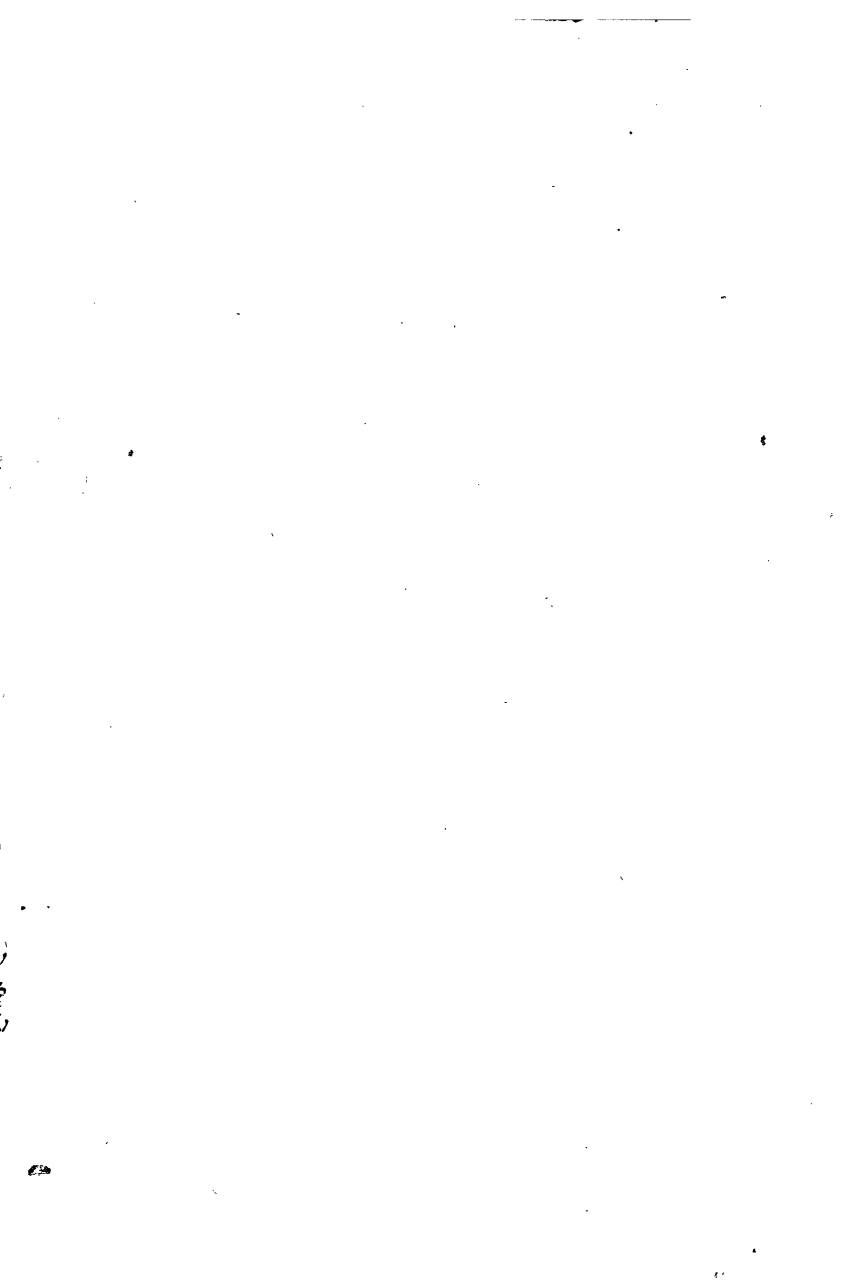


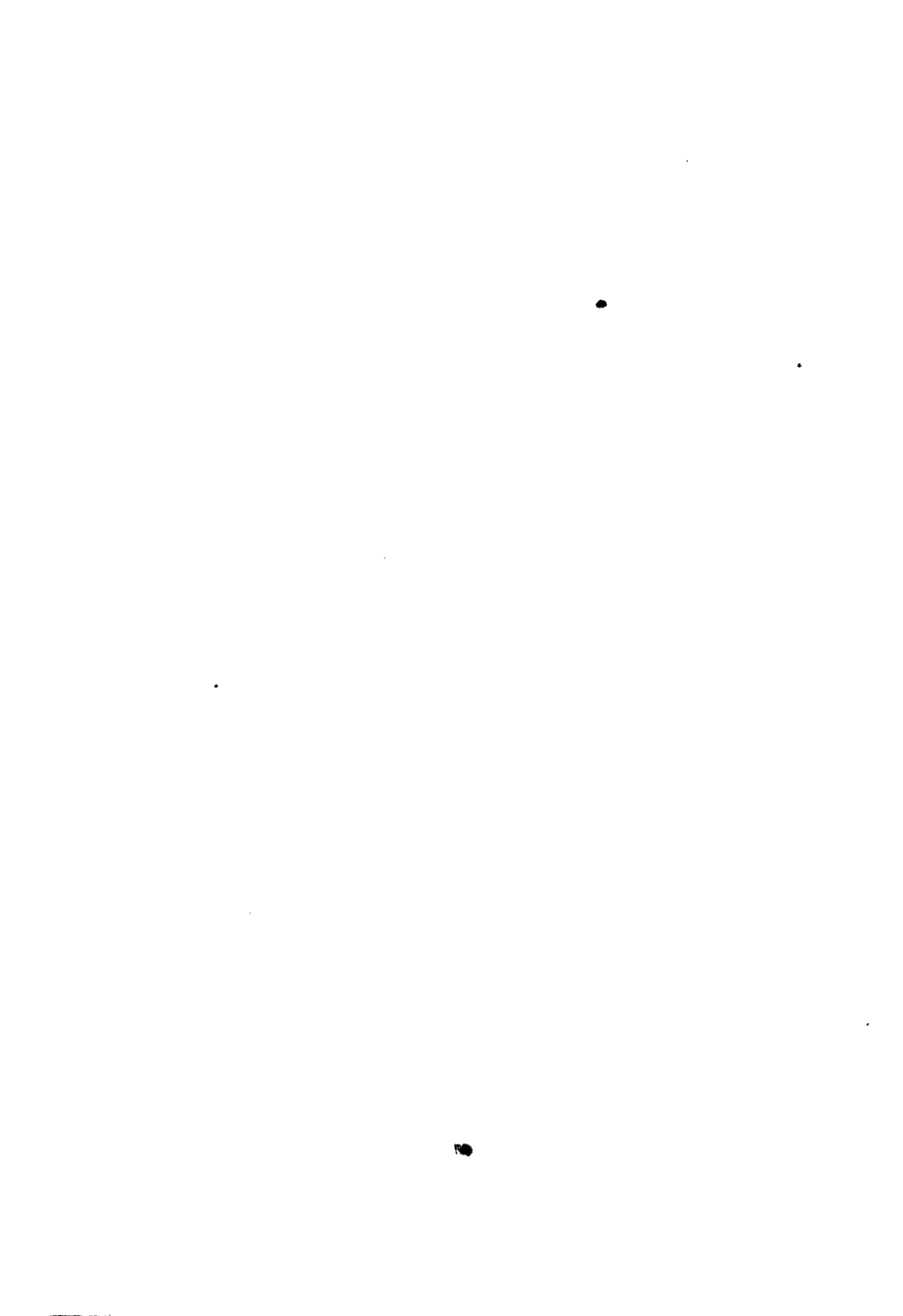
A SHORT HISTORY
OF
MARATHI LITERATURE

Marathi Education

M. K. Chitambar







A SHORT HISTORY
OF
MARATHI LITERATURE.

(being a biographical and critical survey of Marathi Literature
from the early period down to the present times.)

by

M. K. Nadkarni, B. A., LL. B.,

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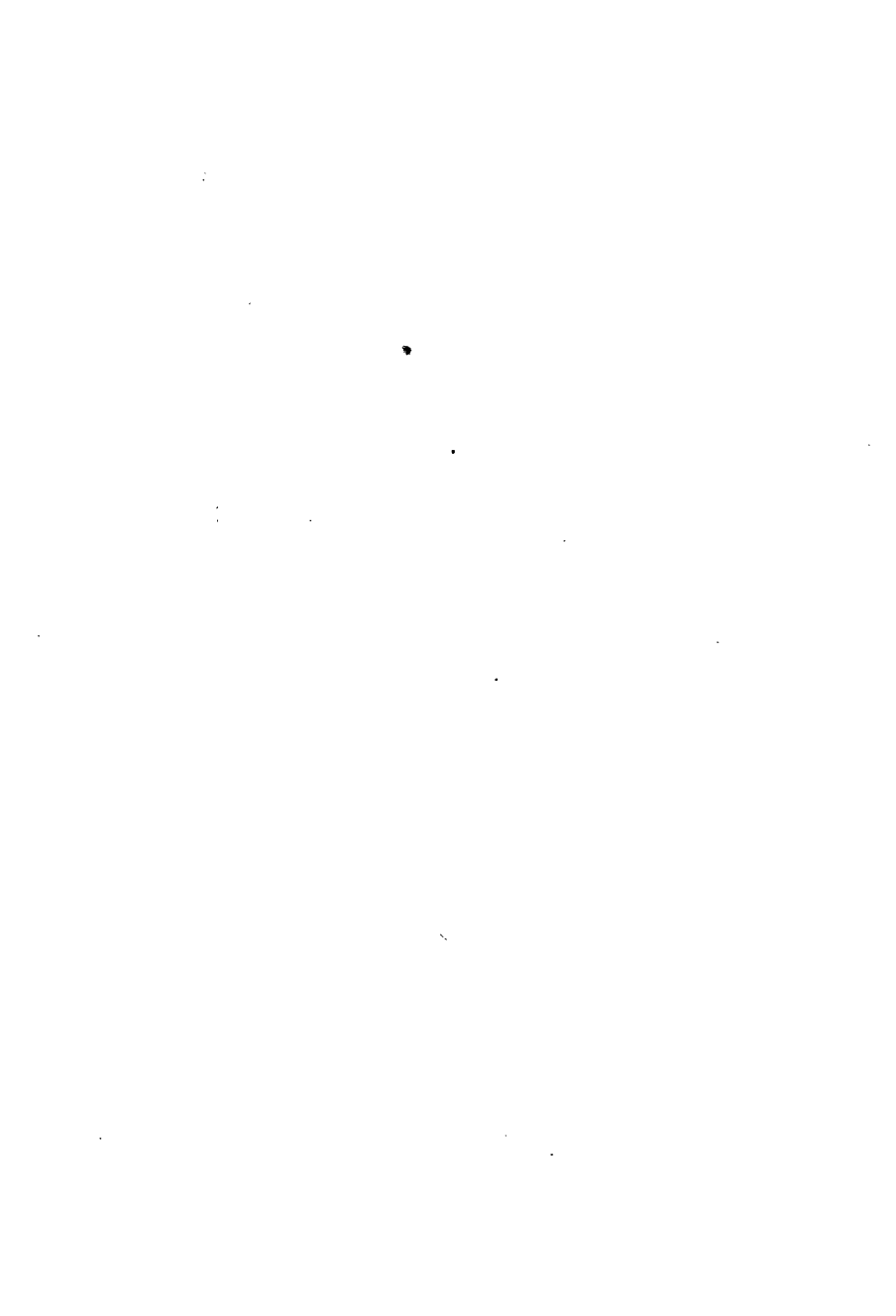


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gift

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO
HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA
SIR SAYAJIRAO GAIKWAR,
G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E.,
SENA KHAS KHEL SAMSER BAHADUR.
IN ADMIRATION OF
HIS HIGHNESS' DEEP LOVE FOR,
KEEN INTEREST IN
AND
LIBERAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO
THE MARATHI LITERATURE,
BY HIS HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.



The idea of writing in English a short history of Marathi literature was suggested to me some years ago by the late Mr. R. C. Dutt, C. I. E., while he was among us here in Baroda as Prime Minister. He had himself written a history of the kind, of the Bengali literature and wished similar histories to be prepared of the vernaculars of the several other provinces of India. His object in getting such books written in *English* was to give a vivid idea of the quality and quantity of the literature of each Indian vernacular to the governing Senates or Syndicates of Indian Universities, who are in a position to introduce the vernaculars in the curricula of the University Examinations. His second object was to acquaint scholars of the other provinces of India with the outlines of Marathi literature and thus to facilitate translations and adaptations from Marathi into other Indian vernaculars. He also aimed at enlightening European scholars as to the merits and claims of Indian vernaculars to be ranked alongside the languages of the civilised world. I commenced writing this book long since, but official duties did not allow me to finish it till now. The vernaculars are now taking a more and more prominent place in the educational system of the country and I deemed it necessary to finish the work as soon as possible.

An endeavour is accordingly made in the following pages to acquaint those that take an interest in the vernaculars of India with the salient features of the literature of Marathi, one of the principal languages spoken in this country, the various circumstances under which it grew and the lives of the more important of the poets, covering a period of about seven centuries from the days of the old Yadav dynasty down to the present times. Bare critical remarks on poets are neither interesting nor instructive; hence a few quotations from the writings of each of the more important poets are given in order that the readers may judge for themselves and test the criticism offered. Several of these pieces are translated into English for the convenience of those that have not studied Marathi much.

The volume of Marathi literature, prose as well as verse, is so great that it would take even an industrious man having no other occupation, several years even to go through the principal works of the various authors. It is needless to say, therefore, that the work of a survey similar to the present one cannot pretend to be exhaustive. I have treated here of poets of first rate and second rate merit alone, leaving out of account, or satisfying myself with only a passing reference to poets of lesser importance like Chintamani, Narhari, Shivram Swami, Keshav Swami, Jivan Tanaya, Shivdin Kesari, Madhvamuni and others. As for prose writers of the Nineteenth century, they are too many and, besides, it will be evidently too early to treat of them in detail at present.

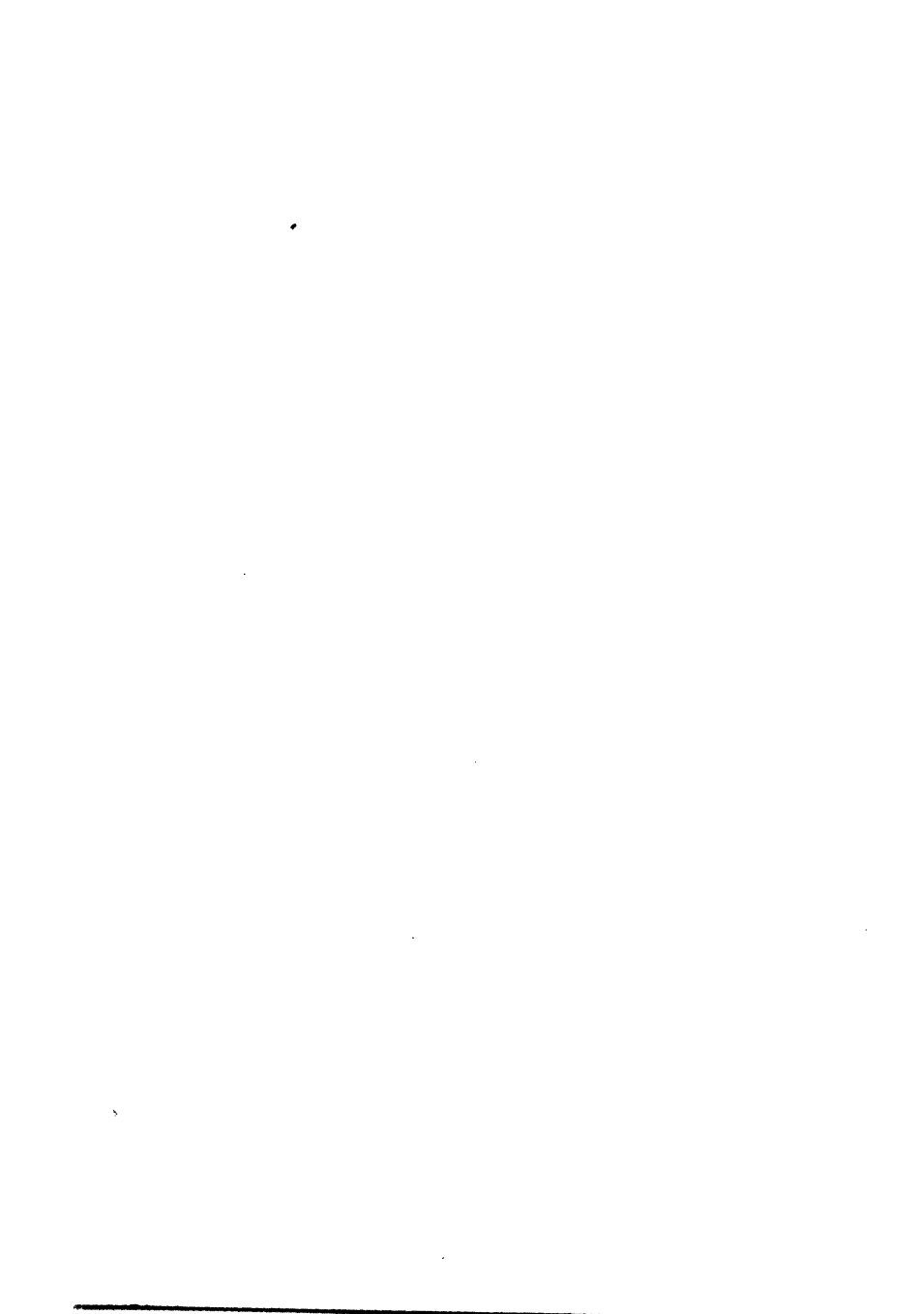
Certain critical and biographical notices recently published by some writers in periodicals as well as in separate form have been oftentimes referred to in this book while surveying the chief works of the poets and making an estimate of their literary talents. Among such books may be mentioned the late Mr. Justice Ranade's 'Rise of the Maratha Power' and 'Note on the growth of the Marathi Literature,' Mr. V. L. Bhave's *Maharashtra Saraswat* and the several biographies of poets by different authors like Pangarkar, Bhide and Ajsaokar.

My thanks are due to Rao Bahadur V. M. Mahajani and Prof. B. R. Arte for the trouble they have taken in going through the Manuscript and making valuable suggestions, most of which I have adopted.

If the present effort succeeds in furthering the cause of the Marathi language in some measure, either in the shape of keener and more substantial interest in it on the part of those whose mother tongue is Marathi, or of encouragement thereof in the School and College curriculum on the part of others, I shall consider my humble labour amply rewarded.

Baroda,
19th November 1921 }

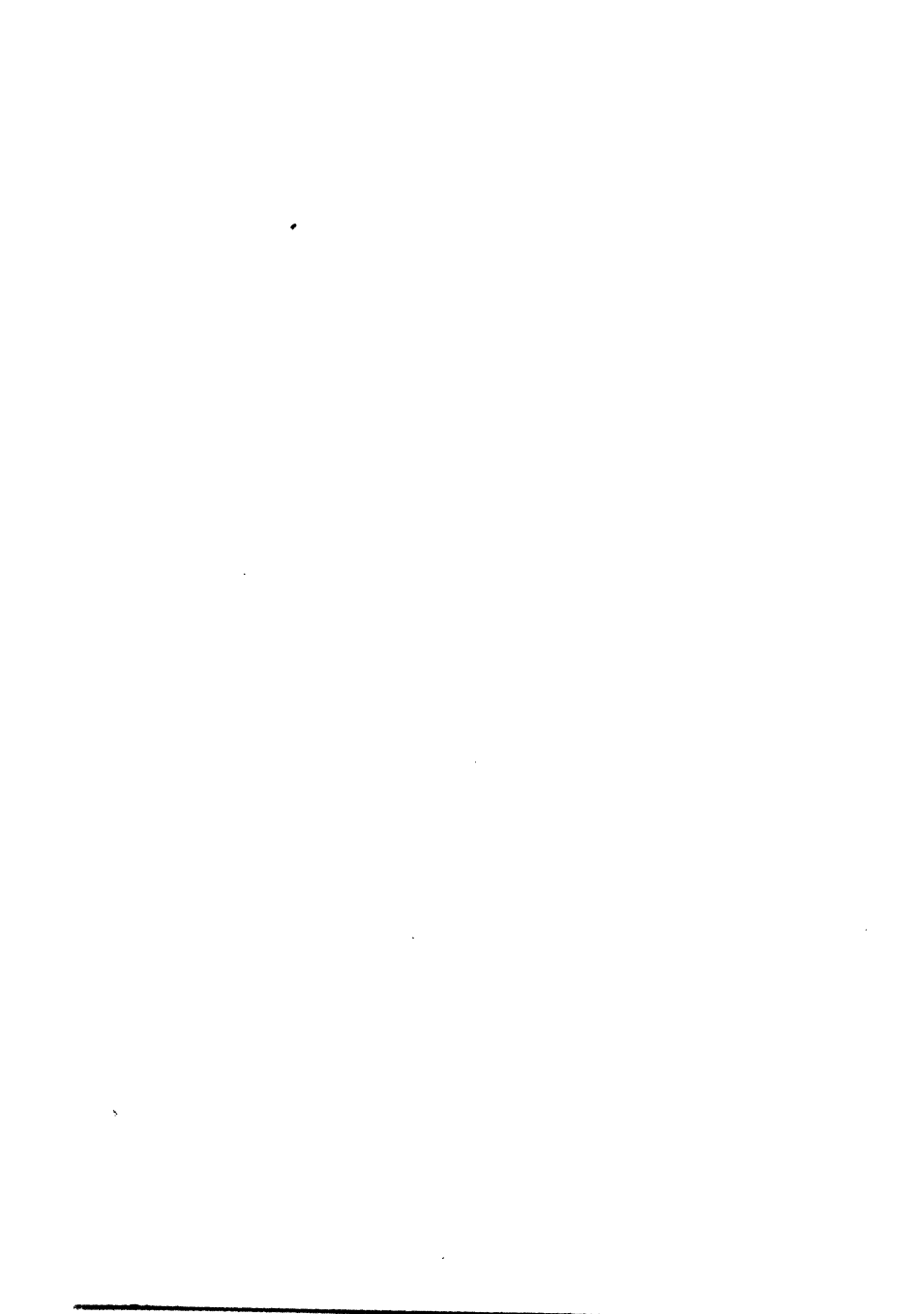
M. K. Nadkarni.



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A SHORT HISTORY OF MARATHI LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

Maharashtra and the Marathi Language.

Before the Aryans came down in numbers from the north, India was inhabited by Bhils, Kolis and other aboriginal tribes who were called by them *Rakshasas*, *Pishachas*, and *Dasyus*. Being hard pressed by those powerful invaders, these non-Aryan tribes had to recede further and further in the east and the south and while running away, some of them took shelter in mountain fastnesses on their way and the others ultimately settled in the extreme south of the peninsula. The Aryans first gradually occupied the whole of the country north of the Vindhya, and when this apparently insurmountable barrier was reached, their progress in the south was checked and they had to find an outlet in an easterly direction. Thence they again took a southern route and effected an access to that part of the country which was once considered by them inaccessible owing

to the height of the Vindhya range. In the meantime the great sage Agastya succeeded in crossing the mountains and boldly set an example to the other Aryan settlements in the north. In this way, the Aryan invaders took possession of the whole of the *Dandakaranya* and the rest of the peninsula further south. The probable date of this incursion into the *Dandakaranya*, or *Maharashtra* in modern terminology, by the Aryans, is about the beginning of the seventh century B. C.*

According to Dr. Bhandarker, Aryans of the name of the *Rashtikas*, (or in Sanskrit, *Rashtrikas*), were very likely the people of Maharashtra, for a tribe of the name of *Rattas* had from the remotest times held political supremacy in the Deccan. He concludes that just as the *Bhojas* called themselves *Mahabhojas*, the *Rashtrikas*, *Rattis*, *Ratthis*, or *Ratthas* called themselves *Maharatthis* or *Maharatthas* and thus the country in which they lived came to be called *Maharattha* or in Sanskrit, *Maharashtra*.*

Maharashtra is roughly in the shape of a right-angled triangle, of which the coast line along the Arabian Sea from Daman to Karwar forms the base and the river Damanganga and the Satpuda range together form the perpendicular side, the hypotenuse being a somewhat

* Early History of the Deccan by Dr. Bhandarker.

crooked line drawn from the confluence of the Wain-Ganga and the Vardha to Karwar. The area of the country of Maharashtra comprises more than 100,000 square miles and its population comes to about thirty millions, of whom about nineteen millions speak the Marathi language. From the Census Reports we find that the Marathi in its various dialects extends nearly across the Peninsula of India. In the Bombay Presidency it covers the northern portion of the Deccan together with the Konkan, extending to about a hundred miles south of Goa. It is also the language of the Berars and of a considerable part of the north-west of H. E. H. the Nizam's dominions. It stretches across the south of the Central Provinces and occupies also a great portion of Bastar. It has to its north, in order from west to east, Gujarati, Rajasthani, Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi, and on the south it has Dravidian Languages. It is bounded on the west by the Arabian Sea. All these surrounding languages have had some effect, greater or less in degree, on the vocabulary of Marathi; so also had Persian, which was once of the Court language of Maharashtra for a long time.

There are three main dialects of Marathi viz. *Deshi*, *Konkani*, and *Warhadi*. *Deshi*

Marathi language and its dialects.

Marathi is spoken in the *Desh* i. e. in the east of the Ghauts, that spoken round Poona being recognised as the standard form of the language. *Konkani* is spoken in the *Konkan* i. e. in the country lying to the west of the Ghauts. *Warhadi*

4 *Maharashtra and the Marathi Language.*

is spoken in the Berars & the Central Provinces. It is said that language changes at every twelve Koss (बारा कोसांवर भाषा बदलते) and strictly speaking there are many dialects, but these three are the chief ones. The difference in these local dialects chiefly consists in the peculiar intonations and in the utterance of certain words with contracted or broadened or lengthened endings.

As to the origin of the Marathi language it seems to have sprung from the old *Maharashtri* dialect, which is one of the *Prakrit* or corrupt forms of Sanskrit. Linguists are of opinion that *Maharashtri* must have been a spoken language during the fifth century A. D., i. e. a century or so before the time of Kalidas who wrote the *Setubandha* in that dialect, and also put the speeches of certain characters of his famous Sanskrit plays, in that dialect.

Mukundraj who was the tutor to Jayantpal of the Yadav dynasty at Devgiri, the modern Dowlatabad, and wrote *Paramamrita* and *Viveksindhu* in Marathi, is the earliest Marathi author that we know of.* He

* The language of these works shows that Mukundraj, if he wrote them must have flourished long after ज्ञानेश्वर. There is however a theory that these works are later renderings of what Mukundraj wrote.

lived in the latter part of the 12th century, and this is, therefore, the date of the literary recognition of Marathi; and if we suppose that the Marathi language had undergone a course of cultivation for about four centuries before this date, as is probably the case, we may fix the date of the origin of Marathi at somewhere in the ninth century A. D. +

Marathi has got two forms of alphabet, the *Balbodh* or simple and the *Modi* or Alphabet. current. The *Balbodh* form corresponds to the *Devnagari* and the Marathi literature is written and printed in that character. The *Modi* or the current form is generally used in all sorts of correspondence and in commercial as well as domestic writings. It is said to have been introduced by Hemadri or Hemadpant, who is known to have flourished in the last quarter of the thirteenth century A.D. as the celebrated author of certain religious works, and able minister to kings Mahadeva and Ramchandra of the Yadav family. Hemadri is believed to have brought the *Modi* character from Lanka or Ceylon; but whatever it be,

+ Most of the religious literature of the Mahanubhava (महानुभाव) cult is in ancient Marathi prose. This cult was founded by Chakradhar and the bulk of the literature seems to have been written about the middle of the twelfth century of the Sak era. लालचरित्र is considered to be the oldest work of the Mahanubhava literature.

the plausible theory seems to be that as the chief officer of the state he had to superintend the writing of official papers and records and so he might have introduced some improvements in the mode of writing.†

If we make a minute observation of the alphabet, it will appear that the *Modi* is but another form of the *Balbodh* or *Devnagari* adopted in such a way as to be written with facility, fluency and flourish without stoppages of the pen. This will be easily seen from the comparison of the forms of some letters of the alphabet shown in the chart opposite (Fig: 1)

† Early History of the Deccan by Dr. Bhandarkar. Sec. XV.

Balbodh form.

Probable inter-
mediate forms.

*Modi form**

क ख ग घ च ज झ ञ ट ठ ड ढ ण त थ द ध न प फ ब भ म	क, क ख, ख, य ग, ग घ, घ च, च ज, ज झ, झ ञ, ञ ट, ट ठ, ठ ड, ड ढ, ढ ण, ण त, त थ, थ द, द ध, ध न, न प, प फ, फ ब, ब भ, भ म, म	क, क ख, ख ग, ग घ, घ च, च ज, ज झ, झ ञ, ञ ट, ट ठ, ठ ड, ड ढ, ढ ण, ण त, त थ, थ द, द ध, ध न, न प, प फ, फ ब, ब भ, भ म, म
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* It is very interesting to note that the intermediate forms are strikingly similar to Gujarati alphabet. Some scholars are of opinion that both *Modi* and *Gujarati* scripts are derived from *As'oka* script.



CHAPTER II.

Periods of Marathi Literature.

The history of Marathi literature covers a period of about seven centuries from the days of the old Yadav dynasty down to the present times. It may be divided into four main periods, which strikingly coincide with the epochs of the rise and decline of the Maratha power in the Deccan.

Maharashtra was ruled by the yadav dynasty of Devgiri, now called Dowlatabad, from the last quarter of the twelfth to the beginning of the fourteenth century. During the time of the Yadav Kings, Marathi was the language of the court and, as such, received a long and continuous course of development. Bhillama founded the dynasty at Devgiri in 1187 A. D., and his descendants ruled over Maharashtra till the country was annexed by the Mahommedans of Delhi in 1318. During the rule of Maharashtra by Yadav Kings, two poets of note flourished: Mukundraj lived in the reign of Jayantpal (1191 to 1210 A. D.), and Dnyaneshwar, in the reign of Ramdev (1271 to 1309 A. D.). Both of them wrote poems on theological philosophy, in which they expounded that the Supreme Spirit pervaded the whole universe. They preached that true religion consisted in worshipping

God by means of sincere love and true faith and not in mechanically going through several rites and ceremonies laid down by the scriptures. The people in those days enjoyed material prosperity and the national mind naturally craved after spiritual felicity. The treasures of spiritual learning were, however, couched in the Sanskrit language which was unintelligible to the large majority of the masses, and so these magnanimous saints came to their help. The Brahmins, as a class, discouraged exposition of Sanskrit learning to others to such a degree that they actually persecuted those among them who translated the Sanskrit works for the masses; but in spite of the opposition of their kinsmen, Mukundraj and Dnyaneshwar stood firm, and boldly carried on the task of educating the nation. Dnyaneshwar's brothers Nivrattinath and Sopandev and sister Muktabai helped him in the task and also composed some poems. Namdev is the third poet of note that flourished some years after this period. He was a tailor by caste and profession. Poetic genius was, however, quite ready at his service and he wrote a great many *Abhangs* (stanzas of that name) on devotion to God. This we may call the First or Early period of Marathi Literature extending from 1200 to 1350. A. D.

This period is marked by works on spiritual philosophy and devotional love. The style of the literature of this early period is what we may call archaic Marathi. Namdev being a poet of later date than the other two, his style is somewhat more modern and we find purity of

Traits of First period.

diction permeating all his poems. The influence of the literary activity of the time was so great that the spirit was taken up by Namdev's whole family, even by his maidservant Janabai.

Namdev died in the middle of the fourteenth century and no writings of significance were produced in Maharashtra for about two hundred years from that date. After Namdev Ramdev was the last independent Yadav king. While he was reigning at Devgiri, Allaud-din Khilji suddenly appeared in the Deccan and reduced him to subjection. Shanker and Harpal struggled for independence, but Maharashtra was annexed to the Empire of Delhi soon after, and remained so till the establishment of the Mohommedan kingdom called the Husein Kango Brahmani in 1347 A. D. This kingdom lasted till the beginning of the sixteenth century when it broke into five separate kingdoms viz. Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Berar and Bedar. During this long period of Mahommedan rule, the nation of Maharashtra was completely over-ridden and found little scope for its activity. Marathi gave place to Persian as Court language. In political sphere it degenerated and so it did in literary sphere also. The period from the establishment of the Brahmani Kingdom to its disruption was almost a blank in the history of Marathi literature.

The five separate Brahmani Kingdoms mentioned above, fought with each other for power, and hopes of the Mahratta nation lay in these mutual quarrels of the

Second period.

Mahommedan kings. The latter had to seek the help of Mahratta horsemen for the achievement of their own purposes and old Mahratta families of note, who had so long been buried in obscurity, came forward and began to take prominent part in the courts of their respective Mahommedan masters. In course of time, they grew in power. The families of Jadhav, Nimbalkar, Ghatge Bhonsle, Morey and others established their military reputation and held high positions at Mahommedan. About this time, the seeds of literary genius germinated again. Eknath was born in 1548 A. D. He resumed the task commenced by Dnyaneshwar more than two centuries ago and prosecuted it further by denouncing the rigid traditions of the caste system and preaching the spirit of mutual toleration. Other poets e. g. Dasopant, Rangnath, Raghunath Pandit and Anand Tanaya were also born about this time. This period may be called the Second Period viz. from 1550 to 1600 A. D.

The poets of this period wrote on religious and social emancipation and rendered into Marathi the more important portions of the national epic lore. The style of this period is naturally less old fashioned and we find in it a sprinkling of Persian words and phrases owing to the advent of Mahommedan kings in the Deccan about this time. The situation of Maharashtra was such that everybody was deeply engrossed in the struggle for existence and there was neither much time nor much energy to devote to literature.

Traits of Second period.

The third is the most brilliant period in the history of Marathi literature. It extends from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the close of Peshwa rule. i. e. over two hundred years. Three poets of great fame, viz Ramdas, Tukaram and Mukteshwar were born in course of only a year or so about 1603 A. D. Tukaram preached asceticism, toleration and devotion to God. Ramdas was a saint of keen insight and ardent preacher to the masses. He was shrewd enough to see that the ground of the Mahratha nation was well prepared, and that the time had arrived when the seed of union could be sown to advantage. *Dasbodh* and his other writings, besides containing sermons on abstract as well as practical topics, exhorted all communities of the Mahratta nation to forget their old dissensions and caste prejudices. Mukteshwar too, by his translation of the *Mahabharat* stirred up the nation still quicker. Many a Mahratta soldier gathered together and listened with deep interest and rapt attention to the public narration of thrilling episodes in the *Mahabharat*.

This period of two centuries produced poets of a very high order, chief among whom, besides those mentioned above, were Vaman Pandit, Shridhar, Moropant, and Mahipati. The *Shahirs* or petty bards also added their quota and immortalized important historical incidents by their less scientific, yet more popular and more inspiring songs called *Powadas*. A little before the

Third period.

