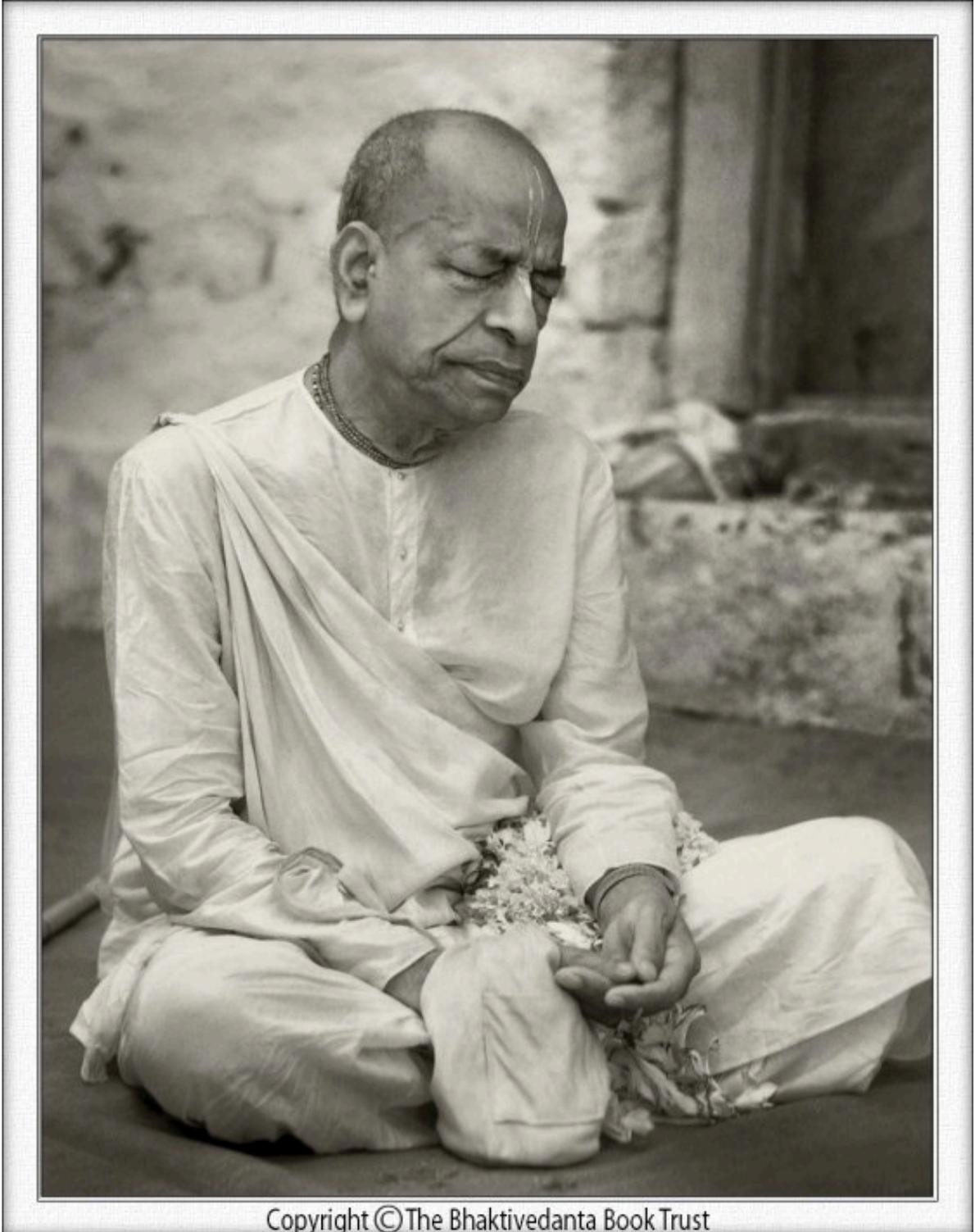


**A Brief Biography of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada**

**Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness
(The Hare Krishna Movement)**



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada appeared in this world in 1896 in Calcutta, India. He first met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami – a prominent religious scholar and founder of 64 Gaudiya Maths (Vedic institutes) – in Calcutta in 1922. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati liked this educated young man and convinced him to dedicate his life to teaching Vedic knowledge. Srila Prabhupada became his devoted student and, in 1933, his formally initiated disciple.

