PHAKIRMOHANA SENAPATI: HIS LIFE AND PROSE-FICTION

by

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ABSTRACT.

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the political and literary importance of Phakirmohana Senapati. The thesis falls into two parts, each of which consists of nine chapters. Part I relates primarily to Phakirmohana's life and part II to his prose-fiction.

The first chapter of part I describes the framework of the thesis and sets out the reasons for its adoption. The second chapter outlines the history of Oriya literature from its inception to roughly 1800. Chapters III, IV and V recount the history of the press and journalism in 19th century Orissa, and describe an important controversy over the medium of instruction in Government schools. This controversy marks the beginning of the Oriya nationalist movement. Chapters VI, VII, VIII and IX relate the life-story of Phakirmohana: his childhood in Balasore; his first career in the local salt and shipping industries; his second in teaching; his third as an administrator; and finally his retirement in Cuttack and Balasore.

The first chapter of part II summarises Phakirmohana's four novels. The second examines the basic plot of Phakirmohana's fiction, his characterisation and the interrelations between these two aspects of his fiction and 'the assumptive world' of his childhood. Chapters II, III and IV study his three main themes, the history of Orissa in general and Balasore in particular, education in 19th century Orissa, and justice. The final three chapters draw the thesis together. Chapter VII brings out the relationship between Phakirmohana's writing and his participation in the nationalist movement. Chapter VIII elucidates the value system he was attempting to promulgate and the aims he hoped to achieve by doing so. Chapter IX falls into two parts:
the first outlines the history of the nationalist movement in Orissa and assesses Phakirmohana's contribution to its development; and the second assesses Phakirmohana's literary achievement in contrast to his two eminent contemporaries, Madhusudana Rao and Radhanatha Ray.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

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Secondly, I should like to express my appreciation to the library staffs of the School of Oriental and African Studies, the British Museum and the India Office.
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**SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION.**
The bargiya and antahsha ब and ऑ of Bengali and Oriya have been transliterated in almost all cases as 'b', but sometimes as 'v'; i.e., when transliterating Sanskrit quotations and in a few proper names, which contain elements that are familiar to readers in a Sanskritic form; e.g., विद्यासागर य and भूदेव. The vaphala of both Bengali and Oriya is a transliterated as 'v' throughout; e.g., विश्वनाथ य becomes Visvanātha.
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PART ONE.
CHAPTER I

The framework of this thesis.

Since it may be felt when reading this thesis for the first time that the discussion of phakirmohana's life and prose-fiction is delayed unduly by the introductory chapters, a word of explanation on the general arrangement of the thesis seems necessary. In Part I the second chapter relates the history of Oriya literature up to 1800, the next two the history of the press and journalism from 1865 to 1897, the fifth the political and journalistic events between 1865 and 1870, the sixth phakirmohana's life from his birth in 1843 to 1864, the seventh his teaching career from 1864 to 1874, the eighth his administrative career from 1872 to 1896, the beginning of his career in prose fiction, and the ninth his years in retirement from 1896 to his death in 1918.

Two things are discernible in this chronological statement: one, the gap between 1800 and 1865; and two, certain recurring dates, 1864/65, 1870/72, 1896/97. The gap is between the waning of medieval and the beginning of modern literature in Oriya. This gap is not unspanned, but it was Bengali literature which provided the bridge between the ornate Oriya poetry of 1800 and the strikingly modern Oriya prose of such people as Gaurisanka Raya in 1865, which has none of the awkwardness of the first prose in Bengali, for Orissa benefited from the experiments in prose style undertaken in Bengal between 1800 and 1865.

The recurring dates 1864/65, 1870/72, and 1896/97 were important both in the history of Orissa and in the life of phakirmohana. 1864/65 was the beginning of the Great Orissa Famine, of the dawning of the Orissan renaissance, and of the literary career of phakirmohana Senapati. 1870/72 marks a turning point in the history of Orissa, when Oriyas such as Radhanatha Raya
began to assume important post in the Education Department. It also marks a turning point in phakirnath's career when he relinquished teaching for administration. 1896/97 was the initial year of Orissa's first major literary journal, *Utkala Sahitya*, and the year when phakirnath was writing his masterpiece, *Cha Mana Atha Guntha*, which marks the beginning of realistic prose-fiction in Oriya. The thesis has been planned around these dates.

The reasons for the inclusion of the introductory chapters are these:

i) phakirnath's reputation rests on both his political and literary importance. To assess these, it was first of all necessary to establish the literary and political context in which he lived.

ii) To have launched too early into a discussion of phakirnath's life and fiction may have created a false impression of his importance. Biography tends to place its subject at the centre of events, but in this case the subject, phakirnath, was rarely at the centre; he was mainly on the periphery. He originated only one thing in Orissa, realistic prose-fiction in colloquial speech, in almost all other respects he followed trends set by others.

iii) It is desirable also to attempt to demonstrate the role played in the Orissan cultural renaissance by domiciled Bengalis such as Gaurisankara Raya, who formed the core of the intellectual middle-class in Orissa in the 1860s, and by sympathetic outsiders such as Rangalala Bandopadhyaya and Bhudeva Mukhopadhyaya, Ravenshaw and Beames. The aim of the Oriya nationalist movement may have been to free Orissa from non-Oriya domination, but its debt to non-Oriyas in the inception of this process ought not
to be overlooked.

iv) Phakirmohana achieved full recognition only posthumously in the 1930s, by which time a genuine Oriya middle-class had emerged and assumed political importance. It was largely in order to bring out such facts as these, that the introductory chapters were included; but there was one other reason.

The coming of printing to Orissa revolutionised its literature. Previously literature had been disseminated by oral tradition. The main medium of literature had therefore been verse, which is easily memorised. With the coming of printing literature began to be disseminated in book-form, and finance became necessary possibly for the first time; for oral tradition is cheap, whereas printing is expensive. It was largely the expensiveness of printing that was at the root of the clash between Bengal and Orissa. Stripped of patriotic sentiment, the real argument was whether the area comprising Assam, Bengal and Orissa could support more than one publishing industry. Was the reading public in that area sufficiently large and affluent to support three printed literatures? If not, was it not sensible to support only that literature which had thrived best in modern conditions, namely Bengali? The opening chapters attempt to show why even non-Oriyas found it to their advantage to say, no.
CHAPTER II.

Outline of Oriya Literature.

Known variously as Utkala, Kalinga and Orissa, this modern state consists of a coastal belt bounded on the east by the Bay of Bengal and encircled from the west by a horseshoe of forested mountain ranges from which pour numerous rivers both to enrich the plains below with their fertile silt and at times to devastate them with their sudden floods. It is inhabited by two groups of people, the Oriyas who are located predominantly on the plains and foothills and a number of aboriginal tribes who remain for the most part in the hills.

The past opulence of Orissa, her artistic powers and her immense 'joie de vivre' stand testified in stone in the exquisite carvings which adorn the facades of her temples and shrines, recording each aspect of her temporal and spiritual life, from the march of armies to the suckling of babes, from the Buddhist and Jain, to the saivite, sakta and vaisnavite. Significantly building ceased as the Moguls encroached on her frontiers.

1) The beginnings of vernacular literature in Orissa.

In most of North India the development of vernacular literature was impeded by the predominance of sanskrit. Vernacular literature did not generally commence till after the Mogul occupation. In this respect Orissa was fortunate in lying contiguous to the Dravidian south, where the tradition of vernacular literature was strong. Vernacular literature took its first hesitant steps in Orissa during the rule of a South Indian dynasty, the Gangas (1042-1435). It was this dynasty
that commissioned the great temples of puri and Puhbanesvara.

The earliest known compositions in Oriya, which are anonymous, are either inscriptions and records or folk literature. Of all the languages in the Indo-Germanic group, Oriya prides herself on the possession of the oldest inscription in a modern language, that of Ananta Varma Vajrahasta Deva, dated 1051 A.D. (1) Oriya's oldest text is the **Madala Panji** (The Drum-shaped Records), which consists of two parts, a chronicle of the main events in the reigns of the kings of Orissa, and a description of the Puri Temple services. The authenticity of the text is controversial. It is argued that its language is not very archaic and its historical statements inconsistent with contemporary stone and copper-plate inscriptions. It is claimed that the original **panji** must have been destroyed by Kala Pahada in 1568, when he sacked Puri Temple, and that the present **panji** was fabricated in the early days of British rule to substantiate the deeds and titles of a certain king of puri and some of his temple servants. This controversy will not finally be resolved until the **panji** has been properly edited. So far only fragments have been published. Even so, it would appear that the historical inaccuracies are few and minor. The **panji** was commenced in 1042 at the command of Coraganga Deva. It incorporates a chronicle of both preceding and succeeding kings. Naturally the earlier section, based on tradition, is prone to error, but from 1042 onwards the chronicle is reliable. (2)

It is impossible to date the commencement or any of the constituent parts of folk literature. Its language and form has been constantly moulded and modernised by each successive

generation, during its oral transmission across the centuries, but on the whole it has remained simple and direct. The literature comprises sayings, songs and stories.

The sayings are in verse and are of two types, dhaga and ðaka-bacana. Dhaga are snippets of wisdom on personal, family and social behaviour. Many a villager has smarted from the stinging satire loaded in a flight of these dhaga from old village women. Two good examples are: "The smartly-dressed steal and the badly-dressed are pursued?; and "Are the words of the woman who sleeps by one's side and whispers in one's ear ever disregarded?" ðaka-bacana (The sayings of ðaka) are common to many regional languages. ðaka is not a person, but a nation; and his sayings are the nation's accumulated experience of agriculture, astrology and commerce. Some are satirical; e.g. "Farming is bending one's back in the sun, not sitting on one's backside in the shade."

The songs are occasional. Some are sung in ploughing, some in children's games, and some at particular social events, as, for example, kândana (weeping songs), sung by mother and daughter, when the latter departs as a bride for her new life with her husband's family. kândana are deeply moving and wring tears from every woman's eye. The line, "It is woman's lot to dwell in the house of strangers", provides the last note of resignation in a favourite kândana.

The stories are similar to our fairy stories. Their characters are generally kings and queens, merchants and their families, the sons of ministers and kings, and demons and witches. The chanting of charms produce supernatural events; human beings become cats and goats; are empowered to understand the speech of birds and beasts; and to travel at will in magic conveyances. The stories are not without moral value, for they demonstrate the triumph of good over evil.
The stories are in prose but are generally introduced, interspersed, and concluded by peculiar jingles; e.g.

"My story's over. The flower is dead. Why did you die, flower? The black cow ate me. Why did you eat it, black cow? The herdsman wasn't watching me. Why weren't you watching, herdsman? My sister-in-law did not send me any food. Why did you not send any food, sister-in-law? My little son was weeping. Why were you weeping, little son? An ant bit me. Why did you bite him, ant? I stay beneath the earth and when I see tender flesh I snap at it."

Told by a humorous grandparent these set the grandchildren squealing with laughter.

The most interesting of the stories strictly fall outside folk literature. These are the brata-kathā (cult tales). Some are translations from Sanskrit, but the original Oriya tales have some of the features of folk literature: simple sentences, straightforward narration and the characters, often merchants and their families. There is a marked improvement in rhetoric and a higher proportion of Sanskritic vocabulary. Some are in prose, some verse, and some a mixture of the two. Their purpose was to establish the worship of various gods and goddesses and their importance lies in the light they shed on the social and religious history of Orissa.

One of the most popular and fascinating is the tale of Taa Poi, advocating sakti worship. A heavenly nymph, Tilottama, once ridiculed Indra, and her co-wife demanded that she be punished. So Indra sentenced her to sixteen years of mortal life. Accordingly she descended to earth as Taa poi, the only daughter of Tanayabanta, a merchant living on an island near Ceylon, which subsisted on maritime trade. Tilottama's co-wife
assumed mortal form as a brahmin widow, whose envy was excited by Tanayabanta's wealth. She determines to sow dissent in his family, firstly by persuading Taa poi to demand expensive toys, and, when this ruse fails, by poisoning the minds of Taa poi's sisters-in-law against her. Thus, when her parents are dead and her brothers at sea, Taa poi's days of luxurious indolence end, and she is forced by her sisters-in-law to endure the hardship of a goatherd. But for the kindness of her youngest sister-in-law, she would have starved to death. In her wretchedness she performs the khudurukuni fast before the goddess Mangala. Her brothers return and find her. She is restored to her former finery and at the instigation of her brothers, when her sisters-in-law come to welcome the boat, she slashes off the noses of all but the youngest. The sixteen years elapse. Taa poi returns to Indra's heaven. By praying to the Siva image of a gabara (an aboriginal tribesman) the sisters-in-law regain their noses and resume marital life with their husbands(1).

This tale reveals the rise of an indigenous merchant class, whose success excites envy in brahmin quarters; the absorption of their indigenous goddess Mangala into a Hindu framework of Indra's heaven; and the revelation of the propitious influence on Oriya society of a gabara image of Siva. Clearly the tale of Taa poi is an important landmark in the progress of the diverse elements of Oriya culture towards cohesion.

Folk literature laid the foundations of the later prose and poetry. Many of the metrical forms of Oriya poetry derive from the dhaga and daka-bacana of folk literature. (2) Creators of nineteenth century prose, Gauri Shankar Ray and

(1) Suryanarayana Dasa, op. cit., pp. 77-80. (2) prabacana prabada, compiled by Sarbeesvara Dasa, Cuttack 1961; p.v.
phakirmohana Senapati, seized on these pithy folk sayings to
wit and vigour to their racy styles. Their usage is now uni-
versally adopted. The folk stories and songs had demonstrated
the power and appeal of familiar scenes etched in homely
speech. And the brata-katha had presaged a synthesis of the
Aryan and indigenous cultures of Orissa. The stage was set
for the entry of a major poet of genius, Sarala Dasa.

ii) Orissa's first major poet, Sarala Dasa. (Mid-15th century)

Sarala Dasa was the name assumed by Siddhesvara parida,
a Sudra, born in the village of Jhamakada in Cuttack District.
His descendants have improved their status to karana (writer-
caste), and their name is now spelt parija. Sarala Dasa wrote
during the reign of the first of the Solar Kings, Kapilendra
Deva (1435-1465). Under the beneficent rays of the Solar
dynasty Oriya literature produced three blooms whose fragrance
still pervades the rural areas even today, the Mahabharata
of Sarala Dasa, the Bhagavata of Jagannatha Dasa and the
Ramayana of Balarama Dasa. No other age ever produced three
works of comparable popularity.

The reign of Kapilendra Deva was turbulent. It saw the
suppression of revolts by the feudatory kings of South Orissa,
the repulsion of Nasir Uddin Mahamad from North Orissa, and
prolonged campaigns in South India, which are said to have
carried Oriya arms to the frontiers of Kerala. These turbu-
lent times are reflected in the Mahabharata of Sarala Dasa.

Criticism of the Mahabharata and Ramayana in Oriya tended
until recently to follow the method set up by pandita Gopinatha
Nanda Sarma, which is restricted to a comparative study
of the Sanskrit originals and their so-called Oriya transla-
tions. Modern critics, such as Narendranatha Misra, have de-
monstrated the folly of this method. In the interval of more
than a thousand years which separate the Sanskrit originals from their Oriya versions, Hindu society and thought had progressed, as is evidenced by the appearance during the interval of the Sanskrit purāṇas. The Oriya versions had thus to acknowledge this progress by incorporating relevant episodes from the purāṇas, otherwise they would have been regarded as retrograde. Thus Saralā Dāsa's Mahābhārata includes episodes from the Haribhāg with bhagavata purāṇas. Furthermore the respective audiences differed. The Sanskrit versions were addressed to an all-India audience of intellectuals. In consequence their settings were on a grand all-India scale and their characters of a dignity and piety to appeal to a primarily brahmanic audience. The Oriya versions addressed a one-nation audience of more worldly outlook and more limited sympathies. Consequently their settings were on a smaller geographic scale, Orissa, and their characters more earthy and human, and recognisably Oriya. This audience craved concrete examples set by characters with a plausible psychology comprehensible to themselves, not philosophical word-spinning. It got exactly what it craved from a fellow peasant, Saralā Dāsa.

Saralā Dāsa has preserved the mere skeleton of the original. There remain 18 cantos, but their sequence and titles to some extent differ. He has expanded and contracted, excluded and included, in accordance with his understanding of the patience and temper of his audience. The fine philosophical speculation of the original contained in the dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, the Bhagavad-gītā, has been reduced to a few rapid lines. The ponderous length of the original dialogue would have vitiated the verisimilitude of this prelude to battle; and in any case the subjects of Kapilendra Deva needed no philosophical inducements to kill and be killed;
their needs were quite the reverse, and सारला दासा was perhaps catering to them in his description of a ahimsa colony in his साभा परबा, which faintly echoes the last cloistered days of King Kharavela of Kalinga and his Queen, who became Jain mendicants.

सारला’s insight into the feminine mind is uncanny, as his remoulding of the characters of गंगा and द्राकृष्टि reveals. Mansimha writes,

"गंगा is a psychological absurdity in the original work, killing her children as soon as born in spite of a romantic marriage. In सारला’s work her behaviour acquires psychological plausibility because hers is an arranged marriage, much against her own inclinations and she frankly tells her royal husband that she is in no mood to love him, that she had agreed to be his wife only to honour her father’s pledge."(1)

द्राकृष्टि loses some of the loftiness of the original but her loss in dignity is more than compensated for in her gain in psychological depth. Out of the Oriya verses emerges a woman whose conduct is dictated neither by व्यासः nor by सारला दासा, but by the laws of the feminine psyche. She protests when marriage to the पांडवas transports her from palatial splendour to a potter’s hovel; she taunts the पांडवas with lack of virility, when they stand by in silence while she is subjected to indignities at the court of the कौरवas; she confesses in the ‘true mango’ episode, which is peculiar to the Oriya, that in spite of the possession of five husbands, she occasionally experiences a desire for the handsome कर्णa. Such behaviour detracts nothing from her greatness, however; she remains great, not as an ethereal संस्कृती superwoman, but as an earthy daughter of the Oriyan Eve.

(1) Mayadhara Mansimha, op.cit., p. 55.
Sarala's epic is solidly interwoven in the evolving pattern of Oriya literature. The myth he coined about the metamorphosis of the unburnt heart of Krishna into Lord Jagannatha has been resung in countless ballads and mystery plays and is current in Bengal in Kasirama Dasa's Jagannatha Mangal Kabya. Many of his lines are re-echoed in proverbs and many of his episodes have been elaborated by later poets, notably Upendra Bhanja and Radhanatha Raya. Clearly this epic is now embedded in the national consciousness of Orissa. Four attempts have since been made to popularise faithful versions of the Sanskrit, but no Oriya will look at them. For an Oriya the original Mahabharata is that of Sarala Dasa, whose epic therefore deserves to be classed as an original work.

Sarala's other works are the Candik Purana and the Bilanka Ramayana (based on the Sanskrit Adbhuta Ramayana), in which the poet, as a devout saktta, demonstrates the superiority of the female principle (prakrti) in the form of Sită over the male (purusa) in the form of Rama.

iii) Oriya Vaishnava Literature: The Age of the panca sakha.
(late 15th-early 16th century)

Sarala Dasa wrote during the reign of the first of the Solar Kings (1435-65). His most important successors, the pancâ sakha (five friends), Balarama, Jagannatha, Ananta, Yasobanta, and Acyutananda Dasa, wrote during the reign of the last, Prataparudra Deva (1495-1532). In many respects they continued Sarala's tradition, for they made more of the Sanskrit puranas available to the masses in simple memorable language; they carried forward the progress towards cohesion of the Aryan and indigenous cultures; and they continued to bring down the gods to the dusty earth of Orissa.
Balarama Dasha comes closest to the Saralā tradition. Being like Saralā a peasant, Balarama makes Ayodhya not a city of splendid houses and palaces as in Valmiki's Rāmāyana but an Oriya village of mud and thatch. Kailasa becomes Kapilasa Hill in Dheñkanāla and the followers of Rama the forest tribes of Orissa. Balarama's Lakṣmi purāṇa suangā brings Viṣṇu, Balarama and Lakṣmi to dwell in Puri. His skill in giving them 'a local habitation and a name' has endeared his work to the masses. It was recently filmed and proved an instant success. It tells of the domestic upheaval occasioned by Lakṣmi's visit to the home of an untouchable; she is forbidden the house by Viṣṇu (Jagannātha) at the command of his elder brother Balarama (Balabhadra); but the decline in their comfort soon convinces them of their error.

There are, however, fundamental differences between Saralā and the pāñca sakhā. Saralā was a sākta. As such he stressed the tāmasika strand in man's nature, his darker, more elemental instincts of violent vitality. The pāñca sakhā were Vaiṣṇavas. As such they stressed the sāttvika strand, man's idealistic yearnings for truth and justice. Their most enduring works, the Rāmāyana of Balarama Dasha, which proclaims the vision of the ideal Hindu state, and the Bhāgavata of Jagannātha Dasa, which through its perennial popularity was to become the banner of Oriya nationalism.

The most striking difference between Saralā Dasha and the pāñca sakhā was in the image they projected upon the popular mind. Saralā's image is of a man of humble origins and human failings, who through his piety becomes the spokesman of his goddess and sings the songs that she dictates in his dreams; i.e. he is the true servant (dāsa) of his goddess. The pāñca sakhā have no such humility, Balarama Dasha in particular. Balarama was once imprisoned for daring to impersonate a brahmin
on the Mukti Mandapa (a position reserved for only the most venerable of the orthodox in Puri Temple) and attempting to expound the Vedānta. He claimed that by placing his hand on the head of an illiterate he could enable the man to expound the Vedānta. On proof of this claim he was released. On another occasion he attempted to mount Jagannātha’s car during the Car Festival and was contemptuously thrown down by the brahmans. Infuriated by this public humiliation, he berated Lord Jagannātha, as he relates in his Bhāba-samudra.

"It was typical of you, Jagannātha, to let your wife go to Rāvana. Why did you censure another for looking after your wife, when you were incapable of doing so yourself?"

The anger here is of a man forsaken by the god who was his intimate friend. The depth of his loyalty and devotion should have protected him from affronts of this nature. Jagannātha was indeed moved by this insult to his devotee. His car was immobilised and remained so till King Pratāparudra, urged in a dream by Lord Jagannātha, begged Balarama’s forgiveness.

The significance of the arrogance of the panca sakha is probably this. The fusion of the Aryan and indigenous cultures had progressed at such an alarming rate that within sixty years or so of Saralā Dasa the lower castes under the guise of Vaiṣṇavism and their devotion to an essentially tribal god, Lord Jagannātha, were threatening the established social hierarchy; caste was being negated. The movement was reinforced by trends in Hindu thought that were sweeping through the whole of North India. Hindus were seeking to settle their doctrinal and sectarian differences in a return to the worship of a formless Brahma. Guru Nanaka and Mahātma Kabir especially
were propagating this idea in reaction to the proselytising efforts of Muslim rulers(1). Both of these had visited puri. In Orissa the Vaisnavism propagated by the *panca sakha* based itself upon the worship of this formless Brahma, whom they identified as both Viṣṇu and Buddha, and both as the Void (*śunya*). This intricate concatenation of identification links the three strands of religious thought in Orissa: the aboriginal (*Jagannātha*); the Hindu (*Viṣṇu*); and the Buddhist.

The acceptance of the Buddha as the ninth incarnation of Viṣṇu and the description of both as Void (*śunya*), Buddha by virtue of his attainment of *nirvāṇa*, and Viṣṇu whilst floating on the oceans of destruction, have tended to facilitate their identification with Lord Jagannātha, but exactly how and when the three became identified and in what order remains a mystery. Jagannātha was originally a tribal god worshipped in the form of a blue stone (*salagrama*) by the *gabaras*. There is a legend in *Srraya’s Mahābhārata*, later elaborated by Bīpra Nilāmbara in his *Deula Tola Suṅga* (the Building of puri Temple), which relates in allegorical form the aryанизation of this tribal god, Niḷa Mādhaba, as the wooden Jagannātha. The legend accounts for much, but not all, of the ritual surrounding Jagannātha. The triad of images, Jagannātha, Bala-bhadra and Subhadra, their sister, is unique. Hinduism generally proclaims a dyad of male (*puruṣa*) and female (*prakṛti*) united by marriage. This triad is united by blood. Scholars now argue that the triad is none other than the three jewels of Buddhism, the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the *Sangha*, and that the object that is secretly transferred from the old to the new image every twelve years when Jagannātha assumes a fresh bodily form is none other than a Buddhist relique. The non-observance of caste distinctions in the presence of Lord Jagannātha also suggests a Buddhist origin of the puri Temple site.

(1) *Suryanārāyaṇa Dāsa*, *op. cit.*, p. 197.
The path, advocated by the *panca sakha*, to the realisation of the Void is *jñāna-mīra bhakti* (a combination of the paths of knowledge and devotion). They had adopted the doctrine of the Nātha Cult, *pinda-brahmānda*; i.e., the formless Brahma, who pervades the universe (*brahmānda*), is of the same essence as the human soul, encased within the *pinda* (body). Thus knowledge of one's own soul is knowledge of Brahma and is to be attained by severing sense connection with the world and withdrawing into oneself by means of either rāja or ḫatha yoga, both of which are advocated. Having thus attained knowledge of Brahma, one then expresses one's devotion (*bhakti*).

The Vaiṣṇavism of the *panca sakha*, therefore, differs markedly from the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism of Caitanya, which at first failed to gain support in Orissa when Caitanya came to Puri to propagate it in 1510. Caitanya became acquainted with the *panca sakha* and was much impressed by their qualities, especially those of Jagnātha Dāsa, on whom he conferred the title *ātmbada* (very great). Late in life Balārāma Dāsa attempted to imitate Caitanya's swoonings and religious ecstasies, but only earned for himself the title 'Mad Balārāma' (*Matta Balārāma*). Though slow to gain acceptance in Orissa, the diffusion of the songs of Vidyāpati on the Rādha-Kṛṣṇa theme gradually prepared the ground for converts, and after Orissa fell to the Moguls, Oriyas began to adopt the religion and its romantic literary theme.

The age of the *panca sakha* forms a link in a chain of ages in which Buddhism, in either overt or covert form, has found literary expression in Orissa. Some scholars claim that the earliest lyrics of Orissa are the so-called *bandha gāṇa* *Dohā*, written in an *apabhrama*, which is said both to bear strong affinities to Oriya and to contain imagery reminiscent of Orissa's tribal life. These are alleged to date from the 7th-9th centuries. Buddhism was suppressed, but reappeared in
disguised form in the 16th century in the works of the \textit{panca sakha}. Again if faded, only to reappear in the early 19th-century in the songs of Arakṣita Dāsa and Bhīma Bhoi, the propagator of the so-called \textit{Mahima dharma}. It would seem that Buddhist sentiment, characterised by a yearning for a formless god and a casteless society, were never far from the Oriya mind. It was probably this sentiment which underlay Orissa's acceptance of the \textit{Brahma Samāja} in the 1860s.

iv) Ornate poetry in Orissa in the 17th and 18th centuries, notably that of Upendra Bhanja (1670-1720).

The reign of prataparudra Deva and the age of the \textit{panca sakha} constitute the autumn of Orissa's power and glory. In 1568 the last Hindu king of Orissa fell; and thus began the winter of Orissa's long decline. For almost 250 years semi-anarchy reigned. In the hills, unchecked by any strong overlord, the feudatory rulers broke free and fought among themselves. On the plains \textit{Moguls}, Afghans and Marathas battled in turn for power and plunder. From the coast fled Lord Jaganmātha, anxious for the safety of both his treasures and person. In the winter of her decline Orissa stood like her temples, those architectural marvels of Bhubanesvara, puri and Koniara, exposed to the merciless elements of \textit{Mogul} India, a victim to erosion and decay.

Paradoxically the political decline of the nation brought belated prestige to the language. Oriya, long despised as a literary medium by the upper castes, became suddenly fashionable in the courts of the newly-independent feudatory lords; and enticed by royal patronage, brahmins and kṣatriyas, rushed to compose in it. This change in author and audience produced a change in literary tastes. The prime purpose of literature had hitherto been the communication of sacred knowledge. Comprehension had therefore been essential. Consequently, the
language had been as simple and lucid as possible. Both author and audience had been motivated by sincere religious convictions and both had acquired merit by their respective acts. This is not to deny that the works produced had been entertaining; for they would have failed in their purpose if they had not been; but entertainment was secondary. The character of the literature now produced by the learned court poets was the absolute opposite. Their theme, either the doings of Rama or the romances of Krsna, was already known to their audience, either through the Sanskrit of Vyasa and Jayadeva, or the Brajaboli of Vidyapati. When the theme is known, comprehension ceases to be essential; simplicity and lucidity of language yield pride of place to wit and charm of expression. The aim is no longer to inform, but to entertain and enchant with displays of scholastic profundity and linguistic dexterity. Poets ceased to communicate knowledge and concentrated on the communication of emotion. Religious sentiment found expression in sensual imagery: yearnings for spiritual union with God in descriptions of physical union with woman. Poets toyed with linguistic music at the expense of grammar.

This trend of ornate poetry reached its culmination in the works of Upendra Bhanja (1670-1720). His personal life was not without drama. His grandfather, Dhananjaya Bhanja, himself a renowned poet, was King of Chhumusara, one of the feudatory states of Orissa. As a result of court intrigues, Dhananjaya was poisoned in 1701, and was succeeded by Upendra's father, who managed to hold the throne for only four years, after which he was forced to flee to Nayagada, accompanied by Upendra. Despite these upheavals, Upendra seems to have spent a life of domestic and artistic felicity, untroubled by political ambition. There are stories, probably apocryphal, which indicate that Upendra's poetic career started in emulation of
his grandfather. It is said that when Dhananjaya solicited his grandson's opinion of his Raghubilāsa, Upendra spoke slightly of it, implying that he could do better himself. When urged to prove it, Upendra did so by producing his Baiḍeḥisabiliāsa.

Upendra Bhanja was extremely prolific. He has between 70 and 80 major and minor kābya attributed to him. Some are based on paurnīka themes, some are entirely fictional, but all are cast in virtually the same mould: a prince and princess experience a mutual attraction; are married and experience the joys of union; are separated and experience through the six seasons the sorrows of separation; and are finally reunited and experience the joys of reunion. But these regal puppets dancing to the dictates of a mechanical plot come like petrushka at moments suddenly to life, and their songs of love and yearning burst through the bonds of their commonplace plot and express a joy in the pleasures of earthly passion that is startlingly uninhibited, and universal. It is as if Upendra is the eternal adolescent, transfixed in the first excitement of sexual passion. He never progressed beyond this single moment of time. He apparently never knew a mature form of love. He remained an eternal Romeo singing to the balcony of his youthful Juliet.

Upendra Bhanja has suffered much at the hands of the critics. But what critics now see as faults, contemporary audiences saw as virtues. He spends the whole of the second canto of premasudhanīḍhi (Love's Nectar Treasure) on a description of his heroine's eyes. To contemporaries this was probably a 'Tour de force'; to moderns it is an endurance test. On the other hand, one famous passage in his Kotibrāhmaṇḍasundarī (The most beautiful woman in 10,000,000 worlds) is so condensed as to describe three seasons "in one and the same poem; the entire lines give us the rainy season, the lines by drop-
ping the initial letters give us the winter season, and by dropping the first two letters, the summer season"(1). In order to introduce each line of his great epic, Pāideśīsa-bibhāsa, based on Balarama Dāsa's Rāmāyana, with the same letter, he scoured every available Sanskrit lexicon to find words with the required initial (b), which might at a pinch express his meaning. The dictionary drudgery this imposes upon modern readers has almost alienated their sympathies; but it should be remembered that Upendra was composing neither for the masses nor for the hurried modern reader, but for a highly cultured, leisured class, who delighted in classical allusions and philological expertise. Upendra was not unaware of the unintelligibility of some of his passages and produced his gītābhīdhāna, a lexicon explaining unfamiliar words. Such a venture must not be regarded as a confession of failure, however; but rather as a mark of scholastic success, for a commentary was visible proof of profundity and nothing in Oriya had ever merited such a distinction before. In short Upendra's faults all derive from the literary fashion of his day, the attempt to apply Sanskrit poetics to Oriya. The bitterness of the critical attack upon him is proof of only two things: one, how well he succeeded in his self-imposed task; and two, how greatly literary fashions have changed.

Upendra may have his modern detractors, but none can deny his signal service to his language and country. In the 1860s when in urban communities Oriya literature was in danger of being forgotten, it was the songs of Upendra Bhanja as sung by strolling mistrels that attracted people such as Gaurīsāṅkara Rāya and his associates to try to preserve their literary heritage by collecting and printing it. Thus there may well be truth in the popular adage: the songs of Upendra are

(1) B.C. Majumdar, Typical Selections from Oriya Literature, Vol. II. p.xix.
like the coconut, the outside is hard, but the inside delicious. It was the delicious insides of Upendra Bhanja's coconuts that helped to save the Oriya language from political extinction.

v) Other 18th and early 19th century poets.

Upendra Bhanja's ornate style of poetry continued to be cultivated by contemporaries and successors till well into the 19th century. Numerous works of a high order were produced on the twin Vaishnavite themes of Rama and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Among the most outstanding were Dīnakṛṣṇa Dāsa's Rāsa-Kalolā (early 18th century), Abhimanyu Sāmanta Simha's Rīdagha-Cintāmani (late 18th century), and Kabiśūrya Ḍalaśebaugh Ratha's Kisoracandra Čampu (early 19th century), a masterpiece, whose technical intricacy continues to constitute the touchstone of talent in aspiring musicians. Not all the poets of the period favoured the ornate style, however; Gopālakṛṣṇa Pāṭṭanāyaka (early 19th century) produced a song-cycle on the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa theme, whose appeal consists not in the fashionable linguistic embellishment, but in its sincerity and freshness. It abounds in beautiful lines; e.g. "I shall be eternally telling the rosary of his beauty and virtues"; "A year's looking passes like a moment's and a moment of non-seeing seems like an endless aeon."

Away from the royal courts, however, the earlier traditions were maintained. People such as Pitāmbara Dāsa, for example, continued to produce purānas for the edification of the masses, and by the early 19th century strong echoes of previous periods were being heard again. Arakṣita Dāsa and Bhīma Bhoi were again propagating Buddhism in new guises. Both denounced idolatry and caste. Arakṣita Dāsa declared,

"I have taken food from all households, from the Brahmin and Chandala. Thou art in all. Milk from
cows of many colours is white. The blood of all people is red."(1)

And Bhima Bhoi sang,

"It is in utter ignorance that people prostrate themselves before idols ... They have not learnt to surrender themselves to the One, who created their bodies and souls, but run to wooden figures and say, 'Oh, save my life!'"(2)

And a little earlier Brajendranātha Bādajena (1730-1795) had been writing a story-cycle, catur-binoda (four entertainments), which, although addressed to a courtly audience and being in consequence somewhat erotic, was nevertheless couched in a homely prose, that was redolent of folk literature. His Samara-Taraṅga (Waves of War) is reminiscent of Sarala Dāsa. Not since Sarala had an Oriya poet sounded war's trumpet. Samara-Taraṅga has the authenticity of a war-memoir. All the horror and the glory of contemporary campaigns are vividly evoked. The naming of historical persons and descriptions of the engagements in which they took part during the Maratha struggles in Orissa adds immeasurably to the poem's interest and value.