Authors in the Third period.

subversion of the Peshwa rule, however, the poetic faculty seems to have indulged in lighter literature, and poetry of a low order was composed and sung for pleasure alone. Bajirao II and his gay companions revelled in luxury and some of the poets of this time composed *lavis* (songs of that name) in order to please the voluptuous Peshwa and his sycophants. This period (1620 to 1820 A. D.) of Marathi literature is coincident with the period of Mahratta power in the political history of the Deccan, and Mahratta poetry is remarkably contemporaneous with Mahratta power in its rise, growth and fall. Tukaram followed in the foot-steps of Namdev with particular regard to devotional love; Ramdas preached union and taught practical wisdom besides the abstract philosophy of *Brahma*; Mukteshwar and Shridhar adapted the national Sanskrit epics in sweet, simple, elegant Marathi; Vaman Pandit explained the Gita and brought forth a series of fine poems of charming sentiments; Mahipati produced valuable biographies of saints; Sohiroba taught asceticism and saintliness of life; and last, but not the least, Moropant translated or rather adapted the Sanskrit epics into several poems with masterly skill and learning; *Bakhars* or chronicles recording important events in the history of Maharashtra were composed by able men like Chitnis and Sohoni; in fact the light of literature was well kindled just before the rise of Shivaji, and, with the exception of a generation or two after the death of Shivaji, it burnt brightest under favourable circumstances for two centuries, till the close of the reign of Madhavrao II.

Just after his sad demise, the court of Poona began to lose its manliness and wisdom, and luxury and folly was the order of the day. The poetry of this latter interval was of an effeminate kind and mostly consisted of *Lavis*. The Maratha confederacy was dismembered and Maratha literature too suffered a fall.

The literature of this period is characterised by a variety of features. It was not only rich in devotional poems but the poetic genius found other themes also. Prose writings were not neglected though they were marked by antiquity of style and tinged with hybridism of court language. The highly didactic tone of Ramdas, the spontaneous flow of the writings of Tukaram, the descriptive talent of Mukteshwar, the delightful melody of Vaman Pandit, the narrative genius of Shridhar, the unsurpassed metrical dexterity and inexhaustible vocabulary of Moropant are literary excellences, of which any nation may justly be proud; and all of them are the products of this, the brightest era in the history of Maharashtra.

We now come to the Fourth or the present period of Marathi literature, viz the latter part of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Great literary activity is shown during this period of peace under the enlightened British rule. The art of printing was introduced and a large number of publications made.

Many works of ancient authors are discovered and published; old *Bakhars* are printed; translations are rendered from the Sanskrit and English languages, of works on history, philosophy, politics, religion, medicine and law; works are published with critical and explanatory commentaries; books are written for the use of schools and colleges; select dramas in English and Sanskrit are adapted to the stage; original dramas based on epic as well as social plots are composed and acted; novels are written, some original and others adapted, for diversion of the reading public; many other good works are written in prose and verse; and newspapers and periodicals have been started to disseminate various kinds of knowledge among the public.

Among the authors that lived or do live in this period may be mentioned Parashuram-pant Godbole who translated some good Sanskrit dramas like *Shakuntal* and *Uttara Ramcharit* into Marathi; Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar who has rendered *Meghadut* into Marathi verse; M. M. Kunte who has written a vigorous poem on Raja Shivaji; Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar who is the author of several instructive and critical essays; Vasudev Shastri Khare who has written *Yeshvantmahakavya*; V. M. Mahajani who is the author of *Kusumanjali* and translator or adaptor of three of Shakespeare's plays; Dr. Kirtikar who has produced *Indira*, an adaptation of the 'Princess' in Marathi verse; Kirloskar, S. M. Banade, Khadilkar, Kolhatkar and Deval who have been

successful in diverting the Marathi-knowing public with their able dramatic productions; Parasnis and Sardesai who have acquitted themselves well as historians; H. N. Apte, the well-known writer of social and historical novels; Gunjekar, C. V. Vaidya, Bhanu and N. C. Kelkar who have written on varied subjects; Justice Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar who have produced instructive essays on religions and social themes; B. G. Tilak of worldwide fame who has left an excellent legacy in his learned exposition of the Gita in Marathi; Rev. Tilak, Mogre and Bhide who have turned out good specimens of poetry; and Bapat and Ramabai Ranade who have written good biographies.

In the following chapters we shall take brief notices, critical as well as biographical, of the more important of the authors that lived in each of these four periods in order.

CHAPTER III.

Mukundraj.

Mukundraj is generally recognised to be the first Marathi poet. He is reputed to have lived in the reign of Jayantpal The exact date of Mukundraj is not known, but this much is certain that he was one of the great ascetic saints of those days and was afterwards a religious tutor to Jayantpal who ruled Maharashtra in the latter half of the twelfth century. He lived at Jogai's Amba (now included in the Nizam's Territory) and was a Deshastha Brahman by caste. Jayantpal was very desirous of perceiving the much-talked-of *Brahma* (Supreme Spirit) and asked every ascetic that propounded the theory of *Vedant* in his sermons, to show him *Brahma*. Several Brahmin recluses were thus ordered, and all of them, being unable to show him *Brahma*, were incarcerated for what he called their impudence and hypocrisy. Saint Mukundraj also once happened to pay a visit to the prince and was, as usual, asked to show the *Brahma*. Unlike the many ascetics that preceded him, he showed himself equal to the occasion. Tradition has it that he asked the prince to keep staring at a camel hard by, and at the same time drink a cupful of milk without the least idea of the camel in his mind. The prince tried his best, but had to confess at last that he could not do

so. It was impossible, he said, to be gazing at the camel and at the same time to keep the idea of it out of the mind. Mukundraj retorted, saying that the mind must be first disabused of the various ideas of worldly life before perception of *Brahma* could be achieved; that required a very long course of study and practice, and it was futile to attempt at knowing *Brahma* before one had gone through the course. Jayantpal saw his mistake, repented of having imprisoned so many ascetics, and set all of them at liberty. Thenceforth Mukundraj lived for a long time at the capital as a tutor to the prince and taught him the science and art of knowing *Brahma*.

The language of the works of Mukundraj viz *Viveksindhu* and *Paramamrit* appears comparatively modern appearance of his works. to be more modern than that of *Dnyaneshvari*, the celebrated exposition of the *Bhagavad-Gita* in Marathi composed by Dnyaneshvar later on; and scholars doubt if Mukundraj really wrote them. Some are, however, of opinion that he wrote them in the archaic Marathi of his time and that somebody must have afterwards rendered them into later Marathi and hence the comparatively modern appearance.

His Writings.

Viveksindhu (Sea of Reflection) and *Paramamrit* (Extreme Nectar) are, as mentioned above, the only two works of Mukundraj that we know of. The former is the

bigger of the two and consists of about 1500 couplets or stanzas in the *Ovi* metre. Mukundraj was the first to compose verses in the *Ovi* metre. *Vivek-Sindhu* is written in two parts, the first consisting of seven and the second, of eleven chapters. It was composed for the instruction of prince Jayantpal. Mukundraj says at the end of the seventh chapter of the first part of his *Vivek-Sindhu*:—

“ नृसिंहाचा बल्लाळ । त्याचा कुमर जयंतपाळ ।
तेणें करविला गदारोळ । ग्रंथरचनेचा ॥

भगीरथाचेनि दैवयोगें । विश्व सुस्नात गंगें ।
तैसें जयंतपाळाचेनि प्रसंगें । जग सुखिया होय ॥ ”

Translation:—“Jayantpal, son of Ballal who was the son of Nrisimha, had this work prepared. Just as the whole universe has got the benefit of bathing in the Ganges by virtue of the good luck of Bhagiratha,* so the whole world is blessed with this work on account of Jayantpal.”

Mukundraj was a follower of the school of S'ankaracharya and a profound scholar of *Vedant* (Philosophy of the Soul). He preached one-ness of the Supreme Soul with the Individual Soul, and exhorted the people to free the Soul from the bonds of worldly existence and, by realizing one-ness, to attain true

*The King who led the river Ganges down through the mountains on to the sea.

knowledge, so as to work their own salvation. Both the parts of the *Vivek-Sindhu* are devoted to the disquisition of this abstract theory of *Vedant*. The following small extracts from the fifth chapter of the first part and from the ninth chapter of the second part give an idea of the theory:—

“प्रपंचानुसंधान करितां । किंचित् स्वरूपीं झाली दुश्चित्ता ।
तेथे उठलिया अनंता । अज्ञान शक्ती ॥

स्वरूपीं दुश्चित्तपण । हेचि अज्ञानाचें लक्षण ।
जेणें चैतन्यासि भरे अवतरण । अहंतेचें ॥

अवयव हस्तपादादिक । एक देहाचे जैसे अनेक ।
तैसे अज्ञानसंगें असंख्य । अंश माया देवीचे ॥

एकाच बुद्धीच्या अनेकवृत्ती । तेंवी मायेच्या अनेक शक्ती ।
जाणिवे नेणिवेच्या प्रतीति । जगप्रसिद्ध कीं ॥ ”

Tr:—“When one takes recourse to worldly differentiation (प्रपंच), then there is a misconception of the real nature of the Supreme Spirit and the result is immeasurable Ignorance, whereby the Supreme Spirit is covered over with a coating of egoism. Just as hands, feet and other limbs are but several parts of one body, so the innumerable phenomena of *Maya* (Illusion) are the products of Ignorance. It is well-known that as Knowledge assumes several conceptions, so Ignorance assumes several deceptions.”

“ नातरी आपुलेनि आंगें । जळचि तरंगाकारें हो लागे ।
 तैसें ब्रह्म आभासूं लागे । प्रपंचाकारें ॥
 अलंकाराची कुसरी । सोनेंचि भासे नानापरी ।
 तैसें पाहतां तत्व निर्धारि । ब्रह्मचि विश्वरूप हें ॥
 मूळाकडूनि पाहतां । वृक्षचि पावे खांदियां समस्तां ।
 येक्य पेसें तत्वतां । अनुभवासि ये ॥
 वृक्षाग्रें फडुनि पाहिजे । तंव खांदियांसि भेद देखिजे ।
 एकचि वृक्षासी विभागिजे । अवयवभेदें ॥
 तैसें एकचि ब्रह्म लिंगातें । विस्तारिति नाना मतें ।
 ती फुडी माया संकळितें । ऐसें जाणिजे ॥

x x x x

या परी हें अद्वैत । जयासी अनुभवलें निश्चित ।
 तें जाणावें मूर्तिमंत । परब्रह्म पै ॥
 प्रपंच उपसंहारे । केवळ ब्रह्मचि उरे ।
 तें जाणावें चतुरें । अद्वैत मत पै ॥
 महा अद्वैत अनारिसें । येथें केवळ ब्रह्मचि प्रकाशे ।
 प्रपंच निरासाचें पिसें । न लगे तेथें ॥ ”

Trs:—“Just as water itself assumes the forms of waves, so the Supreme Spirit assumes different images in the form of प्रपंच. As the same gold appears in the forms of different ornaments, howsoever skilfully made, so the same Spirit appears in the various forms of the Creation. If we watch a tree from the root, we find the same one tree taking the form of various branches; when we watch

it from the extremities, we suppose the branches to be different. But in truth the tree is all one and the same; only, there is the difference in the parts. So it is with the Supreme Spirit; it is really the same; only, different views give it different appearances. × × × Those that realise this oneness are themselves embodied in the Supreme *Brahma*. When the प्रपंच disappears, the pure spirit remains behind, shining brilliantly, divested of the darkness of the प्रपंच (Differentiation). ”

विवेकसिंधु being a systematic disquisition on an abstruse subject, it is not proposed to give here too many extracts from it. The whole work may be said to be a short summary of the Upanishads, the well-known Sanskrit essays on *Vedant*.

परमामृत is also a Vedantic lecture consisting of fourteen chapters. The whole poem contains about three hundred stanzas in *Ovi* metre. Like the विवेकसिंधु it is also a discourse on परब्रह्म.

Mukundraaj is of opinion that it is absolutely necessary for a disciple to choose a proper गुरु (religious master) and that then only can he know the परब्रह्म under his guidance. He says in the concluding chapter of परमामृत:—

“ नित्यं करावा ऐसा नेम । पडों न चावा संसारभ्रम ।
धरावा स्वरूपाचा काम । साधनपथ ॥ ”

हें नित्य श्रवण करावें । मनन निदिध्यासं अनुभवावें ।
 आळस करून न दवडावें । आयुष्य वृथा ॥
 येविषयीं जो आळशी । त्या परमप्राप्ती न होय कल्पां-
 तेसी । तो सद्गुरूचा उपदेशी । म्हणोंचि न ये ॥
 आतां असो बहु बोलणें । श्रीगुरूसी धरी जीवंप्राणें ।
 नाहीं सार त्याविणें । अन्य कांहीं ॥
 त्याचे वचनीं राहीं । करूं नको येर कांहीं ।
 तरी अनायासें स्वरूप पाहीं । पावशी तूं ॥
 वृद्धी पावे गुरुकृपा । ऐशिये स्थिती राहे पां ।
 गुरु कष्टी होय बापा । ऐसा न वर्ते ॥ ”

Trs:--“ Make up your mind to be free from the delusion of *Samsara* (worldly life) and to attain salvation. If you wish to realise the nature of the Supreme Spirit, have recourse to one of the paths (पंथ) which lead to it. Do not waste your life in idleness. He who is idle in this matter cannot attain salvation even at the end of Time and he cannot be called a true pupil of the Guru (master). Cling with all your heart to your Guru; follow his advice and do nothing else: Even then you will easily realise the Supreme Spirit. Act in such a way that the master's favour to you may increase day by day; never act in such a way that he may ever get displeased.”

In both the works the author expatiates on a theme of abstract philosophy, and therefore they contain neither pathos nor happy constructions. They are in fact

no poetry in the modern sense of the word, but rather systematic discourses in verse on a religious topic; only, prose had not yet made its appearance at this stage of national literature, and hence instead of being composed in prose, they were composed in verse. Both the works, however, display fine specimen of similes. Johnson says that in didactic poetry, of which the great purpose is instruction, a simile may be praised which illustrates, though it does not ennoble. This remark equally holds good of a discursive poem, and similes that present the subject in a clearer view, are commendable. From this point of view Mukundraj's poems are certainly a valuable acquisition.

The saint deserves a compliment for another reason

His services
in throwing open
the Vedant to
the Maharashtra
public.

also and that is that he for the first time threw open to the Maharashtra public at large what had been to them for centuries a forbidden fruit. *Vedant*

was so long believed to have been intended for those only that knew Sanskrit, most of them, Brahmins. Mukundraj boldly pushed aside the cover under which the secret treasures of the Upanishads lay and the general public of the succeeding generations could profit themselves by perusing them, without any distinction of caste. A deepseated foundation was laid for the gradual evolution of Maharashtra from social iniquities, and the structure continued being erected, though by fits and starts, by the succeeding saints of the nation, as we shall presently see.

CHAPTER IV.

Dnyaneshwar.

It has been observed in the preceding chapter that the literary efforts of Mukundraj were solely devoted to the cause of teaching. Dnyaneshwar's *Vedant*; the same vein of thought was resumed after the lapse of about half a century by Dnyaneshwar with all the flight of his innate genius and learning, and also by Namdev with the inspiration of his sincere devotion. For real happiness, a man must realise how infinitesimal and insignificant a unit he is in this vast Creation, which is nothing but a manifestation of the Supreme Being in various forms, and he must continuously cultivate the spirit of contentment in his innermost heart. This is the substance of what *Vedant* preaches. Material well-being in life, as a rule, does not put us in the line of thinking in this direction, but on the contrary, pushes us further and further away from the realisation of this great doctrine. We find that it is very often some adversity, some untoward event in life that sets a man a-thinking in the right direction, and such constant thinking ultimately conduces to his spiritual elevation; then the man knows himself, is contented within himself and feels happy by himself. Such being the importance of the doctrine, the long train of Maratha poets from Mukundaj down to Vaman Pandit have devoted to it a considerable part of their labour

and have shed upon it some light of their own, in a greater or less degree. What Dnyaneshwar, together with his worthy brothers and sister have done in this connection will be presently seen.

ज्ञानेश्वर, otherwise called ज्ञानदेव or God of knowledge, was born in the year 1193 of the S'ak era i. e. 1271 A. D. He had two brothers, निवृत्तिनाथ and सेवानंदेव and one sister, मुक्ताबाई. They were all religious devotees. विठ्ठलपंत, their father, was a यजुर्वेदी Brahmin living in a village near the town of प्रतिष्ठान or Paithan. He led an ascetic life from his childhood and wandered from place to place in holy pilgrimage. In this course of life he visited आळंदी, where he was requested by a respectable Brahmin of that place to marry his daughter. The request was complied with and रत्नमाबाई was married to विठ्ठलपंत. Worldly cares were, however, a burden to his naturally ascetic mind and he therefore soon entered the life of a संन्यासी (recluse). He took this step against the wishes of his wife and hence his religious master श्रीपददयतीश्वर of Benares, when he came to know it, advised him to go back to अ.ळंदी and resume गृहस्थाश्रम (worldly life). In obedience to the master's advice, विठ्ठलपंत went back to Alandi and reverted to worldly life; but the other Brahmins of that place excommunicated him, saying that a recluse could not legitimately re-enter worldly life. विठ्ठलपंत did not mind his excommunication and lived the life of a pious devotee

worshipping, meditating and praying to God. It was during this period that निवृत्तिनाथ, ज्ञानदेव, सोपानदेव and मुक्ताबाई were born. It is said that they were born learned, and even while young, they were superior to grown-up pandits in point of knowledge and reasoning. As the parents were excommunicated, the boys remained without the usual ceremonies of wearing sacred thread &c. विद्वलपंत tried his best to get himself and his family re-admitted within the pales of his community, but to no purpose. The husband and wife at last went away to प्रयाग in despondency and left the children at Alandi to take care of themselves. The Brahmins of Alandi told the boys to go to Paithan and said that if the Brahmin community of that place declared them fit according to the Shastras to be taken back, they would be taken into the community. But the latter were as obdurate as their friends at Alandi and would not yield. At last some miraculous events* brought about by Dnyandev, as we hear related to this day, convinced the bigoted Brahmins of the purity of the children and they were at length re-admitted and freed from persecution.

On their way from Alandi to Paithan, the brothers and sister halted at Tryambakeshwar on the river Godavari, when निवृत्तिनाथ

His later life.

* e. g. making a buffalo repeat the *Vedas* and reviving a dead man. Whatever the truth may be in such miracles, they are surely well suited to confirm the faith of the masses in the saints.

was favoured with गुरुपदेश (religious instruction) by गद्दिनाथ. निवृत्तिनाथ imparted the गुरुमंत्र to his brothers and sister and thus became their गुरु thenceforth. We find निवृत्तिनाथ mentioned as गुरु in some places in the writings of ज्ञानदेव. Though they were young—too young, apparently, even to read Vedantic works, much more so to reflect upon them—they acquired a mastery over the subject which an ordinary man can never aspire to attain even after close study of several years. They all died by premature death and yet, in the short span of life allotted to them, they worked wonders. Poet Moropant says of them in reverence and admiration :—

शंकर निवृत्ति हरि तूं ज्ञानेश ब्रह्मदेव सोपान ।
विद्या मुक्ता; तुमच्या कीर्तिसुधेचें सदा असो पान ॥

ज्ञानदेव died in S'ak year 1215 at the age of only 22; निवृत्तिनाथ, सोपानदेव and मुक्ताबाई followed shortly at equally early ages.

Dnyaneshwar's writings.

Dnyaneshwar's works are all devoted to the exposition of metaphysical topics. His principal work is भावार्थदीपिका (Light of substance) commonly called ज्ञानेश्वरी from the name of the author, and is a commentary on the celebrated भगवद्गीता. It consists of eighteen chapters, as many as the original Sanskrit work does; but its volume is much greater and covers over 9000 couplets in *Ovi* metre, while the original *Gita* consists of about

700 stanzas only. The भगवद्गीता which is the pith of Sanskrit works on Vedant and had so long been read and understood only by a few Brahmins that studied Sanskrit, was now thrown open by ज्ञानदेव to the masses of Maharashtra. It is written in simple style with many similes and metaphors so devised as to elucidate the abstract topics; and though its language is archaic and some of the words used are now obsolete and sound quaint to the ears after six centuries, it is largely read by persons taking an interest in Vedantic lore. His अमृतानुभव, स्वात्मानुभव, and पंचाकरण are also disquisitions on abstract subjects. Of these, अमृतानुभव is an able work consisting of nearly 1000 stanzas and is a substance of the उपनिषद्स in brief. Besides these works, ज्ञानदेव has composed many अभंगs on moral as well as metaphysical topics. All of his works are intellectual productions of a very high order, and it is but natural that the reader going through them should be surprised how a youth of twenty could show so keen an insight and so minute a power of observation. A few small quotations will give an idea of ज्ञानदेव's compositions.

Speaking of the importance of faith in God irrespective of birth or creed, ज्ञानेश्वर has the following commentary on the advice of God Krishna to Arjun:—

“अमा कुळाचिया चोखपणा न लगा ।

अभिजात्य ज्ञणी श्लाघा ।

व्युत्पत्तीचा वाउगा । सोस कां वाहावा ॥

कां रूप वयसा माजा । अथिलेपणे कां गाजा ।
 एक भाव नाही माजा । तरी पाल्हाळ तें ॥
 कणेंवीण सोपटें । कणसें लागती घनदाटें ।
 काय करावें गोमटें । ओस नगर ॥
 नातरी सरोवर आटलें । रानीं दुःखिया दुःखी भेटलें ।
 कां वांझ फुलीं फुललें । झाड जैसें ॥
 तैसें सकळ तें वैभव । अथवा कुळ जाति गौरव ।
 जैसें शरीर आहे सावेव । परी जीवचि नाहीं ॥
 तैसें माझिया भक्तीवीण । जळो तें जियालेपण ।
 अगा पृथ्वी वरी पाषाण । नसती काई ॥ ”

Tr.—“My friend ! why need you purity of birth ? Do not praise respectability of family. Don't boast of learning; so too don't boast of having beauty or youth. If there be no devotion to me, it is all useless. Ears without corn in a cornfield though hanging dense; a town without population howsoever grand-looking; and a dry lake howsoever large are good for nothing. If a miserable man meets another as miserable in a forest, what is the use of the latter to him ? A tree having flowers that will not bear fruit is of no avail. So it is with greatness and nobility of birth without devotion to me. It is like a body having all the limbs but no life, no better than a stone.”

How suggestive are the similes of a dry lake, a desolate city and a tree bearing flowers that will not bear fruit ! Likewise the following passage in the two fifth chapter dealing with the virtues of a saint contains equally happy similes:—

“जो सर्वा भूतांचे ठाई । द्वेषातें नेणेचि कांहीं ।
 आप पर जया नाही । चैतन्या जैसे ॥
 उत्तमातें धरीजे । अधमातें अव्हेरिजे ।
 हे कांहींच नेणिजे । वसुधा जेवीं ॥
 कां रायाचें देह चाळू । रंका परौतें गाळुं ।
 हें न म्हणें कृपाळु । प्राण पै गा ॥
 गाईची तृषा हरूं । व्याघ्रा विष होऊनि मारूं ।
 ऐसें नेणेचि गा करूं । तोय जैसें ॥
 तैसें अवधिया भूतमात्रीं । एकपणें मैत्री ।
 कृपेशीं धात्री । आपण जो ॥
 आणि मीं हें भाषण नेणें । माझें कांहींच न ह्मणे ।
 सुख दुःख जाणणें । नाही जया ॥
 वर्षावेवीण सागर । जैसा जळें निर्भर ।
 तैसाचि निरुपचार । संतोषी जो ॥
 ऐसा भक्त आवडे । मज जिवाचेनि पाडें ।
 हेही येथ थोकडें । रूप करणें ॥

x x x

पार्था जयाचे ठाई । वैषम्याची घाता नाही ।
 रिपुमित्रां दोहीं । सरिसा पाड ॥
 घरींचिया उजेड करावा । परकिया आंधार पाडावा ।
 हें नेणेचि गा पांडवा । दीप जैसा ॥
 जो खांडावया घाव घाली । कां लावणी जेणें केली ।
 दोघां एकचि सांडली । दे वृक्ष जैसा ॥

ना तरी इक्षुदंडू । पाळी तयासचि गोडू ।
गाळी तया कडू । नोहेचि जेंवी ॥ ”

Tr:—“He bears no enmity to any being, and in him there is no scope for duality as in the case of life-spirit. The earth gives shelter to the good and the bad alike; the breath of life instils vitality in the body of a king as well as a pauper; water quenches the thirst of a cow and a tiger alike. So is he well-disposed and merciful to all. He is free from egoism and *treats happiness and misery alike*. He is always contented within himself as the ocean is, for ever, full with water without the aid of the rains. I love such a devotee as dearly as my own life. These are only some of his traits. *

* * * 0 Partha, there is not a vestige of hatred in his heart; he is alike towards the friend and the foe. A lamp sheds light to men of the home as well as to strangers; a tree offers shade to one who strikes it with an axe as well as to one who has reared it; a sugar-cane is equally sweet to one who has grown it and to one who mercilessly presses juice out of it. ”

Such are the traits of ज्ञानेश्वर's commentary on the *Gita*. He is not satisfied with mere translation, but explains the matter by means of impressive and happy analogies from nature. Each idea conveyed in a few words in the original is explained in several stanzas in the commentary; for instance, we find in the 13th chapter, the one single word अमानित्व (absence of pride) explained by means of the following seven couplets:—

तरि कवणाही विषयाचें । साम्य होणें न रुचे ।
संभावितपणाचें । ओझें जया ॥

पार्था तेणें पाडें । सन्मानें जो सांकडे ।
गरिमेतें आंगाकडे । येवोंचि नेदी ॥

पूज्यता डोळां न देखावी । स्वकीर्ति कार्नी नायकावी ।
हा अमुक पेशी नो व्हावी । शेखी लोकीं ॥
तेथ सत्काराची कें गोठी । कें आदरा देईल भेटी ।
मरणेसी सांठीं । नमस्कारितां ॥

वाचस्पतीचेनि पाडें । सर्वज्ञता जरी जोडे ।
परि वेडिवेमाजी दडे । महिमा भेणें ॥
चातुर्य तें लपवी । महत्त्व तें हारवी ।
पिसेपण मिरवी । अवडोनी ॥

मज असतेपण लोपो । नामरूप हरपो ।
मज ज्ञानें वासिपो । भूतजात ॥

On a minute observatiou it will be seen that as from the अनुष्टुभ् to the ओवी, so from the ओवी to the अमंग metre is an easy transition; there is only a slight difference in the rhymings. ज्ञानेश्वर composed some of his verses in the अमंग metre. From his miscellaneous *Abhangs* we quote the following in illustration of his high moral teaching:—

उपजोनी संसारी । आपुला आपण वैरी ॥
माझें शरीरी । घेऊनि ठेला ॥

द्या देहातें म्हणे । मी पुत्र दारा धन माझे ॥
 परि काळाचें हें खार्जे । ऐसें नेणतु गेला ॥
 कामक्रोधमदमत्सराचेनी गुणें । बांधला आपण नेणें ॥
 मी मी माझे माझे ह्मणे । भ्रमितु जैसा ॥
 मिथ्या मोहो फांसा । शुक नळिके जैसा ॥
 मुक्त परी आपैसा । पळों नेणें ॥
 जलचरू आमिष गिळी । जैसा का लागलासे गर्ळी ॥
 आप आपणापे तळमळी । सुटिका नाहीं ॥
 तैसें आरंभीं विषया । सुख गोड वाटे इंद्रियां ॥
 फुडें पाकीं पापिया । दुःख भोगी ॥
 राखोडी फुंकितां । दीप न लगे जया परी ॥
 तैसा शब्द ब्रह्म कुसरी । ज्ञान नपवे ॥
 व्रत तप दान तीर्थ । भजन बेचिलें पोटा ॥
 दंभाच्या खटपटा । शीणतु गेला ॥
 मृगजळाची नदी । दुरोनी देखोनि धांवे ॥
 परी गंगोदक न पावे । तान्हेला जैसा ॥
 तैसें विषयसुख । नव्हेचि हित ॥
 दुःख भोगितो बहुत । परी सावध नव्हे ॥
 परतोनि न पाहे । धांवतां सैरा ॥
 करितो येरझारा । संसाराच्या ॥
 ज्ञानदेव म्हणे । बहुतां जन्मांचा अभ्यासू ॥
 तरीच होय सौरसू । परब्रह्मीं ॥

Tr:- "A man, when he is born in this world, becomes his own enemy. He calls his body 'I' and the wife,

children and wealth 'Mine', not knowing that these are only a prey to Time, the great Destroyer. He does not know that he is bound down by the ties of Desire, Anger, Pride and Envy, and delights, like a mad man, in saying 'I' and 'Mine'. The tie of attachment is deceptive. A parrot perching on a pipe (set to catch him) does not think of flying away, though he is quite free. A fish swallows the bait and is caught by the hook; and the struggle is of his own making. Objects of the senses are sweet at first but the wretch has to suffer misery in the long run. Just as mere ashes cannot be blown into fire, so he, who is skilled merely in words relating to *Brahma* does not acquire the true knowledge thereof. If vows, penances, gifts, religious pilgrimages and prayers are for earning livelihood, it is sheer hypocrisy. Just as a thirsty man sees a river of mirage from a distance and runs for water in vain, so it is in the case of sensual pleasures. They are not for a man's good; he afterwards suffers misery on their account; yet he is not restored to his self-presence. He runs on and on without looking behind; he goes to and fro in life. Dnyandev says, you can attain the great *Brahma* only after you go through the necessary practical training for several births."

It is necessary to make here a passing mention of the controversy carried on some years ago whether there was only one poet named ज्ञानदेव ? of the name of ज्ञानदेव or two of different dates. Mr. Bhingarkar is of the former opinion while

Mr. C. V. Vaidya holds the latter view. The question seems to have arisen from the apparent difference in style between ज्ञानेश्वरी and other works on the one hand and some *Abhangs* &c. attributed to ज्ञानदेव on the other hand. The style of the former seems to be old while that of the *Abhangs* &c. appears to be comparatively of a later date. But in absence of convincing proof it is not safe to conclude from this that the authors were two different persons of the same name.

निवृत्तिनाथ is reputed to have written some work and placed it at the feet of god Vithoba, but

His brothers and sister. what that work was is not certain.

सोपानदेव has composed some *abhangs*.

मुक्ताबाई is the author of many *abhangs*. She remained unmarried and was only sixteen at her death. She was exceedingly pious and saintly in her life. Once upon a time, ज्ञानदेव was angry with her for some reason or other, and so he shut himself up in a room and would not open the door. मुक्ताबाई requested him to open the door by means of the following instructive *abhang*:-

मजवरी दया करा । ताटी उघडा ज्ञानेश्वरा ॥

संत जेणें व्हावें । जग-बोलणें सोसावें ॥

तरिच अंगीं थोरपण । जया नाहीं अभिमान ॥

थोरपण जेथें वसे । तेथें भूतदया असे ॥

रागें भरावें कवणासी । आपण ब्रह्म सर्व-देशी ॥

येसी समदृष्टी करा । ताटी उघडा ज्ञानेश्वरा ॥

योगी पावन मनांचा । साहे अपराध जनांचा ॥
 विश्व झालें वन्ही । संतमुखें व्हावें पाणी ॥
 शब्दशस्त्रें झाले क्लेश । संतीं मानावा उपदेश ॥
 विश्व परब्रह्म दोरा । ताटी उघडा ज्ञानेश्वरा ॥

Tr:—"Show mercy, O Dnyaneshvar, and open the door. He who wants to be a saint must tolerate the words of the people. He alone is great who has no pride in him; and where there is greatness, there is sympathy. To whom to show anger? We are all the great *Brahma* that pervades everything. Expand the range of your view and open the door, O Dnyaneshver. A *Yogi* possesses a holy heart and forgives the faults of the people. If the world is on fire, water must flow from the mouth of a saint. If a saint is pained at the words of others, he should regard them in the light of advice. The whole Universe is an evolution of the *Supreme Brahma*. Open the door, O Dnyaneshver."

How sensible and philosophical advice this and that from a girl of fifteen! This is admirable.

Such are the valuable services of ज्ञानेश्वर and his brothers and sister to the cause of Marathi Literature.

CHAPTER V.

Namdev.

Namdev is said to have been born in the year 1192 of the S'ak era i. e. 1270† A. D. Namdev's family. His father Damashet was a tailor by caste, and lived in a small village called Narsi on the river Krishna near Karhad. Namdev had a large family consisting of his parents, sons, daughters-in-law and others, as we find enumerated in the following *Abhang*:—

गोणाई राजाई दोघी सासूसुना ।
दामा नामा जाणा बाप लेक ॥
नारा म्हादा गोंदा विठो चौघे पुत्र ।
जन्मले पवित्र त्याचे वंशी ॥
लाडाई गोडाई येसा साखराई ।
चौघी सुना पाहीं नामयाच्या ॥
लिंबाई ते लेकी आऊवाई बहिणी ।
वेडी पिशी जनी दासी त्याची ॥

His life. He was in poor circumstances, but lived a pious and saintly life. He used to sing prayers to God with earnest devotion in his very childhood. He was considered to

† Dr. Bhandarker is of opinion that he lived about or after the end of the fourteenth century. (*Vaishnavism, Shaivism &c.* p. 92).

be an incarnation of उद्धव, the great devotee of god Krishna. He was a disciple of Visoba Khechar, a pupil of ज्ञानदेव's. Namdev was a contemporary of Dnyaneshvar and they both together went in a pilgrimage to the holy places in the north and the south of India, in company with many other saints of the time, such as सांवतामार्ळी गोरकुंभार and सज्जन कसाई mentioned in the भक्तविजय of महीपति. It is remarkable in this incident that ज्ञानदेव, a Brahmin, mixed freely with these pious men, though of low castes, in spite of the superstitious prejudices of the Brahmin community. In a few days after Namdev returned from his holy travels, he departed from this world in the S'ak year 1272 at the advanced age of eighty.

Throughout his life Namdev never cared a bit for his worldly affairs; he solely minded his own भजन to God. Gonai, his mother and Rajai, his wife were tired of this indifference of Namdev, and very often expostulated with him, but in vain. We find Gonai's fond remonstrances in the following *Abhang*:—

गोणाई म्हणे नाम्या सांडीं देवपिसें ।

बळें घर कैलें बुडविसी ॥

जनाचीं लेंकुरें वर्तताती कैशी ।

तूं मज झालासी कुलदीपू ॥

अन्य धन्य पुत्र कलत्रें नांदती ।

अभाग्याचे चितीं पांडुरंग ॥

यातें जे अनुसरती त्याचें नुरे काहीं ।
 हा देव नोहे पाहीं घरघेणा ॥
 याची भक्ती कैसी लौकिका वेगळी ।
 संसाराची होळी केली नाम्या ॥
 गोकुळांत चोरी करुनी पोट भरी ।
 तो तूज निर्घारीं देइल काय ॥
 गोणाई म्हणे नाम्या हें रे नव्हे भलें ।
 घर त्वां बुडविलें कुळासहित ॥

Tr:-“ Oh Nama ! , ” says Gonai, “ Leave off this madness (after God); why do you knowingly ruin our house ? See how the children of other people behave themselves; you are indeed a light (?) to the whole family ! Happy are those whose sons and daughters in law live in peace. But my unlucky one thinks of Pandurang (God). Those who follow Pandurang have nothing left to them; he is no God, but a house—taker. Oh Nama ! your devotion to Pandurang is not like what others practise; it ends in the ruin of the house. He who lived by committing theft in *Gokul*, what can he give you ? Oh Nama ! says Gonai, this is not good; you have simply ruined the house together with the family.”

