worldly minded Brahman alone in this world. He had no family cares. But Desire for worldly things prevented his mind from being

at peace. 32. Wherever any one was giving away money in charity, there he would rush, even to a far distance. But although he was always receiving from many sources, still he gained but little money. 33. Days in which he received excellent food, he would eat with great satisfaction. But if he saw before him common food, he ate it grumblingly. 34. When previous to this, king Shivaji had given a feast in honor of his *sadguru*, he was there sitting in a row with the others. He was for ever remembering this. 35. So the thought occurred to him : "I will make Rāmdās my *guru*. I will become his disciple, and then I shall always have delicious food. 36. Besides this, he being the king's *guru*, the king will connect me with him, as if I was his brother. People will pay me respect and honor." Such were the thoughts of his mind. 37. This Brahman then, with his worldly desires, went into the dense forest to hunt for Rāmdās. Finally he saw Samartha at a distance caressing a tiger. 38. The Brahman was frightened : "If I go near, the tiger will eat me up," he thought. He trembled with fear and made no haste to go near Rāmdās. 39. When Samartha saw him he called out to him : "O Brahman, don't be afraid. The tiger will not kill you. Come at once." 40. Hearing Samartha call him, he said to himself : "This seems a miraculous thing." The Brahman came near, and made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. 41. The *Svāmī* asked him where he was going. The man replied : "I am wandering about for the sake of a livelihood. 42. I was unable to see any town even at a distance, and I was in great fear of this tiger, so I thought if I could have a sight of you, *Svāmī*, my mind would gain courage. 43. I feel as though I would like to become your disciple, O Samartha. And for that purpose I have come to you. Give me now your assuring blessing." 44. Rāmdās questioned him : "Who have you at home? Tell me truly. Do not tell me a falsehood." 45. The man replied : "I have no

wife or children. My father and mother have both died. I am entirely alone in my home. 46. All snares have been destroyed. I want to join myself to some saint. I feel that in so doing I shall cease to care for food or clothing." 47. Whatever is the true desire of any one's heart, it becomes revealed in his speech. Samartha understood what was in the man's heart, and that he was not a worthy candidate for discipleship. 48. It had merely passed through his mind to unite himself to a *sadguru*. It would give him a public reputation, but it could not be from sincerity of feeling. 49. When a person does not perceive the difference between what he should do and what he should not do, between duty to do and duty not to do, such a man cannot understand the easy path to the Supreme-spiritual-riches. Such an one bears the name of one characterized by being in bondage. 50. This Brahman appears to me a worldly minded seeker after earthly desires. He is merely a "Dinner-brother." Shri Rāma Himself has said that one should not give the initiatory *mantra* to those who were not *bhaktas*. 51. Well, whatever is really in His [Rāma's] mind will hereafter come to pass. A cloud pours rain equally, and let us act in the same manner.

52. So Samartha said to him : "Sir, go and take your bath. I will then tell you what will help you to the Supreme-spiritual-riches. Make no delay." 53. Listening to what Rāmdās said, he went and came back from his bath. He placed a garland of flowers around Rāmdās' neck and then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm. 54. At Samartha's bidding he made him eleven *namaskāras* and then according to custom Rāmdās gave him the *mantra*. 55. Just then Dattu, the barber, returned with the results of his begging. He placed the begging bag before Rāmdās, and made a prostrate bow before him. 56. Samartha came back from his bath, and then began to prepare the food.

He made cakes baked on leaves, and served them to the two disciples. 57. Samartha ate the cakes along with Dattu with enjoyment. But the Brahman grumbled in his mind, for his tongue had no liking for such food. 58. Just then King Shivājī arrived for seeing and worshipping Rāmdās. He bowed on the ground before him and worshipped him according to the prescribed custom. 59. Of the delicious food offerings that the king brought, Rāmdās distributed a little to the people as a favor, and what was left he distributed to the monkeys. Samartha himself ate none of it. 60. There was one of Rāmdās' cakes remaining which Samartha gave to the king. The king took it with supreme delight, and ate it there and then. 61. When the Brahman saw this he was astonished. He said to himself : "This is food obtained by begging, and moreover is what has been left over, and yet the king eats it with pleasure."

62. The king took leave of Samartha, and worshiping him left for Sātārā. The Brahman was hungry from his fasting, and was unable to sleep. 63. The next day Rāmdās took Dattu along with him, and went into the town to beg for food. They said to the Brahman : "Come along with us. 64. Which will you do, remain here in this forest, or come with us into the town to beg for our food ?" He replied : "I am afraid to remain here. There are so many wild animals here." 65. So the Brahman went with them. He begged from house to house, but he felt ashamed of doing so. 66. When it was noon Samartha returned; then performed his bath, and baked and ate the cakes he had made. 67. The man became much disturbed in his mind. He thought to himself : "Path for attaining the Supreme-spiritual-riches is too hard for me. I cannot fill my belly with those cakes, and I cannot beg from house to house. 68. Knowing that he was the *guru* of the king, I was glad to become his disciple, but it is evident I can-

not get any delicious food here, and I have been fasting for three days. 69. Not long ago a thousand Brahmans dined with him, and now he lives in this terrible forest. It is I who am an unfortunate one. 70. I dive into the ocean for pearls, and brought up a handful of sand. That is because Fate had so written in my destiny. 71. The king brings Rāmdās choice food, and he throws it to the monkeys. Then he gives those dry leaf-cakes to his disciples, and himself eats them with pleasure. 72. The king eats those cakes dry just like a glutton. 73. I cannot stay with him to the end," was his final decision. 74. The Brahman said to Samartha : "Svāmī, give me all means to go. I want to go to-day to another town. My mind is not content here." 75. The man made him a *namaskāra*, and left for another town where he wandered from house to house in hope of an invitation to dine. 76. Some said to him : "Here is some bread and greens. Accept them if you will." He replied : "If there is any special celebration going on, she's house." 77. People replied: "Go to the Deshmukh's house. There is a feast taking place there in honor of a great man." 78. The Brahman went there at the appointed time. As he dishes were served, he was seated with the guests. He ate the dainty food, with every mouthful he felt satisfaction. 79. He said to himself: "For the last three days I have not had proper food, but today I have eaten all I wanted. It has been a good day for me." 80. And when he received the *pāna-supārī* and the gifts of money, he was especially pleased. He thought : "I would like to remain with this man always." Such was the desire he conceived. 81. With this hope in his mind, he went to see the man, and made him a *namaskāra*, adding this request: "The desire has come to me to remain with you always."

So instruct me and keep me with you." 83. The good man asked him : " Where is the place you live ? What is the name of the town ? Tell me." 84. The man replied : " I live at Mābulī, at the river junction. I have no share of wife or son. Therefore, I wander about sadly. 85. As I had no permanent place for eating, I became a disciple of Rāmdās, the *guru* of the king. But he lives in the forest. 86. His indifference to worldly things is of a very strict kind. Going into the town, he begs for flour, and then makes cakes without even using salt. I cannot endure them." 87. When the good man heard these words, he understood what was in that man's heart, and so he said to himself : " He has a gluttonous desire for choice food. He seems one whom Fortune has deserted. 88. Rāmdās is truly a world-guru. He is an *avatāra* of Maruti. In order to save the world, he has manifested himself as a man in this mortal world." 89. Thus thinking to himself, the good man said to the Brahman : " You became the disciple of one, and now why have you come to me ? 90. Because a mother is weak, she should not be abandoned by her child. Another woman may be more beautiful, but her breasts will not swell to nurse another's child. 91. To leave one's first *guru* and seek for another, is a disgraceful act. How can such a man attain the Supreme-spiritual-riches ? Such an one is worthy of rebirths and redeaths. 92. Although you were unable to endure the forest life in company with Samartha, still you should be meditating on the *mantra* he gave you. 93. If a *sadguru*, seeing the sincerity of some one, comes into his town, it is right you should make him a *namashāra*, offering him *tulsi* leaves. 94. But to become a disciple of one, and then go to another as a suppliant for discipleship, is an act contrary to scripture. Saints and all good men laugh at such." 95. The good man tried hard to impress him with his teaching, but that ignorant fellow

was not impressed. He fell at the good man's feet, and said : " Give me, Sir, the *mantra* making me your disciple."

96. Wherever this good man was invited to dine there he also would go with him. Said he : " Please don't leave this place before you give me the *mantra*."

97. The good man said to him : " Go back to Samartha and give his *mantra* back to him, and then come to me."

98. After listening to the good man's word, the Brahman went into the forest. He saw Samartha's abiding place, but Samartha was nowhere to be seen.

99. He was in great fear of the wild beasts, and wandered about a long time in the forest. Finally, however, he saw Rāmdās enjoying himself on the bank of the Krishnā, and said to him :

100. " I have seen another good *guru*. Take back the *mantra* you gave me." When Samartha heard him say this, he was much astonished.

101. He replied : " If I should make a search, I could not find so true a disciple as you. Why do you wish to return the *mantra*? What fault have you found in me?"

102. The man replied : " I found that your path to the Supreme-spiritual-riches was too difficult. You wander about day and night in the forest and eat those leaf-cakes."

103. Samartha replied : " Listen. Take some water in your mouth, and then spit the mouthful on to the ground. That will make you free of a *guru*."

104. Following this suggestion of Samartha's, the undevout man spat a mouthful of water on to the ground. Without any intention on his part it formed thirteen syllables on the ground.

105. Rāmdās now said to him : " You can go now as a suppliant to some other *guru*. Nothing of mine now remains with you. Look at the syllables on the ground."

106. " I shall do so," said the Brahman, and he returned to the town where the other Saint was. But when he went to bathe and to perform his morning prayer, he found that he could

not remember the *Gāyatrī mantra*.

107. He found himself overpowered by drowsiness and sleep. His body lacked

energy. But the Brahman aroused himself, and went into the town. 103. He met the great man, and told him all the news: "I have thrown away the *mantra* that Rāmādīs had given me. Now instruct me, and make me your disciple." 109. The good man asked him how he had thrown away his *mantra*? He replied: "I spat out a mouthful of water, and it formed thirteen syllables on the ground." 110. The good man was astonished, and said: "Blessed are the deeds of Samartha. No one has ever seen such a miracle before. 111. That *mantra* of thirteen syllables was given to Māruti by Rāma. That you should throw away that *mantra* makes it seem that you are one whom good fortune has deserted. 112. The *mantra* that Samartha taught you is the same that I teach. If it once is spit out of the mouth, it is impossible for it to return again. 113. To make one a disciple who already is a disciple of another is a great wrong. So go away from here. You cannot be my disciple." 114. Being rejected in this way, it upset the right relationship he should have had. He was like one who rejected the wish-cow, and sought for a milk-cow. 115. It was as when one puts his hand to a cow's udder, she should kick him off. He is doubly lost. And so it was with this Brahman.

116. He who is the slave of his appetite; he whose mind is entangled in the desires for worldly things, and yet at the same time has the wish aroused in him to have a share in the Supreme-spiritual-riches [ *paramārtha* ]. 117. He should seek for a *sadguru* who is a householder, and a God-loving pious man, with an unusual worshipful spirit, and finds peace of heart through the joy of love. 118. Whose mind is impressed with Indifference to worldly things, and does never forget the contemplation of Hari, and who by his worshipful spirit sings the praises of Vishnu. 119. A seeker after Final-deliverance [ *mumu-*

*kshu* ], and yet one who has to live in this busy world, must go as a suppliant to such a *guru*. He must hold in his heart what he is told and he must serve his *guru* in the following way. 120. If he possesses the means, he should send money and grain to his *sadguru*. He should so arrange it that his *sadguru* may not have any anxiety about his domestic affairs. 121. After finishing his own work, he should go to his *svāmī*'s house to pay him respects. He who acts thus, will be saved in the ocean of this worldly existence, and escape from the eightyfour cycles of rebirths and deaths. 122. A person who is financially weak, and yet has become a disciple of his *sadguru*, he should perform some physical labour for him, and thus obtain the blessing of his *guru*'s favour. 123. Any one who performs various lowly forms of work in the house of his *svāmī*, Shri Hari shows his mercy to such, and saves him from the ocean of this worldly life. 124. One should go as a suppliant to one who has no selfish desires, and become as he is. Just as a filthy stream after joining the Ganges obtains its name, and falls into the sea. 125. One might through Fate have the brilliancy of Aruna [the Sun's charioteer]. He would then sit in the sun's chariot, and be of the same spherical shape as the sun.

126. Such was the relationship to Samartha of those sincere seekers after final Deliverance who came as suppliants to him. The *svāmī* accepted them, and made for them a name on this round earth. 127. Thus blest was king Shivājī, who, knowing Samartha's heart, continually hunted for him in the forest, in order to worship and make him *namaskāras*. 128. However, relatives, officials, panditas, Vedic Brahmans, friends, and Brahmans in general spoke insultingly of Rāmdās before and behind him. 129. They call him : "Crazy Rāmdās." The king has become his disciple, and has become even more crazy

than he, we think. 130 Whatever money there was in the royal treasury, he has spent on his *guru*, and becoming totally unconscious of body like king Janaka, wanders on foot through the forest 131 Samartha belongs to the genus of monkey. Ornaments studded with jewels were placed upon him, but he cast them all away, and hastened into the forest" 132 Such were the many insulting remarks of the evil minded. But the king's determination was unchangeable. He was all the time worshipping Ramdas, and forgetting the cares of worldly things. 133 From the very first the king had a great desire to visit saints, and he used to listen to the stories in the Bhāgavata. In listening to them his heart gained a sense of peace 134. There was one Nimbarka Baba of Dvārakā, whose disciple Tukarama was. With closest attention he listened to many stories regarding him 135 The blessed words of the saints the king held in his mind. Therefore, when he saw Samartha his devotion to a *guru* reached its height. 136 In the past there have been kings who were like statues of good deeds, whose praises have been sung in the Puranas. But just so in this *Kali yuga* King Shivaji has been chosen for his devotion to his *guru*.

137 He who is Merciful-to-the-lowly, the Giver-of-final-Deliverance will continue to speak through me his blessed words. Mahipati having received his assurance not to fear, is ready to sing the praises of the saints.

138 Svasti This book, the Santavijaya, by the mere listening to it the longings of one's heart are fulfilled. May the wise, pious saints listen. This is the eighth delightful chapter

## CHAPTER IX.

### GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE SAINTS OF OLD

1. Victory, Victory, to Thee Shri Hari, Thou art the dweller on the sea of milk, the Recliner-on-the-Serpent Shesha, the Unchangeable one. When Thy *bhaktas* are in difficulty Thou hast acted for their relief, in many an *avatāra*. 2. Thou didst assume the Fish and Tortoise *avatāras*, also the Nrisinha, Vāmana and Bhārgava *avatāras*. Thou didst assume the names of Rāma and Krishna for Thy servants to sing of them. 3. In this *Kaliyuga*, Thou didst become the Buddha *avatāra*. The great rishis have written of them in the Purānas, but seeing the great love of Thy *bhaktas*, Thou hast spoken to them directly in very loving words. 4. Seeing Nāmadeva's devotion, Thou, Husband-of-Rukmini, didst eat with him. Thou didst move forward the wall on which Dnyānadeva was sitting, a deed that *sādhus* and saints sing of in their *kīrtanas*. 5. The simple-minded *bhakta*, Dāmājipanta, allowed the king's grainary to be looted by all the Brahmans. Thou becamest Vithu Nāyaka, the adopted son of Dāmājipanta and didst protect him. 6. Kūrmadāsa, a cripple without hands or feet, started to go on a pilgrimage to Pandhari. Thou didst go to meet him as far as Lahula, and gave him a vision of Thysel. 7. Thou, Lord-of-Pandhari, didst ask Sānvatyā Māli for a place in which to hide. He ripped open his abdomen, and hid you in his heart. 8. It was Nāmā, the tailor, the God-loving *bhakta*, who drew Thee out. Therefore, all the saints speak of Thee as the child of Sānvatā Māli. 9. Narahari, the Goldsmith, was a *bhakta* of Shiva. Seeing his determination, O Vitthala, even up to day, wearest Thou on Thy head the symbol of Shiva. 10. The devotion of Rāmdās was fixed on Rāma, and knowing

his heart, Thou didst take a bow and arrow, in Thy hand.  
11. Do Thou, O Husband-of-Rukmini, relate his story in detail. I am truly dull of mind, who does not know even how to form letters into words.

### RĀMDĀS GOES TO PANDHARAPURA

12. In the last chapter there was contained the story of the undevout disciple, who threw away his *mantra*. He spit out the mouthful of water on to the ground, and there it formed the thirteen syllables. 13. Suddenly the king appeared again. With sincerity he worshipped the Giver-of-final-Deliverance. Then at the command of Samartha he returned to his place.

14. After the above events Rāmdās, indifferent to all worldly things, went down to the bank of the Krishnā, where he quietly amused himself. Just then a large band of pilgrims arrived, and encamped at that spot. 15. Some fastened bells to their feet and danced here and there. They worshipped one another not being able to restrain their enthusiasm. 16. Some took *vīṇās* and clappers in their hands, and sang the *abhangas* of Tukārāma. They lovingly described the greatness of Pandhari, and finally lost all bodily consciousness. 17. There were many bands carrying banners, who with loud cries took Vitthala's name. Seeing them doing these things, Rāmdās, asked them very politely: 18. "Where is this pilgrim band going to?" They replied: "We are going to Pandhari." This was their reply on the bank of the Krishnā as they prepared to encamp. 19. They pitched their tents, and settled down for the night. When the sun was set, Rāmdās sat in meditation, bringing the Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma] to mind. 20. As he was thus remembering Rāma, the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā revealed Himself. Rāmdās offered Him fruit and worshipped both Shri Rāma and Māruti. 21. Then sitting absorbed in his thought, he began to describe

the goodness of Shri Rāma. The pilgrims, seeing him in this attitude, came near him, and made him a *namaskāra*. 22. The saints and good people in that company said to Rāmdās : "You should come with us to Pandhari. It will please all of us. Please agree to our request." 23. Rāmdās replied : "What deity is there? Tell me minutely; and who had a direct visual manifestation? and whom shall I see in visible form?" 24. The saints replied : "The deity is Krishna, the eighth *avatāra*, who voluntarily assuming a human body lived at Dvārakā, but has come to this place. 25. There was a good *bhakta*, named Pundalika, who devoted himself to his parents' service. God-supreme felt the burden of necessity to reward him for his devotion, and so, He came to see him. 26. The Life-of-the-World said to Pundalika : "I am pleased with you. Though you may ask for the promise of a seeming impossible gift, still I shall certainly give it to you." 27. Pundalika replied : "Remain here forever, O God, with Thy feet parallel on the brick, and Thy two hands on Thy hips. 28. The deity, the sacred place, the devotion of the *bhākta*; and devotion should be known by one (Zodiacal) name alone. So change Thy name and call Thyself willingly Pānduranga. 29. God-supreme Lord-of-the-Universe, with Thy sight directed to the point of Thy nose, remain here on the bank of the Bhīmā for the sake of protecting Thy *bhaktas* in all times of distress." 30. To this request the Life-of-the-World replied : "I accept. This sacred city of Pandhari will be a purifying place, a heaven in the land of the mortals." 31. For this reason the sacred place is called Pandhari. Pānduranga is the helper of His *bhaktas*. For the sake of His *bhakta*, Pundalika, He remained there at the door of His *bhakta*, Pundalika, on the bank of the Bhīmā. 32. In this *Kaliyuga* there have been many *bhaktas*, who have gone as suppliants to Him, and have had direct visual manifestations of Him, a fact that has

become known world-wide. 33. Bhānudāsa, a Vaishnavā *bhakta*, Nivrittideva and Dnyānadeva, Sānvatā Māli, and Nāmdeva, had a firm devotion to Vithala. 34. Kūrmadāsa, the God-loving *bhakta*, Gorā, the potter, a man of intense devotion, Janārdana and Ekanātha, all these worshipped Pānduranga. 35. And other saints also have gone as suppliants to Vithobā. So you must come to Pandhari." Thus the saints pleaded with Rāmdās. 36. Samartha replied to them : "Shri Rāma is my family deity. Aside from Him my heart finds no resting place. What am I to do in his case? 37. My eyes long day and night to see the Bearer-of-the-bow [Rāma], and I want to listen only to the story of Rāma's related by Vālmiki." 38. The pilgrims recognized Rāmdās's determination not to go with them, and they left for Pandharapura. Suddenly another band of pilgrims came to the bank of the Krishnā, and encamped for the night. 39. Samartha sang of Shri Rāma. The pilgrim saints spoke to him, and urged him to go with them to Pandhari. 40. Rāmdās replied : "If the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] is there, take me along with you. If He is not there, my desire to go there is insufficient." 41. The saints replied: "Rāma pervades every place. Using the eye of knowledge you must recognize Him as in yourself". 42. Hearing this remark, Samartha composed two *abhangas*. I quote them in this book. Listen to them, you pious people.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

43. Hearing Rāmdās' verses, the saints were astonished, and the poets among them remarked to one another on the fixed determination of Rāmdās. 44. The *chūtaka* bird will not drink water that is on the earth. An infant cannot be comforted without its mother. The *chakora* bird waits for moonbeams. Therefore, all these ( cloud, mother and moon ) have the power of concentration. 45. A

dutiful wife does not care to listen to any stories except those about her husband. So Rāmdās' heart cared for no one but Rāma. 46. After their vain pleading with Rāmdās the band of pilgrims left. And now Shripati ( Rāma ) Himself was impressed by the *bhakti* of Rāmdās, which had but one object and performed a wonder. 47. And so the Life-of-the-World immediately manifested Himself in the form of a Brahman. Rāmdās had just finished his bath, and had prepared the leaf-cakes. 48. Just as he was serving the cakes he saw the Brshman. He made him a *namaskāra* and invited him to eat. 49. "This is food obtained by begging. Please accept it. Through your mouth Shri Rāma is always satisfied." 50. Hearing these words of Rāmdās, Chakrapāni ( Vishnu ) answered : "This was the wish of my heart, and hunting for you in the forest I have arrived." 51. The Life-of-the-World then hastened to bathe in the Krishnā and wearing His wet clothes applied the *gopichandana* clay to his forehead. 52. Although He had assumed the form of a Brahman, still the sixfold brilliancy of His glory did not cease. For the sake of His *bhakta* He was not at all ashamed of this act. 53. He who is the father of Brahmadeva; He who is unaffected by the three *gunas*; He who is unaffected by *Māyā*; He, because of His love for His *bhakta*, assumes a visible form. 54. Rāmdās arranged some *palasa* leaves as plates, and placed his leaf-cakes on them. He then made the offering ceremony. He said: "O merciful, Life-of-the-World, 55. Who art worshipped by the Blue-throated-one [Shiva]; Who is the heart's jewel of the son of Anjani, to Thee I offer this food this day." 56. Having thus made the offering ceremony, and offerings to the vital airs, the Husband-of-Rukmini ate the dry leaf-cakes greedily, with delight. 57. The Dweller-in-Heaven, Who was invited by Indra to drink nectar, would not go to him, yet He asked for this humble food from His *bhakta*. 58. Rhishikeshi ( Krishna ) said to Rāmdās : "I have been fasting for many days. Unexpected-

ly I have had to-day this feast in the forest in company with you." 59. Talking in this way the Life-of-the-World ate to His satisfaction, and Rāmdās with much pleasure gave Him the *tulsi* leaves for cleansing his mouth. 60. Then sitting quietly on the grass, Rāmdās asked the Brahman : "Svāmi, where do you live? Where have you come from to-day ? 61. To what place are you going? Tell me your name." To these questions of Rāmdās the Husband-of-Rukmini replied : 62. "Together with my wife I have been living many days at Pandharī. Begging is my profession. I go seeking for patrons. 63. In the month of Kārtika I went to Alandi on a pilgrimage. Then Tukārāma very kindly took me to Dehū. 64. He also is one of my patrons. He is just like you, indifferent to worldly things, who has discarded his domestic life, and all wrong desires and wanders about in the forest. 65. And now it is the festival season of Āshādhi and the eleventh of the fortnight is near. My patrons all come there, so I must go at once to Pandharī. 66. You have asked me the name of this bodily frame. Every-where people call me Vitthalabhata. 67. I have a desire that you should come along with me to Pandharī. I will take you carefully, and together we shall enjoy ourselves. 68. It has been my characteristic from the very beginning to enjoy the company of saints, so, take the path to Pandharī. I am telling you the desire of my heart". 69. To these words of the Life-of-the-World Rāmdās replied : "I am fond of the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. He has entered into my heart. 70. I do not like to contemplate other deities aside from Rāma, with the bow in His hand, and His beautiful pleasing form. 71. Wherever He is, there I am willing to go prostrating myself." To this remark of Rāmdās' Chakrapāni (Krishna) replied : 72. "The image of Pānduranga is at Pandharī but the image of Māruti is in front of Him. He will cause you to meet Rāma. Have no doubt of that." 73. After those remarks of Vitthalabhata Rāmdās

felt a sudden desire. He arose immediately, and started on the path to Pandharī. 74. Dattu, the barber walked near him. He was given the begging bag to carry. God and His bhakta walked gaily along. 75. (As they went along) Samartha and Dattu went into the towns to beg. They baked the cakes on leaves, and all three ate very happily together. 76. It was the month of Āshādha, the rainy season. Rāmdās walked barefooted. Every once in a while his feet were pierced by thorns. He, however, did not feel them as he was in a condition of bodily unconsciousness. 77. But Vitthalabhata at once noticed them, and pulled them out. Thus the merciful Husband-of-Rukmini cared for His *bhakta*. 78. Just as a mother looks moment by moment at her ignorant child, just so, God cared for His *bhakta*. 79. As they descended towards Pandharī they saw the domes from afar. It made Rāmdās compose an *abhangā*, to which give ear, you pious folk.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

### RĀMDĀS' EXPERIENCES IN PANDHARĪ

80. There were an innumerable number of pilgrims singing hymns of praise as they walked along. Musical instruments and banners abounded, and all were shouting "Victory, Victory to God." 81. The pilgrims made *namaskāras* to one another, and saluted one another. They did not take recognition of differences of caste or personalities. All pride had vanished. 82. Whether they were looking at animate or inanimate things they wished their minds to realize that God was in all. And so no one had any pride of caste, and fell at the feet of any saint. 83. Seeing these things, Rāmdās' mind was puzzled. He thought: "I have seen very many sacred places in my wanderings, but I never found a place where pride of heart had disappeared. 84. But here men and women

seem without pride. Pandhari is filled with the loud repetitions of God's names." In company with the Brahman, Rāmdās now approached the great door of the temple. 85. Vitthalabhata now said to Rāmdās: "I must go to see a patron." And with these words the Life-of-the-World became invisible. 86. Dattu said to Rāmdās: "What has become of Vitthalabhata? What is his place? Where does he belong? We are unable to realize this." 87. Samartha perplexed in his mind replied: "He was the Lord-of-Pandhari. It looks to me that He cast over me the spell of a Vaishnava *māyā*, and surely deceived me. 88. The Lord-of-Pandhari, in the form of a Brahman, brought me hither, caring for me in the way. He is the Protector-of-the-helpless, therefore, He pulled out the thorns from my feet with His own hands." 89. Thus conversing, they arrived at the Eagle platform. Here a *kirtana* was being enthusiastically performed, accompanied with loud repetitions of God's names, uttered with feelings of love. 90. As Rāmdās listened, he could not restrain his feelings, and there and then composed two *abhangas*, to which I ask you to listen.

(*Abhangas not translated*)

91. After Rāmdās had repeated these verses, he made a *namaskāra* to all the saints. Just then he saw before him the image of Māruti, and his heart was filled with joy. 92. He bowed before him on the ground, and with sincere feelings worshipped the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti]. Rāmdās stood before Him with his hands joined palm to palm and asked: "Where is our Rāma?" 93. Then Māruti related to Rāmdās the story of long ago. How Rāma killed the Lord-of-Lankā (Ceylon), and freed the good Sītā. 94. How He gave immortality to Bibhishana and installed him over Lankā (Ceylon), and how accompanied with His army of monkeys He returned

to Ayodhyā. 95. How the Lord of Ayodhyā became a universal ruler over the earth limited only by the seas. How in His kingdom there was no such thing as old age, death or poverty. 96. Mankind abandoned hatred and evil thinking, and lived in the fulness of joy. The very name of falsehood could not be found, even if needed for medicinal purposes. 97. Shri Rāma ruled for eleven thousand years. Then sitting in His chariot of light [ vimāna ] He left Ayodhyā for Heaven. 98. I then pleaded with Rāma : ' Although Thou hast given me an immortal body, I cannot endure to live without seeing Thee. 99. Thou art leaving me, O God, and going to Thy own abode. How can I bear this ? O Thou Dark-as-a-Cloud, O Thou Being of Supreme-Goodness'. 100. Then I further pleaded that He should give me a visible manifestation of Himself. To this Rāma replied to me in His kind way. 101. Hearing my plea He gave me this promise : ' When you contemplate Me three times a day, I, Rāma will manifest Myself in your heart. 102. In the *avatāra* Krishna I shall meet you in a visible manifestation.' With this promise the Lord-of-Ayodhyā left for Heaven. 103. I then sat on the shore of the ocean, and thrice a day contemplated Rāma. In my mental worship I contemplated the Enemy-of-Rāvana [ Rāma ]. 104. When it was near the close of the Dvāpāra Yuga, the Son of Brahmā approached me. I asked him when I would meet Rāma ? 105. Nārada replied : ' By the time you visit all the sacred watering places on the earth Rāma will meet you'. 106. For this reason I have been wandering about with the desire in my heart of meeting with Rāma. After I had visited many shrines and sacred places, I finally came to Dvārakā. 107. Here I saw a city of gold, whose domes kissed the skies. It was like Lankā ( Ceylon ) ruled over by Bibhīshana. Seeing the city, I was angry. 108. I intended to lift it up with my tail and throw it into the sea. Just then the

Muni Nārada appeared on the scene 109. I asked him the name of the city. Nārada replied truly that it was the city of Dvāraka 110. That its king was the great Balarama who was the *auṭīra* of the Serpent Shesha. Replying thus much to me, the son of Brāhma-deva [Nārada] left 111. He at once informed Krishna that Māruti the *bhakta* of Rāma had come to visit him. 112. Nārada and Krishna were really one, there being no difference between them in their feelings, but they had taken two different forms in order to fully carry on the lives (they were to live) 113. When Nārada told me that Balarama was king of the city, my heart was filled with anger, and I went into the city park. 114 There were here many kinds of trees bearing beautiful fruits and flowers. They were tall, and pierced the sky, just like the trees in the Nandan forest 115. I then enacted here the tricks of monkeys. I ate my belly full of fruit. I broke down great trees, which made the forest-keepers weep 116. On the throne were seated Shri Krishna, Balarama and Ugrasena, and around them five hundred and sixty million Yādavas were standing. So crowded was the assembly. 117 The forest-keepers cried out before the assembly that a monstrous monkey had come, and was destroying the park, and had sent by them this message 118. That Balarama the king should either give up his title, or bring up at once all his army to fight. 119 When the assembly heard this news, Nārada clapped his hands. And Krishna turning to Balarama laughed. 120. The Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] then said to his eagle "Do at once what I am to tell you. A monkey has come into the park. Capture him and bring him here." 121 The eagle, with his heart full of pride, replied: "Do you send me to conquer a monkey? I once conquered you, Shri Hari. Perhaps you have forgotten that." 122. The Lord-of-Dvāraka replied: "My *bhaktas* are more powerful than myself. They have already confined me in their

hearts, and among them this monkey is a great *bhakta* of God. 123. So that aside from you, there is no one able to conquer him." To this remark of the Recliner-on-Shesha [Krishna], the eagle responded by taking flight.

124. Knowing that the eagle had come, I sat with closed eyes. I contemplated Rāma in my heart, and said not a word to him. 125. The Eagle said to me: "Get up, you monkey, and come quickly along with me. Balarāma and Shri Krishna have called you." 126. Still I said nothing. He came nearer to me, and struck me with his claws. I slapped him in his face, so that he fell in a faint. 127. After regaining consciousness he returned, and fell down in the midst of the Yādava assembly. Shri Krishna came to him and gave him some water to drink. 128. Krishna said to him: "You had great confidence in yourself. Has the monkey beaten you?" The Eagle replied: "He is in reality God Rudra at the time of deluge, and appears as big as a mountain." 129. Nārada then said to Balarāma: "Change your name for another. I know that that monkey is all powerful. Neither gods nor demons can outdo him." 130. Krishna then said to Pradyumna: "Take with you the Yādava army, bind the monkey and bring him here." 131. At the command of the Life-of-the-World the Yādava army made themselves ready. All then went to the park, and engaged in defiant acts. 132. Māruti now said to Rāmdās: 'The Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] told me while contemplating Him: 'Do that which will destroy their pride.' 133. Having received this command, I remained perfectly silent. The Yādavas said to me: 'Wake up, you monkey. 134. You have destroyed the trees of the park and so Balarāma and Krishna are very angry. Bring to your mind any one who can now protect you.' 135. Then some said: 'What can one monkey alone do before many?' So saying, they marched towards me and looked

at me with curiosity from before and behind. 136. One tickled me from behind. One threw pebbles at me from a distance. Some said among themselves: 'Is he dead or alive?' 137. I listened to all they said, then I gave a command to my tail, and then before they knew it at all I bound them all. 138. By Shri Rāma's command my tail flew up into the air, and the Yādavas hung from it like so many bats. 139. I swayed my tail in the air like the awaying of a kite. Men and women in Dvārakā saw the sight, and there was a great outcry of distress. 140. There were some strong swimmers among them hanging to my tail. They jumped into the sea. I then dipped my tail in the water and gave them all a bath. 141. As the water rushed into their ears and mouths, all were intensely frightened. Just then some one went and told Krishna that the monkey had drowned the whole army of the Yādavas. 142. Nārada laughed and clapped his hands and said to Shri Krishna: 'You will have to change your name. The Monkey has drowned millions of Yādavas. The Monkey is always supreme.' 143. Balarāma remarked. 'The end has come.' Ugrasena and Krishna were troubled. Krishna then called the Eagle and said to him: 144. 'That is not a monkey, but Māruti, a worshipper and *bhakta* of Rāma. Go, therefore, tactfully, and bring him here.' 145. The Eagle replied: 'Take your disk in your hand and go yourself and kill him. O God, why do you put any one else in peril?' 146. The Father-of-Brahmadvā [Krishna] then said: 'I will take the form of Rāma. You then have nothing to fear. You have but to say: 'I will bring about your meeting with Rāma'. 147. Hearing this assuring remark, he started at once, and going into the park called out from a distance: 148. 'He who is the Universal Ruler, Lord-of-Ayodhyā, Shri Rāma, the son of Dasharatha, summons Māruti at once to come and meet him.' 149. Hearing this message, I felt very happy, and I at once let tho

Yādavas go, whom I had bound by my tail. 150. I went to the Eagle and made him a *namaskāra*. I took him by the hand, and made him walk, telling him to bring me to Rāma. 151. The Eagle was troubled for he said to himself: 'Perhaps Krishna has not yet taken the form of Rāma. If he has not, Māruti will kill me. Things do not look favourable.' 152. But seeing the love of his *bhakta*, Shri Krishna became Rāma. He looked adorable with his bow and arrow. Balarāma became Lakshmana. 153. By Nārada a message was sent to Satyabhāmā: 'Shri Krishna has invited you to come. He has become the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. Change yourself at once into Sītā.' 154. She adorned herself quickly, and came to Krishna. Krishna laughing said to her: 'You are not really Sītā.' 155. Satyabhāmā felt ashamed, but Krishna, the Killer-of-Kansa said: 'All the sixteen thousand chief wives including yourself go, and fetch Rukmini quickly here.' 156. At the command they went to where Rukmini was, and bowed to her, and seeing that she had as beautiful a form as that of Sītā they were wonderstruck. 157. As soon as Rukmini heard the message, she came, and sat on the lap of Rāma. Around were a multitude of monkeys, and also Shatrughna and Bharata created by Krishna. 158. While Krishna was manifesting these wonderful changes, I arrived without delay. I bowed to Rāma and lovingly embraced Him. 159. I stood before Him with hands joined together palm to palm. Rāma spoke in his sweet nectar voice. 'Has your longing now been fulfilled? 160. I had said to you that during the *avatāra* of Krishna, I would give you a direct visual manifestation of myself. That revelation you now have. 161. Under the names of Rāma and Krishna I have manifested myself in two *avatāras*. But we are essentially one. We are not to be considered as separate beings.' 162. With this remark the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma] took again the

form of Krishna. From that time I lovingly worship Rāma-krishna."

163. The above story of events, when Krishna was the *avatāra*, was told by Māruti to Rāmdās. Rāmdās was astonished, and said to himself : "I will test this assertion myself." 164. So having made a loving *namsakāra* to Māruti, Rāmdās went into the assembly hall. He stood before the image, but it was still the image of Pānduranga. 165. Samartha stood with hands joined together palm to palm, and with his lips he pleaded. I quote his *abhangas* here in this chapter. Listen to them with love.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

166. At the pleading words of Rāmdās, the Cloud-of-Mercy was deeply moved, for he adapts himself to the feelings his *bhaktas* have towards him. 167. Then by using the Vaishnava *mūyā* he showed Rāmdās a wonderful sight. He showed him the whole view of Ayodhyā in a moment's time. 168. The Chandrabhāgā flowed in front of Rāmdās, but it looked like the Sharayū Gangā. Rāmdās' intense love bewitched Pānduranga. 169. He had removed His hands from His side, and taken in them a bow and arrow. Around him Vaishnava cowherds sang, who seemed monkeys to Rāmdās. 170. Through the feelings of *bhakti* Rukmini became Sītā. And when Rāmdās saw Rāma, he was joyful in heart. 171. Just as a mother takes up her infant the moment she sees it. Just so the Merciful-to-the-lowly embraced the God-loving Rāmdās. 172. Where God and His *bhakta* meet together, there can never be separation. But in order that there may be historical events, the Ruler-of-the-Universe creates separate beings. 173. He thought to Himself : "If my *bhakta* is absorbed into my essence, then who will there be to plead with me? Who will sing aloud my praises?" He then said to Rāmdās : 174. "Go to

the Eagle platform, where the saints and *mahantas* are seated, and perform a *kīrtana* there."

175. In the next chapter there will be a pleasing story which will satisfy the ear's longings. So let the hearers give close attention. 176. While then Rāmdās is lovingly performing his *kīrtana* on the river sand, do you with close attention listen to Mabipati. 177. Svasti. This book, the Santavijaya, by the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Listen, you, God-loving pious *bhaktas*. This is the ninth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE EVIL KALI YUGA [ Evil age ]

1. In this Kali Yuga the speaking of untruths has greatly increased. For that reason God assumed the Buddha *avatāra*. 2. The holy, long-lived *rishis* went off to Badrikāshrama. The *sanyāsis* that remained have been troubled by lust and anger. 3. Brahmins that study the Vedas are hindered by the snare of their desires. Even when their aged bodies become mere skeletons, still they cannot detach themselves from worldly affairs. 4. The wise are but literate fools. The aged have no reason. Mankind is sunken in 'the sea of worldly affairs, and cannot escape the pains of rebirths. 5. The Lord-of-Pandhari had aroused in him the merciful thought of saving mankind. He then made His Name a ferry-boat, and has stood ready to ferry across the sea of this worldly life.

### RĀMDĀS MEETS MANY SAINTS

6. In the last extraordinary chapter the Lord-of-Pandhari, seeing Rāmdās' feelings for one form, revealed Himself to him in the form of Rāma. 7. Rāmdās then composed verses describing the form he saw. I quote them in this chapter. Listen attentively to them.

( Verses not translated )

8. This was Rāmdās' description of the form of Rāma as he saw it. *Bhaktas*, who see that form with its qualities, their eyes feel a sense of peace. 9. This Pandharapura, which is without a beginning, had the appearance to him of Ayodhyā. The cowherds became monkeys, and danced, making their monkey cries. 10. Rukmini,

the primal *māyā*, became Jānaki [wife of Rāma]. Thus the Life-of-the-World [Krishna] fully carried out the wish of His servant. 11. The Chandrabhāgā, flowing southward seemed to the eye as the Sharayū Gangā. The Vaishnavas seeing this, marvelled, for, it was a very extraordinary fact. 12. The God-loving *bhaktas* saw with their own eyes the deeds performed by the *avatāra* Shri Rāma. Those to whom Rāma manifested Himself, they had a direct vision of Him. 13. Those who Yuga after Yuga become *avatāras*, along with God, they were full of joy at meeting the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma].

14. You may ask who they were. Listen to their names. And if you listen to the record of their deeds, the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna], will be pleased. 15. Nimbarāja Bāvā of Daithana, the noble Vaishnava Tukārāma, the supreme *bhakta* Mānakoji Bodhalā, worthy of the highest praise. 16. Vāmana Svāmī, the clever Pandita, of loving disposition, and free from all hatred. He made a Marāthī version of the tenth skandha of the Bhāgavata. 17. Jayarāma Gosāvī of Vadagāva, who was a great *bhakta* and worshipper of Krishna. The Husband-of-Rukmini, seeing his determination met him in a visible form. 18. There was also Shekh Muhammad of Chāmbhāragonde, a great *bhakta*, a man of *bhakti*, knowledge, and indifference to worldly things, who expressed his thoughts in poetry. 19. Ranganātha Svāmī, and his brother Atyā, both of whom lived at Nigadī, singing or listening to his verses produces a sense of repentance. 20. These saints, God-loving and wise, to whom Krishna was subservient, through Rāmdās saw Rāma before their eyes. 21. They said: "We had never seen with our eyes the deeds of the *avatāra* Rāma. Our heart's longings have been satisfied to day. Rāmdās has fulfilled our wish." 22. The others of the pilgrims saw Pandhari just as it always was, but to

the saints it seemed to be Ayodhya. This seems very strange 23 To the eyes of the ordinary people Pānduranga was seen sitting on His throne, but to the saints He seemed Rama. This is very strange 24 The ignorant and those with worldly minds saw the Bhīma, but the saints, however, bathed in the Sharayu Ganga That seers also very strange. 25 The cowherds were gaily dancing. This is what the pilgrims saw, but the saints saw them as monkeys swarming around Pandhari 26 As all the saints saw the deeds connected with Rama, they thought on the matter, and then besought Ramdās that he should make God appear as before 27 They said "Panduranga, the dark complexioned one, became Himself Rama voluntarily for him [ Ramdas ], seeing his loving worship, and unerring devotion. 28 Just as a crystal assumes the colour of the thing on which it is placed, so Shrikranga (Go i) yields to the wishes of His *bhaktas* 29 Or just as Maruti went on a pilgrimage to Dvarka during the *avatāra* ship of Krishna, and Shri Krishna became Rama, just such an event has now occurred 30 We, however, love the object of our contemplation to be as before, His beautiful form on the brick, and His two hands gracefully on His hips and His eyes directed to the tip of his nose 31 When God saw the supreme devotion of Pundalika He gave him a promise He became the *avatāra* Panduranga But ( with Krishna as Rama) the Pundalika story becomes of no value. 32 Even the crazy Ramdas seems like a monkey He has changed the image of Panduranga, and made Him appear as Rama with His bow and arrow." 33 Another remarked "Why blame Ramdas ? If our God of universal power did not become Rama, then what sort of a doer would He be ? 34 This Life of the-World, the voluntary Actor is under the authority of His *bhakta*, so that He becomes for Him what he wishes, according to the depth of his feeling 35. There was once in this sacred city a *bhakta* of Shiva's by

name of Narhari, the Goldsmith. For his sake the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] wore the Shiva emblem on His head. 36. Vithobā is fond of the *bhakta* who worships God wholly and solely. The Soul of-the-Universe, therefore, assumes that form that pleases His *bhaktas*. ”

37. Making the above statement, all the saints pleaded with Rāmdās: “God has fulfilled the desire of your heart. 38. Through you we have had a sight of Rāma. Thereby our longings have been satisfied, and the sight of Him has cooled our eyes. 39. So now pray to the Husband-of-Sītā and change this sacred city into what it was before.” As the saints thus spoke, Rāmdās began to plead with God. 40. So Rāmdās prayed: “O Dweller-in-Ayodhyā, Husband-of-Sītā, hear my prayer. O Life-of-the-World, show us Thyself as Thou wast before. 41. Knowing Pundalika’s wish, Thou didst become the *avatāra* Pānduranga. Thy feet parallel on the brick, and Thy hands on Thy hips. 42. All the saints are most anxious to see Thee in that form, and I also have the same desire aroused in me. So now, O God, become as Thou wast formerly.” 43. As Rāmdās was thus praying, all saw the image as now that of Pānduranga. The saints, seeing this, were astonished. They then embraced his feet.

44. After that event the saints often met with Rāmdās, remarking : “In him Māruti has appeared as an *avatāra* for the salvation of the world. 45. Seeing his unlimited worship and loving *bhakti* Pānduranga became Rāma, and manifested the deeds performed in His former *avatāra*. 46. After making the observations, the noble Vaishnavas took Rāmdās by the hand, circumambulated the holy city, singing aloud as they walked. 47. There was the loud sound of cymbals, *vīnās*, and drums. There was a great flow of sound. The servants of Hari shouting His name

danced with joyous enthusiasm. 48. Some fastened small bells to their feet, and danced here and there. There was clapping of the hands and snapping of fingers. As they listened, people lost bodily consciousness. 49. Some sang of the deeds of the saints. Others listened with love and reverence. Some, filled with love, walked about singing aloud the names of God. 50. Seeing such gladness about him, Rāmdās was very happy, and exclaimed: "Blessed, Blessed art Thou, O God Supreme, that Thou shouldst create in this universe a sacred city like this one. 51. I have seen many sacred places, but pride seemed to increase there. But here, in looking at the Chandrabhīga, men become free of pride." 52. In saying these words, Rāmdās' love overflowed. His eyes filled with the tears of joy. All the saints saw him. 53. In circumambulating the sacred city they danced wildly. They leaped under the influence of love and joy. If one had a crooked intention it did not remain. 54. The saints, altho and the pilgrims wondered at the sight. They said to themselves: "He is truly an *ānūdī* in visible form, and not a mere man." 55. With such feelings of joy the city was circumambulated. Then coming before the shrine of Pundalikā, they sang songs of praise. 56. All shouted "Victory, Victory," in the name of Vīthala, and the saints, *sādhus* and the noble Vaishnavas all met together on the river sand bed. 57. Rāmdās then said to all the saints: "Go now and listen to the *Kirtan*. Immediately *Kathās* (*Kirtanas*) had commenced in several places on the sand bed, and in them the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] was sincerely praised." 58. The Haridasa in many songs, and in many forms, are singing to Krishna. Lovers of music are feeling their hearts full of joy. 59. The simple minded Vaishnavas are singing with love. The Husband-of-Rukmini has become bewitched

by it, and has forgotten that He is God. 60. God has forgotten that He is God, and the self consciousness of His *bhaktas* has disappeared, but love remains everlasting as the wise know from experience." 61. An innumerable number of pilgrims gathered to listen to the *kīrtana* given by Tukārāma Svāmī of Dehū, the avatara of Namadeva. 62. Rāmdās, seeing the gathering, also sat down there to listen. All the listeners lost bodily consciousness. No one was conscious of possessing a body. 63. There was the sound of the cymbal, *vīnā* and the drum. There was a great flow of sound. The Haridāsa sang with the enthusiasm of love. There was no limit to their joy. 64. He so spoke that all, from child to adult, women, Shūdras and other castes could understand his blessed words. 65. While Tukārāma

( *Abhangas* of Tukārāma not translated )

was repeating his *abhangas*, Rāmdās was wagging his head, and remarking: "Many people, listening to his talk, will obtain some direct manifestation of God." 66. Thus remarking to himself, Samartha sat quietly by, and for three watches of the night listened to the loud music of the *kīrtana*. 67. When one watch of the night only remained, the hymns of praise were sung, the wave offering over the Husband-of-Rukmini was performed, and sweat-meats were distributed. 68. The saints embraced one another, and then sat quietly remarking that they wished to listen to Rāmdās' *kīrtana*, being filled with the love of God.

### RĀMDĀS PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

69. On the next day at the eagle platform preparations were made. A dense crowd assembled at the great door of the temple shouting aloud the names of God with cries of "Victory, Victory." 70. The *bhakta* Nimbarāja, Bodhalā, the world-wide known Tukārāma, the God-loving

*bhakta* Jayarāma Gosāvī, hastened to sit down to listen (to Rāmdās' *kirtana*). 71. Shekh Muhammad, an ocean of knowledge, Rangasvāmī Nigadikara, and many other noble Vaishnavas also sat down to listen with reverence. 72. The assembly of pilgrims made a dense crowd, so that one could see no path through them. The news spread through the sacred city, and the most prominent Brahmins came to listen. 73. Among them was Vāmana Svāmī, the wise Pandita, very learned in the *vedas* and *shūstras*, besides being a God-loving *bhakta* he was widely known for his poetic talent. 74. Thus all the chief *bhaktas*, young and old, sat down to listen. The drums and the *vīṇā*, played in harmony, and Rāma was adored. 75 Then at the name of Vitthala, there were shouts of "Victory, Victory," and the clapping of hands. It was such as would make Krishna happy. The sound overflowed the sky. 76. Rāmdās repeating to himself the names of the Dweller-in-Ayodhyā, the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma], the deity worshipped by Shiva, then began his *kirtan*. 77. He repeated some inspiring *abhangas* of his own composition. They are written in books. Listen, all you pious people.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

78. Rāmdās showed a mind of vast capacity. His poetry was full of blessed inspiration. His oratory was like that of Brihaspati [Jupiter], and yet he had no pride of greatness. 79. And so he pleaded with the saints, saying : "What shall I say before you ? I do not know how to sing. I have no skill or cleverness. 80. From childhood I have wandered in forests. I have not committed poetry to memory. I have no philosophic knowledge. 81. My speech has no sweetness. I have no knowledge of the laws of right and wrong, nor of right thinking. I have not studied the teaching of the *vedas*. All of you saints know this. 82. In music I have no knowledge of time or

harmony. In every way I am deficient, and of a humble estate. Rāma is witness to this."

83. Rāmdās spoke as above, but the saints replied to him: "The Lord-of-Ayodhyā, the Husband-of-Sitā is your helper. 84. Without His favour, all skill lacks brilliancy. It is like the breast-like growth on the neck of a goat. An infant sucking it will get no milk. 85. If one is able to obtain nectar why try to collect common herbs? Why does one need the light of a lamp when the sun has arisen? 86. It was because of your wish that the image of Pānduranga changed to one holding a bow and arrow [Rāma]. All the saints saw this change. 87. You are the *avatāra* of Māruti, come to save the world. So now with loving devotion sing to the praise of Pānduranga." 88. Thus requested by all the saints, Rāmdās' heart was full of joy. He then repeated an *abhangā*, which you hearers, must listen to with reverence.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

89. Rāmdās in this way praised especially the greatness of *bhakti*, and that the name of God was a Saviour, able to save the most ignorant of men. 90. There was Ajāmila, the Brahman, who lost his heart to a low caste woman. As he was dying, the angels of Yama hastened to carry him away. 91. But just as he came to his last breath he called out to his son Nārāyaṇa. That name burned up his fault, and the angels of Yama fled away. 92. The angels of Vishnu seated him in a chariot-of-light, and carried him to heaven. Thus in the Purānas the goodness of the merciful Krishna is proclaimed. 93. Then there was the prostitute [Pingalā], who was just a heap of sins. She was at the point of death. She had no relatives near her, for all had abandoned her. 94. There was a parrot in a cage, and her attention was called to it. She exclaimed to it: "O Rāghobā [Parrot and also Rāma], I am about to die. I am

all in a tremor. 93. O Raghoba, who now will give you food and water? My eyes see no one who will open the cage and let you go free. 94. O Raghoba, I am your enemy, an enemy that was formed in a former birth. It is because of that that I have confined you in a cage." 95. As she took Raghoba's name [Rama] her sins were burned up. The angels of Yama fled, for they had no strength to restrain the angels of Vishnu. 96. The servants of Vishnu quickly came, and saved her in the dead of night and brought her to the land of Heaven. This story is known all over the world.

97. Then there is the story of the man of Brahma's blood, whose occy when was that of killing. His name was Vata Kali, and he was known everywhere. 100. He killed innumerable living beings. The earth trembled at the mention of his name. Penance cast him away, as unable to purify him. 101. Even the great sacred walking places were afraid of him. They exclaimed: "We do not want his touch, such an evil murderer as he is." Narada saw him. 102. And said to him: "You kill many beings, and thereby support your large family. Who is responsible for such sins? Think of that, you who are blind from pride." 103. Hearing Narada's words, he, secretly hastened to his home. He called all, young and old, together, and said to them. 104. "I kill travellers, and thereby provide you with food and clothing. Tell me whether you will continue as partners with me in these crimes?" 105. His relatives replied: "Suffer the effects of your own sins for ever." Hearing this, the bad man naturally felt angry. 106. With his heart easily angered he exclaimed: "You have eaten thus far of my doings, and now you have turned against me. I will take revenge on you today." He told this secretly to Narada. 107. Narada heard him and said: "We are only two, and they are many. We are unwise to desert them in quarrel. Do

‘what I now tell you.’’ 108. During all your life you have cared for and supported your family, and yet they are not willing to share the crimes with you. So repeat the words ‘Rāma, Rāma,’ and kill them by a curse.” 109.

Vālyā, easily aroused to anger exclaimed as a curse: “You have eaten what I provided, and now you have turned against me. So let all of you die today. I am very angry.”

110. He said to Nārada: “Well, are they all dead now?”

The heavenly rishi [Nārada] was astonished and said to himself: “He has no common sense. 111. Curses and blessings given by the good are fulfilled, but there is no numbering of his sins. Penance has cast him off.” 112. Nārada then said to him: “Repeat the words ‘marā, marā’ [die, die]. I will go and see whether they have been destroyed, and will hasten back to tell you.” 113. Saying thus much to that murderer, Nārada went back to heaven. And Vālā got into the habit of repeating all the time the words.

“Marā, marā.” 114. Sādhus give advice according to the capacity of the people. So, in telling Vālyā to repeat the words “Marā, marā” it naturally led to his repeating the words “Rāma Rāma”. 115. The power of God’s name is great. It burned up all his sins, and Vālmīki was lost in contemplation, and all enmity was forgotten. 116. White ants ate up his body, and trees grew on it. He was a mere-skeleton of bones; but did not die. 117. So from the place where Vālmīki sat in the forest, the sound of Rāma’s name was to be heard. Twelve years passed in this manner. 118. In the mean time the sadguru Nārada one day remembered the past event, and came to the forest to look for Vālmīki. 119.

