A SHORT HISTORY
OF
MARATHI LITERATURE
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OF
MARATHI LITERATURE.

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

by

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Printed at:
The Luhana Mitra Steam Printing Press Baroda by V. A. Thakkar for M. K. Nadkarni on 20th November 1921.

Price Rs. 2.
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO
HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA
SIR SAYAJIRAO GAIKWAR,
G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E.,
SENA KHAS KHEL SAMSHER 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 Ajgaokar.

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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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, Pishacas, and Dasysus. 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 Vindhyas, 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 Vindhyá 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 Dandakaranyá and the rest of the peninsula further south. The probable date of this incursion into the Dandakaranyá, 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 themeselves 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

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* Early History of the Deccan by Dr. Bhandarker. Sec III.
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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
is spoken in the Berars & the Central Provinces. It is said that language changes at every twelve Koss (बारा कॉसांवर 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 शानेश्वर. There is however a theory that these works are later renderings of what Mukundraj wrote.
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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 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 Ramechandra 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 (महानुभव) 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 S'ak era. छात्रविश्वास 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.
*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 Brahmans, 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 inspite of the opposition of their kinsmen, Mukundraj and Dnyaneshwar stood firm, and boldly carried on the task of educating the nation. Dnyaneshwar’s brothers Nivrittinath 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
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 after Namdev were produced in Maharashtra for about two hundred years from that date. 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 Mohammedan 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 Mohammedan 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
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.
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
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 lavnis (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 footsteps 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 lavnis. 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. Ranade, Khadilkar, Kolhatkar and Deval who have been
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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; Gunjikar, 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 his reign 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. comparatively more modern than that of Dnyaneshvar, 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 *Owi* metre. Mukundraj was the first to compose verses in the *Owi* 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*:

"नृत्सिंहाचा बहाऊ | त्याचा कुमार जयंतपाण्डित |
तेऊं करविलयान्तर गदारोज्ज | अङ्गरचन्दनेनाच |"

*भगीरथाचैनिन दैवयोगेन | विद्या सुस्नात गंगेन |
तैं जयंतपाठाचैनिन प्रसंगेन | 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:

"प्रत्यावानसंधान करितां | किंचित् स्वरूपी झाली दुखितत्वा ||
तेथे उठड़िया अनंता | अज्ञान शकी

स्वरूपी दुखितत्वान | हेचि अज्ञानाचे दक्षण ||
जेनेच वैतन्यासि भरे अवतरण | अहंतेचे

अच्छव हस्तपादादिक | एक देहाचे जैसे अनेक ||
तैसे अज्ञानसंगे असंक्य | अंश माया देवीचे

एकाच बुद्धीच्या अनेकवृत्ती | तेंती मायेच्या अनेक शकी ||
जाणिवे नेणिवेच्या प्रतीति | जगप्रसिद्ध की

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."
Mukundraj,

“... and whatever image the mind may project, it is accepted by the soul. The Supreme Spirit
assumes different images in the forms of the various elements. 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
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 प्रांत्य disappears, the pure spirit remains behind, shining brilliantly, divested of the darkness of the प्रांत्य (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 Owi metre. Like the विवेकसिंधु it is also a discourse on प्रांत्य.

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

“नित्य करावा ऐसा नेम | पड़ों न चाहा संसाराभ्रम | धरावा स्वस्वपाचा काम | साधनपंथ”
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 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
Mukundraj.

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 discoursive 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 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 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 Mukundraj 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.

Dnyaneshwar, otherwise called ज्ञानेश्वर or God of knowledge, was born in the year 1193 of the S'ak era i.e. 1271 A. D. He had two brothers, निर्यातनाथ and सेवानेद्र and one sister, शुक्तावाई. They were all religious devotees. बिद्वेंत, their father, was a ब्रह्मी 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 आलंडी, where he was requested by a respectable Brahmin of that place to marry his daughter. The request was complied with and रक्षमाताई was married to बिद्वेंत. Worldly cares were, however, a burden to his naturally ascetic mind and he therefore soon entered the life of a संतास (recluse). He took this step against the wishes of his wife and hence his religious master श्रीमद्वतीश्वर of Benares, when he came to know it, advised him to go back to आलंडी and resume गृहस्थाश्रम (worldly life). In obedience to the master's advice, बिद्वेंत 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. बिद्वेंत 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 निम्नलिखिताथ, शान्तेव, सोपानेव and सुकाबाई 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. गांव 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 अयाग 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 निम्नलिखिताथ

* 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 

विष्णुप्रेम. विष्णुप्रेम imparted the गुरुपदेश to his brothers and 
sister and thus became their गुरु thenceforth. We find 

वन्दनाय mentioned as गुरु in some places in the writings of 

शान्देव. 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 निब्रृति हरि तूं शानेश ब्रजंदेव सोपान।
विष्णु मुक्ता; तुमच्या कीर्तिस्मृतेचे सदा असो पान॥

शान्देव died in S'ak year 1215 at the age of only 22;
विष्णुप्रेम, सोपानेदेव 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 
ब्रजंदेवी (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 Gītā consists of about
700 stanzas only. The स्न्यानसृहिति 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 शान्देव 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 अमृतायुभ, स्वार्मायुभ, and पंचोपक्षण are also disquisitions on abstract subjects. Of these, अमृतायुभ is an able work consisting of nearly 1000 stanzas and is a substance of the उपनिषद्य in brief. Besides these works, शान्देव 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 शान्देव's compositions.

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

"अगा कुष्ठाचिया चोखपणा न कुग ।
अभिजात्य ज्ञेयी स्ताव ।
स्युतपतीचा वाउग । सोस कां वाहाव ।"
"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 twelfth chapter dealing with the virtues of a saint contains equally happy similes:
“जो सर्व भूतांचे ठाई। देशातं नेगेच खांदी।
आप पर जया नाहीं। चैतन्या जैसे॥
उत्तमातं धरीजे। अधमातं अव्वेलरिजे।
हे कांर्वीच नेगिजे। वसुधा जेवी॥
कां राताचे देश चाहूं। रंका परोंत गांवु।
हे न म्हणे कुपालु। प्रण पें गा॥
गाँवीची तृप्त हर्व। व्यान्त्रिक विष हीडूनि मारूं।
पेसें नेगेच गा कर्ल। तोय जैसे॥
तैं संविनया भूतमात्रां। पकपण भैत्री।
कृपेश्वरी धात्री। आपण जो॥
आणि मीं हे भाषण नेंं। माझं कांर्वीच न झणे।
खुश हुळ्या जाणणें। नाहीं जया॥
वर्षचिवीरी लागर। जैसा जंजे निर्बेंर।
तैंसाणी निरपचार। संतोषी जो॥
पेसा भक्त आबळे। मज जिवाचेंनि पांडें।
हे ही वेष थोकें। रूप करणे॥

× × ×

पार्थी जयाचे ठाई। वैष्णवाची जाता नाहीं।
रिपुमिर्वां दोंही। सरिसा पाड॥

घरीच्या उजेड करावा। परक्या आंधार पाडवावा।
हे नेगेच गा पांडवावा। दीप जैसा॥

जो खांदावया चाव घाळी। कां याणी जेणे केली।
दीघें पकर छांडवी। दे वृक्ष जैसा॥
"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.

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 Śāṅkara'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 अभावनित्व (absence of pride) explained by means of the following seven couplets:
On a minute observation it will be seen that as from the अनुभूति to the ओँ, so from the ओँ to the अभंग metre is an easy transition; there is only a slight difference in the rhymings. द्यानेश्वर composed some of his verses in the अभंग metre. From his miscellaneous Abhangs we quote the following in illustration of his high moral teaching:

उपजोनी संसारी | आपुला आपण चैरी ॥
माझें शरीरी | बेघनि ठेवा ॥
भा देहातें महणे। मी पुत्र दारा धन माझे॥
परि काठांचे हे खाजे। पेसे नेणतु गेला॥
कामकोंधमदमत्सराचेनी गुणे। बांधला आपण नें॥
मी मी माझे माझे होणे। अभिमु कैसा॥
मिथ्या मोही फांसा। शुक निधिके जैसा॥
सुक परी आपैसा। पल्ली नें॥
जलचरू आभिष गिथी। जैसा का झागवले गर्भी॥
आप आपणापे तडमढी। सुटिका नाही॥
तैसं आरंभी विषया। सुख गोड वाटे इंत्रियां॥
पुढं पाकी पापिया। दुःख भेंगी॥
राषोदी फुंकितां। दीप न लगे जया परी॥
तैसा श्रव्द ब्रह्म कुसरी। ज्ञान नपवे॥
व्रत तप दान तीर्थ। भजन बेचिंदे पोटा॥
दंभाच्या खंपडा। शीणतु गेला॥
मुगजलच्छ नदी। दुरोनी देखोनि भांवे॥
परी गंगोदक न पावे। तान्हेला जैसा॥
तैसं विषयसुख। नछेचि हित॥
दुःख भोगतो बहुत। परी सावध नघे॥
परतोमि न पाहे। धावतं सैरा॥
करितो चेरामारा। संसाराच्या॥
ज्ञानदेव महणे। बहुतं जन्मांचा अभ्यासु॥
तरीच होय सौवसु। परब्रह्मी॥

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 swallow 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 of the name of शानद्र 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 श्रीमंत and other works on the one hand and some Abhangs &c. attributed to श्रीमंत 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.

मुक्ताबाई is reputed to have written some work and placed it at the feet of god Vithoba, but his brothers and sister.

Srivastava 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, श्रीमंत 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:-

मजबरी दया करा । ताटी उघडा शानेश्वरा ॥
संत जेगें वहावें । जग-बोलणे सोलावें ॥

तरिच अंगें शोरण । ज्या नाहीं अभिमान ॥
शोरण जेंचे वसे । तेंचे भूतद्या असे ॥

रागें भरावें कवणाळी । आपण ब्रह्म सर्व-देशी ॥
पेती समुद्रिशी करा । ताटी उघडा शानेश्वरा ॥
"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 auger? We are all the great Brahma that pervades everything. Expand the range of your view and open the door, O Dnyaneshvar. 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 Brahama. Open the door, O Dnyaneshvar."