Thus during this period, generally referred to as the age of Upendra, two streams of literary creation are discernible, an ornate stream in the royal courts of the feudatory states and a simple purāṇika stream among the peasantry. Both are important in view of future events: the feudatory princes were now committed to the patronage of Oriya literature; and the popularity of the purāṇas had raised the standard of literacy among the peasantry. Both of these factors had a

(1) Quoted by Mayadhara Mansimha, op.cit., pp. 149-150.
(2) " " " " " " " " 153.
powerful part to play in the growth of nationalism in Orissa, especially in its initial phase, the struggle to save the Oriya language from political extinction.

British rule benefited some regions of India and harmed others. Bengal, Bombay and Madras became presidencies, and their capitals became great commercial and political centres. These regions prospered at the expense of others such as Orissa, whose commerce and administration was subordinated to them. Orissa probably suffered more than most. She was comparatively late in coming under British rule (1803), and in consequence was partitioned for administrative purposes. Part of South Orissa was incorporated in Madras presidency, part of West Orissa in the Central provinces, and the major part of Orissa, the coastal belt comprising the districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore, and the feudatory states came under Bengal. The feudatory states were technically independent, but, since they accepted British paramountcy, their administration was supervised from Cuttack and they were therefore indirectly subordinated to Bengal.

The partition of Orissa and her economic and political subservience to other regions placed Oriyas at a disadvantage. They were reduced to the status of linguistic minorities in large administrative zones, where the major language was either Telugu, Hindi or Bengali. The danger inherent in this situation was that Oriyas would be compelled to adopt the majority language of their respective zones for administrative and educational purposes, and in so doing lose their identity as a separate nation.

This was a very real danger, for by the 1860s the process had already begun. The major part of Orissa was well on the way to being absorbed economically and culturally in Bengal.
Bengalis held most of the key-posts in the administration; the Oriya landed aristocracy was being gradually ousted by Bengalis on the coastal plains; and the teaching staff, textbooks and medium of instruction in government schools were predominantly Bengali. Paradoxically, the process was checked, not by opposition to Bengali culture, but by emulation of it, as will become clear in the course of the following three chapters.
CHAPTER III.

printing in 19th Century Orissa.

The first printing press in Orissa was established in 1836 by European missionaries, who had experience in Benga­
al to draw upon, but the difficulties facing the indigen­
ous pioneers of publishing in Orissa were enormous. prac­
tically no one had any conception of what printing was.

Mrtyumjaya Ratha relates how a man carrying a palm-leaf
manuscript under his arm approached Gaurisañkara Raya, the
editor-manager of Cuttack printing Company. "please print
this for me, baba, " the man said, presumably thinking
that the manuscript had only to be placed on top of the
press for it to be instantly printed on paper. (1) And
phakirmohana Senapati relates how he took advantage of
the ignorance of the general public to save face, when his
first attempt at printing failed.

"It was joyfully proclaimed that printing would
commence. Half the shops in Motigunj Bazar
closed. Even the city's most prominent people
came to see the printing. The crowds in front of
the printing works filled the road and brought
the passage of pedestrians to a standstill. The
type was set up and placed in the press. A
wooden rule was rolled over the type, applying
the ink. The paper was put in place. Hundreds of
people looked on with bated breath. What is this?

(1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogì Gaurisañkara, 1st edition,
Cuttack, 1925; p.25
Not a single letter is printed! The paper is just stained with blobs of ink. The printer stood stiff and crestfallen... We were speechless with shame... Then the question burst on us from every side, 'Where's the print?' 'The paper is only inked today. Afterwards this ink will turn into letters,' I managed to reply with some difficulty."(2)

The original publishers were themselves almost as ignorant and inexperienced as the general public; their chances of success were minimal; yet, strangely enough, the two first indigenous presses were among the most successful.

i) Orissa's first indigenous press, Cuttack printing Company.

The first indigenous publishing venture in Orissa was what became known as Cuttack printing Company. The impulse behind the establishment of this press was the desire to disseminate old Oriya literature. Gaurśaṅkara Rāya, who became manager of this press, set out the reasons behind its creation in an address to the Utkala Sahitya Samāj (Orissan Literary Association) shortly before his death.(3)

In his childhood (he was born in 1838) there were no Hindu books printed in Oriya, with the exception of the Nātikatha and the Hitopadesa printed by the Mission press. This meant that members of his generation were cut off

(2) Phakirmohana Senapati, Atma-jībana Carita, 6th impression, Cuttack, 1961; pp. 54-55.
(3) Quoted verbatim by Mrtyumjaya Ratha, op.cit., pp.17-20.
from the culture inherent in their native literature, for in the village _catasthis_ no attempt was made to teach an appreciation of literature. The one or two manuscripts he had read (4) at the _catasthis_ were intended merely for reading practice; comprehension was not considered necessary. In the Mission School he had read only the _mitikatha_ and the _Hitopadesa_. Consequently, by the time he left school he was virtually ignorant of Oriya literature.

Fortunately, in Gaurisankara's childhood there was still a living tradition of cultivating literature. "Educated adults used to get together in each village and read and discuss literature; and since most of it was written to a regular rhythm to be sung, they used to sing it too." After leaving school and entering government service, he heard one or two verses of the _Baidhisabiliya_ from his colleagues in the _kaceri_, and was captivated. He gradually acquired the habit of reading and discussing such works as _prema-sudha-nidhi_ and _abanyabati_ for an hour or so each evening with his friends, Banamali Simha, Radhambhana pattnayaka and Jagamohana Lal. (5) Gradually the desire took root in their minds to communicate their literary enthusiasm and delight to others, by setting up a press and publishing the old texts. The result was the Cuttack Printing Company.

(4) Notably the _Gopibhasa_, which was the first text in the _catasthis_.
(5) Mityumjaya Ratha comments pointedly: "He was not one of your modern men of letters, whose cultivation of literature (thanks to the abundance of books now available) consists of hurriedly reading a mass of books. He studied literature properly: no matter how small the amount, he discussed every detail and communicated it to others." _op.cit._, p.16.
The original leader and moving spirit behind the establishment of the Cuttack printing Company was not Gaurīsaṅkara Rāya, but Bicitrānanda Dāsa. (6) Bicitrānanda was born in 1827. His family was well-known throughout the Mogul Bāndī. They held high office and were influential in government circles. Bicitrānanda was not without intelligence and as a child he quickly mastered Persian, but, being an only child, doted on by an aged father, he soon lost interest in school work. Even gaining admission to Cuttack High School failed to increase his concentration on his studies for long. He left school at fourteen and, after working as a salt contractor, he was appointed as a minor clerk in the Collector's kaceri in Cuttack in 1844. In 1860 he was promoted to sirastādāra to the Commissioner, Mr. Trevor, which increased his influence considerably. His youthful colleagues, Jaganmohana Rāya and Gaurīsaṅkara Rāya, fired him with enthusiasm to work for the community. Bicitrānanda became convinced of the desirability of setting up a new press in Cuttack. He canvassed the support of the mahārājas and rājas of the Gaḍajēṭa Māhāla and the jamīdāras of the Mogul Bāndī. The talented mahārāja of Phenkānāla, Bhagāratha Mahāndra Pahādāra, showed considerable enthusiasm and sympathy. Orissa's new Commissioner, Mr. T. Ravenshaw, was also disposed to help. Thus under his auspices and with the support of the mahārāja of Pheṇkānāla, Bicitrānanda sought shareholders, and found them in the Gaḍajēṭa kings of Tālcer, Baḍambā, Nāyagāda, Aṭhagāda, and Nārasimhapura; the jamīdāras of Kendrāpada, Koṭhadesa and Bhīṅgārapura; and many other patriotic people of means. (7)

(7) ibid., p. 23.
The printing Company was formed with a capital of Rs. 7,500, or 300 shares; and whilst still in full-time Government service, Gauriśaṅkara was appointed manager, initially without payment.

The company commenced operations on the 1st of July, 1865, temporarily housed in the sitting-room of one of the shareholders, Jaganmohana Raya, and equipped with only a lithograph. Their first requirement was a skilled calligrapher, for the text to be printed had first to be handwritten on stone tablets. Fortunately, calligraphers of the required standard were not hard to find in those days, for calligraphy had been a respectable and lucrative craft under the Hindu rājas and Mogul pādas. Most extant portraits of Mogul emperors were executed by contemporary calligraphers. (8) At all events, a calligrapher, Bhāgīrathi Śāthiyā, was engaged and did the company much valuable service.

The company carried on in this way for four or five years. Then in 1870 it acquired a modern press and brick-built premises in Daraghā Bazar. Even so, lithography was not altogether abandoned. Owing to the lack of blocks for printing illustrations, illustrated books continued to be lithographed until 1883. (9)

Under Gauriśaṅkara's management the company initiated the collection and publication of the old literature, the purāṇas and religious texts. It also published contemporary literature, though, as Gauriśaṅkara later admitted, (10)

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(9) ibid.,p.25. Lithography was used as late as 1888 for illustrations in Naba Sambāda. See Priyaranjan Sen, Modern Oriya Literature, Calcutta, 1947; p.48.
(10) Address to the Utkala Śāhitya Samāja, quoted by Mrtyumjaya Ratha, op.cit., pp. 17-20.
the old literature sold better than the modern. At the instigation of Bicitrananda and gaurisaṅkara, an almanac was also published, Utkala pañcikā. It was compiled by three eminent astrologers, pandita Sarbesvara paṭṭayosi, Candrasekhara Acārya and Harihara Khadiratna. At first it was written in verse but later, when this was felt to be troublesome, it was written in prose. Some years later the famous pāṭhāni Śemanta’s New Almanac was published by the company. The increased rate of publishing necessitated the opening of an adjacent bookshop to facilitate sales. This proved a particularly profitable departure. After Gaurlisaṅkara’s retirement from Government service in 1892, when he took up residence in the printing company’s buildings and devoted all his energies to its management, business boomed. The bookshop retained the lead, as far as sales were concerned, right up until 1915, when gaurisaṅkara relinquished all connection with the company. During his 50 years of management he paid out a total of Rs.55,000 to shareholders and left the company with assets exceeding Rs. 40,000. (11)


News of the Cuttack printing Company set off a slow chain-reaction throughout Orissa. The second Oriya press

(11) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, op.cit., p.27. Gaurisaṅkara also acquired sufficient private capital to build Cuttack Town Hall in 1909 at a cost of Rs.11,000; a students’ hostel for members of his own caste (kāyastha) with endowments to provide for its maintenance and free board for students, at a total cost of Rs.14,000; a girls’ school and dispensary in his native village, Diṅgirapāla, in 1913 at a total cost of approximately Rs.7,000; and he also made deposits of Rs.3,000 and Rs.7,000 respectively, so that these two institutions could run on the interest. See ibid, p.93.
P.M. Senapatì and Co., Utkala Press, was established in Balasore. The impulse behind its establishment was similar in many respects to that behind the Cuttack printing Company. Phakirmohana Senapatì writes,

"Whilst teaching at the Mission School, I did my utmost to advance and extend Oriya literature. First of all, I wrote a book in prose, Ràjaputrara Itihàsa. There was only one single press in Orissa at the time, Cuttack Mission Press. I wrote to them and discovered that it would cost Rs.400 to print my book. It was beyond my means, so I abandoned it. Then with Vidyàsañgara's permission, I translated his Jibana Carita from Bengali into Oriya, and managed to get it published by the Baptist press in Calcutta. It was selected as a textbook for the scholarship examination. After that I wrote a grammar and an arithmetic book, both of which were used as school textbooks.

We established a society for the advancement and promulgation of literature. Its members were: Jayakrṣṇa Caudhrȗ, Bholañtha Sàmantaràya, Gobindaprasàda Dàsa, Dàmodaraprasàda Dàsa (the secretary and treasurer), P.M. Senapatì and Ràdhànàtha Ràya. The society resolved to print the old kàbya, beginning with the Rasa-kallojìa; proceeds from its sale were to finance the printing of other books; a company was to be formed to raise the cost of printing Rasa-kallojìa; and shares were to be five rupees each. As a result of three or four months' hard work, a capital sum
of Rs.250 was raised. We then started on the com-
mentary to the Rasa-kallola, continuing each
evening from seven o'clock till nine. Even before
the commentary was completed, it occurred to mem-
ers of the society, that there was bound to be
a considerable lapse of time between the printing
of the Rasa-kallola and that of other works, be-
cause we would be unable to finance the latter
until the printed copies of the former were sold.
On the other hand, if we had a press of our own,
we would be able to print a number of books at
the same time. The Cuttack printing Company had
been established by then. We decided to set up a
printing company in Balasore on similar lines..(12)

The decision to set up a printing press in
Balasore was reached in 1868. It was to be called
'P.M. Senapati and Co., Utkala press'. Shares
were to be five rupees each. Four members of the
society, including myself, set out to raise capi-
tal for the company. Some people bought shares
because they realised the significance of the
press, others in the hope of profit, and many
because of our dogged persistence in asking them
to. After four or five months' continuous effort,
Rs.1,200 were raised and deposited with the
treasurer."(13)

The next problem was lack of technical knowledge and

(13) ibid, pp. 52-53.
printing equipment. They had not the means to hire printers from Calcutta, so phakirmohana sent his cousin Jagannātha there to learn the trade, granting him a monthly allowance of fifteen rupees (out of phakirmohana's own pocket) and instructing him to buy the necessary equipment.

"The press equipment gradually began arriving by ship in Balasore. It took from ten to fifteen days by sea from Calcutta to Balasore, depending upon the winds. Finally Jagannātha himself arrived with the type. The total expenditure to date was Rs.800, leaving a balance of Rs.400, and the press had still to be bought. As a result of inquiries, we found that a press could not be had for less that seven or eight hundred rupees. Were all our efforts in vain? There was a missionary press in Medinīpura. I wrote to inquire whether they had a press going cheap. A press arrived within four or five days, even before the reply to my letter. I understand the price was Rs. 250."(14)

Their first attempt at printing failed, for the second-hand press turned out to be useless. It was a trying time for phakirmohana: Company funds were low; and his hopes of establishing a press seemed doomed to disappointment.

"One trouble invites another. It was Jyeṣṭha

(May–June), and very hot. I had been on the go day and night. What with the worry, the irregular meals and the lack of sleep, I developed dysentery. I passed blood eight or ten times a day. The prolonged bending over the machine to repair it and the constant exertion sent the sweat pouring from me; my clothes were wringing-wet with it; and the flow of blood behind wet my clothes and dripped onto the ground. I fainted when I got home... I told no one of my condition. I talked to people gaily about the press. I forced myself to carry on. I was determined throughout the crisis, either to set up a press, or to die in the attempt.

When one strives disinterestedly and with all one's being in some good cause, the good Lord lends a hand. Kisoramohana Dasa, the brother of Madanamohana Dasa, one of the leading jamidaras and mahajanages in Balasore, was a true friend and help-mate to me. He lent me Rs.800, the moment I asked, without even taking an I.O.U. I ordered a Super Royal Albion press from Calcutta. It was then the rainy season and in Balasore sea traffic was at a standstill. So the press was brought from Calcutta by bullock cart. The Jagannath road (the road from Calcutta to Puri) is metalled now, but it was only a dirt track then, which became impassable in the rains. Loaded bullock carts frequently got stuck in the mud. Coolies had to be fetched from nearby villages to extricate them. The cart carrying our press got
stuck in the middle of Dantan Bazar. It took fifteen to twenty coolies eight days to get the cart through the bazar. Nevertheless, the press arrived in Balasore twenty days after leaving Calcutta.

Our trials and tribulations were now over. The newly-recruited men had learnt the trade, and we were producing excellent print in both Oriya and English. One day the Balasore District Collector, Mr. Bignold, sent for me and gave me his delighted congratulations; and as an encouragement he also placed an order for a large number of printed forms for the kaceri. Thus with a handsome profit, from that order, we were able to make a good start.

The first two or three months of the press were like the Rathayatra: people came from far and wide to see it. Jamidargas used to come in palkis from the rural areas to watch the printing. From the first day that printing commenced till several afterwards, the inhabitants of Balasore swarmed to see the work in progress. This may seem surprising now that printing is so commonplace, but when the first printing press was set up in London, even the King and Queen visited the works to witness the strange event.

Then one morning six months after the opening, Orissa’s great benefactor, Mr. T. Ravenshaw, accompanied by Mr. Bignold and his successor as Collector, Mr. John Beames, visited the works. They inspected the whole press, listened to a brief
history of its establishment, and gave us a gratuity of ten rupees. In stead of pocketing the money, however, we deposited it as two shares in the Company, and after the dissolution of the Company, we returned it to them with profits, a sum of thirty rupees." (15)

It is probable that 'P. M. Senapat and Co.', dissolved in or about 1873, when the Utkala press was presumably taken over by Mahārāja Baikunthanātha De, for we read in Madhusūdana Rāo's Granthābali: "Thanks to the support of Kūmāra Baikunthanātha (the late Mahārāja Baikunthanātha Bāhādūra), who joined them, they put out a monthly journal from Balasore, called Utkala Darpana." (16) This journal was said to be put out by Utkala press, Balasore. (17) Later references to Utkala press describe it as 'De’s Ut­kala Press. (18)

iii) Other indigenous presses in 19th century Orissa.

After the successful launching of the Cuttack printing Company and the Utkala press, other presses were gradually established: the Utkala Hitaisinf press in Cuttack in 1868, founded by a local jamidūra, Kālipada Bandopādhyāya; (19) a Christian press in Berhampur, Ganjam in 1876 (20); a

(17) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Utkala patrika, Cuttack 1920, p. 4.
press in Mayurbhanj in 1881 (21); the Puri printing company in 1882 (22); and it is possible that presses were established in Balasore and Kendrāpadā in 1884 and 1886, for we find references to journals put out from these places at these dates, a Christian periodical, Tārakā (23), and an English-language newspaper, Orissa Students (24). There are also references to a Victoria press, Cuttack, the earliest being 1886. This was probably founded by Madhusūdana Rāo, for he was closely associated with it and had a predilection for the name 'Victoria' (25). The Mahārāja of Bamra, Sudhāla Deba, also founded a press, the Jagannātha Ballabha press in 1889 (26). We also read of the Rāya press in Cuttack in 1894 (27); the Gajapati press in Pārālakhemundī in 1896 (28) and of a press in Tālcner in 1896, founded by the local Rāja, Kisoracandra Bārabara Haricandana (29).

(21) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Utkala patrikā, op. cit., p. 8. Since this press was established under the auspices of the local Mahārāja, it is not unlikely that it is the Rāja press in Bāripadā, Mayurbhanj, referred to by Priyaranjan Sen, op. cit., p. 50.
(22) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Utkala patrikā, op. cit., p. 8.
(23) Ibid, p. 11.
(25) Madhusūdana Rāo also founded a High School of that name in Cuttack. See, Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Svargīya Rāya Madhusūdana Rāo Bāhādura Samkṣipta Jibana Brīttanta, p. x.
(26) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Utkala patrikā, op. cit., p. 17.
Journalism in 19th century Orissa

Journalism in mid-19th century Orissa was a spare-time, unpaid occupation. This was inevitable, since the reading public was not sufficiently large or affluent to sustain a full-time industry. Editorial staff and contributors were drawn mainly from full-time Government servants and teachers. Journalism was therefore subject to the vagaries of their paid employment. Occasionally a group of enthusiasts would band together out of common interest, rally financial support, mostly from the local aristocracy, found a press and launch a journal. A burst of journalistic activity would then ensue. Then one by one the group would disband, as one man was promoted and transferred, and another applied for a post elsewhere. Later the same group would reform, or a new one be initiated by a member of the old group, and the journalistic cycle of literary creation would complete yet one more revolution. Again and again the same names recur in various combinations so that, although a superficial glance at journalism in the last half of the 19th century in Orissa might suggest a fireworks display of scattered and momentary brilliance, a more searching look reveals a steady root growth in the experience of individual editors and contributors, which was eventually to produce such sturdy literary trees as Utkala Sahitya.

Once again the first into the field turned out to be the most stable, Utkala Dipika, which was to run for well over half a century. The longevity of this journal was probably due to two factors: it was an offshoot of the successful Cuttack printing Company; and it enjoyed the unique distinction of being edited by the same man for 50 years, Gauri Shankara Ray(1)

(1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gauri Shankara, op. cit., p. 29.
Since Gauriśaṅkara played such a central role in the history of journalism in Orissa, one ought to try to form an impression of the man.

Gauriśaṅkara came of a Bengali family, which had been domiciled in Orissa since the Mogul conquest in the 16th century. His ancestors had come to Orissa to assist in the first revenue assessment under the Governor of Bengal, Todar Malla. (1) His family had been in government service ever since. He was born in the same month and year as Baṅkim Candra Chatterjee, July 1838. (2) His education began in the same way as that of his immediate ancestors; i.e. Oriya in the village ṇaṭasīlī and then Persian and Urdu in the village maktaba and in Cuttack. By the time he was old enough to attend, there was a High School in Cuttack. (3) Entering at 11, he passed the junior scholarship eight years later and was awarded a government scholarship of eight rupees. (4) As there was then no tuition available in Orissa for the senior scholarship, which constituted the upper limit of education, he prevailed upon his father to allow him to attend Hughly College. His father was reluctant to consent, for he considered it dangerous to send his son to a distant land alone.

Unlike nowadays, English education was then inexpensive. Even so, ordinary people had no particular respect for it or interest in it. They were reluctant to educate their sons in English, when they saw that English-educated youngmen got out of hand and abandoned their religion. Consequently, very few were fortunate enough to be educated in English.

Gaurīśaṅkara was given this opportunity and used it to the full. (1)

He was prevented from taking the senior scholarship by what may seem a strange reason, a proposal of marriage in Bengal. When his father got wind of it, he ordered his son to quit Hughly at once. (2)

After returning to Orissa in 1858, Gaurīśaṅkara worked for a time as a temporary teacher in Balasore, and then he entered Government service in Cuttack. He was competent and held two responsible posts: one, money-order clerk; and two, translator in the law-courts. The experience he acquired in book-keeping and translation was to contribute to his success in his later role of manager, editor and publisher at Cuttack printing Company. As far as government service was concerned, however, he had one drawback: he was outspoken. This gave rise to brushes with his superiors, which might have ruined his promotion prospects. What was a drawback in the service, however, became an asset in his chosen career of journalism, especially as he had the intellect and moral courage to give point and edge to his outspoken convictions.

It had been the intention of the founders of the Cuttack printing Company to publish a newspaper, as soon as the press was properly established. But events moved too quickly for them. Within a month of opening the press, the great Orissa Famine began. They commenced publication immediately under the editorship of Gaurīśaṅkara. In those days editorship was a herculean task and required all the courage and determination of Gaurīśaṅkara, for in his coverage of the famine he was

(1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogī Gaurīśaṅkara, pp. 7-8.
(2) This indicates that some Bengali families long domiciled in Orissa had become alienated from Bengal. The significance of this fact will emerge later.
(3) See following chapter pp. 67-70
drawn to criticise the Government's handling of the situation, and one must remember that he was still a Government servant.

"We are told that the Commissioner, Mr. Ravenshaw, was furious with Gauriṣaṅkara for some of the opinions expressed in Dipikā. But afterwards when he had proof of Gauriṣaṅkara's integrity and stature, he became his life-long friend."

The first number of Utkala Dipikā appeared in August, 1865, almost a month after the establishment of the press. Its second year was reckoned from January, 1866. (2) The second indigenous journal, Bodhadāyini ebam Bālesvara gambadabāhika, was put out from Balasore. Phakirmohana writes,

"Cuttack Printing Company had started to put out a weekly, Utkala Dipikā. This prompted the executive committee of our company to put forward a proposal, which was instantly accepted, to publish a fortnightly journal, Bodhadāyini ebam Bālesvara gambadabāhika. It was to be both a newspaper and literary magazine."(3)

(1) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogī Gauriṣaṅkara, p. 29. Even his enemies were impressed by Gauriṣaṅkara's fine qualities. He once fell foul of John Beames, who was popularly known as Bhima Saheba (Saeb the terrible), because of his temper. Gauriṣaṅkara ultimately emerged triumphant, and it might have been assumed that Beames disliked him, but the news of Gauriṣaṅkara's victory elicited from Beames only admiration: "He is a man in this town" (i.e. one of the few with courage). When Beames was about to be transferred from Orissa in 1878, he sent for Gauriṣaṅkara and said, "You'll be glad to know I'm leaving." "On the contrary," Gauriṣaṅkara replied, "I'm sincerely sorry you are being transferred; we'll never get another Magistrate like you, Sir." ibid, pp. 13-15. (2) ibid, p. 28. (3) Phakirmohana Senāpati, atma jibana carita, p. 58.
Mrtyunjaya Ratha adds,

"Its originators and first editors were a few patriots such as the late phakirmohana Senapati and Govinda Candra Pattanayaka. It commenced publication in July, 1868, as a monthly, ... (and) became fortnightly in 1871. Then from 1871 it became weekly. At the time Bahika was a true rival to Dipika in its discussions of contemporary events. Though the erstwhile fervour of this second journal of Orissa's has gradually waned, Bahika still carries on, thanks to the famous royal family of Balasore."(1)

The third vernacular journal was the Orissa patriot. Priyaranjan Sen writes,

"The Orissa patriot, or Utkala Hitaishini came out in 1871.(2) Behary Lal pandit was the Honorary Manager. It was an Anglo-Oriya publication, published on the 8th and 24th of every month. The vernacular portion was called Utkala Hitaishini. Vol.3, No.1 appeared on August 8, 1873 - after a long interval, after a lapse of 3 years, 'two years and a half', according to the English part of the paper.(3)

"Its motto was: To permit the Liberty of the press is the part (of) a wise government. To preserve it

(1) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Utkala patrika, pp.3-4. W.W. Hunter is presumably referring to these two journals when he writes, "Vernacular journals fight their party battles ... and administer their hebdomadal flagellation of the government." See, his Orissa, Vol. II, p.149. (2) This date is uncertain. Mrtyunjaya Ratha states that the journal came out in 1868. See Utkala patrika, p.4. (3) Possibly Mrtyunjaya is right. The journal may have first appeared in 1868; run at the rate of one volume a year for two years; gone out of circulation for 2½-3 years; and then commenced Volume 3 in August, 1873.
is the part of a free people."(1)

Founded by a local jamidāra, Kālipada Bandopādhyāya, and printed by the Patriot Press (Hitaishini press), it was opposed to Utkalā Dipika,(2) and two other journals, Biḍesi and Utkalā putra.(3) It was presumably the mouth piece of the orthodox, for it was "decidedly anti-Brahmo in tone, as may be seen from an article dated February 16, 1875, on 'Brahmos in a Brahmin Land'.(4) "Thus it became the sworn enemy of many and soon ceased publication". (5)

The fourth vernacular journal was probably Utkalā putra. (6) It would seem to have been conceived some time between 1869 and 1871, when Madhusudana Rāo moved to Cuttack to become the classmate of pyārīmohana Acārya in the First Arts class in Cuttack High School. (7) Of a similar temperament in some respects, they were both attracted towards the Brahma Samāj by the discourses of a Brahma teacher, Hananātha Bhattachārya, and in consequence became firm friends, spending much time together in earnest discussion and literary enterprises. Since space in Dipika was insufficient to carry all that was being written, pyārīmohana, while still a student, launched with the aid of Madhusudana and Govinda Ratha a new journal, Utkalā.

(1) Priyaranjan Sen, pp. 35-36. (2) Mṛtyunjaya Ratha, Utkalā Patrika, p. 4. (3) Priyaranjan Sen, p. 38. (4) Ibid, p. 40. (5) Mṛtyunjaya Ratha, p. 4. (6) There is some uncertainty about the date when it commenced publication. Priyaranjan Sen (p. 43) gives the date as "May, 1873". In Utkalā Patrika p. 5, Mṛtyunjaya Ratha gives the date as 1873; but in his brief biography of pyārīmohana Acārya, in the 2nd edition of pyārīmohana's Odissara Itihāsa, Cuttack 1925, he gives it as 1871. The latter date seems to be corroborated by the movements of Madhusudana Rāo recorded in Svarīgya Rāya Madhusudana Rāo Bāhādūrānka Sāmkṣipta Jibana Britannā, op. cit., pp. iv-vii. Madhusudana passed his F.A. in 1871; stayed in Yajpura 1871-73; and moved to Balasore in October, 1873. (7) Svarīgya Rāya Madhusudana Rāo Bāhādūrānka Sāmkṣipta Jibana Britannā, op. cit., p. iii.
putra in 1871. It was financed by subscriptions. (1)

Utkala putra was indirectly responsible for the abrupt termination of Pyārimohana's education.

"Before Local Self-government was introduced in 1885, the responsibility for sanitation and public health in Cuttack rested upon the District Magistrate. It was financed from the proceeds of the Ferry Tax. Through lack of supervision by the Collector, Mr. 'Eribhing' (2), the town became absolutely littered with rubbish, and an article entitled yoṭamānaṅkara Abedana (The Shoes' Lament) by Pyārimohana appeared in Utkala putra. The blend of unpleasant truth and vigorous language in this article stung the European to the quick. He ordered Candī Babu, the Headmaster of Cuttack High School, to expel the author, but Candī Babu was reluctant to expel such a student. In order to save him, he appealed to Pyārimohana to beg the saheba's forgiveness, but being honest and straight-forward, the youth refused, saying, 'Begging his forgiveness is out of the question. I wrote the plain truth.' " (3)

Mṛtyumjaya continues,

"Utkala putra was too forthright and spirited to reign long on the timid social scene of Orissa. It

angered all and sundry. Its competitor, Utkala Darpana, says of it, 'It is plain from his writings that the editor has no little moral courage and patriotism... but his language is at times too intense. Such intense language does not become a young editor who is desirous of public patronage.'

Priyaranjan Sen adds,

"Regarding the general policy of the paper, it may be added that it advocated women's education... The paper was... critical of the past and the present, though enthusiastic over the national cause."

In 1873 four journals appeared: one in Cuttack, Bidesi; and three in Balasore, Utkala Darpana, Siksaka and Pharmabodhini. Very little is known of Bidesi. Mrtyunjaya says of it only that it was edited by Dinanatha Pandopadhya and put out by Cuttack Printing Company; and that it was highly critical. The most important journal to appear in 1873 was Utkala Darpana. That year Madhusudana Rao became 2nd Master in Balasore District School; Radhanatha Raya was then Deputy Inspector of Schools in Balasore; and Phakirmohana was there editing his newspaper, Sambadabahika. Apparently John Beames was in some way instrumental in inducing Radhanatha to approach Bai-kunthanatha De to publish a new journal from Utkala press.

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To supply it with material, Radhanatha and Madhusudana began translating essays and verse from English and Sanskrit. Radhanatha's Meghaduta and Madhusudana's verse translation of Ayodhyapratyagamana were published in it almost simultaneously. Madhusudana's Pranayara Adbhuta parinama and Candra-tara, both stories, together with Radhanatha's 'novel', Italiya yuba, were also published in it; as also were Madhusudana's poems, Misitha Cinta, Nirbasitara Bilapa and smasana, together with a few essays, Surya, Ulka-pinda, Agneya-giri, smasana-pranal and Buddha-deva. Many of these, together with additional writings, were later incorporated in textbooks by Radhanatha and Madhusudana, (1) principally in their combined Kabita balika and Madhusudana's Prabandhamala. Utkala Darpana was thus the vehicle for the beginnings of modern literature in Oriya. It began as a monthly in 1873, became fortnightly in 1877, and weekly in 1879, which it remained until its expiry in 1884. (2) Mrtyunjaya records that its expiry was due to two reasons; its main contributors were transferred; and it incurred government disapproval.

Whilst in Balasore, in addition to his other activities, Madhusudana launched and edited two journals, giksaka and Dharmabodhini. Both commenced publication in 1873. (3) Though short-lived in this form, they mirrored the twin passions of Madhusudana's life, education and religion (mainly Brahmaism). They were consequently to have many incarnations.

The decade 1873-1883 witnessed a series of short-lived journalistic try-outs. Dharmabandhu, said to have been published in 1874, presumably expired immediately, for there is

but a single-line reference to it. (1) _svadesêi_, described as a trilingual newspaper in English, Telugu and Oriya, was put out by the local Christian community in Berhampur, Ganjam, in 1876.

(2) _Utkala Madhupa_, a monthly, edited by Krsnacandra paṭṭanāyaka, but inspired and managed by the president of the sahitya Samâja (Literary Society), Râmasânkara Râya, brother of Gaurïsânkara, (whose novel, saudâmäni, was published in its pages), was put out from Cuttack printing company in 1878 and expired two years later. (3) The Oriya gazette reappeared in 1879 after a lapse of a few years (it was originally published in 1851) from the office of the government’s Oriya translator to purvey official information. _Mayûrbhanja_ appeared in 1881 from Bâripada and died with its patron, the local mahârâja Krsnacandra Bhanja (who contributed generously towards the foundation of Ravenshaw College in 1876) during the following year. (4) In 1882 three journals were born, _Kohinûra_ in Cuttack, _purusottama_ from Puri printing company and _prajâbandhu_ from Balasore. The popularity of the latter was attributed to its being published from French territory. It also carried articles in Bengali. (5)

Two more journals appeared in 1883, both published by the Cuttack Mission press, controlled by the _sebaka sabhâ_ and inspired by Caturbhûja paṭṭanâyaka, the newly-appointed government translator. They were _sebaka_, a weekly edited by the secretary of the _sebaka sabhâ_, and _saṃskâraka_, edited by Caturbhûja paṭṭanâyaka, who contributed articles on politics, science and literature. The two did not remain separate for long.

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(1) Priyaranjan Sen, p.43. (2) _Utkala patrika_, p. 6. _svadesêi_ is important because of the inclusion of Telugu. It reveals that by 1876 there were believed to be sufficient readers of Telugu in Ganjam to warrant printing newspapers in it. It thus lends weight to the Oriya argument that Oriyas were beginning to forget their mother tongue in areas separated administratively from Orissa. (3) _ibid_, p.7. (4) _ibid_, p. 8. (5) _ibid_, p.9.
Three years later they merged under the title, गःंसकारका ो सेबाका, which afterwards became popularly abbreviated to गःंसकारका. After the merger, गःंसकारका was published under the patronage of the ruler of बांमादा, श्री वासुदेव सुधाला देवा. It attracted articles in both Oriya and English from many of the leading writers. It carried essays, critiques and poems by Candramohana Mahāraṇa, Viśvanātha Kara, Niḷamani Vidyāratna, together, contributions from Rādhānātha, Madhusūdana and Phakīrmohana. During its five years of existence, गःंसकारका effected some social reforms. (1) In 1888 गःंसकारका was reorganised and called ओड़िया पात्रिक (उत्कला हिताशि). (2)

The decade 1885-1895 was not without its short-lived try-outs. The appearance of गःंसकारका in Cuttack prompted that of द्धुमकेतू in Balasore. द्धुमकेतू was run by a group of youthful enthusiasts, including Dvārakānātha Dāsa and Ṣīvanārāyaṇa Nayaka. One of its main contributors was Rādhānātha’s young brother Sītanātha Rāya. (3) In 1885 a monthly called प्राधिपत्र commenced publication in Cuttack. It was sympathetically received by Rādhānātha and Madhusūdana, whose अकास प्रति first appeared in it, but its main contributors were Sādhucarana Rāya, Baikunṭhanātha Datta, Saratcandra Mukhopādhyāya, Mṛgadāra Rāya Caudhūrī and Bhipatinātha Basu. (4)

1886 saw the reincarnations of गिक्षाका and धर्मबोधिनी in a series of journals that उत्कला पत्रिका was to nickname the शैक्षणिक विभाग भाष्य. (5) In 1886 Madhusūdana Rāo was Deputy Inspector for Schools in Cuttack District. One of his chief preoccupations was the provision of adequate training for primary school teachers. गिक्षाबंधु, a monthly journal that he now launched, was part of his campaign to that end. (6)

(1) उत्कला पात्रिक, pp. 9-10. (2) ibid, p. 15. (3) ibid, p. 10 (4) ibid, p. 11. (5) ibid, p. 13. (6) स्वर्गलया राया मधुसुदना राओ बहादुरान्त का संस्कृत संस्क्रिया जैबाना ब्रिटेना, p. x.
All its contributors were practising teachers, Sadhucarana Ray, Bijayacandra Majumdar, Visvanatha Kara and Vyamasundara Nanda. It was allied to Samskaraka in its opposition to Utkala Dpika's criticism of current textbooks. After a short while Sikshabandhu ceased publication (1), but resumed in 1894.(2)

The next incarnation of the 'Education Department Journal' was Nabasambada, January-February 1887. Priyaranjan Sen and Mrtyunjaya Ratha differ over this journal. Sen states that it "started from Balasore, edited by Bhutanatha Basu". (3) Ratha says it was edited by Sadhucarana Ray and published from Victoria Press, Cuttack. (4) It was directly inspired by Madhusudana Rao and, according to Sen, carried the motto: Gatyam eva jayate nanrtam - 'truth alone conquers not falsehood'. Its permanent contributors were Madhusudana Rao, Sadhucarana Ray, Bijayacandra Majumdar and Visvanatha Kara, and its predominant characteristic was its articles on Brahmaism. It failed to maintain its independence for long.