Rajai, his wife, also complains of the ways of her husband and his friends in a similar tone of despair in these words:—

अवघे भांबर भुतें होती । नाचताती आनंदें ॥
 एकमेकांच्या पडती पायां । लौकिकांतुन गेले वायां ॥

म्हणती येगा पंढरिराया । ब्रह्मानंदें डुल्लती ॥
 भोळी सासू गोणाबाई । पांढरा स्फटिक व्याली काई ॥
 त्यानें जोडला शेषशाई ॥ म्हणे राजाई काय करूं ॥

Tr.—"All become mad and dance in joy. They fall at each other's feet; they are lost to the world. They cry aloud 'O God of Pandhari! come over' and shake their heads in joy. Why has the simple Gonabai, my mother-in-law, given birth to such a stone? He has made friends with God; but what shall I do, says Rajai."

After a time, however, his mother, wife and other members of his family realised the importance of Namdev's devotion and preaching and were thenceforth contented with poor but devout life. They also composed some *Abhangs* later on.

जनाबाई was नामदेव's maidservant. While only a girl, she was handed over to the care of Damashet by her father, and did menial services at Namdev's house. She was the most profited by Namdev's preachings; she well understood and appreciated his philosophical talk and wrote many *Abhangs* herself.

Namdev's Writings.

Namdev is said to have written a hundred crores of *abhangs* (शतकोटी ग्रंथ). As the tradition goes, he once learnt at Pandharpur that बालभैकी wrote शतकोटी ग्रंथ

and took a vow in presence of God Vithoba to write an equal number of Abhangs himself. The following *abhang* of Tukaram says how the number was made up and how the remainder of the one hundred crores was composed by Tukaram himself:—

पिता दामशेटी अभंग दोन कोटी ।
भक्तिभावे तार्ती निवेदी देवा ॥

तीन कोटी अभंग गोणाईचा वाद ।
स्वात्मसुखबोध सुखाचा तो ॥

तीन कोटी अभंग नारोबाची सविता ।
उगवी स्वात्महिता दिवसरजनी ॥

तीन कोटी अभंग विठाचा झगडा ।
प्रेमरस गोडा प्रेमाचा तो ॥

महादा आणि गोंदा अडिच अडिच कोटी ।
प्रेमरस पोटी प्रेमळ तो ॥

एक कोटी अभंग लक्ष वरती सोळा ।
प्रेमरस जिव्हाळा आउबाईचा ॥

चौऱ्याण्णव लक्ष रंगाईची करुणा ।
प्रेमें नारायणा आळवीले ॥

दोन कोटी अभंग राजाईची वाणी ।
प्रेमें चक्रपाणी आठवीले ।

लाडाई गोडाई येसा साखराई ।
कवित्व हें पाहीं दिड दिड कोटी ।

एक कोटी देव पन्नास लक्ष रुक्मिणी ।
कोटी दासी जनी साडेबारा ॥

एकुणहत्तर लक्ष चौपन्न कोटी ।
कविता गोमटी नामयाची ॥

तुका म्हणे येथे कोणी फुटूं नका ।
पूर्वीचा हा डंका वाजिन्नला ॥

That he has written hundreds of *Abhangs* there is no doubt. He had real poetic genius in him, and though he possessed no learning like Dnyaneshvar, he could compose *abhangs* off-hand. Only some of his *abhangs* are now to be found. His style is perfectly simple but clear and forcible. His writings display earnest devotion and stern philosophy, to elucidate which he sometimes borrows fitting similes from every-day life. The following quotation will illustrate how philosophical his advice is:-

पाहें परदारा जननी समान ।
द्रव्यही पाषाणसम मानी ॥

निशीदिनी मुका होऊनी तत्त्वतां ।
न घालीं सर्वथा वरी दृष्टी ॥

येसें मनीं दृढ धरूनी राहासी ।
तरी तूं पावसी निज पदा ॥

पराव्या कारणें प्रे वेंची आतां ।
जाणें परव्यथा अंतरीची ।

विहित संतोष धरीं वा मानसीं ।
 कीं परलोकासी जाणें आहे ॥
 देह अभिमान न धरावा चित्तीं ।
 धरीं उपरती उपरम ॥
 सर्वकाल प्रीति संतांचीया संगें ।
 गावें अनुरागें हरी नाम ॥
 सर्वां भूतीं सम ठेवूनीयां बुद्धी ।
 सांडावी उपाधी प्रपंचाची ॥
 सर्व परमात्मा सर्व काळ देशीं ।
 भाव अहर्निशीं वृढ धरीं ॥
 संत समुदाय मिळतील जेथें ।
 लोटांगणें तेथें जावें आर्धीं ॥
 चिंता नको नाम्या तरसी तूं जाण ।
 सांगतली खूण मनें माझ्या ॥

Tr:—“Regard other women (than your wife) as if your mother and regard wealth as if stones: be dumb day and night and do not even look at these. If you make your mind steady, you will attain the highest goal. Sacrifice your life for the sake of others and look upon others' pain as if your own. Be contented for ever, for you have to go to the next world some day. Do not be proud; be indifferent and free from desires. Be always fond of the company of the good and devoutly sing prayers to God. Look upon all creatures with an even eye and keep aloof from the troubles of worldly existence. The Almighty God is at all places and at all times; be

devoutly attached to Him day and night. Whenever you meet saints, fall down at their feet first. O Nama ! if you do this, you will surely attain salvation; this is what my mind tells me. ”

We may quote another small *abhang* of his to show how sanguine he is in his faith.

देह जावो अथवा राहो । पांडुरंगीं माझा भावो ॥
चरण न सोडीं सर्वथा । आण तूझो पंढरिनाथा ॥
वदनीं तुझे मंगळ नाम । हृदयीं अखंडीत प्रेम ॥
नामा म्हणे केशव राजा । केला पण चालवीं माझा ॥

Tr.:-“ Whether my body fall or stand, my faith in God Pandurang shall be firm. In thy name, O lord of Pandhari, do I swear that I shall by no means leave Thy feet. Thy auspicious name shall be in my mouth and incessant love of Thee shall be in my heart. “ O Lord Keshav,” says Nama, “This is the vow I have taken and I solicit Thee to keep me stead-fast in it. ”

The following out of the *abhangs* composed by गोदोबा, Namdev's son, is worth quoting for it shows that the son was in no way inferior to the father in saintliness:-

भावे भक्तिवादे करावे कीर्तन । आशाबद्ध मन करूं नये ॥
अन्नपाणी मन अवघा नारायण । विठ्ठला वांचोन बोलूं नये ॥
निष्कामे करावे देवाचे कीर्तन । भय हें सांडून शरीराचे ॥
रणामध्ये कैला भिडतो रणशूर । होवोनी उदार जीवावारी ॥

तैसा पांडुरंगीं धरा हो निर्धार । उतरा हा पार भवसिंधू ॥
 सिंधू उतरोनी लावा जगढाळ । पाहा तें नवल विठ्ठलाचें ॥
 देव जोडियेला तया काय उन । गोंदा म्हणे मन नीट धरा ॥

Tr:—"Sing God's praises with devotion and free your mind from Desire. Food, water, mind and everything is God Narayan; there is nothing beyond Him. Pray to God without any Desire and without any fears regarding the body. Lo ! how desperately a warrior fights in a battle without caring for his life: have such firm faith in God and then you will cross the ocean of worldly existence. Cross that ocean and plant your flag on the other shore. This miracle you could do because of Vitthal. He who has attained to God stands in want of nothing. Keep your mind upright, above all, says Gonda."

The whole family of नामदेव like the whole family of ज्ञानदेव, were ardent devotees and born poets.

Many other saints of fame were born about this time, the more notable among them being परिसा भागवत, गोरु कुंभार, नरहरि सोनार, कुर्मदास and चोखामेळा and his wife. They were devotees of God Vithoba of Pandharpur, and used to recite *abhangs* etc in prayers, many of them of their own composition.

Here we come to the end of the First Period, of which the chief characteristics are अध्यात्मज्ञान (Knowledge of the Supreme Spirit) and भाक्त (Devotion to God).

CHAPTER VI.

Second Period.

Ekmath.

The Second Period of Marathi Literature opens with Ekmath. He was born at Pratishthan or Paithan on the river Godavari in S'ak year 1471, i. e., 1548 A. D.

Ekmath's early life. He was a Deshasth Brahmin by caste. Suryanarayan and Rukminibai were his father and mother respectively. Ekmath lost both his parents in childhood and was brought up by his old grandfather Chakrapani, who spared no pains on his account. He taught Ekmath reading and writing and also the *Vedas*. Ekmath was an intelligent boy of a quiet temper and was very fond of attending *Kathas* (rhapsodies) and of listening to the narration of lives of saints like Dnyandev and Namdev. This instilled into his mind the idea of himself becoming one like the saints and he used often to brood as to how he could attain that distinction. While he was once indulging in such reveries in a temple, he felt as if he heard a voice exhorting him to approach Janardan Swami of Deogad (Daulatabad) who would give him what he wanted.

Janardan Swami was a minister to the Mahommedan king of Daulatabad and was a man of great piety. He was a follower of Shankaracharya and was one of the pupils of the famous saint नृसिंह सरस्वती of Ganaga-

His acquaintance
with Janardan
Swami.

pur. He was so particular of his religious offerings and prayers that even the Mahommedan king whom he served, gave consideration to his religious life and observed every Thursday as a court holiday in order that Janardan Swami might be able to worship his deity Dattatreya on that day without any distraction. He always took care to spare a few hours for his usual meditation and religious ceremonies in spite of all the sundry duties that his exalted position laid upon his shoulders. In accordance with the miraculous inspiration, Eknath set out one early morning for Daulatabad. There was much hesitation in his mind for several days, for he was very unwilling to throw his grand parents into the pangs of separation. But at last he did make up his mind. After a few days' journey Eknath reached Daulatabad and proceeded straightway into the hall in which his future religious master Janardan Swami was sitting engrossed in perusing some official papers. After a few minutes when the minister raised his head, he saw this little boy standing in front of him and asked him who he was and what he wanted. Encouraged by the sweet manners and kind words of the great man, Eknath explained the purpose that had brought him, to which the Swami replied by promising that he would initiate him into the secret knowledge of *Brahma* when he would prove himself worthy of the same. Eknath consented and remained under the Swami's tutelage. He served his master with great zeal and energy. The story goes that once upon a time while Janardan Swami was perfectly absorbed in समाधि (meditation of the Supreme

Spirit) an hostile force arrived all of a sudden before the very gate of the city and the king issued an order to his minister and general, Janardan Swami to go forth and repel the force at once. Rather than interrupt his master's समाधि, Eknath, then only 20 years of age thought it proper to go forth himself instead. There was no time to lose and he at once pushed forward at the head of his force, soon repelled the attack and came back triumphant. Eknath also assisted the minister some times in his clerical duties and spent his leisure hours in studying diverse topics and in discussing difficult metaphysical questions with the *Swami*, whereby he acquired uncommon learning and profound insight into the doctrines of *Vedant*.

Several years passed in this way and the long-looked-for time for initiation (उपदेश) arrived at last. Eknath was entrusted by his venerable master with the task of preparing accounts for him, and while casting the same, he came across a mistake of one pice. The two sides did not give the same balance and, as the tradition goes, Eknath was trying to discover the mistake for hours together with close attention. Janardanpant awoke in the dead of night and was surprised to find his pupil so busy with his papers that he did not even notice his master standing by his side. The mistake was found at last and Eknath broke into ecstasies of joy. The Swami saw that this was the right occasion and said to him, " Your attetion was perfectly devoted to

Janardan Swami's
advice.

the purpose of finding out the mistake in accounts and you found it out at last; if you likewise devote your mind to meditation of the Supreme Spirit, you will surely be successful in disabusing your mind, in course of time, of the deceptive " *Maya* ". This little piece of advice, offered at the nick of time, touched Eknath to the innermost core and he followed it with all his heart.

After receiving गुरुपदेश (initiation) from Janardanpant in the usual manner, Eknath started on a tour of holy pilgrimage, in accordance with the common practice of those days. He visited many holy places including Benares, Prayag, Ayodhya, Badrinath and Dwarka and then, in pursuance of his master's wishes, spent the rest of his life at Paithan in company of his aged grandparents, who had so long been left unhappy owing to the pain of separation. A Brahmin of Bijapur of good family gave his daughter in marriage to Eknath. She was named गिरिजाबाई. He now passed his days in worshipping God, as well as in delivering sermons in the *Purans* to the people. His sermons were open to the public, including low caste persons also, and were largely attended. He died in S'ak year 1531 at Paithan. He left behind him one son, who, by his Sanskrit learning, made himself well known by the name of Hari Pandit in Benares, and two daughters named गोदुबाई and गंगाबाई. गोदुबाई otherwise called लीलाबाई was the mother of मुक्तेश्वर, one of the famous poets of the Third Period.

Eknath had truly realised oneness of Spirit in the whole Creation. He bestowed on the masses, without distinction, the valuable benefit of Sanskrit lore, not only by rendering it in vernacular but also by explaining to them the same in his sermons. Like his great predecessor ज्ञानदेव, he was a practical social reformer and cared very little for the remonstrances of the bigoted Brahmins of the time including his own son. His home was quite ready to offer hospitality to the poor and the helpless, of whatever caste or creed. Once upon a time on a day of *Siraddha* ceremony in honour of his ancestors, he had invited some Brahmins to dine with him; but before they were served, a hungry man of low caste came and begged alms, and Eknath satisfied him with a portion of the food prepared for the invited Brahmins. The latter resented this sort of precedence given to the outcaste and refused to dine with him after the outcaste; but he never forsook his magnanimous principles to please the conceited Brahmins. He was charitable, forgiving and free from pride, and possessed many other sterling ascetic virtues. He advised his audience to continue the प्रवृत्तिमार्ग (Action) with निवृत्ति (contentment) and preached equality of all castes; hence the Brahmins of the priest-craft hated him bitterly: but in spite of this, he went on in his own way. His sermons were very lucid and created an effective impression on the minds of the hearers.

Eknath's Works.

Eknath has written his works chiefly in the *Owi* metre. His principal works are भावार्थ रामायण, एकनाथी भागवत, चतुःश्लोका भागवत, and रुक्मिणीस्वयंवर. Besides these, he has composed स्वात्मसुख, हस्तामलक आनंदलहरा and some *abhangs* and *padas*. Of these, भावार्थरामायण and रुक्मिणीस्वयंवर are narrative compositions, the rest being metaphysical works, devoted to the exposition of वेदांत or Philosophy. भावार्थ रामायण contains about 40000 couplets in *Owi* metre. After composing 44 chapters of the युद्धकांड Eknath felt that his end was drawing near and so he entrusted the task of finishing the work to his favourite pupil, गावबा, who accomplished it with an ability and success, in no way inferior to that of his master. Eknath's भागवत is also a big work containing nearly 20000 *Owis*. भावार्थ रामायण and एकनाथी भागवत are universally read and honoured. Having passed the prime of his youth in the midst of the Mahomedan court, Eknath knew Hindustani well and composed some of his miscellaneous पदs (songs) in that language. We also find traces of Hindustani words here and there in his compositions. Besides the valuable addition of these works to the store of Marathi literature, Eknath has done another important service to its cause; it was he who carefully revised and published the great *Dnyaneshwari* i. e. Dnyaneshwar's commentary in Marathi on the *Bhagwat-Gita*. He collected some copies of that old work from different sources, and preparing a syste-

matic work by their help, presented it to the public in S'ak year 1512 i. e. 300 years after that work was composed by Dnyaneshwar. Eknath had well mastered Dnyaneshwar's भावार्थदीपिका before he undertook to compose metaphysical works, as is apparent from the following couplet in the 31st Chapter of his भागवत.

“ एका जनार्दनी मांजर वेडें ।
भावार्थदीपिका उजेडियें ॥
हे रस देखोनि चोखडे ।
ताटा पुढें पै आलें ॥ ”

Trs.—“ Indeed Eka, servant of Janardan is simply a silly cat, come before the dish (of Vedant) seeing the sweet dainties served out in it, by the light of the भावार्थदीपिका lamp. ”

Eknath's style of composition is simple and sweet.

The words he uses are generally easy and of common use, rarely obsolete. His style of composition.

He had the power of composing verses on the spur of the moment. He never tried to attain artistic beauty like Moropant by forced composition. Moral and religious teaching being his chief object, his works are full of similes drawn from familiar objects, while some of his miscellaneous songs contain continued metaphors. The sentiments of वीर and वरुग and at times शृंगार also are exquisitely represented in his narrative compositions. We may quote here a few extracts for illustration.

When *Rama* set out on his long travels in the southern forests, his wife *Sita* persisted in her request to accompany him there. *Rama* tried to dissuade her from such a difficult task; but *Sita* would not consent to remain behind in Ayodhya. The poet depicts the deep love between the husband and the wife in the following simple but forcible words put in the mouth of *Sita*, who was chastity incarnate:—

“ जवळी असतां रघुकुलतिलक ।

कंटक होती निष्कंटक ॥

विष तें होय पीयूष ।

परम सुख बनवासीं ॥

तुज सांगातें बनवास ।

तो मज वैकुंठ कैलास ॥

तुज वेगळा संसार ओस ।

दुःख असें समज तेव्हां ॥

पति प्रियेचें निज जीवन ।

पति प्रियेचें निज निधान ॥

पति प्रियेचें निज भूषण ।

तेणें विण ते अतिदीन ॥

पति प्रियेची निजमूर्ति ।

पति प्रियेची निजात्मगती ॥

पति प्रियेची निजशांति ।

होय उपपत्ति त्या विण ॥

पति प्रियेचें निजशोभन ।

पति प्रियेचें गतीगमन ॥

पति त्रियेचें प्रेमधन ।

तेणें विण ते अतिदीन ॥

तू तव माझा प्राणनाथ ।

तुज वेगळा मज प्राणांत ॥

माझा परमात्मा रघुनाथ ।

हृदयस्थ अवधारीं ॥

जेव्हांचि तुजें वन-प्रयाण ।

तुज सर्वें येती माझे प्राण ॥

मागें राहवितां जाण ।

अचुक मरण मज रामा ॥ ”

Trs.—“ O Lord of the Raghus, if thou art near, the thorns of the forest will be robbed of their sting; then poison will be turned into nectar and *I shall feel immense pleasure* even while dwelling in the forest. Dwelling in the forest in thy company will be to me as if dwelling in the *Vaikuntha* or *Kailas*. On the other hand, if thou art away, life will be a burden to me and my very existence will be painful. The husband is the very life of the wife, her treasure, her beauty; without him the wife is wretched. He is her very body, her soul, her peace of mind; without him she is in distress. He is her ornament, her active principle, her store of love; without him, she is wretched. Thou art the lord of my life; without thee, my life will flee away. O Lord of the Raghus, thou art the soul resting in my bosom. When thou departest for the forest, my life will follow

theo there. If thou keepest me behind, death will surely overtake me. ”

Indeed, the whole of the ‘ अरण्यवासगमन ’ including the interview between king *Dasharatha*, and his queen *Kaïkeyi* is worth perusing. It appeals very touchingly to the softer emotions of the reader.

एकनाथी भागवत is a commentary in vernacular on the eleventh स्कंध (part) of *Bhagwat*, one of the three celebrated Epics of India. The original text consists of about 1500 stanzas and Eknath’s commentary on it extends over more than 18000 stanzas in *Ovi* metre. The 28th chapter of this commentary (परमार्थ निर्णयेनाम) is considered to be the best. एकनाथी भागवत is a free exposition of moral and metaphysical principles of the भागवत. It is not translation simply. In order to illustrate what sort of commentary this is, we may take at random a line from the 11th chapter of the original, enumerating the attributes of the saints, along with Eknath’s commentary on the same.

Original:— श्लो. । कामैरहतधीर्दान्तो मृदुःशुचि
रकिंचनः ॥

Commentary on the first half of the above line:—

ऊर्ध्वशी आलिया शेजेसी ।
कामक्षोभ नुपजे ज्यासी ॥

स्वानंदं भोगितां अहर्निशीं ।
 विषयकामासी विसरला ॥
 रंकू पालखिये बैसला ।
 तां पूर्ववाहना विसरला ॥
 तेंवि हा निजानंदं तृप्त झाला ।
 काम विसरला तुच्छत्वे ॥
 कांहीं अप्राप्त पावावया कामावें ।
 साधूसी अप्राप्तता न संभवे ॥
 प्राप्तपदीं यथा गौरवें ।
 निजानुभवे विराजतू ॥
 खद्योता सूर्य भेटों जातां ।
 खद्योता न भेटे सविता ॥
 सूर्यासी न भेटवे खद्योता ।
 तेवीं अप्राप्तता साधूसी ॥
 एवं उभयपरी पाहतां ।
 कामू निवाला सर्वथा ॥
 हें आटवें लक्षण तत्त्वतां ।
 अकामता साधूची ॥
 सावधानें अंतर नेमितां ।
 तेचि बाह्येन्द्रियां नियामकता ॥
 जेवीं कां लेंकीसी शिकवण देतां ।
 सून सर्वथा चळीं कांपे ॥
 मुख्य धूर रणीं लागल्या हातां ।
 येर कटक जितिलें न झुंझतां ॥

कां मूळ छेदिलें असतां ।
 शाखा समस्त छेदिल्या ॥
 एवं अंतरवृत्तीचा जो नेम ।
 तोचि बाह्येंद्रियां उपरम ॥
 येसेनी हे जें उपजे कर्म ।
 तें निर्भ्रम अहैतुक ॥
 अंतर जडले आत्मस्थिती ।
 बाह्य रंगली मद्वृत्ती ॥
 तथें जीं जीं कर्म निपजती ।
 तीं तीं होती ब्रह्मरूप ॥
 बाह्येंद्रियां करितां नेम ।
 अंतरींचे कर्मी प्रकटे ब्रह्म ॥
 हा बाह्येंद्रियांचा नेम ।
 आत्मराम जाणती ॥
 पेशी बाह्येंद्रियनियामकता ।
 हे जाणावी साधूची दान्तता ॥

Ekknath explains each difficult word and phrase in the original by means of illustrations in such a way that the whole becomes intelligible to the reader and leaves a vivid moral impression on his mind.

Ekknath draws upon his observation as well as his imagination in order to devise fitting similes. When all the evil spirits were conquered by Krishna, his Yadav

Illustrations of his similes.

soldiers grew boisterous and became a source of danger to peace. So Krishna thought of destroying them anyhow. In painting this thought, Eknath employs the following similes :-

“ यादव करुनि अतुर्बळी ।
 नाना दुष्ट मर्दिले सकळी ॥
 परी यादव जाहले अतिप्रबळी ।
 हें न मनीच केवळ श्रीकृष्ण ॥
 नव्हतां यादवांचें निधन ।
 नुतरे धराभार संपूर्ण ॥
 घेसें मानिता झाला श्रीकृष्ण ।
 कुळनिर्दळण तो चिंती ॥
 अग्नि कर्पूर खाऊनि वाढे ।
 कापुरांतीं अग्नीही उडे ॥
 तैसें यादवांचें अति गाढें ।
 आलें रोकडें निधन ॥
 केळी फळे तंव वाढे वाढी ।
 फळ पाकें माळी झाड तोडी ॥
 तैशी यादव कुळाची शीग गाढी ।
 वाढली रोकडी मरणार्थ ॥
 फळ परिपाकें परिमळी ।
 तें घेऊनी जाय माळी ॥
 तशीं स्वकुळफळें वनमाळी ।
 न्यावया तत्काळीं स्वयें इच्छी ” ॥

Trs :—“ God Krishna killed all the evil spirits with the help of the Yadavas, whom he had made matchless in prowess. But the Yadavas now grew too strong and this the Lord did not like. He thought that the earth would not be free from the burden unless the Yadavas were killed. So he began to devise the means of destroying their tribe. Fire waxes by devouring camphor but is itself extinguished when the camphor is consumed; in a similar way, the destruction of the Yadavas drew near and was sure and certain. The plantain tree grows to its full growth when it bears fruit, but as soon as the fruit is ripe, the gardener cuts down the tree; similarly, the growth of power which the Yadavas had reached was only for their own destruction. A fruit becomes fragrant when it is ripe, but the gardener then plucks it off; so the Lord now wished to put an end to the progeny of his own race. ”

Eknath's notion of *true religion* appears from the following passages transcribed from his
 His religious thoughts. miscellaneous verses :—

“ परब्रह्मप्राप्ती लागीं ।
 कर्म आचरावीं वेगीं ॥
 चित्त शुद्ध तेणें होय ।
 भेटी सदगुरूचे पाय ॥
 कर्म नित्य नैमित्तिक ।
 प्रायश्चित्त जाण एक ॥

उपासन तें चवथें ।

आचारावें शुद्ध चित्तें ॥

तेणें होय चित्त स्थिर ।

ज्ञानालागीं अधिकार ॥

होय भेटी सद्गुरूची ।

ज्ञानप्राप्ति तेंचि साची ॥

प्राप्त झाल्या ब्रह्मज्ञान ।

आपण जग ब्रह्म परिपूर्ण ॥ ”

Trs :—“ For attainment of the Supreme *Brahma*, you must do the proper *Karma* (rites). By means of *Karma*, the heart is purified and the feet of a proper *Guru* (master) are reached. You should practise with a pure heart all the four kinds of *Karma* viz नित्य, नैमित्तिक, प्रायश्चित्त and उपासन. Thereby the mind becomes steady and then you are entitled to the acquisition of true knowledge. Then you meet a good *guru* and then you actually acquire knowledge; and when the true knowledge of *Brahma* is attained, you will perceive *Brahma* in everything and will be completely identified with *Brahma*. ”

“ अहो तुम्ही संन्यासी जालां ।

कामक्रोध जवळींचा नाही गेला ॥

व्यर्थ कां विनाश केला ।

सावध होई ॥

संसार व्यर्थ सांडिला ।

मुलां बाळां तुटी पाडिला ॥

नारायण नाही जोडिला ।
 सावध होई ॥
 वरवर शेंडी बाडी ।
 जानवें तोडुनी धोत्रें फाडी ॥
 हातीं घेउनी दंड लांकडी ।
 सावध होई ॥
 वरवर म्हणसी नारायण ।
 अंतरीं विषयावरी ध्यान ॥
 कासया संन्यास घेऊन ।
 सावध होई ॥
 आतां एक विचार ।
 धरीं तूं संतांचा आधार ॥
 एका जनादेनी तत्पर ।
 सावध होई ॥ ”

Tr :—“ Oh Sir, you have become a *Sanyasi*, but your Desire and Anger have not left you. Why did you trouble yourself? Learn even now

“ You have left off the world and have separated from your children; but you have not reached God. Learn even now !

“ You have cut off your tuft of hair and torn your sacred thread; you have torn your *dhoti* and taken the staff in your hand. Learn even now !

“ Outwardly you utter the name of Narayan, but inwardly you are thinking of sensual pleasures. Where is the good of your *sanyasa* ? Learn even now !

“ Now devote yourself to one thing, that is, go and seek saints. Eka of Janardan says:—

“ Wake up and learn even now ! ”

It will be seen from the above that Eknath was not opposed to the people going through **Real object of कर्म** i. e. rites prescribed by the *Shastras*; on the contrary, he advised the people to follow the various ritualistic duties, not mechanically but for a higher purpose, viz. purity and steadiness of mind. Then only, he held, can you attain ज्ञान (true knowledge) through the means of कर्म (action). Mechanically going through the several prescribed ceremonies without this higher purpose is of no avail. It is the *eschewing of the mind from the passions* that is to be aimed at; this is what Eknath inculcated like many other saints. The same idea occurs in the following passage in the चतुःश्लोकी भागवत टीका:—

तप म्हणजे नव्हे स्नान ।
 तप म्हणजे नव्हे दान ॥
 तप नव्हे शास्त्राख्यान ।
 वेदाध्ययन नव्हे तप ॥

तप म्हणजे नव्हे योग ।

तप म्हणजे नव्हे याग ॥

तप म्हणजे वासनात्याग ।

जेणें तुटती लाग कामक्रोधाचे ॥

जेणें दंभ लोभ निःशेष आटे ।

अहंममता समूळ तुटे ॥

याच नांव तप गोमटें ।

मानी नेटपाटे विधाता ॥

The above extracts are typical and will be enough to give an idea of the writings and preachings of Ekknath.

CHAPTER VII.

Dasopant and other poets.

About this time, three or four other poets of somewhat minor importance flourished in Maharashtra. Dasopant was born in S'ak 1473 or 1551 A. D. He was the son of Digambarpant Deshpande, a petty revenue officer in the service of the king of Bedar. While only a boy he was kept at Bedar by his father in security for arrears of revenue amounting to a large sum of money. There was no hope of money forthcoming from Digambarpant at the appointed time and Dasopant prayed to God. Dattatreya for saving him from the ignominy of conversion to Mahommedanism. By a strange miracle the money did arrive at the nick of time and Dasopant was set free. This incident made Dasopant a thorough devotee of god Dattatreya. He worshipped the god and lived a very pious life at the village of Jogai's Amba. He has written some Vedantic works, of which गीतार्णव and गीतार्थबोध are the more important ones. The former is a commentary on the भगवद्गीता in *Owi* metre, while the latter is a commentary on the same work in prose. Dasopant died in S'ak year 1537 at the age of 65.

Rangnath Swami who is said to have lived about this time has written many poems, of which योगवासिष्ठ and his commentary on

the भगवद्गीता are prominent. Both these works are philosophical.

Narsinha Saraswati was the religious master of Janardau Swami. He lived at Jogai's
 Gangadhar Swami. Amba. He had many pupils and one of them was गंगाधरसरस्वती who has written a devotional work named गुरुचरित्र in 52 chapters. This work is very popular and we, to this day, find many a Maratha devotee of god Dattatreya chanting the stanzas of गुरुचरित्र every morning for seven days in succession.

Anand Tanaya is said to have lived in the latter part of the eleventh century. No definite information is however available about this author. In one place he has called himself the soldier of Arni; but it is uncertain whether he refers to the famous battle of 1751. Some say that he was the religious preceptor to Shahaji, Shivaji's father, and hence he is supposed to have lived about the year 1650. He has written small poems on different subjects, the more conspicuous of which are सीतास्वयंवर, सुदामचरित्र, उमारमासंवाद, शबरीआख्यान, and मार्कंडेयाख्यान. The chief points to be noted in his compositions are that he has paid more attention to शब्दालंकार (pleasing arrangements of words) than अर्थालंकार (real poetic sentiments). Unlike his predecessors who wrote in *Ovi* or *Abhang* metre, he has composed his poems in various

mètres after the fashion of Sanskrit compositions. On account of the verbal beauties, his compositions are pleasing to the reader. A few extracts will not be out of place. He describes Sita at the time of her स्वयंवर in the following terms:—

हेमाद्रीवरि हेमनिर्मित जशा संफुल्लवल्ली भव्या ।
 तैशा आभरणी अपार तरुणी सौधांगणी शोभल्या ॥
 मध्ये कल्पक वल्लरी सम दिसे सीतांशुर्विबानना ।
 सीता शीलवती शुभा नृपसभा लक्ष्मी जना कानना ॥१॥

In his pretty little poem called सुदामचरित्र, he puts the following words in the mouth of Krishna, the Lord of Dwarka, on the occasion of his interview with a poor Brahmin friend of his childhood, named सुदामः—

कांहीं आठवतें गड्या शिशुपर्णी साळेंतलें खेळणें ।
 नाना हास्य विनोद मोद सगडी कुस्ती करूं हेळणें ॥
 मी तूं हा मज तूज भेद न जर्गी ते मूळ मैत्री भली ।
 येतें कीं स्मरणास जाण सखया पुण्यें बहू लाधली ॥१॥

How appealing the reminiscences of childhood these are ? There is certainly a great deal of touching sentiment in these words. The following two stanzas will give an idea as to how skilful Anand Tanaya is in producing sweet alliterations:—

जो कल्याण गुणी गुणीच अगुणी भूतें मणी ज्यागुणी,
 ज्याच्या रूप गुणी सदा गुण गुणी शंभू रिचे निर्गुणी ।
 सृष्टी चित्त गुणी जयास्तव गर्णी माया जया टेंगणी,
 तो कोणा न गणी, वसे ऋषिगर्णी, श्रीराम रंगांगर्णी ॥१॥

दैत्य धुरंधर तो दशकंधर जो नृपगंधिरजास नसाहे,
 मस्त समस्तहि मस्तक डोलवि, हस्त गदांकित हालविताहे ।
 धोट सभांतरि नीट रिघोनि, अवीट बसे कवणास नसाहे,
 ढाल फिरंग विशालधनु शर चालत चालवि दोनहि बाहे ॥२

Another poet that eminently deserves to be mentioned in this group is Raghunath Pandit, a near relative of Anand Tanaya. He was a learned Brahmin well versed in Sanskrit lore. A small poem called नलोपाख्यान is the only work of his* that we know of : but it is one of the most charming and excellent poetical works in Marathi. Like Anand Tanaya he has composed the stanzas in different metres. Though a small piece, नलोपाख्यान excels many other works in sentiment as well as in sweetness of diction. It is a narration of the circumstances under which the marriage of king नल with दमयन्ती was brought about through the mediation of a राजहंस (swan). They say that a perusal of Anand Tanaya's संतास्त्रयंबर inspired Raghunath Pandit with the ambition of composing a similar poem and नलोपाख्यान was the outcome. It is a nice little poem and instead of giving a few extracts we recommend the reader to go through the whole of it.

* It is understood that another has been recently discovered.

This brings us to the close of the Second Period of Marathi literature, which is characterised by devotional love and spiritual learning similar to what we have had in the First Period, but in which a beginning was also made—and a successful beginning too—by some of the authors to write poems on choice events in the great national epics.

CHAPTER VIII.

Third Period.

Tukaram.

The Third or the Brilliant Period of Marathi Literature opens with the great trio viz Tukaram, Mukteshwar and Ramdas in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Tukaram's
ancestry.