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

Such are the valuable services of Dnyaneshvar 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 सासूधना ।
दामा नामा जाणा बाप लेक ॥
नारा म्हाद्या गोळ्या चिठ्ठी चोधे पुत्र ।
जबमले पवित्र त्याचे बंशीं ॥
झाडाई गोडाई चेसा साखराई ।
बोधी सुना पाहिं नामयाच्या ॥
हिंबाई ते लेकी आऊवाई बहिणी ।
वैदी चिथी जनी दासी त्याची ॥

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 उद्वन्त, the great devotee of god Krishna. He was a disciple of Visoba Khechar, a pupil of नामदेव's.

Namdev was a contemporary of Dnyaneshwar 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 सांततामाली गोरक्षुभार and सजन कसाई mentioned in the भक्तविजय of भक्तिपति. It is remarkable in this incident that नामदेव, 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 mother's re-
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याते जे अनुसरती त्याचें तुरे काहीं।
हा देव नोहे पाहीं घरबेणा॥
याची भक्ती कैसी लोकिका वेंगढी।
संसाराची होठी केली नाम्या॥
गोकुलांत चोरी कसनी पोट भरी।
तो तूज निघरीं देहल काय॥
गोणाई स्हणे नाम्या हे रे नव्हे भलं।
घर त्यां बुडविलें कुछासहिं॥

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:—

अबचे भांबर मुळूं होती। नाचताती आनंदे॥
एकमेकांच्या पडती पायं। लोकिकांतुन गेले वायं॥
Namdev.

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.

Janabai was Namdev’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 अंग). As the tradition goes, he once learnt at Pandharpur that वालमेकी wrote शतकोटी अंग.
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।
भक्तिभावें तारी निवेदी देवा॥

तीन कोटी अभंग गोणाईचा वाद।
स्वातमसुबबोध सुखाचा तो॥

तीन कोटी अभंग नारोबाची सविता।
उगवी स्वात्महिता दिवसरजनी॥

तीन कोटी अभंग विठाचा झगडा।
प्रेमरस गोडा प्रेमचा तो॥

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

एक कोटी अभंग लक्ष वरती लोला।
प्रेमरस जिघाळा आउबाईचा॥

चौप्याणव लक्ष रंगाईची कसुणा।
प्रेमने नारायणा आठवीलें॥

दोन कोटी अभंग राजाईची वाणी।
प्रेमने चकपाणी आठबीले।

ढाळाई गोदाई वेळा साखराई।
कवित्व हें पाहिं दिव्द दिव्द कोटी।
Namde\v{v}.

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:

पाहिं परदारा जननी समान।
ब्रह्मही पाषाणसम मानी॥

निशीदिनी मुका होऊनी तत्वतां।
न घादीं सर्धी वरी हृदी॥

येसें मनीं बुढ ध्रुवनी राहासी।
तरी तूं पावसी निज पदा॥

पराय्या कारणें प्रेम बैंची आतां।
जाणें पराय्या अंतरीची॥
"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.

"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 steadfast in it."

The following out of the *abhangs* composed by नोदेशा, Namdev's son, is worth quoting for it shows that the son was in no way inferior to the father in saintliness:
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 Namdev like the whole family of Jnanadev, were ardent devotees and born poets.

Many other saints of fame were born about this time, the more notable among them being Parshor Bhagwan, Gore Kumbhar, Narhari Sonar, Kumardas and Chowkambhag 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 \( \text{अध्यात्मज्ञान} \) (Knowledge of the Supreme Spirit) and \( \text{भक्ति} \) (Devotion to God).
CHAPTER VI.

Second Period.

Eknath.

The Second Period of Marathi Literature opens with Eknath. He was born at Pratishthan or Paithan on the river Godavari in S'ak year 1471, i.e., 1548 A.D. He was a Deshasth Brahmin by caste. Suryanarayan and Rukminibai were his father and mother respectively. Eknath lost both his parents in childhood and was brought up by his old grandfather Chakrapani, who spared no pains on his account. He taught Eknath reading and writing and also the Vedas. Eknath 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-
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 चमाळि (meditation of the Supreme
Eknath.

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 spirit, 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 (उपदश) 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 attention was perfectly devoted to
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 गुरुपरेश (initiation) from Janardanpant in the usual manner, Eknath started on life. Eknath's later 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 गोदबाई and गंगाबाई. गोदबाई otherwise called लिलाबाई was the mother of मुकेशर, 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 झानदेव, 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 Shraddha 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 however forsook his magnanimous principles to please the conceited Brahmins. He was charitable, forgiving and free from pride, and possessed many other stirring ascetic virtues. He advised his audience to continue the प्रत्रतिमागँ (Action) with निम्बरति (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 Owî metre. His principal works are आवांचे रामायण, एकनाथी मागवत, बुळेृको मागवत, and रत्नमणीस्वर्यवर. Besides these, he has composed स्नातमुख, इत्तामलक आळंदलहरा, and some abhangs and padas. Of these, आवांचेरामायण and रत्नमणीस्वर्यवर are narrative compositions, the rest being metaphysical works, devoted to the exposition of बंदूंत or Philosophy. आवांचे रामायण contains about 40000 couplets in Owî metre.

After composing 44 chapters of the बुळकांड Eknath felt that his end was drawing near and so he entrusted the task of finishing the work to his favourite pupil, गावचा, who accomplished it with an ability and success, in no way inferior to that of his master. Eknath’s मागवत is also a big work containing nearly 20000 Owis. आवांचे रामायण and एकनाथी मागवत are universally read and honoured.

Having passed the prime of his youth in the midst of the Mahommedan court, Eknath knew Hindustani well and composed some of his miscellaneous पदास (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-Gītā. 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 आवार्थदीपिका 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 उजेडिये॥
हे रस देखोनि चोखडे।
ताटा पुढे पै आलं॥
"

*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 बौद्ध and वैष्णव and at times वृंगार 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:

"जय असतां रघुकुटकर्त्तरकृ।
बंटक होती निष्पंकर्क।।
विष तै होय पोयूष।।
परम चुष बनवासी।।
तुज सांगाते बनवास।।
तो मज वैकुंठ केलास।।
तुज वेगळा संसार ओस।।
दुःख असें समज तेहां।।
पति प्रियेचि निज जीवन।।
पति प्रियेचि निज निधान।।
पति प्रियेचि निज भूवण।।
तेने विण ते अतिदीन।।
पति प्रियेचि निजशुति।।
पति प्रियेचि निजात्मगति।।
पति प्रियेचि निजशंति।।
होय उपपति त्या विण।।
पति प्रियेचि निजशोभन।।
पति प्रियेचि गतीगमन।।"
πατι निषेष्येत्रं प्रभुभत।
तेहेपं बिंग ते अतिदीन।
तू तत माभः प्राणनाथ।
तुज वेगःत्र मज प्राणान्त।

माभः परमात्मा रघुनाथ।
हदयस्थ अवधारै।
ज़ेन्द्वैर्चु तुझें वन-प्रायाण।
तुज सैः येती माभः प्राण।
माभें राहिवितां ज्ञान।
अचुक मर्य 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
Indeed, the whole of the 'अरण्यवाससमान' including the interview between king Dasharatha, and his queen Kaikeyi is worth perusing. It appeals very touchingly to the softer emotions of the reader.

एकनाथी भागवत is a commentary in vernacular on the eleventh स्तंभ (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 निर्नर्णाम) 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:—

Commentary on the first half of the above line:—
स्वानन्दे भोगितां अहर्निब्रह्मां ।
विषयकामाली विसर्गः ॥
रङ्कु पालबिये बैसङः ।
तां पूर्वयागना विसर्गः ॥
तेंचि हा निजानन्दे तुम ज्ञाता ।
काम विसर्गः तुच्छः ॥
कांहि अप्राप्त पावास्या कामावें ।
साधृसी अप्राप्तता न संभवे ॥
प्राप्तपदिी यथा गौरवें ।
निजानुभवे विराज्जू ॥
खंडोता सुर्ये भेटों जातां ।
खंडोता न भेटे सविता ॥
सुर्यसी न भेटवे स्वयंता ।
तेवं अप्राप्तता साधृसी ॥
पांचं उभयपरं पाहतां ।
कामू निचाटः सवेथः ॥
हें आठवं दक्षण तत्त्वतां ।
अकामता साधृची ॥
सावधानें अतं नेमितां ।
तेंचि बाह्यन्त्रियां नियामकता ॥
जेष्ठेऽकां कंक्रीति शिकवण देतां ।
सुन सवेथा चढ़ीं कांपे ॥
मुख्य धूर रणिं लागल्या हातां ।
येंर कटक जितिले न जुंझतां ॥
Eknath 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.

Eknath 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...
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 कहूनि अतुर्ब्रजः।
नाना दुष्ट मद्विने सकली।
परी यादव जाहि ले अतिप्रवली।
हें न मनीच केवल श्रीकृष्ण॥

नन्हतां यादवांचं निधन।
नुतरे धराबार संपूर्ण॥

ऐसे मानिता झाळा श्रीकृष्ण।
कुञ्जनिर्दङ्गु तो चित्ती॥

अग्नि कपूर खाऊनि वाहे।
कापुरांतीं अग्नीहि उडे॥

tैलेय यादवांचः अति गाढः।
आळे रोकळे निधन॥

केळी फढळे तंव वाहे वाही।
फढळ पाके माळी झाळ तोडळ॥

tैली यादव कुञ्जाची श्रीग गाढी।
वाहली रोकडळ मरणार्थ॥

फढळ परिपाकें परिमली।
तै धेऊनी जाय माळी॥

तयीं स्वकुञ्जफलें वनमाळी।
न्यायया तत्कालीं स्वयं हृद्धी।"
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 comphor 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 miscellaneous verses:

"परब्रह्मप्राप्ति लागीं लागीं लागीं लागीं
कर्में आचरार्यें वेगीं वेगीं वेगीं वेगीं
चित्त वृद्ध तेषां होय होय होय होय
भेदी सदृशुरूचे पाय पाय पाय पाय
कर्म नित्य नैस्मितिक नैस्मितिक
प्रायश्चित्त जाण एक एक एक एक"
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, प्राकृतिक and उपासना. 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 संयासी जाले इका रामक्रोध जवर्दीचा नाहीं गेला इका

व्यर्थ कांणू विनाश केला इका
साचध होई इका
संसार व्यर्थ सांडिला इका
मुंडां बाणां तुटी पाडिला इका
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 the various ritualistic duties, not mechanically but for a higher purpose, viz. purity and steadiness of mind. Then only, he held, can you attain jnana (true knowledge) through the means of karma (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 चुँ:श्रेकी भागवत टीका:

तप स्म्हणजे नह्ने स्नान ।
तप स्म्हणजे नह्ने दान ॥
	
tap nahné shābhārāyana
vedādhya矩 nahné tap ॥
The above extracts are typical and will be enough to give an idea of the writings and preachings of Eknath.
CHAPTER VII.