On October 26, 1887, a new weekly journal was published from De's press in Balasore. It was called Odi (Oriya), and was bilingual, comprising four pages in Oriya and two in English. (5) It was edited by Dvarakanatha Dasa. The impulse behind the creation of this journal sprang from the desire to alleviate the difficulties of Jagannatha pilgrims, as its English motto indicates: "Devoted for the welfare of pilgrims visiting Chandbaly." (6) Apparently pilgrims arriving by sea at Candabali sometimes failed to find shelter there and experienced hardship. Odi was presumably intended to publicise this fact and raise funds to provide accommodation. A year later Odi merged with Nabasambada and from then on appeared under the joint title, Odi Nabasambada. This joint venture was

run by the royal family of Balasore. (1)

The merger of Nabasambhada with Odia released once more the journalistic energies of Madhusudana Rao and Sadhucarana Raya for yet one more incarnation of the 'Education Department Journal', this time in the form of Asa, a monthly, which first appeared in October, 1888, (2) edited by Sadhucarana Raya and inspired by Madhusudana, many of whose lyrical ballads and articles it carried, together with numerous articles on religion, education and literature by Sadhucarana, Bijayacandra Majumdar and Visvanatha Kara. One article in particular by Visvanatha Kara, Mahatma Mytinski, released a flood of discussion and praise from the contemporary press, because at that time Orissa too was much concerned with the thought of national unification. Asa was published from Victoria Press, Cuttack, and owned by the Brahma Samaja. It was the cheapest magazine of its day, but lasted initially for only two years, ceasing publication in 1890. (3) It was revived in 1892, under the editorship of Mrs. Reba Raya, (4) the wife of the former editor Sadhucarana Raya. She was the first-known lady editor, and Asa was the first-known journal to be aimed specifically at a female audience. (5) Acknowledging its receipt in Dipika, Gaurisadakara wrote,

"Asa is encouraging. We hope it will achieve popularity with women. The lady-editor ought, however, to make the language simpler."

One of its main contributors was Sasibhusana Raya, secretary of Sahitya Samaja (Literary Society) and son of Radhanath. (6)

1892 witnessed yet another incarnation of the 'Education

Department Journal' in a monthly called Brahman, whose main purpose, as its name implies, was the promulgation of the Brahma faith. Once more it was inspired by Madhusudana Rao and was a vehicle for his religious lyrics and essays. Probably its importance would now be seen to lie in its providing Visvanatha Kara with an opportunity to develop his powers of editorship in preparation for his role as editor of Utkala Sahitya. Before embarking on a discussion of Utkala Sahitya, however, one must return to the year 1886 and recount the other journalistic events that had been occurring concurrently with the many incarnations of the 'Education Department Journal'.

In the decade 1886-1896 five journals appeared which attempted to cater to specific sections of the community. In 1886 an agricultural journal was published by the assessment officer for Mayurbhanja. In the same year Orissa Students was published from Kendrapada, edited by Lakshminarayana Dasgupta. It was sustained for a while on the custom of teachers and students. (1) In 1888 Sāmyabāti, a monthly devoted to religion, morality and temperance, appeared. It was published by Lalitacandra Cakrabarti, who also established a school to propagate his ethics in College Lane, Cuttack, where boys were prepared for both the Middle English and Middle Vernacular examinations. The only other contributor to this journal was Bhupatinath Basu, B.A., the first-recorded graduate journalist. (2) In 1892 Aṣa reappeared, aimed specifically at a female audience. In 1894 a medical journal appeared, Utkala Cikitsaka, intended to publicise the essence of the Ayurveda Sāstra and to rescue the public from the clutches of ignorant vaidyas. It was edited by Dr. Ramakrṣaṇa Sahu, published from the Rāya Press, Cuttack, and financed from Nayagada by the rāja and several distinguished gentlemen. (3)

The majority of the journals to appear in the decade 1886-to 1896 were, however, predominantly literary. Three came out in 1889, Sahitya Samalocana patrika, Dipaka and Sambalpura Hitaisini. As its name implied, Sahitya Samalocana patrika was concerned mainly with the criticism of contemporary literature, including textbooks. It was controlled by Sahitya Sammilani, a literary association formed in 1886 with the following prominent members: Gauri Shankara Raya, Madhusudana Rao, Nimeiballabha Bhattacarya, Kapilashvara Vidyabhushana, Gadadhara Tripathi, kalipada Bandopadhyaya, Jaganmohana Raya, Dinanatha Bandopadhyaya, Caturbhaja Pattanayaka and Rama Shankara Raya. It was published from the Orissa patriot press. (1) Little is known of Dipaka, beyond that it was published from Victoria press, Cuttack, and that Utkala Dipika said of it, "This journal hopes to demonstrate high ideals, for it calls many journalists censorious, self-interested and incompetent. It is reputed to be backed by a lot of big men." (2) Sambalpura Hitaisini was to prove the most durable of the periodicals published that year. It was edited by the talented Nilamani Vidyaratna, financed by that great patron of literature Maharaja Sudhala Deva and published from the Jagannatha Ballabha press in Bamanada. Dr. Mayadhara Mansimha writes, (3)

"To him (Nilamani Vidyaratna) goes the sole credit for the pioneering of the movement for the unification of the scattered Oriya tracts under one homogeneous government in the present state of Orissa. As Editor of the 'Sambalpur Hitaishini' under the auspices of the Durbar of Bhamra, he ... kept alive Oriya patriotism and encouraged the cultivation of Oriya literature in all the mutually exclusive twenty-four ex-native states of Orissa. It was as editor

of 'Sambalpur Hitaishini' that he discovered the poetic genius of Gangadhara Meher in the little-known village of Barapalli and got him started on his career by arranging the publication of his early books ...

"As Editor of 'praja Bandhu' in the district of Ganjam then in Madras Presidency, Vidyaratna first organised a conference of the Oriyas in Madras in 1902, demanding unification of all Oriya tracts. This gave birth to the larger Utkala Sammilani or the All-Orissa Political Conference, which in its first session in 1903 brought to its platform Oriyas from all ranks and parts of the country demanding a homogeneous Oriya state."

The Sambalpura Hitaishini rapidly became the leading journal of its day, for it excelled all rivals in its treatment of contemporary topics and in its cultivation of literature. One of its main contributors was Visvanatha Kara, of whom Mrtyumjaya Ratha writes,

"It would probably be nearer the mark to describe Visvanatha Kara as an extremely talented critic and commentator, rather than as a good creative writer. He may not have been the first critic of Oriya literature in point of time, but he was, we believe, undoubtedly the first in point of taste and judgement. His eloquent criticism aroused the consciences of many sections of the community. He was able to effect prompt reforms, especially in the Education Department."

Some of Visvanatha's articles, which appeared in Sambalpura
Hitaisini, such as Hitabada Niti, Sadhana O Siddhi, Sahityacarca O Samalocana, Kavibara Upendra Bhanja, Siksa, Puratana, and Balya Siksa are incorporated in his book, Bibidha Prabandha. Despite the loss of its pristine glory, Sambalpura Hitaisini continued, thanks to the royal family of Baman, to be published regularly up to the time when Mityunjaya Ratha was writing.(1)

From the time that Maharaja Ramacandra Bhanja Deva ascended the throne of Mayurbhanja, he strove for the enhancement of Oriya literature. Early in 1891 he proclaimed in the press,

"For want of financial encouragement, no effort is being made by the educated classes to write books and essays. To remedy this deficiency, a monthly journal is to be published from Mayurbhanja, commencing from next Baisakha. It is to be called Utkala Prabha and will carry articles on science, literature, politics, philosophy, religion and ethics. There will be prizes for the best articles. Each year six writers of prose and six writers of verse will be awarded up to Rs.120 according to their merit. Authors of epics, dramas and stories, and of articles on science and history, whose books are worthy of prizes and are published in full, will receive Rs.100, and those, whose books are published only in part, Rs.60. Authors wishing to publish separate editions of their prize-winning works may have up to 500 copies printed in the Mayurbhanja Press, on payment of ink and paper costs only."(2)

The paper duly appeared the following Baisakha (May-June), 1891, and ran till 1895. An attempt will be made to indicate how

(1) That is 1920, the date of publication of Utkala Patrika, on pages 17-18 of which the foregoing paragraph is based.
(2) ibid, p.19.
during those four years Utkala prabha stimulated literary production.

Its first volume carried Ramaśākara Rāya’s novel, Ribāsini, (1) and Radhanātha’s famous poem Cilika(2), for which he was awarded Rs.100(3), together with Madhusūdana’s Rṛṣiprāne Devataraṇa(4), for which he received Rs.50(5) and during its second year it carried the serial publication of Radhanātha’s great epic, Mahāyātra. Other contributors were Phakirmohana Senāpati with a series of short poems such as Jāhna Maṃ, pṛarthana, Yosephain, Jībana Naḍi, Nidaghā Nīśitha Svāpna and Bibhāsa Rāgini; Lālā Rāmanarayāṇa Rāya with critical studies of the great poet, Upendra Bhanja, and his epics; Govindaśandra Mahāpatra Sarma with an unfinished prose translation of the Mahābhārata and a poem called Himacala, for which he was awarded Rs.100; Viśvanātha Kara with essays such as Mahāsrotā, Rakṣasī Liḷā, Strī Sika, Svadhīnatā and Ananta prema; and the poet Candra-mohana Mahārāṇa.

Lālā Rāmanarayāṇa Rāya’s persistent strictures in Utkala prabha on the erotic element in Upendra Bhanja’s epics sparked off an important controversy. Utkala Dīpikā leapt to the defence of Upendra Bhanja, and when it was unable to contain the volume of support it aroused, a further journal appeared, Indra-dhanu, an irregular periodical, whose appearance was dictated by the availability of material. Indra-dhanu in its turn provoked the appearance of the "obscenity-crushing" Bijuli from Bāmanā(6) Now the battle was joined in earnest. On one side were ranged Gauriśākara Rāya, Rajakīṣora Bābu, Damodara paṭṭānāyaka and Daityāriprasāda Dāsa in defence of Upendra Bhanja and the old literature generally, and on the other were Lālā Rāmanarayāṇa and Radhanātha Rāya. The conflict, though bitter, was

(1) Priyaranjan Sen, p. 51. (2) Utkala patrika, p. 20
(3) Priyaranjan Sen, p. 52. (4) Utkala patrika, p. 20
(5) Priyaranjan Sen, p. 52. (6) Utkala patrika, pp. 21–22; also Priyaranjan Sen, p. 57.
on the whole beneficial, for it forced the combatants to clarify their ideas about the nature and purpose of literature, and stimulated the growth of literary criticism. After peace was concluded, Bijuli was discontinued, but Indra Dhanu carried on for some time as a regular monthly with contributors from both parties to the earlier dispute. Rāmasaṅkara Rāya's unfinished novel, Unmadinī, first appeared in its pages. (1)

In 1896 four new journals commenced publication, Utkala Bandhu, a monthly edited by Brajabandhu Misra under the patronage of the rāja of Talcher, and published from the Rāya press, Cuttack; Prabhatī Tarā, a monthly moral and religious journal, published by Cuttack Mission press and controlled by the Utkala Khristiyana Mandali (Christian Community of Orissa); Ganjam News, an English-language newspaper, published by the Gajapati Press, Parīkhemundi, under the patronage of padma-Nābhā-Nārayana Deva, and edited by Śyāmasundara Rājguru; and Utkala Sahitya, a monthly literary journal, edited by Viśvanātha Kara and launched by the group controlling Indra Dhanu, which now ceased publication. (2)

The story of Utkala Sahitya begins with the appointment of Madhusudana Rāo as Head of Cuttack Training School in 1891, by which he achieved a life-long ambition, the power to mould the future teachers of Orissa. As part of this process, he created the Alocana Sabha, a debating society, in 1894. (3) This society became a public centre for the cultivation of literature. Many of the papers read and discussed in it were published in Utkala Sahitya. Of the members of the Education Department, who participated in the activities of the Alocana Sabha, the following are worthy of note: Viśvanātha Kara, Candramohana Maha-

(1) Utkala patrika, p. 23. (2) ibid, pp. 24-25; also Priyaranjan Sen, p. 57. Sen states that Utkala Sahitya commenced publication in 1897, not 1896. (3) Śvargīya Rāya Madhusudana Rāo Bahaduraṅka Samksita Ḫabana Britānā, p. x.
ranã, Madhusudana Dãsa, Nandakisora Bala, Dãmodara Kara, Krsna-prasãda Caudãtri, Rajmohana Basu, Arttatraã canapatã, Syama-sundara Nanda, Daityãri Kara and Mrtyunjaya Ratha. In 1905 this debating society was established on a broader base under the name, Utkala sahitya samãja (All-Orissa Literary Society). This society too continued to enrich Utkala sahitya. Nevertheless, the backbone of the journal was its editor, Visvanãtha Kara, and its survival and prestige depended in no small measure upon him. (1) Dr. Mayadhara Mansimha writes,

"As the Editor of 'Utkala sahitya' he was practically the philosopher, guide and friend of three generations of writers in Orissa. Coming under the spell of Madhusudana Rao in early youth, this blue-blooded Brahmin renounced the orthodox Hindu faith and became a brahmo, braving poverty and social ostracism for his freedom of conscience ... so great was the respect for his standard of values that the publication of a poem or a story by a young writer in his 'Utkala sahitya' was taken as a triumph, a certificate of success, an honour much coveted but obtained only by the gifted." (2)

Two years after its inception, Utkala sahitya surveyed the literary scene and reported that there were only four newspapers, namely Utkala Dipika (est. 1865), Sambãdabãhika (est. 1868), Nabasambãda (est. 1886) and Sambalpura Hitaisini (est. 1889), and three monthly journals, Utkala prabã (est. 1891), Utkala Bandhu (est. 1896), and Utkala sahitya (est. 1896), so that of the 39 periodicals that were launched in the 31 years between 1865 and 1896 only 7 survived. This is not a cause for

despondency, but for pride; despite difficulties, much had been achieved; a publishing industry, journalism, prose and a new literature had all been successfully launched within the space of a single generation, by amateurs in their spare time.
CHAPTER V.

The Linguistic Dispute with Bengal.

1) The Great Orissa Famine.

The history of the press in Orissa begins from the Na Aaka Famine of 1865-66. It was this famine that prompted GauriSankara Raya and his associates to rush out the first issue of Utkala Dipika in August, 1865. The famine still casts its dread shadow across the Oriya mind. Two of the best novels of modern times are based on the events of those dark days, Kahncarana Mahanti's Ha Anna and Sasti; but the sufferings of the Na Aaka were, in effect, the pangs of modern Oriya renaissance. It was the last of the old type famines in British India. It also followed the Mutiny. It engendered in the government a tenderness towards Orissa and a readiness to heed her grievances.

Pyarimohana Acarya states that during the famine eight lakhs of people died.

"Some people were so torn with hunger that they fiendishly devoured the flesh of their own children, and such social evils as murder, suicide and madness were extremely prevalent."(1)

Phakirmohana Senapati describes the famine in his autobiography.

"People searched the skies anxiously for rain. They talked of nothing else. Just 'rain, rain'. They became extremely despondent from the beginning of Kartika (Oct. Nov.). It was no good now, even if it did rain. The paddy was dying. Paddy is the only crop in Bala-

(1) Pyarimohana Acarya, op. cit., p. 155.
sore. People's lives depend upon it. Some paddy was half grown and waved in the wind like long slender white whiskers of anakhu bush. People let the cattle graze in the paddy fields. The cattle just sniffed the paddy plants once or twice and went away without even touching them.

"The day-labourers sold their brass and bell-metal pots, what few they had, and managed for as long as they could. By the end of kartika, they took to the roads, making for where they thought best. They became separated from each other, wives from husbands, and sons from fathers. They begged from door to door, but who had rice to give away?

"The peasants sold what they had, bell-metal, brass, cattle, gold and silver, according to their circumstances; and at first clung tenaciously to their homes. Oxen sold for from one to five gauni (small basket) of rice, and cows for from one to two gauni. No one had scales to weigh silver and gold and no one had time to look for any. 'Who's asking prices? Give me as much as you can for it.' Many middle-class people scoured the villages with money in their pockets looking for rice, but there was none to be had, for those who had any hid it.

"By phaguna (Feb. Mar.) the majority of the peasants, and almost all the artisans, were scattered and chewing anything they could lay hands on. When the soft leaves came out on the tamarind trees, people swarmed up them like monkeys, ten to twenty to a tree, to pick the leaves and eat them. Everyone was skin and bone with sunken eyes. Many wives and daughters of good family roamed the streets with bundles
tied to their waists. Their signs of motherhood, two flaps of skin, hung against their chests. Some had children in their arms, just skin and bone, with lips glued to these hanging skin-flaps. There was no knowing whether the children were alive or dead."(1)

"People began to die from the beginning of phaguna. Day by day the death rate mounted. Wherever you went, in the woods and fields, and on the edges of tanks, rivers and roads, you were greeted by the sight of corpses, till gradually the whole country seemed to fill with them.

"The price of rice rose to ten seers a rupee. Once it even rose to three seers a rupee and stayed at that price for three days, but even at that price there was none to be had in the towns. Then rice arrived from Rangoon and the price came down to ten seers a rupee again. The year before the famine the price had been 150 seers a rupee for paddy and 1½ maunds a rupee for rice."(2)

"By March or April the Commissioner informed the Government of the true state of affairs in Orissa and requested them to send large quantities of rice and paddy. We presume that the Government, recalling the Commissioner's earlier letter, telegraphed, 'You telegraph to send rice, but rice can't be sent by telegraph...(3)

"Nevertheless, the government hired big handsome ships in Calcutta and Rangoon and began to send rice. Anna-chatras (Famine relief centres) were opened here and there by the government.

As soon as the word anna-chatra reached the rural areas, starving wretches came dashing to the towns. For a fortnight to three weeks, they had not so much as seen food. They had kept alive on tender leaves and inedible roots and fruits. They rushed to the towns in the hope of food. But they were in no condition to cover such distances. Over two thirds of them died on the way, and of those who managed to reach the anna-chatra, some died of cholera and some of dysentery. Their stomachs had dried up. They gobbled as much as they could, the moment they saw the rice, overloading their stomachs. But their digestive systems had gone. Their stomachs could not cope with so much rice.

There were doctors at hand to treat these dry-stomached wretches. So that the starving could be fed on sago for the first few days, sacks and sacks of it had been imported by the government and stored at the anna-chatra ware-houses. But it was all in vain. Almost all of them died ... early in the morning the sweepers picked up the bodies, piled them on carts and tipped them into the river. For a month to six weeks I saw the sweepers taking three to four cart-loads to the river every day."(1)

The Secretary of State for India, commenting on the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the causes of the famine, said,

"This catastrophe must always remain a monument to our failure, a humiliation to the people of this

(1) Phakirmohana Senapati, Atma Jibana Carita, pp.48-49.
country, and to those of our Indian officials of whom we had been perhaps a little too proud." (1)

In the course of the following debate, Lord Cranbourne stated,

"But the great evil ... was that the English officials in India ... did not regard the lives of the coloured inhabitants with the same feeling of intense sympathy which they would show to those of their own race and colour (Hear, hear.) If that were the case, it was no their fault alone. Some blame must be laid upon the society in which they were brought up and upon the public opinion in which they were trained ... And if we would have our officials in distant parts of the empire, and especially in India, regard the lives of their coloured fellow-subjects with zealous affection as at home, it was we who must give the tone and set the example ... And until we were careful to correct all abuses and display our own sense that they are as thoroughly our fellow subjects as those in any other part of the empire, we could not divest ourselves of all blame if we should find that officials in India did treat with something of coldness and indifference such frightful calamities as that which so recently happened in that country." (2)

ii) The new Bengalis in Orissa.

Thus the great Orissa famine resulted in a change of attitude on the part of the British both in parliament and in India towards Orissa. Orissa had only to voice her grievances

for them to receive prompt attention. But between the Oriyas and the British stood the Bengalis, who had by the 1860s insinuated themselves as a barrier within the administrative machine between the British rulers and their Oriya subjects.

Bengalis had been settling in Orissa ever since the time of the Ganga Dynasty. Pyarimohana Acarya writes,

"The number of Bengali settlers in Orissa at the present day (1879) is by no means small, for it almost exceeds one lakh. They began coming to Orissa in the time of the Ganga Dynasty. The last independent King of Bengal himself fled to Orissa in 1203. And afterwards Caitanya came to Orissa in the 16th century, together with many Bengali Vaisnavas. Puri's Jagannatha Temple also tempted many Bengalis to come to Orissa. Many of them settled down here, influencing considerably Oriya society and customs, and being themselves strongly influenced in their social practices by close contact with Oriyas." (1)

Many Bengalis of the writer-caste (kayastha) also came to assist in the Mogul administration under the governor of Bengal, Todar Malla, when Orissa lost her independence in the 16th century. Gaurisankara Rayya was a descendent of one of these families. His family were kayasthas from southern Radha. Their family name was Basu. They acquired the title Rayya through service in the Mogul administration. (2)

These Bengali families, who had been long domiciled in

(1) Pyarimohana Acarya, op. cit., pp. 95-96. He elucidates in a footnote. "The Bengalis were not reckoned as a separate category in the census that was taken in 1872. The brahmin settlers were counted in with the Oriya Brahmins. Thus the census is not suitable for discovering the number of settlers. My figure relies on a calculation of averages and on guess-work."
(2) Mityumjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurisankara, p. 2.
Orissa, had lost contact with Bengal, which they regarded as a distant foreign land, as was observed earlier, when Gaursaṅkara's father was reluctant to allow his son to be educated at Hughsly College and refused to allow him to marry there. They had become Oriya all but in blood. The reader may have noticed the profusion of Bengali names in the previous chapter. These were the descendants of those Bengali families, who had been long domiciled in Orissa and who identified themselves with the Oryyas.

In the 19th century, however, during British rule other groups of Bengalis had been occupying key-positions in Orissa. At first they had probably been reluctant to come. Wilkinson, for example, had considerable difficulty in recruiting a teacher from Calcutta in 1835, when trying to set up an English School in Puri.

(1) The Bengali teacher, who was eventually appointed, demanded excessive travelling expenses, because it would necessitate "more than a fortnight in travelling... whether by land direct to it, or by water as far as Palasore, and thence by land." (2); and he finally requested a transfer, because "the sea air here disagrees with most Bengalees... of delicate constitution." (3) Gradually, however, the number of new Bengali immigrants mounted. As before, they came for economic reasons, to take up Government posts in teaching or administration, or to occupy jamidāris, which they had bought at auctions in Calcutta; and by now the attitude of Bengalis to Orissa had changed.

Prior to the 19th century Bengalis had assimilated to Oriya society and culture. Now they were arrogant. They considered themselves harbingers of culture from an advanced country to a backward land, which to some extent was the case.

The progress they had made and the advantages they enjoyed, however, were not entirely due to their own innate abilities. They were due, at least in part, to the historical accident by which they became the first to be westernised by contact with the British. Fortune had smiled on them. By the 1860s the major part of Orissa had been reduced to virtually a 'suburb' of Bengal. The administration, education and commerce of Orissa were all subservient to Calcutta. Orissa's coming under British rule after Bengal had set in motion a vicious circle of events which threatened to annihilate Orissa. Because of the administrative set-up, the non-European Inspectors of Schools in Orissa were recruited from Bengal; because of the shortage of textbooks in Oriya, textbooks were imported from Bengal; because of the Bengali textbooks, the medium of instruction was Bengali; and because of the medium of instruction, most teachers in Government schools were Bengali. It was a self-perpetuating chain of events, whose immediate effect was to stunt the Oriya language and whose ultimate effect would have been to stunt the Oriya nation.

The chain was eroded by two events: the missionaries had brought printing to Orissa and had commenced the publication of grammars and textbooks in Oriya; and men like Gaurisankara and Bicitrananda were following their lead and trying to preserve their native literature by printing it. The chain finally began to snap under the pressure of two further events: the coming of the new Commissioner, Mr. T. Ravenshaw; and the famine. Ravenshaw was a most humane man and was thus predisposed by nature to sympathise with Oriya aspirations. Nanda Kisora Das, his chief assistant, and Bicitrananda Das, his sirastadvara, can have had little difficulty in eliciting his support for Orissa's first indigenous newspaper, Utkala Dipika, and in inducing him to raise the issue of the development of the Oriya language with the Governor of Bengal in 1865.1 The great

1) Mityumjaya Ratha, Karmayoga Gaurisankara, p. 37
loss of life during the famine, for which he may have felt at least partly responsible, set Ravenshaw working in the cause of Orissa. Before the famine there were only three Government Schools in Orissa, Cuttack High School and the District Schools of Balasore and Puri. As a direct result of Ravenshaw's efforts a new era commenced in Orissa in 1869. A Medical School and a Survey School were established in Cuttack, together with a Normal School (later renamed the Training School) to prepare teachers for service in primary schools, and a Law class was opened in Cuttack High School. Immediately afterwards prizes were announced by the Government for textbooks in Oriya on Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Hygiene, Biology and Surveying. The Maharaja of Pheñkanala, Bhagiratha Mahendra Bahadura, deposited with the Education Department the sum of Rs.1,000 for the compilation of a history of Orissa. Gauriśaṅkara welcomed these tidings in Utkala Dipika and called upon his fellow countrymen to apply themselves to the production of textbooks in Oriya. Among those who responded were: Rīchanda pāṭṭanāyaka, Rīcitrānanda Dāsa, Jaganmohana Lāla, phakirmohana Senāpati, prabhākara Vidyāratna, Govindaacandra pāṭṭanāyaka, Dvārakanātha Cakrabartī, Kapileśvara Vidyabhūṣana and Gauriśaṅkara himself. (1)

Meanwhile in Calcutta, where a university had been established in 1858, the problem of middle-class unemployment was beginning to present itself. Indications of it appear in the press.

"A correspondent, who has taken honors in the Calcutta University, has recorded his experience of the commercial value thereof ... Whether he has done wisely or not, in writing and publishing such a letter may be open to question; but it is not without

its lessons as to the position occupied by the still increasing numbers of graduates and degree-holders in this country. He refers to a common notion that he himself cherished, and speaks of it as a common delusion amongst his countrymen, that a University career meant bread-and-butter, with perhaps no exertion for it after reaching the desired distinction ...

There is a touching simplicity in his confession: - 'Contrary to my best belief and solid expectation, I got no employment for more than a quarter of a year, and became so disgusted with my inactive state that I thought it better to serve in a mean post than continue such an idle dull inactivity.'

... There was a time when much more emphatically than now, 'English meant rupees' ... It may be said that India does not afford fields of employment other than those to which educated natives look; that is chiefly official employment ...

"(1)"

The editor then goes on to enumerate the professions open to graduates, in addition to government service, such as Medicine, Law, Commerce etc; in fact, all the avenues normally entered by British graduates. What concerns us, however, is not the editor's reasoning, but the correspondent's, who regarded education as an investment in future government service and whose expectations were realised. His letter and such comments as,

"... there is in Bengal a large and needy middle-class almost unknown in other provinces, and it is in consequence of the requirements of this class that the demand for English education as the most profitable form of literary culture has been so

(1) The Indian Daily News, 22nd September, 1869."
great! (1)

lead one to suppose that by 1869 there was a large educated middleclass in Calcutta seeking posts in Government service. Orissa had presumably been providing an outlet for this class, who probably saw in the Government encouragement of textbook production in Oriya an economic threat in an area they had come to regard as a Bengali preserve. Mrtyunjaya Ratha writes,

"When these new textbooks appeared in Oriya, orders were issued that Oriya was to be taught along side Bengali in the scholarship schools. From that year examination candidates were given permission to take the examinations in either language. In all schools, from the primaries to the Normal School in Cuttack, all prose books were in Oriya, and poetry and grammar in Bengali; Geography was in Oriya; and History was taught in Bengali. Many Bengali teachers disliked having to teach in this manner two languages in the same school. Far from strive for the improvement of Oriya, they screwed up their noses at the very sound of the language, considered its eradication their highest duty, and from time to time voiced arguments in favour of this to influential persons and highly-placed officers. One day this fire, which had been smouldering for so long, surprised everyone by bursting into flame." (2)

iii) The linguistic dispute between Bengalis and Oriyas.

Bengal's erudite Dr. Rajendralala Mitra had been appointed by the Government to compile a book on the antiquities of Orissa. He stayed in Cuttack for some time, touring the tirtha-

stonas such as Puri, Konarak, Khandagiri, Bhubaneshvara and Majpura. A society, recently been founded in Cuttack by the educated to practise their English, the Debating Society. The Commissioner himself was its permanent president. In the course of an address to the society, Rajendralal Mitra once said,

"The first thing anyone would do who really desired to promote the wellbeing of Orissa would be to abolish the Oriya language and introduce Bengali; for, as long as Oriya remains, it will be impossible for Orissa to progress."

The arguments in support of this contention were as follows. According to the census of the Famine Commissioner, the population of Orissa was now twenty lakhs. If one excluded women and children, then roughly ten to twelve lakhs might learn to read and write. Could so few people maintain a separate language? Because of the paucity of potential customers, no one could hope to make a success of a new book. Bengal, on the other hand was extensive and its population great. In consequence, its language had progressed well. If Bengali were introduced in Orissa, Bengali books would be readily available. In the last three months, three hundred titles had been published in Bengali, whereas there had been no more than three or four in Oriya. This plainly indicated that Oriya would never progress." (1)

Rajendralal Mitra's reputation as a scholar lent authority to his arguments and in consequence they had a strong influence on the opinions of his fellow countrymen. Gaurisanalkara did his best to counter them in Utkala Dipika.

"We thought that by coming to Orissa Rajendra Babu had learnt much, and we are, therefore, surprised to

(1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurisanalkara, p. 40.
hear him making the above remarks. In actual fact it is difficult to determine, whether he was expressing his own convictions, or whether it was out of excessive loyalty to Bengal that he tried to vindicate this view with misleading arguments. Did he not know, when quoting the population figures for Orissa, that they applied only to the Mogala Bandi, that the northern limit of the Oriya-speaking tracts is Medinipur and the southern limit Ganjam; and that they extend from the Bay of Bengal in the East to Sambalpura in the West? If he did not know this, then he has needlessly caused great harm by imparting his ignorance to his audience... The fact of the matter is that the Oriya-speaking tracts are as extensive as the Bengali. Consequently, there is every likelihood of Oriya progressing. His remarks on publishing are equally misleading. Orissa is lagging behind, because, as we have said a thousand and one times already, the Government has not been favourably disposed towards Orissa for as long as it has towards Bengal. Had the Government paid equal heed to both countries, Rajendra Babu's arguments would have applied, but how can one expect the same results, regardless of circumstances? Orissa is evidently progressing now that since the famine the Government has been paying heed to her. Had these projects been instituted ten years ago, then Rajendralala Mitra would have been hard put to it to find an argument in support of his opinions...

"Is there then no impediment to the progress of the Oriya language? Our belief is that 'like the cucumber bed of the three disputants' Orissa is being harmed needlessly. Its guardians are three governments,
and since one part is under the Government of Madras, and another under the Central provinces, it is not being developed equally and uniformly. Different principles are being followed and different textbooks introduced in each of the three areas... So, as the guest of two houses, the Oriya language goes to bed hungry, fed by neither... These conditions are deplorable and ... ought to be swiftly remedied... in line with the decision to have only one medium of instruction for the whole area, there ought to be only one official to administer it..."(1)

Gaurisankara thus carries his refutation of Rajendralal Mitra's arguments beyond the immediate issue and adumbrates a theme that was to become central to the nationalist movement in Orissa, the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts. It is important to remember, however, that this theme has its roots here in the language issue, for it is becoming plain that in Orissa at least nationality was determined not by blood, but by language and birthplace. By blood Gaurisankara Raya was a Bengali, but by language and birthplace he was an Oriya. When this fact was finally grasped the struggle for the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts was taken up in earnest(2), for if birth in an Oriya-speaking area could turn people of Bengali stock into Oriyas, then conversely birth in non-Oriya-speaking areas could turn people of Oriya stock into non-Oriyas. Now if the term 'non-Oriya-speaking areas' is interpreted as areas where Oriya is of no political importance', then this fact becomes of particular significance to the present issue; for that is what the Bengalis, either consciously or unconsciously,

(1) Utkala Dinika, 1869; quoted in Karmayogī Gaurisankara, pp.41-43. (2) The linguistic basis of nationality was certainly realised by 1924, when Odisara Bartamana gamasya, a political pamphlet by Lekhaprasada Dasa, was issued from the sahakara office.
were attempting to do, namely to turn Orissa into a region where Oriya was of no political importance. Had they succeeded, then the Oriya nation would have disintegrated and the major part of it would have become absorbed into that of Bengal.

It is not certain whether the Oriyas fully realised the importance of the language issue at the time, but circa 1917 Phakirmohana records in his autobiography,

"Medinipur has a total area of about 5,200 square miles. Of these, about 2,200 square miles in the south are inhabited by pure Oriya-speakers. Oriya used to be the medium of their conversation, legal documents, accounts and private correspondence. Oriya was also used to some extent in the Medinipur District Kaceri. Clerks used to be appointed to the Medinipur kaceri at the chief kaceri in Balasore. This practice has now virtually ceased.

"The Oriya Ramayana, Sāralā's Mahābhārata and Jagannātha Dāsa's Bhāgavata are still read each evening in the homes of influential villagers in Medinipur. ... hundreds of manuscript-reading brahmins from Cuttack and Balasore earn there livings there ... English-educated babus in those parts now feel embarrassment about speaking Oriya. They are not finding it easy to drive their mother-tongue from the house, however, because of their wives.

"The disappearance of Oriya cāhālis from southern Medinipur is extremely regrettable and mysterious. Between 1865 and 1870 a Bengali Sub-inspector was appointed in southern Medinipur. He tried to set up a Bengali school, but people would not allow their children to be taught Bengali. All his efforts were
frustrated. The sole purpose of his appointment, however, was to set up a school; failure meant dismissal. He had no desire to lose such a good job by confessing his incompetence to his superiors.