As he looked, everything, birds, trees and stones seemed to have the form of Rāma through his worship. The sadguru then saw the spot where Vālmīki had been sitting. 120. Here he saw a skeleton, but from within the skeleton there came out the sound of ‘Rāma, Rāma.’ He whose look is of mercy [Nārada,] looked at it,



tonished by this request of the Husband-of-Pārvati. They exclaimed : 'This simple minded Shiva does not betray the least selfishness.' 135. But those who were wise among them understood that Shiva was not so very simple minded. He really took the cream of the whole book. The ignorant do not understand the inner secrets of things. 136. So when the Husband-of-Umā [Shiva] drank the poison, and his whole body was aflame with pain, he shouted out those two syllables which he had carefully preserved. 137. In saying : "Rāma, Rāma," the burning pain ceased." Such was the story of Vālmīki that Rāmdās related in his *Kirtana*. 138. There is, therefore, no *mantra* greater than that of the name of Rāma. By that name Shiva ceased to feel the heat of the poison, and thus He showed the way to *bhaktas*. 139. In order to take men safely over the sea of this existence he has created boats, consisting of one thousand names. Pānduranga, the friend of his *bhaktas*, is a ferry boat to carry his people to the other side. 140. In my book I am quoting Rāmdās' words just about this. Hearers who listen have the snares of this worldly existence cut away.

141. After Rāmdās ended his discourse, there were shouts of 'Victory, Victory,' by the noble Vaishnavas, and the calling aloud of the name of Vitthala. 142. Then came the lighting of lights, the final singing of sweet praise, and Husband-of-Rukmini was waved over with lights. Then facing the image of Pānduranga they all made him *namskāra*. 143. Pandharinātha, the Merciful-one-to-the-lowly, will cause me to continue the story of Rāmdās. Mahīpati is merely his stamp. He speaks what he is taught to speak.

144. Svasti. This book is the Santavijaya. By the mere listening to it, all the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the tenth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER XI.

### INVOCATION TO PĀNDURANGA

1. Victory to Thee Pānduranga, Lover-of-Thy-*bhaktas*. Thou pervadest the universe, but art separate from it. By contemplation alone Thou breakest the bonds binding one to this worldly existence, O Delight-of-Rukmini, Shri Vitthalā. 2. In Thy form, as the Universe, and infinite, Thy limits are unknown by the *Vedas* and *Shāstras*. Arcund Thee revolve the moon, sun, and all the host of stars. 3. The serpent Shesha [on which Vishnu reclines] praises Thee with its one-thousand mouths. Yet even he cannot comprehend Thy exact limit; although in the attempt he had his tongues cut in two. 4. Yamadharmā, Varuna and Kubera constantly contemplate Thee with reverence. Pārvati and Shiva repeat Thy names with extreme reverence. 5. Thou art just such and such has us yet not been determined. Thou art the servant of Thy servant, standing truly by his side. 6. Thy two hands are placed on Thy hips, and Thy sight is directed to the tip of Thy nose [the image of Vitthalā]. Thou grantest a meeting with Thy pious *bhaktas*, and dost protect them in their distresses in this earthly existence.

### THE PILGRIMS DRAMATIZE THE STORIES OF KRISHNA

7. In the last chapter there was the lively story of Rāmdās' extraordinary *kirtana*, which the Vaishnava *bhaktas* listened to with feelings of love, and were made happy thereby. 8. The festival continued for seven days, and then when it was full moon they started the Gopālkāla [The stories dramatized]. The crowd went to Venunāda, and the chariot containing the image of Vitthalā started on its way. 9. There was the loud playing of sweet instruments.

Groups of singers sang with sweet voices. Symbols and drums made their loud sounds, and the noble Vaishnavas sang. 10. The great crowd of pilgrims took the path to Gopālpurā, waving the seven colored banners and Eagle flags. 11. The God-loving *bhaktas* sang and danced. They shouted the name of Vithala. The gods sitting in their chariots-of-light looked down and exclaimed: "Blessed is that world of mortals. 12. The Pervader-of-the-Universe has greatly deceived us in giving us the nectar of immortality. He gave the nectar of love to the saints, and there is no limit to their joy. 13. Because of the devotion of Pundalika (to his parents) the Supreme Brahma wanders over these sands, meets with His pious people, and protects them from the distresses of this earthly life." 14. While the Gods were thus discoursing among themselves, the noble Vaishnavas were repeating aloud the names of God, and soon reached Gopālpurā. 15. They worshipped Pushpāvati, and then went to see Muralīdhara [Krishna with his *venū*]. There they prostrated themselves on the ground, and then began the *kīrtana*.

16. It was Nimbarāja who now led in the dramatic representation of the *Gopīs* and Krishna. The saints stood behind him taking part in the play. 17. The poem of Shri Ekanātha on philosophical themes, founded on Krishna's childhood deeds, was dramatized by Nimbarāja. 18. Krishna was represented as eating dirt, and when His mother Yashodā, chid Him, He showed her the whole universe in His mouth. He also represented Krishna's holding up the mountain Govardhana to protect the cowherds and the cows. 19. He represented how Krishna stole and drank the milk, and then showed to the cowherds His infinite qualities. Also how, when He spilled the buttermilk, His mother tied Him to the stone in which rice is pounded. 20. Then Nimbarāja represented Krishna's mother Yashodā, and

began to churn. Jayarama took the part of Krishna, and ate the butter. 21 Tukarama took the part of Pendha, and said to Krishna, "Restrain the cow. It is not good to be in your company. I am going to put you out." 22 Then they represented in their acting the games played by Krishna when He was a child, such as the *hutulu* and *humbali*, and songs were sung by the beating of duf and their hips. 23 Ball and bat, *lapandāv*, and when Krishna played false, they sought to strike him saying "Krishna, it is our turn. Give it to us quickly, you thief" 24 Vadujyā, and Vakada, in many ways, made faces at Krishna. In seeing the acting of these deeds of Krishna, the audience all laughed. 25 Some of the milkmaids went to bathe unclad in the Yamuna. Krishna took away their clothes and climbed the *kulambhi* tree. 26 In their home language they pleaded with Krishna for their clothes, but He made them come out holding their hands up and bowing to the sun. 27. In this way the saints acted out the childhood deeds of Krishna, and gave an exhibition of the games that He played with the cowherdresses. 28 How they put aside all hatred. How they did not so much as think of pride. All played together. The crowd of pilgrims watched all this acting. 29 Acting the part of cowherdresses, some challenged others to solve their riddles with a philosophical meaning. While Nimbaraja was acting in the play, Tukarama was repeating *abhanga*s conveying the meaning of the riddles. 30 While some were playing *phugadi* and *pingū*, Tukarama was reciting inspiring *abhanga*s, relating how the cowherds said to Krishna "We are hungry. 31 If you will give us a feast, such as we want, then only shall we be satisfied." Nimbaraja (acting as Krishna) mixed together popped rice and curds, and distributed them. 32 While the shouting of God's names was going on, the gods wanted some of the favors. So they assumed the form of men and with their hands picked up kernels of the popped rice.

33. Mahīpati begs of his hearers, if they doubt the statement that the gods took human form, that they listen to the proof I give. 34. All pilgrims who come to Pandhārī go also to Gopālpurā, so that there is the same crowded condition in the temples and bazars. 35. The multitudes are beyond all count. That the gods come there in human form, has the authority of the assertions of the saints. I am not speaking this on my own authority. 36. The Husband-of-Rukmīnī, the Dweller-on-the-bank-of-the-Bhīmā has commanded me to write, and this Santavijaya is entirely according to His wish. 37. Now going back to the statement that Nimbarāja distributed the curds and popped rice, and that gods took human form and picked up kernels of popped rice. 38. The Gods ate them with pleasure. They regarded nectar as inferior to this.

Going further the saints visited Krishna [Muralidhara], and then, returned to Pandhārī. 39. The music sounded loud. There were bands of singers and flags in profusion. There were loud shouts of Vīhtala's name, so that the very sky reverberated with the sound. 40. The pilgrims passed naturally by the Padmatirtha, where Nimbarāja acted as a juggler. All the hearers exclaimed; "This has been a happy day. We have seen novel things."

41. As Rāmdās watched the doings of the festival, he was very pleased. With his own eyes he had seen the deeds of Krishna when an *avatāra* as acted in this pageant. 42. The pilgrims walked around Pandhārī keeping it to their right, and arrived at their lodgings. The saints among them went to the eagle platform, and there danced shouting: "Victory, Victory." 43. When the way opened for them into the temple, they saw there, the Supreme Brahma on the brick. They embraced Him with love, and prostrated themselves at His feet. 44. Thus on the full moon day the saints drank the divine juice, and at night

the colorful procession started and rinde the streets of Pardhāri gay 45. Rockets, and various fire works were let off. There was the loud sound of the musical instruments. Actors and Haridasa led the procession singing, and the people threw perfumed powders into the air 46. Thus during the period of full moon a festival was celebrated by day and by night. Then as the first day of the fortnight began, there was the Kāla festival at the great door of the temple. 47. The Haridasa in the city, and the rulers of the city, came to the great door in a gay procession. The crowd was intensely dense, heads touched heads, and there were shouts of 'Victory, Victory.' In God's name 48. The saints along with the crowds of pilgrims circumambulated the Eagle and Māruti. The people scattered curds, milk and popped rice, and these acting as cowherds danced over them. 49. They suspended some great jars full of curds, and then made holes in the so that the curds flowed out in a stream. The cowherds drank it out of their hand.

### RĀMDĀ ASKS GOD'S LEAVE TO DEPART

50. Such was the celebration of the Gopalkala festival, and the crowd now began to disperse. Samarthā being alone by himself thought as follows. 51. "I must privately take leave of God, and hasten away." Half the night had passed. The final hymns of praise were sung. 52. The saints had gone to their lodgings. The locks had been placed on the doors of the inner shrine. The temple servants having to keep awake many night were overpowered by sleep. 53. Rāmdā then came, and looked at the image of Vitthala through holes in the door, and said to Him "I am going, Keshava [Krishna]. Let your love of me remain" 54. God now performed a wonderful miracle. The locks fell off, the doors opened of themselves, and the idol was plainly seen 55. His feet were parallel on the brick. His two hands adorned His hips. Around His waist

hung the yellow robe and a garland around His neck. It cooled the eyes to see Him. 56. There were earrings in His ears. His eyes were large [reaching to the ears]. His sight was directed to the tip of his nose. When Rāmdās saw this image of god, he embraced Him with love. 57. He placed his head at the God's feet and said: "I am going back to my forest home. You must give me leave to go." 58. Hearing him the Husband-of-Rukmini said: "When will you come again?" Rāmdās replied: "Nothing is really in my hands. 59. Thou Lord-of-the-World didst take the form of a Brahman and bring me here. Thou with Thine own hand drew out the thorns in my feet. That does not seem a right thing for Thee to have done. 60. But through Thee, the Lord-of-the-World, I have met all the saints, and as I have watched the showers of joy, my heart is unable to contain so much happiness. 61. Thou dost cause Thy-self to be called generous and patient, and so I ask of Thee one gift, and that is that Thou shoudest not forget me, just as a

( *Abhangas* not translated )

mother does not forget her infant child. 62. Listening to Rāmdās' pleading words, Chakrapāni (Krishna) sobbed and exclaimed: "I, the Giver-of-Final-Bliss, am always with you, whether you are in the forests, or among men." 63. As the Ruler-of-the-World said this, Rāmdās embraced His feet, and then treasuring in his memory the form of the image, he immediately started to go. 64. He took up his bag. Dattu was standing at the door, and Samartha said to him:

#### RĀMDĀS' RETURN JOURNEY

"Come along with me now. I have asked Pandharinātha's leave to go." 65. The two kept the sacred city of Pandhari to their right, and walked rapidly on their way. As he walked along, he composed verses full of blessing. 66.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

Thus happy in heart, the two journeyed quickly along, calling to their recollection the joys they experienced in Pandhari. 67. All the animate and inanimate things Rāmdās saw on the way seemed in the form of Rāma.

On the first day Rāmdās arrived at Narasipura. 68. At the junction of the Nirā and Bhīmā rivers, both the pilgrims bathed. They then went to pay their respects to God's image, and there bowed prostrate before Him. 69. Samartha took his begging bag, and at once went into the town. He went through the alleys crying out: 'Victory to Rāma', and then hurried along. 70. He visited eleven houses, and then returned to the bank of the Bhīmā. Here he found that Dattu had just returned from collecting dry dung fuel. 71. With his own hands he made a clean place, kindled the pile of dung fuel, performed his religious bath, and then baked the cakes on leaves, and the meal was now ready. 72. Just then Krishna becoming a feeble Brahman approached Rāmdās and said to him: "Suppose me to be God Narahari in visible form, as I am burning within with hunger." 73. Rāmdās said to the Brahman: "If you are willing to eat these cakes without sauce, then sit down with us to the meal, and make me, a lowly man, one possessing a protector." 74. He of the Eagle-banner replied: "I am fond of cakes made of bran. But I think these cakes are better than those," 75. Thus saying, the Brahman bathed, and then sat down before his plate. The Soul-of-the-universe, because of His love for His servant, ate this coarse food. 76. One God and two *bhaktas* sat down together to eat, and ate until their hunger was satisfied. Then the Husband-of-Lakshmi, the Merciful one, said to Rāmdās: 77. "You have satisfied my hunger, and you have the good fortune of satisfying me, a Brahman, and God through me. When tonight you perform a *kirtana* in the temple, I shall come to listen." 78. Thus remarking, the Lord-of-the-universe, left quickly for His temple.

Rāmdās was very pleased, and exclaimed : " My desire has been perfectly fulfilled."

79. Rāmdās, at the approach of night, went to the assembly hall in the temple and began his *kīrtana*. The citizens of the town came to listen, and listened with love as Rāmdās sang of the character and deeds of God. 80. The Brahmans listening to Rāmdās' perfect oratory were greatly amazed. All exclaimed. " Blessed, blessed. In listening to him we have experienced a sense of peace." 81. God [ Narahari ] preserved Pralhāda. That was Rāmdās' theme. The *kīrtana* lasted until the third watch of the night, and then ended by the wave offering over the Husband-of-Lakshmi [ Krishna ]. 82. The citizens whispered to one another : " We must persuade him to remain over tomorrow." With this thought in mind all returned to their homes. 83. Rāmdās understood what was in their minds, but at very early dawn he arose, and started on his way. When it was morning the people came to see him, but there was no one to be seen there.

84. Rāmdās walked along briskly, and in whatever town he lodged for the night, he performed a *kīrtana*. 85. Journeying along in this way, he reached the forest of Māhuli.

#### KING SHIVĀJĪ AGAIN GREETS RĀMDĀS

Scouts came and told king Shivājī the news of Rāmdās' return. 86. The king was very glad, and at once started to visit him. He brought with him all the materials needed for worship, and arrived at the place where he first met Rāmdās. 87. He saw the *svāmī* from a distance. From there he walked towards him barefoot. He prostrated himself on the ground eleven times. 88. Samartha at once made him rise, and lovingly embraced him. The king made Rāmdās sit on a mat, and then using the materials he had brought, worshipped him. 89. Perfumes,

rice, garlands of flowers, incense, lights and offerings, circumambulation all were used, and then the king resting from these acts, 90 said: "Where was it you went to, leaving me for a whole month?" The rāmī replied: "I went to Pandharī to pay my respects to Pānduranga [Krishna]" 91 The king continued: "Why did you not, O Savior of the world, take me, a poor sinner, along with you?" Samartha replied "Hurry back home, and break your fast" 92 For a month you have fasted, eating only fruit. It is because I understood your feelings that I have hastened back to meet you." 93 Receiving this command of Rāmdas, the noble king made him a *nāmākūri* and hastened back to Sātārī. What happened afterwards I will now tell you.

#### THE RULE OF AURANGZEB THE MUHAMMADAN KING

94 The king, Aurangzeb, Lord of Delhi, bringing his army and equipments, invaded the southern countries, and conquered many great kings 95. He conquered six provinces in the Deccan, and took their rule into his own hand. He brought distress on cows and Brahmins. He destroyed idols 96 But wherever he saw any miraculous deed, he was ready to bow in reverence. Elsewhere he used great oppression. He gave the noble Brahmins great trouble

97 Now at Mahuli there was a Muhammadan Military post, which Aurangzeb had then recently established. Now while Samartha was wandering through the forest a marvellous event took place. 98 The chief of that military post had come (into forest) to practice shooting with bow and arrow. While shooting at a target his arrows kept missing it. 99. Seeing him shooting in that way, Rāmdas at once approached him and said to the Muhammadan. "What kind of shooting do you call that? 100. As soon as you shoot an arrow go after it and catch it in its flight." The

Muhammadan replied : "That is impossible. Certainly for me. 101. I will shoot the arrow, and you catch up with it in its flight and seize it." Samartha replied : "Very well," and stood behind the man. 102. The Muhammadan then let go the bow string which he had drawn to his ear, and Rāmdās gave a leap and seized the arrow in its flight. 103. In less time than it takes for eyelid to meet eyelid he had seized and brought back the arrow. The Muhammadan was full of astonishment and exclaimed : "This *fakīr* is truly an *avatāra* in human form." 104. Thus thinking to himself, he made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. Samartha then took the bow in his own hand, and shot at the target. 105. The Mogul was greatly astonished. Samartha then said to him : "He who with one shot can shoot the farthest, he is the one to be called an expert." 106. Then seeing before him a great tree, he shot an arrow at it. It passed entirely through the trunk. The Muhammadan's heart now trembled with fear. 107. Said he : "His seems an extraordinary power. This Hindu *fakīr* could alone kill a thousand. If he took it to his heart to do so, he could conquer the whole of this kingdom." 108. Thus thinking in his heart, the Muhammadan bowed to Rāmdās, exclaiming : "Blessed is your power. I see no one your equal in the whole universe." 109. Samartha then replied to him : "There is no difference between you and me. God [Chaitanya] pervades every being. To Him there is no such thing as mine and thine. 110. You Muhammadans say that the formless Khudā [God] created the Muhammadans, and is it so written in your Kurāna that the Hindus originated from a thief ? 111. Your belief is not correct. It creates a continuous spirit of hatred. You trouble God and Brahmans, and, therefore, your purpose is not accomplished." 112. He did not understand Rāmdās very well, and so Rāmdās composed an *abhangā* in the Muham-

madan language. I gladly quote it in this chapter, let the saints listen to it in reverence.

( *Abhangas not translated* )

113. As Rāmdās used the Muhammadan language, he made a prostrate bow to Rāmdās, and all the soldiers that accompanied him, they also bowed prostrate on the ground. 114. Then standing before Samartha he said : "I shall accept any command you may make me. Let me know anything that may be in my power to give." 115. Samartha replied : "While we have been practising the shooting with bow and arrow, we have trodden this farmer's field, and he must be very troubled thereby. 116. So at once make out a deed and give this land in perpetuity to this man, and have it witnessed by the Jumodāra." This was Rāmdās' command. 117. The Muhammadan replied : "It shall be done." He made out the deed. The Shūdra farmer was happy, and made his *namskāra* to Rāmdās. 118. The chief officer of the post made his *namskāra* to Rāmdās, and went back to his town post. Rāmdās started hastily, and arrived at Chāphalakhore.

#### EVENTS IN THE CHĀPHALA VALLEY

119. He remained here at Chāphala one night, and then went to Battisa Shirāle. When he went into the town to beg his food the people were taken with surprise. 120. They remarked : "He is young in years, but seems to have complete indifference to worldly things. In form he is very beautiful. There is a luster to his body. He looks like a divine *avatāra*."

121. After taking his bath, Samartha, performed all his regular duties. Then bringing Māruti into his contemplation, he began to worship Him with love. 122. At night time he began his *kirtanu*. The people of the town assembled to listen, including very distinguished Brāh-

mans. All listened intently. 123. To begin with there were hymns of praise, in which they were reminded of the special form in which God was to be contemplated. Rāmdās spoke from his full experience. Listen to what he said.

( Verses not translated )

124. Thus Rāmdās spoke of those who had received final Deliverance, and urged on all who were engaged in worldly affairs to keep Rāma in their thoughts. 125. That, man's great desire should not be for son, wife, money and property. Those who spend themselves in doing good to others, naturally receive Final Deliverance. 126. Those desiring Final Deliverance have attempted many ways aside from that of Shri Rāma, but all such have been sad failures, and they have found no escape from rebirths and redeaths. 127. There are some who call themselves wise, but have no love for the worship of God in His *saguna* form. They deceive people by their knowledge of words. Such certainly find themselves unable to attain their purpose. 128. He who is the-Chief-of-Yogis, the-Dweller-in-the-Cemetery, Holder-of-the-bow Pināka [Shiva], became absorbed in the contemplation of Rāma. How much more must others do so? 129. Therefore, the foundation of all means, the boat that is to take one across the sea of this earthly life, is alone the worship of Rāma. It is the original source of the Yoga doctrine. 130. This is the Rāma, lovely in character, whose noble deeds have been beautifully sung by Vālmiki in a billion verses, and which when Shiva heard, he attained peace.

131. As people listened to Rāmdās' *kirtana*, they felt in themselves an indifference to worldly things. Then lighting the lights, they were waved over the Husband-of-Sitā [ Rāma ]. 132. There were then shouts of "Victory, Victory," accompanied with the clapping of hands. The sweetmeats were then brought in, and distributed to all.

133. The next day, with great reverence they caused Rāmdās to remain there a while. Some came as suppliants to the *stūmī*, giving to him their bodies, minds and wealth. 134. Some seeking after supreme-spiritual riches lost all desire for earthly things in their chaste religious life. Some attached themselves to Rāmdās. All these experienced a joy of soul. 135. Some seized with a desire of service, became disgusted with their worldly life. Some, feeling that their domestic life meant trouble, retained their family life, but were indifferent to all bodily desires. 136. Some with strong desire to preserve Samartha's words, took pleasure in writing them down, and bringing to their remembrance their inner meaning, committed them to memory. 137. Thus after helping many in their desire for the supreme-spiritual-riches, the *sadguru* went again into the forest, saying to himself : "It is useless to have a great crowd of followers. It simply leads to pride. 138. It is Rāma's command that I should give the initiatory *mantra* to would-be disciples, but I do not like this reverence that is paid me. Still it has come about through my Fate." 139. Thus thinking to himself, and alone in the forest, he worshipped Rāma all night long. He sang of the infinite deeds of the *saguna* God [Rāma] with feelings of love.

#### RĀMDĀS VISITS SHAHĀPURA

140. While continuing to live in the forest, he came to Shahāpura. He went into the town to beg his food. Pious people made him obeisance. 141. When Samartha performed his *kirtana* at night, a great crowd assembled to hear him. After listening to his oratory they exclaimed : "Blessed, blessed." 142. The Brahmans said to one another : "One should not call him a man. He has become an *avatāra* of the *saguna* God for the salvation of the world."

#### ĀKĀBĀĪ RĀMDĀS' FIRST FEMALE DISCIPLE

143. The chief town official of Shahāpura had a

daughter by name of Ākā. She came to the *svāmī* and placed her head at his feet. She said : 144. "O *sadguru*, I have the desire to obtain from you the supreme-spiritual-riches." Having seen the sincerity of her heart, he replied : "You may proceed with the materials you have brought." 145. She had brought a large amount of materials for his worship, perfumes, rice, garland of flowers, fragrant pastes, bananas, cocoanuts and dates. 146. She had made ready garments, ornaments of various kinds to be used in his worship. She seated the *sadguru*, and lovingly washed his feet. 147. She made the threefold marks on his forehead, and smeared his person with the thin paste made of the fragrant sandal wood. She placed the garland of flowers around his neck, a sight that brought a sense of peace to the eyes. 148. He was waved over with incense, lights, camphor, and the platter of lights. The Giver-of-Final Deliverance [ Rāmdās ] ate with expressions of love the offering that was made to him. 149. She circumambulated him, and with expressions of love made him eleven prostrate *namaskāras*. The *sadguru* being thoroughly satisfied in his own heart (regarding her sincerity ), gave her the initiatory *mantra*.

150. Just then the king Shivājī came, and reverently worshipped Rāmdās. He had had very dainty food prepared, and gave a feast to the Brahmans. 151. Recognizing the sincerity of the king's heart, Rāmdās remained at Shahāpura, and there was daily the loud sound of the *kirtanas*, with cries of "Victory, victory," and the loud repeating of God's names. 152. Those who came to the *sadguru* with sincere hearts, he gave them purification of heart. Their characters at once changed. Their hearts were impressed with indifference to worldly things. 153. After spending some days there, Samartha again went into the forest, followed by his crowd of disciples

seeking to find him. 154. In company with his crowd of disciples he visited Shārāvati every day on his begging errand. Afterwards he would return to the forest in which he wandered about indifferent to bodily comforts.

### RĀMDĀS VISITS SHĀRĀVATI

155. It happened one day that Rāmdās was staying at Shārāvati. While begging in the town, people used to make their obeisance to him. 156. Accompanied by his crowd of disciples, he did not remain even a moment before any house. He would cry out: "Victory to Rāma," and then immediately hasten away from there. 157. Yet they obtained much food from their begging. Daily they were able to make offerings to Brahmins. At night Aśvamedha were performed, attended by a great many people. 158. As they listened to Samādhi, they became fully renignant. And the feelings of pride and indifference to worldly things inclined their hearts to the Supreme; spiritual quiet.

### RĀMDĀS CURES A LUNATIC

159. The town clerk of Shārāvati was a very pious and wise man. He had two sons. Known to their names. 160. The elder son, named Dattoba, was of an excellent character and intelligence. The younger was named Ambājipanta. 161. The younger son Ambājī had suddenly lost his mind. He appeared to the people as a lunatic. He was unable, therefore, to obtain a wife. 162. Because he could not get married, his mother and father were in great distress. They made use of very many remedies, but he did not regain his mind. 163. Hearing Rāmdās' praise loudly sung, they said to themselves: "Rāmdās must be a portion of God." So bringing Ambājī along with them, they came to see and worship the saint. 164. They said to him: "This is our son, but for many days he has acted crazy. He is of no use in our domestic life. It is altogether impossible for him to get married."

165. Thus saying, they, placed Ambājī at Rāmdās' feet, adding : "We have now offered him to you, and will not take him back." 166. Samartha felt puzzled over the remarks of the parents, and said : "He is an intelligent person, but he has become possessed by the Five-Elements. 167. I am a skilled exorciser. I can drive far away the evil influence of demons. If one is in possession of the *Sadguru's* [God's] Name, what can a dead demon do ?" 168. Hearing Samartha's words, all the people, were astonished, and exclaimed ; "What are the Five-element demons ? We don't understand you." 169. Samartha replied : "You should call a saint, who is an exorciser. He can drive the Five-element demon far away, and bring one back to intelligence." 170. Ambājī's parents answered : "O *Sadguru*, what saint is there greater than you ? We see no one." 171. Rāmdās, hearing them say that, composed a five verse poem filled with blessings, dealing with demon possession.

( Verses not translated )

172. While Rāmdās was delivering these verses, Ambājī was falling at his feet. The insanity of his mind disappeared, and he remained to serve his *guru*. 173. His parents, very happy, returned to their home. They had given their son as an offering to the *sadguru*, and all were pleased. 174. Those who daily repeat the six *abhangas* contained in the Panchaka [Five stanzas] on demon-possession need have no fear of the evils of demon possession, or of the evils of this earthly existence.

175. In the next interesting chapter, the desires of the listeners will be fully satisfied. Mahipati requests the saints to listen with close attention. 176. Svasti. This book, the Santavijaya, by the mere listening to it fulfils the longings of the heart. Let the God-loving, wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the eleventh delightful chapter

## CHAPTER XII.

### FACTS LEARNED FROM THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

1. The purification which can be had by bathing in all the sacred watering places that are in Heaven, earth and the lower regions, the same is obtained by the listeners to the stories of the saints. 2. Also the great festivals are present in a *kirtan*. During the *kirtanas* the thirty-three million gods stand around listening to them with intense interest. 3. The four *Mukta*, (Four stages of Salvation personified) with hands joined palm to palm, become servants of those *bhaktas*, who by listening to the Hari *kirtanas*, become worthy recipients of good gifts. 4. The Eight *Suddhis* (Accomplishments personified) become the *bhakta*'s slaves, and like to marry them; but because they are indifferent to worldly things, they do not accept them (the *Ruddhas* or *Suddhis*). 5. The *bhaktas* care for nothing, but God. All else is as nothing; and God cares for nothing else but his *bhaktas*. Each one pervades the mind of the other.

### NEW DISCIPLES JOIN RAMDAS

6. In the last chapter the going of Ramdas to Shirarpura was related. He here initiated Ambaji as one of his disciples, his insanity having disappeared. 7. The characteristics of devotion, knowledge and indifference-to-worldly-things appeared in him. He was all the time repeating God's names, and was entirely obedient to his *guru*. 8. Reverent in his *swami*'s service, he was always ready. He failed in no regard, and his heart was always full of great joy. 9. As a result, he became a learned pandita. He now understood Sanskrit, and in Sainatha's daily *kirtanas* he joined in the singing with the enthusiasm of love. 10. He was a clever understander of his *swami*'s mind.

In his hand writing his letters were like pearls. He was always writing down Samartha's delightful poetry as he composed it. 11. As fast as the words left the lips of Rāmdās, he would write them down on paper with the utmost speed. He never asked Rāmdās to repeat. It was as if he had already committed them to memory. 12. When Ambājī performed a *kirtana* it was pleasing to Samartha. In Ambājī's *kirtana* his heart-felt love expressed itself in words falling from his lips, and Rāmdās would wag his head in approval. 13. Ambājī became skilled in the knowledge of harmony of time, of tunes, and accents, and an expert in the composition of songs, and a lover of simple poetry. 14. Although he possessed so great an array of talents, he possessed no pride. He went as usual into the town to beg his food, perfectly obedient to his *sadguru*.

15. Many disciples now stood ready for constant service. There was Vāsudeva Gosāvī, a man of supreme knowledge and experience. 16. Vāsudeva Gosāvī was a supreme *bhakta*. Ananta Gosāvī was one wholly indifferent to worldly things. Moro Gosāvī was devoted to his *guru*'s service, and a lover of worship. 17. Uddhava Gosāvī was every where known. Mādhava Gosāvī was a man indifferent to worldly things, and a man of knowledge. These stood ready to serve, day and night, because of their love for Rāmdās. 18. Whatever Samartha's lips uttered, that was what all thought. Now you, pious *bhaktas*, listen to the state of Ākābāī's mind.

#### RĀMDĀS TESTS THE SINCERITY OF ĀKĀBĀĪ

19. Samartha said to Ākābāī : "I wish you to go away from me. I wander about in the forests. You should not go there at all. 20. The ravines and valleys are full of thorny bushes. Tigers, wolves, and intense heat are there. You cannot endure the life, there even for a moment."

Go back at once to your home." 21. She replied: "I will not spend a single moment without you, wif. I have concentrated body, soul and all my property to you."

22. Seeing her determination, Samartha tested her. He said to himself: "To test her I must do those things that will create a rupture between us." 23. He then began to exhibit childish pranks, and act as if crazy. He went into Ākābāi's house and began his mischievous deeds. What they were, listen. 24. With his own hands he mixed together oil and ghee. He also took out from the preserve jars the macaroni, (eaten with sugar and milk). 25. Samartha went where the pile of earthen jars was and smashed the grain jars. He collected in one heap all the eighteen kinds of grain. All this while Ākābāi was laughing merrily. 26. When Rāmdās found that these acts did not trouble her mind, he put her through another great test. After a night had passed he said to her: 27. "Listen to me, Ākābāi. You have taken from me the Supreme-spiritual-riches. Now call all the Brahmins together, and distribute to them all your money and grain." 28. Hearing her sādguru's words, she was supremely happy. She immediately invited the Brahmins and herself went, and bathed with her clothes on. 29. She brought out of her house her vessels, her other property, her money, and her heap of grain, and placed them by her guru's side. Without any hope of any gain thereby, she offered all to Rāma. 30. Having mentally made this offering, she stood near Samartha with hands joined palm to palm. "Distribute these things with your own hands" she said. "I am your suppliant in every way." 31. At the command of Samartha, the Brahmins began to loot the heap of grain. And while he distributed the vessels and other things Ākābāi had only joy. 32. Her jars small and great, her mill stones, and her stone mortar, all these Brahmins took away. Ākābāi exclaimed: "It is a good

thing done. My *guru* has broken the bonds that bound me to this earthly life." 33. Samartha then said to her : " Go into the town, and beg your food." She immediately took the begging bag, and went into the town. 34. Just as an expert applies the sledge hammer to test the diamond ; as gold is tested by melting and rubbing, and thus its value is recognized ; 35. as the jewel taken from the serpent's head is wound around by a string, and then must be thrown into the fire, and if the string does not burn, then the jewel is proved to be of value. 36. So, Samartha tested Ākābāī's determination by his severe treatment. Her mind met the test, and he took her with him into the forest.

#### STORY OF AMBĀJĪ

37. Other disciples of worthy character went with him at that time. They dropped all anxieties of mind, and gave themselves to the constant service of their *sadguru*. 38. Thus Samartha left Shirāpura accompanied by his disciples. They went up a mountain, and there encamped. 39. From here some were sent to beg for food. Some remained to serve. Some assumed the duty of sweeping a place where one could sit for his bath and devotions. 40. They made a clean place under a mango tree. There was a well near by containing an abundance of water. 41. There was also there a great banyan tree whose branches spread in every direction. One of these branches extended over the well. A Shūdra farmer said to Rāmdās : 42. " Here is a dense, cool shade. Your Greatness should perform your baths here." Then Rāmdās ordered the Shūdra, and his own disciples : 43. " The branch of the tree extends over the well, and the leaves fall into the well. It gives an offensive odour to the water. I will tell you what to do, listen. 44. If you will take an axe, and cut off the branch, then only will I bathe here." Thus remarking to them, he arranged his seat, and sat down. 45. To Samartha's

suggestion no one made answer. It was evident that in cutting off the branch an accident could not be prevented. 46. To climb up the tree, in order to cut the branch, seemed also very difficult, and the cutter would surely fall with the branch, and without doubt be killed. 47. Thinking thus of the danger, no one replied to Rāmdās. In the meantime the disciples who had gone to beg for food returned, and placed their, begging bags before the *śāmī*. 48. Samartha now said to them: "Now all of you consider. If you will cut off that branch, then only will I bathe here." 49. Ambājī replied very timidly: "It will take some time to cut the branch down. So, it would be well, if you would bathe now." 50. Samartha replied: "I have made a vow. When that is fulfilled, then I shall bathe." Ambājī then went into the town to get an axe. 51. Accepting Ambājī's decision, Samartha bathed, and then arranging a seat under the branch, sat down. 52. Having gone into the town Ambājī soon returned with an axe. He tied a rope to the branch and climbed up to it. 53. He said to his *sadguru*: "If I cut off the branch, it will suddenly fall on you." Samartha answered: "I am going to test your cleverness." 54. Ambājī thought to himself: "No matter what happens to me, but it must not hurt Samartha. This is what I am anxious about. 55. If the branch should fall on Samartha, I could not bear the pain." Then careless of his own life, he adopted the following clever devise. 56. He sat towards the end of the branch with his face towards the trunk, and merrily and powerfully wielded his axe. Every one was looking at him from below. 57. As the branch came down it fell far from the *śāmī*, but the son of his *guru* [Ambājī] fell into the very deep water of the well. 58. There were many disciples there, and they all cried out: "Alas! alas! What will Rāma do now? This is a great disaster." 59. All were in great anxiety, but Samartha said: "It is all right."

said: "It is past the time for the food offering to be made. Arrange the plates for the meal." 60. Ākābāī then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm, and in a pleading voice she said: "Ambājī is drowned in the well. I feel very sorry about it." 61. Samartha replied: "He is gone somewhere or other, and I am very hungry. Serve the food on the plates at once." 62. Obedient to Samartha's command, all the disciples bathed, performed the other regular duties, and then sat down in a line to eat. 63. They worshipped the *sadguru*, and the food was served on the plates. Ākābāī came close to the *svāmī* and whispered to him: 64. "Merciful-to-the-lowly, Statue-of-Compassion, I am very sorry about Ambājī. I do not feel sure what happened to him." 65. Samartha replied: "He has doubtless gone off somewhere. He will eat later. Please serve me at once. 66. You have no connection with him. Look out rather for your own interests. Some logs of wood come floating in the stream of a river, (In the same-way we all have been accidentally brought to-gether). 67. They meet with a large island in their course, by the force of water and they are separated into different directions. In fact, no one is able to support another all life through. 68. The mother that gave us birth, does not remain during our lifetime. When the cord of life comes to its end, our father leaves for the path that leads to final deliverance. 69. God, Brahmans and the witnessing fire complete the marriage tie with *mantras* from the Vedas, but the husband dies, and the wife alone suffers widowhood. 70. And so brothers, sisters, uncles, daughters, sons, houses and properties, none of these belong to anyone. Therefore, one should worship Rāma alone. 71. So long as one has property, all come to claim their connection with him. When poverty comes, he belongs to no one. All leave him, and go away. 72. Where does Ambājī belong? Whose is he? For a few days he was related to us because

of what he owed to us. Why do you feel sorry about him? Contemplate Shri Rāma."

73. While Samartha was saying these things, king Shivājī arrived. He prostrated himself on the ground, and worshipped him with the usual materials for worship. 74. Food was served on the plates, and all ate. Although Ākābāī was full of anxiety, still she also sat, and ate. 75. The king noticed the large fallen branch, and he asked Ākābāī about it. She told him the whole story from beginning to end. 76. The king said : " If what you say here is true, it will mean a great catastrophe. But the *Guru* has extraordinary power. Let us see what will happen." 77. Samartha having given him leave to go, he returned to his place. The rumour, however, reached the people that Ambājī was drowned. 78. Then they began to repeat the news to one another. The news spread from town to town and people came to see what had happened. Different opinions were expressed. Listen to them. 79. One said : " What sort of a superman is this Rāmdās, that he should have caused a Brahman to be drowned? He seems to have had no compassion in his heart." 80. Another said : " The well is a shrine of water deities, and because he (Ambājī) cut down their tree (branch), they have taken him as their victim." 81. A third remarked : " The *sadguru* has many disciples, and will gain many more. Ambājī lost his life, yet no one has felt any pity." 82. Still another said : " When he was drowning, Rāmdās made no attempt to save him. If he had been drawn at once out of the water, he would have survived." 83. And again another remarked : " Formerly Ambājī was a lunatic. He came as a suppliant to Samartha, and he brought him to his senses." 84. Another added : " He cured him, no doubt, but his end was sad. His parents made of him an offering to the *Guru*, and he let him drown in the water. 85. Rāmdās is the king's *guru*, so we cannot say anything.

If he had been another's *guru*, see how we should have punished him." 86. In the mean-time divers dived down into the well, and after reaching the bottom came up again; but they found nothing much to their astonishment. 87. Some said: "The fairies must have pulled him down into the lower regions, otherwise in bloated form he would come to the surface. It looks as though there was something unusual." 88. Yet another remarked: "How could Rāmdās have enjoyed his meal? While a corpse is in a town, no one eats." 89. Finally it came to Rāmdās' knowledge what people were thinking about him. He answered them in verse. Saints should listen to it with reverence.

1. He who gave has taken away. What is that to you?
2. Quickly watch yourselves and worship God.
3. We know not what is to happen. That is according to God's will.
4. Whatever you did in a former birth, you must certainly experience its results in this life."
5. Says Das: "Whatever has been done in a former birth cannot be escaped even by Brahmadeva or other gods."

90. Thus speaking at that time, he went into another forest, followed by all his band of disciples.

91. Six days passed. On the seventh day Rāmdās returned to the former place, and preparing his seat, he sat in contemplation. 92. His disciples had gone into the town, and had brought back much food from their begging. Ākābāī at once started to make preparation for cooking the meal. 93. After the meal was prepared the Brahmins went for their bath. The disciples worshipped their *guru*, and the food was served on the plates. 94. Just then king

Shivājī arrived to see and worship Rāmdās. He made eleven prostrate *namaskūras*, and then stood before him with hands joined palm to palm. 95. Samartha said to him: "My Lord the King, take here and now the favours I give." At this command of his *guru*, he was very pleased. 96. The plates were served, and when the time came to make the offering to the gods, Samartha arose hastily, and a most wonderful thing happened. 97. He went to the well calling Ambājī. An echo arose out of the well, and the people outside heard it. 98. The *sāmī* then further added: "Are you still well, [Kalyāna]?" The other replied: "Yes, by your good favour." 99. The *sāmī* said to him: "Come out of the well, and meet with these good people here." He obeyed the command, and fell at Rāmdās' feet. 100. Seeing such a miracle, all were full of joy, exclaiming: "Even the multitude of gods, Brahma and others, do not know the depth of this *sādguru*'s greatness. 101. Ambājī was drowned in the fathomless water of the well, and now it is the seventh day. How is it that he has lived?"

102. The Brahmins came, and sat each at his plate and Samartha made the offering of food to the gods. All ate, and the *pāna supārī*, and gifts of money were distributed. 103. The king was given leave to go, and he went back to his city, Sātārā. From the deeds he had seen that day, he had a joy that his heart could not contain. 104. "Seven days in the water, and then to come out at the call of Samartha." This news spread from town to town, and people hastened to come and see for themselves. 105. There were those, who were bad *bhaklas*, crooked in their lives and evil minded. When they heard the news, they repented of what they had said. Now they remarked: "We have wrongly spoken evil of Samartha, leading to the loss of riches in good deeds."

## RĀMDĀS GOES TO CHĀPHALA

106. Samartha said to Ambājī: "Let us go into the next town." Every one by this time was calling Ambājī Kalyāna Gosāvī. 107. So after Samartha had performed the above deeds, he left that place, accompanied by his disciples, worshipping Rāma as he went along.

108. He encamped on a mountain near Chāphala. He built nice raised platforms, which caused a sense of rest to the beholder. 109. Here also they built an upper storey for Samartha, which those who have the authority to worship the *guru*, can see there even to this day. 110. Rāmdās remained here a few days, then wearying of the place, he went to Shahāpura.

111. Here at Shahāpura there was a very ancient and beautiful idol of Māruti. He remained near it, and daily worshipped it. 112. The pious men of the place daily listened to his *kirtanas* and as they listened to the reading of the Dāsabodha (the *magnum opus* of Rāmdās), their minds were absorbed with interest. 113. Householders, merchants, very many of them, Vedic Brahmans, wise panditas, *bhaktas* of Vishnu according to the Bhāgavata doctrines, all assembled to listen. 114. Women, Shūdras, and members of other castes, listened with intense interest. If any one expressed a doubt, Samartha would clear away the doubt. 115. The audience sat around Samartha, while he sat, as it were, on a throne. Samartha looked like the moon among the stars. 116. Like Indra among the gods, like Shiva among the yogis, or as the Husband-of-Lakshmī [Vishnu] among his *bhaktas*, it brought happiness to the eye. 117. In the same way Rāmdās shone in all that circle of listeners. Kalyāna Gosāvī read the Dāsabodha with enthusiasm. 118. He read where Samartha speaks of the extent of the three sources of pain, of their origin from

spiritual and physical sources. His teachings brought conviction to those who were seeking salvation.

119. There was a man in the audience listening most gladly, and as he listened he felt a sense of repentance. He asked the *svāmī* a question. 120. He stood with his hands joined palm to palm before Samartha. "I have experienced much sorrow, but I am unable to get free from this worldly life. What shall I do? 121. I say to myself: 'I will abandon all worldly living.' But my relation to worldly things does not abandon me. Your Greatness must supply the remedy." And with this he fell at Rāmdās' feet. 122. He who is scorched by the threefold pains comes to repentance through association with the good and by listening; he, whose heart has grown weary of this worldly life, is to be considered a seeker after salvation. 123. This merchant householder in listening to the reading of the Dāsabodha had repented. Such is the great influence of a saint. 124. The man stood there before Samartha that day with his hands joined palm to palm. Said he: "I am caught in the snare of this worldly life. Deliver me, O Merciful One. 125. Your Greatness [Samartha] has descended as an *avatāra* on to this earth to save mankind. Give me today the initiatory *mantra*, and let me remain with you as a disciple." 126. To the pleadings of this man Samartha replied: "You enjoy the worldly life, therefore you continue to live with your family. 127. Parents care for their children, and waste their bodies with the idea that they would be useful to them in their old age. 128. The wife who, in fact, is a burden to one's back, likes him as long as she gets good clothes and ornaments. But when one dies, she unwillingly parts with her hair.

129. In the case of one's daughters and sisters, however fondly they are treated when at one's house, the least drawback in sending them off will make them say

in anger: "Well it is that our father (or brother) died." 130. If one of the brothers does not in part share the burden of the family, others think him to be their enemy, and drive him out of the house, saying: "How long shall we support him, if he does not earn?" 131. If poverty comes to one, then the evil minded sneer and laugh at him. His son says: "He has put me into debt." 132. One's enemies are born as one's brothers and children to claim their debt, or to put one into debt. None of them would surely share with one in his sorrow. 133. If you have no children, still there is pain in the vows you make to have them. Or you may have children and they die. That sorrow makes you mourn. 134. Perhaps your son may live, but turn out to be worthless, quarrelling with his father in his old age. That gives pain to the heart, and you say: "A childless one is better off." 135. So this worldly life is the root of sorrow. It is like a mattress of live coals. The man who thinks he can get joy there, is a hundred times a fool. 136. One cannot get a moment's peace on a bed infested with bugs. Even if you try to sleep in a folding posture, you are uneasy all the time. 137. Even if it were really true that one can attain God while living this worldly life, then why did Shuka and others act as if insane, and go and dwell in the caves and clefts of the mountains?

138. As Samartha continued to speak thus, the man's repentance greatly increased, just as when there is the slightest light it gives light to all. 139. The man now said: "O Merciful-to-the-lowly, if all sins were collected together, I would be a statue made from them. - There is no limit to my faults. 140. I recollect today every sin that I have even unintentionally committed. I am today drowning in the sea of that worldly existence. Save me from it."

141. Samartha replied to him : " Your heart is entangled in your family affairs. I have to wander in these dense forests. How can you make use of such a life as mine ? " 142. The man answered in reply : " I positively will not go back to my home. " And with this declaration he immediately fell at his feet with sincere devotion.

143. After a few days the *sadguru* [ Rāmdās ] started for the forest. The circle of his disciples, together with that man, all followed him into the forest. 144. There they saw Rāmdās, with his eyes closed, engaged in quiet worship. And as he sang prayers to the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] he was enraptured by the joy of love. 145. The circle of his disciples now came around him, and having made their *namaskāra* to him they sat down by the well. 146. Samartha said to the man : " Why have you come into this forest ? He who has a sincere desire to become indifferent to worldly things, should obey his *guru*. 147. Your mind is in both directions, towards worldly things, and towards the supreme-spiritual-riches. In such a case how can you gain the required knowledge ? Let your mind be firmly convinced of this." 148. The man replied : " In your company all the illusions of Mūḍa will disappear." Samartha, hearing him say this, replied in *abhangas*, which saints should listen to with reverence.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

149. When the man heard these words of Samartha's that tested the rightness of his thought, his mind came to a peaceful rest. 150. The man then said : " My lord, *sadguru*, whatever command you give me, I will obey it absolutely. I shall do nothing contrary to it." 151. Rāmdās kept in his mind what this seeker after salvation said, and in company with his disciples, he went into a still deeper forest.

## RĀMDĀS TESTS A BRAHMAN'S TRUST

152. Suddenly they saw a well. It was overflowing with water. The trees here were very dense. And they sat down there. 153. The long branches of a tree were spread over the well. Samartha said to the man: "Hasten, and climb up that tree." 154. With this command of his *sadguru*, the Brahman at once began to climb the tree. Rāmdās continued: "Now come over the well." When he heard that, he became frightened. 155. Indeed he became terribly frightened. "I shall fall," he cried. But though trembling with fear, he continued climbing to the topmost branch. 156. Samartha then gave him a further command: "When a teacher punishes a boy, he makes him lock his fingers over a pole, and hang from it. Now seize hold of the branch in the same way." 157. Hearing this command, he locked his fingers together over a branch, then letting both feet free, he hung in mid-air. 158. The *sadguru* then said to him: "Now swing back and forth; just as you do in your worldly life." The man cried out: "O Samartha, I am afraid. I feel as though I shall fall." 159. As he looked down he felt dizzy, and the water looked deep. While the Brahman was thus hanging in mid-air the *sadguru* asked him a question: 160. "Is it the branch that is holding on to you, or is it you who are holding on to the branch?" To this question the Brahman answered: 161. "For fear of my life, I am holding on to the branch. I am just like the silkworm that continues to fasten itself in its cocoon." 162. Samartha replied to that: "Your heart is its own enemy. You have rushed into worldly things, and entangled yourself in them just as you have entangled yourself in that branch. 163. If it was the branch that was holding you, then, I should say that it was your family who are the cause of your being held to your worldly life. What we see now is that you are holding on with both hands. Let go at once. 164. If you say that

the worldly life has seized you, then why are you holding on with both hands?" Hearing the command 'Let go' given him by Samartha, he nearly fainted away. 165. "If you wish for your own good, let go both hands." At these words of Samartha's the Brahman trembled violently.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

166 The *Sadguru* continued to say: "A parrot sat on a twig. It was afraid of falling, so it grasped the twig tighter with its claws. 167. It did not occur to it that as it had wings it should fly away. And so the hunter caught it and kept it in a cage all its life. 168. Or again one bores a small hole in a stone and inserts in it some kernels of *harabharū*. A monkey fills his fist full of them, and then being unable to draw out his filled fist, he struggles in vain to free it. 169. The monkey-man then comes up to him, and puts a chain around his neck. He then takes him from house to house and makes him make salaams to the people. 170. Like the parrot and the monkey even good men get entangled with earthly things. It is they who are responsible for their own bondage, just as you are doing in holding on to the branch. 171. Now let go both your hands. When sinking in the water Rāma will protect you. He saved the stone in the sea. He will not let one drown who is seeking for final deliverance." 172. As Samartha uttered those words, the man forced his will by the power of his courage, and letting both hands go sank to the bottom of the well. 173. As the circle of his disciples looked on, they exclaimed: "The same thing is happening to him as happened to Kalyāna." People came there to see, and reported that a Brahman was drowned.

174. While all this was going on, Samartha was sitting in silent contemplation on the mat that he had spread. He was thinking of Rāma and his heart was full of joy.

175. Turning now to the Brahman, as he sank in the water, lo and behold! As he opened his eyes he saw a beautiful city, surrounded by the wish-trees. 176. He saw there Samartha's hermitage [ *matha* ] which was exceedingly beautiful, with beds of flowers, and clumps of *tulasī* plants. To see these, brought peaceful rest to his soul. 177. Surrounding this hermitage were clean rest-rooms. There were people sitting there listening to that simple book, the Dāsabodha, which Kalyāna was explaining to them. 178. In the middle of the assembly there was a gorgeous throne, and on it sat Rāmdās. He looked here just as he did elsewhere. 179. As the three sources of affliction were being explained, the man became very repentant and exclaimed: "O Samartha, save me, your suppliant, by giving me the initiatory *mantra*, and making me your disciple. 180. He worshipped Rāmdās by the prescribed methods. He prostrated himself before him eleven times. Rāmdās then at once installed him as one of his disciples, giving him the secret *mantra*.

181. Returning now to Samartha by the well, where he was sitting on his mat in contemplation, suddenly he called out to the man: "Come up at once." 182. Hearing this command while in the water, he came out without a moment's delay. He embraced Samartha's feet. 183. The *sadguru* then said to him: "In order to remove the doubts of all, relate in detail what you saw as you were sinking in the water." 184. Hearing Samartha's words, he immediately began to relate what happened: "Svāmī, you were there, and whispered the *mantra* in my ear. 185. Kalyāna Gosāvī was there reading the Dāsabodha to the assembled multitude at Shahāpura; and in the water I saw all who are now here with you." 186. Then all looked at their royal *guru*. His body seemed to glow with a brilliant light. The people bowed prostrate before His Majesty exclaiming: "We cannot understand the limits of your

power." 187. God performs deeds, but the deeds of the saints seem greater than His. By performing these miraculous deeds, he sets men to worship God. 188. In this *Kaliyuga* even Brahmans have degenerated. Corrupt Muhammadan kings are ruling, and continually troubling their subjects. 189. There is the fear occasioned by untruths. Deities have become like stones. The power of *mantras* has disappeared. Justice and morality have sunk out of sight. 190. If one turns to the sacred watering places, made famous by the Purānas, they have become mere water. And when one looks about for some means of salvation, none is to be seen. 191. Then God, Dweller-in-Heaven, gave a command to His *bhaktas*, that they should descend to the world of mortals and turn men to the worship of God. 192. And this *Sadguru* Rāmdās is in truth the *avatāra* of Maruti, and Mahipati is a bard who sings in his verses the praises of the worthy deeds of the saints.

193. Svasti. This book is the *Shri Santarajaya*. By the mere listening to it, the desires of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twelfth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

### GOD IS ATTAINED BY BHAKTI

1. Repeating of *mantras*, austerities, religious ceremonies, sacrifices, gifts, good deeds, visiting sacred places, all these are deeds prompted by selfish desires, and therefore have a low origin [*rajogun*]. 2. But deeds done without selfish desires lead to *bhakti*. Deeds done with the selfish motive do bring about results, but without *bhakti* God can in no wise be attained. 3. Even if there is no sincere, worshipful feelings in the heart, still one should be continually repeating God's names, for by doing so, sin loses its power and the heart is easily purified. 4. And when the heart becomes repentant, one should go to one's *sadguru* as a suppliant, and offer to him one's body, soul, and property. 5. The *sadguru* being pleased, whatever the Giver-of-final-deliverance gives as the *mantra* full trust should be placed upon it, and it should be constantly repeated. 6. God will be pleased thereby, and will give a direct manifestation of Himself to those who seek after Him. Such indeed was what the Dweller-in-Dvārkā [Krishna] said to Uddhava, as recorded in the *Bhāgavata Purāna*.

### RĀMDĀS SMITES THE ROCK AND WATER GUSHES OUT

7. In the last chapter there were two stories related, one about Kalyāna, and the other about the Brahman in the well, to whom Rāmdās preached, in order that he might break the bonds that fastened him to worldly things.

8. Immediately after the above events Samartha got up from his seat, and started for the Chāphala valley. His band of disciples followed after him, and then went into the town to beg for food.

9. Meanwhile king Shivājī was disturbed in his mind. Said he: "In what forest can Samartha have gone?" At once he sent out his scouts to search in the forests, great and little. 10. The scouts looking for him everywhere, finally came to the Chāphala valley. Here they suddenly heard of his whereabouts. "The Svāmī is here", so the people said. 11. The scouts were exceeding glad to hear this, and returning to Sātārā informed the king of their discovery. The king was very glad. 12. His bodyguard of soldiers was made ready, and the king immediately started. As he hurried along, his retinue soon wearied, and his ministers were left far behind, 13. The king rode on the liveliest of horses. During the first watch of the dawning day he travelled the twenty-eight miles of distance, 14. Here a farmer told him that Rāmdās had gone up the mountain. He was now intensely thirsty, but there was no water to be seen. 15. He gave his horse over to the man, and on foot began to climb the mountain. He saw many tigers, wolves and bears along the way. 16. But the king walked along without fear, because of the favour of Samartha. Having climbed to the very top of the mountain, he there saw his sadguru. 17. According to his usage he prostrated himself on the ground before him. But now he was intensely thirsty, and his moon-face was pale. 18. Samartha said to him: "Why have you come so far? I have often told you merely to think of me". 19. The king replied: "Your command is my law. In my mind I am constantly thinking of your feet, but a bhakta wants to have a direct visual sight of his sadguru, for, it brings peace to his vision."