Dasopant and other poets.

About this time, three or four other poets of somewhat minor importance flourished in Maharashtra. Desopant 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 गीतार्थविह गीतार्थविह are the more important ones. The former is a commentary on the भगवद्गुरुला 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 येगचासिष्ठ and his commentary on
the भगवद्गौर्य रे prominent. Both these works are philosophical.

Narsinha Saraswati was the religious master of Janardan Swami. He lived at Jogai's Amba. He had many pupils and one of them was गंगाधरसरस्वती who has written a devotional work named पुज्यचरित्र 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 पुज्यचरित्र 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 चीतास्वयंवर, शुद्धमचित्र, उमारमासूवाद, शबरीआत्मान, and शाक्केयात्मान. 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 Owi or Abhang metre, he has composed his poems in various
metres 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 श्याम in the following terms:

हेमाक्रीवरि हेमनिमित जश्या संपुष्कवस्ति भावया।
तैशा आभरणी अपार तरणी सौधागर्णी होभल्या॥
मध्ये कल्पक बझनी सम दिल्ले सीतान्युबिभालना।
सीता शीतवती शुभा नृपसभा धक्की जना काण्या॥१॥

In his pretty little poem called शुद्धाचरित्र, 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 ब्राह्मणः

कांहीं आठवतं गडवा शिशुपर्णी साजन्तलें इखण्डें।
nाना हास्य विनोद मोद सगडी कृस्ती कहं हेहण्ड॥
मो तूं हा मज टूंज भेद न जगं ते मूठ मैत्री भली।
चेते की समरणार्थ जाण सखाया पुष्यं बहु लाएलि॥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 भूतं मणि ज्ञागुणीं,
क्याच्चा रूप गुणीं सदा गुण गुणी शंभू रिचे निगुणी॥
सृष्टि चिन्त गुणीं जयास्तव गणीं माया जया तंगणी,
ती कोणं न गणीं, वसे ऋविगणीं, श्रीराम रंगांगणी॥१॥
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 नलेपाश्यान 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, नलेपाश्यान 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 दमग्रन्ती was brought about through the mediation of a राजदूत (swan). They say that a perusal of Anand Tanaya’s सांतास्वर्णवर inspired Raghunath Pandit with the ambition of composing a similar poem and नलेपाश्यान 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. 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 Abhanges 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 कृत्तिन (sermons) to the multitudes wherein
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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 श्रीतुकाराम (sermon) and to his सजन (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 abhangs ex tempore while delivering क्रीतन.

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 Abhangs 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 क्रीतन 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 क्रीतन exhorted his
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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 (बैराग्य), 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 अमंग लागति खळ्ळद्दया जेवळ बाण रामाचे।
ज्या परवाण न मोहिति शार जैसे ईश्वरास कामाचे।"
स्वात्मानुभव पहातं तुक्या केवळ सळाचि जनकाचा।
बैराग्यें डोळविला माथा जेणें मुर्तें 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) "कात्या पाषाण पूजीती वीतच।
अश्वातू खळ्ळ भावहीन।"
भावची कारण भावचि तारण।
मोक्षांचे साधन बोलियेंदे।
काय करिल जपमाळ कंठमाळ।
करिसी वेदोळें विषयनप।
काय करिशीलं पंडित होऊनी।
अक्षराभिमानी धोर होय।"
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 खूर (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:

"वाळ मायेगीण क्षणभरि नराहे।
न देखतां होये कासावीस॥
आशिक उदंड बुझाविती जरि।
छंद त्या अंतरीं माउळीचा॥
नावडती तया बोल्या आशिकाचे।
देखोनियां नाचे माय दूरी॥
तुका म्हणे माझी बिठूल माउळी।
आशिकाची बोळी 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:

\[\text{हैंचि दान देगा देवा। तुझा विसर न व्हासा॥}
\text{शुग माइन आवडी। हैंचि माझी तर्फे जोडी॥} \]
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.

"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:-
“राक्षस काहे करावा उतार।
पावावया पार पैलवध दो॥
खापराचे होन खेढळी लेकरे।
कोण त्या वेचाऱे लाभाणी॥

मंगळीयक करिती कुमारी।
काय त्यांची खरी सोयरीक॥

स्वयंचे जें सुख दुःख झालें कांहीं।
जागूरतीं तो नाहीं साच भाव॥

सारी झालीं भेलीं टटिकं वचन।
ब्रह्ममुक दीण तुका स्मरे॥

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 समूह सणोनी काढाची।
तेव्हांचे गोतावी व्हावे तेगे॥
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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:

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आतां एक योग साधावा हा नौट ।
भल्याचा तो वीट मानू नये ॥
जेणे योगं तुम्हां ढागं पाहे रोष ।
पेशा हा सायास करू नये ॥
निद्रक दुर्जन संग्रहीं असती ।
त्यांची युक्ती चित्तीं आणू नये ॥
परिश्रावे कोण राज्याचे रक्षक ।
विषेकाविवेच पाहूनीयां ॥
सांगणेन न ठगे सर्वेश टू राजा ।
अनार्यांच्या काजा साहब व्हावें ॥
हृदि पेकोतीयां पाबं समाधान ।
आतां या दशीना काज नाहीं ॥
चेवोतीयां भेटी कोण हा संतोष ।
आयुष्याचे दीव गेले गेले ॥
तुका म्हणे राया धर्म जन्म स्विती ॥
जैलोकीं हे स्याति कीति तुझी ॥
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*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:

कौणी बंदा कौणी लिंदा । आम्हां स्वस्हिताचा बंदा ॥
काय तुम्हांसंगी गरज । आम्हीं संजूं पंढरीराज ॥
तुम्हांसारिखं चाल्यांबं । तेन्हां स्वस्हिता मुकांबं ॥
तुका म्हणें दो कां कांहीं । गच्छे दिलं विठ्ठलपायीं ॥

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.
Some 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 पढ़गीं श्रायन \।
जैसी जैसी बेठ पड़े \ तैसे तैसे हों घड़े \।
कई भोज्य नानापरी \ कई कोरडचा भाकरी \।
कई बेसांवं बाहनीं \ कई पायीं अनवाणी \।
कई उत्तम भावणे \ कई वसने तींती जीणे \।
कई सकलं संपत्ती \ कई भोगणं विपत्ती \।
कई सजनासीं संग \ कई दुजनासीं योग \।
तुका स्मृणे जाण \ सुख दुःख तैं 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:

"सोनियाचेच ताट क्षीरोऱ्येन भरिलं।
भक्षाचया दिलें भ्वानाळागीं।
सुकाफळद्वार खरासि वातला।
कस्तुरी सुकराळा चोजविली।
चेदपरायण बाधारा सांगे स्वात।
तयाची ते खृृण काय जाणे।
तुका म्हणे ज्याचे तोचि एक जाणे।
भक्तीचें महिमान साधु जाणे।"

Trans:- "A gold dish filled with milk puding is placed before a dog; a necklace 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 padas 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 grammar, 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.
Cloud of arrows.

2. Burning torch.

3. In the sky.

Mukteshwar.

مسحوره ميريا مجا مادئا محا ده مده .
کنک رگیش لکا آگزد نیئ واراها !

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 Owí 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 सौभिकम्बर and शांतिपर्व are recently found.
Mukteshwar.

His similes and metaphors are less numerous but more varied. Besides the great Mahabharat, Mukteshwar has composed smaller poems like the शुक्रंङ्गसंवाद and the शतमुखी रावणा प्रवाण 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:—

कौरववंशी श्रव्यातकीर्तिः। तुष्यंतनामा गणेषाकृतिः।
श्रेष्ठ भूपाण्डु चक्रवर्ती। वीर्येन शौर्ये आगाधा।

प्राच्य प्रतीची दक्षिणोत्तरा। चारी दिशा चतुः समुद्रा।
आक्षमूनी मही महीद्रा। सुरेंद्र तैसा मूलोकी।

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

स्वकाथेपर्वतं ओपी उदका। रत्नधान्य समुद्धि पिका।
पुप्प्वी पिके मात्रिका। फळे जैसी 'श्री चिन्या।

विष्णुसमान सत्तावत्त। प्रताप तेजः सुर्ये तेजाजः।
धरातुल्य सहनशील। अश्रोभ जैता सागर।

निपुण शब्दश्राभ प्रहर्णी। आहर्दों जाणे सचिवहर्णी।
पैसा भूपाण्डु चूडामणी। दुष्यन्तराजा मूलोकी।

सत समुद्रेष्ये लोट। धरामुख्यां एकवत।
तैसे तेनेष्ये संघार। वैकन वना चालिठा।
A celebrated king named Dushyantha 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 Dushyantha, 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 on his army. He saw on his way large terrible mountains, extensive valleys 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:—