Desperate situations sharpen wits. An idea soon occurred to the babu. He visited every police station and got the daroga to summon all the teachers in his precinct to present themselves at the station on a predetermined date. He showed them all a counterfeit warrant, written in English and stamped, and said, 'Look, these are the instructions of the District Collector in Medinipur. All the cahalis in this precinct are to be closed and all teachers are to return home within seven days of hearing this warrant. Any teacher seen in the District of Medinipura afterwards will be arrested and sent to the chief kaceri, where he will be both fined and imprisoned.' The Sub-inspector toured the precincts, proclaiming these instructions. Poor timid teachers are not noted for their courage. After all, they were the District Collector's instructions, and they had been issued by the police. The teachers fled for home as quickly as they could, forsaking their cahalis for ever.

Needless to say, the Sub-inspector afterwards had no difficulty in setting up a Bengali school. His elder brother was Head Master of Balasore District School. We were on intimate terms. He told me the story as an illustration of his brother's intelligence and cunning.

Though the people of southern Medinipur are educated in Bengali, they still speak Oriya at home. It
is not so easy to abandon one's mother-tongue. They get Jagannātha Dāsa's Oriya Bhāgavata printed in the Bengali script together with other Oriya books as well and read them at home. 

What Phakirmohana here records with pride about Oriya-speakers having Oriya books printed in Bengali characters was however not a triumph, but a defeat, for the Oriya language. Medinipur is now regarded as part of Bengal and what are, in fact, features of the Oriya language would now be regarded there as mere dialectal differences from standard Bengali. Oriya has died a political death in Medinipur.

Returning to the events of 1869 in Cuttack, however, we find Umācarana Haldāra in a letter to the Cuttack Star making precisely this proposal, that Oriya be printed in Bengali characters, (2) arguing that this would enable Europeans, Bengalis, and for some reason even Oriyas to learn the Oriya language more easily. Gaurisāṅkara sarcastically comments,

"We really must acknowledge Haldāra babu as an Orissa patriot, for, as a glance at his letter reveals, he has expended considerable time and labour in discovering a good way of introducing the Oriya language to foreigners. His arguments are out of this world. His main one is that since the Oriya script is being written on Bengali paper, in Bengali ink, with Bengali pens, then there is no reason why it should not also be formed in the Bengali way. The people of Orissa should remember, since they are ignorant of the production of ink, paper and pens, that these things were born in Bengal. It takes no special brain-power to prove this point. In fact, the

(2) Mātyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurisāṅkara, p.45.
very words 'paper', 'pen' etc prove the babu's point.
(1) His whole burden of proof does not, however, rest
on this single argument. A scrupulous examination
and comparison of the Bengali and Oriya scripts
leads him to the conclusion that the Bengali is the
more attractive. This conclusion need surprise no
one, for every lad is handsome in his father's eyes.
The Oriya script is rounded; the Bengali is semicircu-
lar or triangular. The Bengali must either have
looked to him like a diamond-studded medallion on a
necklace of elephantine pearls; or its triangular
(tribhaṅga) shape must suddenly have put him in mind
of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa so that overcome with Vaiṣṇavite
sentiment he was filled with love for it. If some-
thing of this sort did not happen, then why in the
course of his examination should he conclude that
the Bengali was beautiful, and, astonished at the
thought, suddenly exclaim, since the Bengali is so
beautiful, why should not the Oriya language be writ-
ten in it? The babu must undoubtedly have been aston-
ished, for we certainly were, when we heard it. In
conclusion, we feel bound to tell the babu that
there was no need to weary his brain and hand with
the labour of so much correspondence. He has only to
get three of four books printed in the Bengali script,
for the brilliance of his plan to become manifest to
all."(2)

The Utkalā Hitaiṣiṇī (Orissa patriot), which was financed
by a local Bengali landowner Kālīpada Bandopādhyāya, sprang to
the defence of Haldāra. It carried a complete contradiction to

(1) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogī Gaurīsaṅkara, p. 46, footnote:
"'paper'(kāgaja), 'pen'(kalama) etc come from Arabic".
(2) Utkalā Dīpika, 10.7.1869; quoted ibid, pp. 45-46.
Gaurisanaka's comments. This in turn was countered by a resolution passed by the Utkalollasini sabha, a society of the most influential and learned people in Cuttack. The gist of the resolution was: "the writing of the Oriya language in the Bengali script would be as detrimental to Oriya as the practice of writing and reading the Bengali Satyanarayanapala, Caitanya Caritamrita, and Vaishnava padabali in the Oriya script has been to the Bengali language. Nothing but harm can be expected of it."(1) The Bengalis disregarded the expressions of opinion in the Utkala Dipika and Utkollasini sabha and mounted a counter-campaign in the Debating Society, led by Rajkrsna Mukhopadhyaya. In a letter to Utkala Dipika under the pseudonym Raiga Pancamanana, Gaurisanaka wrote,

Some Bengali members stated at its last session that if the Bengali script were adopted for the printing of Oriya books and also in the kaceris and darbaras of Orissa, then Orissa would greatly benefit and prosper through close contact with virtuous Bengalis. Though objections were raised by Oriyas, the motion was carried thanks to the grandiloquence and extraordinary erudition of Mr. Rajkrsna Mukhopadhyaya.

 Overflowing with learning and overburdened with letters of commendation, this gentleman finally acquired a degree and being disgusted with bengal and intent on the progress of Orissa he has to our great good fortune descended on us. Orissa's fortunes will indeed look up.

The pity of it is, the babu is too erudite. He would be beyond compare, if he had just left room for one little Oriya letter, when stuffing himself

(1) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurisanaka, p.47
with learning, but he left out the 's' from his degree."

The sting in the tail of this attack was that the abbreviation of the Master of Arts degree, plus the Oriya letter 'ś', formed the "mesa" (sheep). The implied comparison between the bleating of a sheep and his grandiloquence sent R. K. Mukhopadhyāya into a towering rage, and he sued Gaurisāṅkara for defamation of character. Undaunted, Gaurisāṅkara studied the relevant legislation, conducted his own defence, and was acquitted, doubtless much the chagrin of the plaintiff, R. K. Mukhopadhyāya, M. A., Lecturer in Law at Cuttack High School.

The case was closely followed by the Bengalis and Oriyas and did much to intensify the animosity between them. Gaurisāṅkara appealed to both sides to see reason: 'The sooner we stop mentioning this proposal (to write Oriya in the Bengali script) and forget all about it, the better it will be for all concerned. We will then be able to rid ourselves of this animosity.' The famous Bengali poet Raṅgalāla Bandopadhya wrote a long letter to Utkala Dīpikā in an attempt to establish peace. To the so-called 'Orissa patriots' (i.e. the Bengalis), who wanted to introduce the Bengali script, he observed,

"A farsighted European once said, changes in behaviour should not be partial, but total. One therefore fails to see what possible benefit would come of writing Oriya in the Bengali script. Many people may claim that Bengali has achieved a peculiar excellence, that the difference between Bengali and Oriya is a mere handful of prefixes, suffixes and inflections, and that in consequence Oriya ought to be abolished and replaced by Bengali; i.e. there is no reason why Bengali should not be used in Orissa in much the same way as English is used in Scotland. Such
people ignore however the fact that the ties of custom, convention and marriage between England and Scotland have never been severed, and more especially that the English language has been prevalent in Scotland, ever since the latter came under the British Crown. Since, however, Orissa is not subject to the Crown of Bengal, and since it has never been the practice for Bengalis and Oriyas to intermarry, there is no likelihood of the Bengali language and script becoming prevalent in Orissa. Such schemes are mere wishful thinking...

"If, however, it is thought necessary to introduce one language and script throughout India in the hope of creating one nation, then it is preferable to introduce the original language and script, Sanskrit and Devanāgarī," (1)

Thus Raṅgala Bandopādhyāya's view of the issue condemns regional patriotism in favour of patriotism on a continental scale, the unification of all India as one nation. Few if any of the disputants at the time were likely to see his point, however; the Oriyas probably welcomed Raṅgala Bandopādhyāya's letter as a piece of ammunition for their side, and the Bengalis probably deprecated it as a piece of treachery from within their own ranks. Since, however, Raṅgala Bandopādhyāya was wellknown in Cuttack, (for he was formerly a Deputy Magistrate there and had often spoken on the Oriya language in the Utkalōḷḷasimī Sabha, achieving considerable popularity), his letter had the desired effect of silencing the dispute in Cuttack, though only momentarily; for the so-called 'Orissa patriots' now resorted to stealth. They got up a petition, induced a number of Oriyas to sign it, and sent it to the Editor of the Indian Mirror in Calcutta. In due course an article, entitled

(1) Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurīsāṅkara, p. 51.
Education in Orissa, appeared in that journal. It stated,

"It is wrong at this juncture to discontinue the use of Bengali in Orissa and to introduce Oriya, for Bengali possesses excellent textbooks and is easy to learn. The Oriyas acknowledge that the Bengalis are more advanced than themselves in regard to knowledge and culture. They also acknowledge that Bengali is used by many races over a very extensive area. Furthermore, its structure is beautiful, its intonations pleasant, and its pronunciation easy. It is preferable to their own language. In view of all this, and in anticipation of considerable aid from Bengalis, Oriyas are educating their children through the Bengali language and are greatly dissatisfied with the Government's introduction of Oriya." (1)

The Indian Mirror enjoyed considerable prestige in government circles. It was therefore a matter of urgency to Gaurisankar to rectify the impression this article might make on the Government. He wrote,

"We had thought that the Indian Mirror was being extremely well edited. We thought that the Editor went to considerable pains to verify his facts, especially as his journal is the spokesman for the Brahma Samaj, but it is now evident that he rashly and ingenuously accepts as true whatever he hears about things of which he is ignorant and does not scruple to inform the general public of it... We are convinced that he has written this cock-and-bull story only at the instigation of some Bengali in

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Umācaranā Haldāra's set... Had the Editor made the least effort to learn about Orissa, he would have been aware of all the opposition that has been made to the introduction of the Bengali language and script... what little bad-feeling there is between Oriyas and Bengalis is confined to the language question. Bengalis are not new to Orissa, but previously they were respected for they used not to despise the Oriya language and script... as this Editor and his correspondent, if they do happen to want to know how reluctant Oriyas were to accept Bengali education and how hampered the schools were, when Bengali was the medium of instruction... then let them read the petitions to the Government on this matter from the Orissa general public and what the Commissioner and District Collector wrote about it. The relevant papers are in the kaceri of the Director of the Education Department. If they go there, they will certainly be able to see them. It would be excellent, if they were to brief themselves on them and then write their own opinions. It is wrong to mislead people unnecessarily. "(1)

The Bengalis in Cuttack had, however, managed to convince not only the Editor of the Indian Mirror, but also the Director of the Education Department himself. Had it not been that the Commissioner of Orissa, Mr. T. Ravenshaw, and the Inspector of Education, Mr. R.L. Martin, were able to persuade the Lt. Governor to take the matter up, the Oriya cause might well have been lost. In November that year, the following instructions were issued,

"In Cuttack High School and the two other District Schools of Orissa, the choice whether he learns Oriya or... (1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogī Gaurīsāṅkara, pp. 52-54."
or Bengali will rest with the individual student; i.e. both languages are to be taught. In the Middle English and Middle Vernacular Schools, the medium of instruction in all subjects will be Oriya. English will certainly be taught and will remain optional. For as long as there are no good literature books in the Oriya language, Bengali will continue to be taught in the Middle Schools, but only aurally. In the lower schools in Orissa the sole medium of instruction will be Oriya. The introduction of such an educational scheme as this is rendered difficult by the lack of textbooks. The Lt. Governor is unable to formulate any definite rules until it is known what books are available in Oriya in sufficient quantities. In general terms his opinion is that education should be imparted through the medium of Oriya in all lower schools of Orissa and that in the District Schools and High Schools students should be able to receive instruction through the medium of Bengali, if they so wish."(1)

The Director of the Education Department was instructed to give effect to this new Government policy immediately. The official announcement filled Gaurisankara with elation. He expressed his gratitude to 'Orissa's friend', Mr. Ravenshaw, and also to Mr. Martin; and called upon distinguished members of the Utkalollasini Sabha to satisfy the need for Oriya textbooks. The response was immediate. Several new textbooks appeared, together with a few translations from Bengali, one or two of which were written by Bengalis who had recently arrived in Orissa. (2) It seemed that the dispute over the rights of the Oriya language was at last concluded.

(1) Mrtyumjaya Ratha, Karmayogī Gaurisankara, p. 55.
(2) ibid, pp. 55-56.
iv) The linguistic dispute as seen from Balasore.

The scene now moves to Balasore. Phakirmohana Senapati writes,

"Pandita Sadasiiva Nanda of Sora village in the District of Balasore was employed as Oriya pandita in the Balasore Government School. His duties comprised the teaching of Oriya and Sanskrit. When pandita Nanda retired, his place was taken by a Bengali, Kanticandra Bhattacarya. After four to six months' effort, Bhattacarya had read all the school textbooks in Oriya but despite great efforts he could not speak Oriya. He found the pronunciation of 'l' and 'n' absolutely impossible. He pronounced 'l' as 'd' and 'n' as 'no'... The whole class roared with laughter when they heard him try to speak. Such humiliation was insufferable to the pandita. Difficulties sharpen wits. The pandita came to school one day and blurted out... 'Oriya isn't an independent language. It's merely a corruption of Bengali. There's no need to study Oriya.'....

"It does not suffice, however, merely to say, 'Oriya is not an independent language.' It has to be proved. The pandita wrote a book called 'Udiya svaatantra Bhasa Naya'. It was published. The Bengali Headmaster sent a copy to the European Inspector together with a report. The Inspector's office was in Medinipur. All his staff were Bengali. The Headmaster's report reached the Inspector's office, endorsed with the approval of the Bengali Deputy Inspector for Balasore.

"The Headmaster in Balasore was soon issued with instructions from Medinipur, the essence of which were: 'Only Sanskrit and Bengali are to be taught in..."
"At that time there was not a single highly-placed Oriya in any of the government Departments, let alone the schools. All the Bengalis were of the same opinion. They were all equally disparaging of Oriya. And now there was a surge of elation amongst them. Kanticandra Bhattacarya was walking on air, thinking he had achieved lasting fame in Orissa ..."

"I suddenly felt as if struck by a thousand thunderbolts simultaneously. The elation of our enemies and their ridicule pierced my heart like arrows ... Will it no longer be possible to read our mother-tongue? That small powerless committee of ours held a meeting. Day and night we racked our brains for a solution. We canvassed the support of the influential people in the town from door to door from early evening till late at night. We assembled the clerks from the kaceri and begged them to find a way to save themselves. They all replied in chorus: 'This is the government's affair, babu. Our children will learn whatever the Government teaches. You don't expect us to get into trouble by questioning government decisions, do you?'

"When they heard the opinion of the clerks, the jamidaras and mahajanas in the town refused to listen to a word we said ...

"Gaurisankara Raya deserves all our respect. He wrote cogent articles every week in Utkala Dipika in support of the Oriya language. His were the only encouraging words we heard from Orissa. I used to write a little in the newly-established Balesvara Sambadabahika.
"... One day I got all the clerks together after work and made a speech, the gist of which was:

Gentlemen. It was not the Government's decision that Bengali should be taught in the schools in place of Oriya. It was a Bengali plot. They tricked the European Inspector. They'll get Oriya abolished in the kaceni next. Don't you see? The Bengalis hold all the best-paid jobs. You are as proficient in Persian as Maulavis, yet your proficiency became worthless, when the Bengalis got Persian abolished and became clerks themselves. When Oriya is abolished, all the sons, brothers and relatives of these Bengalis will become clerks. Mark my words, you'll all be dismissed, and in future your sons and grandsons will no longer be able to get government jobs.'

"There was an uproar in the meeting the moment I said this. 'No, it will never come to that,' everyone began to shout. 'Our children shall study Oriya.'

"They all pressed us to tell them what to do.

"We replied, 'The solution is simple. Send a petition to the Government, requesting that Oriya be taught in the schools. Then no Bengali will be able to become a clerk.' ...

"For various reasons all the British officials and missionaries in Balasore were on our side. They expressed support for our requests.'(1)

Thus the linguistic dispute erupted once more in Balasore in 1870. It is noteworthy that even then the bulk of the Oriya

(1) Phakirnohana Senapati, Parisista, pp.i-iii; to be found in Phakirnohana Grantha-bali, appended to Atma Jibana Carita.
population were apathetic. They still had not grasped even the economic importance of the language issue to themselves, let alone its political importance for their future as a nation. Had it not been for such people as gaurisankara and phakirmohana, who could understand the economic and political importance of this latest Bengali manoeuvre the battle would have been lost without a single shot being fired in Orissa's defence.

v) Kanticandra Bhattacarya's pamphlet, Udyā Svatantra Bhasa Naya.

As a scholarly work on comparative philology Kanticandra Bhattacarya's pamphlet is of no importance. Its importance is entirely political. Though couched in the form of a philological discussion of Bengali and Oriya, it was an attempt to suppress the Oriya language and deprive it of significant status. Because of its form, however, its opponents had no option but to refute it on philological terms, but for the purposes of this thesis it is important that the pamphlet should be seen in economic terms, as phakirmohana saw it. It epitomised Bengali aspirations for the aggrandisement of Bengal. It envisaged the whole of the region that now comprises Assam, West Bengal, East Pakistan and Orissa as one geographic, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic area; (1) i.e. a Bengali-language area. It was assumed that Assam was universally recognised as part of Bengal and Assamese as a dialect of Bengali. In consequence, Assam was frequently referred to under the blanket-term 'in the East'; i.e. in East Bengal as understood by Bhattacarya, Sylhet, Assam etc. Bhattacarya made similar assumptions about Orissa, which he referred to as 'in the South' meaning 'in south Bengal'; i.e. south of the Subarnarekha, traditionally regarded as the boundary between Orissa and Bengal, and now regarded by Bhattacarya as a mere dividing line.

(1) Kanticandra Bhattacarya, Udyā Svatantra Bhasa Nahe, Calcutta, 1870, pp. 5-6; et passim.
between North and South Bengal.

Such arrogant prejudice dressed up as scholarship could appeal to no one but the bigoted. It alienated everyone else. It attributed the differences between Oriya and Bengali to the former's contact with uncivilised tribes. (1) The implication that standard Oriya approximated to the speech of the uneducated, lower castes of Bengal (2) could hardly have been expected to win support for his thesis from Oriyas; and his attacks on the missionaries for trying to reflect the actual pronunciation of Assamese and Oriyas in dictionaries and textbooks on the grounds that they were deliberately 'corrupting pure Bengali forms' must also have aroused antagonism. His slur on the competence of Europeans generally to judge whether or not Oriya and Bengali were separate languages can hardly have been calculated to win support in European circles. In short, it was a tactless book from start to finish and deserved the almost universal condemnation it received.

Gaurisañkara had every justification in observing,

"We see no reason for being satisfied with the author's knowledge of philology. It seems to us that he has relied merely on the similarity between Oriya and Bengali and utilised the word 'philology' to give to his opinions an air of authority..."

"He has casually passed off Sanskrit, Persian and Hindi words as Bengali..."

"Had the author attempted an impartial judgement, he

(1) Kantilcandra Bhattacharyya, Udiya Svañtana Bhasa Nahe, p. 7.
(2) In such typical statements as 'gentlefolk do not use the word 'pani' in place of 'jal', but the lower caste people of Bengal do', ibid, p. 27; and 'Low-caste people in various parts of Bengali pronounce 'panara' as 'pandara', ibid, p. 58. 'pani' (Bhattacharyya does not distinguish between the retroflex and dental nasal) and 'pandara' are, of course, standard Oriya forms. (3) ibid, pp. 64-65. (4) ibid, p. 20.
would have realised that the excessive use of Sanskrit words in modern books in Bengali and Oriya has increased the similarity between the two, but the ignorant Bengali and Oriya is unable to understand this type of language. They cannot fathom it out without education, and neither can understand the other's spoken language."(1)

Bhubaneswar Mukhopadhyaya, Inspector of Schools, Orissa Division, and Editor of Calcutta's Education Gazette, also refuted Bhattacarya's thesis. The following extract from his journal reveals how he regarded Bhattacarya's reasoning as mere prejudice,

"Where the Bengali and Oriya are alike, he has called both Bengali; where they differ, he has called the Oriya a corruption of standard Bengali. This is no way to reason. What prevents one from calling them both Oriya in the places where the Bengali and Oriya are alike, and from calling the Bengali a corruption of Oriya in the places where they differ? ... If the vocabulary of one language is to be described from the outset as a corruption of that of the other language, then what need is there for reasoning? One can reach any conclusion one likes by question-begging of this sort."(2)

(1) Utkala Dipika, 1870; quoted by Mrtyunjaya Ratha, Karmayogi Gaurisankara, pp. 59-61. Gaurisankara must have been straining to control his anger when writing this, for Kanticandra had quoted from him in his book: "Newspapers are written in pure vernacular. If Oriya is an independent language, then it is to be expected that the Oriya ... in newspapers will be ... different from Bengali... the few lines from Utkala Dipika ... indicate that it is all Bengali. Only a few words deviate from Bengali." Kanticandra Bhattacarya, op.cit., p. 18. (2) This is a translation from the Oriya version which appeared in Utkala Dipika, 30.4.1870, quoted in Karmayogi Gaurisankara, p. 64.
By far the most important condemnation, however, came from the European community.

"The book states in its preface that the Commissioner and the missionaries made a mistake in introducing Oriya into the kaceris of Orissa in place of Bengali, and that they considered Bengali and Oriya to be separate languages. The author has accordingly attempted to prove that Oriya is not a separate language, but merely a corruption of Bengali. In our opinion his attempt failed. He has produced only one argument in favour of his contention, namely that many Bengali and Oriya words are alike. Yet this can equally well be said of Bengali and Gujarati. We are speaking from experience when we say that a well-educated Bengali, who did not know even a single letter of Gujarati, would be able to understand nine-tenths of the language. No one assumes Bengali and Gujarati to be the same on that account. The fact of the matter is that there is a similarity between Oriya, Bengali, Gujarati and other languages because of their common origin, Sanskrit... Even if Oriya were bad Bengali (and we do not admit the fact), the government were nevertheless justified in making it the language of the law-courts of Orissa, for despite being bad Bengali, it is good for Orissa. Not only do three crores of people in Orissa converse in the language, but there was also a considerable corpus of literature composed in it in the past, and this is continually being added to in the present. Consequently, had the government forcibly taught the people of Orissa Bengali, they would have been guilty of the same injustice as Prussia was in imposing its high language on Holstein." (1)

(1) Calcutta Review, July, 1970; quoted in Karmayogi GaurIsaakar
This is by far the most pragmatic approach. It reveals that its authors, by comparing the imposition of Bengali on Orissa with that of prussian on Holstein, fully realised the political significance of Kanticandra's book. It was the end of the battle. The Bengali manoeuvre ended in utter rout. Some of the Bengalis who had been involved in it were transferred. The outcry in Balasore, by phakirmohana won the support of John Beames, (1) who soon had the Bengali Deputy Inspector for Balasore, Sivadasa Bhattacarya, replaced by Radhanatha Raya. In 1873 the post of Joint Inspector was created for the supervision of the Education Department in Orissa and Mandakisora Das was appointed. Thus a new era in education commenced in Orissa, with Oriyas in charge of their destinies for the first time.

(1) Kanticandra Bhattacarya had claimed to have quoted from Beames' 'Indian Philology'; see K.C. Bhattacarya, op.cit., p.1. Beames did not, however, support Bhattacarya's thesis, for he writes elsewhere,

"The legends of the Oriya race render it probable that they came into the province through the hills and down the Mahanadi, and the characteristics of their language lead me to believe that they broke away from the main stream of Aryan immigration somewhere about Shababad or Gya*. That they are not an offshoot of the Bengalis is proved by the fact that their language was already formed as we now have it at a period when Bengali had not attained a separate existence, and when the deltaic portion of Bengal was almost uninhabited. So that in fact they could not have sprung from the Bengalis, simply because there were then no Bengalis to spring from ..."

"The similarity between the languages is not by any means as great as some Bengali writers have sought to make out, and what similarity there is, is due to the fact that they both are dialects of the eastern or Magadhi form of prakrit."

John Beames, Notes on the History of Orissa under the Muhammadan Maratha and English Rule, first published in 1882 in the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 52, part I, and reprinted as Ch.VIII, Vol.II, A History of Orissa, edited by N.K. Sahu, Calcutta 1956, pp. 292-293. In an introductory note Beames explains, "These notes were written as part of a manual on the district of Balasore of which I was Collector from 1869 to 1873. The work was completed ... in 1873; but ... was not printed.

* Gaya.
vi) The effects of the dispute.

This battle in the press over the Oriya language was extremely important in that it marked the beginnings of both nationalism and of modern literature in Orissa. It demonstrated that nationality is determined not by blood alone, but also by language, as was proved by the fact that a number of people of Bengali stock remained loyal to the land of their adoption, Orissa, and the language of their adoption, Oriya. Since language is the life-blood of nationality, the way to feed nationality, to sustain this sense of national unity and identity, was to create a national literature in that language. Thus the press and the publishing industry were of great importance to the national cause, and this accounts for the persistence of the Oriyas in striving to create and maintain a flourishing press, even though part of the motivation behind the publishing industry and the controversies over textbooks must have been economic, the fight for the rich textbook market. (1) This, however, can only have added edge to a struggle that was largely activated by national pride, the desire of the Oriyas to prove themselves worthy descendants of their forefathers. There was certainly much self-sacrifice involved in the creation of the press in Orissa, as journalists were for the most part unpaid, and patrons donated mostly without hope of financial return.

The battle to save the Oriya language from political death had other consequences. Kānticandra Bhāṭṭācāryya had pointed out the dangers of imitating Bengali prose. The education system in Orissa had been dominated from Bengal. This and the fact that most of the generation of which we are speaking were raised on Bengali prose undoubtedly had an effect on those who

(1) According to the Annual Report of the Cuttack Printing Company for the year ending August 31, 1868, the company had printed 16,700 copies of books; of these 11,500 were textbooks; only 5,200 non-textbooks.
remained in the Education Department. One at least went outside, Phakirmohana Senapati. Having his rash statement of youth quoted by Kānticandra (1) and his prose compared with Vidyāsāgara's (2) probably taught Phakirmohana his lesson, for thereafter he began to model his language on what was intelligible to a village Oriya, his wife, and to draw his inspiration from the soil of Orissa. By doing so he was to create the distinctly Oriya subject-matter and style in modern prose, which were needed to attract readers to Oriya literature. To imitate English and Bengali in an effort to attract educated readers, as Radhanatha and Madhusūdana did, was to some extent doomed from the start, for there was no reason to read imitations when access to the originals was possible. Alien themes were unlikely to arouse interest in the rural masses, who preferred the old literature, as Gaurīsāṅkara could demonstrate from sales. Consequently, Phakirmohana's brand of folk literature, that sprang from the soil of Orissa like the paddy from her fields and that echoed rustic speech, found its way into the hearts of a whole nation when he began to write in Utkalā Sahitya in 1897.

(1) "Bābu Phakirmohana Senapati says in his foreword to his Jibana Carita, 'The truth is, the change of the verb forms alone turns Bengali into Oriya,'" Kānticandra Bhattacharya, op. cit., p. 21.
(2) A passage of Phakirmohana's translation of Vidyāsāgara's Jibana Carita is compared with the original, ibid, pp. 9-10.
CHAPTER VI.
Childhood to Adolescence. (1843-64)

Phakirmohana Senapati was born in Balasore in January 1843. The fortunes of his family had varied greatly. At one time they had been landowners in Kendrapada, but had been dispossessed of their land during the Maratha depredations. Then one of their ancestors had restored their family fortunes, by acquiring 45 batis of taxfree land in Balasore in payment for his services as the commander of a frontier post guarding the phalabara pass against the Muslim Pathans. (1) Owing to the folly of phakirmohana's grandmother Kucil Del, this land too had been lost, when Orissa was annexed by the British.

Kucil Del was then a young widow with two small sons. The British had announced that they had no intention of interfering with the rights of private property. All that they required was that the deeds and titles of ownership be registered at the kaceri. People thought this a trick on the part of the British to discover Maratha collaborators and sympathisers. Consequently, few of them registered their land. This poor response prompted the British authorities to send troops to escort landowners to the kaceri. The sight of the soldiers scared Kucil Del out of her wits. She hid her two sons and cried from behind the door, "There are no male children in this house. We have no need of land." (2)

Phakirmohana passes the loss off lightly with the observation,

"The title given to Hanu Malla by the Marathas was Senapati. His unworthy descendants forsook their surname, Malla, and landless and armyless, they have enjoyed the title of 'general' (senapati) ever since.

(2) ibid, p. 4."
Only at remembrance ceremonies (śrāddhas) and similar family and religious functions do they take the name, Malla." (1)

Inspite of his flippancy, however, phakīrmohana was proud of his family background of khandayata landowners. Later in such novels as Cha Māna Aṭha Guntha and Lachama he was to idealise this class of noble hard-fighting men, who glory in family honour and the protection of their tenants.

In the mid 1800s Balasore was an important seaport with a fleet of between 500 and 600 sailing vessels and a thriving salt industry. After the death of their father kūsa Malla, who had been chief peon at the Court of Murshidabad, and after the loss of their lands in Balasore, Kucīla's two sons, puruṣottama and Laksmanacarana, had somehow managed to set themselves up as ship-chandlers and sail-makers, and by the time of phakīrmohana's birth, their business was prospering. Then, when returning from the Car Festival in puri with Kucīla Deī, Laksmanacarana, phakīrmohana's father, took cholera and died on the steps of Binda āgara, a famous tank in Bhubanesvara. The news prostrated his wife Tulasī Deī, who took to her bed almost immediately and languished for fourteen months, before finally dying of grief. (3) Thus phakīrmohana was orphaned at two years of age.

Phakīrmohana would have had an elder brother, but the boy died before phakīrmohana's birth. In consequence of this, phakīrmohana's left ear was pierced to ward off Yama (Death). But Yama is persistent. Phakīrmohana went down with chronic diarrhoea and piles. He owed his survival to Kucīla Deī, who

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, P. 2. (2) Phakīrmohana's caste. (3) The mourning of Candamani for her husband pratīpa Udita Malla in Māmū is probably modelled on phakīrmohana's recollections of his mother's grief. As depicted in the novel, it seems exaggerated, but was an authentic picture of the grief of an adoring wife.
"spent countless days and nights without thought of sleep or food, engaged in a tug-a-war with yama, with me as the rope. Finally she triumphed and I began to recover."(1)

In a moment of desperation, Kucila Dei had vowed that, provided Phakirmohana recovered, she would give him to two Muslim saints (pirs), who lived nearby in Balasore, as their servant or fakir. (2) As an earnest of her intent, she changed his name from Brajamohana to Phakirmohana. (3) After his recovery, however, she could not bring herself to hand her grandson over to the pirs completely, but only symbolically for a period of eight days each year at the time of the Moharram, when she dressed him as a fakir and sent him begging for the benefit of the pirs.

Owing to illness Phakirmohana was somewhat late in starting school. He was nine years of age when he entered the village ḍhataśaṃkha. (4) He claims that during his schooldays his uncle Purusottama, who was the head of their united family, was harsh with him.

"My uncle Purusottama Senapati was very cruel tome. At the end of the month when my teacher came for his salary, my uncle said, 'Why should I pay you? You're not teaching the boy anything.' 'But I'm with him day and night. I don't let him waste a moment in play,' replied the teacher. 'Look,' my uncle said, 'there's not a mark on his back.' The teacher took his point. Whenever I sat down at school, the teacher gave me ten gratuitous cuts across the back. The swish of his cane and my cries of distress delighted my uncle and aunt, but my grandmother came dashing up to the teacher, crying, 'You've no call to hit

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, p.7. (2) The Oriya form of fakir is phakīra. (3) ibid, p. 8. (4) ibid, p. 9.
the boy, schoolmaster. Have you no children of your own?" A repeat performance of this was put on each time the teacher was paid."(1)

After phakirmohana had completed his elementary education at the village and acquired a little persian at the Muslim school in Balasore, his uncle arranged for his marriage and set him to work in the family business. phakirmohana was then 13 years of age. Of his first marriage in 1856, phakirmohana writes,

"At the age of thirteen on the instructions of my uncle, purusottama senapati, I married srímati līlābatī Devī, daughter of Narayana parida of Manika Khamba. She was conceited, inconsiderate, sharp-tongued and disobedient. My aunt saw to it that our marriage was one continuous quarrel. This deadly domesticity occasioned me more pain than my prolonged childhood illnesses. It called to mind that old sanskrit sloka,

'A man, whose mother is away
And whose wife is sharp-tongued,
May as well live in the jungle,
For jungle and home are all the same to him.'

My one source of consolation was my grandmother."(2)

It is plain from his account in his autobiography and from the one or two articles and stories he has written about ships and the sea that phakirmohana enjoyed his new life on the quaysides of Balasore. Even in old age the nautical phrases slipped

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 15-16. (2) ibid, p. 70

* mata yasya grhe nasti,
bhāryā cāpriyavādīni,
aranyam tena gantavyam
yathāranyam tathā grham.
easily from his lips to put a precise name to the various types of craft and rigging long after both had ceased to exist and the names had lost all meaning to the general public. (1) He never lost interest in the sea. In 1898, for example, when he attended a Congress Meeting in Madras, he spent considerable time touring the docks and gives a detailed description in his autobiography, which bears witness to his delight in the technical developments that had taken place in the layout and equipment of docks since his boyhood. (2)

As ship-chandlers and sail-makers, the Senapatis had managed to corner a large proportion of the trade and employed hundreds of tailors for sail-making. Phakirmohana started in the office as the accountant's 'mate'. (3) His work consisted in touring the quays and reporting to the accountant which ships were being fitted out with what sails and by which tailors. In his spare time he was also required to assist with the sewing. The shipping season generally ended in mid-April and from then until mid-November the ships remained at their moorings because of high winds. At the end of the season, Phakirmohana was sent to live with the Head Clerk of the Government Salt Offices (Nimaka Mahala), Visvanatha Das, to learn the salt business. It was probably here that Phakirmohana acquired his fluency in Bengali, for there were many Bengalis employed in the Nimaka Mahala, and business was transacted in Bengali, Oriya and Persian.

These were the halcyon days of Balasore. Though the working seasons of both the main industries were short, that of shipping being roughly 7 months and that of salt 9, everyone in

(1) Some of his nautical descriptions require footnotes even for native speakers; see, Kalika Prasada Gorapa, Phakirmohana Granthabal, pp. 615-622. (2) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 204-205. The description is quoted in this thesis, p. 232. (3) Phakirmohana uses the English word himself. It may have been the only one he knew at the time.
Balasore made sufficient to tide them over the off-seasons and even through lean years. Suddenly in 1862, however, the government decided to close the Nimaka Mahala and salt production virtually ceased. (1) The salt industry was the foundation of Balasore's prosperity. The profits accruing from shipping came mainly from salt-carrying. When the salt industry ceased, the remaining industries gradually toppled. The Senapatis must have been caught in the general economic collapse. Such business contacts and skills as they possessed presumably became worthless. They were reduced to straitened circumstances. Though Purusottama Senapati tried to train Phakirimohana for an alternative career by sending him to Barabati School in Balasore, Phakirimohana was forced to give up attending after only 16 or 17 months, because the family could no longer afford the monthly fee of four annas. (2)

Four annas was a considerable sum in those days, as the 'cost of living index' quoted below will indicate, and the actual cost of Phakirimohana's schooling must have been well in excess of this figure. There would be expenditure on books and suitable clothing (for students are always well-dressed in India) as well as the maintenance of both himself and his wife. Coupled with this, of course, would also be the loss of his potential earnings. Even so, it is a measure of the stringency to which Purusottama was reduced. One would have expected a successful business to have accumulated considerable reserves of capital. Presumably all Purusottama's assets were invested in business materials and equipment which became almost worthless in the general slump.