The famous saint Tukaram was born at Dehu, a village on the river Indrayani at the distance of a few miles from Poona, in the S'ak year 1530 i. e. 1608 A. D., the same year that produced two other great poet-saints viz. Mukteshwar and Ramdas. He was a *Sudra* by birth but *Vaishya* by profession. Tukaram's ancestor Vishwambhar was a devotee of Vithoba of Pandharpur, and built a temple for the god at Dehu. The descendants of Vishwambhar were no less devotees of Vithoba, and Tukaram was the greatest and most devout of them all. Bolhoba and Kanakai were the father and mother of Tukaram. He had two brothers Sawji and Kanhoba. He was supposed by some to have been an incarnation of Namdev: this idea seems to have arisen from the fact that great similarity was to be seen between the *Abhangs* of the two poets in point of simplicity of style combined with depth and earnestness of devotion.

Tukaram was, from his very childhood, fond of worshipping his family god Vithoba. His childhood. and singing his prayers. He was sent out to the fields by his parents every day to take care of their cattle : but while other boys tending cattle spent their leisure in playing their games, Tukaram resorted to some lonely place and there took delight in singing prayers to Vithoba. It is doubtful whether Tukaram was taught anything of reading and writing in his childhood : probably he might have learnt reading and writing Marathi later on. He heard his parents chanting the *Abhangs* of saints like *Dnyan-dev*, *Namdev* and *Muktabai* and so he could recite some of them; and it seems this was the only training he had received in his childhood.

When Bolhoba advanced in years, he grew anxious as to what would become of the management of the domestic affairs of the family after his death. The eldest son Sawji was totally indifferent to worldly affairs and had nearly become a *Bairagi* (recluse). So he told his father that he did not at all wish to take up the management. Tukaram was then only a boy of 13 and the burden of the family cares naturally fell on his shoulders, he being the next son. His father now commenced giving him practical lessons in petty trading, and in looking after domestic affairs and after a time Tukaram acquired a tolerable knowledge of such things. He was lucky enough to make profits in his small concerns in the beginning and his

parents were quite pleased to see him managing the affairs with success. His first wife Rakhmabai continually suffered from asthma and so he married a second wife named Jijai. The affairs went on smoothly with him for about four years when the tide of fortune turned. At the age of seventeen he lost his parents: his elder brother Sawji left the house and walked away a *Bairagi* (recluse) after the death of his wife. Three years later, there was a dire famine, and at the age of twenty, Tukaram's first wife Rukhmabai and son Santuji died of starvation before his very eyes. In the next year he lost his cattle. All these calamities for a time made Tukaram miserable and he was tired of the world. He listened to everybody that showed him sympathy in his mishap, but never made a reply. He sought loneliness, and quietly brooded over the past and reflected as to what course he should follow in the future. Without anybody's knowledge he repaired to a hill situated at the distance of about five miles from Dehu, and there occupied himself with meditation and prayers to God without caring for food or drink. His younger brother Kanhoba went out in search after him and found him out after seven days. They both set out for Dehu and sat down for a while on the bank of the river Indrayani before proceeding to their house. Tukaram now told Kanhoba to bring all the bonds written in their favour by their debtors and told him to throw them away into the river, saying that it was an invidious task to recover the money from their own neighbours. To this Kanhoba did not consent and partition was effected there

and then. Ultimately half of the bonds falling to Tukaram's share he actually threw into the river—water with his own hands.

Tukaram now returned to Dehu and lived the life of a stern religious devotee. He worshipped god Vithoba for hours together day and night. He very often went to the hill named Bhandar, a few miles from Dehu. Not that he left off the worldly affairs and turned a regular *Bairagi* but he spent some time in looking after the ordinary avocations of earning maintenance for the family. He spared nothing in assisting the poor and the needy and spent his leisure in studying the works of Dayandev, Namdev and Eknath and other saints of old.

Tukaram's philanthropy and self-sacrifice were extraordinary. His kindness to even lower animals was highly commendable. This sort of behaviour greatly annoyed his wife Jijai, who tried in vain to dissuade him from spending away his poor belongings for the sake of strangers to the detriment of the members of his own family. The innate dispositions of the husband and the wife were diametrically opposite and the result was that they had to exchange high words with each other, like Socrates and Xanthippe of old Greece. But Tukaram never heeded what he called her narrow views and quietly pursued his own benevolent line of conduct. He used to deliver कर्तव्य (sermons) to the multitudes wherein

he propounded that all men alike were children of God and that they ought to worship Him with sincere devotion. Anybody could go and listen to his कर्तन (sermon) and to his भजन (songs of worship). People from the surrounding villages used to gather together to hear him singing and praying aloud. He possessed, in admirable excellence, the faculty of composing *abhāngs ex tempore* while delivering कर्तन

In this way his fame spread far and wide. It reached the ears of Shivaji who had just begun to rise into prominence in the Deccan. Being eager to see Tukaram, Shivaji sent for him, requesting him to come along with the retinue furnished by him, consisting of horses and men. Tukaram refused to go along with the retinue and sent in return a letter consisting of a few *Abhāngs* wherein he informed Shivaji that he disliked worldly greatness altogether and that it was no use paying him a visit as desired. Shivaji was astonished at the extreme disinterestedness of Tukaram and went out himself to see him. His कर्तन deeply impressed Shivaji's mind and in consequence he neglected for some time the great enterprise of building a kingdom which he had undertaken. Shivaji's mother Jijabai and his followers were grieved at this sudden change worked by Tukaram's words and so they requested the latter to restore Shivaji's mind to the great task he had set before him. Tukaram perceived the situation and in a subsequent कर्तन exhorted his

audience, of whom Shivaji was one, that everybody must do his duty and that that was the way to attain salvation. Fortunately for the people of Maharashtra, Tukaram's exposition of duty convinced Shivaji that flying from the world was not proper but that he ought to remain in the midst of the busy world and do his duty there as best as he could: and with this conviction he returned to his former pursuits of conquest.

Tukaram passed his life in worshipping God Vithoba, meditating over true religion, preaching universal sympathy and exhorting the masses of Maharashtra to work their own spiritual elevation. He died in Sak year 1571 i. e. 1649 A. D. at the age of 41. The descendants of Tukaram live at Dehu to this day.

Tukaram's Writings.

Tukaram's writings chiefly consist of his numerous *Abhangs* on asceticism (वैराग्य), devotion (भक्ति) and philosophy (ज्ञान), and on incidents from the *Puranas* like the rescue of the cowherds by Krishna from the forest conflagration, the destruction of Ravana by Rama and the ten incarnations of Vishnu, as well as on some occurrences in his own life such as the return of the pilgrims from Pandharpur, the harsh words of his wife, and his interview with king Shivaji &c. Of these *Abhangs*, about five thousand are published by Messrs. Damodar Sawlaram & Co. of Bombay. Poet Moropant expresses the following opinion on Tukaram :—

“ ज्याचे अभंग लागति खळहृदया जेंवि बाण रामाचे ।
 ज्या परधाद न मोहिति शर जैसे ईश्वरास कामाचे ॥
 स्वात्मानुभव पहातां तुकया केवळ सखाचि जनकाचा ।
 वैराग्यें डोलविला माथा जेणें मुनींद्र सनकाचा ॥ ”

Trans:—“ His *Abhangs* pierce the heart of the wicked like Rama's arrows. Words of others could not beguile him as missiles of the God of Love cannot hit Shiva's heart. So far as knowledge of universal soul is concerned, Tuka can be compared to King Janaka. At his stern asceticism, even Sanaka, the lord of the sages nodded his head.”

The faith of Tukaram in god Vithoba was uncommonly staunch. He was solely devoted to Vithoba and in him did he put full trust for his salvation. The following *Abhangs* will show how implicitly he believed in the efficacy of sincere Faith:—

(१) “कासया पाषाण पूजीती पीतळ ।
 अष्टधातू खळ भावहीन ॥
 भावची कारण भावचि तारण ।
 मोक्षाचें साधन बोलियेलें ॥
 काय करिल जपमाळ कंठमाळ ।
 करिसी वेळोवेळ विषयजप ॥
 काय करिशील पंडित होऊनी ।
 अक्षराभिमानी थोर होय ॥

काय करिशील कुशल गायन ।
 अंतरीं मलिन कुबुद्धी तों ॥
 तुका म्हणे भाव नाहीं करी सेवा ।
 तेणें काय देवा योग्य होसी ॥ ”

(२) “ गोड नावें खीर । परी साखरेचा धीर ॥
 तैसें जाणा ब्रह्मज्ञान । बापुडें तें भक्तिविण ॥
 रुची नेदी अन्न । त्यांत नसतां लवण ॥
 आंधळ्यांचे श्रम । शिकविल्याचेंची नाम ॥
 तुका म्हणे वीणा । तारांवीण व्यर्थ जाणा ॥ ”

(३) “ सदा सर्वकाळ अंतरीं कुटील ।
 तेणें गळां माळ घालूं नये ॥
 ज्यासी नाहीं धर्म दया क्षमा शांती ।
 तेणें अंगीं विभूति लावूं नये ॥
 ज्यासी न कळे भक्तीचें महिमान ।
 तेणें ब्रह्मज्ञान बोलूं नये ॥
 ज्याचें मन नाहीं लागलें हातासी ।
 तेणें प्रप्रंचासी टाकूं नये ॥
 तुका म्हणे ज्यासी नाहीं हरिभक्ती ।
 तेणें भगवें हातीं धरूं नये ॥ ”

Trans :—“ (1) The wretches worship (idols of) stone and brass and the eight metals without devotion; what is the use? Faith is the key-note; Faith is the protector. Faith is the means to Salvation. Thou thinkest often and often of sensual pleasures;

what is the use, then, of rosaries of beads? What wilt thou do by becoming a scholar? A scholar is very proud of his learning. Of what use is thy skill in singing, if in thy innermost heart there are dirty thoughts? Tuka asks, canst thou be fit for God without Faith, even though thou mayst be going through all the ceremonies of worship?

× × ×

- (2) " They call खीर (milk-dish) sweet only in name; the real sweetness is of sugar. So knowledge of *Brahma* is powerless unless it be attended with Faith. Food gives no relish unless it be mixed with salt. A blind man may take pains to learn; but what can he learn? Tuka says, a lute is good for nothing if it be without strings."

× × ×

- (3) " He who is crooked at heart at all times should not wear a string of beads on his neck. He who does not possess Peace, Sense of Duty, Mercy or Forgiveness should not besmear his body with ashes. He who does not understand the importance of Faith should not talk of the knowledge of *Brahma*. He who is not able to keep his mind under the thumb should not forsake the world. Tuka says, he who is not devoted to Hari should not wear ochre cloth (generally put on by ascetics)."

In the following stanza, Tukaram depicts his love

to God by comparing himself to a child and god Vithoba to its mother :—

“ बाळ मायेवीण क्षणभरि नराहे ।
 न देखतां होये कासावीस ॥
 आणिक उदंड बुझाविती जरि ।
 छंद त्या अंतरि माउलीचा ॥
 नाघडती तया बोल आणिकाचे ।
 देखोनियां नाचे माय वृष्टीं ॥
 तुका म्हणे माझी विठ्ठल माउली ।
 आणिकाची बोली चाड नाहीं ॥ ”

Tr :—“ A child cannot remain quiet for a moment without its mother. If the mother is out of its sight it becomes extremely unhappy. Others may try to pacify it, but yet from its heart it longs for the mother. It does not like the words of anybody else, but when it sees its mother it dances with joy. Tuka says, ‘ Vithal is my mother; I do not care for the words of anybody else. ’”

Tukaram was uncommonly disinterested; he was altogether indifferent to worldly gains. What he cared for was contact with good men, devotion to God and freedom from passions. The following oft-quoted *Abhangs* will illustrate this :—

हेचि दान देगा देवा । तुझा विसर न व्हावा ॥
 शुण गाईन आवडी । हेचि माझी सर्व जोडी ॥

न लगे मुक्ती धन संपदा । संत संग देई सदा ॥

तुका म्हणे गर्भवासी । सुखें घालावें आम्हांसी ॥

x

x

x

नको देऊं देवा पोटीं हें संतान । माया जालें जाण नाठवसी ॥

नको देऊं देवा द्रव्य आणि भाग्य । तो एक उल्लेग होय जीवा ॥

तुका म्हणे करीं फकिराचे परी । रात्रं दिवस हरी येईल वाचे ॥

Trans :- "O Lord! do me only this much favour; I must not forget Thee. I will sing Thy praises with delight; this is my all in all. I do not want wealth, nor glory nor salvation. What I want is contact with good men; give me that. Tuka says, Thou mayst then make me go, through several births at Thy pleasure.

x

x

x

"O Lord, do not give me any children, for I shall then forget thee on account of the snares of attachment to them. O Lord, do not give me wealth, nor glory, for that would only cause distraction to the mind. Tuka says, "Make me an ascetic so that I may utter thy name day and night."

It is worth noting that in the last of the above stanzas, Tukaram is not only indifferent to worldly objects for which a very large majority of us so restlessly pant, but positively detests them with utter hatred.

Tukaram illustrates the philosophy of worldly existence by means of lucid similes in the following *Abhang*:-

“ मृगजळा काय करावा उतार ।
 पावावया पार पैलथडी ॥
 खापराचे होन खेळती लेकुरें ।
 कोण त्या वेव्हारें लाभहाणी ॥
 मंगळदायक करिती कुमारी ।
 काय त्यांची खरी सोयरीक ॥
 स्वप्नींचें जें सुख दुःख झालें कांहीं ।
 जागृती तो नाही साच भाव ॥
 सारीं झालीं भेलीं लटिकें वचन ।
 बद्धमुक्त शीण तुका म्हणे ॥ ’

Trans:—“What means can there be for going across a river of mirage? Children play with earthen coins; what gain or loss by such bargains? Girls perform marriages in play; do those ceremonies create any relation? We feel joy or sorrow in dream; but when we awake, we find that there is nothing real in it. They say all are born and die; but this is not true. Tuka says, properly speaking, this is nothing more than the futile worry of binding and unbinding.”

To the pretending anchorites and pilgrims of whom we find hundreds and thousands, Tukaram addresses these remonstrances :—

आशा हे समूळ खणोनी काढावी ।
 तेव्हांचि गोसावी व्हावें तेणें ॥

नाही तरी सुखें असावें संसारी ।
 फजीती दुसरी करूं नये ॥
 आशा मारुनीयां जयवंत व्हावें ।
 तेव्हांची निघावें सर्वातूनी ॥
 तुका म्हणे जरी योगाची तांतडी ।
 आशेची बींबुडी करीं आधीं ॥

x

x

x

जाउनीयां तीर्था काय तुवां केलें ।
 चर्म प्रक्षाळिलें वरीवरी ॥
 अंतरीचें शुद्ध कासयानें झालें ।
 भूषण त्वां केलें आपणया ॥
 वृंदावन फळ घोळीलें साकरी ।
 भीतरील थारा मोडेचिना ॥
 तुका म्हणे नाहीं शांति क्षमा दया ।
 तोंवरी कासया फुंदां तुम्हीं ॥

Tr :-“ A man must first root out Desire and then become a recluse; otherwise he had better continue in the worldly life in peace; why should he hold himself up to double ridicule? He should leave all, only when he has succeeded in killing Desire. Tuka says, if you want *Yoga*, first destroy the seed of Desire.”

By going to a holy place, what have you gained? You have simply washed the skin outwardly. Can the innermost heart be purified by wearing ornaments on

the body ? *Vrindavan* fruit may be turned round and round in sugar; but can the inner bitterness be removed thereby ? Tuka asks, as long as the heart has no peace, no forgiveness, no mercy, why do you boast ? ”

Of the few *Abhangs* that he wrote in reply to Shivaji's invitation, the following one is very instructive and worth noting:—

आतां एक योग साधावा हा नीट ।
 भल्याचा तो वीट मानूं नये ॥
 जेणें योगें तुम्हां लागूं पाहे दोष ।
 ऐसा हा सायास करूं नये ॥
 निंदक दुर्जन संग्रहीं असती ।
 त्यांची युक्ती चित्तीं आणूं नये ॥
 परीक्षावे कोण राज्याचे रक्षक ।
 विवेकाविवेक पाहूनीयां ॥
 सांगणें न लगे सर्वज्ञ तूं राजा ।
 अनाथांच्या काजा साह्य व्हावें ॥
 हेंचि ऐकोनीयां पावें समाधान ।
 आतां या दर्शना काज नाहीं ॥
 वेवोनियां भेटी कोण हा संतोष ।
 आयुष्याचे दीस गेले गेले ॥
 तुका म्हणे राया धन्य जन्म क्षिती ॥
 त्रैलोक्यीं हे ख्याति कीर्ति तुझी ॥

Trans:—“Now accomplish well this *Yoga* that you

should not discard whatever is good. Do not resort to anything that may subject you to blame. Do not rely upon the cunning ways of those men in your service that are wicked and indulge in reviling others. Make sure with keen judgment as to who are the real well-wishers of kingdom and who are not. I need not enter into details, for, O king, you know everything. Extend your protection to the helpless. Content yourself with listening to these words; there is no need of personal visit. What delight can there be in a visit; most of the days of my life have passed away. Tuka says, O king, blessed is this country and your birth; you have spread your fame in the three worlds."

Tukaram was quite unmindful of the criticism of the populace. He boldly followed his own convictions in the face of public ridicule. The following stanza will illustrate this:-

कोणी वंदा कोणी निंदा । आम्हां स्वहिताचा धंदा ॥
 काय तुम्हांसि गरज । आम्हीं भंजू पंढरीराज ॥
 तुम्हांसारिखें चाल्यवें । तेव्हां स्वहिता मुकावें ॥
 तुका म्हणे हो कां कांहीं । गळ दिला विठ्ठलपार्थी ॥

Trans:-" Some may honour, others may blame; nevertheless we will follow an occupation of our own good. What have you to do with that? We shall worship the Lord of Pandhari. If we follow your advice, we shall be lost to our own good. Tuka says,

come what may, we have held fast to the feet of Vitthala."

So also did he show utter disregard to the pleasures or pains of life and preached contentment; for joy and sorrow were to him like shades of cloud.

कई वाहावें जीवन । कई पलंगीं शयन ॥
 जैसी जैसी वेळ पडे । तैसैं तैसैं होणें घडे ॥
 कई भोज्य नानापरी । कई कोरड्या भाकरी ॥
 कई बैसावें वाहनीं । कई पायीं अनवाणी ॥
 कई उत्तम प्रावणें । कई वसनें तींही जीणें ॥
 कई सकळ संपत्ती । कई भोगणें विपत्तीं ॥
 कई सज्जनासीं संग । कई दुर्जनासीं योग ॥
 तुका म्हणे जाण । सुख दुःख तें समान ॥

Trans :—" Some times you may bear water, at others, lie down in cot. You must adopt yourself to time. Sometimes enjoy various dishes, at others simply coarse bread. Sometimes drive in a carriage; at others walk barefooted. Sometimes put on fine clothes, at others, worn out rags. Sometimes enjoy prosperity, at others, suffer adversities. Some times enjoy the company of the good, at others put up with that of the wicked. Tuka says, look upon pleasure and pain with equal indifference."

Tukaram's style of composition is very simple and smooth. He never aimed at artistic embellishment; what he cared for was perspicuity and force of appeal. His language was easy and the arrangement never far-

fetched. With the liberty that a poet of his genuine faculty is very well entitled to, his words came out in an easy flow which he never attempted to disturb. He did not like to sacrifice sentiment for beauty of composition. His task was to preach virtue and faith, and in order to appeal to the hearts of his audience he used fitting similes. Expatiating on the value of sincere faith, he uses these similes :-

“ सोनियाचें ताट क्षीरीनें भरिलें ।
 भक्षावया दिलें श्वानालागीं ॥
 मुक्ताफळहार खरासि घातला ।
 कस्तुरी सुकराला चोजविली ॥
 वेदपरायण बधिरा सांगे ज्ञान ।
 तयाची ते खूण काय जाणे ॥
 तुका म्हणे ज्याचें तोचि एक जाणे ।
 भक्तीचें महिमान साधु जाणे ॥ ”

× × ×

बसोनि थिल्लरीं । वेडुक सागरा धिक्कारी ॥
 नाहीं देखिला ना ठावा । तोंड पिटी करी हावा ॥
 फुगतें काउळें । म्हणे मी राजहंसा आगळें ॥
 गजाहुनी खर । म्हणे चांगला मी फार ॥
 मुलाम्याचें नाणें । तुका म्हणे नव्हे सोनें ॥

Trans :-“ A gold dish filled with milk pudding is placed before a dog; a necklaco of pearls is put round the neck of a donkey; a sow is besmeared with musk;

a scholar learned in Vedas preaches to a deaf man; of what use is the merit? Tuka says, none but a saint can know the real value of Faith. ”

× × ×

“ A frog sitting in a pool disdains the ocean. He has never seen nor known the ocean; but simply wastes his breath. A crow swells and says he is superior to a swan. An ass lays claim to superiority over an elephant. Tuka says a gilt coin is not gold. ”

The above quotations will be enough to give the readers an idea of the preaching as well as the style of the famous *Abhangs* of our poet and saint Tukaram. Besides these *Abhangs* we find a few *padus* or songs written by him on miscellaneous subjects. Many of his *Abhangs* are selected by *Haridasas* (religious preachers) of these days as the theme of their sermons and many are also devoutly repeated by companies singing prayers at night during leisure. Tukaram is one of the most popular poets of Maharashtra; some of the lines of his *Abhangs* have actually passed into oft-quoted proverbs in the Marathi language.

CHAPTER IX.

Mukteshwar.

Mukteshwar is the second of the brilliant trio that saw the light of the day in the year 1530* of the S'ak era. Much is not known of his life. He was Eknath's grandson. Godubai, otherwise called Lilabai, the elder of Eknath's two daughters was married to Vishwambhar Bawa of Paithan. Vishwambhar Bawa was of somewhat loose morals in his youth and so Lilabai was unhappy for some years in the beginning. Eknath came to know of this, and the remedy that he devised for the improvement of his son-in-law's conduct was that he advised the latter to read and explain at least one chapter of the *Bhagvatgita* every night to his wife. Vishwambhar went on in his vicious course of life, but out of respect to his venerable father-in-law, complied with his request and explained every night one chapter of the *Gita* to his wife before he went out for his immoral practices. The expected result did come out. Naturally the teachings of the *Gita* had their wholesome effect on Vishwambhar's mind, so much so that he gave up his bad habits and remained attached to his wife for the rest of

*Some biographers are of opinion that he was born in the year 1521 of the S'ak era.

his life. A son was born to them and this was our poet Mukteshwar. Some say he was dumb in his childhood and was afterwards enabled to speak by the favour of his grand-father. He was taught to read Sanskrit and Marathi works by Eknath and he eventually figured as one of the best poets in Marathi. The exact date of Mukteshwar's demise is not known; but he must have died some time about the year 1582 of the S'ak era Viz. 1660 A. D. at Terwad, a village near Narsoba's Vadi where he had gone on holy pilgrimage.

His Writings.

Mukteshwar saw Eknath composing poems and was fired with the ambition of becoming a poet himself. He seems to have composed his Ramayan early in his youth. It is written in different S'loka metres and consists of over 700 stanzas. As a poem, it is not a very meritorious production. Its diction is far fetched; some long syllables are shortened and *vice versa* in order to suit the metre. Undue license is taken in some places against rules of grammer, but still the ideas in the poem are good enough and often show early flashes of the author's poetic genius, the like of which we find in his later production the *Mahabharata*.

The following extracts from the युद्धकांड describing the fight between the two great warriors Ram and Ravan will give an idea of the style of this poem.

उभय विर सरोषे लागला बाणमेहो^१ ।
 धरणि गगन सिंधू खुंटला वातवाहो ॥
 शशि दिनकर लोपे माजली काळरात्री ।
 लखकति विजु भारी दीपल्या पक्षिजाती ॥
 शर-निबिडतमिस्त्रे लोपली वीरवक्त्रे ।
 झळकति करमुद्रा जेंवि आलात^२ चक्रे ॥
 उभयविरवरांची भासती त्याचि लक्षे ।
 पसरति शरजाळा दाविती चापदीक्षे ॥
 दशमुखशरवृष्टी दाटली अभ्रजाळें ।
 रघुवरशरसंगी वात कल्पांत काळें ॥
 भ्रमत प्रबळ पुच्छीं घोष गाजे गडाडां ।
 परशरमुखधाराभंग केला तडाडां ॥
 तदुपरि बहु थोरें कोप त्या राक्षसेंद्रा ।
 स्थिर करुनि मनातें देखतो राघवेंद्रा ॥
 सुटत कडकडाटे शूल-शक्ती विशाळा ।
 वमति वदनकुंडीं ज्वाळ कळोळमाळा ॥
 हर हृदयमराळें बाणजाळें निरालीं^३ ।
 निरखुनि वरि विंधे^४ शक्ति संहार काली ॥
 झडपति शरपक्षी वन्हि तेजाळ व्याळीं ॥
 सुर मुनि कपि राणे धांवती अंतरालीं ॥
 अगणित मुख चंचू चुंबितां बाणवृष्टी ।
 उठित खणखणाटें मांडली वन्हिवृष्टी ॥

1. Cloud of arrows. 2. Burning torch.

3. In the sky.

4. Broke.

तरुवर गिरिगुल्मा कानना होत दाहो ।

कनक रचित लंका लागलें नीर वाहों ॥

But it is the abbreviation of the *Mahabharat* into Marathi verse that has entitled Mukteshwar to great renown as a poet. It is a product of ripe learning and long experience and he must have composed it when he was advanced in years, about the year 1650 A. D. Mukteshwar is reputed to have translated the whole of the *Mahabharat*; but only the first four of the 18 *Parvas* are published. It is said that the rest of the *Parvas* must have been destroyed by somebody through jealousy in those times of religious persecution.* Of the four *Parvas* now extant, *Adi Parva* is universally considered to be the best. Mukteshwar's *Mahabharat* is one of the best poems in Marathi. It is written in the simple *Ovi* metre; the style is dignified and chaste and the vein of narration smooth. Mukteshwar here gives animating descriptions of natural scenery, the like of which we find in very few works of other poets in Marathi. The choice as well as the arrangement of words is remarkably sweet and the whole work is marked by noble simplicity. Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar, one of the early critics and authors of the Nineteenth century, was strongly of opinion that Mukteshwar was the best poet in Marathi and that he alone possessed real poetic genius. He effectively appeals to the various tender sentiments of the reader.

* We learn सौप्तिकपर्व and शांतिपर्व are recently found.

His similes and metaphors are less numerous but more varied. Besides the great *Mahabharat*, Mukteshwar has composed smaller poems like the शुकरभासवाद and the शतमुखी रावणाख्यान in *Owi* metre and some miscellaneous songs. He is also credited with a commentary in *Owi* metre on the *Bhagvat* but it is not to be found. A few extracts from the *Mahabharat* will give an idea of the poetic faculties of Mukteshwar.

The following description, given in the *Adi Parva*, of King Dushyanta and his departure for a hunt is as dignified as it is pleasing :—

कौरववंशीं प्रख्यातकीर्ती । दुष्यंतनामा गुणैकमूर्ती ।
श्रेष्ठ भूपाल चक्रवर्ती । वीर्यं शौर्यं आगळा ॥

प्राची प्रतीची दक्षिणोत्तरा । चारी दिशा चतुःसमुद्रा ।
आक्रमूनी मही महीधरा । सुरेंद्र तैसा भूलोकीं ॥

×

×

×

स्वकाळी पर्जन्य ओपी उदका । रत्नधान्य समृद्धि पिका ।
पृथ्वी पिके मांत्रिका । फळे जैसी "श्री विद्या" ॥

विष्णूसमान सत्ताबळ । प्रताप तेजें सूर्य तेजाळ ।
धरातुल्य सहनशील । अक्षोभ जैसा सागरू ॥

निपुण शस्त्रास्त्र प्रहरणीं । आरूढों जाणें सर्ववहनीं ।
येसा भूपाल चूडामणी । दुष्यन्तराजा भूलोकीं ॥

सप्त समुद्रींचे लोट । धरामंडळीं एकवट ।
तैसे सेनेचे संघाट । घेउनी वना चालिला ॥

वाजी वारण रथ पदाती । संख्या करितां न धरवे गणती ।
 सेना-वसनें सर्व जगती । पांघुरविली समस्तें ॥
 देखे प्रचंड महागिरी । विशाल पर्वताचिया दरी ।
 जळें तुंबलीं सरिता-सरीं । समुद्रतुल्य अगाध ॥
 नाना वृक्षांचीं अचाट । डांगें लागलीं धनदाट ।
 माजी निश्चैरोदकाचे पाट । सरोवरा धावंती ॥
 मस्तकें उचळूनी दिनकर । छाये रक्षिला अंधकार ।
 माजी श्वापदगणांचे भार । सुखावले सुखवस्ती ॥
 मृग मारुनी असंख्यात । भक्षूनि भर्जित अभर्जित ।
 पारधी खेळतां झाले श्रांत । ते विश्रांती पावले ॥

Trans :—“ A celebrated king named Dushyanta was born in the family of the Kurus. He was an embodiment of all virtues. He was a sovereign king ruling over all princes and was matchless in bravery and exploits. Occupying the regions of the East, the West, the South and the North as well as the four oceans and all the mountains, he was Indra on Earth as it were. × × In his reign the rain poured down showers in proper seasons and crops of grain and jewels were in abundance for the people as wealth is for those who know the *Mantras*. He was equal in power to Vishnu, in lustre to the Sun, in forbearance to the Earth and in steadiness to the Ocean. He was proficient in wielding all sorts of weapons and in riding all sorts of animals. Such was king Dushyanta, the sovereign of all princes. He once started for the forest with an array of his large army and the scene looked as if the

waves of the seven oceans flowed together on earth. The horses, the elephants, the chariots and the foot-men were innumerable and the king covered the whole earth with a huge garment in the shape of his army. He saw on his way large terrible mountains, extensive vallies and unfathomable lakes and rivers full to the brim. He met with several dense groves and impregnable forests watered by streamlets here and there, winding their course to the lakes. The trees lifted up the sun on their heads and protected darkness under their shelter; and numerous beasts of prey lived with comfort in the interior. In that forest, the hunters killed many deer and ate their flesh, raw or roasted, till at last they were fatigued with the game and took rest under the trees."

"The metaphors of the trees lifting up the sun on their heads and thus protecting darkness under their shelter are charming indeed."

The following extract from the *Sabha Parva* in which sage Narada questions king Dharma as to his ways and manners will be instructive to an Indian prince :-

नारद म्हणे महाराजा । धर्मस्वरूप धर्मात्मजा ।
नामा सारखी सुतेजा । करणी निर्मळ असे कीं ॥
ऐश्वर्य लाधल्या संपूर्ण । धर्मीं वर्तत असे कीं मन ।
राज्यमदें दुरभिमान । तुज संचारला नाहीं कीं ॥
न्यायें अजिला जो अर्थू । व्यय करिसी कीं धर्मार्थू ।
विषयकाम लोभानें तुझे चित्त । विटाळलें नाहीं कीं ॥

वडील आचरले जो धर्म । तोच चालविसी कीं नेम ।
 विहित-भंगाचा कर्दम । तुज लेपला नाही कीं ॥
 धमें अर्थ अर्थे धर्म । धर्ममात्रीं पुरुषोत्तम ।
 चढता वाढता सुखोधम । नित्यानित्य करिसी कीं ॥
 नित्य नैमित्तिकीं कर्मां । वर्तत आहेस कीं निष्कामी ।
 काम्य-निषिद्धाची ऊर्मि । लोटिसी कीं आलिया ॥
 अनायासीं हो कीं सायासीं । भाग्ये जोडिल्या संपत्तीसी ।
 विभागुनी समस्तांसी । सेविसी कीं सुजाणा ।
 अनुकूल अथवा प्रतिकूल । अदृष्ट झालियाही विकल ।
 धर्मापासुनी बुद्धि अचल । भ्रंश कांहीं न पवे कीं ॥
 अहोरात्रीं साठ घडी । लोटितां पापपुण्याची जोडी ।
 किती झाली हें घडी घडी । विचारीत अससी कीं ॥
 निर्लोभिये विश्वासीक । वंशज असती कीं सेवक ।
 जे स्वामिकार्जी देख । देह देती सोडून ॥
 वेतन भक्षिती पवित्र । राजद्रव्य ज्यां अपवित्र ।
 येसेनि योगें स्वतंत्र । स्वव्यापारीं असती कीं ॥
 उत्तम मध्यम कनिष्ठ पर्दी । योग्यायोग्य विचारनिधी ।
 परीक्षुनी विशालबुद्धि । योजिसी कीं नरेंद्रा ॥
 अमात्यपर्दी दासीपुत्र । अधमस्थळीं परमपवित्र ।
 अपूज्या पूजोनी सत्पात्र । अवमानीत नाहीस कीं ॥
 अचाट कार्य साधी भृत्य । वेतनाहूनी कोटिगुणित ।
 द्रव्य देउनी त्याचें चित्त । तोषवीत आहेस कीं ॥
 आपुले कार्जी पावले मरण । त्यांचीं कुटुंबे आश्वासून ।
 आपुल्या कुटुंबा समान । पाळिसी कीं दयाळा ॥

Trans.—“Narad said: “ Oh illustrious sovereign ! Rightousness incarnate ! are thy actions as pure as thy name. Does thy mind follow the path of duty when thou art in possession of glory ? Art thou not pervaded by false pride caused by intoxication of real power ? Dost thou spend on charity the wealth thou earnest by just means ? Is thy mind not contaminated by attachment to sensual objects ? Dost thou not follow the path of duty practised by thy ancestors ? Art thou not smeared with the dirt of the violation of prescribed duties ? Wealth is obtained by performance of pious and virtuous acts which, again, result from wealth. The Supreme Being abides in every act of righteousness. Dost thou perform these acts leading to bliss in growing proportion and dost thou perform the daily and occasional rites ? Again, dost thou perform these acts unattached and dost thou check the impulse of desire and of prohibited acts when it rises in the mind ? If by good fortune thou ^{ac}quirest wealth either by effort or without it, dost thou enjoy it distributing it amongst all ? Whether thy stars be favourable or unfavourable or indifferent, dost thy firm mind not swerve an inch from the path of duty ? Dost not thou think, every now and then, on the merit ^{thou} you acquire and the sin ^{thou} you commit during the course of the whole day ? Are thy servants hereditary, trustworthy, free from greed and ready to sacrifice their life in the service of their master ? Do they live on their legitimate wages looking upon the state money to be impure and thus performing their duties in an independent spirit ? Oh king of mighty intellect and store of discrimination of what is proper

and what is improper ! Dost thou appoint thy servants to the high, the middle and the low posts after examining their qualifications ? Dost thou not dishonour the deserving by appointing a son of a slave girl to the post of the prime minister and an extremely pure man to low post and by honouring one who does not deserve honour ? Dost thou please the mind of ^{thy} your servant who has executed a great mission, by rewarding him with money thousands of times more than his wages ? Oh merciful king ! Dost thou console the members of the families of those who die in ^{thy} your service and support them as members of ^{thy} your own family ?