20. The king now made a sign to Rāmdās' disciple, Akābāī, and asked her, whether she had any drinking water with them. "If so, fill a drinking vessel, and give it to me," 21. Akābāī replied: "There is not one drop of water on this mountain. My brother disciples have

gone to beg our food. What is to be done?" 22. The king sat still, but he was in great distress from his thirst. Just then the disciples returned, and placed their begging bags before Rāmdās. 23. They prostrated themselves on the ground before him. Akābāī now said to them : "The king is in distress from thirst. You must go at once, and bring some water. 24. When Samartha heard this conversation, he said: "It will take too long to go down the mountain for water." Thus saying, he performed a miraculous deed. Listen to it, you pious folk. 25. He took his staff and thrust it with his hand against the mountain side. Suddenly a stream of water gushed forth, resembling the stream issuing from a stone pipe carved into the shape of a cow's head. 26. The water was deliciously cold, and all drank of it with pleasure, remarking: "In praising this water we have done homage to all sacred waters in the three worlds. 27. There was no water in the mountain. Samartha created it by his desire alone. That steady stream of water is flowing to this day, and can be seen by the *bhaktas* of the *Sadguru*. 28. In order to save Sagara, Bhagiratha brought the Ganges. Through it the whole universe is saved, the dull of mind being delivered by merely looking at it. 29. Or as Krishna created the *Bhagavadgītā*, having Arjuna as his pretext for doing this, so seekers after final Deliverance are saved by its meaning, by committing it to memory, by meditating on it and listening to it. 30. So Rāmdās brought water out of the mountain side, because the king was distressed from thirst. That sacred water has still cleansing power, and fully saves the humble souls.

31. In this water that issued from the mountain all bathed, and then cooked their food and ate. 32. Rāmdās gave the king leave to go, and he returned to his residence.

(at Sātārā). The Svāmī remained in the forest, and his disciples went daily on their begging rounds.

### RĀMDĀS TESTS THE DEVOTION OF HIS DISCIPLE AKĀBĀI

33. After some days Samartha left for another forest. Akā was at his service day and night, cooking the food he ate. 34. She prepared milk-macaroni by the basket full. So that whenever Samartha was hungry, she cooked it, and set it before him.

35. On one occasion the *Sadguru* expressed dislike of it, and began his particularly irritating test of her devotion. It happened that it was the month of Shrāvana (August) and the sky was dark with the falling rain.

36. Torrents of water were falling day and night. In the midst of the storm, Samartha climbed to the top of the mountain, and then remarked to Akā that he was very hungry. 37. Then four of the disciples stood holding an awning by its four corners over Rāmdās. The wet wood would not burn, but finally they kindled a fine bonfire. 38. As soon as the milk began to boil she prepared the *Khīra*, but with great difficulty. She added the sugar, and then spoke to Rāmdās. 39. Joining her hands palm to palm, she requested him to sit down and eat. But Samartha replied, "I am not hungry now," and started for another forest.

40. The next day when it was raining, Rāmdās said to her: "Fry some wheat cakes, and serve them to me. Four men then held an awning, and started a fire for cooking. 41. After having prepared this dainty food in ghee, Akābāi besought him to partake, and fell at his feet.

42. Samartha replied: "It is now evening, you were very long in preparing it, and I am no longer hungry.

43. I am not going to eat now. Give it to whomsoever you like." Akābāi listened, but her mind was not vexed.

44. Her devotion was fixed on her *Sadguru's* feet. Her

*bhakti* was continuous, unbroken, and immovable. He sought to irritate her into leaving his company. 45. But there was no confusion in her mind. She felt the great joy in his service. Said she: "Let happen what may, I care for no other means of salvation. 46. If Samartha will not eat, then I will remain fasting."

The next day the *svāmī* went into another great forest. 47. In a dense thicket there was a great striped tiger. When Samartha saw it, he gave it a command: 48. "I want to spend a night here, so go into some other forest, and leave this place to us." 49. As soon as the tiger received this command, it got up and went away. Rāmdās went into the thicket, and spent the night there. 50. The next day before the sun arose Rāmdās went with his disciples to another forest.

#### RĀMDĀS KILLS BIRDS AND BRINGS THEM TO LIFE AGAIN

51. The *sadguru* said to Kalyāna: "Make a *galula* [pebble shooting bow] with your own hands, and give it to me." 52. Kalyāna immediately split a bamboo, smoothed it with his knife, and made the *galula*. He brought it to his *svāmī*, and he accepted it. 53. Samartha took it in his hand, and wandered through the forest, playing with it. Just then the king arrived to meet Rāmdās, bringing with him the materials for worship. 54. The king worshipped the Giver-of-final-deliverance while he was playing with his *galula*, and then taking leave of him, the king returned to his own place. 55. All the religious mendicants, with their matted hair, now assembled before the king Shivājī and said: "Your father was our protector. 56. It was through Shiva that this kingdom has come to you. You do not seem to realize this, and so do not give us due honour. 57. Rāmdās is a crazy wanderer in the forest. He gave you the initiatory *mantra*, and so you have abandoned your Kshatriya duties, and are continu-

ally running after him. 58. He is not in his right mind. Can he save you? Your actions do not seem right. One should act with reason. 59. By associating with Rāmdās, you have abandoned us. You have ceased to associate with the pandits, who are the pillars of the Vedas and Shāstras." 60. These matted-hair mendicants spoke in a way to drive away the king's devotion from Rāmdās. The king, however, made them no reply, and persisted in his silence. 61. These matted-hair mendicants then sent one of their number into the forest with the instruction to observe the manner in which Rāmdās was living. 62. "If you see any fault in him, come back and tell us." "I will do so," the Yogi replied, and started for the forest. 63. Just as the filthy crow looks continually at a sore, so a crooked and an evil minded man looks for some lack or failing in the saint. 64. Samartha, a discerner of inner thoughts, understood what was in the man's mind, but he said to himself: "One should be courteous even when striking an evil man, so I will let him see a miracle." 65. Thus thinking, Rāmdās started to amuse himself in the forest. He had the pebble-bow in his hand with which he was shooting at birds. 66. The disciple of the Yogis was sitting at a distance watching. As soon as he saw what Samartha was doing, he rushed off to give information. 67. Two hundred Gosāvis [Yogis] sat in consultation, and decided to inform the king privately that Rāmdās was shooting birds with his pebble-bow in hand. 68. The whole body of these Gosāvis then hastily arose, and went before the king saying: "O King, show us your forest-inhabiting guru." 69. The king was already prepared to go, so he said to the Gosāvis: "Come along with me to see that Samartha." 70. All arrived at the forest, the bodyguard of soldiers, the Ministers and the Gosāvis. And there was Samartha, with his pebble-bow in hand, shooting pebbles at birds. 71. His aim was faultless.

Hit by the pebbles the birds died at once, and one after the other fell to the earth. He then said to his disciples: 72. "Take your begging bags, and fill them with the dead birds." At the command of Samartha the disciples did as they were told. 73. While this was going on, the king approached him, and prostrated himself on the ground. The Gosāvīs protested saying to the king: "Why do you bow to one who kills?" 74. "You Rāmdās, give wisdom to others, but as for yourself you show your indifference to worldly things by killing living creatures, and bewitching the pious-minded." 75. Samartha replied to them: "He who kills and makes alive is Rāma. In your ignorance you mistake about me, and blame me without cause. 76. The formless substance, the Cloud-dark [ Vishnu ] had Brahmaṇe as His own child, and Creation, Life, and Destruction are by the power of His might. 77. The Infinite Being, holder of the strings, pulls the strings controlling fate. Not knowing Him, why do you blame me for being His instrument?" 78. The Gosāvīs replied to Samartha: "But how is it that you in our very sight killed these birds with a sling in your hand? The blame is on your head." 79. Samartha responded: "I have killed them, you raise them to life. Show this miracle to the king, and he will then worship you." 80. The Gosāvīs exclaimed: "You fool, when life has departed, not even Brahmaṇe, or the other gods, can bring a corpse to life. What is our might compared with theirs?" 81. Rāmdās listened to their harsh words, and then replied in an *abhangā*. I quote it here. Let saints and all good men listen to it.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

82. After repeating this *abhangā* he continued killing more birds. Samartha then said to the king: "Collect the dead birds as I shoot them." 83. At Samartha's command the king began to collect them. The Gosāvīs remarked to

themselves : "The king has become one degraded." 84. Then emptying the bags, they made a heap of these dead birds before Samartha. The Sadguru then said : "Go all of you and collect faggots in order to roast these birds." 85. The disciples, together with the king, gathered sticks and placing the dead birds under the sticks set them afire. 86. Just as the fire began to blaze, all the birds flew away, and as all looked up to see them, they exclaimed : "Blessed is the greatness of the saints." 87. Samartha put out the fire, and looked for birds among the sticks, but there was none left. All the revilers were thus put to shame. 88. With shouts of "Victory, Victory," the circle of *bhakta*s clapped their hands. Naturally the faces of the haters turned black. 89. The Gosāvīs felt ashamed, and returned to their homes, while the king lovingly worshipped the Giver-of-Deliverance [Rāmdās]. 90. As soon as he was given leave, the king returned to his city. And as the Saviour-of-the-lowly [Rāmdās] returned to his place a large multitude followed him.

#### THE NAMES OF RĀMDĀS' DISCIPLES

91. Listen now to the names of those disciples who remained with Rāmdās in the forest. The very listening to their names frees one from the bondage of this worldly existence. 92. Vāsudeva Gosāvī, formerly a householder in Kānherī. Uddhava of Tākali, known over the world. 93. Girmājī of Bhoinja, who was a cowherd in the Bālāghāṭa region. Krishnājī, and Haragājī, citizens of Pandharpura. 94. Shivarāma Gosāvī and the Great Poet as he is called, both from a town in the Konkana, the history of Kalyāna being already well known by you, good people. 95. Sirgāva is a town near Pāli, and that was the home of Dattobā Gosāvī, Anantā of Tārala as he is called. 96. Ānanda Gosāvī, and Mauni, were both from the town of Nilanga. Nāganātha of Adasula, whose *guru* was Bhima, and whose

*bhakti* was full of reverence. 97. Mādhava Gosāvī of Pārnēra, foremost in devotion and knowledge. Milājī of Kudālakhore constant in service. 98. Bholārāma and Bālakarāma, whose home town was in the province of Varāda. They set aside all desires for worldly things, and clung to the good company of Rāmdās. 99. Shivarāma Gosāvī of Parānde, and Dinkara of Tisagāva. Besides these, there were those without limit who remained in their own homes. 100. There was also Akābāī of Shahāpura, and Venubāī of Kolhāpura. They had put aside all thought of being ashamed, and clung to the feet of their *sadguru*. 101. Ambikābāī's former home was in the district of Junnara. Anubāī of Kanhera also was one who meditated on the feet of her *sadguru*. 102. All the above band of disciples were constantly with Samartha. They went out to beg, and brought back an abundance, and no one thought of this as a burden. 103. "Victory to Rām," was their cry, and then the band of disciples hastened away from that street. But pious and good people followed them, and gave to them. 104. Some gave grain, some rice, some gave flour, others *dala*. Some gave merely vegetable leaves, putting them in the begging bag, 105. The merchants in their shops would give turmeric, ginger and cumin seed. They did not lack a single thing. For all *siddhis* (accomplishments personified) were his (Rāmdās') slaves, as it were.

106. Begging is, in fact, a wish-cow. The saints devised it for those seeking final deliverance, but the advantage of it comes only to those who beg without being ashamed of it. Others would die of hunger. 107. If a man becomes a Haridāsa for the sake of worldly gain, and hence feels ashamed of begging his food, then it is evident that the net that binds him to earthly things is not ruptured, and what he does is merely for outward show. 108. Whatever is freely given should be received

with thankfulness. If the seeker after salvation should ask for more, he becomes blameworthy. 109. Such was the rule for begging that Samartha laid down. The disciples would bring back their full begging bags, and place them before their *svāmī*.

110. There were four women who accompanied Rāmdās, so that the cooking was most excellent. A large number of Brahmans were accustomed to dine with him in forest feasts.

#### OBJECTION TO RĀMDĀS' WORSHIP IN KOLHĀPURA

111. On one occasion Samartha was sitting on his mat contemplating the image of Rāma, and worshipping Him with feeling of love. 112. A man came and prostrated himself before the *svāmī*, saying : "Kolhapura, as you know, is a sacred city, a place for good deeds and the gaining of purity. 113. The Goddess Mahālakshmi is there, and all worship Her. Kirtanas and recitations in honour of Rāma are not pleasing to the people. 114. If one repeats aloud "Rāma Rāma," people say : "You must not use such inauspicious words. Those words are to be used only when dying. In this way they frighten the pious people." 115. Hearing the man say this, Rāmdās laughed, remarking : "This Kaliyug is difficult to restrain. It deceives even the wise. 116. If we speak of Rāma as Brahma, the goddess is merely the shadow of Brahma. She has bewitched the three worlds, and made them submissive to her. 117. Because those beings who worship Rāma at once are absorbed into Brahma, therefore, this bewitcher of the universe puts confusion in the minds of men. 118. If a person does some unusual misdeed which he should not do, still his mind is not at all agitated. But the moment his father hears of his conduct he slaps him in his face. 119. A thief and an adulterer accomplish their aims at night, but the moment the sun arises,

through fear they slip away hiding. 120. So to hold to the worship of Rāma is a very difficult thing." On this subject Rāmdās composed an *abhangā*, to which you, good people, should listen with love.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

121. While Samartha was repeating this *abhangā* Kalyāna Gosāvī wrote it down. There is no need of commenting on it, as all saints are familiar with it.

#### RĀMDĀS FEELS A CALL TO PREACH AT KOLHĀPURA

122. Rāmdās having heard of the events taking place at Kolhāpura, and that the name of Rāma was not permitted to be spoken aloud ( in Mahālaxmi's temple ) he was very much astonished. 123. And then Samartha thought to himself: "Rāma has commanded me to preach to men and to start them on the path leading to His worship. 124. So I must go into the District of Karhāda, and help men to pursue the supreme-spiritual-riches. On listening to my *kirtanas* their conduct will change. 125. I, who am *bhakta* of Rāma, have no rebirths or redeaths whatever. But in order fully to save the world, I have assumed this visible body." 126. Thus thinking to himself, he started for the Karhāda District. All his band of disciples followed after him, lodging in whatever village the *svāmī* lodged. 127. With no desires in their minds they begged for food from house to house. When it was night there were enthusiastic *kirtanas*, and people came and listened with reverence. 128. As they listened to Samartha's *kirtanas* their hearts melted with repentance. If anyone came to him with sincere motives, he would give them the initiatory *mantra*, making him his disciple. 129. If it was his good fortune to have Samartha's lotus-hand rest on his head, Indifference-to-worldly-things pervaded his being, and the noble Vaishnava became a *bhakta*. 130. He developed a love for the worship of Rāma, and separated him-

self from the six enemies of the soul. Thus Rāmdās with great joy brought salvation to this world. 131. He turned very many women and shudras, both men and women, to the way of bhakti. Arriving at Karhāda, he performed there his enthusiastic *kirtanas*. 132. When the Brāhmans of the place heard Rāmdās' name, they came to listen. And when they heard his eloquent speech their minds were overwhelmed.

### VENUBĀI BECOMES RĀMDĀS' DISCIPLE

133. The Deshpande [official] of Kathāda was a very widely respected gentleman. His efficient daughter was an earnest listener at the *kirtanas*. 134. She was a widow, and her name was Venubāi. Her listening led her to sincere repentance, and she said to herself : "I must do something by which my soul will have final attainment." 135. And so she went to Samartha, and bowed to him in the sincerity of her feelings. She exclaimed : "I have come as a suppliant to you with body, soul and wealth. And so, Merciful One, you must give me the initiatory *mantra*, making me your disciple. 136. The Sadguru, recognizing her by his power of inner sight said to her : "Make preparations." At this command she greatly rejoiced. 137. She prepared dainty food of various kinds for a Brahman feast. And then with loving devotion prepared the things needed for the worship of the Sadguru. 138. She prepared the upper storey for the worship of the *svāmī*. She designed many patterns with coloured powders and spread the mat on the floor. 139. She polished the brass lamps, and placed them in a circle. She then smeared fragrant perfumed oil on the *svāmī*. 140. They bathed the god [Rāmdās] with hot water, and then wiped him dry. Kalyāna dressed him in a beautiful yellow robe. Then the service of worship was begun. 141. The three marks were made on Rāmdās' forehead. They smeared him with thin sandal-wood paste. They put a garland of flowers around his neck, to see which

brought peace to the soul. 142. Venubāī waved the incense and the lights and offered the perfumed powders. Offerings and gifts were placed before him, and she prostrated herself on the ground. 143. Samartha then called her to him, and whispered in her ear the *mantra*, consisting of God's names. As those words fell on her ears her heart felt a sense of peace.

144. Meanwhile a feast was prepared. The Brahmans bathed and returned. The water in which their feet were washed was sipped, and they were lovingly worshipped. 145. The leaf-plates were set, and the divine food was served. The whole assembly of Brahmans then arose, and came to see and worship the *Svāmī*. 146. To some he seemed to be Māruti himself. Some saw Samartha as the embodiment of wisdom. To some he seemed a crazy fool. Each one's attitude brought its own fruit. 147. After all had made him a *namaskāra*, they took their seats by their plates. Just then Venubāī appeared with vessels full of food to be used as offerings. 148. Samartha then gave a command to Kalyāna to allow no one to come near him, and told Venubāī to go down to the feast, and herself perform the act of offering the food to the Deities.

149. Samartha then sat alone by himself, and brought to his mind the form of Māruti. And Māruti appeared in visible form, and lovingly ate. 150. Venubāī brought some more food in a dish in order to serve Rāmdās. And there she saw Māruti eating with him. That filled her with fear. 151. Indeed as she saw his divine glorious appearance she suddenly fainted away, and began to fall from the upper storey. Rāmdās grasped her by his hand. 152. The Brahmans who were standing below watched the *svāmī*'s great agility. While she was falling in mid-air he seized her by the wrist, and lifted her back. 153. The Brahmans, seeing this most unusual sight, were terrified.

But Samartha assured them as he pulled Venubāl up. 154. Rāmdās then asked her: "Mother, what did you see?" Venubāl held him by the feet, and replied: "I saw a man as if made of light. 155. His robe was as if of gold. At his back I saw a tail. He aroused my fear, and I fell on the ground in a faint" 156. Samartha said to her: "I have a great number of followers, but none of them have had a vision of Māruti. Your good fortune is a special one.

157. In the meantime the feast continued, and all had their hunger fully satisfied. The Brahmins took the pānasupāri, and the gifts of money, and went back to their homes. 158. Rāmdās brought more food, and served it on a plate. Māruti ate all of it. He then drank some water, with evident pleasure. 159. As she gave the pāna supāri to Samartha [ for Māruti ] he vanished out of sight. Rāmdās then ate what was left on Māruti's plate as the latter's gift to him. 160. When it was night all his followers, including women and shudras, dined. Akabāl then came bringing some light food. 161. She said: "The food offerings made at noontime were all eaten up by Māruti, so now eat this light meal." To this Samartha assented.

162. In the meantime preparations for kirtana were made. Mats were spread, lamps burned on all sides, and every one came to listen. 163. Samartha began the kirtana. His circle of disciples stood at his back. He first sang an abhangā, which I here quote.

1. The name alone of Rāma accomplishes what all other means accomplish.
2. Repetition of mantras, austerities and religious rites may be used, but at the end of life only the Name of Rāma avails.
3. No mantras or other means can deliver one at the end of life.

- 4. An infinite number of great sinners have been saved by His name.
- 5. His name is the cream of creams, and the refuge of all.
- 6. Says Rāmdās, "How often have I to tell you, that there is no other course but that of Rāma's name ? "

164. In this manner the Merciful-to-the-lowly [Rāmdās] widely established the Way of *Bhakti*, and in preaching the value of the Name he brought punishment to the evil minded. 165. Samartha also established that the way-of-knowledge is connected with Indifference to worldly things. His stories of *saguna* God touched the hearts of all. 166. In the *kīrtana* there sounded the cymbal, and the sweet sounding drum. There was a great flow of sound. All shouted aloud the name of Rāma, so that the whole of space was filled with it, 167. There was clapping of hands and snapping of fingers. The noble Vaishnavas danced with joy. The *kīrtana* lasted during the four watches of the night, and then came the wave offering to the Husband-of-Jānakī [Rāma]. 168. The Brahmans of the highest rank unitedly requested Rāmdās to remain there for at least a few days. In order to satisfy their desire to listen, Samartha assented. 169. There were present also other pious people, who came to him with undivided devotion. Samartha did them the kindness of giving them, the names of God for them to repeat, 170. Rāmdās remained there for three days, and performed his *kīrtanas*, overflowing with divine love. On the fourth day he left for his forest retreat, without informing any one.

#### VENUBĀI IS POISONED BY HER PARENTS

171. After the sun had arisen the circle of disciples went in search of Rāmdās. Venubāi was greatly troubled; her heart was in a flutter. 172. She therefore asked her

mother's permission to go also, saying: "I am going to visit my suṁī." The mother replied: "That is a disgraceful thing for you to do. By no means may you go into the forest." 173. "If I am separated from Samartha I shall be worried by household affairs. What shall I do?" Venubāi said to herself. Her heart was in a flutter. 174. Just then she saw a company of Rāmās' new disciples starting off to see and worship their *sulguru*. Venubāi made her own determination, and went along with them. 175. Entering into the forest, she reverently made Rāmās a namaskāra, and placing her hands palm to palm, she said in a pleading tone: "I am going to follow you." 176. The *sulguru* counselled her: "It is not well for you to be in the company of a crazy fellow (as I am considered to be). The evil minded will make fun of you in many unpleasant ways, and then you will find your heart confused. 177. Before your physical death you should do to all worldly things, and perform over them the funeral rites. Then only can you have joy in my company. I have no liking for hypocrites. 178. Hold in your heart the image of the Holder-of-the-bow [Rāma] and worship Him in your own home. After He bestows on you His favour your relatives will separate themselves from you. 179. I have to go far from here, otherwise I would take you along with me. So go back, and fulfil your duties at your home, and sing of the deeds of Shri Rāma. 180. Thus instructing Venubāi, he sent her back to her home. She then sat in the God-room, and worshipped by herself. 181. She committed to memory the *abhangas* of Samartha, and lovingly sang them. She would bring to her mind the form of her *sulguru*, and worship him mentally.

182. In the meantime Samartha left the forest, and came to Shahāpura. Venubāi heard the news of this, and she came to see and worship him. 183. She stayed there

but a day, and at night listened to an enthusiastic *kīrtana*. Samartha gave her permission to leave, and she returned to her parental home. 184. Her father-in-law heard the details of her visit to Rāmdās, and came to the home of her father, and complained to him of her conduct. 185. Said he : "She is well on now to sixteen years of age, and has begun wandering about from town to town. All my relatives laugh about her. You should know all this. 186. Rāmdās has with him some unmannerly and unmarried disciples. How is it that you parents in this home allow her to go so far away ? 187. From now on if any scandalous report is heard about her, you should not blame me." So saying, the father-in-law returned to his home.

188. Venubāī's mother and father laboured greatly with her, but she would not listen to them. She said "If my husband were living, then the domestic life would have been my duty. 189. But now I have embraced my *Sadguru*'s feet with my body, soul and property. Shri Rāma is my father, and Sītā is my mother. In clinging to them, I shall accomplish my purpose in life." 190. Her mother and father, hearing her, remarked : "She no longer questions her conduct. But around our heads we shall hear the buzz of scandal." So saying, their hearts were in deep concern. 191. One should hear of one's daughter as dead, or as living honourably at her mother-in-law's. And so they brought some poison, and made her drink it. 192. It set her stomach aflame. She tossed about like a fish out of water. She cried : "I am about to die, O my Guru, and Protector, rush to my aid and save me. 193. For the salvation of the world you are the visible *avatāra* of Māruti. There is no one but you to care for me." 194. Thus exclaiming, Venubāī fell unconscious to the ground. And Rāmdās by his power

of inner sight realized it all. 195. The powers of a man who has reached the highest attainable accomplishments are very wonderful, and they were manifested on this occasion. The corpse lay on the ground, and a large crowd of people had gathered. 196. They remarked to one another: "It was but a short time ago that she was wandering about the town. In the meantime what is this that has happened to her? Only God, the Dweller-in-Heaven, can know the reason." 197. Her mother and father were ostensibly weeping, but in their hearts they were saying: "We have committed child-murder, and the guilt is on our heads."

198. As soon as Rāmdās saw the situation through his power of inner sight, he brought before his imagination the form of the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] and brought to his remembrance His distinguished deeds. 199. He then prayed: "O Dweller-on-the-banks-of-the-Sarayu-river [ Rāma ], hasten to my aid. Thy name is a life restoring nectar; so said the Muni Vālmiki, and that is not an untrue description. 200. Shiva once drank poison, and his whole body was aflame with it. But when he repeated the name of Rāma his body was cooled." 201. Thus praying, Rāmdās, the Brahmachārī, passed a *rattan* stick over her. Venubāi immediately vomited, and the poison was thrown up. 202. She at once arose, and placed her head on the feet of her *sadguru*, saying: "It was my father and mother who gave me the poison. What a demon my mother is! 203. You Merciful-to—the—lowly have done well, and have torn the net of Illusion. Now I shall always be with you my Svāmī," So saying, she immediately followed him. 204. Samartha walked in front, and Venubāi walked behind him. Soon both arrived at the valley, of Chāphala.

205. In the next chapter I shall describe some noteworthy deeds that possess the nine poetic sentiments.\* Mahipati is dependent on the saints, and therefore a possessor of fair fame.

206. Svasti. This book is the *Santavijaya*. By merely listening to it the longings of the hearts are fulfilled. May the God-loving pious *bhaktas* therefore listen. This is the thirteenth delightful chapter.

\* The nine sentiments are love, mirth, pitifulness, anger, heroism, fear, disgust, surprise, and tranquillity

## CHAPTER XIV

### HOW THE MIND IS BEST CONTROLLED

1. While seeking to contemplate God, one cannot always restrain the mind, because of its sickleness. It loses the thought of essential unity, with God, and causes one to wander hither and thither. 2. One may feel he should perform a sacrifice, but he has no money with which to do it. In this Kaliyuga givers are poor, and the miserly will not give to the worthy. 3. Some are weak in body, and so cannot walk to the sacred places. One would like to read the Purānas aloud to others in Sanskrit, but one has not the necessary intellect, one is dull minded. 4. Although one may attempt the system of breathing, still the mind is not in one's control. Those who say they will adopt the vayuśana posture find that God sends them hindrances. 5. Therefore, it is best to put away all desires, and sing with love of the deeds of Bhaktas. There are no means greater than this, and it is in every way simple.

### VENUBĀI AND AKĀBĀI PERFORM KIRTANAS BEFORE KING SHIVĀJI

6. In the last chapter we had as special events the hatred of the Gosāvis for Sunartha, his killing of many birds and then bringing them to life. 7. The parents of Venubāi giving her poison, because she was seeking the supreme-spiritual-riches. And then how Rāmdās suddenly appeared there, and gave her the gift of life again. 8. In that way the net of Illusion was torn from her, and she placed her thoughts on the lotus feet of her *guru*. She then followed her *sadguru* with intense love. 9. Her heart was full of joy. Just as when a serpent slips away from the juggler, and crawls into the hole of the ant-hill,

Venubāī felt the same joy it feels. 10. Or as when a parrot is put in a cage, and then suddenly the cage gets its door loose, and flying away, it sits on a bough looking for its mates. Such was Venubāī. 11. And when in the vale of Chāphala, she saw the assembled *guru* and brother disciples, her heart was supremely happy. Indeed there was no limit to that joy. 12. Through the favour of Samartha, she received knowledge, and she began to perform *kīrtanas*, and give recitations acceptable to the wise.

13. When it was dawn the band of disciples went out to beg for food, and Akā did the cleaning and the sweeping, and began the cooking. 14. Suddenly king Shivājī appeared on the scene to see and worship Rāmdās. He brought with him some excellent mangoes, and filled baskets with them. 15. The disciples who had gone into the town to beg, brought back a great quantity of food with them. Then all performed their baths, and devotions, and in the meantime the cooking was completed. 16. The plates were laid, and the food served. The mangoes, which were given to every one, when squeezed yielded to each one a cup full of juice. Thus all dined. 17. At the *svāmī*'s request the king also dined, and *pānasupāri* was distributed to all. Samartha then gave the order to perform the *rājayoga* rite. 18. A square raised seat was prepared, decorated with flowers. In the middle was erected an altar of the *tulsi* plant. Inserted in it was a banner of Māruti. 19. On this raised platform, they made a beautiful throne, and Samartha sat on it. The king's eight ministers stood in front with hands joined palm to palm. 20. Rāmdās was clothed in a garment with gold and silver thread. He was adorned with jewelled ornaments, which the king himself put upon him. 21. Some acted as staff bearers and with their eyes fastened on his feet, they announced to Samartha any new person who might



RĀMDĀS COMPOSES THE *Dāsabodha*

33. It was really at Shri Rāma's command that Rāmdās began the composition of the *Dāsabodha*. The Svāmī pronounced the blessed words, and Kalyāna wrote them down. 34. Rāmdās composed the verses, as if he were repeating them from memory, and Kalyāna immediately wrote them down without having to ask Rāmdās to repeat them. 35. Samartha sat down to the task from early morning, and as he completed the book the sun was rising.

36. Kalyāna then arose to make his *namaskāra* to the sun, when behold! he could see nothing whatever with his eyes. This made him heave a heavy sigh. 37. Samartha said to him: "Faithful one, what is it that is troubling you?" The other placed his head on Samartha's feet, saying: "Samartha, I cannot see with my eyes." 38. Samartha said to himself: "He was writing steadily for eight watches, so that his eyes have lost their sight." Samartha then passed his hand over the man's eyes. 39. By that he regained his divine eyes. All the band of disciples wondered, and Kalyāna was full of joy.

At the same time the king regained his bodily consciousness. 40. Rāmdās had written seven chapters in the *Dāsabodha* on the duties of a king. These he had copied, and given to the king. The king read them with feelings of peace. 41. Just as when the armies of the Kauravas and Pandavas came together, Arjuna felt the temptation not to fight, and said to Krishna: "O God, I certainly will not fight." 42. Arjuna then threw away his bow and arrow, and descended from his chariot. Then it was that Krishna composed the *Bhagavadgītā* in order to remove the temptation from him. 43. So in this case the king Shivājī having listened to the above story had become indifferent to worldly things, and had said: "I am

going to give up my kingship." So then it was that Samartha composed the *Dūsabodha*. 44. By listening to its contents, and committing it to memory many seekers after salvation have been saved, and will be saved in the future. And so the king came to the same state of mind that the king Janaka came to.

#### THE RĀJAYOGA CEREMONY DESCRIBED

45. As already stated Samartha began the *rājayoga* ceremony, and the king came every day to see and worship him. His worship was according to the usual prescribed custom. 46. Rāmdās had now a very large following of disciples. Some of them acted as if they held the office of the eight ministers. They continually stood before him with hands joined palm to palm, and their sight fixed on his feet. 47. Some held the whisk brush in their hands and some fanned him with fans. Some stood guard over him, and kept back those who sought to come into his presence. 48. Some chose the role of singers, and sang the praises of Samartha. Finally, when he gave his commands all looked at his face. 49. In this manner all his disciples waited upon their Guru for service at all times. Even the eight ministers of the king were all the time rendering some service. 50. Just as it was when Krishna was an *avatāra* an army of nine hundred thousand cowherds made Shri Krishna king and worshipped Him, the Eagle-bannered-one. 51. They piled up folded blankets and made them into a high throne. For materials of worship they used leaves and garlands of flowers. They adorned him with a necklace of the red *gunja* seed. 52. Krishna, seeing the limitless devotion of these cowherds, did not refuse the honour, for according to the feelings which each one had, so He was to them. 53. As God is, so is His *bhaktā*. There is not the least difference between them. He became an *avatāra* in the world of mortals in order to save the world.

54. Samartha was pleased to have this *rājayoga* ceremony performed, because of the earnest wish of his disciples. Brahmans were daily feasted with dainty food including the king and his ministers. 55. At the third watch, listening to the reading of the Purānas took place. The reading was done by Kalyāna at a *kīrtana* in praise of Hari which took place and deeply moved all hearts. 56. Thus in the performance of this *rājayoga* ceremony twelve years passed. Then Samartha went into the forest, and the king was given leave to depart. 57. Just as children arrange their playthings, and play with them as they feel inclined, and then throw them down, and run away, just such an one was Rāmdās. 58. The king had copies made of the *Gurugītā* the *Panchikarana*; the *Manache Shlokā* and the *Rāmāyana* in verse, books composed by Rāmdās. 59. The king kept the great book, the *Dāsabodha*, in his library, and was constantly reading it in his private moments.

#### THE ENVY OF GĀGĀ PANDITA IS AROUSED

60. In the king's service there was a learned Brahman named Gāgā Pandita. He had studied the four shāstras. He was an expert in the *Bhāgavata* and famed for his knowledge. 61. He had resided in the sacred city of Benares and was skilled in every field of knowledge. The king had appointed him, so that he might listen to the reading of the *Bhāgavata Purāna*. 62. When the Pandita heard the loud praises of Rāmdās, and that the king had become his disciple, and was continually serving him, his anger was aroused; 63. just as the moon is spoiled by its disease of waning, just as the sea water is spoiled by its saltiness, just as a Brahman of noble birth is spoiled by some low deed, just as a king is spoiled by some rash act, 64. just as a field is spoiled by an overflowing stream, just as a man is spoiled by intercourse with another woman not

his wife, or just as a quarrel results in the loss of wealth. 65. Rāvana possessed so great an intellect that he divided the Vedas into portions, but even he was spoilt by his pride, and thereby gained the contempt of mankind. 66. So Gāgā Pandita skilled in the Vedas, Purānas and Shāstras, and moreover one who possessed the title of *Rājamānya* [worthy of a king's honour], was ruined by his hatred, and pride. 67. Any one who hates the *bhaktas* of Vishnu suffers the loss of all his good deeds. Durvāsa had an experience of this in his ill treatment of Ambarisha, 68. But enough of so much talking! However, the giving of illustrations is a poet's prerogative.

When Gāgā Pandita heard Rāmdās praised, he muttered to himself with envy. 69. One day the king Shivājī having bathed, sat in the God-room, and having unwrapped the *Dāsabodha* of its cloth covering, sat reading it with delight. 70. Just then Gāgā Pandita suddenly arrived. The king arose to greet him, and gave him a seat. 71. The Brahman now said to the king: "What Shāstra is it that you have unwrapped from its fold? Is it in Sanskrit or Marāthi? Kindly tell me." 72. The king replied that it was the *Dāsabodha*, composed by Samartha. The Pandita answered: "It is a great sin to listen to a work composed in Marāthi. 73. If you so will, I will read to you the works of Vyāsa, but from now on, O King, you should throw away every Marāthi book. 74. Marāthi books are for women, Shūdras and other such people, but for Brahmans and Kshatriyas there are the *Purānas*, composed by Dvaipāyana." 75. The king replied: "This book is in harmony with the Vedas and Shāstras. I have begun to love it greatly. I wish you would look over the whole of it." 76. While the king was making these remarks, the Pandita became very angry, and he said to the king: "From now on I shall not read the *Purānas* to you." 77. With this exclamation, the Pandita returned to his home. But this

'incident did not arouse in the king any unkindly thoughts regarding Rāmdās, for he was a true *bhakta* of his *guru*.

78. Samartha heard of the incident, and how his book had been forbidden. He, therefore, came with all his retinue, and encamped in the park. 79. After all had bathed, and performed their devotions, they sat down in a grove. In the meantime the king, indifferent to his worldly affairs, was preparing to go and see and worship Samartha. 80. Just then his scouts brought the news that Samartha was encamped in the grove. The king all in a flutter started, and walked barefoot. 81. The eight ministers hurried on foot. All the citizens of the town proceeded to the park. Many Vedic panditas and Brahmins hastened to see and worship Rāmdās. 82. Even the merchants of the city hastened to meet him, and following them came elephants, horses and palanquins. 83. For a short time the king stood looking over the crowd. He failed to see Gāgā Pandita. He gave orders to his ministers to have him called. 84. A horse was given to a clerk, and the king instructed him saying: "Tell Gāgā Pandita to come at once to the grove to meet Samartha." 85. The horseman arrived at the Pandita's home, but was told by him that it was his time to eat, and, therefore, he could not come at that time. 86. "When Samartha comes into the city, and performs a *kirtana*, I will meet him then." The messenger took this message, and delivered it to the king. 87. While this delay took place, the whole army approached with their sweet sounding instruments, the music of which filled the sky to overflowing. 88. There were eagle banners and drums. Flags woven with golden threads waved. Dancers sang their sweet songs. Through the music souls experienced a sense of peace. 89. As the king thus came in state into the park, he saw the Giver-of-final-salvation. The king gladly prostrated himself on the ground before him. 90. The eight ministers,

citizens of the highest rank, Valdikas, Panditas and noble Brahmans, all bowed to him. 91. All shouted: "Victory! Victory! to Rāma," as the king hastened to mark Rāmdās' forehead with fragrant powders. 92. They made a great head-dress of flowers, and the king placed it on his head. They put a garland around his neck that reached to his feet, a garland that brought joy to the eyes. 93. Thus worshipped, the Giver-of-final-salvation, was seated in a palanquin. Music from various instruments now sounded, and the drums were beaten. 94. As many Brahmanas as came on foot were given carriages in which to return. Crowds filled the streets of the city. People collected to see Rāmdās. 95. As the procession neared the palace gate, many cannons were fired, and the king, taking the *sadguru's* sandals, placed them before him. 96. For a moment Rāmdās sat on the royal throne, and then the people left for their homes. Then the king brought hot water for Rāmdās to bathe with, and anointed him with perfumed oil. 97. After this perfumed bath, the king clothed him in the yellow silk robe, and worshipped him as rules prescribed, with the use of perfumes, rice, flowers and sandal-wood paste. 98. In the meanwhile a feast was prepared. The Brahmans went for their bath and returned. The plates were speedily arranged, and food was served on them of many dainty kinds. 99. Rāmdās performed the customary worship of the Brahmans, and then made the offerings to the gods. Each one was served with whatever he desired, and all were fully satisfied. 100. After all had eaten, and the *pānasupūri* and gifts of money had been distributed to all, the king took the plate of Samartha, and ate from it, being the last one to be served.

101. With the permission of Samartha, arrangements were made for the *kirtana*. Various seats were arranged, and lamps were lighted on every side. 102. There was an enormous number of flags and banners to grace the

*kīrtana*. The servants of the king with torches in their hands went from house to house to invite the people. 103. Great crowds of people assembled, so that there was no entrance through the palace gate. It was rumoured from house to house that the *kīrtana* was of unequalled excellence.

104. Aside from Gāgā Pandita all the Brahmans of high rank had arrived, as also all the rich men of the city, forming a dense crowd. 105. At the command of the Svāmī, Venubāī began the *kīrtana*, and Kalyāna led the chorus. Waves of love stirred the assembly. 106. After her, Akābāī led in the *kīrtana*. Then Kalyāna Gosāvī stood up to lead, and showed great eloquence of speech. 107. The Panditas and Brahmans began, however, to murmur among themselves. The other pious people, however, listened with loving joy. 108. Rāmdās was in an inner room, but knew of the events taking place. He then came out to perform the *kīrtana* himself, to the great joy of all. 109. As Samartha entered, he made a *namaskāra* to the Brahmans, and the Brahmans all arose to greet him with hearts full of joy.

110. The proud Gāgā Pandita did not, however, arise at that moment. He was proud of his own knowledge, and so kept his seat puffed up with conceit. 111. Samartha took in the situation, and stood in the middle of the circle. He brought to mind, with feelings of love, Him, the Holder-of-the-Bow [ Rāma ], and expressing his thoughts in blessed words, said : 112. "Victory, Victory to Dweller-in-Ayodhyā, Husband-of-Sītā, Son-of-Kaushalyā, Son-of-Dasharatha, Killer-of-Rāvana, the Being-both *saguna* and *nirguna*; whose adornments are His *bhaktas*, Dear Rāma. 113. Shri Rāma is my Divine-knowledge. Shri Rāma is my idea of indifference to worldly affairs. Aside from His name, I shall adopt no other means of salvation. 114. Shri Rāma is my family *guru*. Shri

Rāma is my perfect *sadguru*. Shri Rāma is my dear saviour, to take me across the sea of this worldly existence. 115. Shri Rāma is my learned listener. Dear Rāma is my speaker on philosophy. Shri Rāma is my blessing bestowing poetry. I have no one but Him."

116. When Rāmdās had finished these words, the audience clapped their hands, and repeated aloud the names of Rāma. All shouted: "Victory! Victory!" and the sound of voices filled all space. 117. As Samartha stood up to perform, the assembly was overcome with emotion. Enthusiasm in the *kirtana* reached a high point, which my lips cannot adequately describe. 118. He highly praised the might of Rāma's name in accord with the teachings of the Vedas and Shāstras. He quoted from the Shri Bhāgavata and clearly explained its meaning.

#### PROUD GĀGĀ PANDITA IS HUMBLED

119. As Gāgā Pandita listened, he said to himself: "Samartha is not human. As I watch his features, I see that he is actually Māruti Himself." 120. Gāgā Pandita then dropped all his pride of deeds, his pride of knowledge, and his pride of philosophy, and repentant in heart, he prostrated himself on the ground before Rāmdās. 121. Rāmdās raised him up, and embraced him with both arms, and the Pandita in affectionate words said: "You are actually the *avatāra* of Māruti. 122. You seem on this earth to be an *avatāra* in visible form, and to have come for the salvation of the world, but you are, in very fact, Brahma Itself. Of this my mind is fully convinced." 123. Samartha then took the Pandita by the hand, and seated him before him. As the king watched this unusual sight, he greatly rejoiced.

124. Even the gods delighted to come and listen to the *kirtanas* of Rāmdās. Seated in their chariots of light, they

listened with love to the stories of Hari. 125. All the sacred watering places in the three-worlds, too, assembled there [through their presiding deities]. Also all Festal Occasions stood near by in order to receive a blessing.

126. Rāmdās said to his hearers: "All the illusory things that you see will in the end be destroyed. Rāma alone is the one Eternal Being. Worship Him. 127. Rāmdās here recited verses on Creation, Existence, and Destruction. I quote them as they were spoken. Listen, you pious *bhaktas* of his."

( Abhangas not translated )

128. Such was the substance of Samartha's *kīrtana*, in which he again and again used inspired *abhangas*. He convinced his listeners regarding their way of worship, conduct, and experimental form of knowledge. 129. He also explained the doctrines of the Vedānta and the Siddhānta. All the Panditas were overcome with astonishment, and could think of nothing to say. 130. Rāmdās then said to them: "The Marāthī language seems to you to be inferior, but whether in Marāthi or Sanskrit the meaning is the same. 131. If one reads the *Purānas* in the Sanskrit, one has to explain the meaning in Marāthi, just as a king's glory is not magnified except through his subjects. 132. If one throws iron aside altogether, the marvellous power of the touchstone cannot be known. God has from the very beginning created fifty-six different languages. 133. But as to the names of Rāma and Krishna, there is no difference (no change from one language to the other). The great poets, Vyāsa and Vālmiki, are witnesses to this in the *Purānas*. Ask them. 134. God created the Sanskrit language, and the Marāthi originated from a thief; so the wise should not speak. All languages are without beginning and are self-evolved. 135. If the Purānics did not explain the

*Purānas* in Marāthi, they would not be able to fill their bellies." Hearing these remarks of Samartha, all the Panditas laughed. 136. Hands were then clapped to the shouts of "Victory, Victory." The assembly was full of joy. The king lost bodily consciousness, and was absorbed in loving contemplation. 137. Both the wise and the ignorant among the listeners, the women, the shudras and those of other castes, all remarked: "Today's *kirtana* has been a most blessed one. In listening our ears have felt a sense of peace." 138. The final hymn of praise was then sung, and the-Husband-of-Jānaki [Rām] was offered the wave offering. Suddenly Samartha ceased to be seen by anyone, and Kalyāna finished singing the hymns of praise. 139. But when they looked at the throne, they saw the *sadguru* sitting there, and they exclaimed: "From whence did he get there?" And all the people were astonished. 140. Then at Samartha's command, the favour of sweetmeats was distributed. The people then went to their homes, and the king was delighted.

### RĀMDĀS' NEW DISCIPLES

141. Samartha had many disciples. The names of those noted for their wisdom and popularity have already been mentioned. Listen to the names of those who newly became his disciples. 142. Rāmajī Gosāvi, a man totally indifferent to worldly things. His *matha* [religious house], was near Pāli. He cast aside every share of *Māyā*, and gave himself continually to worship. 143. Musal Gosāvi, a man also indifferent to worldly things. He lived by the bank of the Krishnā river. Meru Gosāvi, from the Karnātaka country, who became a follower for the sake of serving the *Svāmi*. 144. Rudrājī Gosāvi whose home was in Shahāpura. Devadāsa of Dādegāva, a devoted *bhakta* of his *guru*. 145. Divākara Gosāvi of Parali who acted as Samartha's family priest. Bhānaji

Gosāvi of Chāphala, and Jasvanta Gosāvi, always serving his *guru*. 146. But enough of all these details. By means of Samartha's coming to Sātārā, Gāgā Pandita was made free of pride, in the way above described. 147. The pride that comes from ignorance can disappear in a moment ; such is not the case with the pride of knowledge. But even this pride was made to disappear.

### RĀMDĀS GOES TO ĀLANDĪ AND PAITHANA

148. Without informing any one Samartha left Sātārā. Arriving at the town of Bhujia, he spent a night there. 149. Journeying from there, Samartha arrived at Ālandī. He bathed first in the Indrāyani river, and then went to meet Dnyāneshvara. 150. Having worshipped the tomb of Dnyāneshvara, and having fed the Brahmans, he stood up in the assembly hall of the temple, and performed a *kirtana* lasting two watches of the day. 151. After spending three nights there, he hastened on to reach the banks of the Godāvarī. Whatever village he passed through, crowds of people came to welcome him. 152. Having heard the good fame of Samartha, the town officials would come out to meet him, bringing him the materials for cooking a meal. At night they listened to his *kirtanas*.

153. Thus with great joy Rāmdās arrived at the sacred city of Pratishthāna [Paithana], and after bathing in the Godāvarī river encamped for the night with all his followers. 154. Then with all his followers, Samartha went into the city to beg for food. He went to Ekanātha's house, and at the shrine connected with it he worshipped God. 155. In the meantime the disciples brought back their begging bags full of food, and the cooking of the meal was completed. Many Brahmans sat down with him to eat, and all had their appetites satisfied. 156. Then just as the evening began, he went to worship at the altar

dedicated to Ekanātha. And as representing Ekanātha he worshipped the Ashvattha tree, which is well known as God. 157. Samartha stood before the pādukās (foot-impressions on stone] of Ekanātha, and there performed a *kirtana*. All the Brahmans of that sacred city listened gladly to him. 158. Rāmdās remained there three nights in Pratishthāna under these happy conditions. As he was about to leave, and finding himself alone, he actually met Shri Ekanātha himself. 159. As the sun was rising Rāmdās and his followers bathed, and then started on their way. They arrived at Aurangābād, and immediately started out to beg for their food.

#### RĀMDĀS MEETS A FRIEND AT AURANGĀBĀD

160. The elder brother of Rāmdās, by name of Rāmī Rāmdās, had come to that same place. He remained there a few days, and then returned to Jāmba. 161. A follower of his was a resident of Shahāpura. When he saw Samartha begging his food, he was full of joy. 162. He prostrated himself on the ground before Rāmdās, and took him and all his company to his house. He worshipped him in the customary way, and then served them food. 163. Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* there, thoroughly enjoyed by all the listeners. It was a blessed day. 164. Kalyāna Gosāvī in front of the Svāmi performed a *kirtana*. Samartha then told him to repeat an *abhangā* containing examples ; 165. these were to show where and how to beg, in one's country and in a foreign country. Kalyāna had forgotten the *abhangā*, and could not recollect it. 166. Rāmdās threw his cymbal at him wounding his forehead, and causing blood to flow. 167. Although Rāmdās was dressed in a costly raiment, he burnt it and with its ashes dressed Kalyāna's wound. The merciful one then passed his hand over Kalyāna's forehead and behold ! there was no sign of a wound to be seen. 168. Then when Kalyāna got up to perform his

*kīrtana*, he remembered the *abhangā*. Listen to it with reverence, you wise people.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

169. After repeating this *abhangā*, he continued his *kīrtana* for four *ghatikās*. Then when Samartha arose to perform his *kīrtana* every one felt supreme joy. 170. Hands were clapped to the shouts of "Victory, Victory." The assembly of *bhaktas* was overjoyed. The whole audience was moved with an amazement that words cannot describe. 171. Rāmdās explained the true meaning of religious deeds, worship and the Way of Knowledge. He preached to them on the power of God's name, and organized a pleasing service for worship. 172. The *kīrtana* lasted two watches, and then the final hymns of praise were sung. Wave offerings were waved over the Husband-of-Jānaki [ Rāma ], and all bowed to him.

173. The name of this disciple of his elder brother was Bhavāni Nāika. The people requested him to urge Samartha to remain until the next day. 174. He replied to them : "Samartha is under no one's control. He suddenly starts to go off. It is very difficult to change his will."

#### RĀMDĀS MEETS BAHINĀBĀI

175. Just then a Brahman woman arrived, by name of Bahinābāi. She listened to Samartha's *kīrtana*, and felt dissatisfied with her in her mind. 176. She thought to herself : "This worldly life is illusory, so is this body of mine and my deeds. The whole illusory worldly life is, therefore, false. I must go as a suppliant to this *Sadguru*, and in love worship dear Rāma." 177. With this determination in her mind, she spoke to Akābāi privately that it would be well if Samartha would remain over until the morrow, and give her the initiatory *mantra*. 178. Akābāi listened, and then said : "The mediation of one of his

followers is of no avail. You must fall at his feet, and lovingly make your request of him." 179. Samartha was seated on his mat, and Bahini made her request : "Remain over until the morrow together with all your followers, Merciful one, and give me the initiatory *mantra*. 180. I am without a protector, and have come as a suppliant to you. Your very name purifies a sinner. Turn me away from every seduction of this worldly life, and give me a place near you to serve you." 181. Samartha asked her where she lived? Bahini replied: "I live at Shiura. 182. I came to this city for the purpose of meeting with some of my relatives, and lo! unexpectedly I have had this opportunity that you have given me of seeing and worshiping you." 183. Rāmdās listened and replied: "I shall certainly come to Shiura, and then go on to Panchavati in order to meet Shri Rāma." 184. Receiving this comforting assurance, Bahini fell at his feet. She then went on ahead and made all necessary preparations.

### RĀMDĀS VISITS BAHINĀBĀI AT SHIURA

185. Rāmdās suddenly started on his way without taking leave of anyone. Bhavānl Nāika came running after him, and said: "The hopes of many have been disappointed." 186. Samartha responded : "It will not be the right thing for me to return here. I recognize your love for me. Now go back. 187. Whenever you remember me, I shall always be near you." With these words he went on, and arrived at Shiura. 188. Bahini had made all preparations in her house, and was sitting in the street (waiting for him ), just as a girl at her mother-in-law's watches for the message for her to come back to the parental home. 189. From a great distance she was able to see Samartha on a hill and a great crowd with him. She was full of joy, and bowed at his feet with reverence. 190. The people of Shiura had heard of the good fame of Sa-

martha, and the well-to-do people went forth to welcome him, and with reverence bowed at his feet. 191. Bahini had selected a very extensive *wādā* [ house and grounds ], and offered it as a place for them to lodge. She invited a large number of Brahmans and had immediately prepared a feast. 192. She made every preparation also for the worship of Samartha. She washed his feet with her own hands, and lovingly drank the water with which they were washed. 193. She smeared him with fragrant oil, and bathed him as God with warm water. She wiped him with her own garment, and then clothed him in a beautiful yellow robe. 194. She made the three marks on his forehead and smeared his person with sandal wood paste mixed with saffron. She put a garland of flowers around his neck, which to see gave the heart a sense of delight. 195. She rubbed fragrant powders on his forehead, and sprinkled some over him. She offered to him incense, and lights and the platter of lights and various kinds of food. 196. She distributed fruit, *pānasupārī* and gifts, and reverently circumambulated him. Thus worshipping her dear *guru*, Bahinābāī fell prostrate at his feet. 197. Then joining her hands palm-to-palm, she said : "I have come as a suppliant to you with all my body, mind and property. Now give me the *mantra* and an opportunity for service close to you." 198. When God [ Rāmdās ] saw the sincerity of Bahini, he placed his hands upon her head, and gave her the secret *mantra*, whereby she was able to cross the sea of this worldly life.

199. In the meanwhile the preparation of the feast was completed. The Brahmans bathed and returned. The customary worship was performed, and the daintily cooked food was served. 200. The greens and ghee were served to each one. Then Samartha made the offering to the gods, saying that it was out of love for Rāma. 201.

After the Brahmans had sipped the water before eating! Rāmdās sat down to eat, and Bahinābāl served to each one according to his taste. 202. In this way the feast went on; *pānasupārī* and gifts of money were distributed, and then the Samartha's *kīrtana* began at night, and every one came to listen. 203. As the Brahmans listened to the eloquence of Samartha, they nodded their heads with delight. He dwelt upon the power of the Name of God, an idea in full accord with the many *shāstras*. 204. These *kīrtanas* were performed daily for nine days. Samartha then left for Tākli, taking Bahinābāl with him. 205. Bahinābāl committed to memory the poems of the *Sadguru*, and she had the strong desire to perform *kīrtanas*.

### RĀMDĀS REVISITS TĀKLI

206. They journeyed along happily, and the disciples begged the food as they went along. Thus journeying, they arrived at Tākli, much to the joy of its citizens. 207. They exclaimed: "Fortune has served us well in giving us again the opportunity of seeing Samartha." Thus remarking, they prostrated themselves before him on the ground. 208. After bathing, they worshipped Māruti in the usual manner. The company of Brahmans performed *kīrtanas*. Thus three nights passed.

209. Rāmdās then took leave of Māruti, and came to Panchavati. The whole company encamped at the tank called Rāmukunda in order to bathe. 210. After completing the usual ceremonies, they visited the temple of Rāma. There they all prostrated themselves on the ground like so many logs. 211. Then calling the Brahman attendant, they anointed the idol of Rāma, and clothed him with a beautiful yellowish robe and adorned him also with many ornaments. 212. They placed before him offerings of perfume, garlands of flowers, rice, incense, lights, the platter of lights, camphor, offerings of food

and gifts of money, and reverently bowed before him. 213. Then joining hands palm to palm, Rāmdās began his praise of Rāma. He said: "I am without *mantras*, without deeds, and without indifference to worldly things, O God. 214. I am without cleverness and wisdom. I do not know anything of religious rites and austerities. O Mother Rāma, Purifier-of-the-sinner, carry me across the sea of this worldly life." 215. After making this plea, the hymns of praise were sung, and now Mahipati pleads with his hearers to listen with reverence.