(1) "In 1862-66 the Government definitely abandoned a system (viz salt manufacture) which from its first establishment by Lord Clive, in the shape of a pure monopoly, had lasted with various modifications almost a century. (Buckland's 'Bengal' p. 287)" quoted by the editor of Atma Jibana Carita, p. 21.
(2) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 23
Nevertheless, phakirmohana had been at Barabati School long enough to demonstrate his merit. At the end of the year he stood first in the examinations and after he was forced to relinquish attendance, he was quickly taken onto the staff as third master on a salary of two and a half rupees per month by the school secretary, Sivacandra Soma. Kucilä Dei was delighted, especially as phakirmohana's salary was soon raised to Rs.4. (1)

Thus phakirmohana commenced his teaching career and was agreeably surprised to find himself comparatively well-off. He writes,

"The pay scales for clerks in the civil courts in those days ranged from three to ten rupees per month. The Head Clerk alone was on a salary of Rs.10. People were well-off on these meagre salaries, as the cost of living was then low, for example,

- Rice: $1\frac{1}{2}$ maunds for a rupee.
- biri: 1 maund for 8 annas
- muga: 1 maund for 10 annas
- narada: 1 maund for 10 annas
- oil: 7 seers for 1 rupee
- ghee: 3 seers for 1 rupee
- fish: $1/2$ seers for 1 pice.

Office workers and the well-to-do wore fine Baleswar cloth. Agricultural workers in the country wore homespun clothes. Only people with no womenfolk to spin for them bought cloth from the bazar. In the country everyone grew their own cotton. When it had been picked, the head of the family distributed it among the womenfolk to spin it into yarn, for each woman had a spinning wheel of her own. Then the weaver made the yarn up into cloth at a pice a cubit."

While at Barabati School, phakirmohana commenced the study of

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 24 (2) ibid, p. 25.
Sanskrit under the guidance of the school pandita.

"But the aphorisms of the Mugdha Bodha were beyond me. Vidyasagara's Vyakarana Kaumudi and Pujapaṭha were of immense help to me when they were published later on."(1)

Phakirmohana is largely reticent about his home life, but the one or two disclosures he does make suggest that life with his uncle was far from happy. His uncle was strict, his aunt bad-tempered and quarrelsome, and his wife thoroughly disagreeable. The sole comfort of Phakirmohana's childhood, adolescence and early manhood was his grandmother Kucila Deī, whom he was later to immortalise in Cha Maṇa Atha Guntha as the saṃtani, virtue personified and powerless in an evil world. Below we give his portrait of this still sad figure which towered protectively over his early years.

"My grandmother was of medium height, fair-skinned, well-built, healthy and able-bodied. She retained all her teeth, and almost half her hair remained black right up to her death. She was of a calm disposition and simple nature. Her conversation too was calm and gentle. She was never heard to raise her voice. There were a number of quarrelsome widows living in the village at that time. Whenever they started quarrelling, my grandmother retired to her room. My aunt and her daughter-in-law were somewhat sharp-tongued and overbearing. When either of them started shouting abuse, my grandmother withdrew; and if they had hurt her feelings, she sat quietly in her room and wept. No one ever saw her have a really good laugh. Her face was clouded in constant melancholy. She was very

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 25.
devout and god-fearing. She spent most of the year fasting or on a restricted diet. She regarded it as sinful to travel on the shoulders of cattle; i.e. in bullock carts. All her many visits to places of pilgrimage were therefore made on foot. She was never, to my knowledge, 'laid up' with any illness, except rheumatics every three or four months.

"She was up before dawn and doing her work till midnight. She never spoke to anyone face to face except when unavoidable. She was busy with housework all day long except for her worship at midday after bathing, her mala bhajana in the evening, and listening to the puranas. She was the last to eat and retire to bed at night. She slept for only three to four hours, and so lightly that the least sound in the house or a single call would awaken her.

"She possessed but three bamboo baskets: a small one filled with various roots and medicaments; the second with various kinds of garden seeds; and the third was very large. It was the receptacle of all the broken household rubbish. Nothing was ever thrown out. She used to nurse any child who fell ill, whether in our house or in the village. There was a small grove at the back of the house. When she got any spare time from housework, she used to work in it with a gardener. The garden was always full of seasonal fruits and vegetables. We never needed to buy any from the market. My grandmother has passed away, but the mango grove she planted in the garden is still standing.

"She dedicated her life to the drudgery and service of the household. My father's death was a great blow to her. The memory of how she suffered to save me is
almost unbearable: the days and nights she nursed me, day in day out, month in month out. No matter what she was doing, she always had an eye on me, like a cow and her calf grazing in a field. I must have been about twenty or twenty-two, when I first went to Calcutta. It was dusk (some days later) when I returned. She was beside herself with joy, when she saw me, and dashed about the house, veranda and yard, weeping (with relief). It is due to her absolute self-sacrifice that I am alive today. Whatever headway I have made is due to her _punya_ (religious merit). (1)

This moving tribute to his grandmother, his bald account of his first marriage, and his references to his uncle's sternness during his schooldays are the only evidence we have on which to base our picture of Phakirmohana's home-life in childhood and youth. Doubtless all that he says is subjectively true, but one wonders whether his understanding of the situation is quite right.

The thrift inherent in the description of Kucila Dei's three baskets and her gardening is eloquent testimony of the struggle she must have had to raise her two sons after the death of her husband and the loss of their land. She undoubtedly did her best for the boys, but one wonders whether they did not harbour some resentment over the loss of their land through her folly. At all events, they must have had a desperate struggle to establish themselves as they did in business as ship-chandlers. Purusottama may also have harboured resentment over the death of his brother in Bhubanesvara. He may have held his mother responsible for his death. The death of Lakṣmanacarana would certainly have been a cruel blow to Purusottama. At one stroke it doubled his burden of responsibility.

bility. One can well imagine that he grew a little impatient with a mother, who seems to have brought him so much misfortune.

Puruṣottama's alleged cruelty towards Phakīrmohana may have been more apparent than real. On the whole, he seems to have done his best for the boy. He educated him adequately for the career he intended him to follow in the family business and arranged for him to get additional training in the salt industry; and when, as Puruṣottama could hardly have foreseen, both industries toppled, he arranged for Phakīrmohana to resume his education in preparation for a fresh career. Puruṣottama’s harshness may, in fact, have been a mere mark of his determination to make a man of his nephew. He could see that Phakīrmohana was physically weak, but he did not want him to be also morally weak, by remaining unweaned from his grandmother at nine years of age.

Phakīrmohana may have idealised his grandmother Kucila Del as all that was best in woman, but she was far from perfect. Much of the quarrelsome nature of Phakīrmohana’s wife might have been curbed, if only Kucila Del had possessed the natural authority to assume her true role in the household as its female head. Had she done so, Phakīrmohana’s home would have been a far more peaceful place. As it was, the best she could provide for him was a gloomy haven in her garden, "Like a cow and her calf, grazing in a field." Nevertheless, this haven meant much to him; much of his life was spent in the construction of such peaceful havens and most of his works were written in them.
CHAPTER VII.

A Young Teacher at Balasore Mission School.
(1864-1871) ((age 21 to 29))

i) First Contact with Westerners.

Phakirmohana made his first contact with westerners in 1864 when he joined the staff of Balasore Mission School, which was run by the American Mission Society. He writes,

"The post of Head Master was vacant in Balasore Mission School. It carried a salary of Rs.10 per month. The School Secretary, Rev. A. Miller, appointed me in 1864. The post of 2nd Master was also vacant. My good friend Govindaarendra Pattanayaka was appointed on a salary of 7 rupees per month.

Miller saheba was tall, handsome, well-built and slightly plump. His faults were a bad temper and a lack of common sense. He did the first thing that came into his head. Because of the shortage of Christian Teachers in those days, he appointed us Hindus, but he had no faith in us. In his opinion, Hindus were another form of the idolatrous devil, mendacious, mischievous and untrustworthy. Naturally as a Hindu I was also unreliable and mischievous. He had not mastered Oriya and knew nothing about running a school. Whenever I made a suggestion about the school, he flew into a rage and issued orders to the contrary; but his unnecessary anger did not frighten me; on the contrary, his outlandish Oriya and strange gesticulations amused me...(1)

"One day pandita Visvanatha Satapathi was absent. It

(1) Atma Jtblana Carita, pp. 31-32.
happened to be the Muslim Moharram that day. The secretary, Miller saheba, sent for him the next day and asked, 'Why didn't you come yesterday, pandita Visvanātha?

Pandita: 'I was unwell yesterday, Sir.'
Miller: 'Liar. You went to the Moharram. You are fined one rupee.'
Pandita: 'But, Sir, I'm a Hindu brahmin. Why should I attend the Moharram.'
Miller: 'You idolators are all alike.'

Despite the one-rupee fine, we were greatly amused by the saheba's ignorance. It kept our friends laughing for a month.

"One day the saheba and his brethren went to distant parts of the rural areas to preach the gospel in markets and other public places. Immediately on his return to Balasore, a criminal suit was filed against him. The suit ran: the saheba and his brethren stood in a public place in the market and first of all sang a hymn to an English air at the top of their voices. Not even an educated man, let alone the people in the market place, could understand the hymn's meaning. When it was over, the saheba delivered his sermon (in broken Oriya):

'Your Jagannātha is wood, brothers, is stone, is nothing. Worship of it leads to eternal damnation. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Saviour. If you worship Him, you will find the light and take your place in His heavenly kingdom.'

Some fool let slip: 'No, saheba, our Jagannātha is good. Your Christ is no good.' The saheba flew into a rage: 'You've blasphemed our Lord Jesus Christ, you..."
idolatrous Hindu rascal.' He was holding a riding crop in his hand. He struck out and hit not only the blasphemer of Christ, but also whoever happened to be standing in front. Finally a criminal suit was filed against him.

"The saheba imagined that he knew Oriya well. As a result of some days' toil he translated a slight pamphlet into Oriya. It was arranged that I should correct the translation, when it was finished. The Head of the Mission would then read it through, and if it was alright, it would be printed. I was given the manuscript and started correcting. As I recall, the first sentence ran: 'There are many people in the world, who do not believe there is a god in the world.' My version of this was: 'There are many people in this world who reject God's existence (astitva). When I had finished correcting the manuscript, I took it to the Mission Head. He could not read handwriting, so I read it out to him.

"He flew into a rage at the very first sentence. 'What? What's that you've written? God's bones! Is the Lord God made of wood and stone like the images of idolators that He should have bones?' he bellowed. I gaped at him in bewilderment, and he kept on and on explaining to me that the Lord God was boneless. 'Excuse me, Sir, but where have I written anything about bones?' I asked gently. 'Right here. Asthi.* Asthi means bones. D'you think I don't know that?' he snapped and shouted angrily to the saheba, 'The pandita has ruined your pamphlet with his blasphemies, brother!' In the saheba's estimation, the

* The Mission Head had presumably misheard astitva (existence) as asthi (bones). Hence the confusion.
Mission Head was a learned man for he could haltingly read the printed Bible. What was more, he was a Christian, and therefore reliable. His word was bound to be true. I, on the other hand, was an idolatrous, mischievous Hindu and therefore untrustworthy. The Sāheba did not ask me for a single word of explanation. He just raged at me. He did not address a civil word to me for a long time afterwards. I have no idea what finally became of his pamphlet. The American Mission Society severed all contact with him when the suit was filed, but he did not remain unemployed for long. Bignold Sāheba, then the Balasore District Collector, wrote to the government about him and got him appointed as Deputy Collector. He died within a few months of his appointment, however. (1)

The man who first dispelled this unfortunate first impression of Phakîrmohana's in regard to Western Christians was the American, Rev. E.C.B. Hallam, who succeeded Miller as Secretary of the Mission School. Phakîrmohana had left the School, but now resumed his old appointment. He took to Hallam immediately. He writes,

"The Reverend Hallam was as learned and talented as he was handsome. He was gentle of both speech and nature. His Oriya was exceptionally fluent. His intonation and accent were exactly like ours. He sounded just like an Oriya." (2)

The attraction must have been mutual. Phakîrmohana was surprised at the degree of intimacy Hallam permitted him. In dedicating his Bhāratabarṣaṇa Itihāsa to Hallam in 1869, he wrote,

"I have worked under you for some time. You always

(1) Atma Jīvana Carita, pp. 35-36. (2) ibid., p. 37.
regarded me as a friend rather than a subordinate. For this and for other reasons service under you gave me intense satisfaction. Indeed, I have never experienced such satisfaction anywhere else since the day I entered the teaching profession. Our talks afforded me great pleasure. I shall never forget your modest unaffected manner of speech."(1)

There is a passage in similar vein in his autobiography, where he speaks of Hallam and himself discussing Oriya literature after school.(2)

Under Hallam's supervision phakirmohana was making a success of his teaching career.

"A new scheme was introduced whereby pupils in the Oriya and Bengali grant-aided schools in Orissa, who succeeded in passing their final examination, were to be given a monthly scholarship of four rupees and taught English for a period of four years. During its first year, four of our pupils from Balasore Mission School passed. Three of them were awarded scholarships. My cousin's husband, Raghunatha Caudhuri, was one of them. Balasore Mission School came first in the whole of Orissa. The appreciative Hallam increased my salary to twenty-five rupees a month."(3)

Hallam undoubtedly thought highly of phakirmohana. When Mr. R.L. Martin, the Inspector of Schools for South-West Bengal, offered Phakirmohana the post of 2nd Master at the Normal School in Cuttack on a salary of thirty rupees, Hallam raised his salary to thirty rupees himself rather than lose him.(4)

Hallam wrote an Oriya grammar in English for the benefit of Western students of the language. Phakirmohana writes,

(1) Phakirmohana Senapati, Bharatabarsara Itihasa, Balasore, 1869, dedication. (2) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 41. (3) ibid, pp. 37-38 (4) ibid, p. 40.
"I helped with its preparation. That is why he mentions my name in his book. I differed from him on only one point of grammar. We were in complete agreement on all others. It was his contention that Oriya has no separate Dative case. He argued that since the inflection of both the Accusative and Dative is ku, there is no need to distinguish the Dative. His grammar therefore omits it." (1)

Hallam was sufficiently impressed with phakirmohana's grammatical work, however, to introduce him to John Beames, who had recently been appointed as District Collector for Balasore and who needed a pandita with a knowledge of Sanskrit, Bengali and Oriya to assist him with the composition of his Comparative Grammar of Indian Languages. phakirmohana was aware of Beames' reputation in the service and in educated Indian society as an extraordinarily learned man. He was proficient in eleven languages. It is not certain whether phakirmohana subscribed to this view of Beames' erudition, for his remarks are ambiguous. He states that at their first interview Beames posed several grammatical questions and receiving from phakirmohana answers that accorded with his expectations, included them in his grammar. As a result phakirmohana became known as "a pandita among Europeans." He then quotes a proverb, which I take to be roughly equivalent to the English: "In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king"; implying, in addition to self-disparagement, either that Europeans in general are not noted for scholarship in these subjects, or that Beames in particular was not. (2)

At all events his relations with Beames seem to have afforded him amusement, especially as regards punctuality and English forms of polite phraseology. He writes,

The saheba instructed me to come to see him at least once a week. Sometimes when I was a day or two late, he would ask, the moment he saw me, 'What explanation have you to offer for this delay in coming to see me?'

And some years later (1876) phakirmohana, temporarily penniless and unemployed, went to Beames to ask for a job. The conversation ran:

"Saheba: 'I suppose you're unemployed whilst awaiting the Board's letter.'
I: 'Yes, Sir. I find unemployment hard to bear.'
Saheba: 'Quite. Unemployment is worse than any illness. (He reflected for a while.) Well, I should at least like to employ you as Dewan of Domapada. Would you be willing to go?'
I: '(I smile to myself. He asks, am I willing. It's like being granted a boon, before one has even prayed...) Yes, Sir, I'm willing to go wherever you send me.'"(1)

Phakirmohana's contact with Europeans resulted in sympathy for them, for at times they appear to have been no more than pawns in the hands of their subordinates. It is clear from his account of the Great Orissa Famine that he attributes a large measure of the responsibility for it to the sycophancy of Ravenshaw's Indian staff. He writes,

"I think Mr. Ravenshaw, Orissa's great friend and benefactor, had at the time been newly appointed as Commissioner. He received a communication from the Government in either September or October that there was every likelihood of famine in Orissa due to

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 83.
drought. Is there any necessity for government action to safeguard its subjects? If so, what action is feasible? The Commissioner consulted all the clerks in the kaceri in order to prepare his reply. Two Head Clerks said, 'There is no need for concern about possible famines. The jamidāras and mahājanas have enough paddy stored away in the rural areas ... for one year.' Seeing that the Head Clerks (sirastādāras) had said this, the Commissioner's peskāras felt it incumbent upon themselves to add to it in order to please their chiefs.... Besides which, the houses of the small-scale mahājanas were full of paddy. They alone could keep Orissa going for two months... The peskāra of the political Department ... reckoned that there were lakhs and lakhs of paddy in people's homes; and according to the lower-grade clerks there was unlimited paddy stored away in Orissa. The people could manage for a year. Accordingly the Commissioner replied to the government that there might be a famine in Orissa, but that there were sufficient stocks of paddy to manage for one year. "(1)

We are not concerned with the truth or falsity of phakīrmohana's account, but only with the sympathy it expresses for Ravenshaw's position as a foreigner dependent upon Indians for information. Phakīrmohana goes on to point out that Ravenshaw did in fact err and that he ought to have held a full-scale inquiry into the stocks of paddy available in Orissa. Even so, phakīrmohana mitigates his remarks by adding,

"It was ordained by providence that up to thirty lakhs of Oriyas should be hurled into confusion and death. In view of this, was it likely that the Commissioner could ever have seen sense?" (2)

His contact with the Western community was the most important circumstance of the seven years (1864-71) phakirmohana spent at Balasore Mission School. That alone accounts for his rapid rise from comparative obscurity to prominence in Balasore politics in 1869-70. Once he had established his worth in European eyes, his position improved a thousandfold, and he readily acknowledged the fact. "The tap root of all my worldly advancement is the Mahatma John Beames. I shall remember his sacred name to the very last moment of my life."(1) His position became impregnable, as the Europeans stood as a buffer between him and the uncertainties of his times. His self-confidence increased, and he became secure against the fear of poverty and unemployment. His financial and social position improved, and he became a man of influence, a potential leader.

Personal friends and learning English.

It is during his period of teaching at Balasore Mission School that we first hear phakirmohana speak of personal friends. His circle of acquaintance seems to have included both people who were already in positions of influence or authority locally by virtue of their birth such as Kumāra Baikūṭhanātha De, one of the local royalty, and Kisoramohana Dāsa, brother of one of the richest jamidāras and mahējanas in Balasore; and also people such as Radhanātha Rāya and Madhusūdana Dāsa, who were later to achieve eminence in literature and politics respectively. Obviously phakirmohana was becoming well-placed to be attuned to, and to influence, trends of thought in the most powerful section of Balasore society. At first, however, he had much to learn from his friends.

"On the edge of Motigunj Bazar in Balasore there is a tank called Gadagadia. It is actually part of the village of Batesvara, which constitutes the home of

(1) Atma Jibana Garita, p. 39.
most of the non-Oriyas (1) teachers and clerks... The home of the famous poet Radhanatha lay a little way to the east of Gadagadi. My home was a little further away, on the west. The honourable Madhusudana Das, M.A., C.I.E* was then 3rd Master of Balasore District School. His lodgings too were near to Gadagadi. During the summer we used to gather on the brick stairs of the tank almost every day to talk in the fresh air. Radhanatha was unable to join us in public during the day for fear of his father. (2) He occasionally joined us after dark, but Madhusudana Das was a regular member of our group. The high ambitions he entertained even at that early age staggered us. He resigned his post and went on to Calcutta.

"I wanted to learn English. I got a copy of the First Book and began to study it on the tank-stairs with the help of my friends, one of whom was 2nd Master of the District School. He gave me a few days' tuition. Then I read a few English books such as The Arabian Nights, Robinson Crusoe, Bengal Peasant Life and the Bible. This smattering of English education subsequently stood me in good stead in my career." (3)

iii) Phakirmohana's religious development.

The late teens and early twenties are as a rule a period of sceptical unrest. Young people seem suddenly to realise that the

(1) Presumably Bengali. (2) Radhanatha's father was very strict; he closely supervised Radhanatha's studies and career. See, Radhanatha Granthabali, 11th edition, Cuttack 1957; p.ii. (3) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 63-65. Padma Carana Pattnayaka claims that Phakirmohana conceived the desire to learn English, when insulted by the doorkeeper of Mr. R.L. Martin, Inspector of Schools. See, P.C. Pattnayaka, Phakirmohana Senapati, p.32.
values and ideals of their society are by no means absolute and that they may, and must, be challenged to discover their strength and worth. Thus this period of a man's life often appears to be completely iconoclastic, for he seems determined to shake the faith of his elders to its very foundations; yet actually he is merely testing the strength of that faith and his own power to doubt. Somewhere in the tension between that strength and power lies a point of equilibrium, and that is his maturity.

Phakirmohana was presumably passing through just such a phase as this, when the disaster of the Na Aaka famine suddenly swept through the land. The marked contrast between the response of Hindu and Christian society to the disaster moved him deeply.

"The year after the famine there were many adults and children of both sexes wandering the streets with nowhere to go. They had been outcasted by Hindu society for being chaṭra-khiṣa (people who had eaten at the relief centres). The Christian missionaries lifted them lovingly into their arms; cherished them like sons; educated and trained them. It is not Hinduism that was responsible for this unjust abandonment, for the Hindu purāṇas and śastras plainly state that in an emergency one is not at fault in accepting cooked food from the lowest untouchable. The Mahābhārata records that for the sake of survival Rājarṣi Visvamitra once ate the flesh of a dog cooked by a candāla and afterwards resumed his place amongst the great seers. It is our callous society that was responsible for this abandonment."(1)

The Hindu reaction aggravated rather than alleviated the suffering in its midst. It is possible that this lack of common

(1) Atmaśīlābana迦Gitā, pp. 49-50. Some Christians apparently believed that the Great Orissa famine was intended by the Almighty to facilitate the spread of the Gospel. See, Odissa Kṛṣṇa-dharmodaya, compiled by Jayacandra Simha, Cuttack 1914, pp. 98-99.
humanity on the part of Hindu society temporarily turned phakir-
mohana completely against Hinduism. The passage quoted above
was after all written half a century after the event, by which
time he was fully reconciled to Hinduism, if not to Hindu society as well.

It was about this time that his grandmother Kucila Dei died.
(1867) She had been a pillar of piety, and it is unlikely that
phakirmohana would have done anything during her lifetime that
might have offended her religious sensibilities; so deep was
his affection for her. Her death left his home a cold, comfort-
less place, that he would gladly have left. Thus it was that he
could contemplate the prospect of conversion to Christianity
with the inevitable severing of contact with his family and
society. The Christian response to the Nā Amsaka famine and his
friendship with Hallam promised the warmth and sympathy his fam-
ily and society appeared to lack. He was on the verge of con-
version; but his courage failed him.

"I learnt through the study of the Bible and various
other books, and by talking with European mission-
aries that the world is the creation of one supreme
God, Whose Son, Jesus Christ, is the saviour of our
souls. Eternal damnation attends those who are not
baptised in the name of Jesus. I began to think, since
God created us, He will save us, provided we worship
Him. Who are all these other gods and goddesses?
Every single village has a deity of its own and the
temples are full of them. How can I worship so many
gods? They cannot save me, so what is the point of
worshipping them? I told Radhanath. For a long time
we considered what we ought to do. Finally we decided
to embrace Christianity, but in the event Radhanath
declared that he could not forsake Hinduism, and I
did not have the courage to become a Christian alone."

(1)

It should be emphasised, however, that phakirnohana's experience was not rare. It formed part of the mood of his times. What was rare was his willingness to embrace Christianity, but this was due to the peculiarly hostile atmosphere of his home. His vague sense of the inadequacy of orthodox Hinduism was common to his times. Hinduism seems often to engender in the minds of its intellectuals a certain ambivalence, a dissatisfaction with some facet of its practices and yet a fear of completely forsaking it. This ambivalence is particularly manifest at times of national crisis or disaster, such as the Na Aaka famine in Orissa. At such times it is natural that some other religion, possessing the particular quality that Hinduism seems then to be lacking, should exert a powerful appeal. In 19th century India this other religion was, of course, Christianity. By the 1860s, however, when phakirnohana was experiencing this ambivalence, an answer to Christianity had evolved in Bengal, Brahmaism. After the famine this movement began gaining converts in Orissa. Of his relations with the Samaja, phakirnohana writes,

"... a Brahma preacher named Isanacandra Basu came to Balasore from Calcutta. I went to see him. We used to discuss religion every day. After a while he stopped talking about religion and began discussing language. He tried to convince me of the excellence of Bengali and the inferiority of Oriya, which greatly angered me; so I stopped going to see him.

"A long time afterwards a clerk came from Bengal to the Nimaka Mahala in Balasore. His name was Prasanna Kumara Caturya. I heard he was a Brahma and went to see him to discuss Brahmaism. Prasanna Babu's lodgings

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 67.
were behind the temple of Jhādesvara Mahādeva. His lodgings and the temple were separated by only a narrow alley. A brahma service was held in his lodgings every Sunday evening. After the service we used to drink alcohol. By then drinking had become part of the service for some brahmams. In Bengal even the most venerable brahmams, who were equivalent to rsis, were not averse to alcohol.

Some months later it was publically decided to establish a separate brahma temple. The congregation consisted of the members of our association; i.e. Damodara Prasāda Dāsa, Govinda Prasāda Dāsa, Jayakrṣṇa Caudhuri and Bholanatha Babu. A few other friends also attended the services occasionally. On the western edge of Motiunj Bazar in Balasore there was a brick-built building belonging to the Maharaja of Mayurbhajā. It was known locally as Rajakotha (the Royal buildings). It would be during the summer of 1867 or 1868 that the services began to be held in Rajakotha. Up till then people had not so much as heard of Brahmaitism. Some of the leading people were surprised to learn that a samāja had been started. 'What's Brahmaitism?' people asked. It caused a great stir in the kaceri. 'This is that devil's doing (Phakirmonhaśa's presumably)', they decided. 'He's already ruined his family name. Now he's out to finish his caste.'(1)

The above passage is disappointing. One would have expected at least some indication of why phakirmonha was attracted to the Brahma Samāja. Instead one receives a bald outline of events that seems calculated to arouse antagonism towards the

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 67-69.
Samāja. Alcohol is anathema to Hindu society. It has become
the very symbol of depravity in modern Oriya literature, an
attitude Phakārmohana helped to create. Why then did he chose
to paint so unfavourable a picture of his relations with the
Samāja? Any search for an explanation must begin with the as­
sumption that Phakārmohana's account is substantially correct;
i.e. that the facts he presents are true, even if the impres­
sion he creates is false. Assuming then that the facts are
true, what do we deduce? Firstly, Phakārmohana was unfortunate
in being introduced to the Brahma Samāja, not by a Bengali in­
tellectual, but by a semi-educated clerk. His conception of
Brahmaism was therefore likely to be, at its best, vague; and,
at its worst, distorted. Secondly, his whole association joined.
Consequently, it is possible that his membership was prompted,
not by sincere religious convictions, but by a desire for con­
formity with a fashionable trend. Thirdly, he began to drink
alcohol under the delusion that all the most venerable mem­
bers did so. This is not so absurd as it sounds. Religious
sects in India have been known to indulge in many strange prac­
tices. Phakārmohana's statement is therefore plausible, especi­
ally as he makes no other attempt to excuse his conduct.

Thus so far it would appear that he was attracted to Brahma­
ism by a semi-educated Bengali; joined the Samāja because it
was fashionable to do so; and drank alcohol under the delusion
that even the most venerable Brahmas drank. It was all very
natural for him to have done so at such an impressionable age.
Yet if this were the case, why did he not say so? Why instead,
did he write in such a truculently provocative fashion? The
clues lie in two lines: "He tried to convince me of the excell­
ence of Bengali and the inferiority of Oriya"; and "He's al­
ready ruined his family name." That the Brahmu Samāja achieved
such popularity amongst intellectuals in Orissa after the Na
Aāka Famine is proof of the popularity of Bengali culture in
Orissa at this time and of the good personal relations then existing between Bengalis and Oriyas. All this was changed overnight by the language dispute, but the point I wish to make here is that in 1867 Phakirmohana was on extremely good terms with Bengalis. He spoke Bengali fluently; lived in a part of Balasore where many Bengalis lived; and sought out the company of Bengalis, as he had sought out both Isanacandra Basu and Prasanna Kumara Caturya, the two Brahmas. His attitude towards Bengalis was, however, poisoned by the language issue, and it is my contention that he disparaged the samāja partly for this reason, and partly for another.

After Kucila Dei's death in 1867, "home became hell to me", Phakirmohana writes. (1) It was probably this intolerable home atmosphere that drove Phakirmohana into so many outside activities during these years: joining the samāja, writing his History, founding a press, launching and editing a journal and so forth. No one can work all the time, however; he had to take some relaxation; and the type of relaxation he took is hinted at in the final line, "He has ruined his family name." His biographer, Padma Carana Pattnayaka, writes,

"In those days Balasore society was riddled with corruption. Hot-blooded youth was capable of all kinds of lewdness. Government clerks in the law-courts pocketed bribes in abundance. Nor was pocketing bribes regarded as reprehensible. On the contrary, a clerk's prestige was proportionate to his pocket's capacity. A contemporary saying ran: 'Clerking is thieving and commerce mendacity.' Far from practising religion themselves, the young ridiculed the old for doing so. Through consorting with semi-educated Bengalis, semi-educated Oriyas took up drinking;  

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p.70.
indeed a young man who did not drink was regarded as uncouth. The young held numerous dinner parties, at which meat and wine bulked large on the menus. Dinners, dances, (bāmāca) wenching, dicing, cards and chest were the main daily amusements of rich young men. Though labouring body and soul in various spheres of activity for the advancement of his country, phakirmohana was unable to remain aloof from these evils, because of the society of the rich young men he courted. In later life when reminiscing with his friends and acquaintances he expressed great regret for these youthful excesses, and he has left traces of this regret in some of his occasional verse. The introduction of Western education was at first responsible for the acquisition of several bad habits from the West by Indian society, not only in this province, but in other provinces also. The English-educated of those days thought these habits an indispensable part of English education and culture."(1)

Padma Carana Paṭṭanāyaka's statement that phakirmohana was led astray by the company he kept is endorsed by a poem in phakirmohana's Abāsara Bāsare, Saṅga Ḍoṣa. Like the majority of the poems in the collection, Saṅga Ḍoṣa is autobiographical. It reads like a confession.

"How circumspectly I progressed in the exploration of my soul. Lovingly I fixed my gaze on virtue's path; and strong in righteousness, I trampled down"

(1) Padma Carana Pattanāyaka, Phakirmohana Senapati, Cuttack 1926; p. 35.
temptation ... Then by chance I made the acquaintance of a contemporary, who was high-spirited and bold, and held a post of learning and prestige ... We were as inseparable as milk and water. A moment's parting was too much to bear. We were apparently alike in all things, though we differed in character, as soon became apparent. My friend's behaviour troubled me. I was too ashamed to watch, yet too timid to protest. Let each do as he will, I resolved; but I shall not stoop to temptation ... Little do people realise the danger of self-deception, for virtue's path is slippery ... Despite seeing constantly that vice and virtue are born of our companions, in our stupidity we deliberately throw caution to the winds ... When I first witnessed my friend's behaviour, I was startled. What's this? I thought, and I became afraid. I had always had a natural hatred of evil, yet the more I saw of my friend's behaviour, the less this grew ... When fused with ambrosia, poison triumphs. I tumbled into sin at my friend's request ... How am I to live? I brood continuously. I shall die of this remorse."(1)

Another poem in the same collection, Bāra Bīlāsinī, both reviles and excuses the prostitute for her calling. Phakīrmohana still lays the direct responsibility for evil at the door of corrupt companions, but the ultimate responsibility he lays upon the callous society which stands by and allows evil to take its course. Addressing the prostitute he says,

"I do not hold you alone to blame;
Society is equally to blame.
How could society stand aloof,

(1) Phakīrmohana Granthābalī, pp. 826-828.
When you were corrupted by your companions?
Obviously the whole of society was there to witness
Your childhood fall into the hands of harlots.
Had they snatched you back,
You would have remained on virtue's path.
A soul sank to damnation before their eyes,
And society looked on, unmoved." (1)

- The problem of evil was to perplex phakīrmohana for many years. He finally resolved it in the following theory,

"... though all men are basically the same, not two men in ten million are physically identical; and just as men's bodies differ, their minds differ also. Some men have strong propensities, others weak, whilst the propensities of still others may lie dormant. At some particular time a turn of events may awaken these dormant propensities. Who would have thought that those drunken reprobates, Jagāi and Madhai, could have become devout vaishnavas? Or that that tyrannical enemy of Christ, Saul, would now be worthy of a seat amongst the most venerable of seers? On the other hand, the asceticism of that royal seer Viṣvamitra, son of Gādhi, that had endured for thousands upon thousands of eons, and his even greater steadfastness in Brahma, tottered at a single glance from the beautiful Menaka ... the cause of all these sudden changes was a particular circumstance or meeting ..." (2)

That is, man has propensities for both good and evil, and may well remain unaware of possessing either, until a particular situation reveals the fact to him. His position may best be

(1) phakīrmohana Granthabali, p. 847. (2) ibid, pp. 278-279.
explained by an analogy. Evil is like disease. Some men are resistant to it; others are not; while still others are born with it in a quiescent form. A particular set of circumstances, which favour the propagation of disease, may suddenly activate this quiescent form; i.e. the potentially evil man will sin, when conditions are such that his innate propensities become irresistible. The same is also true of goodness. This is not to say that Phakirmohana was lacking in charity or compassion. In the face of evil, however, he was intransigent. "You have not the least trace of purity in you," he screams at the prostitute.

This, in my opinion, was the second reason why Phakirmohana disparaged the Samāja. From the Brāhma Samāja there seemed to emanate an enervating atmosphere of moral laxity, which sapped his resistance to sin; and in consequence he projected all his loathing of his own sinfulness back onto the Samāja. Deplorable as this transitory dissipation may have been for Phakirmohana the man, it was of immense value to him as an artist, for it opened wide vistas of self-discovery and revealed to him affinities between himself and the most morally depraved, which as a man he may well have found deeply disturbing, but which as an artist he could use to advantage. An artist's personality limits the range of his creation. His most successful creations are what he himself is, either in fact or potentially. Unaided by experience, intelligence and imagination can only produce puppets in ingenious situations; but experience, which is only another word for the discovery of one's potential self, enables the artist to create his characters from within, as it were, and thus to endow them with an independent life and psyche of their own. This was one of the ways in which this self-discovery was later to prove valuable to him. The other was in revealing to him the need for a moral code to protect himself from his own baser instincts. It marked the birth of
the moralist in him to counter balance his own propensities for evil. One wonders, for example, whether in his short story, Patent Medicine, he was not still trying to exorcise his own youthful addiction to alcohol, when he has an amiable drunkard reformed under the battering blows of his wife's broomstick.