At their first meeting, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati requested Srila Prabhupada to broadcast Vedic knowledge in English. In the years that followed, Srila Prabhupada wrote a scholarly commentary on the Bhagavad-gita and assisted the Gaudiya Math in its preaching work. In 1944, Prabhupada published Back to Godhead, a fortnightly newspaper written in English. Singlehandedly, Srila Prabhupada edited and typed the manuscripts, checked the galley proofs and personally distributed the individual copies. Back to Godhead is now being continued by his disciples in the West in glossy full-colour magazine format.

In 1950, Srila Prabhupada retired from married life, adopting the vanaprastha (retired) order of life to devote more time to his studies and writing. He travelled to the holy city of Vrindavana, where he lived in humble circumstances in the historic temple of Radha Damodara. For several years, he wrote prolifically and immersed himself in deep study. Prabhupada accepted the renounced order of life or sannyasa in 1959. At Radha Damodara temple, Srila Prabhupada began work on his life's masterpiece: a multi-volume translation and commentary on the 18,000 verses of Srimad Bhagavatam, the Bhagavata Purana. At this time he also penned Easy Journey to Other Planets, which focused on what Vedic literature of 5,000 years ago had to say about the aspirations of space-age man.

After publishing three volumes of the Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Prabhupada, at 69 years of age, embarked on an arduous journey by sea to the USA in September 1965. His mission was to fulfill the order of his spiritual master and preach the message of Lord Chaitanya to the Western world. His Divine Grace continued to translate more than 50 volumes of authoritative commentated translations and summary studies of the philosophical and religious classics of India.

When he first arrived by freighter in New York City, Srila Prabhupada was practically penniless. After almost a year of intense austerities, he established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in July 1966. Before he passed away on 14 November 1977, he had guided the Society and seen it grow to a worldwide confederation of more than 100 ashrams, schools, temples, institutes and farm communities.

In 1972, His Divine Grace introduced the Vedic system of primary and secondary education in the West by founding the gurukula school in Dallas, Texas. Since then his disciples have established similar schools throughout the USA and the rest of the world.

Srila Prabhupada also inspired the construction of several large international cultural centres in India. The Society's headquarters at Sridhama Mayapur is the

site for a spiritual city, an ambitious project for which construction will extend over many years to come. In Vrndavana are the magnificent Krsna Balarama Mandir and International Guesthouse, gurukula school and Srila Prabhupada Memorial and Museum. There is also a major cultural and educational centre in Bombay, while major centres are planned in Delhi and in a dozen other important locations on the Indian subcontinent.

His Divine Grace's most significant contribution, however, is his books. Highly respected by scholars for their authority, depth and clarity, they are used as textbooks in numerous college courses. His writings have been translated into more than 50 languages and sold in the hundreds of millions. The Bhaktivedanta BookTrust (BBT), established in 1972 to publish the works of His Divine Grace, has thus become the world's largest publisher of books in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

In just 12 years and despite his advanced age, Srila Prabhupada circled the globe 14 times on lecture tours across six continents. Yet this vigorous schedule did not slow his prolific literary output. His writings constitute a veritable library of Vedic philosophy, religion, literature and culture.

Srila Prabhupada wrote and published more than 80 volumes of spiritual literature, which he considered to be his most important contribution for the benefit of humanity. Despite the heavy demands of establishing and managing a worldwide movement, Srila Prabhupada never failed to rise in the very early hours to perform his beloved writing work. He applied great devotion and care in translating the ancient Vedic literatures into English from the original Sanskrit and Bengali languages. He would then dictate his famous "Bhaktivedanta Purports", further explaining the meaning of each verse and its relevance to the modern age. His books are highly acclaimed by scholars and students alike (see reviews below). The Prabhupada Connection encourages everyone to take advantage of these timeless literatures, which are so rich in spiritual knowledge and potency.

The Governing Body Commission (GBC) has made available a booklet (in PDF format), establishing Srila Prabhupada's position as Founder-Acarya. The publication is an important read and will benefit devotees generation after generation. You may visit this website – founderacharya.com – to download your copy.

Books by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada:

These books are also available at our Temple Shop

Bhagavad-gita As It Is

Srimad-Bhagavatam, cantos 1-10, (29 vols.)

Sri Caitanya-caritamrta (17 vols.)

Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The Nectar of Devotion

Sri Isopanisad

Easy Journey to Other Planets

Krsna Consciousness: The Topmost Yoga System

Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (3 vols.)

Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers

Dialectical Spiritualism — A Vedic View of Western Philosophy

Teachings of Lord Kapila, the Son of Devahuti

Transcendental Teachings of Prahlad Maharaja

Teachings of Queen Kunti

Krsna, the Reservoir of Pleasure

The Science of Self-Realization

The Path of Perfection

Life Comes From Life

The Perfection of Yoga

Beyond Birth and Death

On the Way to Krsna

Raja-vidya: The King of Knowledge

Elevation to Krsna Consciousness

Krsna Consciousness: The Matchless Gift

Back to Godhead magazine

Scholars Review Srila Prabhupada's Books

On Bhagavad-gita As It Is

“No work in all Indian literature is more quoted, because none is better loved, in the West, than the Bhagavad-gita. Translation of such a work demands not only knowledge of Sanskrit, but an inward sympathy with the theme and a verbal artistry. For the poem is a symphony in which God is seen in all things. The Swami does a real service for students by investing the beloved Indian epic with fresh meaning. Whatever our outlook may be, we should all be grateful for the labor that has led to this illuminating work.”

**Dr. Geddes MacGregor, Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
University of Southern California**

“The Gita can be seen as the main literary support for the great religious civilization of India, the oldest surviving culture in the world. The present translation and commentary is another manifestation of the permanent living importance of the Gita.”

Thomas Merton, Theologian

“I am most impressed with A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada's scholarly and authoritative edition of Bhagavad-gita. It is a most valuable work for the scholar as well as the layman and is of great utility as a reference book as well as a textbook. I promptly recommend this edition to my students. It is a beautifully done book.”

**Dr. Samuel D. Atkins, Professor of Sanskrit
Princeton University**

“As a successor in direct line from Caitanya, the author of Bhagavad-gita As It Is is entitled, according to Indian custom, to the majestic title of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. The great interest that his reading of the Bhagavad-gita holds for us is that it offers us an authorized interpretation according to the principles of the Caitanya tradition.”

**Olivier Lacombe, Professor of Sanskrit and Indology
Sorbonne University, Paris**

“I have had the opportunity of examining several volumes published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust and have found them to be of excellent quality and of great value for use in college classes on Indian religions. This is particularly true of the BBT edition and translation of the Bhagavad-gita.”

**Dr. Frederick B. Underwood, Professor of Religion
Columbia University**

“If truth is what works, as Pierce and the pragmatists insist, there must be a kind of truth in the Bhagavad-gita As It Is, since those who follow its teachings display a joyous serenity usually missing in the bleak and strident lives of contemporary people.”

**Dr. Elwin H. Powell, Professor of Sociology
State University of New York, Buffalo**

“There is little question that this edition is one of the best books available on the Gita and devotion. Prabhupada’s translation is an ideal blend of literal accuracy and religious insight.”

**Dr. Thomas J. Hopkins, Professor of Religion
Franklin and Marshall College**

“The Bhagavad-gita, one of the great spiritual texts, is not as yet a common part of our cultural milieu. This is probably less because it is alien per se than because we have lacked just the kind of close interpretative commentary upon it that Swami Bhaktivedanta has here provided, a commentary written from not only a scholar’s but a practitioner’s, a dedicated lifelong devotee’s point of view.”

Denise Levertov, Poet

“The increasing numbers of Western readers interested in classical Vedic thought have been done a service by Swami Bhaktivedanta. By bringing us a new and living interpretation of a text already known to many, he has increased our understanding manifold.”

**Dr. Edward C Dimock, Jr.
Department of South Asian Languages and Civilization
University of Chicago**

“The scholarly world is again indebted to A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Although Bhagavad-gita has been translated many times, Prabhupada adds a translation of singular importance with his commentary.”

**Dr. J. Stillson Judah
Professor of the History of Religions and Director of Libraries
Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California**

“Sri Prabhupada’s edition thus fills a sensitive gap in France, where many hope to become familiar with traditional Indian thought, beyond the commercial East-West hodgepodge that has arisen since the time Europeans first penetrated India.

“Whether the reader be an adept of Indian spiritualism or not, a reading of the Bhagavad-gita As It Is will be extremely profitable. For many this will be the first contact with the true India, the ancient India, the eternal India.”

**Francois Chenique, Professor of Religious Sciences
Institute of Political Studies, Paris, France**

“As a native of India now living in the West, it has given me much grief to see so many of my fellow countrymen coming to the West in the role of gurus and spiritual leaders. For this reason, I am very excited to see the publication of Bhagavad-gita As It Is by Sri A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. It will help to stop the terrible cheating of false and unauthorized ‘gurus’ and ‘yogis’

and will give an opportunity to all people to understand the actual meaning of Oriental culture.”

**Dr. Kailash Vajpeye, Director of Indian Studies
Center for Oriental Studies, The University of Mexico**

“It is a deeply felt, powerfully conceived and beautifully explained work. I don’t know whether to praise more this translation of the Bhagavad-gita, its daring method of explanation, or the endless fertility of its ideas. I have never seen any other work on the Gita with such an important voice and style. It will occupy a significant place in the intellectual and ethical life of modern man for a long time to come.”