216. *Svasti*. This book is the *Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it the longings of one's heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving and wise *bhaktas* listen. This is the fourteenth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XV

### PREPARATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE SAINTS

1. If, in accordance with the laws of governing the infinite number of rebirths, any one is possessed of good deeds, then only can he properly describe in loving words the lives of the saints. 2. If the Husband-of-Lakshmi has been worshipped with a heart free from worldly desires, then only there will arise a delight in listening to the stories of the saints. 3. Only when gifts are bestowed in love upon those who are worthy and only when there is a passionate longing to serve the saints, then only on account of the riches of these good deeds one hears the biographies of the *bhakta*s. 4. If one has worshipped Shri Rāma privately with a contrite heart, then only will a delight in the stories of the *bhakta*s arise in him, who aspires after Final Deliverance. 5. The Seeker after Final-Deliverance, whose efforts are for the Supreme spiritual riches, can only come to know by hearing how the saints live and their method of *bhakti* and worship.

### RĀMDĀS TELLS OF RĀMA'S LIFE

6. In the last chapter the stories included the following: Samartha visited Alandi, and then hurried on to Pai-thana where he met with Ekanātha. 7. Departing from there this Brahmachārī arrived at Shiura and put up in the house of Bahinābāl. 8. He preached to her on the supreme-spiritual riches, and then went on to Panchavati, where to his great joy he met Shri Rāma. 9. He worshipped him with all the usual preparations, and then began a *kirtana* at the great door of the temple. 10. As the news of this became known from house to house the people came to listen. The Brahmins of high rank in the city and the

learned and expert *shāstris* said to themselves, "We must listen to Rāmdās' *kirtana*". 11. A great many men and women, with an intense desire to listen, assembled. The pavilion was densely crowded, so that there was no way through the crowd. 12. In order that His goodness may be supremely exalted, God took the form of His *bhakta*. Each became the father of the other, but there was no distinction in their essential forms. 13. As Rāmdās stood before the image of Rāma, he appeared as attractive as the Eagle appeared when standing before the Great Vishnu, ready to serve Him. 14. Or the scene was like that of Māruti, standing before the Universal Ruler, the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] in the attitude of a slave. Thus Rāmdās in his love described the fame of Rāma in His *saguna* form. 15. They had with them the cymbals, *vīnā* drums and all the accessories for music. All the disciples joined in the singing in this enthusiastic *kirtana*. 16. Seeing Rāma before him, Rāmdās composed some *shlokas*. I quote them in this chapter. Let the good people listen to them with joy.

( *Shlokas* not translated )

17. Listen, listen all you people, both wise and ignorant. What other deity is there like Rāma the moving force and the pervader of the universe ? 18. In Rāvana's prison the three hundred and thirty million gods were confined, and Rāma delivered all of them. Such was the victorious Rāma. 19. Having killed Rāvana he made Bibhishana king of Ceylon. There is no one in the three worlds to displace him. 20. In this world of mortals he made two *bhaktas* immortal, namely, Bibhishana and Hanumanta. So mighty is my Rāma. 21. Shri Rāma reigned for eleven thousand years, during which there was no old age, death or poverty on the earth. 22. Rāma is the advocate of the gods, Rāma is the purifier of sinners.

Rāma knows the hearts of His *bhaktas*. There is no one like Him in all the Three Worlds. 23. Rāma saved many souls. Shiva was relieved from pain by calling on the Name of Rāma. Rāma performed the miracle of raising a stone slab to life. He alone knows His own divine power. 24. Rāma is the formless and attributeless [Brahma] unaffected by *Māyā*, the moving force of the universe. Still, when his *bhaktas* fall into trouble, He assumes form and attributes. 25. Just as a bit of crystal assumes the colour of the thing on which it is placed, so dear Rāma in the same way breaks the bonds that bind His servants to this worldly existence. 26. In this way Rāmdās described the life of Rāma with great earnestness. Men and women, as they listened, became enrapt, and nodded their heads at the loud shouting of the name of Rāma. 27. The sound of the cymbals, drums and *vīnā* was very sweet, and the grandeur of the music seemed the very personification of sound. Rāmdās then composed an *abhangā*. Listen to it, you pious people, in composure of mind.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

28. Such was Samartha's inspiring poetry, and the audience became absorbed as they listened. The discerning ones said it was a gifted poetry. It seemed to them like the creation of the nine poetic sentiments.\* 29. The gods, the celestial choir, demi-gods, spirits, and fairies, sitting in their chariots of light, listened to the enthusiastic *kīrtana*. 30. These celestial beings whispered to one another: "We have no joy that comes from love. *Bhakti* has robbed us of it all." 31. While they were whispering these things, Rāmdās composed the following description of Rāma, which I quote in this chapter. Listen to it you pious ones.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

32. Thus he composed many blessed *abhangas*. The

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\*See chapter 13. 205.

*kīrtāna* went on until the fourth watch of the night, when the sun began to rise. 33. Then Rāmdās sang the closing hymns of praise, and waved the wave-offering over the Dweller in Panchavati [ Rāma ]. Favours were distributed to all present, to the great joy of all hearts.

34. In this manner Rāmdās continued to perform *kīrtanas* for three days. Māruti felt joy and embraced Rāmdās. 35. The wise, the ignorant, women, Shudras, and all the other people present had their attitude changed as they listened to the *kīrtanas*. 36. Rāmdās' acts of worship were to them, as it were, the initiatory *mantra* in that they began to regard this worldly existence and *Māyā* as illusory, and in love began to worship dear Rāma. 37. The saints became *avatāras* in order to save the world. Otherwise, they are formless and unaffected by the three *gunas* [ Goodness, Energy and Evil ]. 38. Just as God is, so are his *bhaktas*. Between Him and them there is not the slightest difference; just as there is no difference between Nectar [ the drink of the Immortals ] and immortality ; 39. just as there is no difference whatever between the sun and its rays; between fire and heat, between the moon and its coolness ; 40. just as there is no difference between a jewel and its brilliancy, between a pearl and its lustre, and between the waters of a sacred place and the water of the Ganges ; 41. just as there is no difference between space and sky, between air and its quality of motion ; so God and His *bhaktas* are different only in name. 42. In order to increase the glory of His saints, God gives the emotion of love to His servants. They plead with God : " Give us Thy command."

#### RĀMDĀS THINKS OF BUILDING TEMPLES TO RĀMA

43. " I have the purpose in my heart to install the images of Thee in the valley of the Krishnā. So come. Thou there, and make Thy servant one who has Thee as

his Protector. 44. In this *Kaliyuga* [present evil age] men are unbelievers. Wrong ways of thinking have defiled their minds. So, wherever an image can be installed, there show some miracle. 45. By fear or by devotion incline men to worship thee." Having listened to Rāmdās' petition, Rāma replied: 46. "For your sake I become an *avatāra* from age to age. The good fame of this is world-wide, spread through the writings of the great Yogi Shuka. 47. Nāmā the tailor, a God-loving *bhakta*, was always worshipping me so that for his sake I on one occasion turned the temple of Shiva around. 48. Seeing the devotion of Dnyānadeva, I myself moved the wall, and made the buffalo repeat the Vedas, in order that his name might become famous in the world. 49. Going to the house of Ekanātha for twelve years I brought his drinking water, and when Tukārāma's manuscript was sunk in the water of the river, I, Krishna, was its preserver. 50. You took a *galul* [pebble shooting bow] in your hands, and killed many birds. But when you put them into the fire, I brought them to life, and made them fly away. 51. Whenever you, with your own hands install my image, there I shall for ever remain, and accept the service of the *bhaktas*."

52. While Rāma was thus speaking, Rāmdās placed his head at Rāma's feet saying: "Let your favour continue, O Rāma, and henceforth be my protector." 53. While he thus spoke, tears of love flowed from his eyes. His throat choked with emotion, as he looked upon the dark-coloured one [Rāma]. 54. Rāmdās could not bear the thought of separation from Him. Every moment he kept looking back at him. Samartha now started taking with him his whole company of disciples. 55. As they departed there was the loud sound of horns and trumpets. Māruti's banner was carried in front of the procession. People flocked together to see them off. 56. Samartha, pausing

where he dismissed all those who had come to see him off, gave them his parting counsel to keep Rāma in remembrance, for only so would they prosper in their lives.

### SHIVĀJĪ WELCOMES RĀMDĀS ON HIS RETURN

57. Having thus spoken to them, Rāmdās hurried along. In whatever town he lodged he performed a *kirtana*. 58. People strongly urged him to remain longer with them, but he would not consent. He had no liking for popular honour. He was always indifferent to worldly things.

59. Now king Shivājī was day and night worrying over Rāmdās; his kingdom and his wealth ceased to be dear to him. He said to himself: "When shall I meet Samartha?" 60. His scouts returned from searching near and far in all directions, but they could get no news of him. The king gave himself up to fasting. 61. Except for milk and fruit he ate very little. He thought to himself: "When shall I meet my *sadguru*? When will Rāma answer my prayer?" 62. Just then Samartha arrived, and encamped in the Park. The whole company performed their baths and devotions. The king's scouts saw them. 63. With great joy they went, and reported to the king that Samartha had arrived at the Park. Hearing this news, the king was delighted. 64. The whole army was called out. The eight ministers also started. The citizens joined the procession, because Rāmdās had arrived. 65. There was the loud sounding of the musical instruments. The king walked barefoot. As soon as he saw Rāmdas' banner, he prostrated himself on the ground. 66. As the king approached near his *sadguru*, he made eleven prostrate *namaskāras*. He embraced him lovingly. His heart was unable to contain his joy. 67. He applied fragrant powders to Rāmdās' forehead, and hung a garland of

flowers around his neck. All were happy, because they had met Samartha again. 68. He seated the Sadguru in a canopied tower on an elephant, and sat behind him waving the fly wisp. Many instruments began to play. The procession moved gaily along. 69. As the procession arrived at the city gate, guns were fired. And when Samartha entered into the palace he was given a seat on the throne. 70. The king worshipped him as formerly, reverently performing it himself. He clothed him in all the required garments and ornaments, and then waved the wave offering over his *sāguru*. 71. The king gave a feast to the Brahmans, serving them with many kinds of delicacies. The appetites of all Brahmans were satisfied. The king distributed the gifts. 72. The feast was thus celebrated, and at night the Hari *kirtana* was performed. Many people came to listen, panditas, learned *shāstris* and Brahmans among them. 73. At the beginning Samartha composed an *ab anga* which I quote in this chapter. Let the saints listen. By merely listening to it, they will get knowledge and inspiration, and the supreme-spiritual-riches will come into their possession.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

74. Such were Samartha's words, a mine of loving happiness. The listeners became absorbed. Just then the sun arose. 75. Then the lamps were lighted and the hymns of praise sung. They waved the wave offering over the Husband-of—Jānaki [Rāma]. Favours were distributed to all, and then the audience departed.

#### RĀMDĀS TELLS SCULPTOR TO MAKE AN IMAGE OF RĀMA

76. The *Sadguru*, being indifferent to these worldly things, went into the forest. He remained there for some days, and then went to the Chāphala valley.

77. One day Rāmdās felt a strong desire to install an image of Rāma there, and celebrate the festival of Rāmanavamī [birth of Rāma]. 78. Men will thereby be incited to *dhakti* and praise. 79. He then called a sculptor, and told him to look for some specially good stones and make three images, namely, of Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmana, according to authorized rules, with smiling faces and delicate features. 80. The sculptor listened, and then said: "I will make them and give them to you in due time. Many days are required for such work. They cannot be made in a hurry." 81. After this conversation, the sculptor returned to his home.

#### RĀMDĀS REMOVES A VILLAGE IDOL

Rāmdās began to feel concerned, and so brought Māruti to mind. 82. As he brought to mind the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti], he openly revealed Himself. To relieve Rāmdās of his anxiety, he said to him: 83. "You have conceived a good desire, in planning an image for your worship and I can tell where you can find one. Go quickly and bring it here. 84. Fourteen miles from here there is an image of Rāma in a miserable little village. Go there by night and hasten back with it." 85. After saying this, Māruti vanished; or one may rather say, he entered Rāmdās' heart. 86. Rāmdās hastily started and went there by night. When he saw the image, he was full of joy. 87. Rāmdās lifted up the images of Rāma and Sītā and bound them to his back. Then running with the swiftness of the wind, he returned to the Chāphala valley.

88. Now when it was morning, a Shudra came to the place where the image had been. When lo! and behold! he saw no image there. This filled him with astonishment. 89. There were many villagers sitting together

and he gave them the news: "During the night some thieves must have come into the town, and taken away the images." 90. When they heard it, they all expressed surprise. They came and looked into the temple, and found no image of Rāma there to the astonishment of all. 91. They remarked: "One has fear of thieves in the case of gold or silver images of God, but no one has any experience of stone images being stolen." 92. Thus remarking to one another, they rushed in every direction. In the way they met a Shudra who said he had seen the thief that night. 93. "I recognized him as the crazy Rāmdās, who is a super-man in this part of our country, and wanders about here and there. 94. He had fastened the images to his back, and was running quickly along the way. I would have seized him by his wrist, but great wild beasts were following him. 95. Seeing great tigers and bears, I was greatly afraid, and climbed a tree, whereby my life was saved." 96. The Shudra having said this, the villagers went to Rāmdās, and made their *namaskāra* to him. And there they recognized the images. 97. They said to the *śūmi*: "You are a distinguished super-man. How is it that you stole the god, and brought him here? This is a stain on your greatness. 98. All the people say that the king has become your disciple. Therefore, we cannot make a charge against you, but you have done a very improper thing." 99. The *Vaishnava bhakta* [Rāmdās] listened and then said: "I brought the god here at the command of Rāma. If your feelings are pure, take Him away." 100. The villagers listened, then brought a large cart, and attempted to lift the image into it, but they could not at all move it. 101. Many put their hands to the task, and exerted all their strength, but they could not lift the idol at all. Then they made a *namaskāra* to Rāmdās. 102. They said: "The Husband-of-Sita [Rāma] has

evidently come here on account of your *bhakti*. So now install the image here, and worship Him with affection."

### RĀMDĀS BUILDS A TEMPLE AT CHĀPHALA

103. Having spoken thus, the villagers returned, and Samartha began to consider where to install the image. 104. He sought for a place near the village, but no place suited him. He then came to the burning ground. 105. Half a mile from the village the river flowed. Mountains encircle the place. The place approved itself to him. 106. All around there was a grove of mango trees, which gave a very dense shade. Samartha said to himself : "Here I must install the Recliner-on-Shesha [Vishnu]." 107. Then Samartha applied himself to the work of erecting a temple. Gathering together his fourteen hundred disciples, they dug far laying the foundation. 108. All the disciples went to the mountain, and brought back on their heads slabs of stone. They handed them to the *Swāmi*, and he laid them with his own hand. 109. Just as the monkeys built the bridge [over to Ceylon], bringing mountains on their heads, so these disciples struggled with their heavy loads, but the hearts of all were full of joy. 110. Some took hoes in their hands. They stirred the mud and trod it. Some brought the mud to Samartha, and some brought the water. 111. There were in the village hewn stones lying about here and there. They brought these also. There was no one who forbade Samartha from doing so, for all reverently submitted to him. 112. Wherever Rāmdās used his hands, extraordinary beauty was to be seen. Riddhi and Siddhi [accomplishments personified] were serving him. The part played by the disciples was of no account. 113. Not many days were required to finish the temple including the pinnacle. The assembly hall was very large. They also arranged lodging places

for pilgrims. 114. All the people aided in supplying the necessities for the warming ceremony of the temple. The Vedics and astrologers assembled; and determined the auspicious day. 115. King Shīvājī also arrived to join in the great celebration, bringing a large quantity of garments and ornaments, needed in the celebration. 116. The news of this temple warming ceremony spread from town to town. Many *Vaishnava bhukkas* in crowds assembled. 117. In the court, before the assembly hall, there were two *tulasi* altars placed at both sides, and the ochre red Māruti banner waved there beautifully. 118. In the meantime the cooking of the feast went on, preparing many kinds of dainty foods. The Brahmins returned from their baths, and began to repeat the Vedio *mantras*. 119. The sweet sounding instruments were sending forth their musical tones, in harmony with the big and the little drums. The *bhukkas* shouted the cries of "Victory, Victory." The hearts of all were glad. 120. While the rite of putting life into the idol was going on Samartha was pleading with Rāma. At that moment the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] appeared. The words used by Samartha should be brought to mind.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

121. "O Rāma, separation from Thee makes every moment seem like an age. O Rāma, run quickly to me. I am Thy infant child. 122. It is many days since I have seen Thee. I am unable to bear this longer. Without Thee everywhere seems a desolate desert. My soul is in distress. 123. When I met Thee at Panchavati Thou hadst made up Thy mind to come here. What wrong hast Thou seen in me that Thou hast delayed so? 124. O Rāma, my body is aflame to see Thee. O Dear One, come now, why has Thy love suffered diminution? 125. I am Thy helpless and lowly one. My heart is fixed on Thy feet.

Why hast Thou become indifferent to me, that Thou no longer keepest me in mind ? 126. Whether my service of Thee is true, or false, Thou, O God, dost know ; for Thou art the knower of the heart."

As Rāmdās was thus pleading, the Husband of Sītā [Rāma] made Himself known. 127. The Life-of-the-world, who takes a pride in His *bhaktas*, at that moment took a visible form, and embraced Rāmdās with feelings of love. 128. In order to fulfil the desire of Rāmdās, Rāma entered into His image. The promise which God [Purshottama] had made at Panchavati, He now fulfilled.

#### THE CEREMONY OF DEDICATING THE IDOL

129. In the meanwhile the Brahmans were worshiping the idol. They bathed it with the five nectars [milk, curds, clarified butter, honey and sugar]. They mixed together saffron and musk and Rāmdās rubbed it over it. 130. They smeared it with many kinds of fragrant ointments. Then they wiped Him all over with a cloth, and dressed Him in the yellow robe. 131. They put over him a garment woven with golden threads, and on his head they placed a jewelled crown. On his forehead they made the marks with musk paste, and sprinkled him with fragrant powders. 132. In his ears were placed earrings of the shape of crocodiles, and on his breast jewelled ornaments, which made Him look beautiful, and so dazzling as to compel one's eyes to close. 133. On His feet little bells were fastened. On His wrist were placed some wrist ornaments. On His arms were bound jewelled arm ornaments. Around His neck they hung a garland of flowers. 134. The Husband-of-Jānaki [Rāma] was waved with wave offerings of incense, lights and the platter of lights. Outside of the precincts, there was the loud sounding instruments, and the *bhaktas* were shouting : "Victory

"Victory." 135. They brought vessels full of offerings, vegetables and fruits. The nine kinds of custards as it were the nine forms of *bhakti*, looked beautiful on the plates. 136. There were fried cakes, sugar puffs, wheaton cakes, layer cakes, short cakes, sweet cakes, macaroni fried puffs, and sweetmeats. 137. There were many preparations of fruits, and the delicious beautiful yellow curry. All these were offered to Rāma who ate to His satisfaction. 138. Rāma having washed His hands, there were placed before Him the *pūnasupāri* and gifts. The *bhaktas* reverently circumambulated Him, and then made Him a *namaskāra*. 139. They now served the Brahmans with food, the same as the offerings they had made to the God. The foreheads of the Brahmans were marked with saffron paste, and holy water was given them to sip, and then the feast commenced. 140. As soon as it was night, a *kirtana* was performed in the assembly hall. All listened with emotion to the blessed words of Rāmdās.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

141. Such were the blessed words uttered by Rāmdās in his *kirtana*. By it the hearers were absorbed in the subject. The three-worlds seemed to be in the form of Rāma. 142. The whole sky was overflowing with the loud sound of the cymbals, and the sweet sounding drum. There was also the noise of clapping, and full of love the listeners wagged their heads. 143. Thus the *kirtana* continued until the fourth watch of the night. Then at the rising of the sun the wave offerings were waved over the Husband-of-Jānaki, Rāma. 144. The listeners were all making frequent *namaskāras* to God and His *bhakta*. Every day Brahmans were feasted. Thus during the whole night there was the noise of the *kirtana*. 145. The celebration continued for four days. On the fifth day the concluding dramatic entertainment was given. They put

Jānaki's Husband [ Rāma ] to bed, and then the crowd of pilgrims broke up.

146. The king took his leave of Rāmdās, and went away with all his retinue. Rāmdās placed Kalyāna Gosāvī and Ākābāī in charge of ( the image of ) God. 147. When it was night, Rāmdās sat alone by himself thinking of Māruti. Immediately the Son-of-the-Wind [ Māruti ] appeared, and spoke to Rāmdās, 148. and said: "I am well pleased with you. Ask me for whatever boon you desire." Rāmdās said to himself: "The Merciful-One has understood my heart. 149. The desire has arisen in me to install images of Thee. So, perform some miracle wherever they are installed." 150. After listening to him, Māruti said: "I will surely do so. Your desire will be fulfilled." Then Rāmdās made three images. Listen to the description of the appearance and form of the images. 151. The image of Māruti in the posture of a slave, and with hands joined together palm to palm, he placed before the image of Rāma. Then there was a terrible and hideous image in the heroic posture which was placed far to the back. 152. Many different kinds of miracles take place there even yet. One of beautiful design was placed at Shinganāpura. By the mere looking at it *bhaktas* become victorious. 153. When installing the image of Māruti there was a great celebration. The news having spread far and wide, a great crowd of pilgrims assembled. 154. About a half mile in front of Rāma's temple Rāmdās erected a high pillar for lights. The light illumined the face of the image of Rāma, so that people everywhere could see it.

155. The image of Māruti which stood before the image had behind it an image of Ganapati. In describing the good fame of Samartha the mind is overwhelmed.

156. O Merciful to the lowly, Lord of Pandhari, cause me to continue the story of the saints. Apart from

Thee, there is no illuminator of the mind. 157. Thou art both hearer and speaker. Thou art all the time enabling me to remember the stories. Mshipati is Thy dear child, an ignorant and foolish child.

158. *Savsti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving *bhakta*s listen. This is the fifteenth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER XVI

### MAHIPATI'S FONDNESS FOR THE SAINTS

1. There are some who visit sacred places. Some perform religious rites. But I care for no other method than that of listening to the stories of the saints. 2. Some regard themselves as ritualists worshipping a variety of deities. But I have no liking for anything except the good things said about the saints. 3. Some force themselves to *Vajrasana*, and contemplate *Brahma*. Some treat as mere dust their worldly affairs, and wander in the forests. 4. Some becoming *Haridāsas* proclaim the deeds of Hari in song. Some have philosophic knowledge, and are supermen forgetting that they have bodies. 5. Some devote themselves to good deeds. Some turn their thoughts to duties prescribed and forbidden. But I like this easy way of relating with love the stories of the *bhaktas*.

### RITUAL IN THE WORSHIP OF AN IDOL

6. In the last chapter there was related the pilgrimage to Panchavati. After which Samartha built a temple, and installed the image. 7. At the time also Samartha appointed Akābāī, Venubāī, and Kalyāna Gosāvī to the service of the God. 8. The glory of Rāmdās increased greatly. Men and women came to see and worship him. Then Samartha planned to install the eleventh *avatāra* of Shiva [Māruti]. 9. He had already installed a Māruti at Chāphala placed behind the image of Rāma and at some distance from it. Let the wise listen with reverence to how he should be worshipped. 10. One who is a *Brahmachārī* [a man of chaste life], pure within and without, should take oil and anoint him. 11. After that he should be bathed with water and then be smeared with red ochre, and marked by the three upright lines made with mixed saffron and

sandal-wood paste, also lovingly offered incense and lights." 12. God is very fond of curd-cakes, and therefore they should be offered to Him. After sixteen days of such service, all one's longings will be fulfilled. 13. All the disciples followed the methods of worship prescribed by Samartha. They made many kinds of vows, whereby their longings were fulfilled.

#### MAKER OF MOLTEN IMAGES BECOMES A DISCIPLE

14. There was a maker of molten images, who was devoting himself to the service of the *siāmi*. When Samartha summoned him, he placed his head at Samartha's feet. 15. Rāmdās said to him, "Take some gold, and make of it a molten image of Māruti." He replied, "Give me a drawing of the form such as you may approve." 16. He brought a copper plate, and Samartha made a drawing on it. The artisan took gold, and making the image, gave it to Samartha. 17. When Rāmdās took it in his hand and looked at it he was full of joy. Just then king Shivājī appeared, and made his loving *namashkāra* to Rāmdās. 18. When he saw this little image of Māruti, he exclaimed, "Siāmi, How is its power shown?" Then Samartha composed two *shlokas*. Listen to them, ye good and pious ones.

( *Shlokas* not translated )

19. Having listened to Samartha's verses, he wrote them down, and committed them to memory. He fastened the image to his arm, and he immediately experienced its power. 20. There were many of his other disciples who fastened the image of Māruti on their arms, and this method which Samartha prescribed is still in vogue. 21. Māruti is the son of the Lord of life. When life leaves the body, it falls lifeless. And therefore Rāmdās worshipped Māruti. 22. Samartha with his own hand installed twelve Mārutis. The first one was installed at Tākali which you saints have heard of already. 23. The next

one at Chāphala was placed before Shri Rāma, a beautiful one, and in the posture of a slave. Behind him there was a statue of a horrible form. Māruti does not permit his *bhaktas* to fall into distress. 24. And then, thirdly, Rāmdās installed a very large image of Balabhīma [ Māruti ] at Shinganāpura. Let the saints listen with reverence to how he later installed the remaining eight images.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT CHĀPHALA

25. Samartha remained many days in Chāphala. One day he suddenly arose and went into the forest. 26. The disciples and followers soon followed him. Then they went into the town of Masura to beg their food. 27. In company with his disciples he hurried from house to house, crying out, "Victory to the hero Rāma," and the pious people brought them food. 28. By begging in this particular way, Samartha was able to discern who were really *bhaktas* and who were not *bhaktas*, who were generous and who were miserly. 29. By this method of begging from town to town he tested the people. Only those who were worthy of Final-Deliverance did he initiate into his discipleship with the supreme-spiritual-riches (as the goal).

30. Seeing that the town of Masura was one inclined to *bhakti*, Samartha thought to himself, "I must install an image of Māruti there. It will greatly redound to his glory. 31. So without anyone's knowing it, Samartha went outside of the town, and making a very beautiful image of Māruti, installed it by the bank of the Krishnā river [ the village stream ]. 32. As soon as it was morning the company of his followers arrived there and found the Merciful-to-the-lowly [ Rāmdās ] repeating an *abhangā* in honour of Māruti.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

33. While he was repeating this *abhangā* the townspeople gathered there, and when they saw the image of

Māruti they were all delighted. 34. Samartha had Māruti duly worshipped by the lips of the Brahmans. In the meantime a feast was being prepared, and many Brahmans assembled for it. 35. Ākābāī then said to Samarth, "Food has been prepared for only one hundred, but a thousand Brahmans have arrived. What shall I do?" 36. Samarth replied "Why should one trouble oneself about that? Māruti will supply all of them with food." Then the plates were arranged. 37. Rāmdās worshipped the Brahmans, and gave all of them *pūnsupāri* and favours. Rāmdās made the offerings to the gods, and Brahmans ate the offerings to the five vital airs. 38. All had their appetites satisfied. Rāmdās questioned Ākābāī and she replied, "The food is as usual." 39. She then arranged plates for them all. Shivājī the king sat down to eat, and there was a plate with offerings to Māruti. Rāmdās sat down before it. 40. Thus all dined and at night a *kīrlana* was performed. Listen to Rāmdās' blessed words, you pious people.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

41. While listening to Samarth's words, the listeners forgot all about their illusory worldly affairs, and everything took the form of Rāma. No one had the thought of "Who am I?"

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT MASURA

42. On the next day Rāmdās started the building of a temple (at Masura). He remained in Masura for one month, and the work was completed up to the very pinnacle. 43. The *Sadguru* then called one of his disciples, and said to him, "Perform daily the worship of Māruti, and give food to the hungry. 44. During the day time go into the town begging for food, and every night perform *kīrtanas*." Thus instructing his disciple, the Svāmī left for the forest. 45. His company of disciples began go-

ing from town to town begging food, and daily having Brahmans dine with them. After which they read the book called *Dāsabodha*. 46. Thus they listened to thoughts on morals, on the good and the bad, from Samartha's own lips. Thus time was spent usefully, and all were happy.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT SHAHĀPURA

47. One day Samartha rose early and came to Shahāpura. He begged for food in the town. The people rushed after him to give it to him. 48. When it was night he withdrew alone to sing his praise of Māruti. And Māruti, seeing his loving *bhakti*, gave him a visual manifestation of Himself. 49. Māruti gave him a promise with His own lips, "Whatever desire you may have, I will fulfil it, in order that your good fame may spread into the entire world." 50. Rāmdās then made this plea: "I have made the image with my own hands. Thou, merciful one, enter into it." Māruti replied, "I will certainly do so." 51. As soon as it was daylight people began to assemble to see Rāmdās. Seeing the image of Māruti, they were astonished, and all were delighted. 52. The Brahmans were then called, and it was decided to install the image. Just then king Shivājī arrived in order to see and worship the *Svāmī*. 53. The people of the town told the king of Samartha's remarkable doings, how during the night he had made the image. The king heard this with delight.

54. Preparations were made for gifts to Brahmans, and the cooking of the food for the feast proceeded. Rāmdās performed his bath, and then sat down to the loving task of worshipping the image of Māruti. 55. With various fragrant oils and the five nectars they bathed the image. The Brahmans then bathed it with the recitation of Rudra and then wiped it with their upper flowing garments. 56.

Garments, adornments, and ornaments, saffron, musk and sandal-wood paste, were placed upon the image of Māruti, and the garland of flowers hung around his neck made him look beautiful. 57. Incense, lights, camphor and the platter of lights were waved over him. Offerings of various dainty foods were made to him. Then lovingly making him a *namaskāra* they offered him handfuls of flowers, as prescribed in the *Vedas*. 58. Rāmdās then joined his hands palm to palm, and repeated a verse of praise : "Māruti is my life. I have no nearer relative than Him. 59. Māruti is my mother. Māruti is my father, my dearest friend, my brother, my uncle. Aside from Him I have no other relative. 60. Māruti is my supreme *sadguru*. It was through Him that I met Rāma. It is through him that I have every joy and peace, and have not seen the illusions of this worldly existence."

61. After praising Māruti in this way, he lovingly prostrated himself on the ground. In the meantime the Brahmans seated themselves in lines, and were worshipped. 62. Vegetables, pickles and salt were served along with the daintily cooked food. Samartha made the offering to the gods, and the Brahmans sipped the water. 63. Whatever pleased the taste of anyone, this was served to him, and thus all had their appetites satisfied. *Pūnasupāri* and favours were given them, and then the crowd sat down in lines to eat. 64. The king sat down with them, and all his retinue. All the people of the town, young and old, sat down with Samartha and ate with deepest reverence. 65. After this a *Hari Kirtana* was performed. Samartha took as his subject the *Sundarkanda* of the *Rāmāyana*, and all who listened were delighted. 66. As the sun was rising, offerings were waved over the Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma]. For carrying on the worship of this image of Māruti, Rāmdās appointed one of his disciples. 67. Finally the assembled crowd broke up, and the king re-

turned to Sātārā. Samartha then took his company of disciples with him and started for Umaraja.

### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT UMARAJA

68. When the people of Umaraja heard the news, they came out to welcome him accompanied with a musical band. All made a *namaskāra* to him, and then selected a place for him to lodge. 69. Those who were wealthy among the pious ones brought a large quantity of the materials needed in cooking. All the disciples went into the town to beg for food, as large crowds of men assembled. 70. All the people then gave themselves up to listening to the *Harī Kirtana* and to worship. The king came constantly to see and worship Rāmdās because of his great love for him.

71. Many days having passed, Samartha performed a miracle at night. He made a beautiful image of Māruti, which with the red ochre on it gave it extreme brilliancy. 72. It had a perfect form and was very pleasing to the *bhaktas*. Before it Samartha sang about the character of Rāma. 73. When the sun arose, the townspeople came to see and worship, and lo ! before the *svāmī* there was a very noble image of Māruti, to the astonishment of all.

74. Samartha said to Kalyāna, "Help the assembled multitude." The image of Māruti was then bathed and worshipped according to the usual custom. 75. Garments and ornaments were placed upon it, and the materials of worship were offered, such as incense, lights and other offerings. Outside the temple there was the loud noise of the musical instruments and the "Victory! Victory!" cry of the *bhaktas*. 76. While this celebration was going on king Shivājī appeared. He made eleven *namskāras* to the *svāmī* in his love for him. 77. While the worship of Māruti was going on Samartha uttered words of praise, and offerings were placed before the image of many forms

of daintily cooked food. 78. In the meantime Kalyāna Gosāvi was worshipping the Brāhmaṇas. He served them with delicious food, of which there was no lack. 79. Samartha made the offering to the gods with feelings of love, and the Brāhmaṇas ate the offering to the five vital airs.

The king then sat with citizens and Samartha to dine. 80. At night a *Hari Kīrlana* was performed, and the people remained awake for all the four watches of the night, while Rāma's noble character was being described with feelings of love. 81. Sweetmeats were offered as favours and the people returned to their homes. At the Sūnī's command the king also returned to his city (Sāraṇā). 82. Rāmdās placed there one of his disciples to conduct the worship of Māruti. Samartha then left and was followed by his multitude of disciples.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT BATTISAI SHIRĀLE

83. As Rāmdās wandered from forest to forest he arrived at Battisa Shirale. He begged for food in the town and the people made their *namaskāra* to him. 84. During the day there was the reading of the Purānas and at night the *kīrlanas*. Listening to these services turned the people to worship. After some days had passed he made an image of Māruti. 85. Before this image Rāmdās lovingly performed a *kīrlana*. When the sun arose people assembled to worship. 86. They saw before them an image of a beautiful shape, and when people looked at it they were astonished, remarking, "One does not understand the activities of Samartha. 87. These are favourable times. Therefore Māruti has revealed Himself." The day for the installation was appointed, and preparations began. 88. After Samartha had finished his bath and morning prayer he sat down to worship Māruti. He invited Brāhmaṇas of very high rank who loudly repeated *mantras*. 89. Outside, the auspicious instruments were played. The image

of Māruti was bathed with the five nectars. Lovingly the Rudra bath also took place. Samartha himself made the fragrant paste. 90. King Shivājī came bringing garments and a great variety of ornaments. Samartha clothed the image with his own hands and made Māruti look very gay. 91 Red ochre was rubbed all over His body. Around His neck was hung a garland of flowers. Incense lights and other offerings were offered. The king placed his gifts before the image. 92. Lights were lighted and waved before the image, while Rāmdās sang his praises. The *shlokas* are blessed ones, and the saints should listen to them with reverence.

( *Shlokas* not translated )

93. With hands joined palm to palm Rāmdās thus used words of praise. Tears of love flowed from his eyes, and the hearers were stirred with emotion. 94. There were offerings of flowers and the repeating of *mantras*. The image was circumambulated with feelings of reverence. Then bringing the offering of cooked food, they caused the Son-of-the Wind [ Māruti ] to partake. 95. In the meantime the feast was being prepared. The Brahmans returned from their baths. They were worshipped, and then on their leaf-plates dainty food was served. 96. The appetites of all the Brahmans were satisfied, and they were given gifts and *pānasupāri*. Then Samartha, together with all his disciples, dined along with the king. 97. Rāmdās performed a *kirtana* before the image of Māruti. The learned as well as the pious, ignorant folk, sat down to listen. 98. Rāmdās repeated many *abhangas*, I will quote one of them. Seekers after salvation, who listen to it, feel a sense of joy, and are confirmed in their right thinking.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

99. Thus Samartha's *kirtana* incited all to worship. The sky was filled with the loud noise made in

repeating God's names, and the bearers lost all consciousness of body. 100. Four watches of the night passed in this way. The sun now arose, and after Samartha had sung hymns of praise, the sweetmeats were distributed. 101. The assembly then broke up. The king departed, taking the swāmi's leave. Māruti appeared in the form of His Dūsa (servant-Rāmdās) and as God (Himself) disciple for the salvation of all the world. 102. Rāmdās appointed a there to carry on worship and instructed him to turn every one into the Way of *Bhakti*. He then left for the forest, taking the multitude of his disciples with him.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT JARĀNDĀ

103. One day as Rāmdās wandered about he came to the town of Jarāndā. When the people heard he had come they were very glad. 104. Children and adults gathered together, and lovingly went out to welcome him. They prostrated themselves on the ground before him, and took him into the city. 105. With cymbals and drums the Haridāses performed their worship. The procession led by a loud sounding band conveyed Rāmdās to his lodgings. 106. The disciples then went into the town to beg for their food, but some people brought food directly to him. All were thus able to have food, and at night Rāmdās performed a *Kirtana*. 107. When more than half the night was passed the audience returned to their homes. The God-loving *bhakta* then withdrew by himself and brought Māruti to his mind. 108. Samartha had made an image of Māruti, and into it the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] entered. It appeared a large beautifully formed image, and Rāmdās looked on it with delight. 109. The citizens of the town arrived in the early morning to see it. As they saw the image of Māruti all rejoiced. 110. The astrologers were called and preparations were made for the crowd. Rāmdās lovingly bathed the image and duly worshipped it. 111. The God was bathed

with the five nectars, and anointed by the Brahmans. Appropriate *mantras* were recited, and all felt delight. 112. Red ochre was rubbed over the image of Māruti, and lovingly He was clothed and decorated. Flowers incense, lights and the platter of lights were offered to it. All the people shouted, "Victory! Victory!" 113. Samartha brought the offering of cooked food, and Māruti partook of it in private. In the meantime the Brahmans returned from their bathing, and dainty food was served on their leaf-plates. 114. After the Brahmans were worshipped, Samartha made the offering to the gods and the Brahmans sipped the water. Then all dined. 115. All the disciples ate in the same line with their *Sadguru*. When it became dark a *kīrtana* was begun. 116. Kalyāna Gosāvī led the service, describing the deeds of the gods, during which half the night passed. Samartha then arose to perform his part of the *kīrtana*, and just then the king appeared. 117. He made eleven *namaskāras* to Rāmdās and placed a garland of flowers around his neck. The king remaining standing, listening with reverence. 118. As Rāmdās realized the wish of the people, he repeated an *abhanga* on a philosophic theme. I quote it in this chapter just as he repeated it. Listen to it with reverence.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

119. "Through obscure philosophic teachings those who are inclined to the worldly life become crazy. Therefore one should worship directly the Saguna God. By such worship, difficulties of the worldly life disappear. 120. The Holder-of-the-Bow [Rāma] is the purifier of the sinner. By His Name a long line of *bhaktas* have been saved. His good deeds have become known in the three worlds. His heroic acts are vividly described in the *Purānas*."

121. Such was the theme of Samartha's *kīrtana*. After this he sang the praises of Māruti. As soon as the sun arose, the lights were reverently waved over him.

122. After receiving the favour of sweetmeats the crowd of pilgrims broke up. When Rāmdās gave permission the king returned (to Sītārā) and he placed all his love on Rāmdās' feet.

123. Samartha then called to one of his disciples and gave him the authority to perform the daily worship of Māruti, and charged him so to plan that the people may turn to the Way of *Bhakti*. 124. Thus charging the disciple, Rāmdās started to leave with his crowd of disciples. Wandering about in the forest he came to the town of Tembhī.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI AT TEMBHĪ

125. After begging their food in Tembhī they fed the Brahmans. People came regularly to listen to the *Kirtanas* and all gave themselves to worship. 126. Many hero received the initiatory *mantra*, both among the common people and the pious rich. Rāmdās, then sitting alone by himself, at night made an image of Māruti. 127. It was characterized by its horrible form and its extraordinary size. While Rāmdās sat repeating his praises, the sun arose. 128. The people came to see and worship the *swāmi*, and seeing the image they were astonished. They exclaimed, "A time of prosperity has arrived." Arrangements were then made for its installation. 129. The Brahmans were invited, cooks prepared the feast, sweet musical instruments gave out their sounds, and Samartha sat down to perform the worship. 130. Then after the invocation there was the bath with the five nectars. Then the dressing of the image in various garments, which to look at brought joy to the eyes. 131. The whole of its body was rubbed with red ochre. It looked radiant, like Rudra (Shiva) Himself. Offerings of incense, lights, camphor and the platter of lights were made. The audience made a *namaskāra*.

132. In the meanwhile a crowd of Brahmans arrived. The disciples of Rāmdās worshipped them. Leaf plates with delicious food were served, which to look at brought delight to the eyes. 133. Samartha made the offering to the gods and all present feasted. By gifts of *pānasupāri* and other gifts the Brahmans were made happy. 134. The *svāmī* dined with his disciples in the very last line. In the meantime preparations for the *kīrtana* were made, and seats were everywhere arranged. 135. Bright lamps were lighted. Cymbals, drums and *vīnās* began to sound. The *svāmī* arose to perform the *kīrtana*, and all felt a sense of joy. 136. There was the loud shouting of the name of God, the sound of which filled the sky. And now and again the whole audience joined in clapping their hands and snapping their fingers. 137. Samartha took for his theme the noble characteristics of Shri Rāma. By this the hearts of his hearers were touched, and they forgot the illusions of their earthly existence. 138. While the *kīrtana* was thus going on the sun arose. Then waving the wave offerings over Shri Rāma, they distributed the final favours. 139. All the people returned to their homes. The *svāmī* then, without taking leave of anyone, departed for the forest. The disciples had to hunt for him.

#### INSTALLATION OF A MĀRUTI IN A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE

140. Samartha saw a village up in the mountain, and went up to it. The disciples soon arrived, and all worshipped him. 141. They took their begging bags and at once went into the town to beg food. Samartha said to Akabāī, 142. "A Māruti has been installed at Tembhl. Who shall be placed in charge of the worship there?" She replied, "Choose a disciple who belongs to that town and appoint him to the office. 143. One who is of a pure and chaste character, one who will worship with a sincere and worshipful spirit, one whose power of speech is such that

when people bear him their hearts will become indifferent to worldly things. 144. If you place such an one in charge many people will begin to worship Maruti." Listening to her advice, Samartha replied, "It shall be done."

145. Rāmdās then performed his bath, and began the worship of Māruti. In the meantime his disciples returned bringing the food they had begged. The Brahmins were then invited to dine. 146. The feast was being prepared. Just then king Shivājī arrived to worship Rāmdās. He made his *sadguru* a *namaskāra* and stood before him. 147. When Samartha motioned to the king with his hand, the king sat down. In the meantime the Brahmins took their baths, and all sat opposite their leaf-plates. 148. The plates were served with the holy food obtained from begging, and this they ate. For the purification of their mouths the *tulasi* leaf was brought and distributed to every one. 149. At the third watch there was the reading of the *Purāna*, and then the *Dīsubodha* was read. The substance of it was discussed, in order to drive away the illusions of Jñāya. 150. When night came, and Samartha was by himself, he made another image of Māruti. It was a huge image, but according to artistic principles. To look at it gave the soul a sense of rest. 151. When it was dawn, all the people of the town came to worship Rāmdās. Samartha gave a command that every preparation for the installation should be made at once, 152. that all the citizens including householders and priests in all the towns around should be invited, and that the invitation should be extended as far as Shahāpura. They did as they were commanded. 153. As the news of Samartha spread a great crowd of people assembled. The loud sound of the musical instruments was now heard and the worship of the image began. 154. A pavilion was erected and the red ochre-coloured banner of Māruti was raised. The Brahmins repeated Vedio *mantras*, and the

image was bathed with the five nectars. 155. After the anointing of the image, (the red) shendur was rubbed over it. It was offered garments, ornaments and flowers, and with them it looked very beautiful. 156. Incense and lights were lovingly offered, and then the great offering of cooked food was presented. Samartha then sang the final songs of praise, and all offered handfuls of flowers.

157. In the meantime the Brahmans returned from their baths and were duly worshipped. The leaf-plates were then arranged and the food served. Samartha made the offering to the gods. 158. After that they sipped water, and the appetites of the Brahmans were fully satisfied. *Pānasupārī* and gifts were made to all and their hearts were gratified. 159. Along with the king his attendants dined in the same row as Samartha, and then the *kīrtana* was begun by Samartha. 160. He repeated many *abhangas*, but I shall quote only one that gives the substance of his teachings. If the pious walk according to it they will be saved.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

161. This *abhanga* of Samartha's is in itself a blessing to all. Samartha then told the story of Māruti as described in the *Sundarakānda* of the *Rāmāyana*.

162. As the *kīrtana* continued through the night the sun now arose, and both Māruti and Rāma were presented with the wave offerings very lovingly. 163. Roasted *hara-barā* was distributed to all as the final favour. The king, taking leave of Samartha, returned and all the people returned to their homes. 164. Samartha appointed for the worship of Māruti a wise disciple, very God-loving, who was able to turn the people to the Way of *Bhakti*. He then hastened from that place.

165. Wandering through the forest as he willed, he came soon to Īrnabāhu. Here he installed an image of

Māruti of tremendous size. 166. Rāmdās sang in *shlokas* here the story of Īrnabāhu, which I quote with feelings of love. You pious ones, listen to it attentively.

( *Shlokas not translated* )

167. Such were the ten *shlokas* of Samartha, composed to describe the story of Īrnabāhu. He repeated them with great love. Saints only are able to understand their meaning. 168. The evil-minded and deceptive Rāvana had kidnapped the good Sītā. To search for her Rāma journeyed to the South. 169. Bears and monkeys helped Him. They built a bridge over the sea, and He, having killed the ten-headed Rāvana, released the gods from their prison. 170. He made Bibhishana immortal, and gave him an everlasting kingdom over Lankā ( Ceylon ). Thus Rāma, being victorious, hastened back to Ayodhyā. 171. With Sītā and Lakshmana and with an army of one hundred and eighty billions of monkeys, He encamped on the bank of the Krishnā river for the purpose of bathing there. 172. Sītā encamped in a town called Shirāte. Near her was Rāma's brother, the victorious Lakshmana. Rāma, the Recliner on the serpent *shesha*, Himself was at that time bathing in the Krishna. 173. The Holder-of-the-Bow [ Rāma ] made a Shiva-emblem out of sand, and placed it on a straw seat. Then worshipping it with all the usual rites, He sat contemplating it. 174. Everything to his mind became Shiva. He had no consciousness of Himself. Just then through a fall of rain on the earth a flood swept down the Krishnā river. 175. Both Rāma and Lakshmana were lost in contemplation. Māruti was standing close by, and exclaimed, "There will now be a disaster". 176. The flood came roaring on, and great waves were thrown up. Then Māruti put forward both hands, and stopped the flow of all the water. 177. Māruti stood in the middle, and the water was unable to force its way.

Then the water turned to the West sixteen miles back. 178. Māruti's power, which could not be withstood, made the Krishnā river form two forks, leaving an island in the middle, called by people Rāmlinga. 179. Rāma then performed a wonderful deed. He saw a beautiful slab of stone, and drew on it the form of Māruti, just as He had seen him with his eyes. 180. The Holder-of-the-Bow [Rāma] then placed it in the water, and in Lakshmana's ear uttered the following prophecy, 181. "In the Kali-yuga I shall have a bhakta by name of Rāmdās. He will take this image out." Thus said the Lord-of-Ayodhyā.

#### RĀMDĀS DISCOVERS THE ANTIQUE BAR-RELIEF OF MĀRUTI

182. In a former paragraph the installation of a Māruti at Urnabāhu has been described. Without anyone knowing, Samartha left, 183. and He quickly arrived at the place where Shri Rāma had erected a *linga*, and where the Krishnā had divided into two forks. 184. There he suddenly remembered that Shri Rāma had with His own hands made a bar-relief of Māruti and had placed the image in the water of the Krishnā, and that he must certainly find it. 185. Rāmdās looked all around but Māruti was not to be seen. His heart felt desolate and he cried out aloud, 186. "Quickly come to me, O Thou dearest of my life. Brother-of-the-lowly, dear Māruti, without Thee my body seems all afire. Meet me quickly that the pain may cease. 187. When Shri Rāma went to His heaven, He appointed you, Māruti, as His servant. Have you no recollection of this? And, therefore, you have made me hopeless?" 188. Hearing Rāmdās' words, pity was aroused in the Son-of-the-Wind. "I will give you a meeting with me now," said a sudden voice from below. 189. "My heart is also impatient to greet you. Come down into the water, and I will meet you here." Rāmdās, hearing this

water, and I will meet you here." Rāmdās, hearing this voice, leaped into the water. 190. There were many people by the bank of the Krishnā, and they sent up a distressed cry. They exclaimed: "There is no limit to the depth of the water, and there are crocodiles and other water animals in it." 191. Rāmdās had leaped into the water of a deep hole, but no one had recognized him as one living in a certain place or town. 192. Just then some one said, he had recognized him and that he was the crazy Rāmdās. He had called aloud to Māruti, and then leaped into the water. 193. Such was the conversation of the people on the bank. "Someone has lost his life needlessly," they said. One remarked: "It must have been written in his Fate that he would die in this way." 194. While the people on the bank were talking in this manner, his disciples arrived searching for him. They heard the bad news and all were alarmed. 195. They were in the same state as that of a young deer, abandoned by the mother deer. With the hope of seeing their *sādguru* they looked in every direction. 196. Then they remembered the past events, and sat down with a quiet mind, and yet no one took food or water, because they were without their *sādguru*.

197. In the meantime Rāmdās was in the water seven days. Māruti gave him a visual revelation of Himself, which gave Rāmdās' heart great joy. 198. Shri Rāma had formed in bar-relief on the stone slab a Māruti. Rāmdās took this image, and came out of the Krishnā river. 199. As the people saw Samartha, their hearts were filled with intense joy. All cried out: "Victory, Victory." All minds were filled with astonishment. 200. The townspeople now exclaimed to one another: "There were fish and crocodiles in the deep hole of the river. How was it he lived there for the seven days? The power of saints is most extraordinary." 201. The disciples, when they-

saw Saniartha, fell at his feet. All then bathed, and broke their fast.

202. When half the night had passed, Rāmdās sat by himself. Suddenly Māruti appeared to him, and in the quietness revealed to him his secret thought. 203. He said: "Shri Rāma with his own hand sculptured this bar-relief on a stone. You have brought it out of the water; and its form is imprinted on your heart. 204. Now look at it, and make another one with your hand. Install it here and this one replace in the water." 205. To this expressed wish of Māruti, Rāmdās was agreeable and he made a very beautiful image, which was installed on the bank of the Krishnā. 206. Rāmdās then replaced the Māruti that Shri Rāma had made in the deep hole in the Krishnā river. The new one was duly installed with the usual prescribed ceremonies.

207. The news spread from town to town, and a great crowd assembled there. The saints and *mahantas* performed a *kīrtana* and the Brahmans repeated the *mantras*. 208. Māruti was worshipped in all the prescribed ways. Garments and ornaments were placed upon him. Garland and sandalwood paste were placed on him. Offerings and the final wave offerings were then made. 209. The Brahmans were feasted, and *pānasupārī* and gifts were distributed to all.

The saints must give me their attention as I develop the next chapter. 210. The stories of good men are supremely purifying, and in describing them there is intense joy in the heart. And so you pious ones, being absorbed in these stories, give me your attention. 211. He, who is the Merciful-to-the-Lowly, Lotus-eyed, is personally relating these stories of saints. Mahipati is merely his instrument, and not an independent writer.

212. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santarijaya*. By merely listening to it, it fulfils the longings of the heart. Let the God-loving, wise *bhaktas* listen therefora. This is the sixteenth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### SAINTS ARE SENT FOR THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD

1. In order that the earth may have light, the sun rises in the East. In order that the sky may be beautiful the moon appears in the heavens. 2. In order to bear the weight of the earth, the chief of serpents (Shesha) became an *avatāra*. In order that clouds may spread over the earth, the oceans are filled to overflowing. 3. In order to preserve the life of living creatures space is filled with air. In order to warm the body and create digestive power the gastric heat burns in it brilliantly. 4. In order that all the gods may have their appetites satisfied, immortality-producing nectar [*amrita*] appeared in Heaven. So, in the *Kaliyuga* the saints have descended for the salvation of the world. 5. As they have dwelt on the names of God in their songs, people have been saved by merely listening to them. In order that men may worship and adore God, they have installed idols that reveal His attributes. 6. In order to increase the happiness that comes from love, God Himself became His own *bhakta*. To the eye Rāma (God) and Dāsa (Rāmdās) are two names : but the inner light is the same in both.

### THE INSTALLATION OF ELEVEN MARUTIS RECALLED

7. In the detailed descriptions of the last chapter it was related how Samartha made eleven Mārutis with his own hands, and installed them. 8. You saints have already listened to the various places where he installed them. You may have forgotten them, so I again repeat them. Kindly listen. 9. Rāmdās installed an image at Tākli near Nāsik. That first event of exceeding interest, you good people have attentively listened to. 10. Aside

from this one, Samartha installed eleven Mārutis in the valley of the Krishnā, namely two images in the Chāphala vale, wide awake and glorious. 11. At Singanāpura one. The third was installed at Masura and the fourth Māruti at Shahāpura. The fifth was installed at Umaraja. 12. The sixth Māruti was installed at Battisa Shirile, the seventh image at Jarāndā, and the eighth at Tembhi. 13. The ninth Māruti was placed up in the mountains at Navāgāva. The tenth at Urnabāhu under most extraordinary circumstances. 14. Ten images were thus installed, but the two in the Chāphala Vale made in all eleven Mārutis, as is understood by all of Rāmdās' followers. 15. At the end of the list you have listened in detail to the story of Urnabāhu. To see that place is to enjoy the peace that comes from indifference-to-worldly-things. 16. Samartha chose to remain here many days. Crowds gathered here to see, and worship him with devotional hearts. 17. Those who with strong desires made vows, Māruti fulfilled their longings. The disciples [Rāmdāsis] live there to serve him and carry on the religious rites. 18. If [Māruti] wishes to accept the service (of the vow maker), good health is the result. Otherwise the servitors have much bodily trouble; and, therefore, men with desire retire. 19. In all these eleven places elaborate festival takes place in celebration of the birth of Māruti. *Vaishnava bhaktas* perform *kirtanas*, and crowds of Brahmans assemble.

#### RĀMDĀS BECOMES A FOREIGN MISSIONARY

20. After performing these praiseworthy deeds, Samartha went to the sacred city of Kolhapura, where he remained many days laying the foundations of faith and worship of God. 21. By means of *kirtanas*, repetition of God's names, and by the worship of Vishnu he turned men to that path. And seeing Rāmdās acting as he preached, the all-wise Brahmans gave him honour.