So also the advice given by sage Kanva to his daughter Shakuntala at the time of her departure for her husband's capital will prove instructive to young ladies. Kanva says :-

परघर अटण परघर वस्ती । जार जारिणीची संगती ॥
 एकट शय्या एकट वस्ती । हें कुलक्षण कुलवंते ॥
 क्षणक्षणी चंचलपणें । चिरी निरिया सरसावणें ॥
 कच्छ फेडणें घालणें । हें कुलक्षण कुलवंते ॥
 हृदय दावुनी घाली पदर । पुरुष अवलोकूनी वाढवी हार ।
 परकियासी एकांत विचार । हें कुलक्षण कुलवंते ॥
 बहु हांसणें बहु बोलणें । सदा हांसत गोष्टी करणें ॥
 परंत परतोनी निरखणें । हें कुलक्षण कुलवंते ॥
 आणिका वर्णी निंदी भर्ता । पति त्यागुनी धांवे तीर्था ॥
 पुरुष अढेहनी देवता । भजतां दूषण कुलवंते ॥

We would add another piece from the *Adi Parva* narrating the dialogue that took place between king Dushyant and Shakuntala at the time of their first interview in the hermitage, for it adequately illustrates the simple but noble style of Mukteshwar's compositions. It runs thus :—

राजा बोले अत्यादरें । ऐकें मद्राक्य साचारें ॥
 भार्या हीउनियां चतुरे । मनोरथ पुरवावे ॥
 ऐकूनी राजमुखींची गोष्टी । सारसाक्षी पै गोरटी ॥
 वचनसुमनें श्रवणपुटीं । पूजिती झाली नृपातें ॥
 धराधीशां धर्मपाळा । तूझिया शुद्ध यशाचळा ॥
 कीर्ति शृंगार विमण्डला । भेदूनी गेलें सतेज ॥
 कुकर्म कुलिश घेऊनि हार्तीं । अमर त्यातें छेदूं इच्छिती ।
 हा उपाव माझिये मती । अयुक्त पेसा दिसताहे ॥
 अमृत म्हणोनि हाळाहळ । प्राशि त्याचें कवण फळ ॥
 बाळ म्हणोनि धरिला व्याळ । अनर्थ वोजे रोकडा ॥
 आम्हां स्त्रियांची संगती । भली नव्हे गा मेदिनीपती ॥
 मातला काम भद्रजाती । विवेकांकुशें वळवावा ॥

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नृप म्हणे चातुर्यभरिते । विशालाक्षी लावण्यसरिते ।
 विधि आठ विवाहांतें । ऐसें शास्त्रें बोलती ॥
 अष्टविवाहांमाजी येथें । गांधर्व बोलिजे श्रेष्ठ ग्रंथें ॥
 तेणें विधि विवाह त्वरितें । करूनि अंकीं आरूढें ॥
 तयावरी चंद्रानना । चारुहासा मृगनयना ॥
 म्हणे राजया विचक्षणा । विहित धर्म बोलसी ॥

कन्या-देह तव निश्चिती । दिधला पाहिजे पुरुषा हातीं ।
 तुज ऐसा विशिष्ट नृपती । परम दैवें पाविजे ॥
 तुझिया ऐसें माझिया चितीं । वर्तताहे अत्यंत प्रीती ।
 परी वडिलां नेणतां हे रीती । व्यभिचारदोष आणील ॥
 यालागीं नावेक धरीं धीरू । आश्रमा येईल ऋषेश्वरू ।
 वचन मान्य करूनि अत्यादरू । मज वोपील तुज हातीं ॥
 नरेंद्र म्हणे वो सुजाणी । विचारें आपें आप धनी ।
 आदिमध्य अवसानीं । संगीं आपण आपणिया ॥
 यालागीं आपुल्या देहदाना । समर्थ करीं तूं आपुल्या मना ।
 माझेनि संगें सर्व कामना । पूर्ण तुझिया होतील ॥
 ऐसें बोलतां धरारमण । शकुन्तला हास्यवदन ।
 म्हणे आतां ऐक वचन । नियमाचें अवधारीं ॥
 तुज पासोनि माझे पोटीं । पुत्र जन्मेल तो या सृष्टी ।
 राज्यधर तो तुझिया पाठीं । पदाधिकारी त्वां करणें ॥
 पेशिया नेमा देशील भाके । तरी घडणार तें घडों सुखें ॥
 हें पेकोनि अत्यंत हरिखें । राजा सरके पुढारां ॥
 हस्त धरोनि स्वहस्तकें । देता झाला त्रिवार भाके ॥
 तुझा पुत्र निजनिष्टकें । राज्यासनीं युवराजा ॥
 हें माझें प्रतिज्ञा-वचन । भंगूं न शके चतुरानन ।
 तें परिसोनि आग्रहवचन । त्यागूनि भावें अनुसरली ॥

The above quotations will be enough to give the reader an idea of the literary merits of Mukteshwar as a great epic writer in Marathi.

CHAPTER X.

Ramdas.

Ramdas, the third of the trio, was born at Jambgaon on the river Godavari in the district of Nasik, in S'ak 1530 i. e. 1608 A. D. He was a Deshatha Brahman by caste. His father was Suryajipant Thosar by name, and his mother, Ranubai. Both of them were very pious and virtuous. Suryajipant was a *Kulkarni* (village accountant) by profession. The original name of Ramdas was Narayan. He was supposed to be an incarnation of Maruti. Being a keen devotee of Ram, he called himself Ramdas or 'the servant of Ram.' He also went by the name of 'Ramdas Swami Samarth' or simply 'Samarth' meaning 'the powerful.' Ramdas had one elder brother named Gangadhar who was born in the S'ak year 1527. He was called *Shreshtha* or Honourable by way of respect. Some say the latter was called Rami Ramdas, and *Abhangs* in whose last line the word रामीरामदास occurs are attributed to him. Like his father and brother he was a pious Brahman of learning and devotion.

Ramdas was a mischievous boy in his childhood as many great men are. He took His childhood. delight in climbing trees, bathing in the river-water for hours together and

such other puerile pranks. His father wished to get him married at the age of 12. All preparations were made for the purpose; friends and relations were gathered together on the auspicious occasion; the bride was brought out in front of the bride-groom and the priests on both sides were merrily chanting the 'lucky verses' (मंगलाष्टक) each ending with the warning "Attention !" (सावधान). The pretty little word 'Savadhan' like all other ritualistic Sanskrit recitations gone through on similar occasions, hardly attracted the notice of anybody present on the spot. In fact it was too hackneyed to draw anyone's attention. But the quick mind of Narayan, a boy of only 12 years then, was instinctively attracted to the note of warning and he at once perceived that the seemingly innocent ceremony which he was being made to go through, was really a serious step involving him into heavy future cares. He instantaneously ran away from the place like a mad-man. Poet Moropant tersely describes the incident in the following couplet :-

“ द्विज सावधान ऐसैं सर्वत्र विवाहमंगलीं म्हणती ।
तें एक रामदासैं आयकिल्लें त्या असो सदा प्रणती ॥ ”

Trans :—" Brahmans everywhere utter the word सावधान at the ceremony of marriage. Bow to Ramdas who alone listened to it ! "

As was the custom with Brahmans of those times, His travels. Ramdas had learnt in his childhood reading and writing Marathi and a

little of Sanskrit, besides getting by heart the Vedic hymns of morning and evening prayers and worship. With this much of learning in his stock he left his house and went to Nasik where, in the Panchavati, (Banyan Grove) he practised religious penance for many years. The learning as well as the experience of practical life that is exhibited in his *Dasbodh* and other writings were acquired by him in the subsequent part of his life. By his long performance of religious austerities he was successful in curbing the native passions of the heart, and then in S'ak 1554 he set out on a pilgrimage to Kashi (Benares) and other holy places. In those days there were very few roads traversing the country, not to speak of travelling by Railway. So it was a pilgrimage in its real sense, and Ramdas reaped all its advantages in full. He could observe various kinds of natural scenery on his way, hear different languages spoken, converse with a variety of people, acquaint himself with their manners and customs and so forth. He had got not a pie when he left home, and it was only by begging alms that he maintained himself all his way. Ramdas' idea of begging alms was quite different from what we find practised in India in these days by lazy folk wandering from place to place doing nothing. The so-called beggars of olden times were men of learning and experience; they renounced the world and travelled throughout the country, preaching religion morality and truth. Their object in becoming *Bair a*, was not to live by the labour of others but to educate

the public mind, and the people in their turn were glad to feed them. They were content with only a little and never cared for the morrow.

From Nasik Ramdas first went to Benares, thence he turned westward to Ayodhya, Muttra and Prabhas. He then went to the extreme north as far as Badarikedar and again turned to the east to visit Jagannathpuri. Thence he proceeded along the eastern coast to Rameshwar whence he turned to Karavir (Kolhapur) *via* Gokarn. Then he visited Mahabaleshwar and Pandharpur and returned at last to Panchawati, the old place of his penances. When he had finished his pilgrimage he went back to his native village Jambgaon to see his mother.

After his return, Ramdas lived in his *Math* (monastery) at Champhal* in the District of Satara. He established *Maths* at many other places in the Deccan for the spread of his tenets and appointed his able disciples, one to each *Math*. He and his disciples occupied themselves with preaching social union and true religion to the people. Shivaji, the great founder of

*Shivaji was successfully resisting the Mahommedan power in the Poona and Satara districts and Ramdas thought that it was his mission to seek and help him. As to who sought whom first and how far Ramdas helped Shivaji, there is dispute. But Ramdas' removal from Nasik to Champhal is in itself significant.

the Maratha Empire was one of his disciples. The Deccan was then much oppressed by the Mahomedan rulers and Ramdas was largely instrumental in bringing about the upheaval of the Marathas for political liberty. He inspired the Maratha populace to unite and resist the Mahomedan oppression, and on the other hand he also incited the great Shivaji to gather the robust and hardy Maratha soldiers under his banner in order to overthrow the Mahomedan rule. Shivaji had so high a reverence for the saint that before he undertook hazardous enterprises he had an interview with him, his religious master who gave him sound practical advice in addition to his blessings. Once Shivaji thought of presenting him with some worthy gift and set the whole kingdom at his feet. Ramdas accepted the gift and giving it back to Shivaji, asked him to have as his own mark the भगवा झेंडा (the flag of ochre colour) for his royal standard. Another mark of Ramdas' influence on Maharashtra is the method of salutation followed to this day by the Maratha peasantry. Instead of uttering the word 'जोहार' as before, they now began to utter, ' रामराम '*

When Ramdas wished to pass his hours in quietude, he went to the fortress of Parali. Many
Sajjangad. saints and pious men visited him there
and the fortress was therefore known

* This is questioned by some for in one of Namdev's *abhangs*, रामराम is used as the usual mode of salutation. Perhaps Ramdas made it more universal.

by the name of सज्जनगड or ' the fortress of the good '. Ramdas breathed his last in this fortress in the S'ak year 1603 i. e. 1681 A. D.

Ramdas had many disciples; some of them were never married. Uddhav Gosawi, Kalyan Swami, Anant Kavi and Bhim Swami were the chief among the male and Venubai, Akkabai and Bahinabai were the chief among the female disciples. Tradition has it that a crowd of men had gathered together in his *Math*, under the garb of pupils and they were all fed there according to the usual practice of such *Maths*. Ramdas saw that most of these were lazy youths gone there simply with the object of maintaining themselves at the expense of the *Math*. So he devised a strange plan to test their sincerity. He tied a ripe mango to his leg in a cloth without their knowledge and caused it to appear as if it were a big boil. He feigned to suffer unbearable pain owing to the boil and requested that anyone of his disciples might suck up the impure blood in order to save him from the jaws of death. One by one, quietly did the so-called pupils make themselves scarce, with the exception of Kalyan who boldly came forth to the rescue of his venerable master. He began to suck up, but to his great astonishment found there the mango-juice instead of impure blood. Kalyan Swami is said to have written some verses. Anant Kavi is the author of सीतास्वयंवर, कुशलवा-स्थान, सुलोचनागर्हिवर &c. and his style is similar to

that of Anand Tanaya. Venubai has composed निवृत्तिराम in *Ovi* metre. She was a woman of learning and could compose verses on abstract subjects.

To meet the expenses of Ramdas's *Math* at Champhal, Shivaji conferred on him some villages in perpetual gift in the S'ak year 1600. Ramdas remained a bachelor throughout his life and the *Math* was consequently represented by the descendants of his elder brother Gangadhar, who enjoy most of the villages and go about preaching religion from village to village, to this day.

His Writings.

दासबोध (Ramdas' Advice), मनाचे श्लोक (Advice to the Mind) and रामायण are the principal works of Ramdas. Besides these, he has composed many miscellaneous verses in *Abhang*, *S'toka*, and *Ovi* metres.

Dasbodh is one of the best works in Marathi literature. It consists of a series of lectures on various topics, abstract as well as practical. Besides containing a lucid exposition of spiritual subjects, it is full of sound practical advice that would stand the readers in good stead in everyday life. It teaches us how to behave in this world in its different walks and also to attain spiritual beatitude. It is written in the *Ovi* metre and consists of twenty *Dashaks* (groups of ten chapters), each chapter being devoted to some particular

topic. The metre is simple, the style is chaste, and the words used are of every day occurrence in common talk. In fact the object of Ramdas' writings was to educate the popular mind; and he has therefore written his works in the easiest diction. A man of ordinary information without much of learning can understand Ramdas with ease. His verse is as good as prose in point of simplicity of style. He never cared for figures of speech and beauties of style. In his chapter on poetry he says :-

“ कवित्व असावें निर्मळ । कवित्व असावें रसाळ ।
 कवित्व असावें प्रांजळ । अन्वयाचें ॥
 कवित्व असावें भक्तिवळें । कवित्व असावें अर्थागळें ।
 कवित्व असावें वेगळें । अहंतेसी ॥ ”

Trans:—“Poetry should be chaste, melodious and perspicuous; poetry should be full of devotion and full of meaning; it should be free from self-conceit.”

This is Ramdas' idea of true poetry, and it is but natural that he should aim at these objects in his own compositions. There is only one prominent exception and that is the fourth chapter of the 14th *Dashak*, wherein Ramdas has, as if to show that he could if he would excel in artistic composition, made each line of each verse begin with each of the alphabet in consecutive order.

A few extracts from *Dasbodh* will illustrate our above remarks.

The chapter or 'Who is a fool?' displays a keen insight into the affairs of the world. We find the following among other traits of a fool:—

“ आपुलीं धरुनियां दुरी । पराव्यासि मैत्री करी ।
 पळूयून बोले अहोरात्रीं । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 बहुत जागते जन । तयांमध्ये करी शयन ।
 परस्थळीं करी बहु भोजन । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 आपणाहून जो श्रेष्ठ । त्यासि अत्यंत निकट ।
 शिकवणीचा मानी वीट । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 विचार न करितां कारण । दंड करी अपराधाविण ।
 स्वल्पासाठीं जो कृपण । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 स्वयें नेणें परोपकार । उपकाराचा अनुपकार ।
 करी थोडें बोले फार । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 समर्थासि मत्सर धरी । अलभ्य वस्तूचा हेवा करी ।
 घरींच्या घरीं चोरी करी । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 अल्प अन्याय क्षमा न करी । सर्व काळ धारकी धरी ॥
 जो विश्वासघात करी । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 बहुत दिवसांचे सेवक । त्यागून ठेवी आणिक ॥
 ज्याची सभा निर्नायक । तो एक मूर्ख ॥
 लक्ष्मी आलियावरी । जो मागील ओळख न धरी ।
 देवीं ब्राह्मणीं सत्ता करी । तो एक मूर्ख ॥

द० २ स० १ ”

Trans:—“A fool is he who keeps his own folk at a distance and makes friends with strangers. A fool is

he who talks day and night over the failings of others. A fool is he who sleeps in the midst of many awake. A fool is he who eats too much at a strange place. A fool is he who stands too close with superiors and disregards advice. A fool is he who does not consider the cause and punishes without fault. A fool is he who is miserly for a trifle. A fool is he who does not return obligations but returns evil for good. A fool is he who does little and talks much. A fool is he who hates the powerful and aspires at things beyond his reach. A fool is he who steals things from his own house. A fool is he who does not excuse a trifling offence but deals severely at all times. A fool is he who betrays confidence reposed in him. A fool is he who abandons his servants of long standing and entertains new ones. A fool is he whose council has no leader. A fool is he who when he attains glory forgets his former friends and endeavours to lord it over gods and Brahmins. ”

How much wisdom does the above contain? So also does the following advice in the chapter on ‘*Who is a wise man.*’ It runs thus:—

“ आळसें सुख मानूं नये । चाहाडी मनासि आणूं नये ।
 शोधिल्याविण करूं नये । कार्य कांहीं ॥
 सभा देखोनि गळूं नये । समर्थी उत्तर टळूं नये ।
 धिक्कारितां ढळूं नये । धारिष्ट आपुलें ॥
 सत्यमार्ग सोडूं नये । असत्यपंथें जाऊं नये ।
 कदा अभिमान घेऊं नये । असत्याचा ॥ ”

Trans:—"Do not take delight in laziness. Let not tale-bearing have any effect on your mind. Do nothing without careful thought. Never get nervous in a meeting of many, nor let presence of mind forsake you on the right occasion. Do not give up courage when ridiculed by others. Do not abandon the right path and take recourse to the wrong one. Never allow yourself to be a partisan of the untrue."

The chapter on asceticism begins with a continued metaphor in which the worldly existence is compared to a great flood of water wherein the various sharks and serpents in the form of passions are trying to eat away the poor soul of man. Ramdas then exposes the folly of man attaching himself to unreal pleasures of life and exhorts him to devote himself in full faith to Ram (God) so as to get free from the turmoils of worldly existence. He says:—

तुवां भोगिल्या पुनरावृत्ति । पेशीं मायबापें किती ।
 स्त्री कन्या पुत्र होती । लक्षानुलक्ष ॥
 कर्मयोगें सकळही मिळालीं । एके स्थळीं जन्मासि आलीं ।
 तीं तुवां आपुलीं मानिलीं । कैसीं रे पढतमूर्खा ॥
 तुझे तुज नव्हे शरीर । येथें इतरांचा कोण विचार ।
 आतां एक भगवंत साचार । धरीं भावार्थ बळें ॥

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पेसा कृयाळू देवाधिदेव । जो सांभाळी सकळजीव
 नेणवे जयाचें लाघव । कृपालुपणें ॥

पेसा सर्वात्मा श्रीराम । सांडूनि धरिती विषय काम ।
 ते प्राणी दुरात्मे अधम । केलें पावती ॥
 रामेंविण जे जे आस । तितुकी जाणावी निराश ।
 माझें माझें सावकाश । शीणची उरे ॥

Trans:—“Thou hast passed through many births. How many lacs of parents and wives and sons and daughters thou hadst ! All of them gathered together by virtue of their respective *Karma* (action) and were born together. Oh learned fool ! why shouldst thou look upon them as thine own ? Even the body that thou callest thine is not really thine own; what to say then, of other objects ? So, now, hold fast by dint of faith to that Supreme God who alone is real.

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Such is the god of gods who protects all beings, whose mercy is beyond comprehension. Such is the great Ram, the life of all souls, and yet mankind forsakes him and take to pleasure of senses. These are wicked wretches working their own fall, the fruit of their past evil deeds. Be sure that every desire not relating to Ram is bound to end in disappointment. Say thou ‘ This is mine ! This is mine ! ’ But that shall slowly vanish and leave thee to despair.”

The following is Ramdas’ idea of Liberation of the Soul :—

“ जीवपण एकदेशी । अहंकारें जन्म सोशी ।
 विवेकें पाहतां प्राणियांसि । जन्म कैचा ॥

जन्ममृत्युपासूनि सुटला । या नांव जाणिजे मोक्ष झाला ।
 तस्व शोधितां पावला । तस्ववस्तू ॥
 तेचि वस्तु ते आपण । हें महावाक्याचें लक्षण ॥
 साधु करिती निरूपण । आपुलेनि मुखें ॥
 जेचि क्षणीं अनुग्रह केला । तेचि क्षणीं मोक्ष झाला ।
 बंधन कांहीं आत्मयाला । बोलोंचि नये ॥
 आतां आशंका फिटली । संदेहवृत्ति मावळली ।
 संतसंगें तोत्काळ झाली । मोक्षपदवी ॥
 स्वप्नामध्ये जो बांधला । तो जागृतीनें मोकळा केला ।
 ज्ञानविवेकें प्राणियाला । मोक्षप्राप्ती ॥ ”

द० ८ स० ७

Trans :- “ It is on account of self-conceit that the one Soul is split up into several souls and so undergoes births. If one achieves true knowledge, how can there be birth ? When a man is free from birth and death, he is said to have attained Salvation; in his search after Reality, he may then be said to have attained Reality. The secret of this sublime science is that one ought to realize himself to be that Real Spirit. This is what the Saints preach; and the moment they favour their pupils with true knowledge, the latter attain Salvation, and then the Soul is liberated from all bonds. Then is the doubt solved and then is uncertainty removed. Contact with saints at once confers salvation. Just as a man enveloped in sleep is freed therefrom by wakefulness, so is soul freed from all fetters by knowledge. ”

जीवात्मा (Individual Soul) is only a manifestation of the परमात्मा (Supreme Soul) tied down by *Maya* (unreal bonds of worldly existence). When a man disabuses his mind of this *Maya* and realises his oneness with the Supreme Soul, he attains liberation and his soul is then fused with the Supreme Soul. This is the idea of Salvation as expounded by Ramdas in the eighth *Dashak*.

The first eight *Dashaks* of *Dasbodh* alone seem to have been written in a methodical way. The plan of the topics treated in them appears to have been previously conceived and the subtopics also are made to fit in well. But the arrangement of the rest of the *Dashaks* is somewhat indifferent. Their chapters seem to have been composed at random on different occasions and to have been subsequently grouped together anyhow; they are however equally forcible in their didactic effect.

Unlike other poets in the Marathi language Ramdas has something to say regarding statesmanship. The following extracts will give some idea of the advice of Ramdas in this direction:-

करणे असला उपाय । तरी बोलोन दाखवूं नय ।
 परस्परेंचि प्रत्यय । प्रचितीस आणावा ॥
 जो बहुतांचें सोसीना । त्यास बहुत लोक मिळेना ।
 बहुत सोसितां उरेना । महत्व आपुलें ॥
 राजकारण बहुत करावें । परि कळोंचि न घावें ।
 परपीडेवरी नसावें । अंतःकरण ॥

लोक पारखून सोडावे । राजकारणें अभिमान झाडावे ।
 पुनः मेळवूनि घ्यावे । दुरिल्या दोरें ॥
 हिरवटासि दुरी धरावें । कचरटासि न बोलावें ।
 संबंध पडतां सांडूनि जावें । एकीकडे ॥”

Trans:—If you have to adopt a plan, do not expose it by talk; surprise others by results actually achieved. He who suffers not a bit for the sake of others cannot have followers around him. So also he who suffers too much will not be able to keep his dignity. Do much work of political purpose but do not give out your purpose; at the same time never devote your heart to injuring others. First see through the natures of the men you meet, sweep off their selfish notions by statesmanlike tact and then tie them together to yourself by cords of sympathy pervading vast distance. Hold at a distance the hot-tempered and do not talk to the useless chaff; when you come across such men, leave them alone.

In those days of oppressive Mahommedan rule when there were no laws properly framed, when the wrong acts of the rulers could not be criticised by the subjects with impunity, no political movement, however honest and loyal, could be set on foot openly, as can be done in the present peaceful times and hence, it seems Ramdas advised the people to observe secrecy in such affairs. We find teaching similar to the above in *Dashak* 19, Chapter 9: so also in his letter to Sambhaji after Shivaji's death.

How versatile must be Ramdas' genius that could

successfully handle a variety of subjects and that too in such a way as to bring them within easy reach of the ordinary folk? Certainly *Dasbodh* is an invaluable treasure of practical learning. The second and the third *Dashaks* with the pretty little enigmatic *Kahani* (story) of the thirteenth *Dashak* discover uncommon acquaintance with human life; while the 7th and 8th *Dashaks* are a masterly example of discourses on spiritual topics. Like the great *Bhagwatgita* the *Dasbodh* exhorts people not to fly from the world and to do their duties in the midst of worldly affairs, nay, gives them sound advice as to how to behave in life and at the same time asks them to get rid of the bonds of *Maya* and thereby to attain the much-coveted liberation of the Soul. He says "आधीं प्रपंच करावा नेटका". If you have no wisdom to do the duties of *this life*, do you think you can gain beatitude in *after life*? This distinguished Ramdas from other Sadhus. "Be practical first."

The above extracts are enough to give an idea to the readers of the high purpose, as well as the dignified, yet easy style of *Dasbodh*. This *Dasbodh* that we have treated of above was written by Ramdas subsequently to another *Dasbodh* called जुना दासबोध or the *Old Dasbodh*, otherwise called एकवीससनासा because of its consisting of 21 chapters. The topics of the *Old Dasbodh* are similar to those of the new one. It seems that Ramdas was not satisfied with his production and hence undertook and successfully accomplished

the task of writing another work on more exhaustive lines.

मनाचे श्लोक or 'Stanzas addressed to the Mind' otherwise called 'Advice to the Mind' are over 200 in number. They are written in the भुजंगप्रयात metre. Though this is only a small poem, it is a notable one as it is very popular. Many persons of Maharashtra, especially men of advanced age, are to be heard reciting a few of these at least, early every morning. As the title shows, it is an advice to the mind, inculcating Truth, Faith, Freedom from passions, and so on. We shall quote a few of the verses for illustration.

मना सज्जना भक्ति पंथेंचि जावें ।
तरी श्रीहरी पाविजे तो स्वभावे ।

जनीं निघ तें सर्व सोडोनि द्यावें ।
जनीं वंद्य तें सर्व भावें करावें ॥

प्रभाते मनीं राम चिंतीत जावा ।
पुढें वैखरीं राम आधीं वदावा ।

सदाचार हा थोर सांडूं नये तो ।
जगीं तोचि तो मानवी धन्य होतो ॥

मना वासना दुष्ट कामा नये रे ।
मना सर्वथा पापबुद्धी नको रे ।

मना सर्वथा नीति सोडूं नको हो ।
मना अंतरीं सार वीचार राहो ॥

मना पापसंकल्प सोडोनि द्यावा ।
 मना सत्यसंकल्प जीवीं धरावा ।
 मना कल्पना ते नको वीषयाची ।
 विकारें घडे हो जर्गी सर्व छी छी ॥
 नको रे मना क्रोध हा खेदकारी ।
 नको रे मना काम नाना विकारी ।
 नको रे मना सर्वदा अंगिकारूं ।
 नको रे मना मत्सरु दंभभारु ॥
 मना श्रेष्ठ धारिष्ठ जीवीं धरावें ।
 मना बोलणें नीत सोशीत जावें ।
 स्वयें सर्वदा नम्र वाचें वदावें ।
 मना सर्व लोकांसि रे नीववावें ॥
 देहे त्यागितां कीर्ति मागें उरावी ।
 मना सज्जना हेचि क्रीया धरावी ॥
 मना चंदनाचे परी त्वां शिजावें ।
 परी अंतरीं सज्जना नीववावें ॥ ”

Trans :—“ O good mind ! go by the path of Devotion; then thou wilt easily reach God. Leave off all that is censurable in the world and resort to all that is commendable. Early in the morning, think of Rama, and first of all utter the name of Rama. Do not swerve from the path of good conduct; such a man alone becomes praiseworthy in this world. O mind ! give up evil passions and sinful notions; stick for ever to Justice and indulge yourself in good thoughts; entertain good ideas,

never bad ones. Do not think of sensual pleasures, for they will hold you to public ridicule. Keep away from Anger which is the cause of unhappiness and from Desire which is parent of all passions. O mind ! never resort to jealousy or hypocrisy. Have that excellent courage which always tolerates the words of others, talk to others with humility, and please all. O good mind, do such acts that when thou leavest off the body, thy fame shall remain behind; thou shouldst, like sandal-wood, put thyself to trouble in order to please the good. ”

The mind is bound to be elevated if it constantly exerts itself to follow such a lofty piece of advice.

Ramdas' *Ramayan* consists of three parts, namely किष्किंधांड, सुंदरकांड and युद्धकांड. The first two parts are short ones intended by the author only to introduce the main subject viz., the War of Rama with Ravana which he really wanted to describe in full. The purpose of his *Ramayan* seems to be not to describe the *whole* of the life of Rama but to depict only the *war portion* of it. Hence he finishes off the first three parts in about 300 verses and devotes as many as thirteen chapters to the subject of War, each consisting of about a 100 verses. Like the 'Advice' to the Mind, the poem is in भुजंगप्रयात metre.

Of the miscellaneous writings of Ramdas, रामदास-आत्माराम, ज्ञानशतक and वैराग्यशतक are worth perusal. Some of his miscellaneous *Abhangs* are highly didactic in tone and

are, like those of Tukaram, very often quoted by religious preachers in their sermons. The following few lines in the वैराग्यसतक are very striking; they show how a man happens, step by step, to fall a prey to the cares of this world inspite of himself :—

मायाजालीं झालें वृढ माझे मन ।
 रामा तुझे नाम आठवे ना ।
 आठवे ना चितीं स्वहिताचे ज्ञान ।
 मायबापें लग्न केलें लोभें ।
 लोभें लग्न केलें मानिली आवडी ।
 पार्यीं ओविली वेडी बंधनाची ।
 बंधनाची वेडी प्रवळला काम ।
 मग कैचा राम आठवे ना ।
 आठवे ना राम स्वामि त्रैलोक्याचा ।
 झालों कुटुंबाचा भारवाहीं ।

Trans: — “O Rama! my mind is entangled in the snares of *Maya* and I do not think of your name. I have not thought of that knowledge which is the real knowledge of true utility. My parents eagerly got me married; I fondly took a liking to my wife and simply bound myself down with fetters. The consequence is that passions prevailed over me and I have forgotten Rama, the lord of the three Worlds. Here I am now only to sustain the cares of the family.”

How true this ? When a man reaches manhood

distracting anxieties of life sit heavily on his mind and so Ramdas earnestly invokes the aid of god Rama for his liberation in the following lines :-

चपलपण मनाचें मोडितां मोडवेना ।
 सकळ स्वजनमाया तोडितां तोडवेना ।
 घडि घडि बिघडे हा निश्चयो अतरींचा ।
 म्हणवुनि करुणा हे बोलतो दीन वाचा ॥
 जळत हृदय माझें जन्म कोटयानुकोटी ।
 मजवरि करुणेचा राघवा पूर लोटीं ।
 तळमळ निवर्षीं रे राम कारुण्यसिंधू ।
 षडरिपुकुळ माझें तोडिं याचा समंधू ॥

Trans :—" I try to check the fickledness of mind but in vain: I endeavour to get over the attachment to my kinsfolk but to no purpose. O merciful One! every moment the resolution of mind fails; so I pray to thee in a suppliant voice. For crores of births this my heart is burning. O Rama! let the stream of thy merey flow upon me. O Rama! thou art an ocean of mercy; so cool down the agitation of my mind. I am pestered by the six great foes; rescue me from their grip. "

The above extracts will show that Ramdas was a saint of sound practical wisdom. He studied the state of the people of Maharashtra in all its bearings and settled for himself the direction in which he should strive for its regeneration. He therefore chose to be an

inspirer of great ideas—more of a preacher than of a poet: he cared much more for *what* he said than *how* he said it. And hence it was that he preferred simple to artistic style and hence too it was that we find in him more cases of poetical license than in later poets. All he wished was that he should be effective in his appeal to the heart of the public and that end he certainly did achieve with eminent success.

Ramdas was not only a poet but also a religious saint and political guide. Of the contemporary trio viz. Tukaram, Mukteshwar and Ramdas, Tukaram helped the cause of spiritual emancipation and spread devotional love among the people of Maharashtra. His particular aim was neither social nor political; he was satisfied with *elevation of his soul*. Mukteshwar, too, did not attempt anything definite beyond *education of the masses* by rendering the national epic lore into the language that they could speak and understand. But unlike both of them and over and above what they aimed at, Ramdas had a thorough grasp of the social and political situation of Maharashtra at that time and his heart did not rest content with the emancipation of the Individual Soul alone. He saw that elevation of the soul expounded by Dnyaneshwar, Eknath and Tukaram was not the only thing to be sought and particularly prached with a set purpose that as mental elevation largely depended on material prosperity, the people should, in the first instance, join together with

concerted action to achieve material prosperity. It was he, therefore, who for the first time introduced into Marathi literature, a wider aim and a higher purpose than the poets were so long wont to do. In fact, no necessity was so keenly felt for such a preaching in former times as it was in the time of Ramdas and hence it was that Ramdas was the first to take a new departure from the trodden path.

CHAPTER XI.

Vaman Pandit.

Vaman Pandit was born about the close of the 16th. century of the S'ak era. He was a Rigvedi Deshasth Brahmin by caste and his avocation was that of a *Gram Joshi* (village priest) at Koregaum Kumtha in the district of Satara. He studied Sanskrit lore in all its branches at Benares according to the practice of those times and was acknowledged to be a very competent scholar. His learning enabled him to conduct with triumph controversies against *Shastries* of the time and firmly established his reputation as a Pandit (scholar). He used to compose verses in Sanskrit and was so proud of his knowledge of that language that he abhorred even to talk in Marathi which he contemptuously called Prakrit or vulgar language. He defiantly went from place to place defeating Pandits in controversies in Sankrit till he happened to meet Ramdas. The latter severely rebuked him for his detestation of the language spoken by his brethren and exhorted him to write in Marathi, so that the general public of the Maharashtra nation might be benefited thereby. Vaman Pandit now fully saw the force of Ramdas' pressing advice and thenceforward composed poems in Marathi. He died in or about the S'ak year 1600 or 1678 A. D.

His Writings.

The chief of Vaman Pandit's works are यथार्थदीपिका (True Light), & निगमसार (Substance of the *Vedas*). They are both in *Ovi* metre and are devoted to discussion on Vedantic topics. The " True Light " is a learned commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Vaman Pandit, it seems, was not satisfied with the commentaries written by his predecessors including Dnyaneshwar and Rangnath. He addresses god Krishna saying :-

त्या गीतेचा अर्थ । तोचि परमार्थ ।
जिचा वक्ता तूं समर्थ । परमात्मा भगवंत ॥
परी अजी भगवंतजी । या कलियुगा मार्जी ।
जो तो गीतार्थ योजी । मतानुरूप ॥

× × ×

या कारणें जी भगवंता । यथास्थित हे तुझी गीता ।
वाखाणावी म्हणूनि होता । बहुत काल संकल्प ॥
आणि तुझ्या कृपेचे विभागी । शिष्य संतभक्तयोगी ।
ते म्हणति कीं जगदुपयोगी । ऐशी टीका करावी ॥

Trans :—" The meaning of that *Gita* alone is truth, of which Thy glorious supreme self was the speaker. However, O God, in this *Kali* age every one interprets *Gita* according to his own notions. × × × Hence I long to explain Thy *Gita* in the true light. Moreover some devout pupils and saints who shared Thy kindness

advised me to write such a commentary as would be useful to the whole world. ”

This is, in his own words, what inspired Vaman Pandit to write the commentary, and like the famous Jagannath Pandit of the North, he was so confident of his superior learning that he called his commentary यथार्थदीपिका in contradistinction to the भवार्थदीपिका of Dnyaneshwar. This commentary covers over more than 20000 couplets. It may be called an exhaustive essay in verse rather than a poem. Vaman Pandit here takes an able survey of what the previous commentators on the *Gita* had to say in explanation of the various theories and then discusses the whole matter in his own way. भावार्थदीपिका is a simple and clear exposition, while यथार्थदीपिका is a series of erudite lectures. The former is one continuous thesis while the latter is drawn up in the fashion of scholastic discourses.