**Dr. Shaligram Shukla, Professor of Linguistics
Georgetown University**

“I can say that in the Bhagavad-gita As It Is I have found explanations and answers to questions I had always posed regarding the interpretations of this sacred work, whose spiritual discipline I greatly admire. If the aesceticism and ideal of the apostles which form the message of the Bhagavad-gita As It Is were more widespread and more respected, the world in which we live would be transformed into a better, more fraternal place.”

**Dr. Paul Lesourd, Author
Professeur Honoraire, Catholic University of Paris**

On Srimad Bhagavatam:

“This is a work to be treasured. No one of whatever faith or philosophical persuasion who reads these books with an open mind can fail to be both moved and impressed.”

**Dr. Garry Gelade, Professor of Psychology
Oxford University**

“It has been my great pleasure recently to have read the Srimad Bhagavatam in the superb edition authorized by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. I am sure this monumental work will go far to bring the sublime message of the Bhagavatam to numerous Westerners who otherwise would miss this opportunity.”

**Dr. Alex Wayman, Professor of Sanskrit
Columbia University**

“The Srimad Bhagavatam is extremely useful for all those interested in ancient India, whether their interest be that of the philosopher, the student of religion, the historian, the linguist, the sociologist or the political scientist. I truly hope that Srila Prabhupada will complete his translation of the entire Bhagavata and continue to translate other eminent Sanskrit works as well. Undoubtedly, this work of Swamiji’s is a great contribution to the troubled human society of today’s world.”

**Dr. Sooda L. Bhatt, Professor of Indian Languages
Boston University**

“The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust editions of famous religious classics of India, with new translations and commentaries, are an important addition to our expanding knowledge of spiritual India. The new edition of the Srimad Bhagavatam is particularly welcome.”

**Dr. John L. Mish, Chief, Oriental Division
New York Public Library**

“A commentary on the Vedanta-sutra by Srila Vyasadeva divided into twelve ‘cantos’ of which four are presented here in eight beautifully produced volumes. These lavish volumes, obviously the product of devotional effort, contain many lovely full-color illustrations.”

Choice magazine, June, 1975

“In the diversity of religious approaches offered by the yogis of India, the most significant, of course, is the way of Krsna consciousness. It is amazing to see how Sri Bhaktivedanta Swami has in less than ten years succeeded, by his personal devotion, untiring energy and efficient direction, in organizing the International Society for Krsna Consciousness. Now, he has undertaken the stupendous project of rendering the entire Bhagavata, the great devotional classic of India, into English. His edition is learning blended with devotional feeling and inspired by a definite purpose of communicating the intense lyrical and devotional quality of the Bhagavata. Srila Prabhupada has done an excellent service by his able rendition of ‘the abode of divine joy’ that the Bhagavata is.”

**Dr. Mahesh Mehta, Professor of Asian Studies
University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada**

“It is axiomatic that no book can be expected entirely to satisfy all its potential readers. Here is one, however, which can be said to come remarkably close to that ideal... we have here the ideal of what an edition of a Sanskrit text for a Western audience should be.”

**Dr. R. E. Asher, Professor of Linguistics
University of Edinburgh**

“For those who have no access to the Sanskrit language, these books convey, in superb manner, the message of the Bhagavatam. In addition to being a scholarly work, it directly reflects the spiritual aspirations of a religious community which has gained considerable popularity in modern America.”

**Dr. Alaka Hejib, Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies
Harvard University**

“Srimad Bhagavatam is a valuable source material and cannot but be attractive to serious students and scholars of religion and philosophy. I recommend this series, to anyone, as an important and useful reference work.”

Dr. C. P. Agrawal, Chairwoman
Department of Humanities, University of Michigan

On Sri Caitanya-caritamrta

“I am most happy to have these handsomely printed volumes which embody the work of so learned and sincere a believer in the message of the Caritamrta. I thank you.”

Dr. Daniel H. H. Ingalls, Chairman
Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies
Harvard University

“The appearance of an English translation of Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami’s Sri Caitanya-caritamrta by A.C. Bhaktivedanta [Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krsna Consciousness] is a cause for celebration among both scholars in Indian studies and lay-people seeking to enrich their knowledge of Indian spirituality. It will fill a most serious lacuna in our libraries and in our courses on the religious traditions of India.