22. From there [ Krishnā Valley ] Rāmdās continued southward in order to visit other countries, where the inhabitants were characterized by the two qualities, *rājasa* and *tāmasa* [ activity and evil ], and where there was not the slightest of the good. 23. Theological truths and the worship of Vishnu were unknown to their ancestors, so that all were given over to immorality and glut-tony, and no one knew the way to the supreme-spiritual-riches. 24. If the name of Rāma fell on their ears, those fools regarded it as supremely unpleasant. As Samartha watched those people, his mind filled with wonder. 25. There were those whose occupation was that of interpreting in two languages. Samartha, therefore, said to them : "Tell me how it is that they are irritated hearing the name of Rāma ?" 26. They replied : "If any one repeats the name of Rāma, it is considered as a bad omen for their domestic life. It is the name repeated when one is at the point of death, and the moment it is repeated, death comes. 27. Such is the teaching in this country, and therefore they dislike the name of Rāma." To this reply of the interpreter, Rāmdās responded with an affirmation : 28. "Only if I succeed in turning all to the worship of Rāma, am I to be called the *bhakta* of Rāma." He therefore remained there many days, and thoroughly learned their language. 29. In their language he finally performed daily *kirtanas*, and so touched their hearts. Many became his disciples as they heard from his lips of the supreme-spiritual-riches. 30. He told them of how that supremely wicked fisherman [ Vālmiki ] by repeating the syllables *ma-rā*, *ma-rā* [ die, die ] ended in saying Rāma Rāma. Through that event his fame has easily spread, and the Three-worlds [ heaven, earth and hell ] have not space enough to contain the love felt for him. 31. When Shiva drank the poison, his whole body was

on fire, but as Sūkṣma (three-eyed and with numerous eyes) pronounced the name of Ra in his mind was ex. 32. (Pingals) the prostitute, a very 'lap o' sin, called to her parrot by name of Raghu (RS. 2), had by it made a turned to a bird of Heaven. This the P. r. is loudly proclaim 33. And, therefore, I tell you, never forget the name of Rāma." Thus preaching to the people, he turned them to the joy of the worship (of Rāma)

### RĀMDĀS LATOR'S TO CĀPHĀLA

34 When Samarth had finished his work there (in the Canara country), he began his return journey. Along the way, in the various villages, he showed his love in the performance of his duty 35. Just as the Ganges flows along its course, purifying the towns along its banks, and by the sight of her and by her touch, sin and suffering disappear, and trees also are nourished without any effort of theirs, 36 so saints, anxious to help others, as they wander casually from country to country bring about the salvation of those who on this earth are indifferent to spiritual things. How am I able to mention the very many who have done this? 37 And so Rāmdās turned all that country to the worship [of Rāma] and then gradually in the company of his followers returned to the Vale of Chāphala.

### RĀMDĀS WELCOMED BACK AND INVITED

38 Rāmdās had previously appointed Kalyānī sādhu to perform the worship of Shri Rāma (at Chāphala). As soon as he heard the news (of Rāmdās' arrival), his heart was full of joy 39. All the citizens of the town went out to welcome him. Musical instruments were played, and the air was filled with the joy of their love 40. As soon as they saw their sadjūru they bowed prostrate on the ground. Young and old embraced him, and hung garlands

of flowers around his neck. 41. Thus on that day, with music and acclaim, Samartha came to the temple of Rāma. As he looked on Shri Rāma, his heart could not contain his love. 42. Lovingly he bowed prostrate on the ground, and with eyes full open he looked on the image. Rāmdās embraced it with love. The peace and joy of it I am unable fully to express. 43. He then again took a bath, and duly worshipped the image. In the meantime a feast was being prepared. Just then king Shivājī arrived. 44. When he saw the *sadguru* he bowed to him eleven times. The king, then clothing him in costly garments, adornments and ornaments, worshipped him. 45. The feast was now ready, and various daintily cooked dishes were served. With joyful hearts all dined along with the *sadguru*. 46. The *sadguru* took the *pānasupārī*, and then sitting on the throne gave his command to all that preparations should be made for the approaching festival. 47. The gods desire to see the great festival of the birth of Rāma. It should be performed here, because Rāma is near us here.

#### THE FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH OF RĀMA CELEBRATED

48. As they received this command, the hearts of all were filled with joy. The king stood before Rāmdās with hands joined palm to palm, and said : "I will bring the needed materials." 49. Samartha replied to him : "According to the teachings of the scriptures the birthday of Rāma (*Navamī*) is to be celebrated after begging contributions from many. The wealth of one individual alone should not be expended on it. 50. Still if you have the desire to help, join your contribution with theirs." As soon as Rāmdās gave him leave, the king hastened back to his place.

51. The followers of Rāmdās had assembled from many villages to welcome him. These going back to their

homes, began to make preparations for the festival. 52. The temple of Rāma was whitewashed and garnished. *Svastikas* and pictures were drawn on the floor ( with coloured powders ). A pandal was erected with banners, and the loud sounding music began. 53. The disciples who had been sent out to beg for food brought back some. Followers in the towns around sent various materials. 54. The king sent very many sackfuls of materials, accompanied by his secretaries and officials. 55. The festival began to be celebrated on the first day of the bright-half of Chaitra ( April ). On that day the musical instruments were played with the very greatest of enthusiasm. 56. King Shivājī now arrived accompanied by all his ministers and army. Many Pandits, Brahmans and Vedio priests arrived also for the great celebration. 57. Samartha bathed early in the morning, and then worshipped Shri Rāma. Brahmans repeated Vedio *mantras*, and the hearts of all were full of happiness. 58. The Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ] was bathed with a mixture of many fragrant oils, with saffron, musk and *argajū*, and with the five nectars. 59. At the suggestion of the Brahmans, the golden-bath ceremony took place, similar to that done at the *mahārudra* ceremony. Then they wiped the image with their upper flowing garments. 60. They clothed the god in a yellow raiment, and cloth with gold and silver threads of beautiful design, and a shawl of eight strips, to look upon which gives joy to the heart. 61. On his forehead was placed ~~the~~ *tilaka* mark of saffron paste, and smeared his person with ~~a~~ *gum* paste of the fragrant sandalwood. A garland of flowers was placed around his neck, and hero's bracelets on his arms. 62. There was placed around his neck a string of pearls. On his breast the jewel glittered. On his feet were placed the *vānki* and *nepura* ornaments. A vast amount of powders was thrown into the air. 63. Plan-

tains, cocoanuts, custard apples, pomegranates, grapes, Rāmaphala, and the leaves and nut used in the *pānasupāri*, were all placed before the image. 64. Many forms of tasty food, fried in butter, were prepared, and as an offering of cooked food there were numerous dainty dishes neatly arranged on the leaf plates. 65. The king placed before the image as a gift a handful of gold coins, the sight of which gave the ( Brahman ) worshipper much pleasure at the thought of his enrichment. 66. There was the waving of the platter with lights over the image, the waving of incense, the burning of many lights from wicks of cotton around sticks, of five thread wicks and three thread wicks. These burning wicks were offered to the god, followed by an offering of food. 67. The *bhaktas* shouted, "Victory, Victory." The *kirtana* took place at the great entrance door of the temple. Sweet music from many instruments was heard. Samartha then intoned the final song of praise. 68. The image was circumambulated with reverence and all offered handfuls of flowers. And as all prostrated themselves before the Husband-of-Sitā [ Rāma ] they felt a sense of peace. 69. Rāmdās then, with hands joined palm to palm, composed a hymn of praise, in which he pleaded for comfort with pity-arousing emotion. The saints must listen to it with reverence.

- (1) "O God, I have none but Thee. So care Thou for me.
- (2) I am deficient in Indifference-to-worldly-things. I abound in insincerity. Fatal doubts fill my mind.
- (3) Right-thinking has deserted me, and knowledge has abandoned me. But now my heart clings to Thy feet.
- (4) May I ever be repeating Thy names, for my heart places its confidence in Thee."

70. After this pleading cry, Rāmdās made his *namaskāra* to the Husband-of-Sītā [Rāma]. Just then the Brahmans returned from their baths, and were seated in crowded lines. 71. In company with his disciples Samartha worshipped the Brahmans, seating them on the bathing-board, and washing the feet of all. 72. The water with which their feet were washed was brought to the *sadguru*, and he lovingly drank it. For all sacred waters in the Three-worlds are located at the Brahmans' feet. 73. Their foreheads were marked with the saffron paste. The black spots from musk were also made on their foreheads and their persons were smeared with the thin paste made from sandalwood, and an abundance of fragrant powders were used. 74. Garlands of flowers were placed around their necks. Incense, lights and the platter of lights were waved over them. Cymbals, *vinās* and bells were sounded, and thus the wave offering was made to the Brahmans. 75. Leaf-plates were spread for all. The (king's) attendants did the serving. For the fast-day of the birthday celebration, light food was prepared. 76. Many kinds of pickled fruit and vegetables were served on the leaf-plates; so also pickles and yellow custards. 77. Delicate wheaten meal in milk, mixed with large helpings of butter and sugar-and many kinds of fried *bhajas*, were served on the leaf-plates. 78. Leaf-cups full of curds, milk, ghee and *sāra* were served. Then Samartha made the offering to the gods saying that Shri Rāma was the enjoyer of food.

79. According as any one had a special taste, that was brought, and served on his leaf-plate. All had their appetites satisfied. Then the mouth-purifying course was served. 80. The Brahmans, with the *pūnasupūri* and gifts in their hands, gave to Rāmdās the rice over which mantras had been repeated, saying: "May you worship the Lord-of-Ayodhyā, the Husband of-Sītā [Rāma]. 81.

Knowledge is connected with Indifference-to-worldly-things, and Indifference-to-worldly-things is marked by union with the spirit of worship. To save the whole-world you should become an *avatāra* at different ages." 82. Having uttered this blessing, the Brahmans returned to their homes. Large numbers of the common people came to see and worship Lord Rāma on His throne. 83. After the Brahmans had dined, those who partook of the light-cooked meal sat, and those who observed a strict fast ate-fruit only; all had their appetites satisfied. 84. In the meantime the sun was setting, and it was time for the final praise service. The *bhaktas* could not contain their love for Rāma. People hastened to see and worship Him. 85. Outside skinned drums of various kinds were sounded. Some blew wind instruments and horns, while lights were everywhere being lighted. 86. The place dazzled with light from the many lamps that had been lighted. Clarions gave out their sweet sounds. There was no limit to the joy ( of the people ).

87. One acted as a mace-bearer and made the people stand in line on both sides of the way, and in front bards described Rāma's heroic deeds. 88. Using various kinds of flowers the Brahmans worshipped the gods. Incense-lights, camphor and the platter of lights were waved over the Husband-of-Sitā. 89. The idol attendants drew a curtain before the idol, and then made the offerings. The *bhaktas* at that moment stood outside, and shouted, "Victory, Victory". 90. After Rāma was satisfied with the sweet odour of the offering, the curtain was removed immediately, and sweetmeats were distributed to all, which His servants ate with joy. 91. Thus the final praise service was held, and wave offerings waved over the Lord of-Ayodhyā [Rāma].

Then when night came preparations were made for a procession of the idol. 92. There were many banners.

with the eagle design and with fish designs. Some of the red-ochre coloured flags were very large, and the picture of Māruti was drawn on them. 93. The image of Rāma to be carried in procession was seated on a throne. Some waved brushes and whisks before it. To look at it gave joy to the eyes. 94. In front of the procession there was the loud sound of musical instruments, and dancers sang sweet songs, cannons roared, and the *bhaktas* cried, "Victory, Victory." 95. Rockets, fire crackers, and other fireworks were let off every few feet; thereby the earth was lighted as brilliantly as with the rising sun. 96. In the front ranks the Haridāsa sang, repeating the deeds of Shri Rāma. All the gods, sitting in their chariots of light, looked on with wonder, 97. saying: "Blessed is Rāmdās' love. He has seduced the Good Being by his sincerity. By giving us immortality, he has deceived us, for it seems that thereby we are separated from Shri Rāma." 98. Thus in gay procession Rāma returned, and by that time there were but two hours of the night left. Rāmdās then began his *kirtana*. 99. First his disciple rose one by one, and described the deeds of Rāma. There was no limit to their joy. They brought into their recitation all the nine emotional sentiments.

100. Thus the festival continued every day for eight days. Twice the image was carried in procession, and in singing the praise of Hari the enthusiasm was extraordinary. 101. On the morning of the birthday [Navamī] all finished their bathing, and then worshipped Shri Rāma, and the praise service was held with tremendous enthusiasm. 102. After that the Brahmans were worshipped. Samartha himself performed the worship of their feet. Fragrant pastes and oils were placed on them, and flowers were offered them. 103. The favours of sweetmeats were distributed to young and old.

The sun had now been up for one watch, and Rāmdās began his *kīrtana*. 104. He repeated an *abhanga* as a prologue. Listen while I quote it in this chapter. Behind him stood his disciples, with accompanying instruments in their hands.

( *abhanga* not translated )

105. While repeating this *abhanga* tears of joy flowed from his eyes. And as the sound arose of those repeating aloud the names of Rāma, the air was filled to overflowing. 106. Recognizing the wish of every one, Samartha explained in detail the reason for the festival of the birth of Rāma.

#### RĀMDĀS REPEATS THE STORY OF RĀMA

107. Rāmdās said to his hearers: "Listen to my words. Rāma is the unchangeable, and the attributeless [*nirguna*], abounding in joy, and for ever perfect Intelligence, 108. He became the advocate of His *bhaktas* through becoming *saguna* [with qualities], and taking a human form. He performed many deeds worthy of being sung by the animate and inanimate."

109. Pulastyā Muni was the son of a Brahman, a man of extreme austerities, and one of perfect knowledge. From him was born here on the earth Vishravā, a mine of right-thinking. 110. From Vishravā was born through Kaikasi three sons. Listen to their names. 111. The monsters Rāvana and Kumbhakarna, haters of Brahmans and gods, and the third Bibhishana, the servant of Vishnu, devoted to the love of worshipping God (*bhakti*). 112. The three by their extraordinay austerities gained the favour of the Lord-ofHeaven (*satyaloka*) who said to them: "Ask the favour of a boon according to the desires in your hearts." 113. Hearing this voice of Brahmaṇeva, Rāvana at once asked as follows: "I wish to conquer all the gods."

and become the lord of Three-worlds [Heaven, Earth and Hell]. 114. Along with Indra I wish all the gods to be my servants. I wish to possess the golden city, with sons, grandsons, wealth and wives. 115. My prosperity should last for fourteen of the four *yuga* period." Brahmadeva hearing him replied: "Your heart's wish will be fulfilled." 116. Then Brahmadeva [Begotten-from-the-lotus] said to Kumbhakarna: "You may also ask some special boon." Hearing this request, the gods became very anxious, saying to themselves that all was not going well. 117. The gods then besought Sarasvatī to go and sit in Kumbhakarna's mouth, and prevent his asking for what may be to their harm. 118. "Surely I will", said the daughter of Brahmadeva. Kumbhakarna then requested the king of *Satyaloka* [Brahmadeva's heaven]: "Give me a heavy sleep, and thus enjoy bodily happiness." 119. "Assuredly," said the Lotus-begotten-one [Brahmadeva]. All the gods then rejoiced. After that Bibhishana, chief of Vaishnavas, asked for his special boon. 120. "I wish to be a worshipper of Vishnu, and have my desires centred in God and Brahmans. I wish to be repeating the names of God continually, and never forgetting to do so." 121. Hearing this request of Bibhishana's, Brahmadeva was much pleased, and at once saying, "So it shall be", left for His abode. 122. The granted boons immediately went into effect. Rāvana carried out his extraordinary deeds. He captured Lankā (Ceylon) from Kubera, and himself went to live there. 123. He also conquered all the picus kings of the earth. The ten-headed monster [Rāvana] was exceedingly greedy, and filled his treasure house with jewels. 124. He had many sons and grandsons. Then being in possession of Brahmadeva's boon, he took with him a great army and attacked the city of the gods. 125. In a tremendous battle he conquered the gods, bringing

with him the three-hundred and thirty million gods [ or 33 classes of gods ] whom he imprisoned in Lankā (Ceylon). 126. Together with the nine planets he made the gods his servants, and cows, Brāhmans and Rishis were greatly harassed. 127. The monsters who were obedient to the commands of the Ten-necked monster [ Rāvana ] filled the earth with their arrogance. This occasioned the neglect of sacrifices and divine offerings, and unrighteousness greatly prevailed ( over the earth ). 128. Night-demons with great relish devoured cows, Brāhmans and Rishis. Suffering through those evil beings, the whole earth was in trouble. 129. Then eighty-eight thousand Rishis, and the gods along with Indra, and the earth in the form of a cow, arrived at the Heaven of Brahma-deva [ Satyaloka ]. 130. Telling Brahma-deva all the news, they besought His help: "Ravana, intoxicated with pride, has robbed us of our homes." 131. Brahma-deva replied : "Let us go to my father, who is the founder of all religions. He will remove all your anxieties." 132. Brahma-deva, together with all who had come to Him, went to the Ocean-of-milk, and standing afar off on the shore of the ocean, they shouted aloud, "Victory, Victory." 133. All joined their hands palm to palm, and stood according to the prescribed rules, and then with love in their hearts began to utter with their lips words of praise: 134. "Victory to Thee, Enjoyer-of-the-Ocean-of-milk, Husband-of Lakshmi, Supremely-generous-one, Recliner-on-the-serpent-Shesha, Unchangeable One, Mine-of-mercy Brother-of-the-lowly. 135. In obedience to Thy commands, we were protecting our places of abode, but Rāvana, the pride-intoxicated monster has robbed us of all our homes. 136. He devours cows and Brāhmans. Unrighteousness has spread throughout the worlds. Graciously look upon us. Thereby the universe will be made

happy." 137. Having listened to this complaint, a voice from the sky was heard: "I will become an *avatāra* in the Sun-family-line, and will utterly destroy Rāvana. 138. All of you gods will appear in the guise of monkeys Shiva will become Māruti, and burn the city of Lankā. (Ceylon). 139. The Serpent Shesha (Vishnu's couch) will become Lakshamana the brother of Rāma. Vishnu's conchshell, *Pānchajanya*, will become Bharata, and His disk will become Shatrughna. 140. I, Rāma, Holder-of-the-bow, will be born to Dasharatha and Kausalyā, a voluntary *avatāra*, and will kill Rāvana in battle. 141. I shall establish righteousness, and make cows and Brahmins happy." As the crowd of gods listened to this voice, they were comforted.

142. Let us turn now to Ajapāla's son, a supremely powerful and holy king. He had no son, and therefore, was downhearted. 143. Then with great effort he brought to his place the Rishi Shrings. The king performed the birth-sacrifice. The sacrificial cake was provided and the sacrificial deity divided it. 144. The king had three wives: Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikayā. As the noble *muni* distributed the cake to the three wives, he said: 145. "The moment you eat this, you will assuredly have beautiful sons." When Kaikayā heard this, she was very angry. 146. Said she: "I am the king's favourite wife. Why should I take the smaller piece? In the battle when the king went to help Shakra (Indra) I gave him complete victory." 147. Vashishtha heard of this prophecy, and said to himself: "Now look out for trouble." Just then a kite, flying in the air, swooped down and picked up the morsel that (Kaikayā had rejected). 148. Kaikayā then began to cry: "How now can I have a son?" Kausalyā immediately divided her piece in half, and put one piece in Kaikayā's hand. 149. So also the good

Sumitrā gave half of hers to Kaikayā. So all three became with child, and the king enquired about their fancies.

150. He who finds His happiness in the Ocean-of-milk, God-Supreme, Dweller in Heaven [ *Vaikuntha* ] suddenly revealed Himself to Kausalyā for the sake of aiding His *bhaktas*. 151. He whose name when repeated enables one to avoid the return of births and deaths, He, the Formless One, became caught in her womb. But that must be recognized as a wrong statement. 152. For Kausalyā was delivered without the slightest pain. Suddenly the Recliner-on-the-serpent-Shesha [ Vishnu ] appeared to her in her inner room. 153. On the ninth day of the bright half of *Chaitra* ( April ) at the second watch of the day, Kausalyā looked upon the ornament of the Sun family line ( Rāma ). 154. Peace, love, mercy and devotion were near Kausalyā as her close friends. They went and told Dasharatha that he had a son. 155. The king was very happy. Said he : "My good fortune is remarkable." He distributed sweetmeats from house to house, and musical instruments gave out their loud sound. 156. Just then other female servants came, and told the king that a son had been born to Sumitrā. The king rejoiced. Immediately after that still another female messenger arrived, and said : 157. " O king, to Kaikayā two beautiful sons have been born." On account of these births Brahmans assembled, and the king distributed unlimited gifts. 158. The king broke open his treasury of gold and jewels, and every beggar was given to his satisfaction. The city of Ayodhyā was decorated. 159. The whole city rejoiced. There were arches and banners at every house. Women taking red and yellow turmeric powders started for the royal palace. 160. In whose toe the holiest of the holy Ganges has its rise, He, the Lord-of-the-earth, was being bathed on Kausalyā's feet. I regard that as very wonderful, indeed !

161. Vashishtha then said to the king: "Look now on the face of your sons." He then bathed himself with his clothes on [ *sachaila* ], and had ( Dasharatha ), the son of Aja do the same. 162. The king took off his garments and ornaments and distributed all to the Brahmans. The king then went into the inner chamber, and looked with love on his sons. 163. Dasharatha, supremely fortunate, looked directly with his own eyes on the Supreme Brahma. And as the child was given a drop of honey, the Dark-complexioned-one [ Rāma ] was pleased. 164. The child was so beautiful that ten million gods of love would lose their brightness before him. Dasharatha mentally wished the child freedom from all evils, and bodily afflictions, and looked at him.

165. Vashishtha muni then seated himself as customary, and explained Shri Rāma's horoscope. Said he: "This child is God-Supreme, Lord-of-Lakshmi. He has descended as an *avatāra* to give peace to the world. 166. He will kill Rāvana, and Kumbhakarna, and free the gods from their prison. He will establish righteousness on the earth, and protect his *bhaktas*. 167. For eleven thousand years he and his descendants will rule, and then finally he will take the whole city of Ayodhyā to Heaven." 168. To this prophecy of the son of Bramhadeva the king replied: "My good fortune is blessed." After twelve days they named the child. 169. They put into His cradle Him who is the Supreme-Brahma, untouched by *Māya*. As they swung the cradle to the sound of "jo, jo", they gave Him the name of Raghunātha [ Rāma ]. 170. The jewel in Sumitrā's heart they named Lakshamana. The two sons of Kaikeyi were named Bharata and Shatrughna.

171. These four sons of Dasharatha gradually attained maturity. They all seemed as brilliant as the moon in the bright half of the month. 172. In Rāma's descent

as *avatāra* the earth rejoiced exceedingly. All men who were ill formed or ugly became beautiful. 173. Old people looked young. The poor became rich. Rain fell in unlimited amount ; fresh grass sprang up in the hot season. 174. Cows on the earth that gave little milk became wish-cows, supplying abundant milk. Care and poverty fled far away from the world. 175. The ignorant became wise. The careworn became comforted. Such feelings as enmity never entered into His subjects' minds, even in their dreams. 176. The music of *kirtanas* was heard from house to house. Men and women all became devout. The undevout, haters and evil doers were not to be seen anywhere on the earth.

#### RĀMDĀS CLOSES THE FESTIVAL OF RĀMA

177. Mahipati requests his hearers to remember what has been previously related. It was in that way that Rāmdās lovingly described the birth of Rāma. 178. Samartha preached to his hearers : "What do you or I lack ? The formless one became one with form, in order to protect his *bhaktas*." 179. After his sermon there followed the clapping of hands and the shouts of "Victory, victory." These waves of sounds in the *kirtana*, in the shouting of God's names, made space resound with their loud sounds. 180. Samartha then sang the hymns of praise, and waved offerings over the Lord-of-Ayodhyā. While the hymns of praise were being sung the Vaishnava *bhaktas* danced, full of love. 181. The enthusiasm was limitless. No one could remember what of home or property belonged to them. As the king listened to the *kirtana*, he lost bodily consciousness. Such was the performance of the *kirtana*. 182. People bowed prostrate before Rāma. Sweetmeats were distributed to all. Then all returned to their homes. 183. The festival lasted nine days and nine nights. On the tenth day Samartha broke the fast, and many forms of

dainty food were served to the Brahmans. 184. This divine food, exceedingly special, even the gods desired to eat, and exclaimed: "Blessed, blessed are human beings whose trust is in Shri Rāma." 185. After the Brahmans had eaten, Samartha with his own hands distributed the *pānasupārī* and gifts. And then the others sat down immediately to eat. 186. The king, in company with the disciples, sat down to eat in the same line as their *sadguru*. After the first watch of the night they began the dramatic presentation of the theme of Rāma's birth. 187. Samartha requested Kalyāna to act the play himself. He then stood before the image of Rāma, and lovingly sang His praise. 188. He acted perfectly and repeated the *abhangas* of Samartha, containing personal and theoretical truths, which the wise received by experience. 189. The ignorant laugh at outward truths, but the wise soon become absorbed in their meanings. Rāma's *bhakta* then said to Him: "We have kept you awake for a long time." 190. They then made a platter full of *pānasupārī* and placed it before Rāma. They threw into the air much red and fragrant powders, and the people shouted: "Victory, Victory." 191. Cloth was spread for God to walk upon and some waved before Him brushes of peacock's feathers and whisks. Men and women stood on both sides of the way and Māruti stood before Him. 192. The dramatic representation took place in this way, and then they put the Lord-of-Ayodhyā to sleep.

The saints have appointed Mahipati to worship at Rāma's feet. 193. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*; by the mere hearing of it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving, and good *bhaktas* listen. This is the seventeenth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE MARVEL OF RĀMA'S INCARNATION

1. (As already told) the Merciful-One-to-the-lowly (Rāma) brought to Ayodhyā the life existing in Heaven. What were mere pebbles of the fields became at once touchstones (stones that turn iron to gold). 2. Shri Rāma is my World-guru, an *avatāra* with voluntarily assumed human body. All the trees of Ayodhyā became wish-trees (trees that grant every wish). 3. Birth as a human being is a source of happiness, but births, deaths and poverty interfere with this joy. Rāma drove out of the land these interferences. This praiseworthy deed of Rāma is known everywhere. 4. So long as Shri Rāma was ruling, all creatures lived in mutual friendship. No one reviled or hated. The world seemed in the very form of Rāma. 5. Blessed, blessed was the good Kausalyā. The Lord-of-the-three-worlds (Vishnu) entered her womb. She became one without bodily consciousness and the Three-worlds seemed to her in the form of Rāma. 6. Kausalyā placed in the cradle Him whose couch is the Serpent Shesha [Vishnu]. With smiling face the mother sang to Him, which brought happiness to dear Rāma. 7. He, whose abode is on the ocean-of-milk, which is the Lord of all oceans, even He begged of Kausalyā to be nursed at her breast. This seems very wonderful to me. 8. He who (Lotus-begotten) is the father of Brahmadeva, and the family deity of Shiva (Blue-throated), even He called Dasharatha His father and asked him to take Him on his lap.

### RĀMDĀS DRIVES AWAY DEMONS

9. In the last chapter it was related how Samartha performed a *kīrtana* on the ninth day of the Rāma-Navami

festival and how he related the contents of the Birth-chapter (of the *Rāmāyana*). 10. On the tenth day in the presence of a great crowd, at night, a dramatic representation took place. Then after receiving the final favours, the whole multitude dispersed to their homes.

11. Samartha then went up into a mountain and there sat down. Then accompanied with the music of a tambourine, he composed an *abhangā*.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

12. Thus Samartha sang on the mountain top in the fulness of his joy. The crowd saw him and heard him.

13. It now happened that women, Shudras and the young and adults among the crowd that had gathered were attacked by chills, fever, and vomiting [Cholera morbus].

14. As to how this happened, the listeners will bring to mind what was told before, that Rāmdās had obliterated a burial-ground, and had there installed an image of Rāma. 15.

All the devils, who occupied this cemetery, fled when they saw Samartha. All their power vanished before that of Samartha. 16. Now all these demons were stirred to anger, and began to trouble the assembled crowd of people.

Fever, dysentery, vomiting took place [Cholera] and the people's condition became serious. 17. Rāmdās heard of this, and called *Vetūla* (king of devils) to come to him.

Rāmdās said to him: "Your army is giving trouble to the assembled crowd. They must be punished." 18. Hearing Samartha's declaration, *Vetūla* (king of devils) joined his hands palm to palm, and said: "Your command is my authority." He then called away all his demons. 19. *Vetūla*

said: "Be gone at once from here. If Māruti should hear that you are troubling these crowds, he would bind you all to his tail." 20. At this order of *Vetūla*'s all the demons deserted the place and fled away. The whole crowd recovered their health and were able to return to their homes.

21. Various kinds of devils were there in great numbers, and therefore Rāmdās was very angry with them, accusing them of giving his people trouble. 22. The water nymphs who lived on the river banks, they also fled precipitously. Black-female-deities and the wild-female deities and the fierce-female-deities all ran away. 23. Female ghosts, and female-lustful-demons, fled out of fear of Māruti. The buffalo-demon had to wander from jungle to jungle to find a place to dwell in. 24. Other ghosts also of many kinds, the long list of whose names would be too long to record, as soon as they received the command of *Vetāla* (king of devils), abandoned all hope of returning there. 25. The female demons that give the pains to women in child-birth, they also fled away precipitously. *Vetāla* (king of devils) searched with his eyes the place of his abode, but to the very end he could see none of the devils.

26. After *Vetāla* (king of devils) had given his order, he went to Kailāsa [Shiva's Heaven]. There he bowed to the Husband-of-Pārvatī [Shiva], and worshipped that king of Yogis. 27. Shiva said to the King of the devils, "Why did you go, to the land of the mortals ? What unusual events occurred there ? Tell me at once." 28. Thus requested by Shiva, the king-of-demons replied : "The noble Vaishnava, Rāmdās, is there. He has undertaken to save the world. 29. In the Vale of Chāphala he has installed the images of Rāma. He has been celebrating the festival of the birth of Rāma, and a great crowd gathered there. 30. There was formerly a cemetery there, and, therefore, the gathered crowd of people became possessed by the devils. Rāmdās then summoned me, and put fear in my heart. 31. He said: 'If you do not take away your army of devils, Māruti will be angry with you. I therefore freed the place of devils.'" Hearing

this, Shiva laughed heartily. 32. Said he: "Māruti is my *avatāra*, and he himself, in a certain portion of him, has become Rāmdās. So, there is no difference whatever between us two in the matter of thought and feeling. 33. Shri Rāma is the deity I worship. This you must surely have heard. It is really I, therefore, who have become Rāmdās for the salvation of the world in this *Kaliyuga*." 34. As the Enemy-of-Cupid [Shiva] thus spoke, *Vetūla* (king of devils) was astonished and said: "If I had not taken away my devils, they would certainly have met with disaster."

#### RĀMDĀS DRIVES AWAY INFERIOR GODS

35. Turning now to Samartha, He summoned to him the inferior gods, and said to them: "If you are planning to trouble the assembled people, then quickly get out of here. 36. If you will not listen to my order, Māruti will lash your bare backs with his tail." Hearing this, they became full of fear, and precipitously fled. 37. Evil spirits such as *māvijā*, *Munja* and *Birdava*, and the *Utchhishta Chāndāli* and *Bhairava*, left the place, and began to hunt for another town to live in. 38. Thus the inferior deities and ghosts left, but the Buffalo-Demon [*Mahishāsura*] would not go. He stood before Samartha with hands joined palm to palm. Said he: "I will remain by the pillar for lamps. 39. I will do no one any harm. I will merely feast my eyes on the assembled crowds." So saying, he bowed to Samartha from a distance. 40. "When the chariot bearing the God passes this place, let a cocoanut be given me. I shall truly ask for nothing more than this." Samartha heard him and replied: "So be it."

41. Kalyāna Gosāvī asked Rāmdās why he had removed the images of the inferior deities. Hearing him, the *sadguru* replied: "They cause men to kill. 42. Men

of evil disposition and ungodly character make various vows to these inferior deities, and that their desires may be fulfilled they offer them animal sacrifices. 43. These evil causes at once produce the reason for their going to Hell. Therefore, men should worship Shri Rāma with love instead. 44. Blessed are those Vaishnava *bhaktas* whose family deity from past time has been Shri Rāma. Thereby they themselves are saved, and they save others also. 45. Those whose heart is fixed on the name of Rāma do not care for these trumpery deities. They do not care for *mantras* and *tantras*, or rules and rituals. They care for nothing else whatever, but Rāma's name. 46. He whose *jap* [Repetition of Names] is the repetition of Rāma's name; he whose severe austerities are only the repetition of Rāma's name; he who besides repeating Rāma's name makes no other effort; 47. he who obtains joy by the name of Rāma, he who gains the highest form of salvation [*sāyujya*] by the name of Rāma, such an one cares not about scripture teachings, aside from the name of Rāma. 48. He to whom all forms of sacrifices are Rāma Himself; to whom the name of Rāma is his wealth and utmost desire; to whom the four great purposes of human existence are only Rāma; such an one has no other love, but Rāma. 49. He to whom Rāma is his supporter and adviser and his very thought; he to whom Rāma is the beginning and the end of all, such an one should be considered as being Rāma Himself, His human appearance is illusory." 50. Hearing these words of Samartha, the people, (*abhanga* not translated) made him a *namaskāra*. Those alone whose minds were fitted for devotion accepted his teachings.

#### RĀMDĀS ASSIGNS DUTIES TO SHIVĀJĪ'S ATTENDANTS

51. Samartha called the King's attendants to him on the mountain, and instructed them that they should per-

form the duties for which they were especially fitted. 52. "When the festival of Rāmnavaṇī [Birth of Rāma] is near, let all of you come some days earlier. And each should perform the duties assigned to him." 53. Samartha assigned to each one such work as he was fitted for. At the time of the Rāmnavaṇī festival they came joyfully, and performed their duties with delight. 54. If you ask what these duties were, they were such as smearing the walls of the temple, or whitewashing the temple, or drawing pictures on them. 55. There were some skilled women cooks who were assigned to making spiced cakes and macaroni. Some of the female cooks who were of special pious character were appointed to duties requiring holiness. 56. Some had the happy task of caring for the lamps and making them polished and bright. Some were appointed to the joyous act of worshipping Brahmans, to be performed with the utmost pleasure. 57. Some were placed over the store room, and others to bring materials from there. Some were to be mace-bearers and stand guard before the God. 58. When the palanquin with the God was to be carried, some were appointed to be the bearers in front and others at the back. Samartha also appointed those who were to wave the brushes and fly whisks. 59. Some were appointed for making the fragrant saffron and black pastes and some for marking with powders. Some were appointed to look after the diners. 60. Some were to provide various kinds of seats for those at the *kirtanas*. Some were to be ready to give water immediately to those of the crowd who were thirsty. 61. Some were appointed as waiters who would know the secret wish of every diner, and serve on his leaf-plate at once what was not already there. 62. All those attendants (of the king) to whom Samartha appointed these duties, were to come every year, and gladly perform them. 63. All those whom Rāmdās thus appointed, they accepted his commands and

made him a *namaskāra*. To this very day the descendants of these perform these very duties.

### MĀRUTI'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED

64. Now when it was full moon Samartha celebrated the birthday of Hanumāna [Māruti]. King Shivājī came bringing much material, and all were rejoiced in heart. 65. Samartha bathed at the time of full moon, and then began the worship of Māruti. Auspicious instruments of music gave out their loud sounds, that resounded through the heavens. 66. The Brahmans repeated the Vedic *mantras*. Fragrant oils were rubbed on the God. His image was bathed with the five nectars and then he was anointed with oil. 67. Red ochre was rubbed on it, and garments, ornaments, neck-jewels and garlands of flowers were hung on its neck. He was offered incense and lights. 68. *Pānasupāri*, gifts of money and offerings of cooked food were placed before it and thus this Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti] was made pleased. 69. The final hymn of praise was sung to the accompaniment of the shouts of "Victory, Victory!" Outside, there was the loud sound of musical instruments. Then the Brahmans were feasted in long lines, and all had their appetites satisfied. 70. Samartha then began to perform his *kirtana*. Men sat down in reverence to listen. The king was absorbed in the scene and watched the form of his *sadgura*. 71. Just then Samartha gave a loud cry in repeating the name of Māruti, and there was loving clapping of the hands, and sound of all this echoed far off. 72. Rāmdās then said to his hearers: "I will tell you what is the best means (of salvation). It is to trust in God's name. 73. While one at his usual occupation is repeating the names of God, he is to be considered as one who is contemplating God. While one with every morsel of food repeats the names of God, he is to be regarded as equivalent to one who fasts. 74. While repeating the

names of God by day and night, the seeker after final deliverance finds his character at once changed. He finds peace of mind and indifference to worldly things enter into him, and the illusions of *Māyā* are driven away. 75. If anyone has experience of the effect of repeating Shri Rāma's name, it is the Lord-of-Kailāsa [Shiva]. That same Shiva later became Māruti in order to worship Rāma."

76. Hearing these words of Samartha's, king Shivājī joined his hands together palm to palm, and asked him to tell what purpose Shiva had in taking the form of a monkey. 77. It also seemed the wish of all present to listen to the details of the story from beginning to end. The Sadguru related the story as follows:—

(The long Purānic story of Māruti's birth in verses-78 to 143 is not translated)

144. Thus Samartha related the story of Māruti. Camphor lamps were lighted and waved around the Son-of-the-Wind [Māruti]. 145. Sweetmeats were distributed to all present. Baths were taken and Māruti was worshipped. Brahmans daily dined on daintily cooked food, and Samartha performed *kirtanas*.

#### RĀMDĀS IN VARIOUS PLACES AT THE SAME TIME

146. In this way Samartha celebrated the birth of Māruti in eleven villages at the same time, and appearing in a different form in each place. 147. Everyone thought that Rāmdās had stayed in his town for a few days and carried the celebration to completion.

148. In the meantime the Brahmans returned to the Vale of Chāphala with the gifts they had received. Seeing Samartha there, performing the worship of Shri Rāma, they were amazed. 149. One remarked: "Samartha was for four days at Shahāpura. How is it he has come here so quickly"? To their minds it was an astonishing act

150. Another said: "We were at Jarāndā for five days; Rāmdās led in the celebration there, and distributed these gifts to all present." 151. A third said: "Last night I was at Singanāpura, and I saw him there. You may say that that is a false statement, but there are very many witnesses to this among the citizens of the town." 152. Then one from Urnabāhu spoke up: "A great crowd had assembled there, and Samartha led in the celebration there. This is absolutely not an untruth."

153. This led a disciple to go to the temple and ask the *Svāmī*, for, said he: "I was at Battisashirāle along with you." 154. Being thus asked by his disciple, Samartha laughed to himself, and then replied: "God's acts are seemingly impossible. One cannot fathom them by searching. 155. In stealing away the calves, Krishna made Brahmaṇe crazy. Then the Life-of-the-world [ Krishna ] became calves, cows and herdsman, and appeared in two places at the same time. 156. The Life-of-the-World became fife, flute and shoes. As Brahmaṇe looked at Him, he saw nothing lacking in each, and lovingly worshipped him. 157. In order to make Brahmaṇe crazy, the Lord-of-all became both cows and calves. He, therefore, experiences no difficulty in assuming my form." 158. Saying this to his disciple, Rāmdās, composed an *abhangā*. I quote it in this chapter and ask you to listen attentively to it.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

159. As all listened to these words of Samartha, they made him a *namaskāra*, remarking: "O *Sadguru*, neither Brahmaṇe nor Shiva can comprehend the limits of your abilities. 160. After some days had passed a Brahman came from Tākali, and reported that Samartha had led in the Māruti celebration in that place. 161. "The *Svāmī* is intending to leave there this very day." At this

Kalyāna Gosāvī laughed, saying: "The *Svāmī* is in the temple at this very moment. 162. If you call this false, the *Svāmī* is right here in this town." Here Ākābāl remarked: "Evidently your misconceptions have not left you. 163. When the Lord Sadguru [Rāmdās] voluntarily became an *avatāra*, His seemingly impossible deeds are done everywhere, constantly, and seen by all. 164. So Ambājīpanta [Kalyāna Gosāvī], before the sight of every one, was for seven days under water in the well. Then at Samartha's call he at once came out. 165. While Samartha in childish mood was playing (with boys), he was wounded accidentally by a batted *vīṭi* [short thick piece of sharpened wood]. The boys then buried him in the sand. Seven days passed. 166. The townspeople then dug into the sand to find him, when he suddenly came out, and ran away. He has no difficulty in assuming a similar form in twelve different places (at the same time). 167. At the time of the Krishna *avatāra* he at the same moment was married to sixteen thousand wives. Dvaipāyana relates that Shri Krishna was in as many places at the same time. 168. As God is, so is His servant. Hence his deeds are the seemingly impossible. Through the power of Vishnu's *Māyā* special deeds are performed." 169. As people listened to the remarks of Ākābāl, all were moved with astonishment, and declared. "There is no limit to what Samartha can do. One should not fall into vain doubts. 170. How he performs these deeds cannot be asked of any one." Rāmdās then repeated an *abhangā*. The saints should listen to it with reverence.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

171. As people listened to this *abhangā* the doubts of all disappeared. They remarked to one another: "We cannot comprehend the limits of our *Sadguru's* power."

## EULOGY OF RĀMDĀS AND HIS DISCIPLES

172. After the feasting was over, the reading of the *Purānas* was begun. Then the *Dāsbodha* was read with its special reference to what was philosophically true and untrue.

173. All the saints had assembled for the celebration of Māruti's birthday. I will relate all their names. Listen. 174. There was Jairāma Gosāvī of Vadgāva, a most distinguished *bhakta* and a worshipper of Krishna. Then there was Rangā Gosāvī of Nigadi. He was a man of unlimited knowledge. 175. Vāmana Gosāvī, a clever Pandita, whose vast composition of *shlokas* was most extraordinary. Then there was Muni Gosāvī, a great saint, of a peaceful mind, and ever indifferent to worldly things. 176. Such were the saints that sat in the assembly. The king was there with his ministers. Also Brahmans who were Vedic panditas, expert scholars of Vedānta books. 177. In this distinguished assembly Samartha shone like the moon in the midst of all the stars, a beautiful statue of light. 178. As Shiva among the yogis, or as the sun in the heavens, as one learned in the Vedas among common panditas, in oratory prominent over all ; 179. so Rāmdās was looked upon as to his superiority by all the *bhaktas*. He discussed philosophic questions of truth and untruth, yet without pride or hate.

180. The supremely wise Ākābāī read from books. Some of the learned pandits asked her regarding their doubts, 181. She replied : "The many *rishis* have had different opinions. Hence they have approved of the three ways, Deeds, Worship and Knowledge. Thus the Vedas have taught these three ways." Samartha then repeated an *abhangā*.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

182. As all listened to these words of Samartha, the wise among them arrived at a true understanding and exclaimed: "Blessed is this happy day. All our minds have had their doubts removed." 183. After Samartha had finished with the reading of the *Purūna* he distributed sweetmeats to all. Just then a most remarkable occurrence took place. Listen, you pious people.

### RĀMDĀS SETTLES THE QUARREL OF POETS

184. A large number of poets had gathered there, and were quarreling among themselves. The king's door-keepers would not let them enter the building. 185. Rāmdās asked them the reason of the commotion outside. They replied: "A band of poets, quarreling among themselves, have come to meet you." 186. The pandits then asked Samartha what he thought about it. Rāmdās replied to them: "Everything is a combination of the three *gunas* [goodness, activity, and evil]. 187. The *Purūnas* insist that the *Vedas* are made of the three *gunas* only. All the *Shastras* are composed of the three *gunas*; so also are all the interesting stories of the gods. 188. In this world which God has created, each of the *gunas* has a presiding poet. Listen to their names, that no doubts may remain in your minds. 189. The Bold poet [original composer] is a poet by nature. In him the *tamoguna* [evil *guna*] is prominent. The Repeating Poet, who is truly of the active *guna* [*rajoguna*], is clever in inventing similes and recording histories. 190. Those who belong to the *satvaguna* [Goodness] are the saints. Through their blessed inspired poetry they sing to God in appealing words. Through such poetry the Lord is pleased." 191. The Bold, the Repeating and the Blessed poets have each their respective characteristics. As Samartha explained this, all felt gratified.

192. Samartha then said to the king : " Let these poets come in. The saints here will listen for a moment or two to what their opinion may be. 193. At this command of Samartha's, the ignorant felt very happy. There were many of the *tamoguna* kind, who remarked, : " Let us now see some fun." 194. Having been called in, the whole band of poets came near Rāmdās. The tambourines sounded loud, and filled the air with their noise. 195. Just as the bulls on *Pola* festival are fancily dressed, so these poets ( Shāhira ) were dressed up. They had red shawls thrown over them, and seen from behind they were gaily adorned. 196. Their turbans were of a saffron colour and as they came in they were chewing the *pāna-supāri*. They had upright marks on their foreheads, and they walked in an impudent way. 197. They had rubbed ashes on their eyes and held little tambourines in their hands. They had planted banners, and were violently beating their cymbals. 198. Seeing them, the saints and the chief saint began to laugh, exclaiming : " It must be Rāma, who is acting in them. Perhaps it is divinity seen because it is pervading them."

199. The poets came in, and bowed prostrate before Samartha. They bowed to the king, and said as follows : 200. " We have been quarreling among ourselves since the month of Phālguna ( March ). Let the king decide between us. Otherwise we shall be compelled to remain here. 201. Continuing our search from place to place we have come here to Samartha. Listen now to our poetic compositions, and give the praise to the best." 202. The Sadguru said to the king : " Why do you not decide between them ? They are in trouble, because of pride, so cause them to enjoy the happiness that comes from a peaceful mind". 203. The king replied : " My dear Sadguru, there is no cure for the evil principle [ *tamoguna* ]. You

therefore judge between them, explaining to them the blessing of the supreme-spiritual-riches. 204. One may place a stone in a pool of water in order to soak it, but it will not be soaked at all. But apply a chisel to it, and it becomes a god. Deal with them in that way, O Samartha." 205. Rāmdās then said to the poets: "Let me hear what wisdom you have. Sing what you have composed". They listened to this invitation with joy. 206. They came forward twisting their moustaches, and thrumming their tambourines, singing the praises of Ganapati, vying with one another, and comparing themselves with one another. 207. Both parties were completely subject to the evil principle [*tamogunz*], and no one seemed to be victorious over the other. So Samartha motioned with his hand, and caused them to cease. 208. He said: "Your singing seems to me to be equal. Your knowledge seems equal, but you must give up the evil feelings of pride." 209. The poets replied to Samartha: "You should give to one at least a written statement of superiority. Instead of that you have praised both alike. That is not justice." 210. Samartha said to them: "I will sing a song accompanied with a tambourine. He who correctly replies to it will be considered as superior." 211. So Rāmdās said to Kalyāna: "Take a tambourine in your hands." and with two other disciples they began to sing heartily. 212. The whole assembly looked intently at Samartha. The king and his ministers, in full enjoyment, listened with delight.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

213. As the poets listened to Samartha's verses, they lost their pride. They prostrated themselves before Rāmdās, and exclaimed: "We are conquered by your verses." 214. Rāmdās then gave these poets *pūnasupīrī* and garments. He greatly honoured them, who in their

turn exclaimed: "Blessed, Blessed," and then returned to their homes.

215. Gifts were now given to the Brahmans, who had come to the birthday celebration. Samartha himself worshipped the noble Vaishnavas, giving them gifts of garments. 216. The king took leave, and he returned to his palace (at Sātārā). Samartha started suddenly, and went to Shahāpura.

#### DISCIPLES OF RĀMDĀS INCREASE

217. Ākābāī, Venubāī and, thirdly, the wise Bahinābāī who were devoted to their *swāmī*, immediately followed after him. 218. A great many other disciples now came and remained with Samartha. He then went to Battisashirāle, and there worshipped Māruti. 219. From there he went to Umaraja and then to Tembhī. There worshiping Māruti with reverence he went on to Kolhāpura. 220. He bathed in the lake, and then went to see and worship Lakshmi. His disciples all went out to beg for food, and dined on their return. 221. As soon as the inhabitants of the city learned that Samartha had arrived they came to see him. They made their *namaskāras* with sincere hearts and embraced their *sadguru*. 222. Here he made more disciples, and turned them to the worship of Shri Rāma. He taught the people by their listening to his *kirtanas*, and thus they easily became seekers after Final Deliverance. 223. The money he received here, he spent where it would do good. He remained there a month preaching to the people. 224. He exalted the power of God's name. Listen to the *abhangā*, you fortunate *bhaktas*. By merely listening to it, one becomes attached to Shri Rāma with love.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

225. Such were the *kirtanas* Samartha performed in this place. By merely listening to him, people became entirely without bodily consciousness. 226. Then Rāmdās, by shouting aloud God's names, aroused them to consciousness. He then lovingly sang the closing hymn of praise, and waved the wave-offering over the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma]. 227. All bowed to the *śūmi*, and received the favours of sweetmeats. Mahipati, the servant of God's servants, sings of the praiseworthy deeds of the saints.

228. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By merely listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas*, therefore, listen. This is the eighteenth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### GOD THE REFUGE OF HIS SAINTS

1. The God-loving *bhaktas* of Shri Rāma, ever indifferent to worldly things, have all their earnest desires fulfilled by the Dark-complexioned-one [Rāma]. 2. God supreme is pleased by the unlimited devotion of His *bhaktas*. The Husband-of-Sitā [Rāma] Himself carries to completion their efforts. 3. If His good *bhaktas* lack anything, Rāma cannot endure it, and so to be their advocate He became an *avatāra*.

### RĀMDĀS GOES TO CHANDRAGIRI (MAHĀBALESHWAR)

4. In the last chapter there was related in detail the celebration of the birth of Māruti, in which Rāma took the form of Rāmdās, and carried it to completion. 5. In twelve different towns there was one Rāmdās, there being no difference between God and His *bhakta*. 6. A tree naturally grows from a seed. The seed is found in the tree, so a great *bhakta* comes from God, and God increases his *bhakti* [spirit of worship].

7. After the celebration, Rāmdās went to Kolhāpura, and there turned all the people to the worship of Rāma. He then thought to himself: 8. "I must go to all the sacred places in this region, and see all the deities there. If I remain in one place, the wishes of people will not be gratified." 9. Thus thinking, he went into the forest, without anyone's knowing his intention. The people became astonished. 10. Samartha went and stayed on the mountain called Chandragiri [probably Mahābaleshwar]. His company of disciples, hunting for him, finally saw him there. 11. When Rāma went in search of Sitā, He met Hanumāna [Māruti] at this place.

So Rāmdās remained here, his soul delighting in the scenery. 12. There is here a heavenly lake, from which an abundant stream of water flows. In the lake the lotus flowers wave. Merely to look at it gives peaceful rest to the soul. 13. The glory of the place is extraordinary. There is an *abhangā* of Rāmdās in reference to it in a metre fitted for singing with a tambourine. Read it, you, the all-knowing:—

(1) On the mountain of Chandragiri the summit is hidden; where the all-knowing Lord-of-the-Yogis [Shiva] dwells.

(2) That Lord-of-the-Yogis is a strange one. The summit pierces the heavens. There is no other place in the world like it.

(3) The place is strangely beautiful. The soul finds happiness here. If one looks upward to the sky, it seems a solid blue.

(4) No wind blows there constantly, therefore it is known as a windless place. In the hot season one does not need much clothing.

(5) On the two sides are the Krishnā and Koynā rivers. Between them is the mountain with its precipices. As one looks at the scenery, it is most gratifying.

(6) Below the mountain are seen fields of rice, where ploughs are driven. Travellers from many places come and go along its paths.

(7) On the summit of the mountain are flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, some with horns, some as calves. And here and there the boys, who tend the flocks and herds, play among themselves.

(8) Looking around one sees the glory of these mountains with their perpendicular precipices and deep valleys, enveloped in mists [*dhukate*] which come and go.

(9) Looking down from the mountain towards the Konkan, the scene looks like another Kailāsa [Heaven of Shiva]. One's heart feels the desire to go there.

(10) On one side of this mountain is the Mānadesha, and on the other is the South Konkan and Karhāda, Dattagiri and Pattana are in its vicinity.

(11) King Rāma came here because of Hanumāna [Māruti]. To look at the God there (Rāma) is a feast to one's eyes.

(12) Hanumanta (Māruti), the eleventh Rudra (Shiva), is Rāmdās' refuge, you, *bhaktas*, hasten to meet him. \*

14. Such is the glory of the place (Mahābaleshwar) described by the lips of Rāmdās. He remained there three months, daily performing enthusiastic *kīrtanas*.

#### RĀMDĀS VISITS SACRED PLACES NEAR KOLHĀPURA

15. Rāmdās also visited the sacred places in the vicinity of Kolhāpura, well known through the *Purānas*. Rāmdās visited them all. Listen to their names. 16. Mahālakshmi was victorious, and killed the demon Kolhāsura. She is, therefore, the presiding deity at Kolhāpura. She is glorified in the *Purānas*. 17. There are many temples here, also the ponds Rankāle and Padmāle. Their waters are exceedingly pure. By bathing in them the filth of the soul is washed away.

18. North of Kolhāpura is the very sacred town of Keshāpura, on the bank of the Panchagangā. The glory of the place is great. 19. At a distance from it is the

\* This description corresponds almost exactly to the region now called Old Mahābaleshwar and Elphinstone Point. Just below the actual source of the Krishnā there is a mountain peak now called Chandragiri. It is probable that in former times the whole of Old Mahābaleshwar, Elphinstone Point and Chandragiri bore the one name of Chandragiri. This description appears also in *Dāsavishrāmadhāma*, p. 633, with variations in text.

Jalashayana lake in which lotuses are found. From there can be seen the Fort of Panhāla, and every one looks at it. 20. Further on is the mountain of the Rishi Mārkandeya, and higher than that Ratnākara. Kedāreshvara came here out of love from the Himalayas. 21. He then came to Lakshmiche Sirāle, where various kinds of cobras appear. A great pilgrimage [Nāgapanchmī] takes place here in the month of August, drawn thither by the force of their faith in the power of those serpents. 22. He then passed through Dhavaleshvara, Bholeshvara, Rudreshvara and Chāpeshvara. The extraordinary glory of these places has been declared by Rāma Himself. 23. At Chandragiri [Mahābaleshwar] a prideless poet once lived. Samartha visited all these places to his great delight. 24. After thus visiting all the southern sacred places, he returned to his disciples. When he returned to the Vale-of-Chāphala the people rejoiced. 25. Rāmdās was pleased to remain there a few days, and then taking his disciples with him, he went into the forest. 26. All the disciples had to go to beg for their food, while Samartha went to perform his bath. The meal was made ready, and all sat down to finish it. 27. When the svāmi was seated, all the disciples sat in a circle around him.

#### MUHAMMADAN INTOLERANCE

Turning now to events at Māhuli, the occurrences there were most extraordinary. 28. Uddhava Gosāvī lived there, and his disciples performed *kirtanas*. Many people had assembled there to listen. They were men and women of the highest ranks. 29. The cymbals, *vīnā* and drum were being played, and many kinds of hand instruments. There were also loud shouts of God's names. Suddenly the following event took place.