नाराद म्हणे महाराजा | धर्मस्वरूप धर्मात्मजा |
नामा सारखी सुतेजा | करणी निर्मल असे कीं ||
पेष्वर्य लाखल्या संगूणे | धभी वर्तत असे कीं मन ||
राजस्रभे दुर्रिमान | तुज संचारला नाहीं कीं ||
न्यायेच्या अजिला जो अथूं | त्यय करिसी कीं धमादृष्ट ||
विषयकाम लोभाने तुंबें चित्तू | विराजूळें नाहीं कीं ||
इह आचरणे जो धर्म | तो चालाभिसि किम नेम | 
विबिध-भंगाचा कर्तम | तुज लेप्दा नाहीं किं ||
धर्मे अर्थ अर्थे धर्म | धर्मार्थी पुरुषोत्तम |
चढता चाहता सुखोधम | नित्यानित्य करिसि किं ||
नित्य नेमित्रिकी कर्मिं | चतुत आहेस किं निष्कामी |
काम्य-निषिद्धाची ऊष्मि | लोटिसि किं आधिया ||
अनायासीं हो किं सायासीं | भागें जोडिल्या संपत्तीसी |
विभागुनी समस्तांसी | सेविसि किं सुजाणा ||
अनुक्रूद अथवा प्रतिक्रूद | अदुत ज्ञातियांही विकल |
धर्मार्पणुनि बुधि अचल | बंध फांकें न पवे किं ||
अहोराधीं साठ ढाडी | लोटितां पापपुण्याची जोडी |
किती झाळी हें ढाडी ढाडी | विचारित असती किं ||
निलोंमिती विश्वासीक | वंशज असती किं सेवक |
जें स्वामिकाजीं देख | देह देती सोइून ||
बेतन भक्तिती पवित्र | राजाच्या त्यां अपवित्र |
पैसेनि योंग सवतंत्र | स्वत्त्वारीं असती किं ||
उत्तम मध्यम करिनू पदीं | योग्यायोग्य विचाररिणी |
परीश्रृंखली विशालसुबद्ध | योजिसि किं नररंत्रा ||
अमाराथपदीं दाशीपुत्र | अधमस्थतीं परमपवित्र |
अपूज्या पूजोनी सतपात | अवमानीत नाहोंस किं ||
अचार कार्य साधी मृत्य | बेतनाहुनी कोटिगुणित |
श्रव्य देवनी त्याचे चित्र | तोषबोत आहेस किं ||
आपुले कार्य पावले मरण | त्यांचीं कुदुंबें आभासूल |
आपुल्या कुदुंबा समान | पाठिसि किं दयाजना ||
Trans:-‘Narad said: “Oh illustrious sovereign! Righteousness 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 requirest 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 you acquire and the sin 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 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 consol the members of the families of those who die in your service and support them as members of 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:-

परदर अटण परदर वसती | जार जारिणीची संगती ||
पकट शर्या पकट वसती | हें कुष्कण कुलवंते ||
श्रणक्षणीं चंचवङप्यें | चिरी निरिया सरसावणें ||
कच्छ फेडणे चाळणें | हें कुष्कण कुलवंते ||
हदय दाबुनी घाली पदर | पुरूष अवलोकुनी वाढवी हार ||
परिकवासी पकांत विचार | हें कुष्कण कुलवंते ||
बहु हांसणे बहु बोलणे | सदा हांसत गोष्टी करणे ||
परंत परतोनी निरक्षणें | हें कुष्कण कुलवंते ||
आणिका वर्णी निंदी भर्त | पति त्यागुनी धावे तीर्थ ||
पुरूष अवहेळनी देखतां | भजतां दूषण कुलवंते ||
We would add another piece from the Adi Parva narrating the dialogue that took place between king Dushyanth 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 अत्यादर्षेः। पेकूँ महाक्य साचारेः ||
भाया होऊणियां चतुरे || मनोरथ पुरवावे ||
पेकूँ राजसुबीची गोष्टी || सारसांक्री पैं गोरटी ||
बचनसुंप्रेण व्रज सपुलियां || पूजिती झाली नूपाते ||
धराधीशां धर्मपाया || तूक्ष्या शुद्ध यशाचल्या ||
कीती शुभार विमलदलाः || मेहदूनी गंगी तत्तेज ||
कुकरुण कुलिश चेडलिन हारी || अमर त्यातं छेंदूं इचित्ती ||
हा उपाय माक्षिकेय मती || अयुक पेता दिसताहे ||
अमूट म्हणोति हाँचाहत || प्राशि त्याचें कवण फंट ||
बाळ म्हणोति धरिला व्याच || अनर्थ बोजे रोकदा ||
आस्मां बिख्यांची संगती || भड्डी नव्हे गा मेदिनीपती ||
मातला काम महजाती || नितेकांकुंडें बाढ़वावा ||

× × ×

नूप म्हणे चातुर्यभरते || विशालाक्षी द्वारणसरिते ||
विधि आठ विवाहाते || ऐस्से शाष्के बोडली ||
अधविवाहांमाजै येथे || गंधवर्त बोलिजे श्रेष्ठ धर्मे ||
तेने विधि विवाह त्यातिते || कहते अंकी आंहुळे ||
तयावरी चंद्रानना || चारुहासा मूगनयना ||
म्हणे राजया विचक्षणा || विधित धर्म बोडलसी ||

7
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 Ramdas' parents' 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 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' (मंगलांक) 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:

"ढुळ सावधान ऐसें सर्वरुप विवाहमंगली महणति।
तें पक रामदासें आयकलें त्या असो सदा महणति॥

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, 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 Paunchavati, ( 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 Mahommedan 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 Mahommedan 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 Mahommedan 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 भण्ड (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 'जी' 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 saints and pious men visited him there and the fortress was therefore known as Sajjangad.

* 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.
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-म्यान, खलोचनागहित्वर &c. and his style is similar to
that of Anand Tanaya. Venubai has composed निद्वलिराम in Owi metre. She was a woman of learning and could compose verses on abstract subjects.

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

**His Writings.**

दासवेंध (Ramdas' Advice), मनाचे श्वेक (Advice to the Mind) and रामावण are the principal works of Ramdas. Besides these, he has composed many miscellaneous verses in Abhang, S'loka, and Owi 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 Owi metre and consists of twenty Dashaks (groups of ten chapters), each chapter being devoted to some particular
Ramdas.

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 निर्मेणः। कवित्व असावें रसाठः।
कवित्व असावें प्रांजलः। अन्वयाचे इ।
कवित्व असावें मकिवलेचः। कवित्व असावें अर्थाण्गतः।
कवित्व असावें वेगांचे। अहंतेसी इ।"

Trans:—"Poetry should be chaste, melodious and perspicuous; poetry should he 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:

"आपुली धङ्गनियां दूरीः पराम्यात्मक मैत्री करी ः पश्चायण बोले अहोरात्रिः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

बहुत जागते जनः तयांमध्यें करी शयनः ः परस्थढ़ीं करी बहु भोजनः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

आपणाहूँ जो दुःखः तत्याति अत्यन्त निकतः ः शिकवाणीचा मानी वीतः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

विचार न करितां कारणः दंडं करी अपराधाविष्णुः � स्वल्पासाठीं जो कृपणः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

सब्यें नेंने परोपकारः उपकाराचा अनुपकारः ः करी थोड़ें बोले फारः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

सम्यक्ति मत्ततर धरीः अपत्त्व वस्तूचा हेवा करीः � घरीच्या घरीं चोरी करीः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

अल्प अन्याय क्षमा न करीः सर्व काल धारकी धरीः ः जो विश्वासवत करीः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

बहुत दिवसांचे सेवकः त्यागून तेवी आपणिक ः न्यावी समा निवाचक १ तो एक मृत्युः ॥

लक्ष्मी आलियावरीः जो मागील ओळख न धरीः � देवीं ब्राह्मणीं सत्ता करीः तो एक मृत्युः ॥

द० २ ल० १"

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

"अाछें छुप मारू नयें | चाहाडी मनाली आए नयें | शोधिल्याविन काहौं नयें | कार्य काहाँं ||
सभा देखोली गद्धू नयें | समयीं उत्तर दर्जूं नयें |
घिरविता हटौं नयें | घारिष्ट आपुळें ||
सत्यमार्ग लोईं नयें | असत्यपर्यं जाउँ नयें |
कदा अभिमान चेंदु नयें | 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 मायवांपं किती ।
ब्री कन्या पुत्र होती । लक्षानुलक्ष ॥
कर्मयोगें सकलह्य मिठालिं । पके स्थलीं समासिं अर्हतीं ।
तीं तुवां आपूर्धी मानितीं । कैसीं रे पदत्सूखीं ॥
तुवं तुज नन्हे शरीर । तेथे इतरांचा कोण विचार ।
आतां पक मार्हं साचार । धरीं मार्हार्थं बतें ॥

× × ×

पेशा कृष्णां देवाधिदेव । जो तांभाली सकलजीव
लेणवे जयचे द्वाच । कृपालुपणं ॥
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.

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 पकदेशी | अहंकारें जन्म सोशी |
बिचेकें पाहतां प्राणिगयांसि | जन्म कैंचा ||
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."
\textit{Jeevarta} (Individual Soul) is only a manifestation of the \textit{Parmarta} (Supreme Soul) tied down by \textit{Maya} (unreal bonds of worldly existence). When a man disabuses his mind of this \textit{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 \textit{Dashak}.

The first eight \textit{Dashaks} of \textit{Dashodh} 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 \textit{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:

\begin{quote}
करणं असतं उपायं। तरी बोलोन दाखणं नयं।
परस्परंचि प्रत्ययं। प्रचित्तिः आणातः।
जो बहुताचं सोसीनां। त्यास बहुत लोकमिलेना।
बहुत सोसिसं उरेना। महत्तव आपुलें।
माज्यकारण बहुत करावें। परि कठोंचि न धावें।
परपीडेवरी नसावें। अंतःकरण।
\end{quote}
Ramdas.

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 "आधी प्रांत राही नेटक।". 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 खुना दासबोध or the Old Dasbodh, otherwise called एकत्रीससमास 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.

曼陀罗或‘Stanzas addressed to the Mind’ otherwise called ‘Advice to the Mind’ are over 200 in number. They are written in the भुजंगप्रशात 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 पंधेविच जाखें ।
तरी श्रीहरी पाविजे तो स्वभावें ।

जरी निंदे तें सर्वो तोड़ोनि चाखें ।
जरीं वंचे तें सर्वे भावें कराखें ॥

प्रभाते मरीं राम चितीत जाखा ।
पूंढे बेखरीं राम आरीं बदाखा ।

सदाचार हा थोर सांहूं नये तो ।
जरीं तोची तो मानवी धन्य होतो ॥

मना चासना हुष्ठ कामा नये रे ।
मना सर्वथा पापबुझ्या नको रे ।

मना सर्वथा नीति सोडूं नको हो ।
मना अंतरीं सार वीचार राहो ॥
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 किंचित्ताकांड, हुंदरकांड 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 मुद्रनप्रवत metre.