Besides these philosophical works, Vaman composed many miscellaneous poems on some stories in the *Purans*, e. g. भामाविलास, रुक्मिणीविलास, रुक्मिणीपत्र, वामनचरित्र, लोपामुद्रासंवाद &c., and rendered beautiful translations of Bhartrihari's Sanskrit *Shataks*. It is these poems indeed, that have held Vaman Pandit to admiration as a first-rate Poet. Most of these pieces contain real poetry in them, and as such, charmingly appeal to the tender feelings of the reader. The words and phrases are highly melodious and the variety in metres is delightfully adapted to the variety

of sentiments. In fact each poem sounds a harmonious whole and is a superb production in every respect. He was fond of writing in S'loka metres, such as शिखरिणी, वसन्त-तिलक, मालिनी, द्रुतविलंबित &c. and he is most famous for his S'lokas. There are many rhymes here and there but not too many; on the contrary they add to the beauty. If poetry is रमणीयार्थप्रतिपादकः शब्दः (words conveying charming thoughts) as defined by Jagannath Pandit, the author of the रसगंगाधर, these miscellaneous poems are certainly high class poetry capable of vying with the sonnets of any good English poet. We shall leave it to the more philosophical of our readers to go through Vaman pandit's Vedantic works at leisure and propose to give below only one or two extracts from two of his miscellaneous poems viz. भामाविलास and रुक्मिणीविलास.

A flower of uncommon fragrance from the celestial *Parijata* plant was presented by sage Narada to Krishna and the latter gave it to his dearest queen Rukmini. Satyabhama, another queen, well-known for her conceit and obstinacy came to know of this and got angry with Krishna for this partiality to her rival. When Krishna visited her mansion, Satyabhama did not speak a word to him and showed him all signs of intense displeasure. But Krishna, with his usual presence of mind, pacified her in a moment, saying that he was going to bring the very tree from heaven and plant it in Satyabhama's garden. This fine little incident is nicely described by Vaman in the following few stanzas :-

कृष्णासि कृष्ण-पद-भक्ति-विशारदानें ।
 जें स्वर्गपुष्प दिधलें मुनि नारदानें ॥
 तें रुक्मिणीप्रति दिलें त्रिजगन्निवासें ।
 जें द्वारका करि भरोनि सुगंधि वासें ॥

अशी गोष्टि दासी-जनीं बायकानीं ।
 विचारूनियां सांगतां जाय कार्नीं ॥
 तई सत्यभामा महा क्रोध दावी ।
 बुझावी हरी तेचि लीला वदावी ॥

गडबडां धरणीवरि लोळते ।
 वदवती न कवीसहि लोळ ते ॥

रडत मूर्छित होय घडी घडी ।
 पवन निश्चल नेत्र न ऊघडी ॥

अलक हार गळ्यांतिल तोडिते ।
 कुरळ केश मुखावरि सोडिते ॥
 करयुगें उर मस्तक ताडिते ।
 वसन आणिक कंचुकि फाडिते ॥

महा उष्ण श्वासें करुनि वदते शुष्क अधरा ।
 धरा-पृष्ठीं जोडा न शठ दुसरा या गिरिधरा ॥
 धराया माझा हा कर कपटि कैचा जनमला ।
 मला जो निंदूनि कुसुम तिस देऊनि रमला ॥
 सरुया हो मेल्या ही शवहि न शिवो हें यदुपती ।
 पती नाना र्छींचा पतित जनही ज्यास जपती ॥

नका येऊं देऊं सदर्नि सवतीच्या प्रियकरा ।
करातें लावी ना मज कपटि पैसें तुम्हि करा ॥

रडत रडत मूच्छें माजि वृत्ती बुडाल्या ।
परम विकळ मी तू या स्मृती ही उडाल्या ॥

उचलुनि सखियांनीं मंचकीं दिव्य शेजे ।
निजविलि मृततुल्या सत्यभामा दिसेजे ॥

ये अशांत सदर्नांत हरी तो ।
जो अनादि भव शोक हरी तो ॥

किं करी नमुनियां चरणांतें ।
सांगती सकळ आचरणांतें ॥

म्हणे शोक कां प्राप्त झाला महा हा ।
अशी कष्टली कां शुभांगी अहा हा ॥

न बोलेचि कां आमुर्शीं आज राणी ।
जिच्या बोलण्याचीच आम्हां शिराणी ॥

जई श्री वत्सांक प्रभु करि निजांकस्थित शिरा ।
शिरा नाडी प्राण प्रगटति न लावूनि उशिरा ॥

शिराणी शद्धाची पुरवि तरी डोळे न उघडी ।
घडी जों मानाची विघडलि असे तोंवरि घडी ॥

न जागी ते जागीं स्वमनिं परि डोळे न उघडी ।
घडी एक क्रोधीं मन बुडविं मानें अवघडीं ॥

घडी पूर्व प्रेमास्थितिस वसतां तीस विघडी ।
घडी स्त्री जातीची घडविलि असे ख्याति सुघडी ॥

सख्या दुःखी तूझ्या मजसहित कीं कान उगले ।
गळे नेत्रीं पाणी न निघति मुखीं शब्द सगळे ।
किती मीं प्रार्थितां धरुनि शिर अंकाच उपरी ।
परी क्रोधाची हे अधिकचि दिसे अद्भुत परी ॥

वदे भामा कोपें अति विकळ चावूनि अधरा ।
धरापृष्ठीं नाहीं ठक तुज असा अंबुजधरा ॥
धरावें या अंकीं शिर अजि तिचें पक्षिगमना ।
मना आलें देणें कुसुम जिस तें कंसदमना ॥

जों नेत्र मोडुनि वदे ढकलोनि मांडी ।
भ्रुमंडलिं भ्रमण अंगुलि भंग मांडी ॥
तों कृष्णजी करुनि हास्य म्हणे अहा हा ।
वेडे अनर्थ इतुक्यास्तव कां महा हा ॥

अर्पितां मुनिवरें सुमना तें ।
वाटलें प्रथम हेंचि मनातें ॥
कीं असा तरु पुरीत असावा ।
त्यांतहि स्वसदनींच वसावा ॥

तत्रापि जे प्रिय बहू स्ववधूचि माजी ।
तो स्थापणें तरु तिच्या सद्नाचि माजी ॥
ते तूं प्रिया तुजचि देइन त्या हुमातें ।
हें वाटलें प्रथम आण तुझीच मातें ॥

फूल देउनि तिला उतराई ।
होई मी समज हे चतुराई ॥
देतसें तरुचि तो तुजला गे ।
खेद हा न करणें तुज लागे ॥

तुतें वृक्ष देणेंचि यालार्गि आर्धी ।
 फुलें नाशिला जो तिला होय आधी ॥
 न जाणोनि केले तुवां कष्ट भारी ।
 समाधान ऐसें करी कैटभारी ॥”

Trans:—“Sage Narada, the keen devotee of the feet of God, presented a celestial flower to Krishna. That God, who pervades the three worlds, gave it to Rukmini and it filled the whole of the city of Dwaraka with perfume. The women of the city with their innate partiality to flowers, now asked each other as to where that flower was and the news at last reached the ears of Satyabhama through the mouths of her maids. In an instant, she betrayed her anger but the god appeased her with cunning art. She wildly rolls on the ground and about such sweeps the poet is incompetent to give an adequate idea. Now she weeps, and now she faints. She opens not her eyes and her breath almost ceases. She tears her hair, breaks her necklace and covers her face with her dark locks. She beats her breast and head with both hands and tears her garments. At last she dried up her lower lip with a long hot sigh and said, “Nobody on earth can equal this god, the bearer of the mountain, in roguery; how cunning he is ! He has deceived me by accepting my hand in marriage; for he has slighted me and was pleased to present the flower to her. O friends, if I die, don't let the lord of the Yadus even touch my dead body—he who is waited upon by the fallen and who is the husband of so many women. Don't allow him to enter my house—, he who is the

dear lover of my rival. See that the deceitful one does not even touch me.

“ In course of weeping, her consciousness sank into a swoon and powers of memory were also gone; and so her friends lifted her up and placed her on the splendid bedstead where she looked as if dead. In the meantime god Hari, who has power to put an end to long standing miseries, came to her mansion, when the maid bowed down and related what had happened. He said, “ Why this sorrow ? What has pained the tender lady ? Why my dear queen does not speak to me today ?—she, whose words are so pleasing to my ears ? ” With these words the lord placed her head in his lap. No sooner did he do so, than her veins and sinews began at once their wonted course. He spoke many appeasing words but she was smarting under the sense of wounded honour, and so would not even open her eyes for a moment. The querulous lady was really awake but had feigned sleep; she had sunk her heart in extreme anger for a time. If her heart, of its own accord, returned to its proper peace, she would again perforce disturb its peace. Such is the well-known nature of the fine feminine race ! ” “ Your friends and myself, says the Lord, “ Are buried in grief & despair; tears run from their eyes, and words are only half-uttered. How long have I been requesting you with your head in my lap ? Yet I find your wrath strangely increasing more and more ! ” Then the proud woman replied with a cruel bite of her lip, “ Oh lotus-bearer, there is no knave like yourself on this earth; O rider of the eagle, get you gone, please,

and place in your lap, O destroyer of Kansa, the head of that woman whom it has pleased you to present the flower." She pushed aside his lap with harsh, piercing glances and suddenly knit her brows and cracked her fingers, when Krishna replied with a smile, "What a pity! O silly lady! why all this trouble for a trifle? Upon my word, when the sage gave me the flower, I thought such a tree should be in my capital and in our own palace, and that too in the garden of the queen who is the most dear to me. You, being the dearest, I thought of plating the tree in your garden. This is what I thought, upon my word. It is only a cunning dodge that I have just given the flower to her; I am going to give you the very tree; you need not feel sorry on that account. And in order that I may give you the tree, I have just given her the flower, so that she might not feel sorry afterwards. Surely you made yourself so uneasy for nothing without knowing the facts." Thus did the lord reconcile the proud woman.

Satyabhama's wrath and Krishna's ready wit are finely painted in the above piece.

In *Rukmini Vilas* Vaman Pandit narrates an amorous joke played by Krishna with his beloved queen Rukmini. He tells her that she was a fool to marry a wretched husband like himself and advised her to find out some great king for her husband before it was too late. The simple woman took him to be serious and was shocked to hear from his own lips that she had fallen

into displeasure with her lord. She lost her consciousness in an instant ; and so god Krishna could no longer keep her in that miserable plight. He immediately assured her that it was only a joke and she was all happy again. Vaman Pandit poetically puts this event in these few stanzas :—

वरावे ते राजे निजसम तुवां राजतनये ।
 नये आम्हां ऐसा क्वचिदपि वरूं वो सुविनये ॥
 दिलें बापें भावें त्यजुनि बरवे ते क्षितिपती ।
 पती केला ज्याचे कुलपति समुद्रांत लपती ॥

आतां तरी क्षत्रिय तूं भला गे । वरीं ज्याचा तुज लोभ लागे ॥
 जेणें तुला साधति लोक दोनी । आम्हीं वृथाकाय बहू वदोनी ॥

झाली असें परिसतांचि अनाथ वाणी ।
 ठावी नसे जिस कधीं अशि नाथ वाणी ॥
 त्रैलोक्यनाथ पति हा प्रियं आपणातें ।
 त्यागावया तिस गमे करितो पणातें ॥

दाटूनि कंठ पडली वदनास मुद्रा ।
 शोकें भरें जल जसें भरितें समुद्रा ॥
 घेऊनि चामर चुडा सह मुद्रिकांहीं ।
 भूईं पडे उरि नुरे तनुमाजि कांहीं ॥

पडे केळ जैसी महाचंडवातें ।
 असें देखतां ये कृपा माधवातें ॥

उडी शीघ्र टाकी पलंगावरूनी ।
 धरी उत्तरीयां बरा सांवरूनी ॥

मजविण न सुखाचा तूज तो हेतु कांहीं ।
 समजत तुझिया या पाहतों कौतुकांहीं ॥
 निज वचन विनोदें बोलिलों तूजला गे ।
 न कळत गति याची खेद हा तूज लागे ॥

जयन शर धनुष्यें भोंवयाच्या प्रतापें ।
 श्रवणवरिहि येती तांबडे कोपतापें ॥
 अधर थरथरीति रक्तवर्ण स्वभावे ।
 असिस तुज पहावें बोललों याचि भावे ॥
 जरि निपट दरिद्री जो न लाहेचि कांजी ।
 तरि अमृत मिळाल्या त्यास सोडील कां जी ॥
 तसि बहुत उणी मी लभ्य झालास मातें ।
 म्हणवुनि वरिलें म्यां तूज सर्वोत्तमातें ॥
 राज्यादिकें टाकुनि निर्विकारी ।
 त्वदर्थ होतात असे भिकारी ॥
 राज्यांत दुःखें सुख तूज माजी ।
 म्हणून तूं श्लाघ्य तया समार्जी ॥
 सुधा मानुनीयां पितो एक कांजी ।
 सुधापानकर्ता शिवे त्यास कां जी ॥
 तसी टाकुनी मी तुला मंगळाला ।
 नृपांला तयां कां भर्जों ओंमळांला ॥

Trans :- " O modest princess, you ought to have married kings worthy of your hand, and never a poor fellow like myself. Your father was simply a fool to have left aside great kings and to have given you over to me whose ancestors hid themselves in the sea for fear of

the foes (in the island of Dwarka). Even now make haste before it is too late and marry a suitable Kshatriya king whom you love, so that you may serve your purpose both in this world and in the next. This is what I would advise you. ” These words from the lips of her lord, the like of which she had never heard before, threw the simple Rukmini into consternation. She supposed her dear husband, the lord of the three worlds, was thinking of abandoning her. Her throat was choked and she became speechless. Her heart was filled with grief, like the ocean with tidal waves. All of a sudden she fell headlong on the ground with the *chowrie* in her hand and the ornaments on her person, and life seemed to be almost extinct for a time. When god Madhav saw her fall like a plantain tree overthrown by a fierce gale he was moved with pity. He instantaneously jumped down from the bedstead and caught hold of her upper garment in order to support her. “ I know for certain,” said he, “ That there is no source of pleasure to you other than my own self. I wanted simply to enjoy the fun and so I spoke to you by way of jest. But you did not understand the trend of my words and were pained to hear them. I expected that you would be angry and that the crimson arrows of your eyes, being pushed by the bow of your knit brow, would reach as far as the ears and that your naturally red lips would throb profusely. It was with the motive of seeing you in this charming state that I jocularly said so, I assure you. ” “Tell me, O dear lord,” replied the prudent lady lovingly,

“ If an extremely poor person, not having even rice-water to drink gets nectar perchance, would he let it slip out of his hands ? Just so, when I got a great god like you for my husband inspite of my extreme inferiority, should I not naturally marry him who is the best of all ? Kings spurn their kingdoms, accept poverty and become ascetics to reach you. Royal state is full of miseries, while in you there is eternal happiness; so you are the most agreeable of all. Some one may drink rice-water taking it to be nectar, but as a matter of fact, would one who is actually drinking real nectar touch the rice-water ? Similarly why should I think of leaving you who are the best, and go to wretched kings ! ”

The innate simplicity of Rukmini and her consequent confusion are vivid before the readers mind; so also one admires the poet's imagination in devising a well-fitted reply to be put in the mouth of Rukmini.

CHAPTER XII.

Shridhar.

Shridhar was a great epic writer and very popular in Maharashtra. The chief of his works are पांडवप्रताप (Exploits of the Pandawas), रामविजय (Triumph of Rama) and हरिविजय (Triumph of Hari). We shall find very few persons in Maharashtra even in a village who have not heard at least some "Ovis" of Shridhar. Mukundraj, Dnyaneshwar and Eknath are interesting only to those few persons, who are privileged to understand *Vedant* (Philosophy of the Universal Soul). Vaman Pandit, Moropant and Raghunath Pandit can be approached by those alone, who possess a tolerable knowledge of Sanskrit. Namdev's and Tukaram's *Abhangs* are on devotional love and are recited by those alone who care not so much for true knowledge as for devotion. It is the narrative literature, that is as a rule, more agreeable to the ordinary tastes of the general public; and Moropant's epic works being too learned and Mukteshwar's *Mahabharat* being available in fragments only, the people of Maharashtra have naturally fallen back on the more simple and therefore more congenial epic works of Shridhar. Copies of Shridhar's works, either in printed or in manuscript form, are now-a-days to be found in almost every village of

Maharashtra, and groups of village folk, young and old, male as well as female, can be seen listening at night time after the toil of the day, with undivided attention and ever-increasing appreciation, to the village accountant or the village master or the village priest, reading aloud the epic works of Shridhar with as much music as his voice can command. Shridhar may, therefore, be called *the poet of the people*.

He was born in the S'ak Year 1600 or 1678 A.D. at the village of Nazra situated in the vicinity of Pandharpur. His father was Brahmanand Swami of whom he makes a mention in his works in many places. Shridhar entered the life of a *Sanyasi* at the early age of 14, and made Pandharpur his home, sometimes going out from place to place on holy pilgrimage. Besides रामविजय, हरिविजय and पांडवप्रताप, he has composed शिवलीलामृत, जैमिनी अश्वमेध, ब्रह्मोत्तर खंड and पांडुरंग माहात्म्य. All these works are in *Owi* metre. He died at Paithan in S'ak Year 1650 or 1728 A. D. at the age of 50.

His Writings.

Shridhar's epic works पांडवप्रताप, हरिविजय and रामविजय are, as their names imply, the respective adaptations of the three great national epics of India, viz, *Bharat*, *Bhagwat*, and *Ramayana*. The simplicity and sweetness of his diction, as well as the lucid flow of his narration no less than the nobleness of his themes, have earned for

his works such a height of popularity as is unequalled by the writings of almost any other poet. His thrilling descriptions and suggestive similes at times add an amount of grandeur to his expositions. It was not, however, without apologies to Sanskrit Pandits, that he undertook the task, for the sake of the illiterate masses and the feminine sex. The prejudices of this conceited and militant school of Pandits were not yet completely worn away in spite of the continuous battling of saints like Dnyaneshwar, Eknath, Tukaram, and Ramdas for four centuries. So Shridhar had to say the following in the very first canto of his *Ram-Vijaya*:-

प्राकृत भाषा म्हणोनी । अहं न करावा पंडित जनी ।
 जैशीं कृष्णा वेणीचीं तिरें दोन्हीं । परी उदक जाण एकवी ॥
 तैसें प्राकृत आणि संस्कृत । दोहीत एकची अर्थ ।
 जैशा दोघी खिया एकची कांत । कीं दोन्हीं हस्त एकाचेची ॥
 दोन्ही दाढा एकची सुर । एक पाहणें दोन्ही नेत्र ।
 कीं दों पात्रांत पवित्र । एकचि दुग्ध घातलें ॥
 दोन्ही माजी गोडी एक । जैसें त्रिवेणीस भरलें उदक ।
 एक सुवर्ण कूपिका अलौकिक । ताम्र धातूची एक घडली ॥
 दोन्ही कुप्या नेऊनि देख । श्रीरामेश्वरासी केला अभिषेक ।
 दोन्ही धातू एक उदक । देवास समचि आवडे ॥
 अबलांस न कळे संस्कृत वाणी । जैसें आडांतील गोड पाणी ।
 परी ते दोर पात्रा वांचोनी । अशक्त जना केंवि निघे ॥
 तोचि तडागास येतां त्वरें । तात्काळचि तृषा हरे ।
 अबलाजना तारावया ईश्वरें । प्राकृत ग्रंथ निर्मिले ॥

In this passage the series of similes are worth noting. There are many such similes in Shridhar's works.

Of the three chief works, *Pandav-Pratap* is the largest in extent and covers over 13000 couplets or stanzas in *Ovi* metre. It comprises 64 sections. As to the plan on which the work is composed, the poet says in the last section:—

सवा लक्ष भारत । तितक्याचा जो मथितार्थ ॥
 आला चौसष्ट अध्यायांत । कथा सर्व आकर्षूनी ॥
 पाल्हाळ केला नाहीं बहुत । अथवा नसे संकलित ॥
 नेमस्त धरोनि मथितार्थ । पांडव प्रताप केला हा ॥

The original *Mahabharat* in Sanskrit consists of 90,816 stanzas* while :shridhar's compendium of it is about one-seventh of the original in extent.

Similar is the composition of "*Ram-Vijaya*" and *Hari-Vijaya*. The *Ramayan* in Sanskrit consists of about 29000 stanzas and Shridhar has condensed it into 40 sections consisting of nearly 10,000 couplets altogether. *Hari-Vijaya* is divided into 36 sections, each containing about 200 couplets. What it contains will be seen from the following stanza in the 36th section:—

* According to the calculation made by the late R. C. Dutt in his 'Literature of Bengal.'

दशम आणि हरिवंश । पद्म पुराणीच्या कथा विशेष ।
त्याच हरिविजयीं सुरस । श्रुतीं सावकाश परिसावें ॥

From this stanza it will be seen that *Hari-Vijaya* is a sketch of the marvellous exploits of god Krishna and is an adaptation of the tenth Chapter of the *Bhagwat*, *Hari-Vamsha* and *Padma-Puran*. शिवलीलामृत is a pious narration of the deeds of god Shiva.

What Kashiram and Krittibas have together done for the public of Bengal, Shridhar has singly done for the public of Maharashtra. The numerous exciting episodes of the early mythological period so long a monopoly of the higher classes knowing Sanskrit, were now thrown open and made to inspire the heart of the masses. And the effect of this general inspiration naturally was to raise the moral tone and rouse the sturdier element of the whole nation.

We shall give below two quotations from Shridhar, one from the *Pandav-Pratap*, and the other from the *Ram-Vijaya*, by way of illustrations. In section 42 of the *Pandav-Pratap*, while depicting the fight between the Kauravas led by Bhishma and the Pandavas led by Arjun, the poet says :—

सुरवर विमानीं पहाती । एकाचे रथ एक छेदिते ।
तूणीर सायकासनें तोडिते । ध्वज पाडिते क्षितीवरी ॥

परस्परें मारिती सारथी । उसणें परस्परें फेडिती ।
सुवेंच हृदयीं शर भेदिती । वाघें वाजती दोहीं दळीं ॥
बाणजाळ पसरले बहुत । तेणें झांकोळला आदित्य ।
परम धाकड बळवंत । हिमज्वरें कांपती ॥

भारतीय युद्ध अद्भुत पाहीं । त्यांस दुजी उपमा नाहीं ।
पेसें वीर निर्वाण पाहीं । ताहीं कोठेंच झुंजले ॥
वीर विदेही होऊन । रणांगणीं भिडती निर्वाण ।
सुहृद् माया दारा धन । थोरपण नाठवेचि ॥

देहाचें स्मरण नाहीं तयांप्रती । म्हणोनी वीरांस समरीं मुक्ती ।
पूर्वापार बोलिजे पंडितीं । शास्त्ररीती निर्धारिीं ॥

थोर गाजली रणघुमाळी । रिते कुंजर धांवती दळीं ।
ध्वज अपार पडती भूतळीं । रिते रथ अश्व नेती ॥

नग्न शस्त्रें पडलीं अपार । वीरांचे पसरले अलंकार ॥
असो उदयाचळीं सहस्रकर । गंगाकुमर तेंवि दिसे ।

पांच-पताकी शोभे रथ । महारथी पाठीं अपरिमित ।
असंख्य बाण तेव्हां वर्षत । खिळीत पांडवसेनेतें ॥

बहुत वीरांचीं शस्त्रें । छेदून पाडिलीं क्षणमात्रें ॥
तो श्रीरंग-भगिनी-पुत्रें । केलें घांवणें सत्वर ॥

तो केवळ प्रति-अर्जुन । दोहीं हातांचें समसंधान ।
शत बाणें गंगानंदन । भेदिला तेणें समरांगणीं ॥

कृतवर्मा खिलिला नवबाणीं । तैसाच शल्य विंधिला तेक्षणीं ।
सारथ्यांचीं शिरें धरणीं । सहस्रावधी पाडित ॥

हस्त लाधव देखोन । वीर सर्व हालविती मान ।
सव्य तर्जनी उचलीन । शूर सर्व घन्य म्हणती ॥

The following extract from Section 30 of the *Ram-Vijaya* describes the extremely sorry plight of Sulochana, the wife of Ravan's son Indrajit, when all of a sudden an arm of her husband who had gone for fight, severed from his body, fell into the court-yard of her mansion :-

सुलोचने गृहीं आनंदू । तों अमृतीं पडे विषबिंदू ।
तैसा तो भुज सुबुद्ध । अंगणीं येउनी पडियेला ॥

ठणत्कार होतां ते क्षणीं । दूती आल्या धांवोनी ।
येऊनि पहाती तव आंगणीं । भुज अद्भुत देखिला ॥

ते काचवंद आंगणांत । वीरपाणी पडिला अद्भुत ।
देखोनि दासी भयाभीत । आल्या सत्वर सांगावया ॥

म्हणती नवल वर्तलें हो साजणी । महावीराचा तुटोनी पाणी ।
येऊनि पडिलासे आंगणीं । निराळ मागें अकस्मात ॥

येकोनी दासीचें वचन । दचकलें सुलोचनेचें मन ।
रत्नपादुका त्वरें करून । अंग्रियुगलीं लेइली ॥

तडित्प्राय झळके अंबर । अंगणांत आली सत्वर ।
उतरला असे मुखचंद्र । विव्हळ नेत्र जाहले ॥

आंग झालेंसे विकळ । पुढें न घालवेचि पाउल ।
वदनीचें काढोनी तांबुल । एकीकडे भिरकाविलें ॥

सखियांशीं म्हणे सुलोचना । प्राणपति आज गेले रणा ।
सीतेलागीं अयोध्या राणा । सुवेळाचळीं बैसला ॥

पेसैं बोलतां शेषनंदिनी । भुजे समीप येतां ते क्षणीं ।
तंव तो शक्रजिताचा पाणी । पतिव्रतेनं ओळखिला ॥

पंचांगुलीं मुद्रिकामंडित । वरी कंकणें विराजित ।
 दंड किर्तिमुख झळकत । चपळेहुनी विशेष ॥
 म्हणे आर्जीं जहाज बुडालें । म्हणोनी वदन हातीं पिटिलें ।
 परम आकांत ते वेळे । वाटे बुडालें ब्रह्मांड ॥
 सुमन-कलिकेवरी सौदामिनी । पडतां उरी न उरे ते क्षणीं
 तैशी निस्तेज होऊनी । भोगेन्द्र-नंदिनी पडियेली ॥
 लोभीयांचें गेलें धन । किं जळचरें जीवना वीण ।
 तैशी पति-वियोगें करुन । सुलोचना तळमळी ॥
 म्हणे विपरीत काळाची करणी । मृगजळीं बुडाला अगस्ती ।
 दीपतेजें रोहिणी-पति । आहाळोनी पडियेला ॥
 तमकूपीं बुडाला तरणी । पाडसैं सिंह धरिला वनीं ।
 पिपीलिकें मुखीं धरूनी । मेरु कैसा रगडिला ॥
 अळिकेनें गिळिला सुपर्ण । मशकीं ग्रासिला महा अग्न ।
 भूतांनीं काळ धरुन । समरांगणीं मारिला ॥
 मग सुलोचनेस उचलोनी । बैसविती सांवरुनी ।
 पतीचा भुज हृदयीं घरुनीं । आक्रंदे सुलोचना ॥

These extracts will give the reader an idea of Shridhar's poems.

CHAPTER XIII.

Amritrai, Sohiroba and Mahipati.

Amritrai is famous for his easy-flowing sweet *Katibandhs* or *Katavs* (कटाव) as they are commonly called. He was born about the S'ak year 1620 or 1698 A. D. The *Katav* is a forcible rapidly-running metre, full of rhymes, very effective in didactic and narrative poems. The audience of a *Haridas* is simply enraptured while he goes on repeating *Katavs* with well measured modulations of tone. Amritrai has written many such *Katavs* on certain events of the *Bharat*, e. g. दुर्वासयात्रा, द्रौपदीवस्त्रहरण, ध्रुवचरित्रं, etc. We may quote his *Katav* on जीवदशा (conditions of man) for illustration.

सज्जन हो निजगुज आपुलें उमजाना हरिलार्गी
भजाना ॥ ध्रु० ॥ नऊमास गर्भांत सांपडे, मूत्र-मलादिक
फार सांकडे, तनूसि तोडिति जंतू किडे, बहु श्रमानें
बाहेर पडे, स्मरण मुळींचें सर्व विसरला, सोहं कोहं रडूं
लागला, दिवसा मासा वृद्धि पावला, क्षण क्षणा अपघात
चूकला, धनमदगवें फार दाटला, अहंपणाचा पूर
लोटला, पांचा विषयांमाजि बाटला, पापाचरणें मर्नी
काटला, भला थाटला, संसार अपार, थोर करितो
कारभार, महाल मुख जाहागीर इजारा, कमावि-
सदारी, भारी पसारा सावकारी, हत्ती घोडे सैन्य

शीबिका, वा पोषाख कार्नि चौकडा, सुंदर वनिता प्रिया
 नवोढा, शहाणपणाचा गर्व हि गाढा, मनसोब्याचा करी
 निवाडा, वाडा रंगित रंग महाल, सोनेरी बैठका, जरी
 भरजरी तमाम पेने, काम मुलायम फिरंगाणी बिल्लोरी
 फानसें, मिनेगारि किनखापी पडदे, खणोखणीं रेशमी
 गालिचे, बागबगीचे राग रंगामधीं गुंग बेटा, निसंग मोठा,
 अभिमानाचा चढला ताठा, जार चोरटा, उन्मत खोटा,
 धर्मीं विषयीं फार करंटा, त्याच्या बंधुनीं धरल्या वाटा,
 अग्नी तस्कर करिती चपेटा, आंटा पीटा, + + + + देश
 धडीवर गुढी लागली, दुष्कर्माचीं अत्रें दाटलीं, पहा
 पहारे डोळे उघडुनी, पुढें यातना यम लोकींच्या, नाना
 परिच्या, जाणुनि येथेंचि कां सावध व्हाणा । हरिलार्गीं
 भजाना ॥ १ ॥

Besides the *Katavs* he has left some miscellaneous songs. Amritrai was a Deshastha Brahmin by caste and lived at Aurangabad. He died in the S'ak year 1675 or 1753 A. D. His contemporary " Madhwamuni " has composed some miscellaneous songs.

Sohiroba.

Sohirobanath, commonly called Sohiroba, was an inhabitant of Banda in Savantvadi State. He was born in S'ak Year 1636 or 1714 A. D. He was a Goud Brahmin by caste. A colony of Goud Brahmins had migrated some centuries ago from their original home in North India and settled in Goa and the surrounding country

on the coast. During the time of the Hindu rule and the succeeding Mahommedan and Portuguese rule over the country, this community acquired an important position in the south of the Kokan by virtue of their faithfulness and intelligence. Sohirobanath's ancestors, like those of several other poets of note, were hereditary *Kulkarnis* (accountants) of certain villages and accordingly he himself served the State of Savantvadi in that capacity. Being tired of worldly life, he entered the life of a *Sanyasi* at the age of 35. He successfully practised योग (mental concentration) and was a high class *Vedanti*; and he thoroughly understood and vividly realized the principles of *Vedant* by his own actual अनुभव (experience). He then went on a tour of holy pilgrimage, and visited the saints of the time in the Deccan and in the North of India. He was entirely contented within himself. While travelling through the territory of the Scindia of Gwalior in course of his pilgrimage, an interview was arranged between him and Mahadji Scindia according to the wishes of his General, Jivba Dada who was a Goud Brahmin from the South of the Kokan. The Scindia was fond of poetry and sometimes composed verses himself. These he showed to Sohiroba in the expectation of his praising and admiring them. But Sohiroba did not approve of them and possessed too much independence to bestow false praises on the royal production. He died in the S'ak year 1711 or 1789 A. D.

Of his compositions, सिद्धान्त संहिता, अक्षय्यबोध, महदनु

भवेश्वरी and अद्वयानंद are the more important and are published of late by Mr. Pai of Savantvadi. He has written more than 20000 couplets. All these works are purely Vedantic. His miscellaneous songs can be often heard being recited by the people of the South of the Kokan to this day. His style is simple but dignified. Vithoba Anna Daftardar, a later scholar of piety and devotion expresses his high admiration for him in the following terms :—

कवि संत सोहिरोबा बांदें ग्रामीं वसे महा द्विज हा ॥
ज्याची देखुनि कविता हरि स्वजनां भूवरी म्हणे द्विज^१ व्हा ॥

The following song of his which is very popular will serve as an illustration of his miscellaneous songs :—

हरि-भजना वीण काल घालवूं नको रे ।
चित् स्वरूपासि उमज, ध्यानिं आणुनि पुरतें समज ।
अपुले मतिनें उगाचि चिखल, कालवूं नकोरे ॥ हरि० ॥
दोरिच्या सापा भिडनि भवा, भेटि नाहीं जिवाशिवा ।
अंतरिंचा ज्ञान-दिवा मालवूं नको रे ॥ हरि० ॥
सोहिरा म्हणे पूर्ण ज्योति, तेथें नाहीं दिवस राति ।
तयाविणें नेत्र पाति, हालवूं नको रे ॥ हरि० ॥

Trans :—“ O Friend! Do not spend your time without *praying to God. Perceive true knowledge of the Supreme Soul meditate upon it and realize it.

1 Be born again.

Do not spoil your hands for nothing in the mire of *Ignorance*. Do not mistake the rope for the serpent in this worldly life (Do not be influenced by *Maya*) for then the individual Soul (जीव) will not be one with the Supreme Soul (शिव). Do not extinguish the inner light of knowledge. Sohira says the Supreme Soul is perfect light where there are no days and nights; do not move your eye-lids without the sight of that light.

Mahipati.