30. The Emperor Aurungzebe had a police station at Māhuli. The Muhammadan captain became very angry

over the *kirtana*. 31. He, therefore, ordered his subordinates to charge them with disorderly conduct, arrest them, and bring them before him. Obedient to his orders, those evil men rushed to arrest the singers. 32. Men and women of the highest rank in the town were seated listening. The Muhammadan's servants began to beat these people. 33. This attack coming so suddenly the *kirtana* performance at once melted away. Just as when a man of the Mānga caste coming into a Brahman assembly causes all to run away. 34. Or as when a marriage taking place, suddenly a death occurs. In the confusion that results, the marriage parties are glad to hasten away. 35. Or as when the Brahmans are sitting at a feast, and a dog comes treading on their leaf-plates. The diners leave their places, and rush away. So was it with the *kirtana* listeners. 36. The mad subordinates of the Muhammadan Captain continued beating the audience. Because of this violent treatment, all fled away. 37. Some of the men of highest rank in the town appealed to the Muhammadan. "These fakirs," they said: "are followers of Rāmdās. You should not give them trouble." 38. Although thus appealed to in many ways, that evil man would not listen. He was of an ungodly temperament and hated Vishnu. 39. Just as the ten-headed Rāvana was thrown into a rage when he heard Shri Rāma praised. Or as the king of Magadha ( Jarāsandha ) disliked to hear of the praise of Shri Krishna. 40. Or as one with violent fever dislikes even dainty food, or as an impotent man has no love for his wife. As the deaf have no liking for music, so the Muhammadans disliked the story of Hari. 41. When he saw Brahmans in their holy garments, these Muhammadans would go and defile them by touching them. They would lick with their tongues the marks on their foreheads such were these extremely evil inclined men. 42. These Muhammadans had thrown down ancient temples, and

with the material built mosques. Wherever they saw some miracle performed, that place alone did they preserve from destruction.

43. Thus while Uddhava Gosāvī was performing his *kirtana*, this violent attack took place all around him. And although the citizens of high rank appealed, the captain would not listen at all to them. 44. Indeed, he sent other subordinates with orders to arrest the Hindu fakirs and bring them to him. Here they could not expect mercy from anyone, except from Rāma Himself. 45. The subordinate had attacked the audience while the *kirtana* was going on, and all the listeners had to flee away. They used curses and vile language in their evil words. 46. They broke the strings of the *vīṇās*, and destroyed the drums. They bound Uddhava Gosāvī and took him along with the other chorus leaders. 47. In the houses men and women said among themselves : "This Muhammadan has given us a lot of trouble. When will God overturn him ? " Thus they cursed this Muhammadan. 48. This police captain sat on his balcony upstairs. The subordinates brought Uddhava bound before him. 49. The officer said to his servants : "Go and call the Kājt in order to make him a Muhammadan." So said this man of excessive evil. 50. Uddhava, full of fear, began to contemplate the feet of his *svāmī*. He exclaimed : " I wonder what my Fate has written [on my forehead]. O my mother *sadguru*, rush to my help."

51. In the meantime Rāmdās was sitting in his usual place at Chāphala. Suddenly the Lord-of-Ayodhya [Rāmā] appeared to him, and told him what was taking place. 52. Just as a mother rushes in haste when her child is in danger, so hastened the dear *sadguru*. Akābal grasped his feet and asked, 53. "What is the cause of this sudden haste ? " Samartha smiled and replied :

"They are planning to make Uddhava a Musalman. So I must go to him. 54. The harmful Muhammadan, a mass of sin, has met with one who is characterized by goodness." He repeated an *abhangā* which listen to with reverence.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

55. "My disciple Uddhava lies in the impious Muhammadan's town." After giving this information, Rāmdās hurriedly started. 56. So it seemed to the people, but in fact, he at that very movement appeared there at the Muhammadan's in the form of Māruti, where he violently swung his tail. 57. The angry Muhammadan had already given a command to the Kājī [ priest ] to make a Musalman of the Hindu fakir who had been brought there. 58. Rāmdās listened to these words that fell from the Muhammadan's lips, and then assuming a fearful appearance, uttered a loud cry. 59. Hearing Māruti's outcry, the whole assembly, was thrown into confusion, just as I would think might happen when at the final destruction of the universe the earth must tremble before fierce Supreme Death. 60. Just so Māruti seemed to the Muhammadan. Suddenly Samartha gave a great leap, slapped the Muhammadan on his cheek, and sent him sprawling on the ground. 61. The Muhammadan's servants were near him, but when they saw the trouble he was in, they at once ran away, for their terror of Māruti was great. 62. For four *ghatikās* the Muhammadan lay in a faint. When he became conscious, he made obeisance to Samartha, saying : 63. "You are evidently God in visible form. Forgive me my fault. I am Thy guilty slave". This he said standing with hands joined palm to palm. 64. Samartha then assumed his ordinary form, and said to him : "Why do you hate us? It was for that that I smote you. 65. Did Khudā [ Muhammadan word for God ] create the Muhammadans, and did a thief create the Hindus? Your

*Qurūn* says : "God is the preserver of the world." 66. Samartha then composed an *abhangā* in the Musalmāni language, which I quote here. Give thought to its teachings.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

### RĀMDĀS A PROLIFIC POET

67. Samartha composed much poetry in the Musalmāni language. I have quoted above but one of them, because my hearers have a distaste for that language.

68. My hearers do not understand the Musalmāni language, and the metres are not familiar to them for the purpose of reading. Perhaps you, my readers, may say : "Why this needless introducing of other events ?" So I leave them.

69. Samartha composed numberless *abhangas* of great variety. All of them I have not been able to acquire, but even with a few one finds gratification. 70. He wrote some of his verses on *palas* leaves, and then threw them into the stream of the Krishnā river. Some of them came into the possession of King Shivājī. Later Kalyāna Gosāvī wrote down his verses. 71. When Rāmdās was alone in the forest, and prayed to Shri Rāma, only God Supreme knows who wrote down those tenderly worded verses. 72. Vālmīki's verses number a billion, but how few of them have come to light ? One only sees what one really desires to see. 73. Air fills the whole universe but one's breath occupies but a cubit foot. All are ready to stand in aid of the king, but no one has all the required strength. 74. In a rich man's home there are many bales of clothes, but he wears only as many as he needs. 75. An abundance of food is cooked at one's house, but the wise one only eats sufficient to appease his hunger. If he takes a single morsel more, it would surely do him harm. 76. So the saints have composed numberless verses for the

saving of the world. If anyone thought of committing them all to memory, the mind would not be equal to it.

77. Rāmdās was a man of vast intellect. Even when he spoke casually he spoke in the *abhangā* metre. Of course, they will now all come to light, so one must be content with the few.

#### THE MUHAMMADAN CEASES PERSECUTION

78. In the last section there was mention of the severe punishment given to the Muhammadan, and then how he besought Rāmdās to carry on their religious services as they wished. 79. "Let no one now prevent the Brahmins from observing their duties, nor hinder the Hari *kīrtanas*." Issuing this order, the Muhammadan made a *namaskāra* to Samartha. 80. Rāmdās then took Uddhavā and started for Pāli, and put up in the famous temple of Khandobā. 81. Together with his disciples Samartha sat in the assembly hall, and cautioned every one to be very watchful. 82. "This Kaliyuga is very evil. The Muhammadan kings are evil doers. If Rāma has mercy, then only seekers after final Deliverance will be able to pass through this worldly existence."

( *Abhangā* not translated )

83. Hearing these words of Samartha's, all made him a *namaskāra*, and said : "If you are favourable to us, all hindrances will vanish."

84. Obtaining the consent of Rāmdās, the disciples went into the town to beg their food. The news thus spread in the town, and all came to meet him. 85. With a strong desire in their minds to honour him, they brought him materials for cooking. While Samartha performed his bath, the food was prepared. 86. Many Brahmins sat in the temple, and loudly read from the *Vedas*. Suddenly the king appeared in order to pay his respects to Rāmdās,

and worshipped him with great pleasure. 87. After all had eaten, a *kirtana* was performed that night. For that one night the *kirtana* was performed, and then Rāmdās departed. 88. The king walked along with him, accompanied by his disciples. They all finally arrived at the Vale of Chāphala, and went to worship Rāma. 89. After finishing their baths, and again worshipping Rāma, Rāmdās worshipped Māruti, and all dined. 90. The Sadguru sat down casually, and the disciples near him. He then gave them his command that they should all go (on pilgrimages) over the country. 91. To the north as far as Benares; to the South as far as Rāmeshwar. Thus wandering everywhere to sacred places, they should increase their store of supreme-spiritual-riches. 92. If they met with any pious seeker after Final Deliverance who came to them body, soul and all they possessed, they should give them the initiatory *mantra*. "My command is your authority. 93. You are not to be caught in the snare of desires. You must daily beg for your food. Whatever you may happen to receive, receive it thankfully. 94. Making your begging the means, hold the different homes under observation. You will thus be able to see who are miserly, and who are generous and can judge them accordingly. 95. Whatever happens to be given you in your wanderings over the country, receive thankfully. Return here in time for the celebration of the birth of Rāma."

96. As soon as the disciples received this command they started. They established religious houses here and there, too many to be counted. 97. The followers of Rāmdās became known world-wide. When placing their lotus-hands on the heads of men, the spirit of indifference to worldly things entered into them. 98. Rāmdās was indeed the *avatāra* of Māruti. I know not how many souls have been saved through him. In every place where there

was established a religious hour, there the birth of Rāma was celebrated. 99. There were numberless holy occasions observed, and at every occasion the Brahmans were feasted. If any one should attempt to number them, they would be altogether innumerable. 100. In this way, Rāmdās sent his disciples from country to country in order to turn the people to the worship of Rāma.

### RĀMDĀS REFUSES THE KING'S WEALTH

On one occasion king Shivāji in a very humble spirit made a request of his svāmī. 101. "I have vast wealth in my kingdom. I ask that you, Samartha, should use it in your festivals." The Svāmī replied to this : "Our giver is the Lord Rāma. 102. O king, I have no desire apart from Him. If begging of our food is our wish-cow then why should His *bhaktas* be troubled ? 103. Begging food is an eternal and immortal vine. Your kingdom is perishable. If one accepts your offer, he, though a seeker after final-deliverance, becomes bound to worldly things." 104. Shivāji replied : "Let my Lord accept one half of my kingdom." Samartha answered : "To accumulate that which is perishable, is truly harmful. 105. While you live, your gift (kingdom) will continue, but afterwards the enemy will steal it away. Begging seems to be without cause of fear. So I am convinced in my heart." 106. Listening to Samartha's explanation, the king sat silent.

Listen to how Samartha looked as he sat on his seat of honour: 107. Just as Shiva among the Yogis, as the moon among the stars, or as the Husband-of-Lakshmi [Vishnu] among His company of *bhaktas* resplendent in his glory; 108. so Samartha seemed to all his followers at that time. He then spoke to the good people words of wisdom new to them.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

109. Such were Samartha's words, a mine of knowledge-jewels. Those who are great in good fortune, they will listen.

### THE MIRACLE OF THE POUND OF RICE

110. A seemingly impossible event now took place. Listen to it, you pious *bhaktas*. Keshava *svāmī*, a God-loving *bhakta* and saint, lived at Bhāgānagara. 111. The spirit of worship, knowledge, and indifference-to-worldly things were characteristics that adorned his personality. He heard of the fame of Rāmdās. 112. That for the salvation of the world he had become an *avatāra* of Māruti; that when about to be married, and the word 'Sāvadhāna' ['Beware!'] was being pronounced, he fled into the forest. 113. Chaste in his habits, he wandered about indifferent to worldly things. Knowledge, indifference to worldly things, and a forgiving spirit were always his characteristics. 114. That he installed eleven Mārutis in the valley of the Krishnā in the vale of Chāphala and lovingly worshipped Rāma. 115. In reference to his oratorical powers, he can only be compared to Jupiter. He was kindly disposed to every creature, and always indifferent to worldly things. 116. Such was the good fame that Keshavādās heard of Rāmdās. He, therefore, had an intense desire to meet him, and so said to himself: "When shall I ever meet a saint like him?"

( *Abhanga* of Keshava not translated )

117. Although he had this strong desire, his *bhaktas* would not let him go to visit Rāmdās. He was weak in body, so wrote a letter to Rāmdās, instead. 118. Keshava *Svāmī*, therefore, gave his command to one of his good Brahman disciples: "You understand that Rāmdās is in the region of the valley of the Krishnā in the vale of Chāphala. 119. Haste and give this letter to Samartha,

and in my stead make him a prostrate *namaskāra*". 120. Keshava *Svāmī* folded his letter, and addressed it. The disciple then said to his *svāmī* that he had no money with which to pay the expenses of the journey. 121. So the good *sadguru* kindly gave him a seer of rice. With that seer only, tied in his mantle, he started on his journey. 122. He regularly boiled this rice, which tasted as sweet as nectar, but the same amount of rice remained tied up in his mantle just as before. Such are the seemingly impossible events in the lives of the saints. 123. This Brahman, a *bhakta* of his *sadguru*, travelled along the road worshipping as he went along. He said to himself : "It will be a happy day when I meet the *svāmī*." 124. He had to travel for fifteen days before reaching the vale of Chāphala. Here he received the welcome news that Samartha was in that very place. 125. The Brahman was supremely happy. Said he : "My desire is fulfilled to-day." He therefore performed his bath, and then went to meet the *Svāmī*. 126. At that time Samartha was sitting in the temple of Shri Rāma. Around him were all his disciples. Just then the Brahman approached Rāmdās. 127. As soon as Samartha saw him, he stood up to receive him. "Where have you come from?" he asked. The man replied by giving him the letter he had brought. 128. Rāmdās took it, bowed his head to honour it, and then read it. I quote the letter in its *abhangā* form. Let the saints listen to it with reverence.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

129. As Rāmdās read the letter he felt very happy. Considering the letter as equivalent to a real visit, he bowed in reverence to it. 130. The Brahman then prostrated himself on the ground, adding : "This is my *svāmī*'s *namaskāra*." Samartha raised him up from the ground, and most lovingly embraced him. 131. The Brahman re-

mained there three days, and then asked leave to return. Samartha then gave him garments, and requested the king to give him some money. 132. When the King brought the money the Brahman replied: "I am afraid of thieves." So he wrote out a cheque and gave it to him. 133. Samartha then replied to the letter and said to the Brahman: "Convey my regards to your *guru*." The Brahman joined his hands palm to palm, and asked for the expense of the return journey. 134. "When my *guru* sent me to come here, and see you, he gave me a seer of rice. It lasted me until I came here. Such is the power of my *Siri guru*." 135. When Rāmdās heard this statement, he told Akābāl to give the Brahman sufficient uncooked food to last for a day. 136. So she gave him some wheat flour, dālu and rice, ghee, sugar and salt. Altogether it made a pound in weight. 137. The Brahman then bowed before Samartha, took leave of all, and started on his way. He returned to Baigānagara, and bowed to his *swāmī*. 138. As the Brahman related Rāmdās' manner of life, Keshava *Swāmī* felt great joy, and said to him: "While coming from there what did you eat? Tell me all in detail." 139. He replied: "The rice which you, *Swāmī*, gave lasted me until I reached there. For the return journey Rāmdās had me receive uncooked food sufficient for a day. 140. That lasted me until reaching here. Such is the glorious power of the saints." He took out the letter sent in reply, and the *Swāmī* bowed his head to it in reverence and read it.

( *Shloka not translated* )

141. As Keshava read this letter he was happy in heart, for they mutually understood one another's thoughts.

#### SHIVĀJĪ BUILDS A HOUSE FOR RĀMDĀS AT PARALI

Turning now to another event. 142. The king, taking his leave of Samartha, went at once to Parali, and

there started work on a palatial building. He said: "I shall donate this place to my *Swāmī*". 143. Rāmdās then went up the mountain of Parali and there remained. The uneven ground was levelled and the place was made an unusually beautiful one. 144. The houses were constructed with long verandahs. There were kitchens for the women cooks. To see that place gives satisfaction to the eyes of all. 145. The disciples brought back the food they went to beg for. Many Brahmans were dined. Daily there was the music of the *kirtanas*. In these *kirtanas* the sentiment of love was overwhelming. 146. There were many wild beasts, and monkeys in that vicinity, but they never disturbed anyone. This is most strange. 147. Monkeys gambolled over the temple of Shri Rāma day and night. All the people saw this, and the sight pleased their eyes.

#### A LEGENDARY PROPHETIC STORY

(The story, verses 148 to 177, not translated)

178. Some one with a doubt in his mind may say that the story is merely the words of a great poet. But good people should not say that. I have not told it without some foundation for it. 179. Great saints have appeared in our country. In their line of descent there have been wise *mahantas*. I have given attention to their statements. 180. Those who have listened to much, who are supremely wise, who have discarded wrong thinking and hatred, do not have doubts arising in their minds as they listen to the stories of the saints. 181. Wrong thinking seems to be the root of evil doing. Through holy deeds one's faith becomes confirmed. Whatever may be the fate of anyone, his thoughts appear in that direction. 182. Of course people may speak for or against one. Some praise and some revile, but those who appear to be of the same form as their *sadguru*, feel neither joy nor

pain. 183. The Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna], who abides on the bank of the Bhima river, is very fond of the stories of His saints which He, the lotus-eyed one, causes to be related by making me his instrument. 184. I am not a clever, expert poet. I have not the power that comes from a great mind. Makipati is the loved one of the saints and composes his plain verses.

185. *Susti*. this book is the *Shri Santarajya*. By the mere hearing of it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. May the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the nineteenth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XX

### STORIES IN MARATHI OF THE SAINTS ARE PRAISED

1. The *Shāstras* are founded on the Vedas. The *Purānas* are founded on, and in agreement with, the *Shāstras*. In the *kaliyuga* saints composed Marāthī versions founded on the *Purānas*. 2. I will tell you the reason of this. In the *kaliyuga* men are mentally inferior, deficient in intellect, and no one understands the meaning of Sanskrit. 3. One might listen to the *Purānas* from the lips of panditas, but no one has the money needed to give them. The rich maintain *Purāniks* of their own, but what can the others, poor people, do ? 4. Take for example the life-history of Krishna. By merely listening to it, one possesses the means of salvation. This is the arrangement made by Dvaipāyana, but people do not take it to heart. 5. Therefore, becoming an *avatāra*, in the form of a saint, he has lovingly composed Marāthī books. Innumerable dull and foolish minds have been saved by merely listening to them. 6. And when describing the lives of the saints it is done on the foundation of *abhangas*, just as when one attempts to look at the sun, he finds its light to be self-originated.

( The legendary story, 7 to 151, not translated )

152. In the next beautiful chapter, the Husband-of Rukmini [Krishna] is the one causing the story to be written. Mahipati through His blessing does the relating of the lives of the saints. 153. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shrī Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it, the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twentieth delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER XXI

### PARENTAL SERVICE THE HIGHEST FORM OF WORSHIP

1. If by good fortune anyone after passing through an infinite number of rebirths, finally is born with a human body, where is the specially worthy place where he may perform innumerable good deeds ? 2. I will tell you as I may be able, how the seeker after final salvation may obtain a direct revelation of God through the doing of good deeds. Let the audience listen with reverence. 3. One's mother and father are his principal deities. Such is the sure word of the Vedas. Their service is the right duty of a son. They should never be neglected. 4. He, who is a *bhakta* of his father's, possesses an accumulation of good deeds without number. All the sacred places come to see and worship him, and in coming all become purified from sin. 5. Think of Pundalika's good heart, how he served his mother and father. That service made God feel that He was his debtor, and so He came to his town. 6. Nārada said to Pundalika : "God Hari has come to meet you. Give him a seat." Pundalika threw a brick (for God to stand on) 7. Pundalika had gained this idea of parental worship, and that pleased the Lord-of-Heaven. And so the image of Pānduranga stands to-day on a brick with his feet parallel. 8. In the *kaliyuga* many have become *bhaktas*. They have through Pānduranga had a direct manifestation of God, and the dull and ignorant-minded are saved by merely the sight of Him.

### RĀMDĀS REVISITS PANDHARPUR

9. In the last chapter there was the story of king Jayatpāla. He persecuted Brahmins, so Vishnu had to become an *avatāra*. 10. Under the name of Mukundarāja the world-guru manifested Himself, and after preaching

to the king, he composed the book called *Vivekasindhu*, 11. to which after one listens, all doubts vanish from the mind. Listen now to what happened to the heavenly chorister by name of Malaya. 12. In order that he might be saved, a third birth took place. He became a Mahāra [Chokhāmelā] at the eternal city of Pandharpur. 13. Through the effect of his good deeds in a former birth, he fell in with a saint. As there were constant *kirtanas* in Pandharpur he was able to listen to them with pleasure. 14. In the month of Ashādha [July] and Kārtika, all the saints are to be met there. In order to gain a livelihood, he was accustomed to bring loads of wood fagots and sell them in the city. 15. Māruti became an *avatāra* in order to save him. He turned many men to worship, and thereby made his good deeds manifest.

16. Turning now to Rāmdās, he had installed images (of Rāma, Lakshmana and Sītā) in the Vale of Chāphala, by which he turned many to the worship of Rāma, and many came with love to see and worship Him. 17. Samartha was continually performing *kirtanas* in the presence of the God with feelings of love. By merely listening to them, the dull-minded were purified.

18. One day as all the disciples were sitting near him, he said: "Let us go at once to Pandhari." Following this remark, he immediately started. 19. All his disciples followed after him, joyfully worshipping him as they went along. 20. As people from town to town understood that Rāmdās was on his way to Pandhari, a great multitude of pilgrims joined him. Their joy was without limit. 21. There was the sound of cymbals and drums, and there was the sweet music of the *vīnās*. There were numbers of bands of singers carrying banners. These noble Vaishnavas made a gay appearance. 22. Wherever Samartha stopped for the night, there he performed a

Kirtana and listeners had rising in them worshipful feelings for Rāma joined with indifference to worldly things.

23. In the meantime King Shīvājī was hastening to the Vale-of-Chāphala desirous of meeting his swāmi. But Samartha was not to be seen there. 24. Bahinābāī had been placed in charge of the temple along with Annāppā Gosāvī. These told the king all that had happened. 25. They said : "Samartha has gone with all his followers to Pandharpur." Hearing this, the king was delighted and added : "I also must start on that pilgrimage." 26. Taking the necessary materials with him, the king started. Rāmdās was journeying ahead of him along with the saints and other good people. 27. On the tenth of the bright half of the month of Kārtika (November) Samartha arrived at Pandharpur. As his company saw from a distance the dome of Vithobā's temple, all were full of joy. 28. The saints embraced saints. They made one another namashikras. Every one lost personal pride. Such is the powerful influence of that sacred city. 29. They sang hymns of praise, and waved offerings towards the dome of the God's temple. Young and old walked barefoot, shouting aloud the names of God. 30. Thus on the tenth of the month, in festive procession, Rāmdās arrived at Pandhari. They bathed in the Chandrabhāgā river, and concluded the various customary and prescribed religious rites. 31. After worshipping Māruti, they went to worship at Pundalika's shrine. Then all the saints started to circumambulate the sacred city.

32. While the above was going on king Shīvājī, travelling rapidly, arrived. As he saw the world-guru he experienced joy of heart. 33. He worshipped Samartha, he greeted the saints, he furnished them with tents with side curtains, and all encamped on the sand of the river. 34. The number of pilgrims was very large, and all were shouting

"Victory, Victory!" Here and there was to be heard the music of the *kirtanas*. There was no limit to the joy that was felt. 35. After Samartha and his company had circumambulated the sacred city, they went to see and worship the God. The procession took with them the bands of singers carrying banners and the loud sound of the music was heard. 36. Accompanied by the cymbals and drum, Rāmdās sang in his loving way. I quote his *abhang* here in this chapter. Listen attentively to it, you pious ones.

( *Abhang* not translated )

37. Thus describing the glory of Pandhari, Rāmdās went to worship the God. He came to the great door of the temple, and there prostrated himself on the ground. 38. He lovingly worshipped Māruti, and talked privately with him. No one outside understood what they said, but good men infer from their own experiences. 39. Then they passed into the assembly hall, and there prostrated themselves on the ground. They bowed to the images of Jaya and Vijaya with loving feeling. 40. As they entered into an adjacent inner room they saw there the dark coloured image. Its eyes were directed to the tip of its nose, and its two hands gave beauty to its waist. 41. Its feet were parallel on a brick, the loved spot for all His *bhaktas*. As Rāmdās saw it, he lovingly embraced it. 42. That the deity of Pandhari is so simple-minded as to receive first an embrace and then the prostration on the ground perhaps raises a doubt in some minds, but listen to what really happens. 43. As the *bhakta* touches the God's feet, his consciousness of self entirely disappears, and God altogether forgets his own divinity. The idea of their unity seizes each of them. 44. Therefore, if one has the thought of a double nature of himself and God, he should first embrace the feet of God. If anyone has not this sense-

of duality between him and God taken away from him, how can he enjoy the peace that comes from love ? 45. Therefore it was that Rāmdās first embraced the feet of the image of Pānduranga, and then he placed his head lovingly on the lotus feet of the image. 46. God said to him : "My dear *bhakta*, the resting place of my life, I am sorry for you. You have become cruel." 47. Rāmdās replied : " My mind is always on Thy feet. Only my body wanders from place to place through the effect of Fate. 48. All the animate and inanimate things that my eyes see, they are but Thine own form, O Chakrapāni [ Krishna ]. There is not the least place in all the universe where Thy power is not displayed." 49. Hearing Rāmdās' words, the Life-of-the world'was pleased and replied to Rāmdās : "Over your good qualities one should wave the bitter nimba leaves and salt. 50. Knowledge, Indifference-to-worldly-things and the loving spirit of worship, are all of them in you. Therefore it is that I feel the desire of looking on the person of such a saint as you." 51. As the image of Pānduranga said this Rāmdās repeated an *abhangā* which I shall quote in this chapter, and let saints listen to it with reverence.

(1) O Vithobā, Thou art our family deity. We go not for refuge to any other.

(2) My heart is at Thy feet. In my heart is the desire to embrace Thy feet.

Chorus : "Hasten to help me, O mother Vithobā..  
Leap to my aid."

(3) My heart breaks with the desire to embrace Thee..  
I am unable to bear the sorrow of not embracing Thee.

(4) Now lift up Thy arms, and hasten to help me, O Vithobā.

(5) Rāmdās' pleads with pitiful voice. Stretch out Thine arms, and come to my help.

(6) My eyes are filled with tears, so anxious am I to embrace Thee.

52. Listening to Rāmdās' words, the God felt very deep love. Then stretching out His arms, He lovingly embraced him. 53. God delights in loving devotion. He cares for nothing more. God greatly loves to say : "I serve him ( a devoted *bhakta* ) with all my body."

54. Well, God Hari said to Rāmdās : "I always dwell in the temple of your heart. But I wish also to go and meet with the saints and *mahantas* at the eagle platform." 55. At this expressed wish of the Life-of-the-world, Rāmdās made a *namaskāra*. He then went around the temple keeping it to the right, and met Satyabhāmā [wife of Krishna]. 56. He also met with Lakshmi, Rādhā and Rukmini, the original *Māyā*, and his family deity. As he worshipped her he felt great joy. 57. He then came to the eagle platform, and there he saw to his surprise all the saints. Those who had conquered the six enemies of the soul, and were Vaishnavas, who had a direct manifestation of God. 58. If you should ask who they were, listen to their names, for merely by listening to their names, one's sins are burned away. 59. There was Rangasvāmi, the noble Vaishnava, his brother Ātyā-Jayarāma Gosāvī of Vadagāva. These had a direct manifestation of God. 60. Then there was the *bhakta* Bodhalā of Dhāmanagāva. He was always a God-loving man, and indifferent to worldly things. Tukārāma was there performing a *kirtana*, and he sat listening to him. 61. Moreover there were many more Vaishnava *bhaktas* there, but to what extent shall I record them on this page ? Sufficient to say the pilgrims were without limit in number, and shouting aloud, "Victory, Victory !" 62. As the saints saw Samartha, they all arose to welcome him. They fell at one another's feet, and stretching out

their arms embraced one another. 63. Tukārām was standing while performing his *kirtana*, and his eye caught sight of Rāmdās. He at once prostrated himself on the ground before him, his mind unable to contain its joy. 64. While Tukārām performed his *kirtana* Samurtha sat listening. King Shivājī also with all his ministers came to listen. 65. The king Shivājī with sincere feelings made a *namaskāra* to all the assembled saints. He was very fond of *kirtanas*, and so sat attentively listening. 66. Standing behind Tukārām were fourteen noble Vaishnavas. With the accompaniment of cymbals and drums they sang with the enthusiasm of love. 67. They shouted out the name of Vitthala. They clapped their hands to the cries of "Victory! Victory!!" That crowd of saints was full of joy. The sound (of the shouts and music) echoed through vast space. 68. Through the sentiment of love in the words of the *kirtana*, Tukārām's heart became full of joy. He sang words of blessing. Listen attentively to them, you pious folk.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

69. The noble Vaishnavas were highly pleased with these blessed words of Tukārām, and applauded him with cries of "Victory! Victory!" The enthusiasm was intense. 70. The sky echoed with the loud noise of the cymbals and drums. It was the tenth day of Kārtika (November). The sun was now setting. 71. So lighting the lights, they waved them over the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna]. Sweetmeats were then distributed to all the seated saints. 72. Rāmdās with his fine appearance sat in the midst of the assembled crowd of saints. He remarked: "I have enjoyed to-day this *kirtana* performance. My heart feels a sense of satisfaction." 73. After making this remark, Samurtha repeated a *shlōka*. The sentiment of this *shlōka* should be deeply contemplated. It contains the emotion of love.

( Verses not translated )

74. "So many are God's different names, (and saints enjoy them as so many dainty dishes). The dining saints partake of the names of God (Hari). Their belching gives evidence of their satisfaction, but their desire for more is not fully met. 75. With our mouths we eat perishable food, and it passes out through the fundament. But when the name of God is taken in through the ear it never even to eternity passes out of it. 76. If one eats too much it results in constipation or cholera. But he who drinks the nectar of God's name, he easily becomes immortal."

77. All the saints now went to circumambulate the city, and the whole city resounded with the loud noise of those who were singing. 78. The next day, which was the eleventh of the fortnight, was a day of great rejoicing to the Vaishnavas. At night *kirtanas* were performed on the sandy bed of the river, started by Rāmdās. 79. They had erected a pavilion behind the shrine of Pundalika, and in it saints, *muktas*, and Brahmans with kindly feelings towards one another, sat down to listen with loving thoughts. 80. Hera Samartha repeated many *abhangas*. I will quote one of them, which is proved true by experience. Listen, all of you pious ones.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

81. Thus the noble Vaishnava minutely described the glory of *bhakti*. The performance continued for the four watches of the night, accompanied with the loud shouts of God's names. 82. When in the East the sun arose, they waved the wave offering around the Husband-of Rukmini (Krishna), and distributed sweetmeats to all. All then went back to their respective places.

83. But Samartha after bathing went at once to the temple, when lo! at that very moment the king arrived

with the materials for a special performance of worship.

84. The God was bathed with the five-nectars, and anointed, while mantras were repeated. The God was dressed in a yellow raiment, the sight of which brought joy to the eye. 85. A beautiful turban woven with golden thread was wound around His head, with ornaments set with jewels. Around His neck was hung a garland of pearls, which by its brilliancy seemed of limitless lustre. 86. On His neck was the brilliant *kusubha* jewel. He wore a costly brown shawl, which made the dark-complexioned one look very elegant. A garland of flowers adorned His neck. 87. Rāmdās offered Him incense, lights, camphor and platters of light, and an offering of cooked food. Brahmans loudly intoned mantras, and Samartha offered him handfuls of flowers. 88. After worshipping Him in this way, Brahmans were feasted, and many kinds of divinest food were served to the twice-born (Brahmans). 89. After the twice-born had eaten, all were given *pānsupāri* and favours of money. Then after the Brahmans had given the *mantra*-dedicated rice, they returned to their respective places. 90. Then all, including Ākābul and Venubāl, and all the king's retinue, dined together. At the third watch of the day they began the reading of the *Purūnas*. 91. Samartha sat on his mat, and all the saints and *mahantas* gathered around him. But on that occasion Ākābul read from the *Dūsabodha*.

#### RĀMDĀS EXPLAINS A CHAPTER IN THE *Dūsabodha*

92. A special event took place previous to these happenings. Listen to the interesting story. Formerly a disciple of Rāmdās came to Pandhari. 93. He remained many days there, gaining his food by bogging in the city. He daily read the *Dūsabodha*. 94. He used to sit on the eagle-platform, and read it respectfully. He used to explain

the meaning to the pious, God-loving listeners. 95. Once some Panditas, learned in the Vedas and Shastras, and Brahmans came, and sat there. They said to him: "What is this book you are reading?" He then told them in detail. 96. Then with their minds quieted, they listened for a few hours. Suddenly the passage in the book occurred where it speaks in detail of the fourteen kinds of *Brahmas*. 97. The Panditas denounced the statements, and declared that the book was in modern Marāthī, and without any authority. Such was their denunciation. 98. The news of this denunciation reached Samartha. It was after that, that taking all his disciples along with him, he had come on this pilgrimage. 99. Now turning again to above story. While Ākābāī was reading the *Dāsabodha*, some saints and other good men came to listen. Listen to their names. 100. Nimbarājbāvā of Daithana, Jayarāma Gosāvī the noble Vaishnava, Shekh Muhammad a most learned man, grasped the inner meanings of the teachings. 101. Rangasvāmī of Nigadī, who was a mine of *bhakti* and knowledge, and the great *bhakta*, Tukārām, who was the *avatāra* of Nāmadeva. 102. There were many other saints and *mahantas*, but to what extent shall I give their names? These pilgrims came, and sat there more than filling the pavilion. 103. Just then the Brahmans of the highest rank in the sacred city, Vedics, Panditas, and other Twice-born (Brahmans), hearing the news of Rāmdās' arrival, came to the place in a body. 104. They said: "Rāmdās has composed this recent book called the *Dāsabodha*. In order that it may be widely known, he is giving public readings from it himself. 105. The ancient saints have already prepared a feast for our minds in their Sanskrit and Marāthī books. These he has cast aside, and proclaims amongst men his own private opinions. 106. Formerly there was a disciple of his living here. When we expressed our doubts to him, he was unable to answer us. 107. Now

Ramdās, his *guru*, happens to have come here to this sacred city. Now let us ask him about his doctrine of the fourteen *Brahmas*." 108. With this idea in mind, the Brahman inhabitants of the sacred city, came to the temple. Samartha stood up to greet them, and seated them with great honour. 109. It happened that just then Akabai was reading from the book, and also explaining in detail the meaning of the words and the teachings of the book. The Brahmins who had doubts about what was written put forward some questions 110 They said "Your disciple once read your book to us here. We ask you to read that chapter in which the fourteen *Brahmas* are mentioned." 111 As they were thus speaking, Akabai, who was an expert scholar of the book, turned to the seventh division [*Dashaka*], and at once began to read it aloud 112. The pandits with their doubts turned to Samartha for an answer to their questions "You say in this passage that there are fourteen *Brahmas* 113 What scriptural authority have you for this? In what *Purāṇa* or Epic do you find its history? Tell us and remove our serious doubts" 114 Thus requested by the pandits, Ramdās replied: "Know how trees can sprout without originating from a seed on the earth. 115 Just as the Vedas have originated from the syllable *Om* and then were proclaimed from the lips of Brahmadeva, as rays of light spread out from the sun, giving light to all the world, 116 as space has originated from nothing; as air has originated from space, and from air the intense light of the six fires, 117 as water has originated from fire, and from water the earth, as by the union of earth and water all grains sprout, 118. as from grain semen is developed, and from semen all living creatures, so, Marathi books are not created without scriptural authority" 119 Listening to Samartha's reply, the pandits raised the question. 'Tell us then in what Scrip-

ture the fourteen *Brahmas* are described? 120. In replying merely by illustrations our doubts are not satisfied." Just as they were speaking thus, a very remarkable event took place.

### AN IGNORANT OUT-CASTE REMOVES BRAHMANS' DOUBTS

121. The third birth of the divine chorister Malaya had taken place in the sacred city of Pandhari. His body was that of an out-caste, because of Nārada's curse.

122. Carrying a heavy load of firewood, he went from tent to tent (for sale). Just then Samartha's eye rested on him.

123. He then said to Kalyāna: "See that man over there with a load of firewood. Call him here. I have some business with him."

124. "I will do so," he said, and brought the nameless [out-caste] to Rāmdās. He placed his load on the ground, and stood with his hands joined palm to palm.

125. As the nameless thus stood before him with joined hands, Samartha questioned him: "Of what caste are you? Tell us at once."

126. He replied: "I am an [*anāmika*]. From the standpoint of multiplicity of names, I am nameless. From the standpoint of multiplicity I am the one intelligence, therefore I am called the Nameless."

127. That this man of the lowest caste should answer thus, surprised the listening audience. The pandits said to one another: "Those words of his belong to the Vedantic doctrines."

128. Samartha then said to Kalyāna: "Draw a line around him." Kalyāna took a small stick in his hand, and drew a line.

129. Samartha now said to the Nameless: "Come outside of the circular line, and have no doubts in your mind."

In the meantime the people wondered what this meant.

130. In response to Samartha's request the out-caste passed outside the encircling line. Now another line was drawn around him, at which his body changed.

131. Samartha asked him, "Who are you?" He replied: "I am

*Auindha* (Unpierced). I have not been pierced by Ignorance and, therefore, am perfect knowledge. 132. He who is pierced, he is one bound, and caught in the net of *Maya*." As the people listened to his assertions, they all wondered. 133. Rāmdās now asked him : "In your scriptures, which are the fourteen *Brahmas*? Tell us at once." 134. He replied : "Sir, it is perfectly true. Samartha speaks the truth. According to our scriptures there are fourteen saints and prophets." 135. As the pandits listened to the man, they were confounded. They stared at one another and all were dumbfounded. 136. Rāmdās again called him near, and made another similar line around him : Suddenly his body seemed to change, to the wonder of those looking on. 137. Again Rāmdās questioned him : "Tell us who you are." Thus requested by Samartha, he replied : 138. "I am a Shūdra, but no inferiority is seen in me, for I am the all-pervading intelligence. I am of its very form." 139. Again Rāmdās called him forward, and made another circle around him. Then questioned him again : "Of what caste are you ?" 140. He replied : "I am a Vaishya. My eye takes in the Superior and Inferior. Pride has brought trouble to every one, so I have driven it away from me altogether." 141. At this answer the *Purānikas*, Pandits and Brahmans all stared at one another. The power to express their knowledge in words failed them, and silence fell on all. 142. To see this strange happening a large crowd had assembled. They remarked : "This Rāmdās is a portion of God, so we think."

143. Samartha now said to the Vaishya : "Come two steps nearer me," and around him he drew a circle. 144. Rāmdās again questioned him : "Tell us who you are." He replied : "I am a Kshatriya, because I am spoken of as the supreme soul. 145. Everything is perishable, but I am imperishable as is evident from the present occasion.

This Pandharpur is a wholly sacred city (*kshetra*) and God Vithobā is the Knower of this sacred city (*kshetradnya*).” 146. Again Rāmdās called him nearer and he came very close to him. A circle was drawn around him, and he was asked: “Who are you?” 147. He answered: “I am a knowing Brahman ( a knower of *Brahma* ), therefore I am in reality a Brahman. Your minds question the truth of the fourteen *Brahmas*, but listen to my description of them.” 148. He spoke these words of wisdom, and his features shone with light. The twelve clay marks of the *tilaka* and the sacred thread adorned him. 149. As the evil-minded saw his features, they remained silent. The God-loving saints rejoiced; for they had no thought of hatred or dissatisfaction. 150. The Brahman then from his own lips repeated two Sānskrit *shlokas*, giving a list of the fourteen *Brahmas*. Listen, all of you!

( *Shlokas* not translated )

151. Thus by meeting with Samartha, the Nameless (out-caste) became a Brahman and with his own lips repeated the list of fourteen *Brahmas*. 152. As the pandits listened, they lost their pride, and the saints and God-loving *bhaktas* were full of joy. 153. Rāmdās then said to him: “Who were you formerly? Tell us in detail. It will remove the doubts of every one.” 154. The Brahman replied: “I was a heavenly chorister Malaya who lived in Heaven. One day I drank an intoxicating liquor and amused myself in a pond of water. 155. Accompanied by women and unclad, I gave myself up to sensual pleasures. The *Muni Nārada* saw me thus. 156. He immediately visited on me the curse that I must endure three low births. I remember all that now in this unusual recitation of my former life. 157. At first I became a horse at the place of king Jayatpāla. I escaped from that physical form by my sight of Mukundarāja. 158. Then

at Paithana my second birth was into a form of a male buffalo. At the house of a Brahman I was employed continually in carrying leather bags of water on my back. 159. Dnyānadeva the World-guru happened to come there. He had been excommunicated by the Brahmans. He caused me to repeat the Vedas to the great astonishment of the Twice-born. 160. When Dnyānadeva started to return to Ālandī he took me along with him. When he reached the forest of Āle, I the buffalo, passed into the other world. 161. Dnyānadeva built a tomb for me there, and a temple in my honour. And he told me even of the one remaining birth which I had to take. 162. Namely the prophecy, 'You will of a surety be born as a Mahār in the sacred city of Pandhari. There Rāmdās will save you.' That fact without effort on my part has taken place today."

( *Abhangas not translated* )

163. While Samartha was thus giving him his blessing, suddenly his head broke, and the divine person within him came out of him, and started upward on his way to Heaven. 164. Seeing this miracle, the pandits lost all pride. They praised Rāmdās, saying : "Saints are truly God in visible form." 165. Thus speaking to one another, they began to make a prostrate *namaskāra* to Samartha, but the *śūmi* took them by the hand before they prostrated. 166. Said he to them: "You are powerful Brahmans, worthy of worship by the Great Vishnu Himself who is still adorned by the Shri *vatsa* mark over his heart. 167. That this heavenly chorister was saved was through the power of your favour." The Brahmans then took leave of Samartha, and went to their several homes. 168. As they walked along the streets, the Brahmans said to one another: "We wonder how it happened that we saw this seemingly impossible miracle? 169. In Ambā-Jogāl Mukundarāja came, and instructed king Jayatpāla. We have heard of

the saving of the horse at that time. 170. Dnyānadeva really did make the buffalo repeat the Vedas, so we hear it told in *kirtanas*. The evidence of that fact we have before us today. 171. In the *Dāsabodha* Samartha speaks of fourteen *Brahmas*, and that now seems to us to be true." Thus they conversed with one another. 172. Still the pandits wondered about the three rebirths, but of Rāmdās they said : "He is a man of perfect goodness. There is no other man like him."

173. In the next chapter, written with the authority of the saints, is an interesting story. Mahipati through the boon of their blessing writes the account in this book.

174. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, wise saints listen. This is the twenty-first delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XXII

### MAHIPATI'S HUMILITY OF SPIRIT

1. Victory to Thee, Merciful-to-the-lowly, Lord-of-Pandhari. Thou Thyself art the relator of these stories of the saints. I am truly a dullard, unable to describe their deeds. 2. Thou art fond of the stories of the saints, so I happen to come definitely to know. But by putting me forward as an instrument of Thine, Thou hast fulfilled the needs of many. 3. O God Supreme, even Brahma and the other gods cannot comprehend Thy wonderful deeds. Amongst them who am I, a mere man? Thou alone canst comprehend Thine own feelings of love. 4. In every way my heart bears witness that I am a dullard, but the cords (that move me) are in Thy hand. I am unable to fathom the descriptions of Thy seemingly impossible deeds.

### RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO CHĀPHALA

5. In the last chapter there was related a wonderful story of how the Vaishnava *bhakta* went to Pandhari, and there performed an extraordinary act in which he saved the heavenly chorister Malaya. 6. Also how King Shivāji hastened to Rāmdās and made him a prostrate *namaskāra*, and how the *bhaktas* shouted cries of "Victory Victory" as they saw the extraordinary deed. 7. All the people of Pandhari remarked to one another: "Blessed is the *bhakti* of Rāmdās. He is indeed the visible *avatāra* of Māruti. He has performed an act seemingly impossible." 8. All the saints, therefore, came to listen to him such as seekers-after-deliverance, those indifferent-to-worldly-things, and those abounding-in-wisdom. Samartha daily performed *kirtanas*. At these *kirtanas* the enthusiasm of

their love was great. 9. During these *kirtanas* of Rāmdās Māruti came to him in secret unseen, and danced in varying steps, for he could not hold back his love. 10. Soon the day of the full moon came, and Nimbarāja performed the *Gopālakālā*. Multitudes of the saints assembled to witness it, and the festival was completed in that way.

11. After the first day of the dark half all the pilgrims started to return. There was a great crowd at the great door of the temple, for in every heart there was love. 12. When it was night Rāmdās came into the temple alone, and lovingly embraced the God. He then asked leave of the God to return. 13. Rāmdās placed his head on the God's feet, and said: "I am going now back to the valley of the fishnā. Continue Thy love of me, O Shri Hari." 14. Thus speaking, the God-loving *bhakta*'s eyes filled with tears. The dark-complexioned-one [Krishna] caressed him with his hands, and said: "I am with you always." 15. Rāmdās firmly fixed in his mind the form of the image, and taking leave at once, he went to meet with Māruti and then came to the sand-bed. 16. Here he bathed, worshipped and dined. Then together with the king the procession started. The *svāmī* was seated in a canopied seat upon an elephant. The king himself waved the fly-whisk. 17. Wherever the procession lodged for the night, there Rāmdās performed a *kīrtana*. Finally Samartha reached the Vale of Chāphala, and there met with Shri Rāma.

18. On the next day Rāmdās gave a feast on account of the festival to the Brāhmans. The king, taking leave of Rāmdās, returned to his palace. 19. Rāmdās remained many days in the Vale of Chāphala, daily performing *kirtanas*, and giving readings from the *Dāsabodha*. 20. Discussions took place regarding truth and error. Seekers-after-final-deliverance received a direct experience of it.

## THE VISIT OF JAYARĀMA GOSĀVĪ

At this juncture Jayarāma Gosāvī of Vadagāva arrived to visit Rāmdās. 21. The two made a *namaskāra* to one another. Samartha seated him with honour and reverence. The king lovingly waved the fly-whisk himself over Rāmdās. 22. Jayarāma Svāmī then made a request. He said: "I am intending to celebrate the birth of Krishna [ *Jannāshṭami* ] at my house. I invite you to come with all your followers. This is the desire of my heart." 23. Rāmdās replied: "In what way are you going to celebrate the festival? Tell me also about the order you follow." 24. Jayarāma then explained: "On the first day of the fortnight there will be the installation of the image of Shri Krishna in the pavilion. For nine days a feast will be given to Brahmans. At night, daily *kirtanas* will be performed. 25. On the tenth of the fortnight there will be celebrated the *Gopālakālā* (Krishna's deeds dramatized). These dramatic representations will take place during the night." 26. Samarthā replied: "Your plan is most excellent, but I have a special wish in connection with the journey there. If you will have a chariot (for the God) made, I shall come to you." Jayarāma replied: "The building of a chariot cannot be done in haste. 27. And the days of the celebration are now very near. How can one prepare a chariot so quickly?" Samarthā assured him that he need not worry over the matter. 28. "I will build a very large chariot, and come with all my followers. You will have very much to do at the *matha* [ temple and parish house ]; so hasten back." 29. Hearing these words, Jayarāma was full of joy. He took leave of all and departed.

## RĀMDĀS' VISIT TO VADAGĀVA

30. Rāmdās now sent some men into the forest, and had them bring some *bamboos* to make the chariot. 31. Through his clever skill Samarthā made a chriot of these

bamboos. It had seven divisions, it was high, and well made. On the top he placed a little dome. 32. Over this carriage were placed costly draperies, and flags of the seven rainbow colours. To look at it gave joy to the eye. 33. Samartha began that day to build the chariot, and on the third day it was finished. It was indeed not by human skill, and all were astonished at it.

34. The king begged of his *sadguru* that he might accompany him to the celebration. Taking with them a great supply of the materials that would be necessary, the whole multitude started on the journey. 35. There were great numbers of bands of singers carrying banners. In front of the procession musicians played loud music. Samartha rode on an elephant, with the king waving the fly-whisk. 36. As they approached Vadagāva Jayarāma Svāmī felt great joy. He brought along with him a crowd of citizens, and lovingly welcomed their guests. 37. As soon as they saw Samartha, they prostrated themselves on the ground. They hung garlands of flowers around his neck, and made dark coloured marks on his forehead.

38. In such eclat they brought Samartha and his followers to their lodging places. Every one was happy over the coming, and there were loud cries of "Victory, Victory." 39. Samartha performed his bath, and then went to see and worship the God. Seeing the temple, he was much pleased. 40. Various kinds of dainty food had been prepared. Daily there were feasts given to Brāhmans. Hari-*kīrtanas* were held at night, and all listened with love. 41 Rangobā Gosāvī of Nājhare and the great *bhakta* Vāmansvāmī were daily performing enthusiastic *kīrtanas*. Other noble Vaishnavas also performed *kīrtanas*. 42. Rāmdās listened to these *kīrtanas* with reverence, whether performed by common or distinguished men. He looked with an impartial eye. He had put aside the evil

feelings of pride. 43. The clever disciples of Jayarāma-Svāmi wrestled with their tasks day and night. The festival made *bhakti* prominent. It lacked nothing whatever. 44. Then on the eighth day, the birthday of Krishna, Rāmdās took the stand as leader of the *kīrtana*. He repeated an *abhangā* that aroused the nine emotions. In it he related the story of Krishna. 45. The words of saints are blessed. Who can count their number? But I will herein in this book quote a few. Listen to them, you pious folk.

(*Abhangas* not translated)

46. The audience was thrilled by the *kīrtana* of Samartha. The heart of every one became as it were Krishna Himself. All forgot the illusions of this worldly life. 47. Rāmdās spoke in verse and prose. He used the *shloka* metre, in eight verse divisions. He sang a brief history of Krishna, but there was no limit to his expression of love. 48. On the eighth and ninth of the month, Rāmdās performed his *kīrtana*. Then the happy day arrived for the celebration of it, *Gopālakālā*, or the tenth day. 49. There was a great celebration that day. People came from distant places in crowds. There were groups of men carrying numerous banners, shouting aloud the name of God with cries of "Victory, Victory." 50. Jayarāma Svāmi then began the *Gopālakālā* (deeds of Krishna dramatized). The multitude of the saints sat to witness it, and there was no limit to their delight. 51. When Shri Krishna was an *amatāra* he played many games. All these were now reacted with gestures and motions, to see which stirred to overflowing the passion of love. 52. The games of *hamāmā*, *humbarī*, and *lapandāvī* were played. The cowherds were represented as dragging Krishna by his feet. The churning by Yashodā was acted, and her feelings were represented. 53. The part of Krishna's stealing milk was acted, and the complaints made to Yashodā,

All these acts were dramatically represented by these servants of Krishna. 54. There were also acted the standing of Krishna on the shoulders of the cowherds, and his piercing a hole in the milk jar, and causing a stream of milk to flow, which the cowherds sipped as it flowed down their elbows. 55. There were acted the many games Krishna played with the cowherdesses, *phugadī* and *pingā*. All the saints joined in these dances. 56. While the *gopālakālā* was enacted, favours were distributed to all. The multitude of the saints rejoiced, and there was no limit to their joy. 57. As Rāmdās noticed this wonderful exhibition of joy, he repeated a *shloka* which contained unusual expressions of love. Listen all of you, pious folk.

(*Shloka* not translated )

( *Abhangas* of Jayarāma not translated )

58. Such were the blessed *abhangas* that Jayarāma repeated. One of these I have quoted above in this chapter that you may realize the joy of his love of God.

59 Well, after the *Gopālakālā* was celebrated, Rāmdās had the chariot brought, which when the people saw they were overwhelmed with astonishment. As they looked, its dazzling brightness made them close their eyes. 60. As the rays of the sun fell upon it, the pinnacle of the canopy flashed a beautiful light. As the chariot moved along, the bells on the top tinkled loudly. 61. People remarked : " We have never seen a sight like this. Blessed is the mind of Rāmdās. Certainly no one has a mind his equal."

62. They saw the bamboo chariot, but it was one that could never be broken. In height it was made with seven divisions and riding in it was a crowd of people. 63. They brought the idol for the procession and placed it in the chariot after worshipping it. The God's *pādukās* [bas-relief foot-impressions] were placed in front, and the

worshippers waved over it the fly-whisks. 64. The gathered crowd shouted cries of "Victory Victory," as they drew the chariot to the music of innumerable instruments. 65. The Haridāses sang in love and reverence with their sweet voices, to the accompaniment of cymbals, *vīṇā*, and drums. Great quantities of fragrant powders were thrown up into the air. 66. The sky was filled to overflowing by the sound of the drums. The *bhakta*s shouted : "Victory, Victory." There was no limit to their joy. 67. People saw, to their delight, the results of association with the good. In it they saw their worldly life reaching its true value, and their eyes experienced a sense of peace. 68. The crowd of people was dense. No one could find a way through them, so that many had to climb up to the upper stories of buildings and on roofs, from whence they could view the scene. 69. Thus marching in gay procession, the chariot was brought near the temple of Māruti. Here Samartha worshipped Māruti, with all his customary methods. 70. Every one sang hymns of praise, and then returned to the temple of Hari [Vishnu], and there the great *bhakta* [Rāmdās] stood before the image of Krishna on His throne. 71. A garland of fresh flowers was placed around His neck. Vast quantities of fragrant powders were thrown up into the air. Incense was burned before Him, and many lights were waved before Him. 72. The Vaishnavas, shouting aloud the names of God, danced before the chief door of the temple. They sang many hymns of praise. Their hearts could not contain their joy. 73. When night came they conducted a dramatic performance, which was very well acted. They then placed the image of Krishna on a bed, and distributed favours to all present. 74. When it was morning the visiting saints were highly honoured. The assembled crowd of people finally broke up, but they were unable to bear the sorrow of separation from the God.

## RĀMDĀS RETURNS TO CHĀPHALĀ

75. Unperceived by anyone, Samartha immediately left, and the king, along with the crowd of Rāmdās' followers, followed on behind. 76. When all the company of his disciples arrived at the Vale of Chāphala, they saw Samartha in the temple of Rāma. 77. Along with the king all made Rāmdās a *namaskāra*. Such was this *sadguru* of perfect generosity, in his efforts to save the world. 78. There are some learned men who say they perfectly understand (the great sentence): "I am Brahma;" and then neglect the worship of God in his image form. They are not at all saved, because of their pride of knowledge. 79. But the knowledge of Rāmdās was without a fault. It was united with worshipful feelings, and indifference-to-worldly-things. But he had a deep love for the idol as a visible representation of God, and so festivals in His honour were performed with love. 80. Those who, with claim of knowledge, have no confidence in these visible representations of God, God will show them that they have been deceived. They lose both this life and the life to come. 81. Rāmdās was a world-guru. He was like the immovable Mount Meru in his indifference to worldly things. He was a mine of *bhakti*, and of indifference to worldly things. Men were saved by merely a sight of him.

82. As stated above, Samartha had come to the Vale of Chāphala without telling anyone, and later all his followers arrived accompanied by the king. 83. They had found Samartha in the temple of Rāma, seated and in the act of worship, pleading with Rāma in tender words that manifested his love.

84. As soon as Rāmdās gave him leave, the king left for his capital. And Rāmdās went up into a mountain, and his disciples followed after him. 85. The rule was to go to beg food in one village only. Ākābāī cooked the

meal, and Samartha partook of it. 86. Great numbers of people came to visit him, but he allowed no one of them to remain there. Only five of his disciples remained with him on the mountain.