Of the miscellaneous writings of Ramdas, रामायण, ज्ञानेशतक and वेदार्थशतक 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 जाले वृद्ध माहे सन ||
रामा तुः सः नाम आठवे ना ||
ा छात्रवे ना चित्रीं स्वविदाचे झाल ||
मायवापें लग केलें लोऱे ||
लोऱे लवः केलें मानिली आवढ़ी ||
पारी आविली बेडी बंधनावी ||
बंधनावी बेडी प्रवचन तम ||
मग केचा राम आठवे ना ||
आठवे ना राम स्वामि बैठोक्ये ||
जाळं कुंदबाच भारभारं ||

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:

चपछ्यप मनोधि मोडितां मोडवेना।
सकल स्वजनमाया तोडितां तोडवेना।
घडि घडि बिघडे हा निष्कृतो अन्तरिचा।
महारघु रहणा हे बोलतों दीन बाचा॥
जडजत हृदय माझे जन्म कोट्यातुकोटी।
मंजऱ्यसरी कहणेचा राघवा पूर लोटीं।
तप्तमस्त निरङ्खीं रे राम काहूण्यसिंधू।
पधरिपुकळ माझं तोडळ 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 mercy 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.
The chief of Vaman Pandit's works are:  

- यथार्थदीर्घिका (True Light), & निगमसार (Substance of the Vedas). They are both in Owi 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 परमार्थे
जिचा बका तू समधे | परमात्मा भगवंते
परी अजी भगवंतजी | या कलियुग माजी
जो तो गीताथे योजी | मतानुरूप"

× × ×

या कारणे जी भगवंता | यथास्थित हे तुझी गीता
वाखाणावी महणूर्ति होता | बहुत काळ संपूर्ण
आणि तुझया क्षेत्रेचे विभागी | शिष्य संस्कर कोंगी
ते महणूर्त जीणं जगदुपपयोगी | पेशी 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 साधारणांितिका in contradistinction to the भवर्षणियिका of Dnyaneshwar. This commentary covers over more than 20,000 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. भवर्षणियिका is a simple and clear exposition, while भवर्षणियिका 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. भामाबिलास, श्रवणिकिलास, श्रवणीपत्र, वामचरित्र, लोपामुद्रसंवाद &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, वर्त-तिलक, मालिनी, तुतविलंबित &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 रचना: ध्वन्त्रिपादकः शब्दः (words conveying charming thoughts) as defined by Jagannath Pandit, the author of the रसगंगाघर, 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 शब्दविलास.

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-विश्वारामदाने।
जेन स्वर्गपुष्प दिखतेः सुनि नारदाने॥
तेन शक्मणिप्रति दिलें त्रिजगमिष्वासेः।
जेन द्वारका करि भरोनि सुगंधि वासेः॥

अशी गोष्टि दासी-जनीं बायकानीं।
बिचारूनियां साङ्गतां जाय कानीं॥
तई सत्यभामा महा कोध दाबी।
बुझाबी हरि तेचि ठीला बदाबी॥

गडबडां धरणीशरि लोङ्घते।
बदवती न कबीसहि लोङ्घ ते॥
रदत मृष्टिर होय घडी घडी।
पवन निश्चल नेत्र न ऊपड़ी॥

अङ्क हार मल्ल्यांतिल तोङ्घते।
कुर्रश केश मुखाबरि सोङ्घते॥
कर्पुषें उर मस्तक ताहिते।
वसन आणिक कंचुकि फाहिते॥

महा उष्ण भवासी कहनि बहुते शूष्क अधरा।
धरा-पृष्ठीं जोडा न शठ दुसरा या गिरिधरा॥
धराया माझा हा कर कपरि केंच्चा जनमला।
महा जो निन्दुनि कुसूम तिस देऊनि रमला॥
सहसा हौ मेल्या ही श्रविहि न शिबिं हैं यदुपती।
पती नाना भ्रूचा पतित जनही ज्यास जपती॥
नका चेउं देऊं सदनि सवतीच्या प्रियकरां।
करांते उचावी ना मज कपटि भेसे तुम्ही करा।

रदत रदत मूँच्छें माजि वृत्ती बुडाल्या।
परम विकळ मी तूं या स्मृती ही उडाल्या।
उचलुळि सहिथ्यांनी मंचकीं दिव्य शोळे।
निजविलिं मृततुल्या सत्यभामा दिसेल्ये।

ये अश्रांत सदनांत हरी तो।
जो अनादि भव शोक हरी तो।

क्रि कारी नमुनियां चरणांते।
सांगती सकळ आचरणांते।

म्हणे शोक कां प्राप्त झाडळा महा हा।
अश्री कधळी कां शुभांगी अहा हा।

न बोलेचि कां आमूली आज राणी।
जिच्या बोलण्याचीच आभां शिराणी।

जईं श्री वत्सांक प्रभु कारी निजांकस्थित शिरा।
शिरा नाडी प्राण प्रगटित न लाहूनि उशिरा।

शिराणी श्रद्धाची पुरवि तरी डोळे न उघडी।
चढी जो मानाची बिघडूळि असे ताऊवर चढी।

न जाणी ते जाणीं स्वमाण परिं डोळे न उघडी।
चढी एक तृधां मनं बुढवि मानें अवघडी।

चढी पूर्व समास्थितिस बसतां तीस बिघडी।
चढी श्री जातीची विघडूळि असे स्वाति सुघडी।
संह्या दुःखी तुष्या मजसहित कीं कान उगले।
गले नेत्रीं पाणी न लिचलि मुखीं शब्र सगले।
कि कि मीं प्रार्थींतों धरुनि शिर अंकाच उपरी।
परि कोधाची हे अधिकाचि दिसे अद्भुत परि॥
बदे भामा कोंपे अति विकछ चावृनि अधरा॥
धरापूर्णी नाहीं ठक तुज अत्स अंबुजधरा॥
धरावें या अंकीं शिर अजि तिचि पवित्रगमना।
मना आलेने देणे कुजुम जिस तें कंसदमना॥

dों नेत्र मोडूनि बदे ढकलोनि मांडी।
भुमिडूटि भ्रमण अंगुलिं बंग मांडी॥
तों क्रुणजी करुनि हास्य म्हणे अहा हा॥
वेळे अनाथे इतुक्यास्वद कां महा हा॥
अचितं मुनिव्रें सुमना तें।
बाटलें प्रथम हंचि मनाते॥
कीं असा तरु पुरींत असावा।
त्यांतिनि स्वसदनीच वसावा॥
तस्रापि जे प्रिय बहु स्वच्छोच माजी।
तो स्थापणत तरु तिच्या सदनाची माजी॥
ते तुं प्रिया तुजची देहन त्या हुमाते।
हें बाटलें प्रथम आण तुजीच माते॥
फूल देवनि तिल्ला उतराई॥
होईं मी समज हे चतुराई॥
देतसंग तसची तो तुजलं ने।
खेद हा न करणे तुज लागे॥
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
Vaman Pandit.

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 Krisna 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:

वराने ते राजे निजसम तुवां राजतनये।
नये आम्हां पेसा क्वचिदिपि वरूं घो लुभिनये॥
दिलें बापें भावें त्यजूनिब वराने ते क्षितिपती।
पति केला ज्याचे कुलपति समुद्रांत लपती॥

आतां तरी क्षत्रिय तूं मळे ने। वरीं जयाचा तुज लोभ मळे।
जें तुल्य साधते लोक दोनी। आम्हीं वृथा काय बहू बद्दोनी॥

झाळी असं परिसतांची अनाथ वाणी।
ठावी नसे जिस करीं अशं नाथ वाणी॥
चैतंकनाथ पति हा प्रियं आपणांते।
त्यागावया तिसं गमे करितो पणांते॥

दांपनि कंठ पडली चवानास मुद्रा।
शोंकं भरं जलं जसं भरितं समुद्रा॥
बेरुनि चांगर चुडा संह मुद्रिकांहीं।
भूईं पडे उरं तुरे तनुमाजि कांहीं॥
पडे केलं जेली महाचंडवातं।
असं देखतंं ते कुपा माधवातं॥
उडी चींग टाकी पलंगाचवणी।
धरी उत्तरीयां बरा सांवहणी॥
मजबूत न सुखाचा तूज तो हेतु कांहीं।
समजत तुक्षिया या पाहतों कौतुकांहीं।
निज बचन विनोंदं बोलिडों तूजठा ने।
न कठत नति याची लेद हा तूज रागे॥

जयन शार धनुषेक्ष भोवयाच्या प्रतापं।
श्रवणवरिहि चती तांबडे कोपतापं।
अधर धरारीति रक्षण स्वभावें।
असिस्त तुज पहावें बोडळों याचि भावें॥
जरि निपट दरिद्री जो न झादिचि कांजी।
तरि अमृत मिठालय त्यास बोडळ कां जी॥
तति बहुत उणी मी लघु झालास मारे॥
म्हणवुनि बरिणे म्यां तूज सर्वोत्तमाते॥
राज्यादिकें टाकुनि निर्विकारी।
तवदेह होतात असे भिकारी॥
राज्यांत दुःंबं सुख तूज माजी॥
म्हणून तूं ऋणाच्य तया समाजी॥
सुभा मानुनीयां पितो एक कांजी।
सुभापानकर्तण शिवे त्यास कां जी॥
तसी टाकुणी मी तुझा मंगळाळा।
तृपाळा तयां कां मजों ओमळाळा॥

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 reader's 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 “Owis” 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 posses 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
Shridhar,

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 रामाविजय, हरिविजय and पांडवप्रताप, he has composed शिवलीलामृत, जैमीनी अथमंद्र, श्रीनाथ खंड and पांडुरंग महातम्य. 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 Ramayan. 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:

श्रीद्वारे न करावा पंडित जनी।
जैसीं कृङ्णा वेणीची तिरें दोन्हीं। परी उदक जाण पकवी॥
तैसं श्राकुट आणि संस्कृत। दोहींत पकवी अर्थ।
जैशा दोधी खिया पकवी कांत। कीं दोन्हीं हसत पकावेची॥
दोन्ही दाता पकवी सुर। एक पाहणं दोन्ही नेत्र।
कीं दों पात्रांत पवित्र। एकची दुर्ग घातलें॥
दोन्ही माजी गोडी एक। जैसें त्रिवेणीस भरलं उदक।
एक सुवर्ण कुपिका अडोकिक। ताम्र धातूची एक घडली॥
दोन्ही कुप्पा नेऊनं देख। श्रीरामेश्वरासी केळा अभिषेक।
देखणं च एक उदक। देवसां समवि आवडे॥
अबलांस न कठे संक्षुत वाणी। जैसें आडांतील गोड पाणी।
परी ते दोर पात्रा वांचोनी। अशक जना कंबी निचे॥
तोचि तडागास येतां र्वृं तात्काचित्रि तुषा हरे॥
अबलाजना तारावया उँबरे॥ श्राकुट मंयं निर्मिते॥
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 Owi metre. It comprises 64 sections. As to the plan on which the work is composed, the poet says in the last section:

