

# SHRI NRUSINGHA GURU A Practising Idealist

Dr. P. K. Pati

Most of us talk in terms of idealism but when it comes to action, we forget our idealism and do what is good for ourselves. Nrusingha Guru was a chip of a different block. He practised what he preached.....he did what he said.

Even as a young man, he came to have faith in Mahatmaji's ideals. So he responded without any hesitation to the clarion call of Gandhiji and plunged headlong into the freedom struggle. He gave up regular studies and joined the National School. As he grew up, this idealism became more and more pronounced, in words and actions. Though he came from a conservative Brahmin family, he chose to live among the Harijans. Finding that they constituted the most depressed section of the society, he dedicated himself to the cause of their well being. He imbibed from Gandhiji the virtues of truth, non-violence, and fearlessness. When he was sent to jail, he went in with a smile and when he again came out, he did so with a greater determination to live and die, if necessary for the country.

Nrusingha Guru's whole life style was a living example of idealism. Like Gandhiji, he was against mechanisation, except when it is unavoidable. So he never touched machine made sugar, and hand made gur was good enough for him. His food habits were absolutely simple, he spun his own clothes, and a coarse khadi dhoti and a coarse chaddar were his sole apparel. He always walked bare footed, in summer, when the road was unbearably hot, he used a hand-made bamboo um-

brella with a khadi bag slung from his shoulder, he looked the very prototype of Gandhiji.

Adversity is the touchstone, in which a man's character is tested, and whether he is really gold or an alloy is easily detected. Nrusingha Guru came out of such a test with flying colours. When in the most adverse circumstances, he never gave up truth and fearlessness. As a journalist, he brought into limelight the suffering of the people of the drought-affected area of Padampur. The authorities of the newspaper did not feel happy about it and this old faithful received shabby treatment in their hands. What is still more striking is that he never bore any grudge against them and suffered in silence. Though he had enemies; from his side, there was never any feeling of enmity towards any one. He had a ready smile for everybody. He was very modest and at times he did the job of a newspaper hawker without any feeling of reservation. This practising idealist had so many virtues, that, as a person who was close to him. I can go on and on, but I should stop now.

I may offer a suggestion. Our television authorities may prepare a documentary film on Nrusingha Guru so that those who didn't see him, particularly our young men and women, can have a view of his personality and learn some lessons from his dreams and deeds.

Ex-Vice-Chancellor  
Sambalpur University