#### AN APPETITE FOR SWEET CUSTARD

87. One day Samartha said to Ākābāī: "I have a longing for some sweet custard. So hasten and prepare some." 88. Ākābāī at once placed a large quantity of milk on the fireplace. She put into it a handful of rice. Then letting it thicken through boiling it down, she made a most tasty custard. 89. She served it on Samartha's leaf-plate, and added to it melted butter and sugar. Samartha ate it with his fingers. His belching indicated his satisfaction. 90. But he still demanded more of the sweet custard. And Ākābāī brought more, and served it on his plate. He now forced himself to eat it, although it had become distasteful to him. 91. The mouthfuls he took came back into his mouth, but by force he swallowed them. Every one was astonished to see him act thus and exclaimed: "Samartha, what is this you are doing?" 92. Ākābāī said to him: "What does all this mean?" Samartha's answer was: "I still have a longing for that custard. Bring me some more." 93. She brought more and served it. By force he swallowd a few more mouthfuls, and then profusely vomited. By this time he had destroyed his longing for sweet custard. 94. Now said he (to his stomach): "You asked for things sweet, and now why are you sorry for having eaten them? It is through you that this my body keeps in health, but failure to do right are injurious to the bodily organs. 95. If you still have further longing, come again and ask for some more." Just then Ākābāī came and spread some ashes over the vomit. 96. Then Rāmdās composed an *abhangā* in which he censured his heart. I have quoted it here in

this chapter in order to help the seeker-after-final-deliverance on his way.

( *Abhangā* not translated ).

97. After Samartha had repeated this *abhangā* he washed out his mouth, bathed, and took of the mouth-cleanser.

98. Kalyāna Gosāvī was standing close to Rāmdās with his hands joined palm to palm. Ākābāī then said : "What a strange disagreeable act on your part!"

99. Rāmdās replied : "There are five things that one is fond of. Their names are : sound, sense of touch, taste, sight and smell. 100. People regard the enjoyment of these as happiness, but in the end they mean sorrow. People give themselves to sensual things until they are wearied by them. At the end they experience the pains of hell. 101. Deer are more fond of the sensation of sound than they are of their lives. And so, seduced by it they stop and listen, and the hunter is able to shoot them with his arrow. 102. Elephants are lured and entrapped through their fondness for female touch. The moth is fond of lustre, and gets burnt in the fire. 103. The fish loves to taste and when it swallows the bait, it feels happy, but as the fisherman jerks the line, there is no way in which it can escape death. 104. The bumble bee takes in fragrance, as enamoured by the honey in the lotus. But when the sun sets ( and the lotus closes ) it gets caught in the flower. 105. Each person has some special longing for something; and they have the same ending as in the illustrations above. So that the human body, with its five senses, has no good end to look forward to. 106. But the sense of taste is the most wicked of all, for by it the other organs of sense are fattened. So those who are wise, and noble minded, seek wholly to conquer their sense of taste. 107. Those who have not destroyed this long-

ing of the sense of taste, they want things that are sweet. Thus they have become *sanyāsis* in vain, and even *gurus* have thus destroyed themselves. 108. At the time of death the organs of sense are exhausted, and the man can eat nothing at all, but still the sense of taste demands food. Thus there is no escape from rebirths. 109. It was for the above reason that I ate to excess and then vomited, and so now I cannot even bear the sight of sweet custard. My stomach rebels at the very thought of it." 110. As a response to these words of Samartha the company of disciples made him a *namaskāra*. Then all of them conquered their sense of taste, and discarded everything that was especially sweet. 111. For the sake of satisfying their hunger they ate whatever they happened to get. For one seeking for final-deliverance unhindered, the easy way is by destroying the sense of longing for things.

#### ANOTHER CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF RĀMA

112. In the above manner Rāmdās by example taught those who were seekers-after-final-deliverance. The month of Chaitra [April] now arrived, and the saints began to assemble for the celebration of the birth of Rāma [*Rūmanavamī*]. 113. Men entitled to remuneration for their respective annual services came in good time, and at the door of the pavilion of Shri Rāma lively music was played. 114. There was also the loud noise of the drums and other instruments the sounds of which more than filled the air. A very great crowd assembled, shouting the names of God with cries of "Victory, Victory." 115. Whoever was appointed to perform a *kirtana* for the day he did so, and most delightfully. Nine days passed in this way. Kalyāna Gosāvī was appointed for the final dramatic plays. 116. A great crowd of saints, *māhantas*, and noble *Vaishnavas* came to the celebration. Listen with reverence to the names of those who were chief and

the most distinguished. 117. There was Rangobā of Nājhare, the noble *Vaishnava*, Jayarāma *svāmī*. The great-*bhakta* Vāmana *svāmī*, who in this Kaliyuga was the *avatāra* of Vyāsa. 118. There was the *Vaishnava bhakta*-Tukārāma, the supreme *avatāra* of Nāmdeva. His love of God was limitless, and by that love God-supreme was made subservient to him. 119. All these came to the celebration with the highest expectations. The saints have no idea of disappointments, for they possess indifference to results. 120 A great crowd of Brahmans assembled. Enthusiastic *kirtanas* were daily held. Various dishes were prepared for the lunch hours. Listen to the list of them with reverence:—121. *puri* and *kodboli*, fried cakes always ready in the frying pan, and roasted corn. These were served on the leaf-plates, but did not agree with the Brahmans. 122. To eat greasy food in the hot season was injurious to many, so that they exclaimed: “We have lost our voices. We are not able now to sing.”

123. While saints and *sādhus* were performing the *kirtanas* Samartha listened from a distance. He climbed up a banyan tree, and sat where no one could see him. 124. At the back of the image of Māruti there was an enormous image of Ganapati, and there this banyan tree grew on which Rāmdās sat listening intently. 125. Below him many went back and forth, but he himself was entirely unseen. Under this tree the uninvited twice-born guests sat and talked among themselves. 126. They said: “We have here a mighty celebration performed by a great person. There is a full supply of the stories of God (Hari), but the lunches are always of greasy food, and the cause of sickness.” 127. Another remarked: “In the hot season, such greasy food smells of smoke, and we feel as though it would be injurious to our eyes.” 128. A third remarked: “Without curry and dal one’s dinner

has no value. One cannot fill one's stomach on this light stuff. I wonder when our fasting will be over." 129. While this discussion was going on Samartha was listening from above. He kept in his mind the thoughts suggested by the conversation. Leaving that place he went up into a mountain. 130. He sat on the mountain top for a few hours, and then returned to take his part in the *kirtanas*. He repeated a blessed *abhangā*. Listen to it with reverence, you pious folk.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

131. *Sādhus* and saints were well pleased by those words of Samartha's. After half the night had gone the *kirtana* came to an end. 132. Then the lights for the wave offering were lighted, and Shri Rāma was waved over. The *Vaishnavas* danced accompanied with shouts of "Victory, Victory." Then came the distribution of sweets.

133. As soon as the sun arose Samartha called those on duty, and said to them : " What sort of food have you been preparing ? Shri Rāma is not satisfied with it. 134. For five days you have been furnishing light food of a greasy character. The Brahmins are dissatisfied with it. From now on do not do so. 135. Shri Rāma became an *avatāru* in order to make Brahmins happy. Therefore, you must do whatever will please the Earth-Gods [Brahmins]. 136. Rice, dal, and curry (*kutikā*), with *puranpoli*, should be prepared vegetables suitable for Brahmins. Rāma will be pleased by your doing so." 137. Hearing Samartha's words, the servants replied : " We shall do so ", and even down to today this variety of food is prepared ( for the Brahmins ) during the nine days of the celebration. 138. Samartha set the custom, and his followers have adhered to it. In the Vale of Chāphala no Brahmins have to fast. 139. Thus was

celebrated the birthday of Rāma. The crowd of saints was honoured. After distributing gifts to the Brahmins the king left for his palace.

#### A BRAHMAN BECOMES THE DISCIPLE OF A BARBER

140. Another event happened. Listen to it with reverence, you *bhaktas* and pious folk. 141. There was a disciple of Rāmdās, a barber, who lived in the valley of the Krishnā. He rendered his *sadguru* very faithful service, and as a result, had a direct manifestation of God. Casting aside his worldly occupation, he was initiated as a disciple. 142. He assumed the reddish-yellow robe, and studied the *Dāsabodha*. He ate the food he obtained by begging, and attained the highest knowledge. 143. He became widely known as Krishnā Gosāvī characterised by knowledge, indifference-to-worldly-things, and the spirit of worship. A certain Brahman came to him in a sincere worshipful spirit. 144. Said he: "Initiate me as one of your disciples." And with that placed his head on Krishnājī's feet. The latter exclaimed: "I am a barber. One should not do what is improper. 145. Among all the various castes the Brahman is the highest, and the *guru* of the eighteen castes. So go to Samartha, and be initiated by him." 146. Krishnājī tried many arguments with him, but he would not at all listen. He declared: "My affection is set on you. I have no other wish (than to be your disciple). 147. I have come to you as a suppliant with my body, speech and mind." Such was the language in which Jayarāmpant was continually pleading with him. 148. The two then came to Samartha. Krishnājī placed his head on Samartha's feet, and said: "This Brahman is needlessly bothering me. He is asking that I at once make him my disciple." 149. Rāmdās said to Jayarāma: "You should receive your instruction from a Brahman. Your request is contrary to

ordinary custom and such is the scripture teaching." 150. Thus replying, Samartha repeated a *shloki*. As a seeker after final deliverance reads these blessed words, he should realize what is true and what untrue.

(*Shlokas* not translated)

151. Although such were the moral teachings of Samartha's words, the Brahman would not listen to the appeal they made. He exclaimed: "Please give your command to him to make me his disciple by the initiatory *mantra*." 152. He made this plea, and fell prostrate at Rāmdās' feet. Again and again he pleaded saying: "You must save me, a lowly man." 153. Seeing his fixed determination, Samartha said to Krishnājī: "Give him the initiatory *mantra*, and let no doubts of propriety remain in your mind." 154. With this command the two went back at once to the *matha* [religious house in the Krishna valley], and there after duly worshipping Rāma, the Brahman was inducted into the path of Rāma worship. 155. Krishnājī whispered into his ear the mystic *mantra*, and added: "Regard my commands as your authority. Now go, and worship Samartha. Wash his feet, and drink the water (with which they are washed)." 156. Dressed in the reddish-yellow robe, he underwent the initiatory rites, and from that time he became everywhere known as Jayarāma Gosāvī. 157. He regularly visited Samartha, and drank the blessed water in which his feet were washed. As long as Samartha was alive, he faithfully served the *sadguru*. 158. When Krishnājī Gosāvī suddenly went to his home above, at the ending of his life, his disciple Jayarāma was by his side, and remarked that a tomb [*samūdhi*] must be erected in his honour. 159. On the spot where the *sadguru* was cremated, he erected an altar, and on it were placed the *pādukās* [foot impressions], which he worshipped with a sincere heart. 160. In order

to have a sacred festival in his honour, Jayarāma begged for the necessary food, and after collecting sufficient grain, and assembling the other accessories, he enquired of Samartha. 161. And said he: "May Your Greatness give the command for a sacred festival in his honour." The *Svāmī* replied: "If the Brahmans should hear of it, they will needlessly take exception to it. 162. As a noble Brahman by feeling and character you may have collected a large amount of accessories. Invite the Brahmans to the feast, and Rāma will keep all hindrances away." 163. Jayarāma listened to Samartha's suggestion, and was very happy about it. He returned to his *math* [religious house] and there at once made preparations for the feast. 164. He invited by special invitation to the feast all the Brahmans of the town, and chance visitors. He then bathed, and seated himself (for receiving his guests). 165. The Brahmans came from their baths, worshipped the tomb and repeated the Vedic *mantras*. But just then the evil-minded began their criticisms. 166. They said: "This Jayarāma Gosāvī is a follower of Rāmdās. While his *sadguru* is actually living he has started here his anniversary festival in his memory." 167. To this some replied: "Krishnājī Gosāvī was a barber, who had the true knowledge. Jayarāma was his disciple, always gladly rendering him service." 168. When the Brahmans of high rank heard this, they said: "This is contrary to Scripture. One should not take food here." With that they got up, and left. 169. Jayarāma was deeply troubled by this, but just then he remembered the feet of Rāmdās. And this dear *Sadguru*, knowing conditions by his insight, suddenly appeared in their midst. 170. The Brahmans said to him: "There is a sacred festival here in memory of the barber. We, therefore, question whether we should take food here. 171. When the sun is close to Aruna, his charioteer, why look for light from a picture drawn on a wall? This case seems similar to

that. 172. While you are living and visible, why did Jayarāma take instruction from the barber? Still, if you will perform some miracle, we shall be willing to dine here." 173. Hearing what these Brahmins said, Rāmdās performed a wonderful thing. He called to Jayarāma. Suddenly the Brahmins saw a strange sight. 174. On Rāmdās' shoulder sat Māruti, and back of Jayarāma was Rāma. This the Brahmins distinctly saw. That removed their doubts. 175. They said: "Here everything is Rāma. How can there be any such thing for us as religious and irreligious?" Their doubts having been thus removed, the good Brahmins continued to dine. 176. Pūnasupūri and gifts were given to all, and with these gifts the Brahmins were made happy., Mahipati, the bard of the saints sings their praises.

177. *Sastī*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By merely listening to it all longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen. This is the twenty-second delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM

1. There are those who without worshipping Rāma adopt many painful methods for salvation. But they do not thereby gain a direct manifestation of God, and so weary themselves in vain. 2. The absolutely sincere worship of those who love God is the root of the right indifference to worldly things. The final result of which is the knowledge that leads to eternal peace. All other endeavours are useless. 3. Those who discard worship, they turn their knowledge into dust. All despise such, and they cannot escape hell. 4. Here below, those worthy of being despised are disliked by God. Those who here below are praiseworthy, are loved by all. Therefore, casting aside pride, one should worship God Supreme. 5. And so those who love the visible form of God (His image), those *bhaktas*, are pleasing to the Supreme Being. The Supreme soul thereby comes under obligations and his *bhaktas*, and removes the sorrows of their earthly existence. 6. If revilers and evil-minded men persecute the *bhaktas* of God, the Merciful-to-the-lowly visibly manifests Himself. He stands before and behind His *bhaktas*, and continually cares for them.

### RĀMDĀS A POSSESSOR OF A GOD-LOVING HEART

7. In the last chapter the subject-matter was the trouble caused by the Brahmans to *guru* and *bhaktas*. Then as a result of Rāmdās' appeal, Rāma manifested Himself. 8. Māruti was seen on Rāmdās' shoulder, and Rāma appeared at the side of Jayarāma. Having thus manifested themselves to the Brahmans, the sacred festival was carried on to completion. 9. After the feast the Brahmans

left. Jayarāma was comforted. He embraced Samartha's feet, and exclaimed: "You have protected your helpless one." 10. Rāmdās replied: "Rāma has the same feeling in his heart. He is the Advocate-of-the-lowly." He then repeated an *abhangā*. Let the wise listen to it with reverence.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

11. Such was Rāmdās' make-up. He was the image of the eternal and perfect *Brahma*. In addition, he possessed the spirit of worship towards the visible form of God [the image]. He possessed always a God-loving heart.

### RĀMDĀS DIVINES HIS BROTHER'S DEATH

12. On one occasion Rāmdās went into the forest. In his mind he held Shri Rāma. He gave himself up to enjoying him on the mountain top. 13. He held Rāma in his mind. He held Rāma in his heart. In his sleep all was Rāma. In his wakeful moments all was Rāma. In his dream it was Rāma. In his dreamless sleep it was all Rāma, who is the perfect object of desire for His *bhaktas*. 14. He had no other desire, but continually to sing of Rāma, continually to contemplate Rāma in private and in public; and always to be thinking of Him. 15. And as to Rāma Himself He became Rāmdās, and in so doing Rāma really contemplated Himself. To save the world he became an *avatāra* of a portion of Māruti. 16. Such was Rāmdās, without bodily consciousness, wandering about in the forest. Later, his disciples arrived, accompanied by Ākābāī. 17. She gathered flowers, fruit of various kinds, and such bulbs and roots as are found in the forest. She placed them before the *Svāmī*, and he gladly ate them. 18. According to Rāmdās' characteristic of indifference to things, he would eat whatever at the moment happened to be gathered. You saints have already heard the story-

of how in calling for more and more sweet custard, he punished his desire. 19. Sometimes he had daintily cooked food. Sometimes he lunched on forest fruits. If he at any time had no bedding, he slept on a rock. 20. The God-loving pious folk praised him with their lips. The wicked and crooked-minded reviled him, but neither gave his mind pleasure nor pain. 21. Such was Rāmdās, a man possessing the supreme knowledge. On one occasion he went running to a place where there was pure water. 22 He leaped into the water, and bathed with his clothes on. He then went, and sat off at one side, to the astonishment of all. 23. Ākābāī came, and questioned the *Svāmī*: "Please tell me, O Merciful-to-the-Lowly, the reason why you took a bath today? 24. Yesterday morning I washed all your clothes with my own hands." Thus questioned, Samartha replied: 25. "My elder brother, known as Rāmī-Rāmdās, has left his body, and become one with Rāma. 26. In order to observe the command of the *Vedas*, I bathed today in the stream of the Krishnā. It is necessary for me to observe the state of defilement for ten days." 27. Samartha said to Kalyāna: "Tell me what day this is." He answered: "This is the dark half of the month of Phalgunā [ March ], the fourteenth day of the fortnight, and a Sunday." 28. Ākābāī humbly asked him: "Who had come from his home town (with the news)?" Rāmdās replied: "I have heard that it is true." 29. Just then the king Shivājī arrived, and with him his son Sambhājī, as also his Ministers. 30. As the king viewed the scene, he saw the *Svāmī* sitting off at a distance. He therefore asked Ākābāī what had happened. She replied to the king: 31. "Samartha says that his elder brother at Jāmbā has left his body and gone to his home above. 32. But the valley of the Godāvarī is far from here, and how could a man come from there this very day? I cannot understand how Samartha heard of the event?" 33. Without

the *Svāmī*'s knowing it, the king sent two spies. They quickly brought back an answer to his letter, saying the brother's death was true. 34. The worthy son of Rāmī-Rāmdās, by name of Rāmchandra, wrote to the king that the report was correct. 35. The king questioned the *Svāmī*: "How did you know that your elder brother had become one with *Brahma*? We are all astonished." 36. Hearing this question, Samartha repeated an *abhangā* which I have here quoted in order that the listener may possess the evidence of its truth.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

#### RĀMDĀS' BIRTHDAY AGAIN CELEBRATED AT CHĀPHALA

37. Replying thus on that occasion, he added a command to all his disciples. "The festival of Rāma, is near at hand, so all of you go to the Vale of Chāphala. 38. The Vaishnava *bhaktas* who are appointed and paid for annual service will come there. You must begin the festival on the first of the fortnight in accordance with former customs. 39. I am prevented from coming just now, but will come on the eleventh day from now. Expect me on the ninth day of the fortnight." Thus he commanded his disciples. 40. Dattu Divātyā, Jayarāma Gosāvi, and the third, Ākābāī, only remained to serve him. All the others left. 41. Now in the Vale of Chāphala a great multitude of saints gathered. During the days there was the feasting of Brahmans, and at night there was the performance of *kīrlanas*. 42. Thrice in the day there was the worship of Rāma, to the loud music of sweet sounding instruments. The *bhaktas* repeated the names of God, along with shouts of "Victory, Victory." 43. On the ninth of the fortnight, the processions started. When it was about noon, suddenly Samartha arrived to the great joy of all. 44. The men and women who had gathered from distant places came to see and

worship him. A dense crowd gathered at the great door of the temple. There was no room for people to make their prostrate *namaskāras*. 45. Then Samartha repeated the following *abhanga*, about the purification of body which I have here exactly quoted, but one must understand its meaning.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

46. After repeating this *abhanga* he visited Māruti's image, and then worshipped Rāma, making Him a prostrate *namaskāra*. 47. This done, he went back to his mountain top. The dramatic representations were held on the tenth day, and the king distributed gifts. 48. The king especially honoured those who had assisted on the occasion. He also honoured the saints, *mahantas* and the Haridās ( with gifts ). 49. He made the lowly, the helpless and beggars happy, and then, together with his retinue, he climbed up the mountain to see and worship his *Svāmī*. 50. Vedic panditas, begging Brahmans, saints, *sādhus*, Vaishnavas, Kalyāna Gosāvī, and the other disciples also followed him up the mountain, and were there to worship Rāmdās. 51. They made him a prostrate *namaskāra*. There was a great crowd at his hut. There were citizens there of the highest rank, shouting out the cries of "Victory, Victory." 52. The king worshipped his *guru* with gifts of garments and ornaments. In the same manner the king honoured the saints, and made them *namaskāras*. 53. The saints then also asked leave to return. Rāmdās repeated an *abhanga* on that occasion, which should be read for its valuable thoughts.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

54. Thus given leave to return, all the *mahantas* started to go. All the crowd of pilgrims also left, having fixed in their memories the features of their *Svāmī*.

## SHIVĀJI INVITES RĀMDĀS TO PARALI

55. After the festival had ended, the king made a request of Rāmdās: "I have a great desire in my heart that you should come up into the hill of Parali." 56. Thus saying, the king made a prostrate *namaskār* before him. "I am going to feed a hundred thousand, so satisfy my wish." 57. Samartha replied: "I am very happy here in the forest, why take me up to the hill? Tell me the true reason of it." 58. In reply, the king said: "I have built there a temple to Rāma. May your greatness cause all the saints to come there." 59. The Sāmi answered: "I understand now your wish." Then in accordance with the king's purpose, Rāmdās repeated an *abhangā*.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

60. After repeating this *abhangā* the Sāmi arose ready to go. The king could not contain his joy, and had preparations for the journey made at once. 61. Musical instruments began to sound, kettle drums were beaten; the whole army was made ready and halted near the king. 62. A noble looking elephant was brought, and Samartha was seated on it under a canopy. The king stood behind him waving the fly-whisk, and the *bhaktas* shouted aloud the names of God. 63. All Rāmdās' disciples and followers, some hastening in front on foot, others in horse-drawn carriages who did not have the strength to walk, formed the procession. 64. There were many chariots and carts, in which some of the disciples were seated. On that day they accomplished the 28 miles from the Vale of Chāphala, and arrived at the village of Parali (below the fort). 65. Rāmdās and his party encamped comfortably on the bank of the Urvashi river. All engaged in bathing and repeating prayers, fulfilling their regular religious habits. 66. Samartha bathed, and the king brought to him the things required in worship. Kalyāna then began the

ceremony of worship, and so sat in his holy garments. 67. Rāmdās was clothed in the yellow robe. A costly turban was bound on his head. On his forehead the saffron marks were drawn, and a garland of flowers was placed around his neck. 68. Platters with incense and light, and costly offerings were placed before him. Kalyāna then sang a hymn of praise, and all bowed prostrate before him. 69. While this worship of his *sadurgu* was going on the king remained standing with his hands joined palm to palm. After the hymns of praise, he reverently made him a *namaskāra*.

70. In the meantime the preparation of food was completed, and the Brahmans arrived after taking their bath. They dined in the same line with Samartha. All the disciples also dined. 71. The *Svāmī* wore a garment woven with gold and silver thread, and over him he drew a shawl of four breadths and eight borders. The king brought an ornament of pearls and placed it on his head.

#### THE CLIMB UP TO FORT PARALI

72. With a cloak around his neck, Samartha sat in the palanquin. The king Shivājī walked ahead with his shoes in his hands. 73. Thus they climbed up the mountain, and all the multitude followed. Finally they arrived at the assembly hall, and Samartha was seated on the throne. 74. The whole assembly sat down, but the king, however, continued standing with hands joined palm to palm. Sugar was distributed to all, and Brahmans were given gifts. 75. When night came, the army was sent away, and the king remained behind to serve his *Svāmī*, standing near him ( ready to serve ). 76. Samartha continued his prayers and worship according to his regular rule. With love he pleaded with Rāma. Listen to it.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

77. In songs of many forms Samartha referred to the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [ Rāma ], and finally waved lights before the Husband of-Sitā [ Rāma ] as he was put to sleep. 78. The king had arranged a bed, and Samartha slept on it. The king sat by his side massaging his feet with his hands. 79. Seeing the king was alone with him, Samartha gave the king the following command : " Bring all the saints who live in the Krishnā valley to a Brahman feast. 80. Also invite Tukārāma Gosāvi of Dehu, who is a God-loving, noble Vaishnava, and who has come as an *avatāra* of Nāmdeva to save the humble in heart. 81. Invite him here." At this command of Samartha's, the king replied with the following comment. 82. He said " I shall be able to send an invitation to all the saints in the Krishnā Valley, but Tukārāma is always indifferent to worldly things. His mind never thinks of material things. 83. The Brahman Rāmeshvara, living in Vīgho-II, a pandit, learned in all the six *shūstras*, caused Tukārāma's manuscript of *abhangas* to be sunk in the river water, because of his hatred of him. 84. For thirteen days Tukārāma lay at the door of the temple fasting until his prayer was answered. The Husband-of-Rukmini [ Krishna ] took it out of the water perfectly dry. 85. His good fame having reached my ears I sent messengers to invite him to come here, but he would not come. Again I sent my Secretary. 86. Tukārāma was at that time at Lohagāva. Then I went myself to visit him. I put before him some trifling gifts, but he absolutely refused to take them." 87. Samartha replied : " Listen, O king. What does a saint want with money ? Those who get caught in the snare of desires, lose touch with the Lord-of-Pandhari [ Krishna ]. 88. It is because I saw the strong desire of your heart, that I have come up here to the Fort. If he understands this, he will certainly hasten to come." 89. Hearing these words of his *sadguru*, the king wan-

very happy in heart. And then he sent a palanquin, and his Secretary with a horse, to carry the invitation to Tukārāma. 90. The king also sent invitations to other saints, and chief *yogīs*, such as Nimbarāja of Daithana, and Rangobā of Nājhare; 91. Maunirāja, skilled in the Yoga practices; Anantasiddha, a man with an unworldly mind; Vāmansvāmī; and Jayarāma. All these had invitations sent to them. 92. The king sent invitations to Vedic Brahmins and panditas learned in the *shūstras*, such as were distinguished and of high repute. And all these came to Paralī. 93. As the saints and *mahantas* arrived, the king went forward to welcome them. In sincerity he prostrated himself before them, and then taking them introduced them to the Svāmī.

#### TUKĀRĀMA COMES TO PARALĪ

94. The messenger sent to Dehu, informed Tukārāma that Rāmdās had come to Paralī. As soon as Tukārāma understood this, he started with joy to meet him. 95. Tukārāma had with him fourteen noble Vaishnavas who had given up their worldly business, and constantly attended him. 96. The God loving *bhakta* started off without taking leave of anyone. But his followers searching for him, found him, and came along with him. They had cymbals, *vīnās* and drums with them, and sang with love in their *kīrtanas*. 97. If you ask who they were, I will tell you the names of a few. 98. Rāmeshvara Shāstrī, a Brahman, Dhondabhata a *Purān*-reader, Gangājī Mavāla of Kadus, Kānhā the brother of Tukārāma, Santājī Jagannādyā of Chākana. 99. There were also other Vaishnava *bhaktas*, whose names are too many to mention, who out of love for Tukārāma lived with him.

100. In order to approach and meet Rāmdās, Tukārāma walked on foot. The Secretary besought him to ride in the palanquin, but he would not do so. 101. Follow-

ing him were the fourteen noble Vaishnava disciples who arrived with him. When the king learned that Tukārāma had arrived, he went forward to welcome him. 102. The king met him with a long low prostrate *namaskāra*. He placed a garland of flowers around his neck, and marked his forehead with the dark powder. 103. Just as soon as he arrived on the hill, he met Samartha. As they saw one another from a distance, both were delighted. 104. As Samartha approached, Tukārāma made him a prostrate obeisance. Rāmdās hastened to raise him up, and then embraced him.

( An *abhanga* by Tukārāma not translated )

105. As Tukārāma was thus welcomed, all felt very happy. It seemed like the meeting together of the individual and the Universal Soul. 106. Then all the assembly sat down consisting of saints, *mahantas* and distinguished men, Vedic panditas and Brahmans, and Rāmdās sat in the chief seat. 107. He in many ways discussed the Way of Knowledge, and thoughts on philosophic truths and errors. Those who had special desires to know more, asked questions of Rāmdās.

( Questions not translated )

108. To this question put to him by a saint, Rāmdās replied in an *abhanga*, which I here quote. Let hearers listen with reverence. 109. The blessed words of Samartha are the chief authority for this book. What need is there of a commentator? Those learned and wise can understand them.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

110. This reply in verse by Samartha made all the saints feel happy. By experiencing them, they became absorbed in them. All were lost in deep thought.

## THE KING GIVES A DINNER TO BRAHMANS AND SAINTS

111. The Brahmans sat in lines. The king's Secretary worshipped them, offering them fragrant ointment, rice, and flowers. Daintily cooked food was served on leaf-plates. 112. The king sat at some distance, and personally oversaw the carrying out of the feast. No one in the very least lacked anything, and all had their appetites satisfied. 113. Thus the Brahmans were daily feasted. All were given *pānasupārī* and gifts of money. The king gave to each Brahman a rupee. 114. In satisfying the appetites of Brahmans Rāma takes delight. Samartha then dined along with the circle of saints.

115. When the sun had set, lamps were lighted on all sides. The royal pavilion was flooded with light. A great many torches were lighted. 116. Pillows, mattresses, and mats and many kinds of carpets were spread. Crystal glass lamps were burned, and there was also the light of wax candles. 117. When all the people took their seats with the saints, *sādhus*, Brahmans, Vedic Shāstris, and *Purānics*, many others also came to attend the *kīrtana*. 118. The *Sadguru* then said to the king: "The good people have now seated themselves to listen, so without any feeling of shame, perform a *kīrtana* before them. 119. A *kīrtana* is the greatest service one can render to God. God Supreme is fond of *kīrtanas*. One should, therefore, gladly sing to Rāma with feelings of love. 120. In this *kaliyuga* the chief means of salvation is the singing with fondness the goodness of God [Hari]. Such were the secret words with their deep meanings that Krishna repeated to Uddhava as told in the *Bhāgavata*. 121. So now, as all the Vaishnava *bhaktas* are seated, sing and dance before them. Let all the musical instruments accompany you, and fasten bells to your feet." 122. Receiving his command from his *sadguru*, the king felt great joy in

his heart. Then making a courteous *namaskāra*, he began his performance of a *kirtana*. 123. The king had committed to memory a great many of Rāmdās' *abhangas*, which he used to sing daily when by himself, and loved. 124. He had for a long time this desire to perform a *kirtana* before his *svāmī*. It now came to pass without effort on his part. 125. In order to have a lively *kirtana*, he had brought *vīṇās*, cymbals, drums, flutes, piccolos, and mouth organs, all good musical instruments. 126. The king full of love, first reverently made a *namaskāra* to his *sadguru*. Then bowing mentally to all the saints, he brought Rāma into his mind. 127. As the king stood up to perform the *kirtana*, all the people were astonished. The following is the *abhangā* the king repeated. Let the saints listen to it with reverence.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

128. Such was the *abhangā* that the king sang, along with *padas* and *shlokas* of many kinds. He had gladly fastened bells to his feet, and danced while he performed the *kirtana* in praise of God. 129. He put away all shame, and thought of public approval, and gave himself to acts inspired by pure goodness. The saints and *mahanṭas* watched him with pleasure. It seemed a marvellous thing to them. 130. In past *yugas* most distinguished Vaishnava *bhaktas* have become kings, and in this *kaliyuga* truly it is the noble Vaishnava Shivājī who has become king. 131. The saints and *mahanṭas* listened to his *kirtana* with great joy in their hearts. But Gāgā Pandita muttered to himself : "Our king has gone crazy. 132. He has discarded the words of Vyāsa, and is singing in the language of Mahārāshtra." This he thought to himself, but did not utter it aloud. 133. "The king enables me to carry on my domestic affairs, he gives me unlimited money and garments." With that thought of gain the Brahman spoke no open word in opposition to the king.



her were pleased. 144. Only Gāgā Pandita muttered to himself: "One should not listen to a service of song performed by women." Bahinābāl divined by insight the state of his mind, and so replied in verse.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

145. Her part being finished, it was applauded with loud shouts of God's names, and the clapping of hands. The air overflowed with the sounds. The assembly filled with love were full of joy.

### VĀMANA PANDITA PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

146. Then at Samartha's command, Vāmana arose to perform a *kirtana*, he who in this *kaliyuga* came as an *avatāra* of Vyāsa. His delightful poetry is without comparison.

( Vāmana's verses not translated )

147. Thus Vāmana performed his *kirtana*, his songs correspond with the *Bhāgavata*, in which the substance of the Vedas is related. Hearing him, the saints were delighted. 148. The assembly shouted: "Victory, Victory." The saints were full of joy. Then the final hymns of praise were sung, and Krishna was waved with wave offerings.

149. This book, the *Santavijaya*, is marvellous. It should be regarded simply as nectar. Fortunate Saints partake of it with fondness, followed with belching (the sign of satisfaction). 150. Favoured by my good fortune, I have received what remained over from the feast. Mahipati, in eating this, has found his joy in his satisfaction.

151. *Siasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the fortunate, God-loving *bhaktas* listen. This is the twenty-third delightful chapter.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE MORAL VALUE OF THE STORIES OF THE SAINTS

1. If any one actually possesses a store of good deeds derived from unlimited number of births, such an one is fond of the stories of the saints, and listens to them with an intent mind. 2. In listening to these stories of the saints, the seeker after final Deliverance, feels his heart repentant for sins committed. Even his greatest sins are in consequence burned away, and he now walks about where goodness exists. 3. Seekers after salvation have no better authority than truths obtained from the history of the saints, and many, even women and Shudras, have taken to paths of worship through them. 4. Even if accidentally the name of God comes to one's lips, that very instant the illusions of this earthly existence melt away. Rāma is the resting place for all. The blue-throated one [Shiva] lovingly repeats His name. 5. All the saints have but one opinion, and therefore the extraordinary glory of Rāma's name has been proclaimed. It has the authority of the Great *Purānas*, as well as of the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavata Purāna*.

### OTHER DISCIPLES PERFORM KĪRTANAS

6. In the last chapter there was related the extraordinary story of how the God-loving *bhakta*, king Shivājī, collected all the saints on the hill of Parali. 7. He began the feasting of a hundred thousand. He every day served dainty food to the Brahmans. A great many Brahmans attended, and rejoiced the king. 8. He had Rāmdās as his *guru*, bestower of blessings. The king himself had been worldly minded, but by association with the good he became good. 9. The king put aside the sense of shame and performed a *kīrtana* in the presence of the saints.

Finally Vāmana sūmī arose, and waved the offering over the Life-of-Jānaki [ Rāma ]. 10. One watch of the night remained. Some then paid their respects to sleep, but whether awake, dreaming, or in dreamless sleep, Rāma was in their thoughts. 11. When the sun arose, the saints performed their early morning devotions in repeating Rāma's names. After the bathing, and devotions, they dined along with the Brahmanas. 12. At the third watch of the day, while the sun was still shining, the *kīrtanas* were begun. The saints sat down, and the king sat opposite them.

#### NIMBARĀJA OF DAITHANA PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

13. Then Nimbarāja Bāvā of Daithana stood up to perform. All were extremely delighted with his performance. The noble Vaishnavas rejoiced. 14. He was a man who conferred blessings, a follower of Ekanāth. He was one whose *kīrtanas* pleased the Recliner-on-the-serpent-Shesha [ Vishnu ]. 15. He was one who had committed to memory the entire poetry of Ekanāth. He repeated one of Ekanāth's *abhangas* with the expression of love. Listen to it, you pious good people.

( *Abhanga* not translated)

16. Nimbarāja's power of expressing his love for God was extraordinary. As he sang the *abhanga*, he was choked with emotion. From his eyes flowed tears of love, thereby touching the emotions of his hearers. 17. He especially described the life of Krishna, which it would take too long to quote. The whole assembly, men and women, listened intently. 18. When the sun had set, hymns of praise were sung to Pānduranga. Samartha paid special honour to Nimbarāja's *kīrtana*.

#### RANGĀSVĀMĪ PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

19. After the evening devotions had been performed, the *kīrtanas* were begun. Rangāsvāmī arose to perform.

His expressions of love were extraordinary. 20. Rangāsvāmī was a poet of great ability, very clever, and one able to arouse the nine emotions. The saints as they listened were ready to render him full respect. 21. He had written a commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, which was entitled the *Ranganāthī*. Even to-day his tomb is honoured, and visited by all saints. 22. He had composed verses on *Bhakti*, Knowledge, and Indifference to worldly things.

### JAYARĀMA SVĀMĪ PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

Then Jayarāma Gosāvī stood up to perform a *kīrtana* with his expressions of love. 23. Immediately the air resounded with by the loud sounds of those shouting the name of Vitthala. All the people clapped their hands, and the *kīrtana* seemed like waves of sound. 24. Jayarāma Krishnadāsa is famous the world over. Let the saints listen with reverence to his poetic ability expressed in the following *abhangā*.

( *Abhangā* not translated )

25. Such were Jayarāmasvāmī's blessed words, which were simply a mine of joy produced by love. In listening to him, one's ears remained unsatisfied. One's bodily consciousness disappeared. 26. During the *kīrtana* there were loud shouts of God's name, that drove away sleep and drowsiness. The minds of all were intent to listen. Yama [God of Death] was stirred to fear. 27. In the *kaliyuga* there was no means of salvation, so God became an *avatāra* in the form of saints. They proclaimed the power of God's names and saved the universe. 28. Listening to Jayarāma's *kīrtana* all hearts were delighted. Then many other good men performed acts of worship with love. 29. Among them Kalyāna Annāppā Gosāvī, a disciple of Samartha's, Jayarāma and Shivarāma also performed *kīrtanas*.

## THE SAINT TUKĀRĀMA PERFORMS A KIRTANA

30. Samartha then said to Tukārāma, "Arise, Father, to perform a *kirtana*. I have desired to hear you for a very long time. It is also the heart's desire of all." 31. Hearing Samartha's request, the king was extremely delighted. Then the noble Vaishnava made a *namaskāra* to Samartha, and stood up to perform. 32. To aid him in his *kirtana*, he had four persons behind him to lead in the chorus. They were such as had cast aside all the seductions of the worldly life, and had gladly chosen association with the good. 33. Nāmdeva the *avatāra* of Uddhava, had made a vow in his heart that he would compose a billion Marāthi *abhangas*. 34. Then Hari, the Husband-of Rukmini, said to him: "In the *kaliyuga* the span of life is at the most a hundred years, and during that time there are many mishaps. The vow you have made here cannot all of it be fulfilled now." 35. Nāmdeva then said: "O God Supreme, Thou must carry to completion my vow." As he continued his piteous cry, Krishna's pride was touched. 36. Then Panduranga (God) himself having taken pen and ink continuously wrote ( for Nāmdeva ) ; and then Shriranga ( God ) counted the number of *abhangas*. 37. He found it to be nine hundred and forty-four million ; and in the end there were nine hundred thousands *abhangas* as *lalita* ; still the desire of Nāmdeva ( for composing more *abhangas* ) remained just in thought ; for, just then, he went to *vaiikuntha* [ Vishnu's heaven ]. 38. Of the vow of one billion verses there still remained fifty million and fifty one hundred thousand. Therefore, it was necessary for him to return to this world of mortals in the form of an *avatāra*. 39. This *avatāra* was the noble Vaishnava Tukārāma. He was the perfect *avatāra* of Nāmdeva. To save the world he became a visible manifestation in form and attributes. 40. On every occasion where he had to speak on material or spiritual themes he used the

*abhangā* metre. He never spoke otherwise. 41. So when Tukārāma stood up to perform a *kīrtana* before Rāmdās' audience, the air overflowed on all sides with the sound of the loud shouts of Vitthala's name. 42. He repeated blessed *abhangas*, of which I will quote a few. If read with pleasure, the reader will feel the joy that comes from love.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

43. Listening to Tukārāma's words all the saints expressed their approval. But Gāgā Pandita muttered to himself, and then openly said to the Brahmans: 44. "What Veda speaks of the praise of Hari? This Tukā, a Vaishnava of the Shudra caste, seems to me to be telling what is false." 45. To these words of Gāgā Pandita, Vāmanasvāmī replied and quoted a *shloka* approving of the praise of Hari. Listen to it, you pious *bhaktas*.

( *Shloka* not translated )

46. Gāgā Pandita was unable to reply to these words of Vāmanasvāmī, and so growled: "This is merely an assembly of fools. Every one of them expresses the same opinion." 47. When Tukārāma heard of this discussion he repeated some more *abhangas*. I quote them here in this book. Let the saints listen to them with reverence.

( *Abhangas* not translated )

48. As people listened to Tukārāma's *kīrtana*, they lost all consciousness of body. The king also became so intent in his contemplation that he really saw all things in the form of Hari [ God ]. 49. Tukārāma himself had no consciousness of possessing a body. And God forgot His divine nature. Both became one. The idea of being two disappeared. 50. Realizing this condition of his dear *bhakta*, God said to Himself: "Tukā has become of the same essence as myself. That means the loss of the joy that results from love. I cannot endure this loneliness.

51. If a mirror is placed before another mirror, no reflection of a form will be seen. So it is with me without a *bhakta*. The longing for the love of the *bhakta* is frustrated. 52. Although there are fruits as sweet as nectar to the taste, still there must be a taster. The gods in heaven realize what it is to be without *bhaktas*. 53. It is my *bhaktas* who understand the glory of my divinity; so, if he and I become one, then the possibility of my praise is defeated. 54. Under such circumstances whoever will fall into distress, then who will call on Me to come to his help? I cannot bear the thought of such loneliness." Such was the thought of God-Supreme. 55. "In such a case why should I become an *avatāra* from *yuga* to *yuga*? And then how can mankind be saved? Many will drown in the sea of this worldly existence." 56. Realizing this fact, Krishna brought Tukārāma back to bodily consciousness. In a form visible to him, God spoke to him. Listen to it with reverence, you pious folk.

57. "In the performance of the *kīrtana* the whole night has been spent, and the sun has now arisen. Let the torchlight be waved." Thus spoke the Lord of Heaven. 58. Hearing these words, Tukārāma became at once conscious of his body. God and His *bhakta* became two persons. Listen to an illustration of this fact. 59. When the Ganges flows in full flood, it becomes separated by an island into two streams. It appears to people as two rivers, but there are in reality not two rivers. 60. The apparent two, from beginning to end are but one river. Only in the midst of the stream does there appear to be two rivers. But to the sight and to the touch they are one and same, and alike purify man from his sins. 61. So, for the salvation of the world, God and His *bhaktas* take separate names, but in their hearts there is no difference between them. This the saints have experienced.

62. Let us turn again to what had occurred. The God-loving Tukā came to bodily consciousness. Then the Lord of Heaven, the dearest friend of the saints, spoke (through Tukārāma).

( *Abhangas* not translated )

63. Knowing the desire of Tukārāma, Pānduranga said to him : "I, the Infinite one, will fulfil all the desires of your heart." 64. These words of the Lord-of-his-*bhaktas* caused great joy to Tukārāma's heart. He then lighted the lamps for the wave offering, and waved them over the Husband-of-Rukmini [ Krishna ].

65. There is no difference between God and His *bhaktas*. What difference appears is no difference at all. But through the delight caused by the name of Vitthala, men dance, carried along by the stream of love. 66. So seeing Tukārāma's love for God everybody began to dance. Even the king along with his Ministers joined in the dancing. 67. Saints, *mahantas*, Brahmins and the Vedic panditas began to dance, accompanied by the music of the drums, cymbals and flutes. The enthusiasm was extraordinary. 68. Women, Shudras and other classes, adults, well brought up children, even the Muhammadan servants of the king, began to dance moved by their joy. 69. As Krishna danced among the cowherds, all the three worlds began to dance. So it happened now as Tukārāma, the God-loving saint, danced. 70. No one now possessed the consciousness of body. The whole world seemed but Vitthala. And gods, unseen by men, came to watch the scene. 71. While this dancing with love and reverence was going on, the four watches of the night passed. Then loudly shouting the names of Hari, Tukārāma made obeisance to the saints.

72. Rāmdās then sprang forward, and gave Tukārāma a tight embrace. Both embraced one another. They could not restrain their love. 73. One was the Sun, the other the

Luminary. The one was nectar, and the other the drink of the immortals. As to their names these were two, but they were one in heart. There were no longer two. 74. So Rāmdās gave an embrace to the *bhakta* Tukārāma. It is impossible to describe their love for one another. The function of the mind came to a standstill. 75. The *bhaktas* now shouted cries of "Victory, Victory." The saints were full of joy. Sweets were distributed to all; then all departed to their several places. 76. All performed their baths and devotions. The Brahmans were feasted. At night recitations began before the seated company of saints.

#### RĀMDĀS PERFORMS A KĪRTANA

77. Finally Rāmdās stood up to perform a *kīrtana*, and all were delighted. A great crowd gathered to listen to his *kīrtana*. 78. A great many persons stood behind Samartha to lead in the chorus. All had come with their instruments, and stood lovingly behind him. 79. The king stood behind Rāmdās, and all the saints sat facing Rāmdās. How can I describe the good fortune of Rāmdās? He was the visible *avatāra* of Māruti. 80. In his *kīrtana* the joy of love was evident. Samartha repeated many *abhangas*. I quote one of them in this chapter. Listen, all of you.

(*Abhanga* not translated)

81. Such was the theme of Rāmdās' *kīrtana*, and as people listened, they realized its truth. The saints became absorbed in it. Others did not understand it. 82. Samartha now announced what was pleasing to everyone: "I also have the keen desire to listen continually to the *kīrtanas* of Tukārāma." 83. For a whole month, therefore, by day there was the feasting of Brahmans, and Hari *kīrtanas* at night. The hearts of all were full of joy.

84. The private secretary of the king now informed him that he had fed one hundred and twenty five thousand

So the final gifts were made to the Brahmans, and the saints were duly worshipped. 85. The noble Vaishnavas were made to sit on the throne, and the king washed their feet. Garlands of *tulsi* leaves were placed around their necks, and the dark marks on their foreheads. 86. The king having thus worshipped them he gave garments to every one. Samartha then spoke, which the hearers should listen to with deep respect.

#### • PARALI FORT IS RENAMED SAJJANAGADA

87. "This place is especially fortunate. Many saints have assembled here. This, therefore, should be called Sajjanagada (Saints' Fort)." This was Rāmdās' suggestion to the king. 88. The king then called his private secretary, and had him write on paper that it was his wish that the name of the Fort henceforth was to be Sajjanagada.

#### THE GATHERING AT SAJJANAGADA BREAKS UP

89. The crowd of pilgrims now broke up. All the saints and good people started for their homes. The king was very sorry to see them go, for he had feelings of love for them. 90. In order to worship Tukārāma the king had brought golden coins ((mohurs and hons). As soon as Tukārāma heard the rumour of this, he left without any one's knowing of it. 91. The king came and told Rāmdās : "Tukārāma has gone away. I have not been able to do for him what I greatly desired to do. 92. I would have had a deed written giving him the revenue of four towns. Such was my great desire." 93. Rāmdās listened to the statement made by the king, and then heartily laughed. Said he : "To saints a kingdom over the Three-worlds (Heaven, Earth and Hell) seems worth only a straw. 94. Tukārāma has kicked away the mighty *siddhis* (accomplishments personified), and worships Pānduranga without a desire for himself. He has no liking even for

the Four Forms-of-Deliverance. What chance then have the common earthly desires (to attract him)?" 95. Rāmdās was very happy as he realized Tukarāma's point of view, clearly proving that he had become an *avatārā* to save the universe. 96. The king's heart had feelings of love. He looked upon the *sadguru* as if God Supreme. At his feet all sacred waters were to be found. There was no place for an opposite thought.

#### RĀMDĀS REFUSES SAJJANAGADA AS A PERMANENT HOME

97. One day king Shīvājī pleaded with his *sadguru* with many arguments: "Make your permanent residence here at Sajjanagada, and do not go elsewhere." 98. To this Samartha replied: "One should not remain in one place. If he does, he loses his freedom, and falls into bondage. This is the principle governing a *sātīt*. 99. While wandering about from sacred place to sacred place, where people might wish him to remain, he should not remain long in such a place. One should not do what deliberately creates a longing." 100. Hearing Samartha's reply, the king made him a *mānashāra*, and understanding what was in his *sadguru*'s heart, he no longer pressed him in the very least. 101. However, Samartha did remain at Sajjanagada, but when he grew homesick, to the forests he would go, and come back whenever he felt the desire to do so. 102. Rāma was in his mind; Rāma was in his heart. Among men it was all Rāma; in the forest it was all Rāma. He sang of Rāma; he contemplated Rāma, and Rāma became attached to Rāmdās through love. 103. Among the animate and inanimate, gods and demi-gods in several places, and living beings, Rāmdās saw nothing but Rāma in visible form.

#### RĀMDĀS VISITS MOUNT YAVATESHVARA

104. One day Rāmdās started for Yavateshvara, for he had a desire arise in his mind to worship Shiva (in his

temple there). 105. It gave him great delight to see the extraordinary formation of the mountain. He then went to worship Shiva (in his temple) and there praised Him as follows.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

106. Thus Rāmdās described the features of Shiva. He worshipped him with all the usual rites, and then taking his leave, departed. 107. He returned to Sajjanagada, where he remained a few days.

### THE GODDESS BHAVĀNĪ OF PRATĀPAGADA

Here is another event that happened to which good people must listen. 108. The king had installed an image of Bhavānī (Shiva's wife) at Pratāpagada. Even Brahmadeva and the other gods are unable to conceive of her real form. 109. But she appeared in the middle of the night before Rāmdās in all the brilliancy of her glory. She seemed a mass of light. 110. Rāmdās made her a *namaskāra* and enquired: "Who are you, Mother?" She replied: "I am the original *Māyā*. Do you not recognize me?" 111. The goddess said to Rāmdās: "How is it you have forgotten me? O mighty man, you have not described me (in your verses). Why have you disappointed me?" 112. Your lips have with love sung the praises of all the gods, but I am sorry on account of (my omission). Tell me the reason of this." 113. Rāmdās replied: "You are the Primal Force, the Mother-Illusion. No one can describe any one without the power that is of you. 114. It is said that the Supreme *Brahma* is beyond description. Whatever I have, therefore, said of it is through your power." Hearing Rāmdās' words, the goddess replied: 115. "Philosophy teaches that I have an infinite variety of forms, but when you describe my attributes, I listen with satisfaction." 116. Rāmdās said to the goddess: "If you will remove four pearls from your necklace, and make

them into earrings for me, I will describe you (in my *kirtanas*).” 117. The Goddess listened and agreed. In a moment she vanished out of sight. Then she appeared at Pratāpgad, and performed a strange deed. 118. She assumed the form of a goldsmith, and sat making earrings. All this Rāmdās understood through telepathy. And then himself appeared in the Goddess’ temple. 119. The Goddess said to him: “There are guards at the door, and locks on the doors. How were you able to enter in the middle of the night? Tell me at once.” 120. Rāmdās replied: “O Mother, just as you came in here, so I also entered in the same way. Your mind must recognise this.” 121. Hearing him say this, the Mother of the universe, was astonished. Then she put in his ears the earrings she had made. 122. Rāmdās then sang to her praise. I quote his *abhangā* in this book. Philosophers and those of experience will comprehend its meaning and full relationship of words and phrases.

(*Abhangā* not translated)

123. With this praise of her, the Primal Mother was delighted. Rāmdās then returned to Sajjanagad without any one’s knowing about his going and coming. 124. He lay on his mat and slept.

Now turning to Pratāpgad, listen to what happened there. 125. As soon it was dawn, the priests removed the locks of the door, and brought out the ornaments used in the worship of the Goddess. 126. As the temple-keeper counted the number of jewels, he found four pearls missing. He questioned the priest. He replied that he knew nothing about them. 127. This resulted in a great hubbub. Finally the officer in charge of the fort came, and began to make arrests. He even sent word to the king. 128. The king came to see and to worship the Goddess. There he saw the instruments of the goldsmith lying about in the

temple. He asked the Officer in charge of the fort, who had entered into the temple. 129. Receiving the king's permission the officer began to beat the people and to confine many in prison. The king then went back to his place. 130. As the king slept that night, the Goddess Bhavānī appeared to him in the form of a maiden, and spoke to him in a dream. Listen to what she said, you pious folk: 131. "I made the earrings with my own hands, and placed them in Rāmdās' ears. If you think this is untrue, then go and see for yourself." 132. The Goddess having told the king of her deed, he awoke. He sent a letter to Pratāpgad that the pearls are in their proper place. 133. He then came to Sajjanagad and lovingly made a *namaskāra* to his *svāmī*. In his ears were earrings made of four pearls. The king recognized them, and was happy over it. 134. The king called Ākābāī aside, and told her all about what the *Svāmī* had done. Kalyāna remarked: "No one can fully comprehend the possibilities of an *avatāra*." 135. The king joined his hands palm to palm, and stood before his *svāmī* enquiring: "Who put the earrings of four pearls in your ears?" 136. It pleased Samartha to relate the whole happenings to the king. Said he: "Bhavānī of Pratāpagada was pleased to give it to me." 137. The king enquired: "How were you able to enter the temple where she was? The doors were locked. I have doubts about your story." 138. To this remark of the king's Samartha made answer: "How can one of pure mind, and freed from the bondage to this worldly existence, be bound?" 139. One who sees all the animate and inanimate as Rāma, he can go anywhere in this universe. If anyone has the full favour of Rāma, he can show himself where he cannot be seen." 140. As the disciples heard him say these things, they marvelled. The king, with sincere feelings, fell at his feet, saying: "One cannot comprehend his power."

141. This book, the *Santavijaya*, is full of delights. It may be regarded as nectar. If one partakes of it with fondness, he will never suffer from the disease of this worldly existence. 142. God-loving ones partake of this divine substance. The wicked are surrounded by a devilish substance, and will not drink it, though compelled by an outside force. 143. The Merciful-to-the-lowly, the Lord-of-Pandhari, is fond of the stories of the saints. Mahipati is but his stamp. He says what he is taught to say.

144. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*. By the mere listening to it the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhakdas* listen. This is the twenty-fourth delightful chapter.

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## CHAPTER XXV

### STORIES OF THE SAINTS LEAD TO GOD

1. The gods are fond of nectar, and enjoy continually drinking it. Just so the God-loving people listen with pleasure to the stories of the saints. 2. When the *chātaka* bird is thirsty, it longingly watches the cloud. Just so the God-loving *bhakta* regards with love the stories of the saints. 3. Just as the *chakora* bird becomes crazy for the nectar of the moon, so good men rejoice in listening to the stories of the *bhaktas*. 4. Or to use the illustration of a miser who buries his money. He has to wander about on business, but his mind is on his buried treasure. He never forgets it. 5. So while the God-loving people go about their daily avocations, they are thinking of what they have heard. They are always remembering the stories of the saints, which they have heard. 6. If they have this reverent desire to listen day and night, the Husband-of-Rukmini [Krishna] will meet with them, taking a visible form. 7. Such is the promised blessing given to this book. This is really not an untrue statement. I state this from my own experience.

### RAMDĀS SAVES A RICH MERCHANT FROM SHIPWRECK

8. In the last delightful chapter there was related how Shivājī, the God-loving *bhakta*, sent out many messengers inviting the Saints who were dear to him to Sajjangad. 9. How he took his *sadguru* to Parali [Sajjangad], and gave a feast there to a hundred thousand persons. How he made an offering of the place to his *svāmī*, with full sincerity of heart.