Another poet no less popular in the country of Maharashtra than Shridhar is Mahipati Mahipati's Life. of Taharabad, a place about 40 miles from Ahmadnagar. He was born in S'ak year 1637 or 1715 A. D. He was a Rigvedi Deshastha Brahmin by caste. His father, Dadopant, was a Kulkarni (village accountant) by profession. When Dadopant grew old, he asked his son Mahipati to look after the hereditary duties of Kulkarni. Once it so happened that Mahipati was deeply engrossed in his usual prayers when a sepoy arrived and conveyed to him some orders that required his immediate presence in the Government office. Mahipati said that he would go to the office after his prayers were finished. The sepoy, however, uttered some words of disrespect and so Mahipati took a vow not to serve any longer as Kulkarni. He afterwards used to take trips of holy pilgrimage to Pandharpur every year, and depended on the wonted

charity of the people for his necessaries of life. The country on that side was about this time visited by a terrible famine and Mahipati was so generous as to distribute all the grain that he had in his house to the poor and the helpless. He died in S'ak year 1712 at the ripe age of 75.

Mahipati has written many works in Marathi, the chief among them being भक्तविजय, भक्त-
 His works. लीलामृत, संतविजय and संतलीलामृत. All of these are lives of poets and saints. Mahipati was, therefore, not only a poet but a biographer also. He took great pains to collect information about the saints and put it in simple verse so as to be readily intelligible to the general public of Maharashtra. He has also preserved therein those traditions in the lives of the saints which would sound miraculous in these days of science but which are valuable in the eyes of the orthodox masses and are accepted by them with all the faith of sincere devotees.

In these four biographical works, Mahipati has left a very precious heritage to the posterity of Maharashtra. A great deal of what we now know of the poets and saints of Maharashtra is due to these valuable works. He finished his संतलीलामृत in S'ak year 1679; it contains the lives of about forty saints. He wrote the भक्तविजय in S'ak year 1684. It consists of 57 Chapters and gives more than 60 lines.

Besides these biographical works, he has composed small hymns on the various religious holidays of the Hindoos, e. g. हरितालिकाव्रत, ऋषिपंचमीव्रत, अनंतव्रत, तुलसी-माहात्म्य etc. All these are commonly read by devout Hindu ladies during the respective holidays. Among his other works may be mentioned कथासारामृत, कृष्णलीलामृत, and शनिमाहात्म्य. Mahipati's writings are all in the *Ovi* metre. His style is entirely plain and simple and possesses many fine similes.

In order to present to the readers a specimen of Mahipati's composition, we give below only one piece from संतलीलामृत describing the event of King Gopichand renouncing his kingdom and turning a recluse, in spite of the dissuasive words of sage जालंधर. It is this :—

रायासि अनुताप झाला पूर्ण ।

म्हणे सगदुरूचें धन्य महिमान ॥

आतां संसार माया त्यजुन ।

वैराग्य घेणें निश्चित ॥

मग प्रधानासि विचारोनी ।

पुत्र बैसविला भद्रासर्नी ॥

जालंधरासि नमस्कार करोनी ।

कर जोडोनि विनवीत ॥

म्हणे मी शरणांगत पूर्ण ।

जोग थावा जी मज कारण ।

काहीं न कराषा अनमान ।
म्हणोनि चरण धरियेले ॥
या वरी सद्गुरु बोलती वचन ।
वैराग्य नव्हेचि तुज लागुन ॥
नको टाकूं संसार भान ।
शेवट होणें अघटित ॥
विष घेववेल ग्रसोग्रासी ।
पार्यी चालवेल आकाशी ॥
बाहीं पोहोनि सागरासी ।
पैल तीरासि पाववेल ॥
मुठीत धरवेल कृशान ।
कुडी सांडितां धरवेल प्राण ॥
आकाशाची मोट जाण ।
वस्त्रांत बांधोनि आणवेल ॥
पृथ्वीचें वजन होइल कोड ।
करवेल ब्रह्मांडाचि घडामोड ॥
परी वैराग्य बहुत अवघड ।
जाण रोकडें नृपनाथा ॥
आम्हीं आशीर्वाद दिधला राया ।
तेढहां अमर झाली तुझी काया ॥
आतां वैराग्य घेवोनियां ।
व्यर्थ कासया शिणतोसी ॥
गोपीचंद देत प्रत्युत्तर ।
स्वामीची कृपा मजवर ।

असतां माया अनिवार ।
 बांधूं न शके सर्वथा ॥
 पूर्ण अनुतापी ओळखोनी चिन्ह ।
 वैराग्य दिधलें त्याज कारण ।
 सैली मुद्रा कंथा लेघोन ।
 विभूति चर्चन सर्वांगी ॥

CHAPTER. XIV.

Moropant.

Moropant, the greatest Marathi poet of the eighteenth century, was born in the S'ak year 1651 or 1729 A. D. His father Ramchandrapant Paradkar was a clerk in the service of Babuji Naik, a rich Jahagirdar of Baramati near Poona, and relative of the Peshwa. Though originally a son of a quill-driver, Moropant acquired a high proficiency in Sanskrit learning and was soon able to explain the *Purans* in public with masterly skill. He served for some time as a clerk at the fort of Panhala, but Babuji Naik was so pleased with his ability in explaining the *Purans* that he asked him to remain with him at Baramati and narrate the *Purans* to him every evening for which he was given an annuity of Rs.500/-Here he got ample time to prosecute his studies in Sanskrit as well as Marathi literature, which gave him an uncommon command over words and constructions. In his leisure hours he used to compose verses after verses. He was extremely fond of the *Arya metre* (आर्या) and the bulk of his poetic works is in that metre, so that he is styled the *Master of Arya*. Ramchandra Badwe, an admirer of Moropant, says:-

सुश्लोक वामनाचा अर्भंग वाणी प्रसिद्ध तुक्याची ।
ओवी *मुक्तेशाची किंवा आर्या मयूरपंताची ॥

*Some have ज्ञानेशाची.

i. e. Vaman is the master of fine *Shlokas*, the *Abhangs* of Tukaram are famous, so also Muktesh is the master of *Ovi* and Moropant is the master of *Arya*. It is said, he composed 150 to 200 verses in *Arya* metre in a day and it must have been so, for otherwise he could not have produced so voluminous literature.

He surpasses any other Marathi poet in the volume as well as variety of his productions. His command over Sanskrit & Marathi. He is reputed to have written as many as a lac of *Aryas* and most of these are published at this day. His works are somewhat difficult and are not intelligible to the masses as Namdev's and Tukaram's *Abhangs* are. They are meant only for those who know something of Sanskrit and Sanskritic constructions. He has translated or rather adapted, all the 18 *Parvas* of the *Bharat* and a part of *Bhagwat* in Marathi. Each *Parva* is fit to be called a work by itself. Besides these big works he has written हरिवंश, कृष्णविजय and ब्रह्मोत्तरखंड. Of his smaller compositions the केकावली or the "Trumpeting of the Peacock" is most elegant.

His रामायणs are as interesting as they are artistic. The reader is here simply astonished at the extraordinary dexterity of the author in his choice and arrangement of words so as to suit his acrostics and other curiosities of versification. He is said to have composed 108 such

Ramayans in all to propitiate his family deity Ram, a majority of which are published of late. The पृथ्वीरामायण विबुधप्रिय रामायण, पंचचामर रामायण, सवाई रामायण etc are composed in the metres of those names respectively. The दामरामायण or *Chain Ramayan* is a concatenation of the verses linked with each other by the repetition of the same word or words at the end of one verse and again at the beginning of the next verse and so on in succession, e. g. :—

श्रीपति झाला दशरथसुत राम दशाननासि माराया ।
 मा राया जनकाची होय सुता त्रिजगदाधि साराया ॥
 सारा या प्रभुची हे लीला गाती सदैव ही सुकवी ।
 सुकवी भवजलनिधितें निरुपमसुख रसिकजनमनीं पिकवी ॥
 पिक वीतबाध कवि या चरिताभ्रवनांत कूजती सुरस ।
 सुर-सर्द्धांचा लाजे यश हें श्रीशिव म्हणे शिवे परिस ॥
 परिस सुवर्ण करितसे लोहा जीवास शिवचा हा महिमा ।
 महिमान्या स्वर्गाही स्वकुल म्हणे धन्य यत्प्रभा अहिमा ॥

In the परंतु रामायण each आर्या is made to contain the word “ परंतु ”. In the लघु रामायण no long syllable is allowed to appear. The निरोष्ठ रामायण is so worded that the labial alphabet are not used therein and it can be sung with the lips open. In this Ramayan the poet is confronted with several difficulties ; for the name of the great epic hero is *Rama* and contains a labial; so also the name *Ravan* of the antagonist contains a

labial. Similar is the difficulty about *Lakshman*, *Maruti* etc. But the author has skilfully managed to get over these difficulties by coining words like दशरथ-नंदन, घाकटा दशरथि (Younger son of Dasharath), दिक्कठ, अंजनासुत etc. Surely it must have been a great trial to the poet to compose a poem under such baffling restrictions. काशी रामायण, गंगा रामायण, प्रयाग रामायण, ऋषि रामायण, etc. are such that each *Arya* is made to contain letters of the words काशी, प्रयाग etc, and of the names of sages. Many of these Ramayans are small pieces consisting of 50 to 100 verses. Only परंतु रामायण is somewhat large and contains about 250 *Aryas*. His Ramayans are simply acrobatic feats in the field of versification. Besides these, Moropant has composed miscellaneous pieces in other metres. He died in the S'ak year 1716 or 1794 A. D. He had been to Benares and other holy places in the north a few years before his death.

We must mention here the controversy that went

Moropant's claim to be called a poet.

on some years ago among the critics of Marathi literature regarding the claims of Moropant to be called a poet.

The critics on one side, notably among them, the late Mr. Justice Ranade and Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar were of opinion that Moropant was a clever *versifier* but not a poet. On the otherhand Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, Parashurampant Godbole, and others said that Moropant was undoubtedly the *greatest poet* in Marathi. Perhaps the truth lies between the two sides, as is

often the case in such controversies. It must be admitted that Moropant had poetic genius in him, for otherwise he could not have written so voluminous and nice poems of fine imagination. But he was so much given to artistic rhymings and elegant arrangements of words that the spontaneity of his thoughts was appreciably hampered thereby, and poetry was made subservient to versification. Had he not indulged too much in this fancy for artistic beauties, his compositions would certainly have been less laboured and more natural and for the matter of that, more vigorous. His ambition for alliterations and rhymings of several letters together was very great, so much so that he used to note down in his leisure hours many pairs of several letters, having different meanings as they would suggest themselves to him, ready to be used in compositions later on.

Another cause that made his writings unintelligible to the masses was his superior know-

His Sanskrit constructions.

ledge of Sanskrit. This cannot be called his fault. Words and phrases of Sanskrit origin came to him in natural course and were put in. Only one would wish the compounds of Sanskrit words were more easy and less lengthy than what we find in some places. What we have thus lost in spontaneity of feeling is gained in elegance of words. Moropant has successfully imported many literary beauties of the Sanskrit language into Marathi and has thereby enriched the latter to a considerable degree.

Moropant's *Mahabharat* is a learned work in Marathi. It is not a mere translation of the Sanskrit *Mahabharat*. The main story is borrowed from Sanskrit but the poet has often abbreviated the narration. It is acknowledged on all hands to be a very elegant poem in Marathi, containing all sorts of descriptions and sentiments. One or two small quotations will acquaint the readers with the style of this standard poem. सावित्री the virtuous princess of world-wide fame, was sent by her father धृषपति for personal choice of a husband and when she returned, her father sitting in company of sage नारद asked her as to whom she was thinking of. The conversation that ensued is put by Moropant in the shape of the following verses in the वनपर्व:-

सांगे ती सावित्री नृप द्युमत्सेन शाल्वपति आहे ।
जरि अंध वृद्ध रिपु-हृत-राज्यवनस्थहि न काळजी वाहे ॥
कुलशील सत्व गुणनिधी तो पुत्र कलत्र मात्र परिवार ।
परि वार सर्व सम त्या कीं मथिला स्वांतरस्थ अरिवार ॥
तो श्वशुर मानला मज चित्तें त्याचा कुमार म्यां वरिला ।
जरि लाजविति सख्या अनुसरली गौरी हरा न त्या हरिला ।
नारद म्हणे नृपा हे चुकली योजूनि सत्यवान् न वरा ।
न वरावा जरि गुणवान् योजू अन्या असे उणें न वरा ॥
भूप म्हणे सर्वज्ञा देवा उमजे असेंचि सांग मला ।
गुणवान् युवा कुलजवर जरि तरिहि तुला अयोग्य कां गमला
काय इणें न धरावें अधनत्वे भूप-जनवराजीवी ।
कां न प्राशावें मधु मधुपानें कूप-ज-नव-राजीवी ॥

मुनि सांगे वर्षातीं येइल त्या भूप-पुत्र का व्यसुता ।
 अन्य वरुं वृतहि कच त्यजुनि वरी भूपपुत्र काव्य-सुता॥
 भूप म्हणे न वरावा वत्से जरि सुगुण-सागर लवायु ।
 शीतल मंद सुगंधहि वद सेवावा कसा गरलवायु ।
 ती सुमति म्हणे ताता न त्यजुनि पयोधिला नदी परते।
 न पतंग चित्तवृत्ति क्षण ही रत्नीं त्यजुनि दीप रते ॥
 वरिला तो वरिलाचि स्पर्शावा या न अन्य कायातें ।
 हा दृढ निश्चय माझा स्तवितील कुलीन कन्य कायातें ॥
 आयुष्य असो किति तरि मज तदितर पुरुष तुज समचि राया॥
 मन न चळेलचि येइल जरि चरचर हा गळा यमचिराया॥
 देवर्षि म्हणे त्यासचि दे साध्वी-व्रत-परा सुता राया ।
 शुचि निश्चयाहुनि अधिक अमृत रस नसे परासु ताराया ।
 होतें सद्धर्माच्या कासेला लागतां सदा शिव हो ।
 येतों बसा प्रसन्न प्रभु मृत्युंजय तुम्हें सदाशिव हो ॥

Translation :- “ There is the King Dyumatsen,”
 replied Savitri, “ of the Country of Shalva, who, though
 is old and blind and resides in a forest, and his kingdom
 is usurped by his enemies, is free from all sorts of anxiety.
 He is a store of noble birth, good character and excellent
 virtues; and his family consists of his wife and son alone;
 but all the days of the week are alike to him, for he
 has conquered the multitude of the interior foes (viz.
 Desire, Anger, Greed, etc.). I approve of him as my
 father-in-law, and choose his son within my heart for
 my husband. Even when her friends found fault with
 गौरी she chose *Hara* and not *Hari* for her husband.”

- "Oh King," said Narad, "this girl has selected Satyavan for her husband; nevertheless she should not marry him; let her select another; many other marriageable youths can be found." "O omniscient god!" said the King, "Tell me plainly why you disapprove of the bridegroom, if he possesses virtues and high birth. Or is it because of his poverty that she should not hold him dear to her heart? But why should not a bee taste of honey in blowing lotus though it may have grown in a pond?" "The Prince," answered the sage, "will meet with death at the end of a year. So let her choose another husband; Devayani, the daughter of Shukracharya left off Kacha, though once chosen, and made another selection." "O my dear daughter," exclaimed the King, "You should not marry the Prince, though he be an ocean of virtues as his life is short. How may you resort to a poisonous breeze, though it be cool, soft and fragrant?" "O Papa," replied the virtuous princess, "The river does not withdraw from the ocean; nor is the moth attracted to a jewel in preference to a shining light. A choice is a choice, and nobody else shall touch my person. This is my firm determination and noble young girls will admire it. Howsoever short be his life, all men, other than he, will be to me, like you, O Papa. I won't change my mind even if the God of Death comes forth to cut my throat." "Give in marriage, O King," added the divine sage, "your daughter of chaste character to the prince of her choice. Even nectar cannot surpass purity of thought in reviving a dead man. One always attains happiness

by resorting to virtue. I now beg leave of you. May God Shiva, the conqueror of Death, be ever pleased with you. ”

The rhymes of भूपजनवरार्जवी, भूपपुत्रकाव्यसुता, and सागरलवायु are remarkable. Another passage in the भीष्मपर्व describing the fight between the Kauravas headed by भीष्म and the Pandavas headed by भीम is interesting. It is this:-

भीष्म पुढें करुनि उठे प्रथम सुयोधन करावया कदन ।

भीम पुढें करुनि उठे धर्म प्रभु जो सुकुर्तित्तें सदन ॥

भीमाचा सिंहध्वनि कोणासहि आयकों न दे वाघें ।

सोडुनि समाधि मस्तक डोलविलें आयकोन देवाघें ॥

वृद्ध तरुण भीष्मार्जुन परि न रणीं न्यून अधिक ते गमले ।

सम लेखर्षि तयातें जाणुनि तद्भुजपराक्रमीं रमले ॥

सूं सणण सणणणणण वाजति शरनिकर काय हानिकर ।

वदले सुरमुनि करितो नररूपें रुद्र काय हा निकर ॥

शरधी जलधी फुटले कीं दैवें पाश एकदां तुटले ।

कीं काल व्याल करटि घोटक-भट भेक खावया सुटले ॥

कवि योजुनि उपमा गज-हर-नर-शरततिस बाहु टळलाजो ।

अतुल बल न कां गर गल कलही हित विजय बाहु टळलाजो ॥

देवाऽसुराहव न बहु त्या कौरव-पांडवा हवाहून ।

शोणितनदींत गेले स-भट रथ द्विरदवाह वाहून ॥

तिसरे दिवशीं राया भीमानें अतितरोग्र कोपानें ।

दुर्योधन नृप मूर्छित केला भेदुनि उरांत रोपानें ॥

The following description of untimely rains given in पृथुकोपाख्यान relating to the interview between the two old friends कृष्ण and सुदाम is life-like and has noble simplicity about it.

बंधो तें नित्य केव्हां तरि कुतुक तुझ्या आठवे कीं मनाला।
आणाया इंधनाला स्वगुरुयुवतिनें धाडिलें जें वनाला ॥

काला वांचूनि आला जलधर सुटला वात अंधार जाला ।
भ्याला आत्मा कराला-हि-कुटिल तरलां लास शब्दा
विजांला ॥

भास्वान् मावळला पयोद वळला स्थूलांबु वाहो पळ ।
ज्जातांहीं बहु पीडिलों स्थिर वनीं दीलें न राहों पळ ॥

वषें कांकडलों जळांत पडलों झाला क्षणें दिग्भ्रम ।
सारे बाळ कराल काळ शिरला चिर्ती महा संभ्रम ॥

तो निम्नोन्नत भूविभाग न कळे सर्वत्र झालें वन ।
आम्हां काळमुखा समान गमलें सर्वासही तें वन ॥

अंधारीं धरुनी परस्पर करीं स्वाध्व-भ्रमा पावुनी ।
प्रत्यूषावधि हिंडलों मग परामर्षासि आला मुनी ॥

झालों होतो भ्रमानें विकल सकळ ही काननीं वृष्टिवातें ।
आचार्यें धांवुनीयां स्वहृदयि धरिलें जेविं आत्मोद्भवातें ॥
केलें आध्राण माथां सकरुण गुरु तो वर्षला प्रेम तोया ।
मच्चित्ता आठवे श्रीगुरुचरण दया-प्राप्त सत्कारतो या ॥

Translation:—“O Brother, do you sometimes remem-

ber that curious incident when we were sent to the forest by the wife of our preceptor to fetch fuel? There was an untimely shower of rain, the wind blew hard, and it was dark, when we were all frightened by thunder and lightning—lightning that was tremulous and resembled terrible serpents. The sun was hidden, the rain was showering and we were cruelly hit by big hail—stones. We could not rest quietly for a moment in the forest. We shivered in the rains and tumbled down in pools of water. All the boys lost their way and we all fell in utter confusion. High and low ground could not be made out and the forest was all water, and it appeared to us all as if the jaws of death. We held each other by the hand, missed our way and wandered the whole night till the break of day when the sage arrived searching for us. We were all overpowered by wind and rain in the forest when the preceptor ran up and held us one by one, to the breast as if we were his own sons. He bent down over each of us with pity and shed tears of love. I am much pleased to recollect all this as a token of our preceptor's kindness."

The following passage from the अरण्यकाण्ड of the मंत्ररामायण describes the lamentations of राम at the disappearance of his beloved wife सीता from their hut in the forest. It is as pathetic as it is simple :—

रुचिराक्षा नाहीं कीं वत्सा हें अन्य गेह वाटतसे ।
इतर स्थलासि आलों चुकती अनभिज्ञ लोक वाट तसे ॥

वत्सा मज जरि म्हणसी सीतेची हेच होय दल-शाला ।
 तरि मीच रामनामा नसे न साधवी दिसेल काशाला ॥
 ते मज वांचुनि नाहीं गेली गोदावरी-विहारार्ते ।
 क्षण मद्विरहें तीतें युग होंतें भार भावि हारार्ते ॥
 ते प्रियतमा न हिंसें वधिली नाहींच रक्त भूवरतें ।
 नेलीच राक्षसानें म्हणुनी शोधी स्थळ क्षमावर तें ॥
 कोठें जनक-सुते तूं गेलीस धरासुते प्रिये जाये ।
 न करीं विनोद झाला व्याकुळ अत्यंत देह माझा ये ॥
 तूं काय कोप धरिला अपूर्व मृग नाणिला म्हणून मनीं ।
 तरि चंद्र मृगहि आणुन देइन हें तूं असत्यसें न मनीं ॥
 श्वशुराला परलोकीं गेलिस जरी तूं करावया नमना ।
 पुसल्या वांचुन कैसी सीते झालीस आज यान-मना ॥
 न्यावें मजही तेथें श्वशुराची प्रार्थना करुनि सती ।
 भरत करू राज्यातें तुज वांचुनि वांचुनी सुखें नसती ॥
 राज्य-श्री हरुनि जरी कैकेयीनें वनास पाठविलें ।
 तरि तव योगें ते मीं नाहीं काहीं मनांत आठविलें ॥
 मज राजकन्यके तूं वरुनीयां पावलीस न सुखातें ।
 खातें हें चित्तातें सांगों कोणास मी स्वदुःखातें ॥
 हा कमलाक्षि तनूदरि सुंदरि जाये प्रिये अये सदये ।
 विधुमुखि पिक-गर्वापह अमृताहुनि गोडसें स्वयें वद ये ॥
 पंकज विधु हरि गज पिक चमरी मृग कीर जिंकिले होते ।
 त्वन्मित्रार्ते मातें त्वद्वैरें पीडितील सखि हो ते ॥
 हा प्रियतमे वियोग-ज्वलन-मुखीं होमिलेंस कां मातें ।
 वैरी संतोषविले टाकुनि यातें वनीं सकामातें ॥

No critical note on poet Moropant can be complete without a mention of his किकावली or His Kekavali. the "Trumpeting of the Peacock." In this poem the poet (मयूरेश्वर) supposes himself to be a मयूर (pea-cock) and calls his prayers to God his किका i. e. crowing or trumpeting. The poem was composed by him in his old age and is a masterpiece; it is a very earnest song of devotional love and displays the high-class learning of the author at its best. The verses are written in the पृथ्वी metre; we shall quote a few of them here for instance :—

अतर्क्य महिमा तुज्ञा गुणहि फार बा हे विधी ।
 श्रुतिज्ञहि म्हणे सदा स्तविल आमुची केंवि धी ॥
 तरी जन यथामति स्तवुनि जाहले सन्मती ।
 स्तवार्थ तुज्ञिया तुझ्या सम कवी कधीं जन्मती ॥
 प्रभो शरण आलिया वरि न व्हा कधीं वांकडे ।
 म्हणोनि इतुकेंचि हें स्वहित-कृत्य जीवांकडे ॥
 प्रसाद करितां नसे पळ विलंब बापाखरें ।
 धनांबु न पडे मुखीं उधडिल्या विना पांखरें ॥
 शिवे न तुज्ञिया पदा अदयतारव्य दोष क्षण ।
 प्रभो चुकतसों तरी करिसि तूंचि संरक्षण ॥
 नसेवि शरणागती घडलि सत्य अद्यापि ती ।
 रुचे विषय ज्या मिळे अमृत ते न मद्या पिती ॥
 म्हणा मज उताविळा गुणचि घेतला घावरें ।
 असो मन असेंचि बा भजक बहिं मेघा वरें ॥

दिसे क्षणिक सर्वं हें भरवसा घडी चाकसें ।
 धरील मन आधिनें बहु परिभ्रमे चाकसें ॥
 कृतांत कटकामलध्वज जरा दिसों लागली ।
 पुरःसर गदासर्वे झगडतां तनू भागली ॥
 सहाय दुसरा नसे तुजविणें बळें आगळा ।
 न हों जरि उताविळा स्वरिपु कापितो हा गळा ॥

Such are the devout and earnest prayers made by Moropant to God in his *Kekavali*.

CHAPTER XV.

Ram Joshi and Anant Fandi.

If Moropant earned the fame of being the master of the *Arya* metre, Ram Joshi who may be said to have been his pupil, figured as the master of the *Lavni* metre. He was born at Solapur in S'ak year 1684 or 1762 A. D. He was a mischievous boy in youth and was a source of anxiety to his elder brother Mudgal Joshi. Once the latter remonstrated with him so severely that he ran away from home in a fit of anger. This was a turning point in his life. He proceeded to Pandharpur and there learnt Sanskrit and studied the *Purans* and other classical works. In a few years he returned to Solapur and surprised his brother with the charming delivery of his *Kathas*. First he earned his livelihood by performing *Tamashas* (love operas). For this purpose he composed fine *Lavnis* and sang them in public with all the necessary gestures. *Tamashas* are obscene performances and to attend them is considered vulgar. Ram Joshi's company was avoided by respectable persons. But still he went on with this profession for years till he once chanced to meet poet Moropant, who advised him to leave off his dishonourable avocation and take to delivering *Kirtans* (lectures in epics) to the public. Ram Joshi had now passed his youth and readily consented to the proposal. From that time he began to deliver *Kirtans*

in which he highly pleased his audience by singing pieces of his own composition as well as repeating the *Aryas* of Moropant.

. Ram Joshi died in 1812 A.D. Just as the credit of publishing the compositions of Dnyaneshwar belongs to Eknath, so that of making

His Works.

Moropant's poems known to the public of Maharashtra belongs to Ram Joshi. In his youth he composed *Lavnis* full of sentiments of शृंगार (love) but in his old age, like the Sanskrit Poet King Bhartrihari, he wrote his *Lavnis* on subjects of वैराग्य (asceticism). Besides the miscellaneous *Lavnis* he has composed a work on prosody named छंदमंजरी. The following pieces of *Lavnis* will be interesting to the readers. The first is an advice by the poet to men of the world, while the second is a love song addressed by a wife to her husband going astray.

(1) नर जन्मामधि नरा करुनि घे नर नारायण गडी ।

तरीच सार्थक मानष कुडी ॥ धृ० ।

बा चौन्यांशीं लक्ष वेळ संसार पडला गळां ।

चितेचा पिकला मळा ।

दार-धनाचा लोभ टाकुनी झडकर हो वेगळा ।

हा कसा उकलिशी पिळा ।

धना निमित्त जना पुढें तूं दाविसि नाना कळा ।

किती तुला मुलांचा लळा । चाल ।

तू पडुं नको याचे भर्रीं ।

तुझ्या हें खापर फुटतें शिर्रीं ।

तुला मी गोष्ट सांगतो खरी ।

आतां कर तांतडी ।

ही पुन्हा नये वा घडी ॥ नरजन्मा० ॥ १ ॥

निपट बावळा या विषयाच्या मार्गे लागशिकसा ।

कां होशी वा धड पिसा ।

वयोधनाची किती चंचळ गति कां धरिशी भरवसा ।

हें सकळ मनाला पुसा ।

उदरासाठीं दुर्धनिकाच्या पुढें पसरिशी पसा ।

किती उगाळशिल कोळसा ॥ चाल ॥

हें तुला शिकविलें कुर्णी ।

दयाळू नर नारायण धणी ।

अजुनि तरि करिं ही धोकर्णी ।

विषवल्लीची जडी ।

तू म्हणशिल साखर खडी । नर जन्मा मर्धि० ॥ २ ॥

(2) अरे काहीं बोल वाणी झालें पहा दिनवाणी ।

करूं नको वेड्यावाणी दिसतें मी केंविलवाणी ॥ धू० ॥

तुझी माझी प्रीत कैसी रे अरे सरुया कोठें गेली ।

काहीं तरी आण चित्तीं हे काय बोली ।

मला वाटे कोणी गड्या तुला प्यारी झाली ।

माझ्या नावें घातक्या सोडियेलें त्वां केंवि पाणी ॥

अरे काहीं० ॥

हातावरि हात माझ्या देऊनियां जाशी कैसा ।
 कांहीं तुला मागतें मी सुपारिचें खांड कीं पैसा ।
 अपराधि काय झालें सांगा कीं जी खालीं बैसा ।
 असा कां प्राण घेशी अवहची जिनगाणी ॥
 अरे कांहीं बोल० ॥ २ ॥

Some of his *Lavnis* describe the amorous sports of god Krishna in sweet tender words. There are many others, however, like the first one quoted above, didactic in tone. His *Powada* (ballad) giving the description of Poona as it was in his time is well-known. .

Anant Fandi.

Anant Fandi of Sangamner in the District of Ahmednagar must be mentioned among the poets of the 18th century that made themselves famous by writing poems in the *Katav* and *Lavni* metres. He is celebrated as the author of *Fatkas* or Lashes i. e. warnings against wrong path. Like Ram Joshi, Anant Fandi used to perform *Tamashas*; but queen Ahilya Bai Holkar of Indore who had once gone to Sangamner upbraided him for following the dishonourable profession and since that time Anant Fandi began to narrate epic *Kathas* in public. Some of his *Fatkas* convey high moral instruction and fine guiding principles of great use in practical life. Besides his *Katavs* and *Lavnis* for which he is renowned in Maharashtra he has composed a poem in

Anant Fandi and his works.

Owi metre called *Madhav-grantha* in which he narrates in brief the history of the Poona Darbar from the death of Madhavrao II down to the accession of Baji Rao II to the throne of Poona. The historical incidents were first put on paper by Baji Rao himself and Anant Fandi was asked to put the whole thing in verse. He died in S'ak year 1741 i. e. 1819 A. D. He left behind him a son named Shripat Fandi otherwise called Savai Fandi.

Other poets of this period, of more or less local renown were विठ्ठल and शुभानंद of south Konkan. विठ्ठल is said to have been a great scholar. He was a resident of Goa and contemporary of Sohiroba. He has left a few small compositions like वामनचरित्र, शुकरभासवाद etc. शुभानंद has adapted portions of the *Mahabharat* in *Owi* metre.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Bards and their Ballads.

We need hardly mention that the poetry which we have dealt with in the previous chapters is poetry of a higher level. The subjects on which it was written were sometimes religious and philosophical, and at others borrowed from the national epic lore. It contains Sanskrit words and Sankritic constructions too, and in short there is, in every way a classical tinge about it, in a greater or less degree, which in most cases renders it impossible of appreciation by the common peasantry of Maharashtra, possessing little or no refinement. These simple folk of the rural tracts far removed from the busy and varied life in towns gather together and divert themselves sometimes with *Lavnis* (love songs), at others, with the less elegant but more exciting *Powadas* or ballads, commemorating historical events of importance in the history of the Maratha Nation. With the *Lavnis*, the readers are already acquainted and we propose in the present chapter to give them an idea of the *Powadas*.

The authors of these *Powadas* are called *Shahirs* or Bards who obtained information about the events recorded therein on the spot and drew up a faithful ac-

Popular minstrels.

count of the same. The *Powadas* went on being chanted from mouth to mouth and thus became very popular in course of time. The *Gondhalis*, the *Bharadis*, the *Waghes*, the *Chitrakathis* and the *Bahurupis* made it regularly their profession to divert the Maratha peasantry with recitation of the *Powadas* but the *Gondhalis* are the most noted of them all for the *Powadas*. One of them named Rama Gondhali was a clever singer of melodious voice, living at Poona about the end of the Peshwa Rule. He used to sing *Lavnis* and *Powadas* in the most pleasing tune and thousands of people used to gather round him. He gave a powerful impetus to the recitation of the *Powadas* and many *Gondhalis* thenceforth earned a decent livelihood by singing them. The *Gondhalis* sometimes obtained valuable presents of gold bracelets etc. for their skill in reciting. The Maratha nation is indebted to this class of singers for the preservation of this precious legacy.

Thanks to the exertions of Mr. H. A. Acworth

Collection of
Powadas by Acworth and Shaligram.

and Mr. S. T. Shaligram about sixty of them were printed and published 15 years ago, covering nearly 250 pages.

These are also rendered in fine English verse by Mr. Acworth. The first ballad that we know of is written on the death of Afzulkhan, Commander of the troops sent by the Mahommedan King of Bijapur at the hands of Shivaji, the renowned founder of the Maratha Empire. It was composed by Adnyandas as we know from its concluding part. Those on the *escalade*

of the fort of Sinhgad by Tanaji, one of Shivaji's comrades, on the celebrated battle of Panipat between the Marathas and the Afghans and on the battle of Kharda between the Nizam and the Peshwa are the more noted among them. Among the authors of these popular songs may be mentioned अज्ञानदास, तुळसीदास, रामजोशी, अनंतकंदी, प्रभाकर, सगनभाऊ and होनाजीबाळ. Some of the later *Shahir's* as well as the *Gondhalis* took shelter after the fall of the Peshwas at the Court of Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda and the nation of Maharashtra is indebted to the Gaekwar's Court for saving those popular minstrels from their otherwise inevitable degradation from the lyre to the plough.

Being disinterested records, the *Powadas* are for the most part faithful accounts of the historical incidents and besides shed side-light on the manners and customs of the times. Mr. H. A. Acworth says in the introduction to his collection of the ballads:—"With the Marathas as with every warlike race the feelings of the commons have taken shape in ballads which, however rude and inartificial in their language, their structure and their rhythm, are the genuine embodiment of national enthusiasm, and are dear and deserve to be dear, to those who repeat and those who listen to them. With their records of victory and defeat, of heroic deeds and heroic men, of battles, conquests, assassinations and intrigues, they preserve wherever they are sung, the national memories of Maharashtra, its noble struggle to

Importance of
Powadas.

independence, its period of victorious expansion, its dominion and its decline; and over the plains of the Deccan, and the deep vallies and bold ridges of the Sahyadris, from village to village, the humble *Gondhali* still travels and still to rapt and excited audiences sings of the great days, when armed fathers of the men around him gave lands at the spear's point to all the princes of India, or retreated, wounded and dismayed before the sword of the sea-dwelling stranger. It is characteristic of the honesty of this class of poetry that many of the best Marathi ballads commemorate defeats. One of the finest in this volume tells of the fatal day of Panipat and another of that of Kirkee. But most of them deal naturally with happier occasions when the spear of the Maratha triumphed."

A few *Chouks* (sonnets) from two or three of the

Quotations from
Powadas for
example.

more important of the *Powadas* are transcribed below, and will suffice to give an idea of the characteristics of this kind of literature.