Paradoxically, despite phakirmohana's apparent distaste for the Brahma Samāja, the imprint of Brahmāism on his later religious thought went deep. The introduction to Bāuddhavatārā Kābya is instinct with Brahma sentiment and most of the illustrations below will be drawn from there. Like a Brahma, phakirmohana was out for social and religious reform. High on his list of priorities was the breaking of the brahmanic stranglehold on Hinduism.

"It is with compunction and shame that I, a Hindu, am forced to confess that all India's troubles stem from Hinduism alone ... by which I mean the Hinduism of our sacrificial brahmans. This Hinduism left us (the so-called Hindu nation) severed asunder, weak and without sympathy for each other, and sunk in superstitious darkness."(1)

"You brahmans banished the Buddhists on a baseless charge of godlessness. You of course had 33 crores of gods, but still you had not enough. You had to borrow Satyapirs, Mardagajs and Bādagajs to raise your total to 34 crores. Your caste divisions run to 35 crores, and your sects to 36. Science is affronted, when this nation is accorded a seat among the civilised."(2)

"The Buddhist monks were disinterested, averse to worldly pleasures, dedicated to the service of the oppressed and of mankind in general. What good have these purohits of ours done us, even after an unrival-

Footnotes on following page...
led ascendancy of over a thousand years? The monks dedicated themselves to the spread of sacred knowledge amongst the lay community. Far from spreading knowledge, however, these purohitas of ours have been only too intent on keeping from our eyes the Vedas, Upanisadas and philosophies bequeathed to us by great sages of old. Non-brahmins had not the right to utter the syllable om denoting parama Brahma. Sanskrit, our sacred language, was a brahmanic monopoly. Praise be to British raj, whose liberality allows us to study this priceless tongue and the sacred knowledge it enfolds. Praise be to the British, whose liberality allows us to read the Vedas and to worship parama Brahma without fear. It would seem that God in his infinite mercy sent us British rule to liberate India from her evil condition."

Like the Brahmas, Phakirmohana believed in the universal brotherhood of man.

"All men are equal by virtue of their brotherhood as the sons of the Almighty. All distinctions such as Aryan and non-Aryan, Hindu and mleccha, Greek and barbarian, Muslim and infidel are man-made and observed by the uneducated and unintelligent alone."

These distinctions bred fanaticism and fathered needless suffering.

"The history of religion reveals that everywhere on

earth, in Europe, Asia and Africa, thousands upon thousands of innocent people perished senselessly at the hands of arrogant fanaticism. Pious saints such as Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer were burnt at the stake in Europe for professing a faith they held to be true; the great Socrates was poisoned; the pilgrim fathers driven to America; Sadhu Hari Dasa publically flogged in Babana Bazaar; Jesus crucified. Mohammed alone escaped persecution."(1) The whole piece is a plea for tolerance and compassion among adherents of all religions, for, as he points out, "The goal of all religious men, whether Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist, is the same, salvation or nirvana. The path alone differs."(2)

Clearly no matter what motive prompted his joining the Samaja and no matter how disparaging a picture of it he painted in his autobiography, Phakirmohana was one of the few Oriya intellectuals who approached the Brahma ideal of universal tolerance and compassion. He had nothing but praise for the founder of Brahmaism, Ram Mohana Raya, whom he regarded as an incarnation of Visnu, descended once more to uphold virtue and the virtuous in time of crisis. "Hinduism was once more in decline. The pure Vaisnavism of Caitanya was being perverted. The western-educated were embracing the foreign faith to ease their troubled spirits. It was fortunate indeed for India, as we must all confess, that the Mahatma Ram Mohana Raya descended to preach a monism founded on ancient upanishadic lore."(3)

it would seem that national pride alone held phakirmohana back from proclaiming himself a brahma.

"He used to say that sadhus, such as Bhima Bhoi, Hadidas, Arakshita Das, and Bira Simha, together with the Panca Sakha, had promulgated the basic precepts of Brahma worship and non-dualism in Orissa and had long ago adumbrated the Brahmaism, that is now being preached in India. Viewed from this standpoint, Orissa had long been initiated in Brahmaism."(1)

xi) Phakirmohana's role in the linguistic dispute in contrast to Gaurisankara's.

We must now return to the events of the 1860s recounted in the opening chapters. Little remains to be added to the detailed account presented there beyond a commentary on the role of Phakirmohana as contrasted with that of Gaurisankara. The centre of events was Cuttack and more particularly Gaurisankara Raya. His was the genius, whose press and Utkala Dipika initiated the renaissance of Oriya culture. His inspiration came from the brief spell he spent in Bengal at Hughly College; and his desire was to emulate Bengal's remarkable cultural advance. Phakirmohana was on the periphery of events in a comparatively quiet backwater, Balasore. His role was to follow the trends initiated in Cuttack; to write textbooks when urged to do so by Gaurisankara; to found a press on the model of Gaurisankara's; and to collect and publish the old literature in imitation of Gaurisankara.

Phakirmohana did not realise where all this was leading. He just followed blindly in Gaurisankara's footsteps. This explains what appear to be inconsistencies in phakirmohana's conduct at this period. In 1864 he taught Bengali to two

(1) Padma Carana Pattanayaka, op.cit., p.37.
British officers stationed in Orissa (7); he saw nothing odd in their wishing to learn Bengali rather than Oriya. In 1866 he translated Vidyasāgara's Jibana Carita from Bengali into Oriya; he saw no harm in observing that the difference between Bengali and Oriya lay merely in conjugation. In the same year he encouraged Radhanātha to study Bengali (2); he saw no objection to his composing his Kāhitabali in Bengali rather than Oriya. Sometime prior to 1867 he formed his association for the preservation and promulgation of the Oriya language and its literature; yet he saw no objection to the whole association’s joining the Bengali-inspired Brahma Samāj. Thus he was probably still on excellent terms with Bengalis in 1868, when he founded his press.

As he grew more and more absorbed in the resuscitation of Oriya culture, he became aware of increasing Bengali coldness. He noticed that the Bengalis were beginning to rally together under the leadership of a local Jamidara Vṛndāvana Candra Maṇḍala; but he saw no causal relationship between his own conduct and theirs. The fact is that Phakirmohana and perhaps even Gaurīsāṅkara himself were unaware of being witnesses to, and indeed actual participants in, the parturition of Oriya nationalism. How were they to know? Nationalism was unknown in Orissa in the 1860s. The politically more sophisticated Bengalis were not so lacking in perception. What to the Oriyas was harm­less emulation, was to the Bengalis incipient competition, indeed a potential threat to their economic and cultural ascendency in Orissa. They reacted by creating ‘closed shops’ in the Post Office and Public Works, and advancing the claims of the Bengali language. The subsequent clash became inevitable.

When it came, Gaurīsāṅkara kept his head, a remarkable feat

(1) Phakirmohana Senapati, Ātma Jibana Carita, op.cit., p.36
(2) Radhanātha Raya, Radhanātha Granthabali, op.cit., p.ii.
for a young man of 31. He countered argument with rebuttal, fact with fact, mostly maintaining an air of calm and conciliatory detachment, at times being playfully satirical, but always confident of ultimate triumph and the restoration of peaceful and cooperative relations with Bengal. Phakirmohana was younger, being no more than 26 in 1869, and therefore more impetuous. The clash took him almost completely by surprise. He lashed out with impassioned articles and oratory that earned him not only the admiration and support of the Oriyas, but also the hatred of the Bengalis, who henceforth disdained to use his name and referred to him contemptuously as *sāla ring-leader*. Probably his previous close personal friendships with individual Bengalis made their slurs on his mother-tongue harder to bear. At all event, the impetus of his own passionate response to this Bengali perfidy carried him to a position of leadership, though only temporarily.

xii) Phakirmohana's prospects in the teaching profession after the linguistic dispute.

Phakirmohana undoubtedly fought hard in the cause of Orissa over the language issue, but after the battle he may have been somewhat surprised to see that none of the fruits of victory fell to him. After the removal of Bengalis, the senior posts in education fell not to him, but to Radhanatha Raya and Madhusudana Rao. It was inevitable that this should have been so. Phakirmohana's education had been poor and desultory. He had been trained not for teaching, but for business. His contacts with western education had been casual and fortuitous. He had achieved no qualifications whatsoever. Phakirmohana's social position was in fact due to incredible luck. There can have been few Indians in the 19th century who had achieved such intimacy with European society through the medium of their mother-tongue alone, as he had done. Working under Hallam at the Mis-
sion School had been the making of him. To say this is not to belittle the native wit and ability which had enabled him to make good use of this stroke of good fortune. He had throughout his teaching career constantly laboured to better himself by the study of Bengali, Sanskrit and English. Nevertheless, academically he was far behind Radhanātha Rāya and Madhusudana Rāo.

Radhanātha was 5 years younger than phakirmohana. By the age of 15 (1863), Radhanātha had passed the entrance examination for Calcutta University. He was the first from Balasore to do so. By 1863 at the age of 20, phakirmohana had had only one year's education in addition to that of the village 

The difference between the two becomes even more marked in the salaries they received in their first posts, phakirmohana 2½ rupees as 3rd Master at Barabati School and Radhanātha 30 rupees as 3rd Master at Balasore District School (1). This disparity in incomes was to continue throughout their careers.

Radhanātha took no active part in the linguistic dispute with Bengal. He spent the years 1869-1872 as 2nd Master of the District School in Puri,(2) well away from the 'battle areas' of Cuttack and Balasore. Even had he remained in Balasore, it is virtually certain that he would have been advised not to participate by his father, Sundara Narayana Rāya, who was a civil servant in Balasore kaceri. It is possible, however, that the linguistic dispute left Radhanātha unmoved. He may have been too young to appreciate its importance, for he was only 21 in 1869; or his sympathies may actually have lain with Bengal, since after all he was a domiciled Bengali. (3) He had commenced his literary career with a collection of poems in Bengali,

(1) Radhanātha Rāya, Radhanātha granthabali, op.cit., p.1
(2) ibid, pp.ii-iii. (3) ibid, p.1; his family name was De. Rāya was a title awarded the family for government service. They belonged to the Bengali kayastha caste.
his Kabitabali, which was well received in the Bengali press. He continued to compose in Bengali during the linguistic dispute and in 1873 published the second volume of his Bengali Kabitabali.

"This volume received extremely favourable notices in the Bengali press, especially in Bhudeva Babu's Gazette, Bankim Babu's Banga Darsana, and Hali Sahara Patrika, which was controlled by a group of supporters of Vidyasagara."(1)

Radhanatha continued to compose in Bengali until 1879. He had been promoted that year to Joint Inspector, and had just completed his Lekhabali. He sent it along to his superior Bhudeva Mukhopadhyaya for his comments. Bhudeva was delighted with it and published the major part of it in his gazette. He advised Radhanatha, however, to cease composing in Bengali, pointing out that 'it was the duty of every Oriya to enrich his mother-tongue'.(2)

Phakirmohana was an orphan. He had no family connections in Government circles to caution him, as Radhanatha had in Jagannohana Raya, the Deputy Collector in Cuttack. With none to caution him, Phakirmohana became an extremist over the language issue, and thus piled up animosity against himself among Bengalis in Orissa that would have permanently blocked his path to promotion. He continued to fight the battle long after final victory. In 1871, for example, when a member of the Visiting Committee of Balasore High School, he wrote in the visiting book,

"I am sorry there is no Uriya teaching in the upper classes and I do not understand how it is possible for an English teacher to give a liberal education

(1) Radhanatha Granthabali, p.iii (2) ibid, p.iv.
in native language, to the whole school. If I am to express my opinion I should say that an Uriya teacher is exclusively and necessarily in need to teach Uriya only."(1)

In view of Radhanatha's exceptional academic qualifications for an Oriya at that time, and of his apparently uncommitted attitude to the linguistic dispute, he was a natural choice for the post of Deputy Inspector of Schools in Balasore, for he was the least likely to cause friction with the Bengali superiors he would be called upon to work under; especially as he had spent the six months prior to his appointment as 2nd Master in the District School of Bānkā in Bengal. His progress in the Education Department was remarkably rapid. 5 years after his appointment as Deputy Inspector he was promoted to Joint Inspector (1878); in 1892 he was promoted to Inspector; and in 1901 he became Head of the Provincial Service. He retired in 1903. Thus for almost 30 years he was, ex officio, virtually king of literary Orissa, for he was in a dominant position in regard to textbook selection and was thus able to nurture the tastes of the young on the products of his own pen. The process was not as crude as that statement implies. Probably it was his subordinates who advanced the claims of his works with the greatest clamour, out of the usual sychophancy to a superior; though the effects were the same. The age became labelled the age of Radhanatha; when in reality it was merely the Education Department period that Gaurīsāṅkara so heartily detested.

We have none of Phakīrmohana's reactions to all this. He always felt inferior to Radhanatha. His style lacked the sonorous Sanskritic dignity of Radhanatha's. Even his textbooks are marred by the defects of regionalism. (2) Though, however, Phakīrmohana writes Thāe naht, for example, in stead of the standard form na thāe.

(1) Natabara Samanta Raya, Vyāsakavi Phakīrmohana, Cuttack, 1957; p.88. This is one of the few specimens of Phakīrmohana's English that we possess. (2) Phakīrmohana writes Thāe naht, for example, in stead of the standard form na thāe.
mohana may have felt consciously inferior to Radhanatha, one suspects that subconsciously he had a desire to disparage him. There is a chapter in phakirmohana's autobiography entitled 'Kavi Radhanatha'. The major part of this chapter is devoted to a description of the difficulties of travelling between Balasore and Calcutta. Only the opening and closing paragraphs concern Rathanatha. The former describe the reaction in the kaceri to Radhanatha's passing the entrance examination in Calcutta.

"While I was teaching at Barabati School, a pupil from Balasore District School was sent to Calcutta to sit for the entrance examination. His name was Radhanatha Raya. Kavibara Radhanatha Raya was the first pupil from Balasore District to pass the entrance examination. He passed from Class I of Balasore School in 1863. When word of his success reached Balasore, it caused a stir in the kaceri. The clerks all gathered round and said, 'An entrance pass is nothing special, it seems. Our Sundara Babu's ... lad got through. So it can't be all that difficult.

"Radhanatha's father, Sundara Babu, was a clerk in the kaceri. Radhanatha was sent to Calcutta to read for his F.A. His uncle, Jahnabi Babu, went with him to look after him."(1)

The penultimate paragraph is a gem.

"Radhanatha was 15 or 16 when he passed the entrance examination, but he was so thin and weak, that he looked no more than a child of 10 or 12. Arriving in Calcutta during the evening, Radhanatha and his uncle, (1) Phakirmohana Senapati, Atma Jibana Carita, op.cit.,p.26.
Jaunabí Babu, stayed the night in lodgings. When they got up the next morning, they set off in search of an open space 'to answer nature's call'. After roaming all over the place for hours without finding a 'toilet garden' (haguni bādi), they were absolutely disgusted with Calcutta. 'This is a confoundedly fine city, I must say!' they remarked. (1)

In fact, the total image of Radhanātha built up from incidental references in Phakīrmohana's pages is of a sickly, timid boor, quaking at the thought of death and parental discipline. It is conceivable, of course, that phakīrmohana was unaware of this image of Radhanātha, which was reflected in the distorting mirror of his own subconscious envy. On the other hand, it is also conceivable that phakīrmohana was only too aware of the effect he so artistically achieved. It depends on the degree of subtlety one attributes to him.

I have no doubt that phakīrmohana was an excellent teacher. One can well imagine that he held his class enthralled. He had progressed well. Even the Commissioner was not unimpressed by his qualities.

"The Mission School was conducted by one of the best specimens of an Ooriah, I have ever seen, Baboo Fakeer Mohun Senpaty. He has however, left it for the better post of dewan to the Rajah of Neelghery, in which post I am glad to see he is carrying out improvements and introducing those principles of honesty and justice which he has imbibed from the teachings of the late Mr. Smith." (2)

One wonders, however, whether phakīrmohana possessed the high seriousness of the scholar. He was too ready to accept facts

(1) Phakīrmohana Senāpati, Ātma Jibana Carita, op. cit., p. 29-30.
(2) From T. Ravenshaw to the Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal, dated 23rd, July, 1873; quoted by Nātābara Samanta Rāya, op. cit., p. 60.
from any source without checking their accuracy. There is a story of his taking down jibberish from a high-spirited youth in his old age. It may have been an indication of the approach of senility, but it may also have been an instance of a lifelong trait in his character.

"In 1915 we were invited to the festivities on the eve of the wedding of the princess of Bāmandā. and made our way to the fort. He (phakīrmohana) received the title of Sarasvati at the late King's court. We alighted at Bāmandā Station - phakīrmohana, Visva-nātha Kara and I - and continued our journey by car. On the way we crossed many rivers and mountains; and passed through many villages. phakīrmohana kept asking us their names. At first I said I didn't know. A little while later he again started to ask us persistently in the manner of a small child, 'What's the name of this river?' 'What's the name of this mountain?' 'What's the name of this village?' I began inventing replies on the spur of the moment, 'This river's the Khandē-jharī (Sword-springs)'. 'This mountain's the Sapta-srāgī (Seven peaks)'. 'This village's name is Mahuri-khandī (One Trumpet)'. Visvanātha Babu smiled at my sprightly nonsense, but phakīrmohana accepted my replies in all innocence and prepared to note them down. At this Visvanātha and I burst out laughing and told him that I had made them up. We had to tell him two or three times over before he abandoned the attempt to note them down and began to roar with laughter at my waggishness."(1)

The fact is phakīrmohana was an artist. Truth for him was poetic truth arrived at through the candour of the heart.

(1) Gopāla Candra Praharāja quoted by padma Carana pattanāyaka, op. cit., pp.129-130.
not the calculus of the brain. There is a refreshing candour about his History.

"The true History of India defies discovery. The Hindus describe themselves in their Sanskrit texts as an extremely ancient race, but then virtually every nation on earth describes itself as an ancient race. The Athenians boast of a longer descent than the moon. The people of the Chaldees in Babylonia claim a history of more than 150,000 years. The length of Chinese history does not bear quoting, and as for that of Burma, one cannot help but laugh when told of it. The Burmese claim that the face of the earth does not see as many raindrops in more than a thousand days than there are years in their history. Consequently, ... all these claims are fictitious."(1)

On the whole, it was perhaps well for phakirmohana that he left the teaching profession in 1871 for a fresh career as dewan in the Cadajatás. This was a career more akin both to that for which he was trained on the quaysides of Palsore and that to which he would have been born, had it not been for the folly of Kucíla Dei, estate management. It brought him back into contact with the full range of the people of Orissa.

(1) phakirmohana Senapati, Bharatabarśara Itihāsa, op. cit., p.1.
i) Phakirmohana’s second marriage.

The year 1871 witnessed a radical change in the life of Phakirmohana Senapati, for that year he entered upon a fresh marriage and a fresh career. Of the death of his first wife Lilabati Dei, he writes,

"My first wife fell ill. After a year it became evident that the illness was incurable and death certain. In order to ensure the best possible care and attention, she was removed to her father’s home, and there she died. I was living in Puri at the time. My first wife had borne me only a daughter."

(1)

The bluntness of this account, devoid of any hint of grief, testifies to the failure of Phakirmohana’s first marriage. He continues,

"Unless I married again, it was feared that my family name might be extinguished and my ancestors deprived of pinda, a female relative explained to me. So a second bride was sought. The bride selected was named Krishna Kumari Dei. I married her in the summer of 1871. Her father Giva Prasada Caudhuri was Head-clerk in the Criminal Department and her brother Prasanna Kumara Caudhuri was Head-clerk in Customs." (2)

In view of his first experience of the treacherous waters of matrimony, one is not surprised to learn that Phakirmohana required persuasion before taking a second plunge. His courage was rewarded, for his second marriage was a success. He writes,

"To deliver me from all trials and tribulations, and to augment my fortune, felicity and finances, Merciful God sent me Kṛṣṇakumārī as a wife. She possessed all the virtues in full measure, truthfulness, loyalty and piety. To tend and serve me, and to obey my command, she deemed her highest duty. At the time of our marriage she was but 11 years old."(1)

The success of the second marriage may not have been due so much to the qualities of Kṛṣṇakumārī as to the maturity of Phakirmohana. Judging by the available portraits of him, one would say that at the time of his second marriage he was a lean handsome man with a fine straight nose and a good head of hair. He was 29 years of age, old enough to appear to his child-bride as worthy of respect, yet young enough to retain some of the freshness and gaiety of youth. He was a person of consequence in Balasore, respected by his contemporaries and well-liked by the Europeans. It is therefore not improbable that Kṛṣṇakumārī was proud to have obtained him as a husband and, in serving him, moulded herself to his tastes and standards and thus in course of time became, even if she had not been, his ideal bride and mate.

ii) Dewan of Nilagiri (1871-1875) (age 29-33)

When the post of dewan in Nilagiri fell vacant, John Beames, then District Collector in Balasore, recommended Phakirmohana for it; and in October 1871 Phakirmohana was

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, p. 71.
duly appointed by the Commissioner for Orissa, Mr. T. Raven-
shaw, who was ex-officio also Superintendent of the gadajāta
Mahāla.

During Phakirmohana's first year of office all went well.
He was able to effect various improvements. Since there were
no shopping facilities within a radius of six miles of the
royal palace, he established a market in a nearby grove, nam-
ing it Nirmalā Hāṭa in honour of Her Royal Highness, the
Queen of Nilagiri. During the rains communications from Nil-
agiri were impeded by flooding. Phakirmohana commenced and
almost completed the construction of a road to link up with
the main road to Balasore (where, as a recently-married young
man, he was eager to go each Sunday.). He tried to improve
the local diet by the introduction of cabbages and peas,
which he successfully cultivated. He also planted coconut
groves, a flower garden, an experimental tea garden, and a
mulberry garden for silk production.

By the time he left Nilagiri, the tea shrubs had attained
a height of only 8 to 10 inches and only two silk cloths had
been woven, so he was unable to judge whether or not these
would eventually have turned out to be profitable ventures.
The market he founded flourished and 40 years later it had
become well-known both in the neighbouring state of Mayur-
hāṇja and in the District of Balasore. His coconut palms
later bore abundant fruit, but some of his schemes bore him
nothing but trouble.

Previous kings of Nilagiri had founded numerous śāsana
villages where brahmins, being ensured of a steady annual in-
come, could devote themselves to the study of Sanskrit and
the sacred texts. Being relieved of worldly cares, however,
these brahmins had neglected their studies and it was now im-
possible to find a single learned man amongst them. Sanskrit
was extinct in Nilagiri.

To remedy the situation, phakirmohana set up at government expense a Sanskrit tol in the Royal palace, where local brahmin children could acquire their traditional training. But owing to the distance from their homes, brahmin children in the outlying villages were unable to attend. phakirmohana estimated that by raising a subscription of two pice per mana on the tax-free land in the Annasana villages, he would be able to establish numerous Sanskrit tols in these outlying districts. In the brahmins' eyes, however, it was not a subscription he was proposing, but revenue. They were convinced that once they allowed a tax of even as little as two pice per mana to be levied on their tax-free land, the following year the assessment would be increased to one rupee. Thus when phakirmohana approached them, trying to persuade them of the benefits of scholarship, of the duty incumbent upon brahmins to acquire it, and of the necessity for financing it, the brahmins were adamant in their refusal to accede to his demands.

Deeming it futile to try to persuade such people of the benefits of learning, phakirmohana resolved to raise the subscription by force. He levied it upon the brahmin headman, confiscated the man's pony, auctioned it, and deducted the subscription from the proceeds. At the time of writing (1916/17) phakirmohana admitted that his highhandedness in this matter was unconscionable and that it succeeded in raising from the brahmins only their implacable hostility and a determination to unseat him.

Phakirmohana's second blunder was to do with the local quarries, where muguni was cut and fashioned into household utensils for export to Bengal, where they raised as much as 20 to 25 thousand rupees per year. There were two quarries on
Visṇu Hill, and each was divided into sections, which were in practice leased for a little over Rs.6 per section. The office of collecting this revenue (the mahāeldār) was auctioned off each year. It generally yielded no more than Rs.2,500 per annum to the Royal Treasury, but in phakīrmohana's first year in office Rs.4,000 were offered for it by a man named Kahnei Miśra, who, in order to raise this increase, proposed not to augment the cost of leases, but to ensure that not only the leaseholders as in the past, but also every man working in the quarries, paid the tax. Previously members of each leaseholder's family had been allowed to cut stone tax-free. This was no longer to be permitted.

Trouble began the moment phakīrmohana granted the mahāeldār to Kahnei Miśra. The stone-masons objected strongly to Kahnei Miśra's innovations and petitioned phakīrmohana to withdraw the mahāeldār from him. If phakīrmohana had acceded to their demands, he could no longer hope to raise Rs.4,000 from the mahāeldār, so he refused. By 1875 things had come to such a pass that the stone-masons rebelled, rejecting the authority of the Royal Government in every particular. They were supported openly by the brahmins and covertly by Royal officials. Encouraged by this support, they sent a delegation to Mr. Ravenshaw, who initiated an inquiry. The inquiry found that the root cause of the revolt was the increase in revenue from the quarries. Some of the rebel leaders were imprisoned for periods ranging from two to three months for causing an unlawful assembly; Kahnei Miśra was dismissed from the mahāeldār for having oppressed some of the stone-masons; and phakīrmohana was reprimanded for failing to control the peasantry and to check the oppressions of Kahnei Miśra.

Phakīrmohana's final blunder was in siding with the King's
brother against the King in the matter of the succession. The King had been without an heir, so when a son was born to his brother, he had decided to adopt the boy as his eldest child. Some time later the King revoked his decision in favour of one of his own bastards (phula-bibhira putra). This led to a rift between the King and his brother. Relations between the two deteriorated to such an extent that the King cancelled all his brother's allowances, thus occasioning him genuine hardship in regard to food and clothing, and causing his servants to forsake him. The King's brother then began complaining to the Commissioner, Mr. Ravenshaw, who made repeated efforts to reconcile the brothers, but without success. It was this dispute that had cost phakirmohana's predecessor his post. One day phakirmohana received the royal command to expedite the adoption of the bastard. phakirmohana refused on the grounds that in the presence of a nephew the adoption of a bastard was unlawful, according to clause 25 of the gadjita code. From that day on phakirmohana's continuance in office became impossible, so towards the end of 1875 he resigned.

iii) Dewani in Pomapada (1876-1877) (age 33-34)

This chapter in phakirmohana's autobiography (1) is important for the assessment of his attitude to British rule. The discussion below is therefore divided into two parts; one, phakirmohana's account of his period in office; and two, comment on his conduct as revealed in that account.

a) phakirmohana's account.

"After leaving Nilagiri, I was absolutely penniless. Since my firmest supporter in those days, the Mahatma John Beames, was then Collector of Cuttack District, and

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, chapter 14.
since I was convinced that he would be able to do something for me, I decided to go to Cuttack. But to get to Cuttack I should need money. My wife managed to rake up 14 rupees, a few annas and a Jayapura Mohara. On the security of this gold mohara I borrowed money from a neighbour, Abdus Sobhan Khā, a Government pleader. Before leaving I got Babu Sudama Candra Nayaka, who then happened to be in Balasore, to write a letter of introduction to his elder brother in the Survey Department in Cuttack, as I knew no one in Cuttack at that time.

"It was midnight. All was dark. My heart and mind lay swathed in darkness too. All the family were asleep, save my wife. When I was in office, lots of people used to come along to see me off. Where were they now, I wondered. 'avastha puşyate rājan na sarīram sarīrīnām' (It is the position, not the person, that one worships, Sire). I went out and looked back. A sad little female form stood motionless on the dark threshold; before it stood the dāka pālki I had ordered; and I set out for Cuttack. My son-in-law, Raghunātha Caudhuri, was studying for his F.A. in Cuttack College. His lodgings were in Cāndini Cauk. I stayed with him there.

"The post of auditor of the jamīdarīs of minors in Cuttack District was vacant. It carried a salary of Rs.70 a month. The Mahātmā John Beames issued instructions that I be appointed. I made some inquiries and learnt the small estates of the jamīdarīs of minors were scattered all over Cuttack District.
To audit all these outlying estates, I should have to tour the whole district. It would be indispensable to keep a palki, 8 bearers and a cook. I should need sixty rupees a month for their wages and keep alone, which would be impossible on a salary of only Rs.70. I informed the saheba. He agreed with my calculations and wrote to the Board, requesting them to raise the salary to Rs.75.

"2½ months later, I was still awaiting the Board's decision. What little money I had had was gone. That morning the cook reported that there was nothing in the house to prepare an evening meal. I did not feel like staying indoors. At about 4 o'clock I climbed the bond on the edge of Kathayodi to the east of the Collector's kaceri and sat gazing listlessly into the river. 'Hullo there, Phakirmohana,' someone called from behind. 'Whatever are you doing sitting here all alone?' I looked round and saw Babu Dvarakanta Cakrabarti, the superintendent of the Normal School. I respected Dvari Babu as I would an uncle and he loved me as he would a son. 'Come along, Phakirmohana. It's time we settled up,' he said. 'No, please excuse me,' I replied, for I was feeling dreadfully sorry for myself and in no mood for accounts. 'I don't want to go to your place today.' But Dvari Babu took my arm and dragged me off to his quarters at the Normal School. I sat in a chair on the school veranda. Dvari Babu came out and pushed 28 rupees and some annas into my hand saying, 'I owed you 48 rupees. You took a security worth twenty. I've deducted that and here's the balance.' Four years earlier Dvari
Babu had bought some copies of my *History of India* from me. I had forgotten he still owed me something on them.

"Now that I had a little money I began to have a pleasant time. It would have lasted a little longer, if I had been more careful, but I always was extravagant. Providence did not ordain that I should be careful with money. I began to experience acute financial embarrassment. I went to see the Collector, my one hope and prop, and we talked.

Saheba: 'I suppose you're unemployed whilst awaiting the Board's letter.'

I: 'Yes Sir. I find unemployment hard to bear.'

Saheba: 'Quite. Unemployment is worse than any illness. (He reflected for a while). Well, I should at least like to employ you as dewan of Pomapadua. Would you be willing to go?'

I: '(I smiled to myself. He asks am I willing. It's like being granted a boon before one has even prayed. 'Would you like some rice?' 'Just tell me where to wash my hands.' I immediately replied:) Yes Sir. I'm willing to go wherever you send me.'

Saheba: 'Good. At least you'll be able to sit quiet there for three months. You're not to do anything. You won't even be able to. There's been a row going on between the king and his subjects for the last 5 years. I've been getting reports of various cases. You're to see to it that the situation doesn't get any worse. That's as far as your duty goes. I've received an angry letter from the government
telling me that whatever happens, the trouble must be settled this year. One more thing: the King's mad. You'll probably have difficulty in getting your salary. I'll write from the kaceri tomorrow and get you three months' salary in advance from the King. You're to leave for Pomapada as soon as you get it. Tell Jagamohana Babu. He'll give you the money. (Jagamohana Raya was then Chief Deputy Collector for Cuttack District).

"In order to facilitate future discussion of Pomapada fort (killa), I give here a brief outline of the trouble referred to above. When the former King of Pomapada, Purusottama Manasimha Bhrimarabara Raya, died childless, the government decided that his nephew, Raghunatha Manasimha Bhrimarabara, was the true heir. Raghunatha and his younger brother were but children at the time, so the government sent them to the Royal School for Minors, which was then in Calcutta, superintended by the famous Rajendra Lal Mitra. On coming of age, the King took charge of the killa. During the Court of Wards period, the manager had assessed the land at moderate rents. In the meantime much additional land had been brought under cultivation and was now being enjoyed tax-free. The King wanted to carry out a complete survey of his whole domain in order to arrive at a new assessment. But the tenants were unwilling to pay one pice more rent than in previous years. This was at the root of the dispute between the King and
his tenants. All the tenants were now united in revolt against him, and they were being led by the former dewan, Nidhi paṭṭanāyaka.

Orders were issued openly from rebel headquarters, prohibiting people from paying rent to the king, visiting his palace, working for him, or performing the services of washerman or barber for him. The homes of law-abiding tenants who refused to participate in the revolt were raided and looted by the rebels, and the tenants themselves were beaten mercilessly. The palace servants deserted, and the palace household washing had to be taken to Cuttack, almost 20 miles away. The palace filed various criminal cases with the magistrate, but the magistrate advised the king to reconcile himself with his tenants as best he could, and to accept the assessment for the moment, suggesting that he might try for an increase later. The king refused. This angered the magistrate, which in turn encouraged the tenants.

The king's position gradually worsened. There was not a piece of rent coming in. He was afraid that he might be imprisoned by the collector as a result of one of the innumerable court cases he was involved in. He spent most of his time incognito in Calcutta and Cuttack. His debts were gradually mounting, owing to his living expenses and legal costs. Meanwhile the position in the palace was even worse. Unable to tolerate the shortages of food and clothing, the queen mother and king's brother applied to the courts for maintenance. The king was driven to despair by his constantly mounting debts, owing to
his servants' treacherousness and his family's complaints to the courts. He distrusted the whole world and feared that someone would poison his rice and murder him. Consequently, he gave up eating cooked rice and lived on puffed rice and milk.

"At our first meeting in Cuttack, I could see that the King had been reduced to a shred by constant worry. He was suspicious of me, but I resolved to rescue him from his plight.

"I set out for Domapada in the July or August of 1876. I had been paid 3 months' salary in advance by the King and had collected the money from Jagamohana Babu. The King's brother came to escort me to the fort (killa). The Kathayodi was in full spate. We reached the fort at dusk. There was no royal palace, only a few decrepit buildings and a number of delapidated mud huts surrounded by dense jungle.

"No rent had been paid for 5 years. I demanded payment. The village headmen stated that only one year's rent was forthcoming, basing their decision on the following argument, 'Supposing you have a milch cow and you don't milk it for 5 days; then one day you decide to milk it; will you get one day's milk or five?' No matter which headman I approached, nor where, nor when, I invariably got the same reply. My sphere of action bristled with dangers. I did not dare meddle with anything, for both the King and his tenants distrusted me, and besides the collector's instructions had been merely to keep an eye on the fort and do nothing. From time to time I went to
Cuttack to see the King, make various suggestions, and seek instructions. All I ever got was 'yes' or 'no', and neither of those was easy to come by. The King thought hard before replying, for he was suspicious of everything I suggested.

Towards the end of December the Collector came to Pomapada on tour. He first pitched camp at the village of Pahar on the borders of Pomapada and Cuttack. Accompanying the Collector were the Superintendent of Police with 20 constables, an Assistant Magistrate, peskars, munis and amalas, in all perhaps a little more than a hundred people. I had received advance notice and arranged everything... The King was also in the village, but he paid no heed and did not bestir himself. I had to see to the catering for everyone, from the saheba's dogs to the sirastadara (office superintendent).

The behaviour of the officers worried me. The Government had issued strict instructions that the fort's troubles were to be settled by hook or by crook. The danger was now imminent. Either the fort would remain in the King's hands or it would be confiscated by the Government on the pretext of the King's incompetence. There was no one but me to support the King. The King sat tight in the house of one of his tenants like darubhuto murari (Visnu turned into a tree). I reasoned with him using various arguments and examples. I begged him politely; I threatened him; finally, unable to bear it, I scolded him; but all he said was, 'The rents will definitely have to be increased.' I told him
 plainly, 'If you don't change your mind, the kingdom will be confiscated.' The King was unmoved. 'Let them confiscate it,' he replied. Then I asked him to go to see the Collector. 'No,' he replied in a slightly raised voice. I well knew the meaning of that 'no': 'There's a court case in process to obtain my just rights; why should I flatter anyone?'