10. It now happened that once Samartha was casually sitting on his mattress, when a strange event happened.

Listen to it with reverence. 11. Samartha had a very distinguished disciple. He was a rich merchant. He had gone on a merchant vessel, and brought back a large cargo of goods. 12. Now it happened by Fate that his vessel was sinking in the sea. The water was already pouring into the vessel. He then made a vow: 13. "Victory, Victory, to Rāmdās, Samartha. Come at once to my rescue. If you will save the ship from sinking, I will certainly give you a tenth of its value." 14. While he was thus thinking, Samartha appeared there. The vessel quickly reached the shore, and the merchant embraced Rāmdās' feet. 15. Said he: "You have granted the object of my vow." So saying, he placed his head at Rāmdās' foot. As he looked up, he could see his *sadguru* nowhere. 16. Overcome with astonishment, he exclaimed: "The Cloud-of-mercy has protected me." The merchant then taking the money which he had vowed, started at once for Sajjangad.

17. Turning now to Sajjangad, Samartha had been sitting accompanied by his disciples. Suddenly the people looking at him noticed that his sleeve-less jacket-cloak was dripping wet. 18. So Vāmanasvāmi said to Samartha: "You have been sitting here for a long time. How is it that your cloak is wet? Tell us truly." 19. Samartha answered: "Listen. A vessel was sinking in the sea. A pious passenger made a vow. I rescued him, and have just returned. 20. My cloak became wet with the sea-water at that time." Hearing him say this, all marvelled. 21. The king expressed his astonishment: "How could he have gone from here?" The pious accepted Rāmdās' statement as true. Those who were not *bhaktas* regarded it as false.

22. On the next day the merchant arrived to meet Rāmdās. He brought with him ten thousand silver rupees,

and with his own hands placed them before Rāmdās. 23. "I was just going to drown in the sea with all my cargo, when, O Svāmī, you appeared and fulfilled my vow. You saved the vessel from shipwreck, and saved me. 24. You manifested yourself to me in my helplessness, and I placed my head at your feet. But at the same time I looked up, and you were nowhere to be seen. 25. I had vowed to myself to give you a tenth of the cargo ( in money ), if saved; and here I place this mere *tulsi leaf* ( a trifle ) at your feet, O Svāmī, use it as you think fit." 26. As the merchant thus spoke, all were greatly astonished. They exclaimed: "No one can know the limits of the *sadguru's* powers."

27. Rāmdās then called the Brahmans to him, and at once divided the money amongst them. Seeing such generosity on Rāmdās' part the merchant marvelled greatly. 28. The Svāmī said to him: "Your money has been given to those worthy of it. Aside from the name of Rāma, why should I accept anything which will only create hindrances? 29. *Shri*-Rāma is my father and mother; and I think continually of His feet alone. All others are but impediments, therefore their help is negligible. 30. At the end of the ages everything will be destroyed, but the name of Rāma is imperishable." As Rāmdās uttered these words, the merchant fell at his feet.

#### A MUHAMMADAN ATTACK ON PARALI FORT DEFEATED BY MONKEYS

31. After some days had passed, a Muhammadan army arrived and started operations to capture Sajjangad. 32. But do what they could, Sajjangad did not fall into their hands. The Muhammadans, therefore, adopted other tactics. They climbed a neighbouring mountain, and from there they fired upon Sajjangad. 33. Cannons were fired furiously, and great numbers of cannon ball fell.

on the fort. Houses were wrecked by them, and every-one became frightened. 34. When Samartha learned what was going on, he contemplated Māruti. Then suddenly there appeared on Sajjangad an army of monkeys. 35. They lifted up huge rocks and threw them on to the Muhammadan army. Many of the Muhammadans were killed and the general was puzzled to know what to do. 36. Remarking that the enemy's efforts were very effective, he made the state of things known to Aurangjeb. He reported: "A Hindu *fakir* lives in the fort. He has called together many monkeys. 37. They lift up huge rocks, and hurl them up into the sky." The Emperor replied: "Bring that *fakir* at once to meet me." 38. The general replied: "The *fakir* is under no one's authority. He has the signs of a holy man. So all men say." 39. Aurangjeb then issued a command that Rāmdās was not to be harmed in the least. As soon as this order was received, the invading army ran away.

40. When king Shivājī heard of this incident, he came with his army to see, and worship Rāmdās. He then learned of the heroism of the monkey army. 41. The king was greatly pleased. Said he: "Samartha's doings are most extraordinary. I do not quite understand how it was that the invading army was overcome."

#### RĀMDĀS TELLS SHIVĀJĪ THAT HE WILL SOON DIE

42. Soon after this, Samartha took Shivājī aside and told him that his life was near its end: "Hence, be careful of what you do. 43. Concentrate your thoughts on Rāma. Do not let your heart be entangled in other things." The king replied: "I have already offered to Him my body, my mind and my property." 44. The king went back to his palace, and gave gifts in accordance with the requirements of the *shāstras*, and departed this life on the day prophesied by his *Svāmī*. 45. The king had installed his son Samb

bhājī as king over the realm, and then lovingly bringing the form of Rāma to his mind, he became absorbed in his essential form. 46. Sambhājī at once performed the funeral rites of his father, and then came to Sajjangad. With love he visited his Svāmī, and prostrated himself before him. 47. He brought to mind his father. His eyes filled with tears. The Svāmī remarked to him: "Such events are the usual in this world. 48. Even the most distinguished *avatāras* have gone to the other world. Put aside now your sorrow, and lovingly worship Rāma." 49. The king Sambhājī took leave of the Svāmī, and returned to his capital. Let the hearers listen with reverence to what happened afterwards.

#### RĀMDĀS PROPHESIES HIS OWN DEATH

50. After some days had passed, Rāmdās called together all his disciples. The Svāmī said to them: "I am going now to my Home. 51. The distinguished grandson of my elder brother is at Jāmba, Gangādhara by name. He should be called here to be installed as head of our cult." 52. The disciples replied: "He is a householder. One who is holy and unmarried should be appointed over our organization." 53. Samartha had written a letter to Gangādhara, and had placed it inside his copy of the *Dāsabodha*, and so it had not been sent to Jāmba. 54. So he said to Ākābāī: "Install Gangādhara over our Society organisation. There should be no other thought." 55. There were other distinguished disciples and followers in the Krishnā Valley. Letters were sent to them to come at once. 56. Hearing the news all the circle of disciples assembled. They placed their heads on his lotus feet and sat beside their Svāmī. 57. To the assembled disciples Samartha said: "The time of my departure is at hand. Whatever instructions I am going to give you, they are to be held in your minds as your duty. 58. You are to gain

your livelihood by bagging. You are not to perform religious services for hire. To do so would bring stain on our order. 59. If our order greatly increases in number, and some worthless fellow becomes ashamed to beg, his search after the supreme-spiritual-riches is all false. He is not worthy to be spoken of as belonging to the rank of *sādhus*. 60. He may lay claim to definite knowledge, and preach with his lips things which he himself believes. He may express disgust at the worship of a visible image of God. Then such an one is openly censured."

( *Abhangas* not translated )

61. "So long as this body lasts one should hold in love the visible image of God. It should be duly worshipped according to the *Shāstras* and regularly. 62. The festival connected with the birth of Rāma and Māruti should be observed. When Vaishnavas come to visit the *math* [ religious house ], they are to be received with reverence. 63. Holding a state of mind indifferent to worldly things, the daily food should be obtained from begging. No one is to be forced to give. Only that is good which is cheerfully given. 64. Wherever a *math* has been built, dedicated to Rāma, there *kīrtanas* should be regularly listened to. And the *Dūsabodha* should be read there with a desire ( to make it known ). 65. May all of you always regularly worship Rāma. By doing so the net of *Mūyā* will be broken. All this is my special instruction to you." 66. Hearing these words of their *guru*, the disciples made him a prostrate *namaskāra*. Their eyes filled with tears, as they remembered his life among them.

#### AN IMAGE OF RĀMA, SITĀ AND LAKSHMANA SENT TO RĀMDĀS

67. Just then an image of Shri Rāma, with Sītā and Lakshmana was sent by a disciple to Rāmdās from the Karnātaka country. It was beautiful in form, and in accor-

dance with rules prescribed by the *shāstras*. 68. When Rāmdās saw it, he was exceedingly pleased. He, however, said : "Let it remain for the present in its box. It will be of use hereafter."

### RĀMDĀS WISHES NO TOMB FOR HIMSELF

69. Samartha charged Kalyāna as follows: "I do not wish you to erect a tomb over me, but when the temple to Rāma is finished, the images must be installed in it." 70. This remark of Samartha's made all the disciples troubled. They said: "At least your *pādukās* [foot-impressions] should be installed here. This will give satisfaction to all." 71. Then Daitu came forward with his hands joined palm to palm, and pleaded again and again with Rāmdās: "Give permission to erect over you a tomb. This is truly the strong desire of every one." 72. Samartha answered: "Why do I want a tomb? You are needlessly putting a hindrance in my way. Listen, I will tell you truly what I think. 73. If you erect a tomb for me, then Rāma will be neglected. All the temple officials will direct the worshipping to my *pādukās*." 74. Hearing this reply of their sadguru, all remained silent. But Dattobā Gosāvī kept making *namaskāras* and pleading: 75. "O Cloud-of-mercy, give permission to us to erect a tomb over you." Then Rāmdās replied; and you, pious, good people, listen to what he said: 76. "You may build a stone cellar, and in it erect my tomb. Build the temple of Rāma over it, and in it install the image of Rāma." 77. To this permission of their *Svāmī* all assented, and with true sincerity they made him *namaskāras*. They were unable to restrain their loving hearts. 78. Rāmdās said to all: "In the month of Māgha (February) on the ninth day of the dark fortnight at noon I am going to my Home (in Heaven). Let all of you take notice." 79. The news of this prophecy by Samartha spread far and wide. A

great many people, therefore, came to Sajjangad to see and worship him. 80. From the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Māgha, feasts were given to Brahmins. At night Hari kirtanas were held before the assembled saints and other good men. 81. The disciples went from town to town, and brought their begging bags back full of the food given them. All this he expended for the Brahmins until every one was satisfied.

### THE DEATH OF RĀMDĀS

82. For eight days this festival was celebrated. Then came the day for his departure. The king Sambhājī learned the news, and came to be present. 83. The whole company of his disciples bathed, and then looked into the face of their *Siāmī*. They remarked to one another: "We shall never see him again." And their hearts were full of grief. 84. Finally *Samartha* bathed, and placed the twelve marks on his forehead made of clay and a *tulasī* garland around his neck. All this in a happy mood. 85. He sat down in the especially pleasing posture called *padmāsana*, and at the moment of death he prayed to Rāma. Listen to how he expressed his deep emotion.

( *Abhanga* not translated )

86. As he thus brought Rāma to mind, Rama suddenly appeared there. He was in a visible form, dark-complexioned, and embraced Rāmdās. 87. And Rāmdās left his body, with firm faith in His form of God-supreme, who is both *saguna* [ with qualities ] and *nirguna* [ without qualities ] and also the pervader of the universe. 88. "Victory, Victory to Rāma" all at that moment shouted. The gods sitting in their chariots of light came to see the sight with their own eyes. 89. Hosts of Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Brahmadeva, Varuna and Kubera, unseen, continued to shower unlimited flowers upon him. 90. Indra

and Brihaspati sang the praises of Rāmdās. They said : " For the salvation of the world Māruti has descended as an *avatāra*. 91. After a life of happy deeds he has now become one who is absorbed into the divine nature. But he has also left books of deep importance for the salvation of men." 92. Thus speaking, the gods returned to their several places, and the God-loving, pious people mourned in sorrow. 93. They remarked : " The king Shivājī must have had many good deeds to his credit that he went before his *Svāmī*. We are unfortunate, in that we remain separated from the visible form of the *Svāmī*." 94. Thus deeply mourned Ākābāī, Venubāī and Bahinābāī. So also all were in deep grief. 95. It was in Shaka era sixteen hundred and three ( A.D. 1681 ) in the *sanvatsara* [sixty year circle] called Durmati that *Samartha* gladly left his body, and became one with Rāma. 96. Now followed the loud playing of musical instruments. The noble Vaishvanas performed *kirtanas*, and flowers and fragrant powders were thrown over his corpse. 97. Loads of sandal wood were brought, and a great funeral pyre was made. He was then given the sacrament of fire, while the disciples looked on with minds full of serious thoughts. 98. They said : " Let us bring building stones and on the tomb let us place the *pādukās* [feet impressions]. " While the people were planning about this, a very strange thing happened.

#### A VOICE FROM THE DEAD

99. On the third day when the people went to remove Rāmdās' ashes, they saw a stone slab in the pile of the funeral ashes, and on it were seen *pādukās* [feet impressions]. 100. On them was inscribed the name of Rāma. Thirteen letters were distinctly seen. Seeing this, all wondered, and remarked : " One cannot know His extraordinary power."

101. As the people saw this miracle, they grieved all the more, saying : " O Sadguru, even Brahmadeva and

Shiva do not know the limits of Thy power. 102. By Thy departure each moment seems truly as an age. Our domestic life has been ruined, and we are now like wandering vagabonds. 103. O Being-of-supreme-goodness, bring us to our end, and take us to Thy Heavenly Home. We have no dear friend, but Thee. This, O *sadguru*, Thou well knowest."

104. While in their love they were thus mourning, a strange and extraordinary event took place. A voice came from under the stone slab. Listen, pious folk, to what it said. 105. It said: "Kalyāna, give attention. Take in hand pen and ink. I will repeat an *abhanga*. Write it immediately on paper." 106. As this voice arose from the slab, all listened to it with reverence. Kalyāna was Samartha's secretary, and he wrote the *abhanga* without a single mistake:—

1. "It is true my body is gone, but I am now in the form of the universe. Listen now to my helpful instructions. I will mention them.
2. Let not your hearts be troubled. Carefully read my book [*Dūsabodha*]. It will point out to you the path to final salvation.
3. Live forgetful of your bodies. Do not commit deeds, either good or evil. By not committing them the doors of final salvation are to be found.
4. Says Rāmī Rāmdās who is now forever in the form of the divine essence: Contemplate *Shrī Rāma* without ceasing."

107. Listening to this voice unconnected with a physical body, all felt a sense of peace. And the *abhanga* that Kalyāna wrote down every one committed to memory. 108. The slab of stone which was discovered with the feet impression on it was immediately installed just there, to

look at which removed the idea of separation from one's heart; and was also useful for worship. 109. The scriptural rites were then observed. Gifts of many kinds were made. Brahmans were honoured with feasts, and to every one some gift was given. 110. Near the tomb [ *samādhi* ] a *kīrtana* was performed, the *Dāsabodha* was read, and it became a custom for all thus to read it.

#### GANGĀDHARA SVĀMĪ INSTALLED IN RĀMDĀS' PLACE

111. A letter was sent to Gangādharaśvāmī at Jāmba and he came to Sajjangad, and encamped by the river side. 112. News was sent to Sātārā, and the king came with his army. The king met Gangādhara and made him a *namaskāra*. 113. It became known to those on the Sajjangad that the new head of the order was encamped below. The disciples, therefore, went down to welcome him and bring him up on to Sanjjanagada. 114. So, Ākābāī, Vembāī, Kalyāna, Annāppā Gosāvī, and others started to go down. To what length shall I go in mentioning names? 115. All of these descended the mountain, and at once arrived at the river side. Gangādhara was standing there, and they made him a *namaskāra*. 116. They embraced one another. All then sat on their respective seats. They applied the fragrant black powder to his ( Gangādhara's ) forehead, and offered him flowers of various kinds.

117. They then requested Gangādhara: " O God, be pleased to sit in this palanquin.". The musical instruments were then played, and all rejoiced. 118. Gangādhara sat in the palanquin. The king walked in front of him. Servants waved over him the fly-whisks, and there were shouts of " Victory, Victory." 119. Gangādhara made a *namaskāra* to Rāmdās' seat, and withall the usual ceremonies the king also worshipped it.

120. Kalyāna had already started the erection of Rāmdās' *samādi* [ tomb ]. The cellar was excavated, and

the temple was built over it. 121. In front of the *samūdhi* a large assembly hall was erected. Here there was continually the music of the *kīrtanas*, and many people came to see and worship. 122. Samartha's store of good deeds was especially great. He excelled in his divine nature and as a super-man. The loud singing of his praise followed after him, and his followers became numberless.

#### DEDICATION OF THE PARALI TEMPLE TO RĀMA

123. A vast quantity of materials was collected. Distinguished Brāhmans gathered, and messengers were sent to invite the noble Vaishnavas. 124. The temple was completed to its very pinnacle. Then began the warming ceremony of the temple. The idol of Rāma had life put into it and it was anointed by vedic mantras. 125. He was duly worshipped with the use of garments, ornaments, adornments, garlands of flowers, and sandalwood paste, incense, lights and the platter of lights. 126. Dainty food was offered Him, and the supreme offering of money was placed before the Lord-of-Ayodhyā [Rāma] accompanied with *namaskūras*. A feast was then given to the Brāhmans. 127. Just as an idol is worshipped, so this *samūdhi* was worshipped. It was bathed according to the customary rites. 128. Sandalwood paste and rice were offered. Incense and lights were waved. Then making *namaskūras* with sincere hearts the people circumambulated the *samūdhi*. 129. This was followed by a feast to the Brāhmans, and all were given *pānasupārī* and favours. The installation celebration lasted for five days, and each day there were *kīrtanas*.

#### GANGĀDHARA SVĀMĪ SUCCESSOR TO RĀMDĀS

130. Soon after these ceremonies Gangādhara was installed as head of the organization. All rejoiced, and a very enthusiastic celebration of the event took place. 131. Gangādhara svāmī was a man of gentle and quiet disposi-

tion. He retained the kindly feelings of all. He put aside all ideas of differences in his administration of his high office.

132. Ākābāī made request of Gangādhara : "The festival of the birth of Rāma is near at hand. Take therefore all the necessary materials and come to the Chāphala Vale". 133. Accepting the suggestion, Gangādhar sat in a palanquin, accompanied by all his disciples. Loud music sounded, and the crowd of people was great. 134. There were many hands with banners, the reddish-yellow flags of Māruti. They arrived at the Vale of Chāphala and first went to visit and worship Rāma. 135. They entered first the assembly hall, and there prostrated themselves before Him. They worshipped Rāma with all due ceremonies, and an enthusiastic *kirtana* was held. 136. The festival lasted for ten days according to the precedent set by *Samartha*. Those appointed to their several offices performed their duties, and there was joy in every heart. 137. During the daytime there was the giving of feasts to Brahmans. Every night there was a *kirtana* performed. On the tenth day a dramatic presentation took place, and saints were honoured.

138. Then came the celebration of the birth of Māruti. His image had been installed in eleven villages. In all of them the festival was celebrated according to the custom laid down before.

#### KING SAMBHĀJĪ GIVES GANGĀDHARA GRANTS OF LAND

139. King Sambhājī besought Gangādhara as follows : "My father had formerly the desire to make grants of land to Rāmdās. 140. But Rāmdās was absolutely indifferent to worldly things, so he would not accept them. I have had these deeds made out. So I ask your Saintship to accept them." 141. The expenses of the organization were now great, and in order that it might con-

tinue without interruption Gangādhara accepted them. Those grants of land still continue. 142. In each town where there is a temple to Māruti, there the revenues of eleven acres of land were given to carry on the worship of Māruti.

143. After the festival there at Chāphala the saints came to Sajjangad. It was now the first anniversary (of Rāmdās' death) and a sacred gathering (in his honour was held). 144. In the month of Magha (February) on the ninth of the dark half of the month Rāmdās had become the quality-less [ *Brahma* ]. To celebrate this event a great crowd of pilgrims gathered, and enthusiastic *kirtanas* were held during all that occasion. 145. The sacred services which were held were exactly like those held to celebrate the birth of Rāma. All his disciples gathered there and with great joy assisted on the occasion.

146. Some of my hearers may have a doubt in their minds, and may put a question to the speaker : "Who are to be called the followers of Rāmdās ? Tell us systematically the rules of the organization." 147. Listening to the question of the hearer, the speaker answers : "Read with feelings of love the book in which are the *abhangas* of Rāmdās. 148. If you have before you the blessed words of the saints, you need no commentators. When the sun arises in the East, you do not need the picture of the sun drawn on a wall. 149. I, therefore, quote one of his *abhangas*. From it you will understand the rules of the organization. Let the saints bring its meaning to their minds." Thus speaks Mahipati to his listeners. 150. This is Rāmdās' *abhanga* regarding his guru-discipleship descent from before the beginnings of time. So if you read it, you will understand who are his followers. There is no doubt of this. 151. The followers of Rāmdās are distinguished men in the world. They have written many

histories of that saint, known world-wide. 152. It is on their authority that I, a humble author, have spoken as best I was able. I have possessed great love for singing the praises of the saints, and so I could not restrain myself from writing. 153. What is the feeble light of a miserable fire-fly compared with the sun-light? So, I, dull-minded and foolish, prattle as best I can.

154. The stories of the saints are a nectar producing vine, that has spread over the earth. Pious hearers have tasted of it, and through them they have received the satisfaction of attaining Final Salvation. 155. O Shri Rāmdās, Mighty One. May my head be at your feet. The story of your life is an unlimited one, and yet I have written of it as best my mind is able. 156. The Husband of Rukmini [Krishna], who abides by the brink of the Shri Bhīmā river, is fond of the stories of the saints. In the above *abhangas* I have signed my name as Mahipati as a matter of formality. The wise with experience will recognise this.

157. *Svasti*. This book is the *Shri Santavijaya*, by the mere listening to which the longings of the heart are fulfilled. Let the God-loving, pious *bhaktas* listen to it. This is the twenty-fifth delightful chapter.

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(Chapter 26 contains the history of Bābājī Bāvā of Arangāva. This chapter is not translated.)

(Chapter 27 was only recently discovered by Pandit Narhar R. Godbole of Poona. Its genuineness has been questioned, but its vocabulary and style are strongly in favour of its being the work of Mahipati, for a long time separated from the other chapters, but now brought back to its proper place. It contains stories of saints who were followers of Rāmdās. This chapter is not translated).

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## APPENDIX I

### GLOSSARY OF MARĀTHI WORDS USED IN THE TRANSLATIONS AND OF WORDS WHOSE TRANSLATION PRESENTS DIFFICULTIES

It might have been possible to have used fewer Marāthi words in these translations, but where there is no English word that exactly expresses the Marāthi word, or where it requires a whole English phrase to express the meaning of a simple Marāthi word, it has seemed to me better to keep the Marāthi word, so familiar to India, and let the English reader learn its meaning by its context, or by the following glossary. English literature is already enriched by many Marāthi words. I see no reason why it should not still further enrich itself.

There are certain words that are untranslatable except by a long explanation; others, where even the English word conveys only a part of the Marāthi meaning. I have translated these words and expressions as best I could, but it seems worth while to include some of these words in a glossary in order that the reader, familiar with both languages, may understand why I have used the special English word or words, sometimes in opposition to Dictionary authorities, even Molesworth. Usage has to be considered, as well as etymological meaning. The glossary will furnish the examples that have suggested the above remarks. I have used Molesworth's definitions freely, as carrying authority.

#### A

*Abhanga*—A particular metrical composition in praise of the Deity. It is the popular metre of the poet-saints

° in their hymns of praise ; the *abhangas* of Ekanātha, the *abhangas* of Tukārāma, etc.

*Abheda-bhakta*-A *bhakta* who has the conception of no-difference (*abheda*) between the *paramātmā* and the individual *ātmā*. *Abhed-bhakti* is the worship of God in harmony with the conception of the identity of the *paramātmā* and the soul (*ātmā*) of the worshipper.

*Achārya*-Head of religious order or sect.

*Adhelā*-A copper coin worth half a pice.

*Agnihotri*-The priest who maintains the sacrificial fire.

*Amrita*-Nectar. The drink that prevents death.

*Anugraha*-Favour, grace, kindness, instructing in mystical verses of incantations.

*Anushthāna*-Performance of certain ceremonies and works in propitiation of a god.

*Arati*-1. The ceremony of waving around an idol, guru, etc., a platter containing a burning lamp. 2. The platter and lamp waved. 3. The piece of poetry chanted on the occasion of the ceremony of waving expressing praise or worship.

*Ashrama*-1. The abode of saints and rishis. 2. The word is also applied to four conditions of living : - the *Brahmacharya*, or the period of chaste youth and study ; the *Grihastha*, the householder in his married and secular life ; the *Vanaprastha*, who as age comes on passes his worldly cares over to others, and goes into the forest for meditation ; and the fourth the *Sannyāsī*, who entirely abandons all worldly cares, delights and passions, and is wholly absorbed in contemplation of the worship of God. These four *āshramas* are considered the ideal life for a Brahman.

*Ātmā*-The soul, the soul of the universe, the human soul, the vivifying principle, the self, the ego. For clear-

ness the soul of the universe is spoken of as *paramātman* ( supreme ) *ātmā*, to distinguish it from the individual *ātmā*, the two, however, in Vedantic philosophy being identical. *Brahma*, or the *Paramātman*, partially defined as *satchidānanda* ( existence, intelligence, joy ) is the sole existing substance. The universe, as it appears in animate and inanimate forms, with their special names, is but the form in which the *ātmā*, the *paramātman* or *Brahma*, manifests itself. The human soul, or *ātmā*, is therefore, only a form in which the *paramātman* appears. The great sentence, 'aham  
bhūmīha smi, I am *Brahma*', is the conscious acceptance of the philosophic postulate of the oneness of the soul of the universe with the individual soul.

*avatāra*-Etymologically it means, "one who has descended." A divine *avatāra* is the coming down to earth of such a divine being, as for example, Vishnu in the form of Krishna, or Rāma. In Indian mythology, as well as in all popular conceptions, these *avatāras* are for the sake of combating some evil condition or conditions in this world, or to save the world from its sin and misery.

Human *avatāras* are also recognized (*mānava avatāra*), that is a good man who has died, reappears later in some other good man, to carry on, or to complete, the work of the former. Ekanātha is spoken of as an *avatāra* of Dnyānadeva, and Tukārāma as an *avatāra* of Nāma-deva. Or Ekanātha, for example, is spoken of as an *avatāra* of God, making him, therefore, both divine and human.

## B

*Bachanūga*-Poisonous root of the Gloriosa Superba.

*Bhajana*-1. Adoration or worship. 2. Repeating the names of God as an act of worship. 3. A hymn, or verses sung in the worship of God.

*Bhakta*-1. A worshipper, votary, or follower of; one devoted or attached to. While the above definition is etymologically correct, in usage by the poet-saints there is connected with it a moral idea. A *bhakta* implies a really pious man. A hypocrite is not a *bhakta*, though technically and outwardly he might appear to be one. 2. A special religious class devoted to the religious life.

As the different manifestations of God, and the various *avatāras* appeal differently to different minds, there is a personal choice as well as the traditional or family choice of the special manifestation of God. There is therefore, a *Vishnubhakta*, a *Shivabhakta*, a *Haribhakta*, a *Rāmabhakta*, a *Vitthalbhakta*, and so forth.

*Bhakti*-Literally, worship or adoration. It is the attitude of the *bhakta* towards God. It always implies a moral idea of sincerity and purity of worship, accompanied with love. Again and again the poet-saints affirm that there can be no *bhakti* without sincerity and love. *Bhakti* is, therefore, more than mere worship, which can be so easily a mere outward form. *Bhakti* must be the true feeling of the heart, of reverence, and love of God, whether expressed in outer forms of worship, or in the mental worship (*Mānaspujā*).

*Bhaktimārga*-*Bhakti-mārga* the way of *Bhakti*. Three ways are recognized for the deliverance of man from the succession of births and deaths, with their sins and sorrows, and with their good deeds and joys, as well. The *Dnyānamārga* (The Way of knowledge) holds the highest place in the minds of philosophers, because when by true Knowledge Ignorance disappears, all causes of sin and sorrow disappear. The *Karmamārga* or Way of Works is recognized by the poet-

saints as a way, but a very hard way, and a very dangerous way. In the case of both of the above ways the danger is pride and with pride comes a fall. The safe way, the sure way, the easy way, for all high or low, is the *bhakti-mārga*, in which a man throws himself on the mercy of God, *bhakti* on man's part, and mercy, forgiveness, and salvation, on God's part. With *bhakti* sincere, and the consequent gift from God of *moksha* (salvation, deliverance), a return to this earth is avoided, and there is eternal life in the presence of God. Because it is a sure and easy way for all, the poet-saints give the *Bhakti-mārga* the highest preference. Although the word etymologically does not imply it, the usage of the poet-saints in strongest terms emphasizes the moral side of *Bhakti*, not only sincerity in *Bhakti*, but a pure ethical life is essential to the very idea of *Bhakti*. Ekanātha's writings are especially emphatic on this importance of internal and external moral purity.

*Brahma*—The one substance of which all existing things consist. *Brahma* is the substance of which all things exist. Existing things have names and forms (*nāma* and *rūpa*). That they exist and have forms and names is as real as is the real substance of *Brahma*. To consider these forms, however, as different from *Brahma*, making a duality is, due to ignorance, that ignorance personified being called *māyā* (which see).

*Brahmachāri*-A Brahman who observes the strictest chastity for a time or for life from a religious motive.

## C

*Chakora*-A bird that is said to subsist on moonbeams. This idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

*Charitra*-Actions, deeds, proceedings, exploits, history.

*Chātaka*-A bird said to drink only from the clouds, hence always eager for the rain. The idea is very frequently used in poetic figures and illustrations.

*Chiplā*-A musical instrument, consisting of two sticks rattled together.

*Chūla*-A fireplace. In its simplicity it may be three stones so arranged as to have the fire between them, and the pot or pan resting on them, or a semicircular erection on earth to contain the fire in its cavity, and support the cooking vessel on its rim.

## D

*Dakshinā*-Money or presents given to Brahmans and others on special occasions.

*Darshana*-Literally, sight, seeing, looking, In the religious usage of the word there is, however, much more than the physical sight, seeing or looking. There is an implication of respect, reverence and worship. There is no English word corresponding with this use of *darshana*!.

*Dasarā*-A festival commemorating the period of the year when the Marāthā Kings started out on their campaigns.

*Dhotara*-The garment worn by men, consisting of a long piece of cloth wound around the body, tucked in front at the waist and also behind, taking the place of the European trousers.

*Divālī*-The annual festival of lights.

*Dnyāna*-1. Knowledge in general. 2. Knowledge of a specific and religious kind, that which is derived from meditation and the study of philosophy; which teaches man the divine origin and nature of his im-

material portion, and the unreality of corporal enjoyments, sufferings and experiences, and the illusoriness of the external and objective universe: and which sanctifying him during life from earthly attachments and fleshly affections, accomplishes for him after death emancipation from individual existence and reunion with the universal spirit. In some parts of India the word is pronounced *gyāna*.

*Dnyānamārga*-The Way of Knowledge. ( See *Dnyāna* ).

## G

*Gāyatri*-A sacred verse from the *Vedas*, repeated by Brahmans at their morning and evening devotions.

*Ghatikā*-A period of twenty-four minutes.

*Ghāta*-1. A mountainous range dividing countries. 2. A pass or difficult passage over a hill. 3. Quay, wharf, stairs, landing place ( on banks of rivers or tanks ). Hence applied by washermen, tanners, dyers, Brahmins, etc., to their respective places of resort.

*Ghi*-Clarified butter, also known as *tūpa*. The butter is melted, thus removing the water that may be in it, and then preserved in jars.

*Guna*-1. A quality, attribute, affection, or property whether of matter or mind; a power, faculty, excellence, virtue: a property inherent or an affection supervening in the most comprehensive sense. 2. The constitution of created things, as comprised in three *gunas*; *satva* ( existence, truth, goodness, brightness, etc. ): *raja* ( energy, passion, action etc. ); *tama* ( evil, darkness, ignorance etc. ). All created things are a mixture of the three, *satvaguna*, *rajoguna*, and *tamoguna*, and therefore, are; spoken of as *saguna* ( possessing these *gunas* ); and *Brahma*, the *paramātmā*, is *nirguna* ( unpossessed by these qualities ). In God, in

good men, in good things the *satva* predominates. In evil men or spirits or demons the *tama* predominates. The *rajoguna* is in all as the activity of either the good or the evil, or both. In God all is *satva*, because it is the *satva* that is in activity (*rajoguna*). In man there is a mixture of the *satva* and *tama*, and the activity (*rajoguna*) makes man a mixture of good and evil, sometimes the good predominating, sometimes the evil.

*Guru*-A religious teacher; one who instructs in the *Shāstras*.

### H

*Harbarā*-A vetch, gram. *Cicer arietinum*.

*Hariāsa*-Servants of Hari [Vishnu]. Worshippers of Hari. Wandering singers who praise the deeds of Hari.

### J

*Japa*-The repeating of *mantras* or the names of God. A rosary may be used so as to know the number of times the *mantra* or names have been used. As this outer form requires an inner reality, *japa* stands also for meditation, for worship, for prayer, indeed for the true spiritual life of a man. The correlative of *japa* is *tapa* (which see). *Tapa*, literally religious austerity, is also extended in meaning to comprise the outer religious life of a man. *Japa* his inner religious life, and *tapa* his outer religious life.

*Jīva Shīva*-When *Jīva* and *Shīva* are thus used together, *Jīva* stands for the Individual *ātmā*, and *Shīva* for the Universal *ātmā*.

*Jondhalā*-A cereal plant or its grain. *Hulcus sorghum*.

### K

*Kadabā*-The stalks with their leaves of the *jondhalā*, or *jvāri*, *Hulcus sorghum*, used for fodder.

*Kailās*-The Heaven of Shiva.

*Kūkini*-A weight of shells equal to 20 cowries.

*Kaliyuga*-The present, fourth age of the world, the evil age. Its duration is considered to be 432,000 years, after which the world is to be destroyed. The present year A. D. 1931 corresponds with the *Kaliyuga* 5032. The initial year is 3101 B. C. The four yugas are the *Kṛitayuga*, *Tretāyuga*, *Dvāparayuga* and the *Kaliyuga*. The four yugas together make a *Mahāyuga* (Great yuga) 4,320,000 years. It is this evil *kaliyuga* that has necessitated the frequent *avatāras* to check evil, and to save mankind from its effects.

*Kalpa*-A day of Brahma, 432 million years of mortals.

*Karma*-1. An act or deed. 2. Religious action, sacrifice, ablution, etc. 3. Destiny; destiny being only the allotment, to be enjoyed or suffered in the present life of the fruit of good and evil actions, performed in former lives. 4. Deed or action; as all actions through the laws of cause and effect determine the actions in the next life. *Karma* is equivalent also to fate.

*Karmamūrga*-The law of works; the road to heaven through observance of rites and ceremonies and performance of virtuous deeds. (See *Dnyānamūrga*, Way of Knowledge, and *Bhaktimūrga*, Way of Devotion). The Way of Deeds. One of the three ways of Deliverance: *Dnyānamūrga*, *Karmamūrga* and *Bhaktimūrga*.

*Kathā*-A story, fable, exploits of gods or heroes related with music and singing.

*Kūvada*-A bamboo lath provided with slings at each end in order to contain baskets, jars, etc. and carried on the shoulder. Used for carrying water, vegetables, etc.

*Kavadi*-A cowrie. A shell used in making small change.

*Kirtana*-Celebrating the praises of a god with music and singing. Reciting the names of the deity. In practice, however, it is a religious service of song. The leader has a topic which he delivers in song. He is accompanied with a chorus leader and musical instruments. Following their leader the audience may break out in ecstatic repetitions of the names of God, or of the lines of a chorus.

*Kshetru*-A sacred spot, a sacred city, a place of pilgrimage; also the human form.

*Kulkarnī*-A village officer who keeps public records and keeps the accounts of cultivators in their relation to Government.

## M

*Mahant*-1. The chief or head of an order of Gosavis Bairagis, etc., a religious superior. 2. Applied to the head or leading man among panditas, devotees, etc.

*Mahābhārata*-The great epic relating to wars of the Pandavas and Kauravas, ascribed to Vyāsa as author.

*Mahārāshtra*-The great nation. The old name of the country occupied by the Marāthā people, now included in the Bombay Presidency.

*Mana*-Mind. According to Western psychology the mind is the soul itself viewed as thinking or imagining. Mana, however, is regarded as an organ (*indriya*) of thinking and imagining and not a part of the pure *Ātmā* ( Soul ).

*Mandapa*-An open temporary structure, made with bamboo or other poles, with cloth roof and sides erected for festal occasions, for marriages, *kirtanas*, etc.

*Mantra*-A text, prayer, hymn or verse, which possesses mystical or supernatural power.

*Māyā*-This word is usually translated "Illusion," but this is not a satisfactory translation. Vedantic philosophy postulates that there is but one substance, called *Brahma* or *paramātmā* or *ātmā*. This substance appears in the form of the universe, and to the various forms there are names (*nāma-rūpa*). These forms are temporary and changeable, and with the change of form the name disappears. It is due to Ignorance that these forms are supposed to be distinct from the One Substance. The reality of these forms is not denied, but that they are distinct from the One Substance is denied. That they are distinct, i.e., that there is a duality, is the particular form of illusion which is indicated by the word *Māyā*. In usage *Māyā* becomes personified as the cause of the Ignorance (*adnyāna*) which sees duality where is unity. One of the stock-illustrations is that of gold in the form of various ornaments, each with its own name. That the gold appears in the form of various ornaments is not denied, but that ornamental forms are permanent and distinct from the gold is denied. The ornaments can be melted; they disappear as ornaments, but the gold remains unchanged. To think the ornaments were distinct from the gold would be through Ignorance (*adnyāna*) and the cause of the ignorance, by a sort of personification, is *māyā*.

*Modī*-Is the cursive writing of the Marāthī. The old Ashoka alphabet of the inscriptions, 250 B.C., gradually developed in time into the *Devanāgari* used in transcribing Sanskrit literature, as also Marāthī literature. In business writing, however, haste being important, and the pen being lifted from the paper as little as possible, it led to a change in the form of the *Devanāgari* letters, which to the casual observer seem a

'different character, but which can be most easily traced back to the *Devanāgari* origin. The tradition that *Modī* was brought from the south, or that it was the invention of Hemachandra in the 13th century, may be due to the character of the southern cursive writing, and it could well be that Hemachandra adopted it as the form for official documents. There is no doubt, however, that the *Modī* has developed from the *Devanāgari* simply by rapid writing, with the lifting of the pen from the paper as little as possible.

*Moksha*-Deliverance of the soul from the body, its exemption from further transmigration, with all its joys and sorrows, sins and good deeds, and its absorption into the divine essence.

*Mukti*-Exemption of the spirit from further migration and the reabsorption of it into its source the divine monad, *Brahma*, the substratum and substance of universal being. This deliverance from births and deaths must be understood to include in the idea the deliverance from the sins and sorrows, even from the good deeds and joys of life, for each life is made up of these. The four forms of *mukti* are *sāyujyatā*, *salokatā*, *samīpatā* and *sarūpatā* ( see *sāyujyatā*).

## N

*Namaskāra*-Worship, obeisance, reverential or respectful address or salutation. It is performed by joining the palms, inclining the head and pronouncing the word *namaskāra*. A *sāshṭāṅga namsakāra* is the prostration on the ground, so that eight (*ashta*) parts of the body touch the ground, and is the most profound method of showing reverence to God or man.

*Nirguna*-*Nir-guna*. Literally without a quality. *Brahma* or *ātmā*, *paramātmā*, the one substance which appears to us as the universe, cannot be described in human

words. It is indescribable (*aiāchya*). While the one substance cannot be described, the forms in which it appears can be described, and their qualities determined. The forms with their names are, therefore, *saguna* (*Sa-guna*) with quality. God, as a personal being, Creator of the special form in which the universe appears, is recognized as one of the forms in which the one eternal substance appears. God, therefore, is *saguna*, that is, He has qualities which can be described in human understandable words. *Brahma* is *nirguna*. God (*Ishvara*) is *saguna*. The gods, all *avatāras*, Idols and the visions of God, are all *saguna* manifestations of the *Nirguna Brahma* or *nirguna īlmā*; the *saguna Ishvara*, being but one of the many forms in which the *nirguna Ishvara* appears, these are to be identified as the golden bracelet is identified with the gold of which it consists. The poet-saints, therefore, in their hymns of praise, their invocations, their worship, and their prayers, make no distinction. They are addressed as well to the *nirguna* God as to the *saguna* God. This identity of the *saguna* and the *nirguna* is often asserted very definitely.

*Nivitti*-Cessation from worldly concerns and engagements; also Absorption into *Brahma*.

## O

*Ovi*-A stanza of a particular metre of Marathi verse.

## P

*Pad*-A variety of metrical compositions, used in hymns or anthems. Very many of the poet-saints have written in this metre. (See the *Padasangraha* in the *Kavyasangraha* Series for examples).

*Pūdukā*-An impression of a foot on stone, worshipped as the trace of some god or guru.

*Pāna-supāri*-A roll of the Piper-betel leaf with Areca nut cloves, lime, etc. ( See *Vidā* ).

*Pāp*-Sin in the abstract, or an evil deed. It is the exact negative correlative of the word *punya*, goodness or holiness in the abstract, or a good or holy deed. That *pāp* and *punya*, evil and good deeds, must receive a future reward of suffering or happiness is a part of Hindu philosophy, but this idea does not belong to the words themselves. Molesworth's Marāthi-English Dictionary of 1881, founded on the Marāthi-Marāthi Dictionary of 1829, rightly defines these words. I differ absolutely from the notes on these words in Molesworth's Second Edition of 1857, and from its definition of the word *punya* as "merit", a meaning it never has had in Sanskrit, or in the whole course of Marāthi literature, until influenced by Molesworth's second edition. See further discussion under *punya*.

*Petha*-A region or large division of a city. A manufacturing or a trading town. A market town. A ward of a city.

*Pradakshinā*-Circumambulation of an object, keeping the right side towards it. These objects may be idols, sacred trees, the *tulsi* plant, a temple, even a sacred city. Keeping the object to the left would imply irreverence.

*Prahara*-An eighth part of the day of 24 hours, A *prahara* is therefore, a period of three hours. The *praharas* begin at sunrise, at six, hence *Don-prahara* ( two-praharas ) is noon.

*Prakriti*-In philosophy *prakriti* and *purusha* are words that denote the material and the immaterial universe. *Prakriti* ( Nature, matter, phenomenon) conceived as female, and *Purusha* (male, the soul, life, activity) by their union make the whole universe, an anthropomor-

phic expression of the idea expressed in English as "matter and mind."

*Prākrīta*-In the usage of the Marāthā poet-saints the *Prākrīta* language means the Marāthī language. As distinguished from the Sanskrit (the polished language), it seems the common vernacular of the people. As may be seen from the lives of the poet-saints and their works, they had to encounter a certain amount of opposition against their Marāthī, or *Prākrīta* versions of the sacred Sanskrit texts. (See Ekanātha's life *Bhaktalilāmrīta*, Chapter 11).

*Prārabdha*-Deeds in former births determined the course of one's life in the birth previous to this. Deeds in the previous life have determined the course of one's present life. Deeds in the present life will determine the life in the next birth. This is the law of *Prārabdha*.

*Prasāda*-1. Favour, graciousness, propitiousness. 2. Anything (a fruit, flower, rice, etc.) given by an Idol, a guru, a saint as a blessing or a mark of favour. 3. Food, etc., presented to an idol or a holy person to be distributed, thus honoured, among worshippers, etc. 4. The sweetmeats and fruit distributed among the audience at the conclusion of a *kathā*, *kirtana*, or *purūnic* reading.

*Punya*-Goodness or holiness in the abstract, or a good or holy deed. Its negative is *pūp*, or sin in the abstract or an evil deed. In the definition of this word as also in the definition of the word *pūp* I differ absolutely from Molesworth's Marāthī and English Dictionary, second edition of 1857. In a note it says: "The word bears not the feeblest implication of holiness, godliness or purity of spirit." On the contrary it implies all three. And by its using the definition of "merit" (not found in the edition of 1831), an idea foreign to the

word has since then been attached to this noble word. "Merit", meaning a future reward of a good deed, is no part of the meaning of the word *Punya*, which is simply goodness or holiness in the abstract or a holy or good deed. The idea of merit belongs to Indian Philosophy, but not to the word *punya*. Every *punya* will have its reward in the future, as will every *pāp*, but this idea is not in the word itself.

The first edition of Molesworth of 1831, founded on the Pandit's Marāthi-Marāthi edition of 1829, has the correct definition. See also Monier-Williams' Sanskrit dictionary under *punya* and *pāp*. The word *punya*, twice used in the *Rigveda*, many times used in the *Upanishads* and *Bhagavadgītā*, and all through old Marāthi literature, is the exact negative of *pāp*. It, in no single instance, means "merit" as implying a future reward.

*Puranpolī*-A wheaten cake with stuffing of coarse sugar, pea flour, etc.

*Purāna*-A particular class of Hindu sacred literature, generally regarded as eighteen in number. They deal with stories of the creation of the world, its destruction, its renewal of gods, goddesses, and heroes. The eighteen are *Brahma*, *Padma*, *Viṣṇu*, *Shiva*, *Linga*, *Garuda*, *Nārada*, *Bhāgavata*, *Agni*, *Skandha*, *Bhavishyā*, *Brahmavaivarta*, *Mārkandeya*, *Vāmana*, *Varāha*, *Matsya*, *Kurma* and *Vāyu*, but there are other lists of 18, slightly varying from this. Of the *Purānas* the *Bhāgavata*, giving the life and teachings of Krishna, has had the greatest influence on the thought and life of the Marāthā poet-saints.

*Purānik*-A Brahman well read in the *Purānas*. A public expounder of them. On account of the vast extent of

Sanskrit literature those who expound the sacred books have to specialize. There are those who make a speciality of expounding some Purāṇas and are known as *Purāṇikas*.

*Purusha*-See *Prakrti*.

### R

*Rāmāyaṇa*-The great epic relating the exploits of Rāma, ascribed to Valmiki as author.

### S

*Sadguru*-Literally a true, or good *guru* (see *Guru*). While primarily the word applies to human teachers, or gurus, the poet-saints even applied it to God, for a *sadguru* is regarded as a manifestation of God. The Marāthā poet-saints frequently refer to the high moral qualities, the sincerity, the unselfishness, the unb hypocritical spirit that marks a *sadguru*, as distinguished from a false *guru*.

*Sādhana*-The means employed to obtain deliverance from births and deaths and all that life implies in its sins and sorrows and even joys.

*Sādhu*-A holy man; a saint or sage; one of subdued passions and of contemplative habits. The poet-saints give the word a moral emphasis, hence a *sādhu* is a man of pure character, one truly devoted to God, a spiritually minded man; a good man. A man can appear hypocritically a *sādhu*, and not be a *sādhu*, for a *sādhu* must be pure in heart and life. The wandering professional *sādhu*, called such, may or may not be sincere, but he is not considered a true *sādhu*, without purity of heart and life.

*Saguna*-See *Nirguna*.

*Samsāra*-1. The world, mundane existence, human life, man's mortal state. 2. The affairs of life, worldly

business; the vocations and engagements, the cares and troubles of secularity.

*Sannyāsi*-One who has cast off all worldly possessions, and carnal or natural affections; an ascetic. The poet-saints distinguish between the hypocritical, formal *Sannyāsi*, who outwardly appears only to have given up all, and the true and sincere *Sannyāsi*, whose giving up of the world is genuine.

*Santa*-A saint, practically synonymous with *sādhu* (which see). He is one who has lost worldly desires and devotes himself to the worship of God. But whatever he may appear outwardly, no one is a *santa* without purity of heart and life. The appellation *Kavi-santa*, or poet-saints, designate those saints who were poets. The Marāthā poet-saints begin with Dnyāneshvar, about A. D. 1290, so far as their works are known, and continue to the present day.

*Satchidānanda*-Existence-intelligence-joy. Although *Brahma*, or the *paramātmā* cannot be described in human words (*avāchya*), yet because it is believed to exist, to be that which takes the form of *intelligent beings*, and to express itself in beings feeling *joy*—*Brahma* being the substratum of these—this definition of *Brahma* is very frequently employed. It should be noted that these three words, *existence*, *intelligence* and *joy*, are not adjectives but nouns. They do not connote that *Brahma exists*, is *intelligent* and *happy*, but that the one substance, *Brahma*, in taking form appears in the form of existing things, in the form of intelligent beings, and those possessing joy and goodness.

*Sāstāng-namaskāra*-See *Namaskāra*.

*Sāyujyatā*-The fourth of the four states in which *mukti* (final deliverance) is distinguished, viz., absorption into the essence of *Brahma*. The four are *Sāyujyatā*

( absorption into the essence of *Brahma* ); *Silokatū* ( residence in the heaven of a particular deity ); *Sāmīpalū* ( Nearness to the Deity ); and *Sarūpalū* ( Bearing the likeness of God ).

*Sāvadhāna*-Literally attention, heed. At the moment of marriage, the priests in solemn tone repeat the words, " *Sāvadhāna, sāvadhāna*," and at that moment the curtain between the bride and bridegroom is removed, and the marriage is complete.

*Siddhi*-A supernatural power or faculty supposed to be acquirable through the performance of certain magical, mystical or alchemical rites or processes. Eight are enumerated, viz., *anīmā*, *māhīmā*, *garīmā*, *laghīmā*, *prūpti*, *prakāmya*, *ishītva*, and *vashītva*. The powers or *siddhis* are personalised as female beings or *siddhis*, who come and serve those who by their austerities or otherwise gain those powers.

*Shrūddha*-A kind of funeral rite or ceremony in honour of the departed spirits of dead relatives, observed with great strictness at various fixed periods, especial honour being given to paternal and maternal ancestors.

*Shūdra*-The fourth grand division of the Hindu body ; also an individual of it. The four grand divisions are *Brahman* ( the priestly caste ); *Kshatriya* ( the warrior, military, governing class ); *Vaishya*, ( agricultural and mercantile class ); and *Shūdra* ( the servile class, whose duty is to serve the upper three ). The *atishūdra* also called *anāmika*, and *antyaja*, are those still lower than the *Shūdra*, and outside of the four grand divisions. Hence they are *asprishya* ( Untouchable ) or *anāmika* ( Unmentionable ).

*Shūnti*-Peace. Unruffled mind.

*Shloka*-A verse, a stanza, a quantity of four lines. A particular metre; praise. In the Mārathi commentaries the *Shloka* commented on is the Sanskrit text.

*Shruti*-The *Vedas* severally or collectively. The word is from the Sanskrit, meaning "hearing."

*Skandha*-A section of a book, a book, a chapter.

*Stotra*-1. Praise, panegyric, eulogium. 2. A book or writing in celebration of the praises; also a hymn.

*Svāmī*-A master or lord, the master or lord of, also the proprietor or owner of. Applied to the Deity, a god, a king, or prince, a spiritual preceptor, a husband, a holy personage, a learned Brahman, a *Gosāvī*, *Sānyāsī*, etc. It is used also as a title, *Keshavasvāmī*.

## T

*Tapa*-Religious austerity, pious mortification of the body. It is especially connected with the *yoga* system, and the *yogis* carry it to its extreme limit. But it also has less austere usage, meaning the duties of life, the special duties of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shūdras. It is therefore the correlative of *japa*, *japa* signifying the inner spiritual life, and *tapa* the outer religious life. (See *Japa*).

*Tilaka*-The spot or line made with coloured earths or unguents upon the forehead. It is considered either as an ornament or as a sectarial distinction.

*Tirtha*-1. A holy or sacred place, any place of pilgrimage, but especially particular spots along the course of sacred streams or in the vicinity of sacred springs. 2. A holy stream, or water brought from one. Water in which a Brahman, sannyāsi, etc., has dipped his foot, which has been poured over an idol; holy water.

*Tulsi*-A plant venerated by the Hindus, Holy Basil, *Ocymum sanctum*. It is usually grown in an earthen-

altar before the door of the house, or in the garden behind the house. Its leaf is used in offerings, in garlands, and its stalks also have sacred uses. Those worshipping the plant go around it, keeping it to the right (*pradakshinā*) with palm to palm, repeating a *mantra*, or prayer.

## U

*Upanishad*-The oldest philosophical literature.

*Upasana*-Worship or religious service.

## V

*Vaikuntha*-The Heaven of Vishnu.

*Vairūgi*-An ascetic or devotee; one who has subdued his worldly desires of passions. The word is also applied to a class of religious mendicants. The word is also pronounced *bairūgi*. The poet-saints distinguish between the true and the hypocritical *vairūgi*.

*Vairūgya*-1. Absence of worldly desire or passion. 2. Popularly, renunciation of all sensuous delight or gratification.

*Vastu*-The real as opposed to the unreal, *Brahma*. The Universe, *Ātmā*, Substance. The substance of which the Universe consists, namely *Brahma*.

*Vedas*-The oldest of the Indian Scriptures. The four Vedas are the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*.

*Vidā*-A roll of the leaf of *Piper*-betel with Areca-nut, cloves, lime, etc. It is usually chewed after a meal. It is distributed to an audience after a *kirtana*, or any public assembly, and is the final act. It is believed to be a digestive, and also as purifying the mouth. It is generally called *pāna-supāri* (leaf supāri nut). Many have the habit of chewing it constantly.

*Videhi*-Literally, one without a body (*vi-deha*). In usage, however, it implies a temporary or permanent absorption of the mind in a way to make one unconscious of the possession of a body, as when one is intensely listening to a *kirtana*, he is for the time being a *videhi*. Or when through a life of constant contemplation of the *ātmā*, or of God, the ascetic or devotee loses all thought of his body, of cold or heat, hunger or thirst, desires or passions, he is a *videhi*. A man is a *videhi* when the spiritual completely dominates the physical.

*Viveka*-Right-thinking. To the Vedantist right-thinking is the discrimination between reality and unreality.

### W

- Wādā*-1. A stately or large edifice, a mansion or palace.  
 2. A division of a town, a quarter, a ward, as Brāhmaṇwādā, Mahārawāda. 3. An enclosed piece of meadowfield or garden ground; an enclosure. 4. A cluster of huts of agriculturists, a hamlet.

### Y

- Yama*-The god who rules over the spirits of the dead  
*Yoga*-Spiritual or abstract devotion; union with *Brahma* through abstract meditation, or contemplation; also the practice or exercise of this sort of worship.

*Yogabhrashta*-One who was interrupted in his preceding birth during the performance of *Yoga* (abstract meditation upon *Brahma*). As an example, a pious outcaste, devoted to Ekanātha, is called a *Yogabhrashta*. In the Autobiography of Bahinābāī, a calf, because of its peculiar pious actions, is called a *yogabhrashta*. Indeed any pious person can be described as *yogabhrashta*, as one whose pious life in a former birth

was accidentally interrupted and has now a further opportunity.

*Yogi*-1. A performer of the abstract meditation called *yoga*. 2. An ascetic or devotee in general. Popularly a *yogi* is supposed to be able to gain extraordinary powers through his practice of *yoga*, called *siddhis* (which see), and the ash-covered *yogi* is able to instil much fear in the minds of the ignorant. The poet-saints, of course, distinguish between the hypocritical *yogi* and the true *yogi* whose heart and life must be pure.

*Yojana*-A measure of distance equal to four *vara*, roughly about eight miles.

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