सवा ऋक्ष भारत | तितक्याचा जो मयितार्थः ॥
आळा चौल्लु अध्यायांत | कथा सबे आकङ्क्षेनि ॥
पालहाळ केला नाहीं बहुत | अथवा नसे संकलित ॥
नेमस्त भरौनि मयितार्थः | पांडव प्रताप केला हृ ॥

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.'
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* 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:—

\[
\text{बुरवर विमानीं पहातीं य एक छेदितीं।}
\text{तृणीर सायकासने तोडितीं। भवज पाडिती स्वतीवरी।}
\]
पुरस्परं मारिति सार्थिः। उस्म परस्परं फेंडिति।  
सुवेच्छ हदयोः शरे भेदिति। वाचे वाजती दोहीं दल्लीं।  
बाणजालच पसरले बहुत। तेनें झांकोढ़ा आदित्य।  
परम धाकड बल्लंत। हिमज्वरे कांपती।  
भारतीय युद्ध अदृभूत पाणी। त्यांत हुजी उपमा नाहीं।  
ऐसें बीर निर्विभार पाणी। ताहीं कोटेंच हुंजले।  
बीर चिदेही हीऊन। रणगणीं भिडती निर्विभारः।  
सुह्दू माया दाराधन। थोरण नाथवेच्छ।  
देहांं समृण नाहीं तयांवती। म्हणोनी बीरांस समरीं मुक्तीं।  
पूर्वार्प बोलिजे पंडितीं। शाखरीं निर्धारीं।  
शोर गाजली रणघुमाली। रितें कुंजर धावती दल्लीं।  
ध्वज अपार पडती भूत्तलीं। रितें रथ अभ्य नेतीं।  
नगन शब्दें पडलीं अपार। बीरांचे पसरले अठऱ्यकार।  
असो उदयाच्छरीं सहकंकर। गंगाकुमार तेंवि दिसे।  
पांच-पताकी शोभे रथ। महारथी पाणीं अपरिमित।  
असंख्य वाण तेह्यं वर्धत। बिठोत पांडवसजेनें।  
बहुत बीरांची शाब्दें। छेडून पाडलीं क्रणांत्रें।  
तो श्रीरंग-भगिनी-पृथवि। केले धावणें सतवर।  
तो केवल प्रति-अजुन। दोंहीं हातांचं समसंधान।  
शत वाणं गंगानेदन। भेदिला तेनें समरांणीं।  
कृतमार्ग खिलिला नवबाणीं। तेसाच दशं विधिला तेश्रणीं।  
सारध्यांचीं शिरं धरणीं। सहब्राबंधी पाहित।  
हस्त लालच द्रेकोन। बीर सर्व हालविती मान।  
सन्य तजेनी उच्छलोऽ। शूर सर्व चन्य 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:

सुदोचने ग्रहीं आंदू। तो अमृतीं पड़े विषांद्रू।
सैना तो भुज सुकुब्रु। अंगणी बेजुंगी पंडियेला।

ढण्डकार होतां ते खणीं। दूती आल्या धांबोनी।
बेजुंग पहाती तच अंगणी। भुज अद्रूत देखिला।

ते काचबन्द अंगणांत। बीरपाणी पंडिला अद्रूत।
बेजुंग दासी भयाभीत। आल्या सत्वर सांगावा।

महणती नचल हरिलं हो साजणी। महाबीराचा खुटोनी पाणी।
बेजुंग पंडिलासे अंगणी। निराल मांगे अकस्मात।

पेकोनी दासीयं वचन। दचकं सुदोचनेंचं मन।
रतनपादुका तवरं कहन। अंप्रियुगली बेहड़ी।

तड्डत्याय झठके अंबर। अंगणांत आली सत्वर।
उतरला असे मुखचं। विन्हळ नेत्र जाहले।

आंग झालेसे विकं। गुढे न घालवेचि पाउइ।
बदनींचं कादोनीं तांबुळ। एकीकं भिरकाविलं।

सख्यांत्रिं महणे सुदोचना। प्राणपति आज गेले रण।
सीतेदारगं अयोध्या राणा। सुवेद्राचंतीं बेलेह।

पेसें बोलतं दोषनं दिनी। भुजे समीप येतं के खणीं।
तव तो शक्रजिताचा पाणी। पतियने अलखिला।
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. दुर्बास्यात्मा, द्विपदवस्यात्मा, शून्यविश्वात्मा, etc. We may quote his Katav on जीवदाता (conditions of man) for illustration.

सजन हो निकाजुज आपुँ उमजाना हरिदारीं अजाना ॥ खुशै ॥ नऊमास गम्भीर सांपड़े, मूत्र-मधादिक फार सांकड़े, तनुस्ति तोडिति जंगू किंदे, बहु भ्रमानं बाहेर पड़े, स्मरण मुखींचे सच्च विसरला, सोई कोईं रूंडू ढागला, दिवसा मासा वृद्धि पावला, क्षण क्षणा अपघात चुकला, धनमद्गवं फार दाटला, अहंपणाचा पूर छोटला, पांचा विषयांमाजिं बाटला, पापाचरणं मर्नं काटला, मला थाटला, संसार अपर, थोर करितो कारभार, महाल मुख जाहागीर इजारा, कमाविं-सदारी, भारी पसारा सावकारी, हत्ती घोड़े सैन्य
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 Kakan by virtue of their faithfulness and intelligence. Sohirobanath's ancestors, like those of several other poets of note, were hereditary Kulkarnie (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 चेतन (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 Kakan. 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 चंद्रिता, अक्षयवंश, महद्यु
Sohiroba.

भोषरी and बहुयांद 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 बांदेय आर्मी वसे महा द्विज हा ||
ज्याची देखुनि कविता हरि स्वजनां भूवरी म्हणे द्विजे या हा ||

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

हरि-भजना वीण काळ धालबू नको रे ।
चितः द्वृत्तपाति उमज, ध्यानं आणुति पुरतें समज ।
अपुरे मतिनें उगाचि चिखल, कालबूं नकोरे ॥ हरि० ॥
दोरिच्या सापा भिउनि भवा, भेरि नाहीं जिवासिवा ।
अंतरिचा ज्ञान-दिवा मालबूं नको रे ॥ हरि० ॥
सोहिरा म्हणे पूणी ज्योति, तेंचे नाहीं दिवस राति।
तयाबिणे नेत्र पाति, हालबूं 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 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
Mahipati's 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-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. दरितालिकात्रत, क्षिपितचामीत्रत, धनंत्रत, तुलसीमाइत्रम्य etc. All these are commonly read by devout Hindu ladies during the respective holidays. Among his other works may be mentioned कथासारामूठ, कण्यालामूठ, and वानिमाइत्रम्य. Mahipati’s writings are all in the Owi 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 संतवीमामूठ 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:—

रायाति अनुताप झाला पूणः।
महै जगदुङ्कै संध्य महिमान ॥
आतुं संसार माया त्यजुन ।
बैराग्य वेदें निषिद्ध ॥

मग प्रधानासि विचारोनी।
पुजहै बैलविला भद्रासनि ॥
जालंधरासि नमस्कार करोनी।
कर जोडोलि विनचित ॥

महै भी दरणांगत पूणः।
जोग धावा जी मज कारण ॥
काहींने कराया अनमान।
म्हणोति चरण धरियेहे॥

या घरी सदृशु बोळती वचन।
बैराग्य नभेचि तुज खागुन॥

नको ठाकूं संसार भान।
देवत होणे अघटित॥

विष वेचवेळ आसोग्रासीं।
Pारी चालवेळ आकाशी॥

बाहीं पोहोणि सागरासी।
Pैठ तीरसि पाववेळ॥

मुर्जीं धरवेळ कृशान।
कुडी सांडितं धरवेळ प्राण॥

आकाशाची मोट जाण।
वझांत बांधोणि आणवेळ॥

पृथ्वीचं वजन होइल कोड।
करवेळ ब्रह्मांडाचि बडामोड॥

परी बैराग्य बहुत अवघड।
जाण रोक्यं नूपनाथा॥

आम्ही आशीर्वाद दिवळा राया।
तेष्वां अमर झाली तुषी काया॥

आतां बैराग्य वेचोनियां।
व्यर्थ कासया शिणतोसी॥

गोपीचंद देत प्रत्यूत्तर।
स्वामीची झुपा मजवर॥
असतां माया अनिवार ।
बांधूं न शाके सर्वथा ॥
पूर्ण अनुतापी ओँलट्टोनी चिन्द ।
वैराग्य दिघेि त्याज कारण ।
सैली मुद्रा कंथा लेबोन ।
चिंतूति चर्चेि सर्वार्गी ॥
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 (आर्य) 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:

शुभलोक चामनाचा अभरंग वाणी प्रसिद्ध तुक्वाची ।
ओवी शुकेरशाची किवा आयं 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 Owi 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 दरिंगना, कृष्णविजय and बद्धोत्तरखंड. Of his smaller compositions the केकावली or the "Trumpeting of the Peacock" is most elegant.

His रामायण's are as interesting as they are artistic.

His various Ramayans.

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 वानिकरामायण विषुभुप्रिय रामायण, पंचचामर रामायण, सबाई रामायण etc are composed in the metres of those names respectively. The दामरामायण or Chain Ramayyan 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.:

In the परंतु रामायण each अथव is made to contain the word "परंतु". In the लघु रामायण no long syllable is allowed to appear. The निरेंद्र रामायण is so worded that the labial alphabet are not used therein and it can be sung with the lips open. In this Ramayyan 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
Similar is the difficulty about Lakshman, Marutī, etc. But the author has skilfully managed to get over these difficulties by coining words like द्वाररथ-नंदन, धारचिन्द्र (Younger son of Dasharath), रामनिधुत 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, ऋषिरामायण, 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 Rama-yans 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 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 other hand 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 knowledge 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. 