" It was December. When the sahebas arrived in Bārā, a strong wind blew up with unseasonable rain and it persisted. Everyone stayed indoors. I alone splashed here and there in the mud and rain. In the afternoon I went to see the Collector in his tent ... Here is a brief summary of what I reported to him at the time: 'I have been in Ḫomapādā for almost 4 months now and I have made a thorough study of the internal situation. The last assessment in the fort was made 20 years ago. In the meantime much waste land has been brought into cultivation. In the past the land was assessed at modest rents. The King wants a fresh assessment. By law the rent of land should be assessed in accordance with its area and boundaries. The King is not insisting upon the full rent, however; he wishes to increase the rents by merely two pice per mana. The King commenced the new assessment in accordance with your instructions, but the village headmen would not allow the land to be surveyed. The present troubles are not a dispute between the King and his tenants. It is the village headmen and former officials alone who are causing the trouble. The tenants are not really enjoying the newly-cultivated land tax-free. The headmen and officials are collecting the revenues from them and pocketing them them-
selves. The King has not received any revenue from his tenants for the last five years. He has had to borrow to pay his peskis. He is so short of money that he has terrible difficulty in keeping the Queen mother, his royal brother, and the palace servants in food and clothing. If you would just issue instructions to increase the rents by two pice a mana, all this trouble would be over.

"The saheba sat and listened attentively to all I had to say. Finally he said, 'Everything you've said about the rents is correct, babu. The rents must be settled this year by hook or by crook; but there's to be no increase. I've already given assurances to the tenants that the rents won't be increased.' The Mahatma John Beames was an extraordinarily learned man, a benefactor to the tenant, a man who desired the advancement of Orissa, and a father to the poor, but he had one fault: right or wrong, once he'd issued his instructions, he'd never rescind them. Without another word, I took my leave.

"That night I again saw the King and informed him of the Collector's intentions. The King said, 'You must do as I say. Arrange for the fort rents to be increased by two pice and collect from the rural areas the revenues that have been outstanding for the last 5 years. We won't take one pice more than that.' The King's plight distressed me greatly. He was housed in the corner of a cramped little ruin that was on the verge of collapse. A wick burnt dimly in an earthen lamp. He had but two servants to attend him. He must surely be delivered from this
To the south of Bārah village ran the Cuttack–Bānki road, on the southern side of which stood a śaivite temple. The temple was a small thatched building. I had heard that it housed snakes. I had often stayed in the village on my way to and from Cuttack, but had never gone near the temple at night for fear of the snakes, and no one ever stayed there either. But the shortage of accommodation elsewhere that day forced me to take refuge there... I lay down alongside the stone bull, Śiva's mount, in the open pavilion in front of the temple. I had completely forgotten my fear of the snakes. Outside all night long the wind howled and the rain poured. And in my mind raged a storm of violent thought. Sleep was out of the question. I lay in my bedding, trying to devise a plan. Finally an idea began flickering faintly in my mind.

The Government had ordered all the headmen of the villages in the killa to assemble at 4 o'clock the following day, when the 5 year old dispute was to be settled and the King's fortune decided. The tenants of Bārah, and also of nearby Bhagīpura and Gaalaba were loyal to the King. At day-break the following morning, I sent runners to fetch the headmen and principal tenants from these three villages and arranged with them that they should say to the Collector that they were willing to accept the dewan as arbitrator in the dispute between the King and themselves and that they would like the Collector to allow him to settle it.
By four o'clock that afternoon the rain had slackened off, yet there was still a strong wind which carried a fine drizzle. In the kaceri tent next to the Collector's stood the King, three or four peons and myself. I went to the Collector and told him that the tenants had accepted me as arbitrator between themselves and the King. They wanted him to allow me to settle the dispute. My news delighted the Collector. 'good, babu, good,' he said. 'I shall be most gratified if you do. I've been hearing about this business on and off for about two years now and I'm tired of it.' It had almost gone four. A peon in front of the Collector's tent began calling stentoriously (in Hindi): 'Headmen and tenants of Domapad, be upstanding!' From beneath the trees in the mango grove, the verandas, eaves and insides of houses, people began emerging. One group was late. It came scampering forward. The people were forming up in rows in front of the Collector's tent. I scanned their faces anxiously, wondering what had become of my supporters. The horizon looked darkly ominous. And the inside of my heart was swathed in darkness too. I was in for it now. Of that I felt certain.

Wrapped from head to foot in an English blanket, the Collector emerged from the tent and stood on the veranda. Only his eyes and face were visible. The peskar and I stood in front, and a little to one side, of the Collector, who said in Hindi, 'Well, gentlemen, I hear that you want the dewan, phakirmohana babu, to settle the dispute between yourselves and the King.' 'If the dewan was going to settle the dispute,' four or five of the leading head-
men shouted at once, 'then why did you yourself come from Cuttack in all this storm?' Unable to understand them, the Collector turned to me and asked, 'What do they say?' Quick as a flash I replied, 'They say, the dewan is going to settle the dispute. There was no reason for you to trouble to come in all this storm.' 'Thank you, gentlemen, the saheba said. 'The dewan will settle everything. He's a capable man. I trust him. Salam, gentlemen. Goodbye. Goodbye.' So saying, he quickly withdrew into the tent and closed the flaps. The headmen stared at each other in bewilderment, wondering what on earth had got into the Collector. But the clerks were my friends and the peons devoted to me. They immediately drove the tenants from the tent.

The second day the Collector's kaceri tent was pitched in the village of pathapura, 10 miles from Bāra. There were to be no cases heard that day. The wind and rain continued as the day before. I had warned the cowherds to supply one maund of ghee and four or five maunds of milk and curds to entertain the Government people. The cowherds supply milk and curds free, during official visits and to the Royal Palace as a right. This has been the rule in the gadajatas from time immemorial. The cowherds have to provide this service because their cattle and buffaloes graze in the royal forests. The herdsmen had stopped supplies because of the tenants' revolt. Early that morning I was sitting on a veranda, surrounded by clerks and foot-soldiers. It was raining. The sītha behera of Pomapada presented
himself, carrying two earthen vessels. There were 2 seers of milk in one, and half a seer of ghee in the other. The moment I saw him, I got terribly angry. There was a ālapatani log lying in the road in front of me. Owing to the rains, the road was terribly muddy. 'Lay this sitha in the mud, bind him to that log, and let one soldier pour ghee and milk over his back, whilst the other beats it with a cane,' I commanded. The command was executed immediately. No sooner had the sitha received on his back two or three strokes of the cane, when 8 or 10 herdsmen dashed up, and prostrating themselves in the road before me, wailed, 'Let the sitha go, your honour. We'll bring the milk and curds immediately.' True enough, within half an hour load after load of milk, curds and ghee arrived. And a load of fish arrived too, unsolicited. There are four ways of ruling: sāma (appeasement), dāna (generosity), danda (punishment) and bheda (dissension). Despite proper application the first two had failed. I now resorted to the last two.

That evening I received news that the rebel leaders had held a bid meeting in the village of Similipura. They had decided to explain to the Collector the following day that I, the dewan, was on the King's side and was therefore unlikely to give an impartial judgement, as far as the tenants were concerned, so the Collector ought to hear their grievances himself. The following day I went to the Collector's tent. I found the Collector busy, for the previous night rain had leaked in and wet his things. The Collector was pulling them
about from corner to corner and rearranging them. Seeing me, he related how he had been harrassed during the night. Then the following conversation took place.

Sahaba: 'How are things, babu?'

I: 'As you know, two thousand people accepted me as arbitrator in your presence the other day.'

Sahaba: 'Yes, the tenants said that in my presence. Now what's up?'

I: 'Yesterday afternoon the village headmen called together all the tenants and advised them to disregard what took place the other day and start agitating again.'

Sahaba: 'Why are the tenants being guided by these people?'

I: 'The poor peasants are really innocent. The headmen are the root of the trouble. If a peasant doesn't do as they say, they loot his goods and smash his home, and beat every member of his household mercilessly. That's why they obey the headmen.'

Sahaba: 'Give me a list of peasants who have been maltreated in this way.'

I: 'It's happened to lots of people earlier. At any rate, four days ago they raided the home of a washerman and rifled his possessions, because he had washed the clothes of the palace household.'

Sahaba: 'Right, prove this one case.'

I: 'No peasant will testify because of fear of the headmen, sir.'

Sahaba: 'Well, see what you can do.'
I took my leave. My head was bowed deep in meditation as I wandered back towards my quarters. What was I to do? There was no likelihood of the King helping me. Even though what I had said was true, I did not for a moment suppose that I could ever get anyone to testify to the fact. Such was the gloomy cast of my thoughts as I wandered back. Suddenly, I heard someone call, 'Hey, dewan, why are you returning so dispiritedly from the saheba's tent?' I looked round and saw Nidhi pattanāyaka sitting on a little veranda. I blurted out, 'What's there to say? It's all over, pattanāyaka. The karanās are in disgrace from now on.' pattanāyaka swiftly sprang down from the veranda and embraced me tightly, 'What is it? What is it? What's the matter, dewan?' I took him aside and whispered to him, 'You know that four days ago the headmen rifled a certain Sethī house in Nistīpura. Every one knows it. Some tell-tales have told the Saheba that Jagu got a bunch of men together and did it. Is this true? I for one hadn't heard Jagu implicated. I know that he and some others were in Similipura. I have just seen the saheba issue orders that the police are to handcuff Jagu and bring him in.' Nidhi paṭṭanāyaka asked me how Jagu could be saved. I replied, 'Go to the saheba and tell him, Jagu did not rifle the washerman's in Nistīpura. Then Jagu will get off scot-free. Go straight to the saheba without consulting anyone else. There's no time to lose.' Nidhi paṭṭanāyaka asked me to go with him. We both went to the saheba's tent., I told pattanāyaka to wait outside and went in. I told the saheba, 'Nidhi paṭṭanāyaka knows all
about the rifling of the washerman's in Nistipur, Sir. If you ask him, he'll tell you everything. I suggest his statement be taken immediately; otherwise he'll lie, once he's consulted the headmen.'

"The Shēheba sat at his kaceri desk and summoned Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka. The moment he entered, Nidhi quickly blurted out, 'Shēheba, when the washerman's was rifled, Jagu wasn't there.' After the Shēheba had taken down all Nidhi had to say on a witness form, I asked,

Question: 'Right, Paṭṭanāyaka, which washerman's was rifled? What's his name and address?'
Answer: 'He lives in Nistipur. I forget his name now.'

Question: 'What other headmen were there at the raid?'
Answer: 'Jagu Subuddhi, and so and so, and so and so, etc. (He gave each person's name.)'

Question: 'What relation of yours is Jagu Paṭṭanāyaka?'
Answer: 'My nephew.'

Question: 'He lives in the same house as you and shares your food?'
Answer: 'Yes.'

The Shēheba issued warrants for the arrest of the accused and dismissed us.

"At midday from the direction of the villages of Similipura and Karabara on the banks of the Mahānadi came a thousand tenants, led by 8 or 10 headmen, making jubilantly for Pāṭhapura. The headmen were assuring the tenants that the case would now be decided in their favour and that they would not
have to pay one pice more in rent. The moment the headmen descended the south bank to the sands in the bed of the Rananadi River, 8 or 10 constables and a mass of village chātīs descended the north bank. The two parties met in the middle of the river, where handcuffs were clapped onto the wrists of Jaguni Subuddhi, Jagabandhu pāṭṭanāyaka and other headmen. The thousand peasants who had been bringing up the rear turned on their heels and ran. In a few moments there was not a soul to be seen except the accused, the constables and the chātīs.

"That afternoon the case of the washerman of Nistīpura was heard in the Collector's kacerī. Two peasants, who had been eye-witnesses, came forward to testify. When the case was proved, the accused were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

"Before leaving Pomapadā, I atoned somewhat for the deceitfulness I had employed against Nidhi pāṭṭanāyaka. He had been dispossessed of all his land for non-payment of taxes. In view of his straitened circumstances, it was unlikely that he would be able to regain possession, by paying the taxes, so I paid the 96 rupees that were owing out of my own pocket and put the land permanently in his name.

"The Collector struck his tent and set out for Tālabasti, the biggest and best village in the fort of Pomapadā. After hearing a number of cases there, he asked me for a list of the headmen involved in the revolt who had not gone to jail. I
supplied it and he issued writs putting them on probation for one year.

"The moment I left my quarters the following morning and sat on the veranda, 10 or 12 headmen and a number of leading tenants prostrated themselves in the muddy road in front of me, 'Save us, your reverence, save us! You are our mother and father, your honour!' 'You may be saved, provided you do as I say,' I replied. 'Command us, command us,' they all cried in chorus.

My first command: 'You will allow your land to be measured without any protest whatsoever.'

Headmen: 'So be it.'

My 2nd command: 'There will be a slight increase in the revenue assessment on the land.'

Headmen: 'So be it.'

My 3rd command: 'The revenue for the last 5 years will be submitted with interest before sunset by all village headmen.'

After much bargaining, it was finally agreed that no interest would be charged on the outstanding revenue. For the moment only three years' would be paid. The payment of the remaining two years' would be deferred till after the coming harvest.

"All the fort's tenants had saved the five years' revenue in their homes. They were convinced that royal taxes are never waived. They have to be paid some time or other. But the headmen had taken
two years’ revenue for court costs. Consequently it was impossible for the tenants to pay the five years’ outright.

"There were runners waiting at the Collector’s kaceri from every village in Pomapada. The moment any order was issued from the Collector’s kaceri it was immediately circulated throughout the whole killa. When a decision was reached on the payment of the revenue to the Royal parbara, all the headmen and tenants rushed to their villages to fetch it.

"The paying-in of the revenue began at midday. By late that night I had collected Rs.18,000. I then ordered the rest to be paid in at the fort kaceri and terminated the collection. I had the probationary writs on the headmen rescinded and informed the Collector. The Collector’s entourage struck camp and left Talabasti for Khorda.

"I dismantled the kaceri at Talabasti and returned to the fort. The King was living in a brick-built house in the garden behind the palace, which he feared to go near, for he distrusted everyone in it. He was seated on a dais on the veranda. I presented myself to him with the money I had collected. Seeing the money, the King said, ‘No, no, I won’t take the money. You collected it. You have it. I only want the new assessment.’ So saying, he withdrew into the building and an attendant closed the door. I did not have the chance to tell the King anything. I went from the King to the Queen Mother. The doorkeeper of the palace zenana informed me that since the King had refused to take the money,
the Queen Mother was unable to do so either. I asked for a chest or basket to put the money in, but was refused. 'Whatever have I done to deserve all this money,' I wondered. At the time I was not in the least interested in money. During the previous five years, numerous officials and gentlemen had mediated on the King's behalf but had failed to break the dead-lock. Some eminent lawyers from Calcutta and Cuttack had taken about Rs.20,000 from the King on the assurance that they would raise the rents. The King had had to borrow to pay them.

"The King had debts amounting to Rs.5,000 with two moneylenders in Cuttack. Without informing the King, I transferred the money to Cuttack and entrusted it to a moneylender in Balu Bajara, taking a registered hand-note in return.

"I immediately engaged aminas to survey and measure all the villages in the killa. I owned a large Kathiawar horse. From time to time I used to ride out to the rural areas to inspect the aminas' work. I feared that upon their release from prison the village headmen might try to impede the survey. So I was trying to get the rural survey over as quickly as possible.

"The King spent his time in Cuttack and Calcutta till the survey was complete. The strain of continuous litigation for the six years since he had ascended the throne had affected his reason. He trusted no one, not even his mother, brother, wife or servants. He never saw anyone unless it was absolutely essential. He would sit in his solitary
room, mumbling to himself and writing. These were the signs of his advising and reasoning with himself.

"The jungle had infiltrated right up to the palace wall. To come to or from the palace, one had to push one's way through this jungle. In the last six years no one had so much as pulled a blade of grass from the road. The village headmen used to keep lookouts. If any tenant or employee came to the palace, his home was ransacked and he himself was beaten up. My office and quarters adjoined the palace. Whenever I came out of the house in the early morning, I saw flock upon flock of wild fowl pecking for worms outside the door. In front of the lion-gate of the palace stood the walls and temple of Giridhari. Each morning and evening I used to take a brief stroll in the paved courtyard inside the temple walls. One morning I saw a ahirja snake 8 or 10 cubits long climb a tenutī tree outside the temple gate and eat a nepali musá. I was terrified. I got the huntsmen to clear the jungle from the foot of the palace walls to a distance of 100 cubits. While working in the gadajatas, I used to keep a double-barrelled gun. A sikārī always accompanied me. Each morning the moment I emerged from the house, the sikārī showed me two or three fowl he had bagged.

"Within four or five months the survey in the rural areas was complete. The aminas presented their classifications to the chief kaceri. The comparison of the tenants' holdings took place. Now
the rent records could be drawn up. So the King's presence was required. The King was then in Calcutta. On the receipt of my letter he returned to the fort. I was delighted at the change in him. There was no trace of his former distrust of me. He talked gaily. We spent each morning and evening alone together, each sitting on our respective dais talking of this and that.

"The subject of the assessment came up. The King ordered me to increase the assessment by four annas per mana. I made frequent protests about this and tried to reason with him, but each time he replied gaily, 'You must get it done, bābu.' I spent 5 or 6 days bickering with him, and meanwhile I explained to the leading tenants and persuaded them to agree. It was decided that the settlement (bandobasta) should be an increase in rent of four annas per mana.

"When the settlement was almost concluded, I received a letter from the Commissioner's office appointing me to the post of Assistant Manager of the District of Pheākānāla under the Court of Wards. But the King was unwilling to release me. He agreed to pay me Rs.250 per month, and told me to add the following condition on stamp paper to the value of Rs.34, namely that if I were to be dismissed for any offence what-so-ever, he would nevertheless continue to pay my salary of Rs.250 per month for the rest of my life as a pension. The King and I went to Cuttack to see the Commissioner. When the King told the Commissioner about me, the Commissioner said, 'No, you must release
Phakirmohana Babu. The report has already gone to the Government about him. It can't be changed.' Summoning me on another occasion, the Commissioner said, 'The King's mad. He doesn't know what he's saying. You shouldn't listen to him. We are transferring you to an important post in Phenkana.'

"It was decided that I leave Pomapada and go to Phenkana. I promised that whilst in Phenkana, I would finish off what remained to be done on the Pomapada settlement.

"I wanted to build a house in Cuttack and had been looking for a site. The King heard of it. A few days before I left Pomapada, he gave me Rs.5,000 and said, 'Take this and build a house.' He also gave me a nepali mush and the inkstand from his desk. He told me repeatedly to collect the outstanding Rs.50,000 from the rural areas (to keep for myself), but I did not listen.

"Within a few years the Rs.5,000 the King had given me was spent, but I still have the inkstand from his desk, and shall have until the end. All my novels and poetry were written in ink from this stand. When I sit before it, the grave figure of the King, Raghunatha Manasimha Bhararabara, comes to mind. When I see the one or two sayings of his that I have written, I feel as if I were writing to the King's dictation."(1)

b) Comment.

This is an important episode in Phakirmohana's life. His

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, chapter 14, pp. 80-108.
behaviour is puzzling. Beames was a long-standing friend and benefactor, yet Phakirmohana deliberately deceives him on two occasions and without a qualm:

i) when claiming that the tenants had accepted him as an arbitrator; and

ii) when deliberately mistranslating what the tenants said to him.

The King and Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka were virtual strangers. The King was morose and suspicious and Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka openly hostile, yet Phakirmohana did his best for both of them. His loyalty to the King led him to deceive Beames, and his conscience prompted him to make amends to Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka for tricking him into confessing to Beames.

One wonders why Phakirmohana behaved like this. What had he to gain? Admittedly by faithfully serving the King, he nearly got his salary increased $2\frac{1}{2}$ times and was generously rewarded, but, as he himself says, he did not do it for money, for "At the time I had no interest in money". Then why?

What had he to gain by making amends to Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka that he would not have gained by making amends to Beames? The only possible answer is: peace of mind. But why should his conscience bother him when tricking the one and not the other? The only possible conclusion is that to phakirmohana's way of thinking, Beames, despite all his kindness, was ultimately 'one of them'; whereas Nidhi Paṭṭanāyaka, despite all his villainy, was 'one of us'. Beames was an outsider and with outsiders, one's sense of morality is suspended; it only operates when dealing with our own.

Phakirmohana was an Oriya with the values and morality of an Oriya; he was not one of Macauley's 'English, all but
in colour and blood.' Thus when employed as a mediator between the British and their Indian subjects, his sympathies lay a priori on the Indian side, not on the British. His position was admittedly invidious and somewhat ambiguous; he was employed by the British, yet paid by the princely state. It was a position in which a clash of loyalties was inevitable; some day somewhere he had to make a choice as to who was his true master: culture and blood made Phakirmohana choose the King.

iv) Assistant Manager in Phenkanala. (1877-1883) (age 34-40)

Phakirmohana opens his account of his stay in Phenkanala with some meditations on his alternating fortunes.

"On the 1st of November 1877 I was appointed Assistant Manager of Phenkanala on a salary of Rs.100 a month. After six years' service, I was forced to resign. Everything I did went right; in Phenkanala everything went wrong. Illness and misfortune have dogged my steps ever since childhood. I am descended upon alternately by affluence and poverty, prestige and disrepute, health and sickness. Getting jobs and losing them has been a constant feature of my life. Sometimes money has come my way in abundance in high salaries, princely rewards and business profits. At other times I have been absolutely penniless. The root cause of these temporary embarrassments has been my excessive faith in people in entrusting them with money. Not all men have been cursed with such a profuse series of ups and downs as I have experienced."(1)

(1) Atma Jiban Carita, p. 109
The former King of Phreakanala, Maharaja Bhagiratha Mahendra Behadura, had been one of the most progressive kings the state had ever known.

"Maharaja Bhagiratha Mahendra Behadura had passed on before I went to Phreakanala. He had been the first to foster education and the vernacular in Phreakanala, and to build schools for English and Sanskrit, free clinics, and main roads. He was an eminent scholar in both Sanskrit and the vernacular. Each evening from dusk till 10 p.m., he held literary meetings, at which one day a work in Sanskrit would be discussed and the next one in Oriya. His greatest achievement was the fort's stupendous Bhagirathi tank. He was corpulent and had special chairs made for him, which would easily seat two people. From time to time he used to visit the premises of Cuttack printing company. That is why two chairs were always reserved for him on the second floor. They are still there. I first made his acquaintance at a meeting. He took to me from the start and always regarded me with affection."(1)

Bhagiratha had failed to produce an heir, so he had adopted the third son of the King of Bauda, Dinabandhu Mahendra Behadura. On the death of Bhagiratha, Dinabandhu duly ascended the throne. He was still a minor at the time and the Commissioner came to see about the boy's staff. The Commissioner was of the opinion that a boy king ought not to be burdened by too large a staff. After reducing the staff of the King's administrative services, he turned his attention to the King's personal staff, of whom there were 72. There were,

for example, four men to attend to the King's tooth sticks: one to cut the branch from the tree; one to cut the branch into the appropriate lengths; another to carry these lengths to His Majesty's stores; and yet another to hand them to His Majesty, when required. The Commissioner dismissed three and retained one. In this way he pruned the King's personal staff.

Taking advantage of the pūjak holidays, phakîrômohana went to Balasore to fetch his child-wife and his daughter by his first marriage. Since there were then no quarters for an Assistant Manager, they stayed in the dâka bungalow, whilst phakîrômohana had a stretch of forest cleared and a house built to his own design and specifications. When it was complete, they moved in.

It was whilst in Phakâkana that phakîrômohana's two sons were born. His first, whom he named Manmohana, died at the age of six months. Both he and his wife were prostrate with grief. To console his wife, phakîrômohana arranged for a reading of Bâlârâma Dasa's Râmâyana. But it proved incomprehensible to both of them, so phakîrômohana began making a verse translation from the Sanskrit of Vâlmîki. He translated it bit by bit each morning and recited it to his wife bit by bit each evening. She found these recitals deeply moving and when he started on Râma's exile, Kṛṣṇakumârī Dei wept profusely. The earth where she sat was always wet with tears. When he had finished reading the Ayodhyâ Kânda, his wife said, "We weep for our son because he would have preserved our name, don't we? This book will be our son: it will preserve our name for ever." (1) On 11th October 1881, their second son, mohînîmohana, was born.

Phakîrômohana had the Adya Kânda published and distributed

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, p. 114.
free. It bore the following dedication,

"To John Beames Esquire, B.C.S.
Honoured Sir,

I beg most respectfully to dedicate this work to you as a token of the affectionate gratitude which Orissa has always felt towards you for the intelligent and heart-felt interest you have evidenced in the improvement of the Oriya language and the welfare of her people.

I am
Honoured Sir
Your most obedient
servant
Phakir Mohan Senapati (1)
Dhenkanal
1880"

Ravenshaw was seconded to the Revenue Board for three months. During his absence Beames became Commissioner. He and Ravenshaw never got on. If Ravenshaw had been made Commissioner elsewhere, Beames would have remained Commissioner of Orissa permanently, but this was contrary to Ravenshaw's wishes. Ravenshaw returned to Orissa for a short while and Beames resumed his former post. Then the Lt. Governor came to Orissa on tour. Learning of this bad-feeling between the two, he declared, "Orissa needs new blood." Ravenshaw was then appointed Commissioner of Burdwan and Beames Commissioner and Judge of SrIhatta. The new Commissioner to Orissa was Smith. PhakIrmohana concludes, "Beames was my greatest friend and supporter. My fortunes changed the moment he left Orissa."(2)

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 113. (2) ibid, p.115.
A conspiracy began, to get phakirmohana dismissed. Anonymous letters were sent to the Commissioner accusing phakirmohana of graft. The Assistant Superintendent, Raya Nanda Kisora Bahadura, arrived to investigate. Phakirmohana was cleared. Both Nanda Kisora and the Manager Banamali Babu told the Commissioner, "Fakir Mohan Babu is a very honest man." But the Commissioner (Smith) replied, "I have no faith in that man." (1)

Since the anonymous attack had failed, a petitioner brought a specific charge, accusing phakirmohana of accepting a bribe of Rs.100. Again phakirmohana was cleared. The petitioner was proved to have been disgruntled by phakirmohana's deciding a case against him, and was charged under section 211 of the Criminal Code with bringing a malicious prosecution.

Phakirmohana fell ill and took six months leave. During his absence the Manager found a means of getting rid of him. An appeal had once been made in one of the cases decided by phakirmohana. When about to send the relevant file to the High Court, phakirmohana noticed that the verdict was practically illegible, owing to numerous crossings-out. So he had prepared a fresh, though true, copy of the verdict and sent that. The Manager now sent a report to the Commissioner alleging that phakirmohana invariably wrote his verdicts long after the event and also that phakirmohana claimed to have made on-the-spot investigations, when in fact he had not. Enclosed with the report, as proof of the Manager's allegations, was the freshly-written verdict. The Commissioner wrote to phakirmohana demanding an explanation. Phakirmohana was then ill in bed. In a secret communication from his friend, Nanda Kisora Dasa, the Assistant Superintendent, he was advised to resign and on 30th September, 1883, he did so.

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p.115
v) Dewani in Daśapallā. (1884-1886) (age 41-43)

After resigning his post at Phenkanāla, phakirmohana remained unemployed for almost a year, but he did not remain idle. Gradually his health was restored, and he resumed his translation of the Rāmāyana. On its completion, he commenced translating the Mahābhārata, spending 3 or 4 hours each day happily engaged upon it.

Several cantos of his Rāmāyana had already been published, but, being unemployed, he was no longer able to put up the money to publish the rest. At this juncture his friend, prince Baikunthanātha De, offered to publish a complete edition of the seven cantos, and it was finally agreed that the work be published by Raja Syamananda De Bahadura, who granted phakirmohana a prize of Rs.750, which rendered him temporarily solvent.

Still unable to find work phakirmohana went off to Calcutta to witness an international exhibition, the first of its kind to be held in India. When he returned three weeks later, he learnt that Smith had been transferred and knowing that there was now every likelihood of securing employment in the gadajatas, he went to Cuttack, where his friend Raya Nanda Kisora Dāsa Bahadura found him a job as dewan in Daśapalla. On the same day that phakirmohana was appointed, Jagamohana Dāsa was also appointed Dewan of Narasimhapura. The rulers of both these states had proved oppressive, so the Government was having them supervised by dewans.

In August 1884 Phakirmohana and Jagamohana Babu set out for their respective charges. It was the rainy season and the roads were submerged beneath flood water. They had to hire an uthāni nās, a boat specially constructed for going upstream. It was used for carrying wares to Cuttack from the gadajatas, and usually returned empty.
Phakirmohana and his fellow dewan, Jagamohana Babu, were assigned the central hold and their servants another. The holds were small and cramped. Unable to sit up for fear of bumping their heads on the beams and unable to lie full-length because of the narrowness of the hold, they spent the eight days of the journey crouched up and leaning on bolsters in these dark, airless cubby-holes.

Progress was at a snail's pace. In places the waters of the Mahanadi were too deep for the poles, and the men had to drag the boat along like barge-horses. In other places the shore was completely submerged, and they sailed through forests, hauling themselves along from branch to branch.

Despite the discomfort Phakirmohana seems to have enjoyed the journey, especially the temporary respite during meal times on the banks, whilst the boat was moored to a pole driven into the river-bed. He describes the desolation and the grandeur of the scene, cut-off from civilisation and locked in by the high mountain chain.

On the eighth day Jagamohana Babu took leave of Phakirmohana, and on the ninth Phakirmohana disembarked at the village of Belapada, where he was met by a royal official and escorted to the capital of Dasapalla, 14 miles south of the river. Soon after his arrival Phakirmohana received an audience with the King, who scrutinised him from head to toe; for His Majesty had a notion that intelligence and corpulence were mutually dependent qualities. Phakirmohana was slim and thus unintelligent. In order to enhance Phakirmohana's intellect, the King sent him two seers of ghee a day for some considerable time.

A lengthy and expensive education had bestowed on the King only the ability to write his full name and status. There had been numerous complaints of maladministration, so super-
intendent Ravenshaw had once come to Dasapalla on a tour of inspection and bluntly informed His Majesty that he was a complete oaf and totally incapable of ruling his own kingdom. He therefore proposed sending dewans to assist the King. His Majesty was offended at having his competence so impugned and demanded pen and paper in order to give a rapid display of his erudition, but Ravenshaw politely refused. On another occasion His Majesty visited a college in Cuttack and, having completed his inspection of the establishment, was presented with the visiting book, in which to record his impressions. His majesty immediately and delightfully filled several pages with indefatigable scrawl. The Bengali staff, being unable to read it, called an Oriya pandita, and hearing page after page of "Śrī Caitanya Bhanja Deo, King of Dasapalla and Yoramo, Śrī Caitanya Bhanja Deo, King of Dasapalla and Yoramo ...")(1) recited like a gramophone with the needle stuck, burst into roars of derisive laughter.

His Majesty's ignorance is perhaps best illustrated by the following conversation which took place when Metcalf, the Commissioner, came to see him during Phakirnathana's first year of office.

"Metcalf: 'The Government has ordered the construction of a railway from Khadgapura to Bilāsapura.'

King : 'What, a railway? Surely their trucks will never get across all those fields.'

Metcalf: 'They construct a special track, your Majesty.'

King : 'A track, eh? That'll cost a pretty penny. All of Rs. 5,000, I'll be bound.'

Metcalf: 'Oh, much more, Your Majesty.'

King : '10,000?'

Metcalf: 'Much, much more.' "(1)

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(1) Ātma Jībana Carīta, pp. 127-128.
Phakirmohana discovered that in Daśapallā cases were few and straightforward. "Most of the inhabitants were khairas or kandhas (two aboriginal tribes). Plaintiffs, defendants, and witnesses all spoke the truth. There was never any discrepancy between their statements." (1) The kandhas all described themselves as jamidaras and never paid taxes to the King. Ravenshaw once assembled all their headmen and told them that since they dwelt in the King's domains, they really ought to contribute a little towards the running of them. He suggested they pay one Cuttack seer of paddy per plough. The kandhas refused to pay in seers, but expressed willingness to pay in local baskets. When apprised of how much this implied, Ravenshaw agreed. "I forget now whether a kandha basket was the equivalent of three or four Cuttack seers," phakirmohana observes. (2)

Phakirmohana had occasion to tour the villages and sacred spots of the kandhas, when investigating a border dispute between Daśapallā and Ghumusara. The kandhas' main crop was turmeric. To enhance its colour, they used to make human sacrifices. These were stopped in 1836. The kandha mahāla was raided by British troops, who rescued many children intended for sacrifice. Phakirmohana claims to have seen many such children, but one is sceptical, as phakirmohana was not born till 7 years after the sacrifices ceased.

On his way back to Daśapallā from leave in Balasore, phakirmohana happened to board the same canal steamer as Radhanatha Raya, who was then returning to Cuttack from tour. When crossing the Ghadiāmāla River, it looked for a while as though they would be wrecked; for a sudden storm blew up, and the small steamer was hurled about on the waves like a ball. The Ghadiāmāla is not really a river, but the confluence of the Brāhmaṇī, Baitaranī and Sālandī. It was infested by crocodiles.

(1) Arka Tirana-cārīkt, p. 130  
(2) Vaid, p. 131.
and was dreaded by boatmen. Radhanatha and phakirnmohana were the only two passengers in the 2nd class. Radhanatha was convinced that they were done for and sat huddled up in his clothing, with his eyes rolling in terror towards each creak of the timbers, certain that this one must surely signify the onset of their final submersion. "Radhanatha had still to write his Mahayatra, so his journey into the great beyond (mahayatra) did not take place," phakirmohana quips. "And by the power of his punya, I too survived."(1)

Yoramo was a special region of Dasapalla fort (killa). It did not pay taxes in money, but timber, supplying the wood each year for the construction of Sri Jiu's car (ratha) in Puri(2), as it had since the days of the independent kings of Orissa. In northern Yoramo lay Anugula. The Government Forestry officials in Anugula had gradually pushed their forest boundaries right up to the eaves of the villagers of Yoramo. The moment the villagers released their domestic animals, they entered the forest and were impounded. The villagers resented having to pay this poundage and petitioned the King of Dasapalla. On the King's behalf phakirmohana reported the matter to Superintendent Metcalf, who instructed phakirmohana in collaboration with the tahasildara and forester of Anugula to investigate the situation and report back. With the aid of an old survey map, phakirmohana located, and marked out for a distance of 20 to 25 miles, what he took to be the border. The Dewan of Narasimhapura objected to phakirmohana's line, alleging that it robbed Narasimhapura of valuable forest land. Ten years later, however, when the affair was finally settled, Phakirmohana's line was accepted as the true border.

Among the benefits which phakirmohana conferred or tried to confer on Dasapalla, were the repair of a bund, the

(1) Atma Jiban carita, p. 133. (2) presumably Lord Jagannatha's car.
beginnings of a road from the capital of Dāgapallā to Baragadā village, and the cultivation of cabbages, peas and turnips. The road was commenced with convict labour and remained unfinished because a general amnesty was declared and all prisoners were released, when a son was born to the King. The cabbages, peas and turnips failed to excite any but bovine appetites. A headman once begged Phakirmohana not to give him any more cabbages, because, no matter how he had them cooked, the smell persisted. The only beneficiaries from Phakirmohana’s agricultural venture were the cows.