The first and foremost in order of chronology as well as in historical importance touches the much-controverted question of the death of Afzulkhan. The following five sonnets record in detail the critical circumstances under which the Mahommedan Commander met with his death.

पहिला सलाम । माझा भवानीशंकराला ॥

दुसरा सलाम । माझा शाहाजी महाराजाला ॥

तिसरा सलाम । अमचे अबदुलखानाला ॥
 शिवाजी सरजे सलाम केला । अबदुलखान गुमान केला ॥
 मनीं धरलें कपट । पुरतें कळलें महाराजाला ॥
 मग तो शिवाजी सरज्याला । खानदापूनी बोलला ॥
 तूं तो कुणबीका छोकरा । सवरत वच्छाई सदरा ॥

इतक्या उपरी राजा बोले । त्या अबदुलखानाला ॥
 खाना ज्याची करणी त्याला । कांहीं एक भ्यावें रघुनाथाला ॥
 तुम्हीं जातीचे कोण । आम्हीं जाणतो तुम्हाला ॥
 तूं तरी भटारनीका छोरा । शिवाजी सरज्यापर लाया तोरा ॥
 यावर अबदुल बोलला । शिवा तुम चलो विजापुराला ॥
 शिवाजी सरजे नेतां । बहुत दिन लागतील खानाला ॥
 कळला पुरुषार्थ । तुमचा बसल्या जाग्याला ॥

अबदुल जातका भटारी । तुमने करना दुकानदारी ॥
 इतकिया उपरी । अबदुल मनीं खवळिला पुरा ॥
 कव^१ मारिलीं अबदुल्यानें । सरजा^२ गवसून धरला सारा ॥
 चालविली कट्यार । सीलवर^३ मारा न चले जरा ॥
 सराईत^४ शिवाजी । ज्यानें बिचव्याचा मारा केला ॥
 उजवे हातीं बिचवा त्याला । वाघनथ सरज्याच्या पंजाला ॥
 उदरच फाडुनी । खानाची चरबी आणिली द्वारा ॥

खान लव्हा^५ लव्हा बोलिला । खानाचा लव्हा बेगिन आला ॥
 राजानें पट्टा पडताळिला । अबदुलखानानें हात मारिला ॥
 शिरींचा जिरेटोप तोडिला । सरजा जरासा लागला ॥

1 Embrace; grip. 2 Leader; Shivaji. 3 Armour.
 4 Adroit. 5 Sword.

भला सराईत शिवाजी । पट्ट्याचा गुंडाळा मारिला ॥
 मान खांदा गवसुनी । जानव्याचा दौरा केला ॥
 अबदुलखान शिवाजी दोनी । भांडती दोनी धुरा ॥
 बारा हजार घोडा । सरदार नाही कोणी तिसरा ॥

अबदुलखान झाला पुरा । कृष्णाजी ब्राह्मण उठवला ॥
 शिवाजी राजा बोलला । ब्राह्मणा मारूं नये तुला ॥
 तुजशी मारितां । शंकर हांसेल आम्हाला ॥
 नाइकतां ब्राह्मणें । हात दुसरा मारिला ॥
 ब्राह्मणा मारूं नये तुला । क्रिया शाहाजीची आम्हाला ॥
 कृष्णाजी ब्राह्मणें । हात तिसरा टाकिला ॥
 होईल ब्रह्महत्या भोंसल्यासी । शिवाजीनें राखिला ॥
 कृष्णाजी ब्राह्मण मागें सरला । सैद बंडु मोहरे आला ॥
 जवळ होता जिऊ म्हाल्या । त्यानें सैद पुरा केला ॥

That Shivaji was in anxiety and had taken every precaution is undoubted; but it is evident from this ballad that it was Afzulkhan and not Shivaji who acted offensively. The charge of preconceived treachery imputed by some historians to Shivaji is unfounded.

The *Powada* on the capture of Fort Sinhgad is a long one consisting of 55 *Chouks*. It depicts at length the message from Shivaji to his faithful Tanaji, the proposed marriage of Tanaji's son, the staunch determination of Tanaji to take the fort, its capture by Tanaji, his death in the hand-to-hand fight, and lastly, the generous reward given by Shivaji to Tanaji's son. The conversation that ensued between Tanaji and his uncle

Shelar Mama on receipt of Shivaji's message, and his bold resolve to go forth, are described in the following two *Chouks* :—

मामा बोलाया तो लागला । पेशीं वर्षांचा म्हातारा ॥
 लगिन राहिल रायाबाचें । तोड मजला सांगावी ॥
 माझ्या तानाजी सुभेदारा । जे गेले सिंहगडाला ॥
 त्याचे पाठिरे पाहिले । नाहीं पुढारे पाहिले ॥
 ज्यानें आंबा रे खाईला । बाठा बुरजा लाविला ॥
 त्याचें झाड होऊनि आंबे बांधले । किल्ला हातीं नाहीं आला ॥
 सिंहगड किल्ल्याची वार्ता । काढूं नको तानाजी सुभेदारा ॥
 जे गेले सिंहगडाला । ते मरूनशानी गेले ॥
 तुमचा सपाटा होईल । असें बोलूं नको रे मामा ॥
 आह्मी सूरमर्द क्षत्री । नाहीं भिणार मरणाला ॥
 मग रायाबा तो बेटा । बाबाच्या जवळ आला ॥
 पोक पोक माझ्या बाळा । जातो आम्हीं सिंहगडाला ॥
 माझे लगिन करिल कोण । रायाबा पुसे बाबाला ॥
 सातां नवसांचा माझा रायाबा । त्याचें लगिन मागीन ॥
 भिऊं नको माझे बाळा । जातो रायगड किल्ल्याला ।
 जाउन सांगतो महाराजाला ॥
 सात दिवसांचा वायदा । घेऊन येतो तुझ्या लग्नाला ॥
 आहे मी महाराजांचा चाकर । लखोटा हातांत घेतला ॥
 ज्यानें एक लखोट्याचे । बारा लखोटे केले ॥
 धाडले कागद खोऱ्याला । मोठ्या मोठ्या सरदारांला ॥
 पंधरा गांवचे मारुंचे । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥
 दसपट्टिचे मोक्याशी । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥
 उमराठ्याचे शिरके । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥

नांदविचे सावंत । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥
 वडघरचे नाईक । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥
 सिलमाचे ठाकूर । त्यानें आपणा जवळ बोलाविले ॥
 बारा हजार फौजेला । ज्याचा लखोटा पोंचला ॥

The brave reply “आम्हीं सूर मर्द क्षत्री । नाहीं भिणार मरणाला ” is very stirring and the words ring and deserve to ring in the ears of many a Maratha soldier.

Naturally there are many *Powadas* composed by different bards on the triumph of the Marathas over the Nizam of Hyderabad in the memorable battle of Khardā. This was the last occasion on which the various members of the Maratha Confederacy viz., the Scindia, the Holkar, the Gaikwad, the Bhonsle and Chiefs of the Southern Maratha country joined together under the banner of the Peshwa in fighting a common foe. We shall quote here a few lines from one of these *Powadas* by way of illustration.

मंगळवारीं नबाबांनीं पुढें धाडिलें सेनेस ।
 कळलें श्रीमंताला बोहून नेलें आपल्या सरदारांस ॥
 कशी करावी मसलत नबाब जाईन म्हणतो पुणियास ।
 परशुरामभाऊ म्हणे किं मारूं मरूं जरी या समयास ॥
 नाना फडणिस सखारामबापू पुसती जिवबादादास ।
 जिवबा बोले गर्जून मोंगल काय आणिला जिन्नस ॥
 उडविन बाविस टोप्या झेंडे नेऊन लाविन आकाशास ।
 केलीं वखें पांचजणांशीं दिली आज्ञा झुंजायास ॥

पेंढाऱ्याच्या लष्करावरी जाऊन ताकिद करिती ।
ज्याची लूट त्याला मुबा कुणी कुणाची ना घेती ॥

Such is the importance of the ballads of the Marathas to which testimony is borne by the high authority of Mr. Acworth in the following remarks :—

Patriotic fervour
in the Powadas.

“ Other peoples in this country are knit together by other causes: they are castes, religions, sects, tribes; but the Marathas are a nation and from a Brahman to the ryot they glory in the fact. They are therefore susceptible to a class of emotions which is foreign to the nature of other Indian races. The songs of the Rajput glorify the valour of his individual ancestors in paltry internecine feuds; the scope of Moslem heroic poetry has a wider range but its characteristic is religious fanaticism and its inspiration is religion, not patriotism. But the ballads of the Marathas are the ballads of the men of Maharashtra (the Great Nation) as such and burn through and through with patriotic fervour. The times that gave birth to them have passed away but they keep alive that love for the scenes and institutions of their country which is so conspicuous among the Marathas. ”

This brings us to the close of the Third—the Brightest period of the Marathi literature.

CHAPTER XVII.

Fourth Period.

Modern Literature.

The change of circumstances brought about in Maharashtra by the advent of the British Rule has naturally had an amount of effect on the literature of the nation. As the encouragement that used to be given to poets so long, decreased and the Maharashtra nation lost its independence also, the fire of poetry became much less powerful. Only a little quantity of poetic literature was produced under the British Rule and still less of it was original. Among the poetical works may be mentioned Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar's Translation of the *Meghaduta*, Krishna Shastri Rajwade's beautiful Translations of the Sanskrit Dramas, the vigorous poem called *Raja Shivaji* by Mr. Kunte, *Ganesh Puran* by Shrimant Bapu Saheb Kurundwadker, *Ganga-Varnan* by Mr. Chintamanipethker, *Kusumanjanli* by Rao Bahadur V. M. Mahajani, *Yashvant Maha Kavya* by Mr. Khare, *Abhinava Kadambari* by Mr. Mogre, and *Indira* or Translation of Tennyson's *Princess* by Dr. Kirtikar. The valuable services rendered by Madhav Chandroba of Bombay in the cause of publication of Marathi poems early in this period deserve notice.

But fortunately what has been said in the preceding paragraph regarding poetry is not true in the case of prose literature on Growth of Prose literature. History, Biography, Fiction and Drama. These were departments of literature in which Marathi Authors had been so long quite deficient, and hence there was much scope for work and much activity was shown therein under the British Rule. The old oriental method of education was put a stop to and the European method was introduced on the lines of the famous minute on education by Macaulay. A University was established in Bombay for imparting education, liberal as well as professional, to the youths of the Presidency, and the people of the whole of Maharashtra came in contact with every thing that was new and best in English literature. History, Biography, Fiction and Drama were branches of literature almost new to the Maratha nation and the efforts of most of the authors were naturally directed to the development of those branches. On the other hand, comparatively much less labour was devoted to the departments of Science, Mental Philosophy, Law and Medicine. These subjects being taught in Colleges on the European lines in the English language and further progress in those departments being in that language, there was very little of literature on those subjects in Marathi. The language of the Government being English, most of the work done in the department of politics also was eventually in English. As to religion, there were many pamphlets and tracts on that subject, but most

of them were "fleeting productions of no literary value;" only Mr. Lele's, Mr. Bhanu's and the late Mr. B. G. Tilak's endeavours to expound *Vedant* are worth notice. Establishment of schools everywhere has now created a great demand for text books and a large number of miscellaneous works are school books. On the whole, the work done in prose, on History, Biography, Fiction and Drama is very creditable, so much so that the charge of paucity of works in prose once hurled against the vernaculars of the Presidency by the proposers of the motion of displacement of the vernaculars as Second languages from the curriculum of Arts Colleges is certainly not true now in the case of Marathi. We shall take below a general review of the more prominent of the authors and their works in the various departments.*

History. The earliest prose work on history that we know of is श्री शिव छत्रपति चरित्र or the life of Shivaji written by Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad in the reign of Rajaram. The *Bakhars* of Shivaji, Sambhaji, Rajaram and Shahu written by Malharrao Chituis of the Court of Kolhapur come next. While पेशव्याची बखर dictated by Krishnaji Pant Sohoni to the people of Vajjnath after the fall of the Peshwas is an interesting work of later date. A great deal of historical correspondence etc. was published along with old poems by Messrs K. N. Sane

* The review made in this chapter being cursory and of a general nature, it cannot of course claim to be exhaustive; and the author owes an apology to those writers whose works are not mentioned herein.

and J. B. Modak in their काव्येतिहास संग्रह a periodical ably conducted for several years. Messrs. Rajwade, Khare and Parasnis have also very valuably contributed to the work of publishing old Chronicles. The translations of Elphinstone's History of India by Rao Saheb Mandlik and a short account of the History of England by Hari Keshavji also deserves notice in this connection. Epitomes of the Histories of Greece, Rome, Carthage, Persia, France, Germany, Turkey, &c. have been prepared and published through the munificent support of His Highness Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwar of Baroda, chiefly based on the "Histories of the Nations" Series. We have besides histories of Goa, Savantvadi, Bhopal, Bundelkhand, Kolhapur and the States of the Southern Maratha country. Mr. Sardesai's modern history of India is a commendable treatise giving an impartial account of historical events and offering critical remarks from the Indian point of view.

Biography. Under the head of biography we find brilliant work done during recent years. Authors have come forth in a considerable number and devoted their labour to original research as well as translations and adaptations. Not only have the worthies of this country attracted their attention but those of Europe and America also. Among the worthies of this country, historical personages like Akbar, Aurangzebe, Shivaji, Sambhaji etc. of older date and Malharrao Holkar, Mahadji Scindia, Nana Fadnavis, Parashuram Bhau Patvardan, the Rani of Jhansi and others of recent times have been treated of with ability; and attention has also

been bestowed on saints like ज्ञानेश्वर, एकनाथ, तुकाराम, रामदास and मीरोजिंत, the pioneers of the rise of the Maratha nation. Among foreign worthies, we find a variety of names like the great Queen Victoria, Gladstone, Darwin, Shakespeare, William Pitt, Lord Bacon, Bradlaugh, George Washington, Socrates, Demosthenes, Columbus, Garribaldi, Abraham Lincoln and many others. Lives of Buddha, Sankaracharya, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and Anandibai Joshi also deserve a mention. Of the authors of these biographies, the most prominent are Bapat, Bhanu, Pavgi, Natu, Khare, Kanitker, Ok, Dr. Kirtikar, Godbole, Kelkar, Chaubal, Sahasrabudhe, Madgaoker, Bhagwat, Gunjiker, Chiplunker, Athalye, Parasnis and Mrs. Kashibai Kanitker. Only a few of these are graduates, the rest, a very large proportion, being either pre-University or non-University persons. On the whole, a useful addition is made to the literature of the Country in the shape of lives of these various personages.

Fiction. We had hardly any work in Marathi under the head of Fiction before the 19th century. The cravings of national mind in this respect were amply gratified by the epic writings of old and there was no idea of the Modern Novels in Maharashtra before the nation came in touch with the Western Literature. During the first fifty years of the British rule, only a few works of fiction were published, such as, Krishna Shartri Chiplunkar's Translation of the Arabian Nights, Chhatre's Translation of Childrens' Friend (बालमित्र) and Halbe's Muktamala (मुक्तामाला). The old romantic stories of

सिंहासन बलिशी, वेताळ पंचविशी and शुक्रवहात्तरी were also published in this period. But it is during the last fifty years that valuable contributions to this branch of literature have been made. Many of these novels are of one pattern, that is to say, love stories their plot generally consisting of an accidental meeting between a prince and a princess, their falling in love with each other, their subsequent difficulties, and ultimate happy union. But there is another class of novels that sustain considerable interest and are at the same time much more instructive. They paint modern conditions of life in all its varieties and are written after the fashion of Sir Walter Scott and Bulwer Lytton. Among the novels of the first class may be mentioned प्रेमबंधन, मंजुघोषा and भोचनगड while the best specimens of the second class are furnished by आजकालच्या गोष्टी, पण लक्ष्यांत कोण घेतो, यशवंतराव खरे, जग हें असें आहे, उषःकाल मी &c. from the able pen of Mr. Hari Narayan Apte, the greatest Marathi novelist of modern times, and बाजीराव पेशवे and पानपतची मोहिम from the pen of Nageshrao Bapat. Some modern writers like Messers. Phalke and Mitra have also turned out translations of some good Bengali novels into Marathi, of which the more prominent are श्री शिवछत्रपति, दुर्गेशनंदिनी, आनंदाश्रम and विषवृक्ष. In fact the huge series of novels now-a-days turned out are perhaps too many, and a waste of energy.

Drama :—As under Fiction so under Drama, there were hardly any works in Marathi before the advent of

the British Rule. During the first forty years of this rule, only a few works were published, among which may be mentioned the translations of the Sanskrit dramas, शाकुंतल, मृच्छकटिक, वेणीसंहार, उत्तररामचरित, मालतीमाधव and प्रसन्नराघव. But they were simply literary works hardly ever acted on the stage. Stage as a systematic means of popular diversion and education had no place in the pre-British period of the history of the Maharashtra nation. Of course, there were the दशावतार players who came over from the South at times on general festive occasions and *Jatras* or public fairs; but their performances were chiefly borrowed from the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayana* and they represented in an old stereotyped fashion some exciting episodes in the great national epics. An enterprising departure from the crude, trodden path was made for the first time by one Mr. Visbunant Bhawe of Sangli about the year 1853. His dramatic company visited Bombay, Poona and other towns in the Deccan and met with success there. This company also performed episodes from the epics; the orderliness of the arrangements as well as the newly-created variety in the manner of performance attracted large audiences to the company and the success of the enterprise encouraged others to follow the same profession. By and by many companies were formed and now almost every large town in the Deccan has got one or more theatres of its own. New features were slowly introduced in addition. Comic farces (प्रहसन्स), were performed at the end of regular dramas and many short comedies were written for the stage. Music and

singing were introduced, which gave such plays (called संगीत) an appearance of European opera performances on the Indian stage. Credit is due to Anna Kirloskar for this introduction of singing, and his three *Sangit* dramas शकुंतल, सोमद्र and रामराज्यवियोग stand pre-eminent to this day. Among the authors of *Sangit* dramas must be mentioned Mr. Khadilkar, the well known author of मानापमान, विद्याहरण, द्रौपदी etc; also Messrs. Kolhatkar and Gadkari. Mr. Deval also has figured as an able writer of संगीत dramas and his मृच्छकटिक, शापसंभ्रम or कादंबरी and शारदा नाटक are notable in this department of literature. The third innovation and a very useful one from the standpoint of popular education is the introduction of social element on the stage. Many of Shakespeare's dramas, about twenty in number e. g. Hamlet, Cymbeline, Winter's Tale, All's well that Ends well, Othello, the Taming of the Shrew, and the like are ably translated and successfully acted. There are several, besides, that represent the struggle between the social reformers and the orthodox people in matters of female education, widow re-marriage and unequal marriage. We have also others referring to great personages and exciting events in the history of Maharashtra, e. g. the death of Afzulkhan the repulsion of the Mohomedans by Baji Deshpande, the capture of Sambhaji by Aurangzebe, the battle of Panipat, and the murder of Narayanrao Peshwa. Among the dramatic writers, besides those mentioned above, must be mentioned Parashurampant Godbole, an able translator of Sanskrit dramas, Shankar Moro Ranade of Baroda,

the author of अनुतापशमन, प्रेमगुटिका and other dramas of considerable literary merit, V. J. Kirtane the author of जयपाळ and थोरले माधवराव पेशवे and possessing high-class originality, Kelkar and Mahajani who have produced fine translations of the Taming of the Shrew, Cymbeline and Winter's Tale, Kanitkar who has written many prose dramas such as तरुणी शिक्षण नाटिका, बाजी देशपांडे and गुणोत्कर्ष, Mr. N. C. Kelkar the author of तोतियाचें बंड and other dramas, Kolhatkar, the author of वीर तनय, गुप्तमंजूष and other *Sangit* dramas, and Shirvalkar, the author of पानिपतचा मुक्ताबला, तुकाराम and एकनाथ. Our dramatic literature cannot lay claim to be equal in merit to the English dramatic literature; and this is quite natural, since it is only of recent growth. Yet, on the whole a very valuable addition has been made to the literature of the language by these dramatic writers.

Science. We find that many graduates have devoted their time and labour to works on Science including philosophy and art. These subjects are handled now-a-days in the European method and it is therefore not unexpected that work of progress in this field should have been done mainly by men of University Education. Common people knowing Marathi alone can now gain some knowledge of modern science and art by means of the books written by these men. A work on Geometry by Bal Shastri Jambhekar, one on Chemistry and Medicine by Dr. Narayan Daji, on Anatomy by Dr. Bhikaji Amrit, Prof. Chhatre's new Astronomical Tables, Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar's अनेकविद्यामूलतत्वे and Hari

Keshavji's books on Anatomy and Chemistry were published during the early part of the British rule in Maharashtra and latterly an addition was made to these in the form of manuals on Logic, Political Economy, Astronomy, Botany, Chemistry, Physiology, Geology, Physics, etc through the exertions of men like Messrs. Marathe, Agashe, Gole, Bhate, Kane, Prof. Modak and others. Dikshit's ज्योतिर्विलास is a very interesting work on Astronomy; also, Rajo's कृषिकर्मविद्या a work on Agriculture, and Parvatibai's and Rukmini's treatises on the art of cookery and sewing respectively deserve a mention under this head. As regards mental and moral sciences, we have many of Spencer's, Max Muller's and Mill's works translated. In addition to these we have Mr. Bodas' अद्वैतमीमांसा and Mr. S. A. Desai's ग्रौक नीतिमीमांसा. The stock of books on Sciences is, however, not quite adequate and much has yet to be done in this branch of literature.

Religion. As already said above, under the head of Religion we find many tracts and pamphlets of great literary merit. But besides these we have got translations of the भगवद्गीता and a number of the उपनिषद्स. Mr. Kunte's षड्दर्शनार्चनानिका or Lectures on the six schools of Philosophy and Mr. S. P. Pandit's वेदार्थयत्न or Translation of the Rigveda are works of great labour but remained incomplete. Mr. Justice Ranade's, Modak's and Bhandarkar's essays and lectures in the प्रार्थनासमाज, वेदोक्तधर्मप्रकाश by Vishnu Bawa Brahmachari and शतपदीगीता by Bawa

Garde deserve a mention in this category. But the most eminent among the books on Religion is the late Mr. B. G. Tilak's गीतारहस्य a very able commentary on the *Bhagvadgita*.

Law. Under Law the more important works are the translation of the मितक्षरा by Raghunath Shastri Date, अपकृत्यशास्त्र by Mr. M. C. Apte and हिंदुधर्मशास्त्र by Rao Saheb Mandlik and by Mr. Gadgil. Since the Pleaders' examination ceased to be held in the vernaculars, there was no longer the motive to the publication of works on Law in Marathi.

Medicine. Under this head, we have got translations of ancient medical works, viz. माधवनिदान, त्रिबकी and वैद्यजीवन rendered early in this period by Krishna Shastri Bhatawadekar and of वाग्भट the famous ancient work on Hindu system of Medicine rendered by Mr. Garde. In the latter part of the period we had books on Hygiene and sanitation from the pen of Sir Bhalchandra Krishna and Dr. Dhurandhar. Besides these, there are treatises on Midwifery, Medical Jurisprudence, Surgery and Practice of Medicine. वनौषधि गुणादर्श and लघन चिकित्सा are also useful books.

Politics. The labour in the field of Politics for the most part being naturally carried on in English we have got only a few books in Marathi on political subjects, most of which are translations. Amongst these may be mentioned, Local Self Government by the late Mr. Justice K. T. Telang, Elements of Politics by Prof. Karve and Prof. Patwardhan, constitution of England

by Mr. Wagle and Land Tenure of Bengal by Rao Bahadur Mahajani.

Language and Literature:—Under this head we have got a few useful works and they are as laborious as they are useful. Among these we need mention the Grammar of the Marathi language by Dadoba Pandurang; the Marathi Dictionary by Jagannath Shastri; Molesworth's Marathi English Dictionary; Candy's English Marathi Dictionary; and Talekar's Smaller English Dictionary; and Century English Marathi Dictionary, only parts of which are published. Mr. V. G. Apte's Dictionary (शब्दरत्नाकर) which is expected to be a useful work will, it is understood, be shortly out. Still more stupendous task is the ज्ञानकोश undertaken by Dr. Ketkar., the first part of which is already published. The recent enlarged edition of the महाराष्ट्र संस्कृत by Mr. Bhave of Thana which comes under this head contains much information and is a work of great labour. Mr. Joshi's मराठी भाषेची घटना is also a scholarly work.

Travels:—There are very few works on Travels of real literary merit. Accounts of pilgrimages to Benares, Gokarna, Mahabaleshwar, Rameshwar &c. are published but they possess not much merit. The only meritorious books on Travels are Bhagwat's translation of Karsandas Mulji's account of England and its People, विद्वयतचा प्रवास by Mr. Pavgi, युनायटेड स्टेट्सची लोकस्थिति by Pandita Ramabai, धौम महाबळेश्वर वर्णन by Mr. Udas, महाराष्ट्रातील किल्ले by Mr. Gogte, and युरोपचा प्रवास by Mr. D. C. Mujumdar.

General Prose Literature:—Under this head may be enumerated Mr. Bapat's सद्दर्शन, Mr. Ok's हिंदुस्तान कथारस and मधुमक्षिका, Mr. Agarkar's केसरतील निबंध, Mr. Wagle's translation of Bacon's Essays, Pandita Ramabai's स्त्रीधर्मनीति, Mr. Gole's ब्रह्मण आणि त्यांची विद्या and हिंदु धर्म आणि सुधारणा, Essays in the Nibandh Mala by Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, महाराष्ट्र धर्म by Prof. Bhagwat, भारतीय साम्राज्य by Mr. Pavgi, ग्रामसंस्था by Mr. Bodas and Mrs. Ranade's आमच्या आयुष्यातील आठवणी. Campaign against superstitious customs with which the original Hindu religion is enormously overgrown, is being carried on by social reformers on this side of India for the last sixty years. There might be difference of opinion among the advocates of social regeneration about the precise lines to be followed in reforming the society; but the continuous efforts made by all of them, notably Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, the late Mr. Justice Ranade, Mr. Modak, Mr. C. V. Vaidya, Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, Mr. Agarkar and Sir N. G. Chaudavarkar, had a common object in view and that laudable object is slowly being achieved. Lectures were delivered and pamphlets distributed for education of public opinion in English as well as in Marathi and we owe a portion of our literature to this commendable work. We have got books and tracts on different vexed questions like female education, *Parda* system, widow marriage, early marriage etc. Among these we may mention Mr. C. V. Vaidya's अबलोनति लेखमाला or the series on the betterment of the position of females

and some of the lectures delivered under the auspices of the Hindu Union Club of Bombay.

In addition to these, we have got under the head of General Prose Literature a great many books specially intended for use in schools on History, Mathematics, Natural Sciences &c. which it is unnecessary to notice in this place.

Periodicals and Newspapers :—We have got a large number of periodicals, almost all monthly, containing interesting and useful matter. The more prominent of these are विविधज्ञानविस्तार, मासिक मनोरंजन, नवयुग, चित्रमय जगत् and आनंद. Besides these, there were a few others started and conducted for some time, but subsequently stopped, mostly for want of support.

As to newspapers, we have got very many of them at present. Great progress is made in this department of public activity and now almost every district town and some taluka towns too have got one or more newspapers. Only a few of these, such as इंदुप्रकाश and ज्ञानप्रकाश, लोकसंग्रह and लोकमान्य are daily and the rest, the notable among them being केसरी, सयाजीविजय, महाराष्ट्र, सुबोधपत्रिका, etc. are weekly. Most of the newspapers are well conducted by competent editors and possess considerable literary merit. Many of these count their subscribers by thousands. Those that know how to read and write and live in towns take to reading newspapers in order to obtain general information.

It will be gathered from the said account of this, the Fourth Period of Marathi literature coinciding with the *British regime* that the literature has made a very brilliant progress in *prose*, and that the deficiency in some of the branches of literature which was once felt, has now been considerably made up through the exertions of educated men of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. As to verse, besides the *Sangit* dramatic works referred to above, we find only some small poetic compositions now and then put forth by writers like Messrs Padhye, Govindagraj, Chandrashekhar, Lembhe and Madkholkar. Examples of these can be seen in the *रसतरंगिणी*, a collection made by Mr. S. V. Ponds in which he has given select portions from the writings of ancient as well as modern poets. Mr. Tekade's collection of his own compositions called *आनंदगीत* deserves to be mentioned in this connection.

Such are the many-sided activities of the Fourth or the Present Period of Marathi Literature.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Conclusion.

It will be observed from what has been said in the preceding pages that the First Period of Marathi Literature (1200 to 1350 A. D.) is marked by works on अध्यात्म (Spiritual Philosophy) and भक्ति (Devotional Love). Mukundraj and Dnyandev revolted against the monopoly of the Sanskrit-knowing Brahmin Pandits and laid open to the people, in the language spoken by them, what was best and noblest in the ancient Sanskrit literature of the country. These two poets as well as Namdev, through the medium of their plain, simple writings, preached real dignity of the Supreme Soul and efficacy of sincere faith in God, and exhorted the Maratha nation to break through the spirit of exclusiveness and caste domination.

Then followed during the Second period (1550 to 1600 A. D.) after a long interval of about two centuries, Eknath and Dasopant who pushed on the noble task commenced by their worthy predecessors, and besides inculcating similar principles of religious and social emancipation, abbeviated in Marathi, the more important portion of the national epics.

The Third or the Brilliant Period of Marathi Literature was synchronous with the period of growth of the Maratha power in the Deccan. It is characterised

Review of the
First Period.

Review of the
Second Period.

Review of the
Third Period.

by a variety of features, e. g. the devotional love of Tukaram, the practical insight of Ramdas, the narrative talent of Mukteshwar and Shridhar as well as the superb learning of Vaman and Moropant. (1620 to 1820 A. D.)

This leads us on to the Fourth or the Present period (1820-1920 A. D.) which is most strikingly distinguished by the rapid growth of prose literature in the various departments of mental activity. The labours of this period are undoubtedly many-sided, but they do not compare very favourably with the literature of the past. It is true that some authors have shown considerable originality and talent and some have even produced good specimens of poetry; yet the labours in the field are less sustained though more varied, and generally speaking, the writings are, on the whole, of a less permanent stamp.

The present system of imparting education to the youths of the country is one of the principal causes that have worked this change. Before the advent of the British Rule, boys were generally taught reading and writing and something of arithmetic at school. Brahmin boys were also taught to repeat the Vedas and some of them used to get by heart *Amarkosh*, the well-known Sanskrit lexicon of synonyms in verse, and such other useful works. They were taught a few pieces of Sanskrit poetry also, and as a rule, every family of the middle class then used to possess at least

Review of the Fourth Period.

State of things in the pre-British times.

a few manuscript copies of the writings of ancient poets like Dnyaneshwar, Mukteshwar, Ramdas, Shridhar and Moropant. Every evening after supper, groups of men and women would gather together to listen with interest to the verses in those manuscripts being read and explained. In those old days, when there were no Universities nor Colleges, the education of a man was ordinarily tested by the smoothness and fluency with which he could read and write manuscripts, and by the facility which he could show in reading out and explaining poetry. The study of ancient Marathi authors was in fact a necessary part of the course of education a boy had to go through. This habit of study in youth, coupled with the usage in those days for every literate man to pass his leisure hours of evening in reading in poetical works of the past, engendered deep love of Marathi poetry in the mind of the people and the more gifted of them naturally came forth and enriched in their turn, the national store of poetry.

Let us now mark, on the other hand, what effect the present system of education produces on the national mind with regard to the growth of Marathi literature. The times are changed and we are changed with them. Under the present system a man of the writer-class has to study hard for about fifteen years before he is of material help to his family, and for all this period, he finds little time to acquaint himself with the literature of his nation. What little of it he reads, he reads while

he is only a boy at school, when his faculty of understanding is not ripe enough to intelligently appreciate what he reads. He goes out from College without any liking for the writings of the great national poets, and so there being no stimulus, the thought of studying the valuable literature of his nation never occurs to him. In a sense, he is innocently neglectful, and the ultimate result is that he does not take part, which he ought to, in the development of his own literature.

Another cause is want of patronage. In olden times, there were princes, noblemen, and well-to-do people of the middle class who used to extend considerable patronage to writers. By the help of these, the latter easily secured the maintenance of their family. Such is however not now the case. The Government as well as some of the Indian Maratha rulers give some encouragement; among the latter, H. H. the Maharaja Gaikwar of Baroda, who has got many Marathi books published and has lately set apart a large amount of money for the encouragement of vernacular literature, has been a very valuable patron. This encouragement, however, evidently falls short of what used to be done in old days, owing to want of proper support from the higher and middle classes and of the public in general at present.

These are some of the principal causes that have led to the decline of poetic genius in course of the last century. The peculiarity of this period is that only a few works are written in verse while very great activity is shown in turning

out works in prose. Take the literary history of any nation and you find that Prose comes after Poetry. Before the commencement of this period, there were no works written in prose except the few *Bakhars*, and it was in this, the Fourth Period that authors came forth to produce works in prose. The earlier authors of this period have preserved the chaste style and the pure diction of the classical literature; but some of the later writers anglicised the Marathi language to some extent and imported idioms and phrases of foreign element. Opinions differ as to whether this is an acquisition or a disadvantage to Marathi from a linguistic point of view.

It is, however, a happy sign of the times that the deficiency which was once felt in some of the branches of literature is being made up, through the exertions of educated persons, both ladies and gentlemen, of recent times. And there are hopes that under the fostering influences of *Pax Britannica*, growth of various arts and sciences in the country in the near future will, among other things, give a strong impetus to vernacular literature on a variety of subjects; for, the object of education is that men of education, who have learnt something new and useful from foreign influences ought, in their turn, to impart it to the masses through the medium of the vernaculars. There is a vast scope for earnest and solid work in this direction, and the people of Maharashtra will certainly make a good progress in due course, for they have a glorious past behind them.

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ERRATA.

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3	6	the Marathi	Marathi
"	9	Northen	Northern
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5	26	ललाचरित्र	लीलाचरित्र
6	10	comparision	comparison
9	16	beginning	beginning
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10	9	Mahommedan	Mahommedan Courts.
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"	13	biographics	biographies
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25	3	have	has
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38	4	went in	went on
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59	8	comphor	camphor
61	3	वाडी	बोडी
62	14	कम	कर्म
65	10	गुरुचारत्र	गुरुचरित्र
72	5	worhip	worship
73	3	कीतन	कीर्तन
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92	6	घावती	घांवती
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95	18	requiest	acquirest
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96	7, 11, 12	your	thy
99	4	Deshatha	Deshastha
101	28	Bair a	Bairagi
105	17	consits	consists
106	2	occurence	occurrence
"	8	speach	speech
"	15	should he	should be
107	1	or	on
110	17	take	takes
118	12	प्रवळला	प्रबळला
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185	26	Shartri	Shastri
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197	4	Add at the end	(1620 to 1820 A. D.)
198	15	reading in	reading the
200	11	disadvatage	disadvantage







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