“For the first time we possess a readily accessible edition for this great religious classic that will provide opportunity for scholars in Indian literature and followers of the Krsna consciousness tradition alike to compare the original text with a modern English translation and become acquainted with the deeper spiritual meaning of this work through the learned commentary of Sri Bhaktivedanta.

“Anyone who gives a close reading to the commentary will sense that here, as in his other works, Sri Bhaktivedanta has combined a healthy mixture of the fervent devotion and aesthetic sensitivity of a devotee and the intellectual rigor of a textual scholar. At no point does the author allow the intended meaning of the text to be eclipsed by the promotion of a particular doctrinal persuasion.

“These exquisitely wrought volumes will be a welcome addition to the libraries of all persons who are committed to the study of Indian spirituality and religious literature, whether their interests are sparked by the motivations of the scholar, the devotee or the general reader.”

Dr. J. Bruce Long, Department of Asian Studies
Cornell University

“It is a remarkable document of great historical and sociological importance, giving a picturesque presentation of the socio-religious climate in the India of Sri Caitanya’s times and the far-reaching social and religious changes wrought by him. As a literary piece, it is regarded as a work of great merit, having no parallel in the whole of Bengali literature. As a religious text, its sanctity is comparable to that of the Bhagavad-gita.

“This English edition translated by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada is superb. It contains the original Sanskrit and Bengali verses with their English transliteration, synonyms, translation and elaborate purports, easily bearing testimony to the author’s profound knowledge of the subject.”

Dr. O.B.L. Kapoor, Emeritus Chairman and Professor
Department of Philosophy
Government Postgraduate College, Gyanpur, India

“It is a genuine joy to have this momentous biographical work on the life of Bengal’s great saint Caitanya, prepared by his best-known modern interpreter, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.”

Dr. Mark Juergensmeyer
Associate Professor of Ethics and the Phenomenology of Religions
Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California

“Year by year, interest in Eastern religious thought and philosophy grows in America. The editing and translating of the important Sri Caitanya-caritamrta will make a substantial contribution to those who seek information about Indian concepts.”

Dr. Gerald A. Larue, Professor of Religion
University of Southern California

“I can recommend Sri Caitanya-caritamrta as a source of rich insights for every serious student of consciousness.”

Dr. Rory O’Day, Department of Human Relations
University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Other Major Writings by Srila Prabhupada

“Teachings of Lord Caitanya is an authentic and lucid account, in English, of the life and philosophy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. The spiritual movement initiated by ‘the Great Master’ five hundred years ago has profoundly influenced millions of men and women in India ever since, and is presently making its mark throughout the world.

“Sri A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the present spiritual master of the movement in disciplic succession, has done a great service to the English-speaking world by making this spiritual treasure available in English.”

Dr. K. L. Seshagiri Rao, Professor of Religious Studies
University of Virginia

“Krsna is an important book both for the new student of the history of religions and for the professional scholar. It is a helpful and significant contribution to the growing phenomenon of interest in the religions of Asia.”

William A. Johnson, Professor of Philosophy
Brandeis University

“The book Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead should prove to be an important addition to materials available for college courses in religion. It is one of the best sources in English for gaining insight into the bhakti religious tradition.”

Louis Roberts, Executive Chairman
Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures,
Syracuse University

“The Perfection of Yoga is most useful for anyone wishing to understand the meaning of yoga. It also introduces the student to the study of Bhagavad-gita and shows how direct and simple, yet in another sense, how profoundly complex is the path of spiritual growth through yoga practice. It is a scholarly book, yet has a direct personal meaning for all — a powerful combination.”

Dr. Frank Ledwith, Professor of Psychology
University of St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland

“I think the best feature of the Hare Krsna movement is that it is providing scholars with excellent translations of the rarest books on Krsna-bhakti.”

Dr. Lawrence Shinn, Professor of Religion
Oberlin College

“I have read Sri Bhaktivedanta Swami’s books with great care, attention and profound interest, and have found them to be of incalculable value to anyone who is curious about India’s spiritual and cultural heritage. The author of these books displays on every page an astounding scholarship in the subjects treated, and also an understanding and ease of exposition of abstruse ideas, which are rarest gifts.”

Dr. H. B. Kulkarni, Professor of English and Philosophy
Utah State University

“The publications of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust are very valuable documents and will no doubt become classics for the English reader of Indian religious literature.”

Dr. Jerry M. Chance, Chairman
Department of Philosophy and Religion, Florida A&M University

“These books are not only beautiful, but also relevant to our times, as we as a nation search for new cultural patterns for our way of life.”

Dr. C. L. Spreadbury, Professor of Sociology
Stephen F. Austin State University