The virtuous princess of world-wide fame, was sent by her father for personal choice of a husband and when she returned, her father sitting in company of sage 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

**तांगे ती सावित्री नृप ईमत्सेन शाल्बपति आहें।**

**जरि अंध वृद्ध रिपु-हर-राज्यवस्थाहि न काळजी वाहें।**

**कुलशील सत्व गुणनिधि तो पुत्र कलस माह परिवार।**

**परि वार सबे सम त्या की मथिला स्वांतरस्थ अरिवार।**

**ती भवशुर मानला मज चितं त्याचा कुमार म्यां वरिला।**

**जरि लाजविर रुप्या अनुसरली गोरी हरा न त्या हरिला।**

**नारद म्हणे नृपा हे चुकली योजूनी सत्यचान, न चरा।**

**न चरावा जरि गुणवान योजू अन्या असे उणे न बरा।**

**भूप म्हणे सवंज्ञा देवा उमजे असेंचि सांग मद्दा।**

**गुणवान-युवा कुलजवर जरि तरिहितुज्या अयोग्य कांगमदा**

**काय हि न घरावे अधनत्वे भूप-जनवराजीवीं।**

**कां न प्राशावेच मधु मधुपाने कूप-ज-नव-राजीवीं।**
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 devine 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 over pleased with you."

The rhymes of भूपजनवराजीणिः, भूपुष्पकाव्येऽधुता, and साृगराष्ट्रायु are remarkable. Another passage in the शैवपर्व describing the fight between the Kauravas headed by शिवम and the Pandavas headed by श्रीम is interesting. It is this:-

भीष्म पुढ़े कहनि उठेप्रथम सुयोधन करावया कदन।
भीम पुढ़े कहनि उठे धर्म प्रभु जो लुकितिंच सदन॥
भीमाचा सिंहध्वनि कोणासःहि आयकों न दे चावेच।
लोडुनि समाधि मस्तक डोलविले आयकोण देवावेच॥
बृद्ध तत्त्व भीष्मार्जुन परित रणी न्यून अधिक ते गमले।
सम लेखाषि तयात्त जाणुनि तद्भुजपराक्रमां रमले॥
सूं सणण सणणणणणण वाजति शरनकर काय हानिकर।
बदले सुरुमुनि करितो नरस्यं रक्ष काय हा निकर॥
शरभी जलबी फुळे कीं देवः पाण्यें पक्षनं तुरले।
कीं काळ व्याल करिं धोरक-भट भेक खावया तुरले॥
कवि योजुनिः उषमा गज-हर-नर-शरतंतिस बाहु रक्षाजो।
अद्वृत बल न कां गर गल कलही हित विजय बाहु रक्षाजो॥
देवासुरायण न बहु त्या कौरव-पाण्डवा हवाहून।
श्रीकितनदींत गंगे स-भट रथ ब्हरदवाल बाहून॥
तिस्रे दिवशीं राया भीमानं अतिरोग कोपानं।
दुर्योधन नृप मुखित केढा भेदुनि उराणं रोपानं॥
The following description of untimely rains given in \textit{ृष्णुकृष्ण} relating to the interview between the two old friends कुंवर and सुभाष is life-like and has noble simplicity about it.

Extracts from other works.

Translation:
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 मन्त्रमाण 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:—

खचराभा नाहीं कों वत्सा हें अन्य गेह बाटतसे।
इतर स्थलासि आलों चुकती अनभिः लोक बाट तसे॥
मरोपांत

चत्सा मज जरि महासी सीतेची हेच होय द्रु-शाला।
तरि मीच रामनामा नसे न साध्वी दिसेल काशाला॥
ते मज बांचुनि नाहीं गेळी गोदावरी-विहाराते।
श्च नदिरहें तींते युग होतें भार मात्र हाराते॥
ते प्रियतमा न हिंसें विघली नाहीच रक भूवरते।
नेलीच राष्ट्रात खणुनी शोधी स्थल समावर ते॥
कोठे जनक-चुंते ने गेळीस धरासुते प्रिये जाये।
न करीं विनोद झाला व्याकुल अत्यंत देख माझा येई॥
तूं काय कोप धेरिला अपूर्व मूष नाणिला महणून मनीं।
तरि चंद्र मूगहि आणून देहन हे तूं अस्त्यें न मनीं॥
अभ्युराला परटोकी गेळिस जरी तूं करावया नमुणा।
पुसल्या बांचुन कैसी हीते झाडीस आज यान-मना॥

न्याचं मजही तेथं अभ्युराची प्रार्थना करून सती।
भरत कहे राज्यांत तुज बांचुनि बांचुनी सुखें नसती॥
राज्य-श्री हरून जरी कैशीं बनास पाठविलं।
तरि तव योंगे ते मीं नाहीं काहीं मनातं आठविलं॥
मज राजकन्यके तूं वर्णीयां पावलीस न चुकाते।
खाते हे चिततं सांगें कोणा मी स्वय:खातं॥
हा कामलाक्षी तनूदरी सुदरी जाये प्रिये अने सदये।
बिधुमुखि पिक-गर्वापह अमुताहुनि गोडसं स्वयं वद थे॥
पंकज बिधु हरे गज पिक चमरी मूष कोर जिकिलेहोते।
tवन्मिराते मांते तव्यंद्रे पीडितील संख हो ते॥
हा प्रियतमे वियोग-ज्वलन-सुखी होमिलंत कां मांते।
बैरी संतोषचिले दाकूनि यातं शरीं सकांतं॥
Moropant.

No critical note on poet Moropant can be complete without a mention of his *Kekavali* or the "Trumpeting of the Peacock."

In this poem the poet (मधुरेश्वर) supposes himself to be a मयूर (pea-cock) and calls his prayers to God *his* केका i.e. crowing or trumpeting. The poem was composed by him in his oldage 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 *गृंड* metre; we shall quote a few of them here for instance:

अतकर्य महिमा तुषा गुणहि फार बा हे विधी।
शुरि न्याथि महें सदा स्तविल आमुचि कवि थी॥

तरी जन यथामति स्तवुनि जाहिे सनमति।
स्तवार्य तुषिया तुह्या सम कवि कर्न्हि जनमति॥

अभो शरण आलिया वरि न वहा कर्न्हि वाणिके।
महणोनि इतुड़िचि हैं स्वभंि-कुल्य जीवाणिके॥

प्रताद करितां नसे पठ विवल्य बापा खरे।
धनांबु न पडे मुखीं उधहिल्या चिना पाखरे॥

शिवे न तुषिया पदा अदयतारन्य दोष भ्रण।
अभो चुकतां तरी करिति दुंचि संरक्षण॥

नसेिनि शरणागति घडिलि सत्य अधापि ती।
हेके विविह ज्या मिले अमृत ते न मधा रिति॥

महणा मज उताविन्दा गुणचि धेतल्या घाबरे।
असो मन असेन्चि बा भजक बाहि मेघाश्रे॥
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 Moropant's poems known to the public of Maharashtra belongs to Ram Joshi. In his youth he composed Lavnis full of sentiments of श्रृंगार (love) but in his oldage, like the Sanskrit Poet King Bhartrihari, he wrote his Lavnis on subjects of वेराग (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 जन्माचवचि नरा करुनि वे नर नारायण गडि।
तरीच सार्थक मानव कुडी ॥ भृं ॥
बा चौन्यांशी लक्ष वेच संसार पड़ला गठां।
चितेचा पिकड़ा मला।
दार-पनाचा लोभ दातुली श्रद्धकर ही वेगल्या।
हा काल उकलिशी पिल्ला।
खला निमित्त जना पुढे तू दाविसि नाना काल।
किली ठूळा मुठांचा ठूळा। चाह।
रूं पड़ू नको याचे भरीं।
तुह्या हैं खापर पुटतें घरीं।
तुला मी गोष्ट सांगतो खरीं।
आतां कर तांतडी।
ही पुन्हा नये बा घडी॥ नरजन्मान्॥ १॥
निपट बाचव्या या विषयाच्या मागें लागविनक्ता।
कां होशी बा घड पिसा।
वयोधनाची कितीं चंचल गति कां धरिशी भरबेंका।
हे सकल मनाला पुसा।
उदरासाठीं दुर्धनिकाच्या पुडूं पसरिशी पसा।
कितीं उगाळलिहं कोल्हंका॥ चाळ॥
हे तुला शिकविलें कुणूं।
दयावृ नर नारायण धणी।
अजुनी तरिक करिं ही घोकूं।
विषववृलीची जडी।
तूं महणालिसं साखर खडी। नर जन्मा मधिं। २॥
(२) अरे काहीं बोल वाणी झालें पहा दिनवाणी।
कां नको वेदवाणी विसाठे मी केंविलवाणी॥ धूळू॥
तुसी माही प्रीत कैसीं रे अरे सहया कोटें नेटी।
कांहीं तरी आण चिरतीं हे काय बोली।
मला बाते कोणी गडवा तुला ध्वारी झाली।
माही नावं धातक्या सोडितें हे त्यां केंवं पाणी।
अरे काहीं॥
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 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
Owī 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 बिहल and जुमानंद of south Konkan. बिहल 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, शुक्ररंभोसंवाद etc. जुमानंद has adapted portions of the Mahabharat in Owī 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-
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 Waghers, 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 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
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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, तुलसीदास, रामजीश्वर, अंतरकंदी, अमाकर, सगन्नाड़ और 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
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, woun-
ded and dismayed before the sword of the sea-dwelling stra-
granger. It is characteristic of the honesty of this class of
poetry that many of the best Marathi ballads commemo-
rate 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
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-con-
troverted question of the death of Afzulkhan. The fol-
lowing five sonnets record in detail the critical circum-
stances under which the Mahommedan Commander met
with his death.

पहिचा सहाम । माशा भवानीशंकराराजा ॥
दूसरा सहाम । माशा शाहाजी महाराजाराजा ॥
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तिसरा सदाम | अमचे अबदुलखानाला ||
शिवाजी सरजे सदाम केला | अबदुलखान युमान केला ||
मर्नी धरलें कपट | पुररूँ कठलें महाराजाला ||
मग तो शिवाजी सरज्याला | खानदापूनी बोलला ||
तुं तो कुणबोका छोकरा | सवरत बच्चाई सदरा ||

इतक्या उपरी राजा बोले | त्या अबदुलखानाला ||
खाना च्याची करणी त्याला | कंधीं एक म्याबें रघुनाथाला ||
तुम्हीं जातीचे कोण | आम्हीं जाणतों तुम्हाला ||
तुं तरी भटारनीका छोरा | शिवाजी सरज्यापर लाया तोरा ||
यावर अबदुल बोलला | शिवा तुम चलो बिजापुराला ||
शिवाजी सरजे नेतां | बहुत दिन दागतील खानाला ||
कठला पुरुषार्थे | तुमच्या वसल्या जाग्याला ||

अबदुल जातका भटारी | तुमने करला हुक्कानदारी ||
इतक्या उपरी | अबदुल मर्नें खवलिला पुरा ||
कवैं मारिलें, अबदुल्लाहं वर | सरजां गवसून धरला सारा ||
चालवली कठचार | सीलबर तू मारा न चले जरा ||
सराईतं शिवाजी | ज्यानें विच्याचा मारा केला ||
उजवे हातीं चिवचा त्याला | वाघनथ सरज्याच्या पंजाला ||
उदरच फाडूनी | खानाची चरबी आणिली ह्यारा ||

खान लज्ञाैंलज्ञा वोलिला | खानाचा लज्ञा बेगिन आला ||
राजांनं पट्टा पडलालिला | अबदुलखानांं हात मारिला ||
शिरोंचा जिरेटोप तोडला | सरजा जरासा दागला ||

1 Embrace; grip. 2 Leader; Shivaji. 3 Armour.
4 Adroit. 5 Sword.
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...
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Shelar Mama on receipt of Shivaji's message, and his bold resolvo to go forth, are described in the following two Chouks:—

मामा बोढ़ाया तो झागळा | देशीं वर्स्चा महातारा ||
लगिन राहिलं रायाबाचं | तोड मजळा सांगावी ||
माइया तानाजी सुभेदारा | जे गेले सिंहळ्ळा ||
त्याचे पाठिरे पाहिले | नाहीं पुढऱे पाहिले ||
ज्यानं आँबा रे खायळा | वाठा बुरजा लाविळा ||
त्याचं झाड होऊन आंबे बांधले | किंवा हातीं नाहीं आला ||
सिंहळ्ळ जिंदगाची बार्ती | काझू नको तानाजी सुभेदारा ||
जे गेले सिंहळ्ळा | ते महतशानी गेले ||
तुमचा सपाटा होईल | असें बोढऱे नको रे मामा ||
आळी सूरमर्द कश्ती | नाहीं भिणार मरणाला ||
मंग रायाबा तो बेटा | बाबाच्या जवळ आला ||
पेक पेक माइया बाळा | जातों आम्हीं सिंहळ्ळा ||
माझं लगिन करिळ कोण | रायाबा पुसे बावळा ||
लातं नववांता माझा रायाबा | त्याचं लगिन माणीं ||
भिंदू नको माझे बाळा | जातों रायगड फिंद्वाळा ||
जाउन सांगतों महाराजाळा ||
सात दिवसांचा वायुदा | वेळजे येंतों तुझया लगाळा ||
आहें मी महाराजांचा चाकर | लखोटा हातांत वेळहा ||
ज्यानं पक लखोटचाचे | बारा लखोटे केले ||
थाणले कागद बोन्याळा | मोठचं मोठचा सरदाराळा ||
पंढरा गांवचे माहंचे | त्यानं आपणा जवळ बोलाविलेले ||
दुसपटीचे मोकाशी | त्यानं आपणा जवळ बोलाविलेले ||
उमराठचाचे जळरके | त्यानं आपणा जवळ बोलाविलेले ||
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The brave reply "आम्रां सूर मद्य कथा । नाही सिनार 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 Kharda. 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.

मंगळवारी नवाबांरी पुढं धाविलें सेनेस।
कलठें श्रीमंताळा बोहू नेलं आपल्या सरदारांस।
करती करावी मसौंत नवाब जाईन म्हणतो पुणियाळ।
परशुरामभाऊ म्हणें कि माहं चं जरी या समयाळ।
जाणा फडणिस सबूरामभापु पुसती जिवबादादास।
जिवबा बोलें गर्जून मोंगठ काय्र आणिला जित्रस।
उडविन बाविल टोप्या झंडे नेंजू लाविन आकाशास।
केलीं वळं पांचजणांशी दिली आणा दुंजायाळ।
Such is the importance of the ballads of the Marathas to which testimony is borne by the high authority of Mr. Aecworth in the following remarks:—

“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 para regarding poetry is not true in the case of prose literature on 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 known of is श्री शिवाजी जी 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 Mallharrao Chitnis of the Court of Kolhapur come next. While पेशव्याची बख़िर dictated by Krishnaji Pant Sohoni to the people of Vaijnath 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 काव्योत्तिहास संप्रभृ 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, Kollapur 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 lahour 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 सन्तकर, शुक्ल, तुकाराम, रामदास and मोरोपंत, 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, Sankara-charya, 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 (बालकिशा) and Halbe's Muktamala (मुक्तमाला). The old romantic stories of
Modem Literature.

śīhāsana bātīśi; veśatā pāchāvāśi and śūkvaśātī 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, मंजुचोपा and भोपलपर while the best specimens of the second class are furnished by आंजकावलया गोष्ठी, पण लक्ष्यांत कोण बोलो, यशवंत-राव खरे, जग हें असें आहे, उप:काल मी &c. from the able pen of Mr. Hari Narayan Apte, the greatest Marathi novelist of modern times, and बाजीराव पेशेवे 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 थ्रो शिवचत्रपति, इन्दुशनांदिनी, आनंदाध्रम and विषव्रक्ष. 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, शशाकुंतल, मृच्छकटिक, वेणीसंहार, उत्तरामचरित, मल्लीमाचर and गसंतराधव. 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 द्वारावतार 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 Ramayan 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. Visnupant Bhave 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 (प्रहसन), 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 त्रांसंस्कृत, सौनढ़ and राजराज्यविचार stand pre-eminent to this day. Among the authors of Sangit dramas must be mentioned Mr. Khadilkar, the well known author of मानापमान, विराटरण, द्वेषदी etc; also Messrs. Kolhatkar and Gadkari. Mr. Dēval also has figured as an able writer of संगीत dramas and his मुच्छक्रटिक, शापसंह्रण or कांवरी 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 Mohommedans by Baji Deshpande, the capture of Sambhaji by Aurangzebe, the battle of Panipat, and the murder of Narayaṇrao 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 अनुदानपादम, प्रत्यंबिका and other dramas of considerable literary merit, V. J. Kirtane the author of जयपाल and योरेवे भाषवरास देववे 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 शिष्णु नाटिका, बांध देशपांडे and गुप्तकर्म. Mr. N. C. Kelkar the author of तोलियांचे बंड and other dramas, Kolhatkar, the author of वीर तनय, गुप्तमंज्रु and other Sangit dramas, and Shirvalkar, the author of पालिपत्ता मुखाबला, 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 Chipulkar’s अनैकालिकांकृतन्तें 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, Bhatc, Kane, Prof. Modak and others. Dikshit’s उपत्तिप्रेषित्स is a very interesting work on Astronomy; also, Raje’s कृषिकविद्या 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’ अद्वैतमांसा and Mr. S. A. Desai’s गोक नीतिमांसा. 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 उपनिषद्द्स. Mr. Kunte’s पद्धतिनांतितिका or Lectures on the six schools of Philosophy and Mr. S. P. Pandit’s वेदार्थयतन 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 प्राचीनसमाज, वेदोपद्धतिप्रकाश by Vishnu Bawa Brahmachari and शास्त्रपद्द्धता 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 गृहार्थस्य, a very able commentary on the Bhagavadgita.

**Law.** Under Law the more important works are the translation of the मिताक्षर by Raghunath Shastri Date, अपकृत्यशङ्क्र by Mr. M. C. Apte and हिंदुस्मर्चाल 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, तिब्बती and वैयजीवन rendered early in this period by Krishna Shastri Bhatawadekar and of बस्मट 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 Bhichandra Krishna and Dr. Dhurandhar. Besides these, there are treatises on Midwifery, Medical Jurisprudence, Surgery and Practice of Medicine. बनापधिगुणाद्वर्षि and संघन विकिन्त्सा 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 (शब्दकोश) which is expected to be a useful work will, it is understood, be shortly out. Still more stupendous task is the शब्दकोश undertaken by Dr. Ketkar., the first part of which is already published. The recent enlarged edition of the महाराष्ट्र सारस्वत by Mr. Bhave of Thana which comes under this head contains much information and is a work of great labour. Mr. Joshi’s मराठी आंवेची 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, विज्ञायतचा प्रवास by Mr. Pavgi, युनायटेड स्टेट्सची लोकस्थिति by Pandita Ramabai, धौम महाबलेश्वर 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 वद्वर्तन, Mr. Ok's हिंदूस्तानी कथारस and मधुमलिका, Mr. Agarkar's केरळीतील निबंध, Mr. Wagle's translation of Bacon's Essays, Pandita Ramabai's छोपर्मनीति, Mr. Gole's ब्रह्मण शास्त्री प्रथांचे विद्या and हिंदू धर्म आणि सुधारणा, Essays in the Nibandh Mala by Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, महाराष्ट्र धर्म by Prof. Bhagwat, भारतीय स्मार्क by Mr. Pavgi, श्रामसंस्था by Mr. Bodas and Mrs. Ranade's आमच्या आयुष्यांतर्गत 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. Chandavarkar, 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 अवलोकनतियांत रंगमाला 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
of these are विविधशास्त्रसाहित्य, मासिक मनोरंजन, नवयुग, चिन्तनमय
जगत् और 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 इंद्रप्रकाश and शान्तप्रकाश, लोक-
संगम and लोकमान्य are daily and the rest, the notable
among them being केसरी, सयाजीविज्ञ, महाराष्ट्र, हंडवासाचिका,
etc. are weekly. Most of the newspapers are well con-
ducted 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. Pondse 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 आनंदस्पीत 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
Review of the First Period.
of Marathi Literature (1200 to 1350
A. D.) is marked by works on अध्यात्म
(Spiritual Philosophy) and माति (Devotional Love).
Mukundraj and Dnyandev revolted against the mono-
poly 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
Review of the Second Period.
1600 A. D.) after a long interval of
about two centuries, Eknath and Daso-
pant who pushed on the noble task
commenced by their worthy predecessors, and besides
inculcating similar principles of religious and social
emancipation, abbreviated in Marathi, the more important
portion of the national epics.

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

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

fourth period 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
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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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>