Dāgapallā jail was a bizarre institution. Its administration was "lax and irregular". It housed mainly pānas and prisoners were allowed home for family and caste functions. Some of the prisoners were apparently in business with corrupt warders, who allowed them out each night in return for a share in their loot each morning. (1)

Inevitably a rift developed between Phakirmohana and the King. Two sādhus once came to the village. Deeming themselves shabbily entertained by a wealthy herdsman, they set about knocking his cottage down. The herdsman caught hold of the pair of them and beat them severely. They complained to the King, who ordered the herdsman’s goods to be distrained. The herdsman appealed to Phakirmohana, who cancelled the distraint order and in the presence of the King threatened to jail the two sādhus, if they did not leave Dāgapallā forthwith, even though the pāroga had earlier been insisting to the King that if the sādhus were to leave Dāgapallā, dharma would leave with them. Sometime later during a visit of Metcalf’s, the King demanded that Phakirmohana be replaced. Metcalf agreed and Phakirmohana was induced to resign on the promise of another post nearer to Balasore, but this failed.

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, p. 136. This is obviously the origin of Gobarā Jena, the corrupt constable in Cha Mana Ātha Guntha.
to materialise and phakirmohana was left stranded in Cuttack, without a job.

vi) Dewani in pālalahāda (1886-1887) (age 43-44)

There had been a revolt in pālalahāda. The ringleaders had already been arrested and jailed, when phakirmohana was given 1st class magistrate’s powers and sent there to apprehend and punish the remaining rebels. But by the time of his arrival, these had all dispersed into the jungles and calm had descended on the rest of the peasantry. There were no other cases to be heard. The royal kaceri was deserted.

In the absence of any other business, phakirmohana spent his time translating the Mahābhārata in the mornings and playing games of caupata in the afternoons. No one did anything in the evenings in pālalahāda, for it was then a densely wooded region and after dark tigers and bears roamed the streets. Phakirmohana spent an occasional afternoon with the King, who was an intelligent and pleasant conversationalist, and extraordinarily generous. It was His Majesty’s almost absurd generosity which accounted for his heavy debts. Phakirmohana heard numerous stories of the King’s generosity, but records only one.

There used to be a destitute Kābulī wandering round Cuttack who eked a living by begging from his fellow Kābulīs. One day the other Kābulīs suggested he set himself up in business on a loan from the King of pālalahāda. Knowing that he would be unable to approach the King empty-handed, they all subscribed to buy him an English blanket, which the Kābulī presented with all due ceremony for the King’s inspection prior to purchase. The King was too busy to conclude the purchase, so in accordance with long-established custom the Kābulī drew maintenance at the rate of one rupee per day.
from the royal storeman, but, being loth to spend the money, he subsisted on rice and pulses which he begged from the stores. Three months passed and the Kabuli accumulated Rs.90. His old clothes had by now rotted to rags, and one morning the King discovered him sitting half-naked by the side of the road, warming himself before a blazing log, for palabrashad, being high in the hills, could be very cold in Winter. Aghast at the hardship he had unwittingly caused the poor pedlar, the King immediately ordered the store-keeper to return him the English blanket, pay him its value of Rs.10, give him his travelling expenses and send him home. Thus the Kabuli returned to Cuttack Rs.100 better off than when he came.

Drawing a high salary and doing nothing for it irked phakirmohana, so he decided to resign. When he did so, he received handsome presents from the King and the royal family, and during the rains of 1887 he returned to Balasore.

vii) Manager of Keujhara (1887-1892) (age 44-49)

Phakirmohana opens his narration of this period in his life with a meditation upon his own spendthrift nature, which he compares to that of the sañtals, who at harvest time live well off rice and wine, and dance and sing all night long. Then from March onwards, after the rice has run out, they live sparingly on wild fruit and vegetables. "The same streak of prodigality runs through me. When earning, I never think of tomorrow."(1) Thus after resigning his post, phakirmohana once more experienced hardship in Balasore.

The post of manager fell vacant in Keujhara and phakirmohana applied for it. The Maharaja of the state referred to Raya Nanda Kisoradasa Bahadura for a testimonial on phakirmohana's character and competence and, on receiving it,

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 143.
appointed Phakirmohana manager on a salary of Rs.100 per month, on 10th December 1887.

At that time the Maharaja was Dhananjaya Narayana Bhanja, an eloquent, slender, industrious and versatile man, who was thoroughly acquainted with 3,000 square miles of his domain and also with the personal idiosyncracies of almost all his subjects. He was dedicated to his self-appointed task of improving his realm and personally supervised every aspect of its administration.

Six miles south of Anandapura in Kettjhara stood the village of Degā with its famous temple of Kusalesvara, built by one of the independent kings of Orissa, Yayati Kesari. In order to save this temple from engulfment by the Kusabhadra River, the Maharaja had, at the cost of 1½ lakhs of rupees, built an immense bund, second only to that of Kathayodhi in Cuttack. He had also built the gigantic Gundica Temple to Baladebajī in Nijagada.

Phakirmohana was given charge of Anandapura, 52 miles from the Maharaja's residence in Nijagada. He cleared an area of forest round the kaceri and established a garden, part of which was planted with roses and flowers, and part with fruit trees, mangoes, lichis and jāmarula (eugenia alba). The office records in Anandapura kaceri were in disorder. There was no proper register. Phakirmohana had to reorganise it. In his second year of office, with the Maharaja's permission, he set up a press to print summonses, witness forms, circulars and pamphlets.

Phakirmohana successfully managed a court case in the High Court in Calcutta and was rewarded by the Maharaja with a rise in salary of Rs.20 per month with effect from June, 1889. He also earned the Maharaja's esteem by rescuing some
land from Chotanagapura in a border dispute that had been dragging on for years prior to his appointment.

viii) Revolt in Kēṭjharā. (1891-1892) (age 48-49)

In view of the importance of this chapter in phakīrmohana's autobiography (1) for the light it throws on the development of his thought and also on his relations with the British, it is related below in detail.

a) phakīrmohana's account.

"In 1891, my fourth year as Manager of Kēṭjharā, a terrible revolt occurred.

"For administrative purposes, Kēṭjharā was divided into two zones, an eastern zone centring on Anandapura and a western zone on Nijagada. Being traversed by the Baitaranī River, the Anandapura, is fertile, comparatively flat, and cleared of jungle. It constituted, as it were, the pearl of Kēṭjharā and was the home of all the prosperous farmers, traders and merchants. None of the Anandapura peasantry was involved in the rebellion. The western zone round Nijagada was inhabited mainly by Bhuyās, with only a sprinkling of farmers."(2)

phakīrmohana was on tour when suddenly one evening he received a secret message from the Maharājā, outlining the peasants' revolt in Nijagada. He immediately struck camp and returned to Anandapura.

"For the next three days I received two or three

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, ch.19. (2) ibid, p. 147.
messages a day by runner from the Maharaja. Amongst other things, the messages ordered me to dispatch from Anandapura to Nijagada as many troops as I could muster. My work now consisted in getting up-to-the-minute reports from Nijagada and mustering troops to send there. Postal services between the head kaceri in Nijagada and Anandapura were now suspended. The rebels had seized a whole day's mail and set up lookouts at strategic points along the road. The mail now came and went by secret runner through the forests.

At about 9 p.m. on the third day... when I was just about to dine, three elephants arrived at the kaceri, bearing the Maharaja, the Assistant Manager Bicitrananda Dasa and some loyal attendants. The elephants had covered 52 miles of trackless jungle, loaded with four passengers each, at top speed. They were almost dead. The condition of their passengers was even worse. It was the hot season. The sun had beat down on their heads; every joint in their bodies had practically been jolted from its socket by the constant swaying of the elephants; and they had not eaten a thing all day. They collapsed the moment they dismounted. It took almost an hour's fanning to resuscitate them. A meal had been prepared for the clerks and myself. We gave it to the Maharaja and his companions... Then the Maharaja, two or three other people and myself held a council of war. It was decided that I should go to Cuttack to notify the Superintendent of the revolt and bring police assistance to capture the rebel leaders; meanwhile the Maharaja would stay in Ananda-
After two days' travel, partly by elephant and partly by steamer, Phakirmohana arrived in Cuttack, apprised the Assistant Superintendent Raya Nanda Kisora Dasa Mahādura of what had transpired, and went to see the Superintendent, Mr. Toynbee.

"Toynbee saheba flew into a rage when he had heard what I had to say. He was a very high official, yet he leapt uncontrollably from his chair and paced the room ranting, 'Fine, good! He's a tyrant! He flouts Government orders! Serves him right. I won't lift a finger to help him.' I saw clearly then, that the saheba had received a full report of the revolt before I arrived. Since he had leapt up from his chair and was pacing up and down so agitatedly, I found it very difficult to sit quiet, but I waited for a momentary pause, before saying calmly and politely, 'The Maharaja of Ketūjhara has always been a loyal servant of the Government, your honour. You will find the fact amply documented, if you peruse the files. You say the Maharaja is a tyrant. I can state quite categorically that no one, neither a subject of Ketūjhara, nor a complete outsider, can furnish one iota of evidence in support of that contention. The blame for this disturbance rests on the Bhuyās alone. They are born troublemakers. It's in their nature to rebel occasionally. If the revolt were due to oppression on the Maharaja's part, it would be supported by the whole peasantry, whereas in fact the number of rebels is small. The Maharaja can suppress them with ease, but he is unwilling to act without your advice and assistance, for he looks

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, p. 148-149.
upon you as a guardian. That's why he has sent me to see you. The Bhuyâs are hard-drinking, ignorant savages, who riot at the least provocation. The Mahârâja wants no bloodshed. That's why he wants you to send a hundred constables to assist him. The savages will scatter at the sight of them, and peace will be restored.' Toynbee was silent. After reflecting a while, he said, 'Right, babu. I'll send word to police Superintendent Grice in Balsore District, to bring a hundred constables to your assistance in Kojhara. You're dismissed.' I thanked him profusely; salamed most respectfully; and took my leave.

I apprised Nanda Kisora of the outcome of my conversation with the saheba and left Cuttack immediately. No sooner had I arrived in Tândi, when the Mahârâja arrived there from Anandapura. He heard all the news from Cuttack and then decided that since he had come so far, he ought to go to Cuttack to see the saheba. We reached Nanda Kisora's place in Cuttack the next day. After discussing various aspects of the situation, we decided to telegraph a brief report of the revolt to the Lt. Governor and to Chief Secretary Cotton, requesting the assistance of armed police, but implying that the revolt was not serious. The armed police were required only to prevent bloodshed. Having sent the telegraph, we ought then to go to see Mr. Toynbee.

The Mahârâja had come to Cuttack in only a shirt and dhoti, with no other clothes. He declared that he would go to see the saheba, exactly as he was, in order to show the saheba the state he was in, owing
to the peasants. I tut-tutted the idea. 'The saheba will conclude that you’re a coward, who fled in terror from the peasants. You must talk confidently, giving the impression that you don’t consider it a revolt.' My words amused Nanda Kisora Babu. If the Maharaja was going to see the saheba, he would need suitable clothes. Nanda Kisora sent for a tailor, who took the Maharaja’s measurements, and was given strict instructions to deliver the clothes by dusk that day.

"After the tailor had left, we resumed our deliberations in Nanda Kisora’s office. Just then the honourable Madhusudana Das arrived. I whispered to the Maharaja, 'We’d better include Madhu Babu in our discussion. There’ll be a lot of work to be done in Cuttack. He could do it as our lawyer. His help and advice will be essential, especially during the trial.' Nanda Kisora backed me up. Madhu Babu was therefore retained on behalf of Ketjhara and given a full account of the revolt.

"The next morning the Maharaja and I went along to the Commissioner’s house. Summoned to his private study, we saluted and, the moment we were seated, the saheba, as if with an effort controlling his temper, said, bowing his head forward, ‘Raja saheba, you’ve abandoned the queen, and the women and children to the tender mercies of the rebels, and fled to Cuttack in terror. What kind of behaviour is this?’ Before the Maharaja could reply, I quickly interposed, ‘No, your honour, the fort is adequately guarded. The villages around it are also loyal. The rebels won’t even be able to see the fort, (let alone attack it).’
The saheba glared at me. We discussed the revolt. The Governor and Chief Secretary had meanwhile replied to our telegraphs. It was finally decided that the order, by which rice (sic) was to go to Kettjhara with a hundred constables, would be countermanded and instead Dawson saheba would be instructed to go with 200 military police via Catinbas to protect the fort.

"The Maharaja and I left Cuttack for Anandapura. After spending a day in Anandapura raising troops, we set out at midday that Saturday with 300 soldiers of foot for Nijagada.

"Before describing the revolt, one should briefly set down its causes. The Bhuyās had a superstition that the kingdom of Kettjhara was theirs and that they had the right to depose kings and crown new ones. This delusion had already caused numerous revolts and was not entirely ungrounded. Originally Mayurbhanja and Kettjhara comprised one kingdom. It irked the Bhuyās of Kettjhara to go to distant Mayurbhanja to present their grievances, so they kidnapped a child from the royal family of Mayurbhanja and set him on the throne of Kettjhara. There were no horses or elephants for the new king's coronation, so two Bhuyās got down on all fours and acted as horses and elephants to carry the kidnapped king majestically to his throne. When the new king was duly installed, a Bhuyā, who had committed some imaginary offence, prostrated himself before the throne, and the king dangled a long sword above his neck, signifying the king's right to execute Bhuyā
phakîrmohana gives the cause of the revolt to be the Mâcha Kândaṇâ Jôda (fissure). This fissure is in the hills to the south-west of Nijagada, which is itself situated in a mountain valley. Phakîrmohana once went to inspect the fissure when work on it was in progress. The waters from the fissure flowed north into the Baitaranī River. Phakîrmohana planned to dam its northern path, and thus create a lake, which could then be tapped by a system of sluices and ditches to irrigate the fields of Nijagada and provide a reliable water-supply for the village. This scheme would both protect the harvests from the effects of drought and the people from water-borne disease. He estimated that the scheme would cost about Rs. 10,000. The Assistant Manager Bicitrânanda Dâsa was with him at the time and phakîrmohana gave him an outline of his intentions. When asked by the Mahârajâ, what phakîrmohana had had to say about the fissure, Bicitrânanda Babu merely stated the estimated cost of phakîrmohana's scheme. 'All the Manager ever wants to do is to spend money,' the Mahârajâ testily replied. (2) Consequently phakîrmohana's scheme never materialised. The Mahârajâ and Bicitrânanda Dâsa executed a scheme of their own.

The engineer on the Mâcha Kândaṇâ irrigation scheme was Bicitrânanda Dâsa. He had once been a secretary in Anandapura kacerî, where his conscientious hard work had attracted the attention of the Mahârajâ, and in consequence he had been appointed Assistant Manager in Nijagada. Under the feudal system that then prevailed in the gadajëtas, the Bhuyâs were conscripted as forced labour on the irrigation scheme. It was

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 149-155. (2) ibid, p. 157.
Bicitrananda's intention to make them work as hard as he did himself. They had to work from dawn to dusk, swinging steel shovels, 14 pounds in weight, to smash the rock face and divert the water from the Macha Kanda fissure towards Nijagada. It was no easy job and slacking was punished with beatings. At midday there was a two-hour break for lunch, at which the Bhuyas were expected to provide their own food. Those who had none at home to bring with them went without and spent the two hours in sleep. Finally these harsh working conditions goaded the Bhuyas into rebellion. They determined to depose the Maharaja and to execute Bicitrananda Dasa. Bicitrananda Dasa would certainly have been killed if he had fallen into their hands, but flight saved him."(1)

The leader of the revolt was Dharani Dhara, a Bhuya, who had been educated at the Survey School in Cuttack at the Maharaja's expense. After working for some months as a surveyor in the service of the Royal Government of Kendjhora, he began to proclaim that the Maharaja was tyrannical and oppressive, that he, Dharani Dhara, was the adopted son of the Maharani(2), and that his mission was to establish justice in the realm. The Bhuyas were already dissatisfied with the Maharaja, so the moment Dharani Dhara made this proclamation they all accepted his authority and rejected that of the Maharaja. They looted the Royal granaries and also those of non-Bhuyas, who refused to obey Dharani Dhara. They also captured and imprisoned some police officials. Dharani Dhara was joined by a shrewd Bhuya from Simhabhumi, named Mahapatra, who was conversant with legal procedure. In view of the strength of the revolt, the Maharaja had fled from Nijagada.

"We left Anandapura at dawn and rested on the banks

(1) Atma JIBana Carita, p. 158. (2) i.e. Queen Victoria.
of a stream some 8 miles further on. Now, as we marched along, at our head was the Maharaja's elephant, then mine and those of the clerks, followed by a line of 300 foot-soldiers. The soldiers were old, lifeless and possibly half-purblind. After all, what able-bodied youth ever volunteered to serve a king as an unpaid conscript? Those who volunteered were the sick and infirm, who were no longer capable of doing any useful work at home. Besides, there was a rebellion going on. The government had issued orders to report with swords and rifles. There was slaughter afoot. Was the young working son of the house to go and get himself slaughtered? Let the old man go instead. These aged soldiers had double, tattered, homespun gamuchas wrapped round their heads, rifles weighing 10 seers and measuring 3½ cubits slung over their shoulders, and bundles of rice and cooking pots tied round their waists. Such was the dress of these swashbuckling heroes who came hobbling on their sticks and groping their way along this dark and difficult path. They had been trudging through the jungle the whole night long and were on their last legs. The toes of many of them were torn and bleeding through stumbling. But day had dawned that day as it did every other, and we felt as if we had suddenly emerged from an endless night of torment into a pleasant land, since dusk the night before, we had been unable to see each other's faces, and no words had passed our lips. So now when we looked at each other, hope seemed reborn in our hearts."(1)

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 159-161.
At 8 o'clock on the morning of Sunday, 13th May, 1891, they arrived in the village of Ghatagrama and halted there to rest and eat. At 11 o'clock that morning two runners arrived with a message from Nijagaḍa. The previous day 500 Bhuyas had surrounded the fort, but had been driven back by rifle fire; and had now taken up positions in Raisuā. The moment he heard the news, the Maharaja prepared to return to Anandapura, but Phakirmohana resolved to press on to the fort to save the lives and honour of the Queen, princes and princesses. Before the Maharaja left, Phakirmohana took written instructions from him to the effect that in the event of an attack he (Phakirmohana) was authorised to slay his attackers.

"I have described the virility of the soldiers I was leading into battle. I now inspected their weapons and despaired even more. Two thirds of their rifles were split, cracked or broken. As for powder and shot, their powder horns, that is to say the coconuts containing their powder, which were below their waists at the back, contained sufficient for one or two shots, four at the most. Almost all their swords were rusty and cracked. 'Sir,' they explained, 'we were ordered to report so suddenly that we didn't have time to prepare any powder or manufacture any shot.' I cannot understand what prompted me to advance with such soldiers and equipment. One must presume it to have been a mental aberration on my part." (1)

After leaving Ghatagrama, Phakirmohana arrived at Basantapura, only 10 miles from the fort of Nijagaḍa, but between him

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, pp. 162-163.
and the fort lay a mountain range traversed by a narrow gorge, an ideal place for ambush. Fearing to advance without reconnoitring the gorge (the Basaghara ghati), he sent the police officer of Basantapura on ahead to investigate. He did not realise at the time that the police officer was on the Bhuyā side. If Phakirmohana had pressed on at that moment, he would have reached Nijagada without incident. As it was, the police officer gave the Bhuyā lookout a complete intelligence report on Phakirmohana’s troops and intentions. The Bhuyā sent word to Dharanī Dhara’s H.Q. at Raisu, and by the following morning the pass was heavily guarded.

On his return the police officer reported to phakirmohana that the pass was clear. Even so, phakirmohana was reluctant to advance in the dark, and in any case his troops were tired. So he halted for the night in a mango grove. The following morning he again sent the police officer on a reconnaissance patrol and, receiving the same report as the night before, advanced. Entering the pass, he and his men were fired on and failing to find a suitable position from which to retaliate, they withdrew to the mango grove, where they were soon surrounded, and reluctantly surrendered. Had he wished, phakirmohana could have ridden his elephant hard, when in the pass, and have reached Nijagada, but, unwilling to desert his troops, he stayed with them and was captured.

At the foot of Barārasi Hill and west of Basantapura, Basaghara was one of the main Bhuyā posts. It was commanded by Dharanī Dhara’s elder brother Gopālia, who was also commander-in-chief of the Bhuyās. I had seen him six months previously at the jail in Nijagada. He had been chained to a stake with an iron band round his leg. Gopālia was five cubits tall, massively built, fat, and terrifying
to look at. His muscles were as hard as iron; his chest was broad; his face flat, massive and ugly; his eyes were minute; and he was as strong as an ox. The lout was as cruel and vicious as he was stupid. He was sitting on a stone with unsheathed swords and arrows piled round him. Numerous Bhuyas stood in attendance upon him, armed with arrows, axes and unsheathed swords. As soon as I arrived, he glared at me for a long time with his small, blood-shot eyes; and I stood there before him a prisoner, observing his ferocious appearance. After a while he ordered me to accompany him to Dhara in Raisuā.

"I mounted the elephant and he sat beside me, holding a naked sword in each hand. 'Do you have a pistol?' he asked. 'No,' I replied. 'Right,' he said, 'then listen to me, I'm warning you, if you attempt to escape to the fort I'll hack you to pieces.' Then he bound his axe and swords to his waist and loaded his bow; and then we set out for Raisuā, with 50 or 60 Bhuyas in attendance to guard me. Group after group of people passed us en route, bound for Basāghara from Raisuā. Whenever our guard saw anyone approaching from the front, he called out, 'Husiāra'. If the newcomer replied, 'Husiāra', then he was ordered to clear the way. The Bhuyas had this password; if they called 'Husiāra' and received the reply 'Husiāra', they knew that the other person was one of them; if not, then he was a stranger. When we were about halfway there, a dreadful person loaded his bow and called to me, 'Bicitrananda Babu made me work from morning till night with nothing
to eat, you know. Now I'll kill you for it, sure as sure.' He took aim and drew back the string. One second more and death was certain; but a man dashed up from behind and seized the archer's wrist.

"We arrived in Raisuā at about 3 o'clock. The moment I dismounted Dharaṇī Dhara dashed up to me and said, 'Prostrate yourself. prostrate yourself before me.' I hesitated. Weeping anxiously, my cook came dashing up from behind and embracing me, cried, 'Please, prostrate yourself, sir.' Instead of prostrating myself, however, I merely saluted. Dharaṇī Dhara seized my hand and set me down beside his bed. It was almost sunset. I was given permission to bathe and eat.

"In the morning Dharaṇī Dhara's darbāra took place ... There was rejoicing because of my capture ... Dharaṇī Dhara set me beside him and asked, 'What do you have to say now?' I immediately replied, 'If you keep me on as Manager, I'll stay; otherwise, I'll go home.' Dharaṇī Dhara asked the other Bhuyās for their opinion. 'No, no,' they cried in concert, 'he ought not to be kept on as Manager. He's on the Maharājā's side.' No final decision on my appointment could be reached that day. After a discussion of other business, the darbāra broke up ...

"At the beginning of the darbāra the following day the question of my appointment as Manager was raised. When the majority of the Bhuyās objected to my appointment, Maharāṇī putra Dharaṇī Dhara said, 'How am I to manage such a large kingdom without an intelligent capable man to advise me?' All the
Bhuyās agreed. I was appointed Minister. The letter of appointment was signed 'Maharāṇī putra Dharanī Dhara Bhuyā, as indeed were all other documents. As a salary I was permitted to enjoy 7 manas of land tax-free ...

"Word got around that I was Dharanī Dhara's Minister. He trusted me implicitly, never failing to accept my advice on the kingdom's administration. He had been accorded divine status. From a different village each day, parties of maidens came, blowing conches and ululating, to worship him. Dharanī Dhara would stretch out his legs to them and they would wash them in tumeric water and then make flower offerings to them. When they had finished worshipping Dharanī's feet, they came to wash and worship mine, for, as a minister, I possessed venerable feet also. But I saluted them and said, 'You're my mother. Don't touch my feet. I'm but a servant. There's no need to worship them.'(1)

Thus Phakīrmohana gained Dharanī Dhara's complete confidence. Dharanī Dhara used to come to Phakīrmohana's shelter, and they sat together and chewed betelnut. The aim of the Bhuyās was now to raid the palace of Niḍaga. Shelters were constructed to house the Queen and princesses, together with their household servants, once they had been taken prisoner. The plan was that 5,000 Bhuyās, armed with rifles, axes and spears, should rush the palace, loot it and raze it to the ground. When invited to comment on the plan, Phakīrmohana argued that the rifle and cannon fire of the palace guards would inflict heavy casualties on the Bhuyās, especially the

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, pp. 166-171.
leaders. He suggested that a better plan would be to buy 100 sticks of dynamite and hurl it onto the palace walls from the overlooking hills, thus disposing of all the guards and impediments at little risk to themselves. phakirmohana’s plan was accepted. The clerks were ordered to issue demands on the more affluent tenants so as to raise the thousand rupees needed to purchase the dynamite in Calcutta.

Thus phakirmohana was able to delay the Bhuyan attack on the palace, but for how long, he wondered. There was still no sign of the troops the Government had promised to send. He wracked his brain for a means of informing the Maharaja of the impending danger to his family. Finally he hit upon a stratagem. Dharani Dhara was fond of betelnut. phakirmohana informed him that his supplies had run out and begged permission to send to his storekeeper for more and also to instruct the man to irrigate his sugar-cane plot, otherwise his crop would be ruined. Permission was granted, and phakirmohana penned the following letter to Bholanatha De in the office at Anandapura:

Raisu,  
16th May, 1891.  
To Bholanatha the storekeeper, 
Maharani putra urgently requires 100 leaves of betel (pāna) and 200 nuts (gūa). Send them immediately.

You must also dig a ditch from the north to irrigate the sugar-cane plot, otherwise the crop will be ruined.

phakirmohana Senapati. (1)  

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 174-175.
The letter was sent by three of the foot-soldiers, who had been captured with phakirmohana. Before they left, phakirmohana wound three pieces of wire from a soda bottle found the sacred thread of one of them. The soldiers were then given a pass signed by Dharanī Dhara to enable them to cross his domains. The letter was duly delivered to the maharaja, who correctly interpreted the three wires as a hint to send three telegraphs, one to the government, one to the superintendent in Cuttack and one to one other person, either Nanda Kisora Babu or Madhu Babu. Of the letter 'betel' was taken to mean 'soldier', 'nuts' to mean 'bullets'; i.e. 'armed soldiers'; and 'sugar-cane plot' to mean 'the palace at Nijagada'. Thus the whole letter was read as: 'Unless troops come from Cāmba in the north, the palace will be looted and razed to the ground.'

Phakirmohana waited anxiously for the government troops. The Bhuyās had spies everywhere. On the eighth day of phakirmohana's captivity, a Bhuya spy reported that a government column had reached Jayantigada, and in the afternoon police Subinspector Sasibhusana Raya arrived with a letter from Captain Dawson, inviting Dharanī Dhara to come to meet him. Dharanī Dhara cut the letter to shreds on his sword point. Meanwhile Phakirmohana questioned Sasibhusana Babu about the strength of Dawson's column and its expected time of arrival in Raisuā, and in return gave a brief situation report on Dharanī Dhara's H.Q. A few hours later another letter arrived for Dharanī Dhara, this time from the police superintendent of Bālasore District, who was then in Ghatagrama on the way from Anandapura. He also wished to interview Dharanī Dhara, and his letter too was torn up.

On the ninth day runners reported that four sāhebas on horseback were approaching Raisuā at the head of a large number of armed troops. Dharanī Dhara asked phakirmohana what
was to be done. Phakirmohana assured him that there was nothing to worry about, for after all Dharani Dhara was Maharani putra (Queen Victoria's son), was he not? These sahebas were all servants of the Queen. They were obviously coming to pay their respects. Dharani Dhara really ought to go to welcome them, on Her Imperial Majesty's behalf. So wearing his best red dhoti and a splendid hat embroidered in silver and gold thread, and riding a bony old nag, saddled with a blanket and haltered with a knotted old flaxen rope, Dharani Dhara, having quickly acquired the art of sword-saluting from phakirmohana, and accompanied by 8 or 10 Bhuyás armed with axes and bows, set out to welcome the servants of Queen Victoria. Some time later he returned, surrounded by 5 or 6 armed soldiers. His horse and sword were gone. He was under arrest.

The sahebas set fire to all the Bhuya shelters, then set out with their prisoners for the palace at Nijagada. Phakirmohana accompanied them. An hour after reaching the palace, they heard gun-fire coming from Basaghara pass. The Bhuyás were trying to hold back Grice's men, but mounting casualties forced them to withdraw; and Grice and the Maharaja arrived safely in Nijagada.

The Superintendent of the Gadajata Mahála, Mr. Toynbee, came to try the Bhuya prisoners, who were accused of two offences:

i) attempting to make war on a state friendly to the Government; and

ii) the unlawful detention of the chief official of the state of Kedjhara.

As Mr. Toynbee had no clerical staff with him, phakirmohana became his Clerk of Court. Thus at the trial phakirmohana's function was threefold: prosecutor for the state of Kedjhara, translator and recorder.
Mr. Toynbee demanded a written report from the Maharaja on the causes of the revolt. The task of drafting it was enthusiastically undertaken by the sirastādāra of the Maharaja's kaceri. Phakirmohana was relieved, for he was already overburdened. From dawn till 10 a.m. he had to see to the catering for the soldiers and the additional staff provided during the emergency by the neighbouring states of Pheknāla, Bāmandā and Simhabhūmi. From 10 a.m. till sundown he was Clerk of Court to the Superintendent. And from sundown till 10 p.m. he was Manager of Keujhara at the court of the Maharaja. The following morning the sirastādāra came in saying that he had not slept a wink the night before; he had been so busy writing the report. The reams of paper he had filled was visible proof of his veracity. Phakirmohana began perusing this massive compendium of bits and pieces from Čanakya, the Bhāgavata and Rāmāyana, not forgetting voluminous citations from works of history and geography as well. Halfway through Phakirmohana's patience finally evaporated.

"Turning to the Maharaja, I said, 'This is absolutely useless. Let me write it.'

'Right, go ahead,' was his immediate reply.

I glanced at the sirastādāra. He was trembling, and his eyes were red with rage. Time was getting on. It had gone nine. The report had to be submitted by ten. I sat down and wrote the report there and then. I proved with incontrovertible evidence that the causes of the revolt were the craziness of Dharanī Dhara and the peculiar makeup of the Bhuyās. I read the report to the Maharaja, and he signed it. Although there were some crossings-out, there was no time to make a fair copy. In any case there was no need, since the author of the report, the Manager
of Kettjhara, and the reader in the court room, the saheba's Clerk of Court, were one and the same person, myself. Meanwhile the sirastādāra was determined to make trouble for me.

"The report was asked for, the moment I arrived in court. I had no sooner started reading it, in accordance with the hakima's instructions, when the saheba began trembling with rage, 'I'm damned sure you wrote this. It's one of your tricks. I'll jail you for it, if it's the last thing I do.' I could not retaliate. I was in no position to get angry or resign. I just had to suffer it in silence. It seemed to me that the saheba's intention was, if possible, to depose the Maharāja on a plea of incompetence and install his friend Walley saheba as Manager of Kettjhara. He was angry with me, since I was out to prove the Maharāja's innocence. In the course of the inquiry, however, all the witnesses declared that the Bhuyās were to blame for the revolt. Thus there was little likelihood of the saheba's scheme coming off." (1)

The Superintendent left Nijagada, bound for Cuttack. He took the prisoners with him. During a one-day halt at Anandapur, he held the final hearing of the case and passed judgement. All the accused were sentenced to hard labour, Dharanī Dhara being given 5 years and the remainder sentences ranging from two to three years.

"Toynbee saheba took me with him to Bhadraka. On the third day after our arrival there, orders came

from the Lt. Governor in Darjeeling. Walley saheba was also in Bhadraka. In Walley saheba's presence I was ordered to write to the Maharaja telling him to come to Bhadraka the moment he received the letter, otherwise the police would come to fetch him. I wrote the letter and Toynbee saheba signed it. I was then given my instructions. Walley saheba was returning to Mayurbhanja. Thus he would be delayed in coming to Kethjarha. I was to take charge of the fort until he arrived. I signified my acquiescence. The Maharaja was annoyed with me for writing such an offensive letter, threatening him with police action, if he failed to comply with its instructions. He showed the letter to Nanda Kisora Babu and to many other people of standing. He also mentioned it to Chief Secretary Cotton saheba. The idea of my taking charge of the fort during his absence did not appeal to him in the slightest. None of this had entered my head when I agreed to do as the saheba suggested. The following day Toynbee saheba left for Cuttack, and Walley saheba for Baripada. I returned to Kethjarha ... 

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 182-183.

... Orissa's foremost pleader, Babu Madhusudana Dasa, went to Calcutta on behalf of the state of Kethjarha and in the Court of the Lt. Governor refuted all the charges relating to the revolt, which had been brought against the Maharaja by Toynbee saheba, thus establishing his client's innocence. The Lt. Governor declared his intention of coming to Kethjarha to make a full on-the-spot inquiry. In the event, however, he came only as far as Cuttack and
settled the affair there. The Mahārāja was reinstated
as Raja of Ketūjhara. At that time the Lt. Governor was
Sir Charles Alfred Elliot K.C.S.I.

"I received a letter from the Superintendent in
Cutack telling me to go to see the Lt. Governor in
Bhadraka. We met in the Qaka bungalow. I saluted
him, and he asked, 'When did you arrive? How are
you?' ; and then stood there for a minute before
visiting the jails. Behind him was Chief Secretary
Cotton saheba. He stood talking to me for five or
six minutes about Ketujhara, the Bhuyās and my cap-
tivity; and then dismissed me.

"Having concluded their business in Bhadraka, the
Sahebas went their separate ways. Walley saheba had
borrowed 19 elephants to transport his things from
Ketujhara. He handed them over to me and left for
Mayurbhānja.

"On my way back to Anandapura from Bhadraka, my
mind was teeming with depressing thoughts, when
suddenly it occurred to me that the names of all
the writers then active in Oriya literature ought
to be recorded. But then I thought a mere string of
names would not make very interesting reading. One
ought to add a thumbnail sketch of their idiosyn-
cracies too. Still seated on my elephant, I reached
in my pocket, took out my pencil and notebook, and
began writing. My verse composition was half-finished
by the time I reached Anandapura. The moment I dis-
mounted I summoned the compositor and gave it to
him to set up. After a little rest, I resumed writ-
ing. The compositor kept coming to fetch the rest,
sheet by sheet as I wrote. By nine that night it was all written. There were only two days before the Maharaja would arrive and I should have to leave. The printing would have to be finished by then. The compositor knew this. I stayed with him urging him on. By sundown on the second day the printing was finished. The first edition of my Utkala Bhramanam had been published."(1)

There were three reasons for the friction which developed between the Maharaja and Phakirmohana and which finally resulted in Phakirmohana's resignation. Firstly, the Maharaja had disapproved of Phakirmohana staying on under Walley Saheba, when he, the Maharaja, had been temporarily deposed. Secondly, the Maharaja suspected Phakirmohana of having contrived to get one of his protégés dismissed. Walley Saheba, assisted by Phakirmohana and the Assistant Manager, had continued to administer the state for several months after the Maharaja's reinstatement. The Assistant Manager was the son of the former dewan, who had been assassinated by the Bhuyās at the time of the Maharaja's accession to the throne. Ever since then the Maharaja had shown special interest and sympathy in the former dewan's family and had become particularly fond of his son, whom he appointed Assistant Manager. When for some reason Walley Saheba dismissed the boy, the boy suspected it to be Phakirmohana's doing and conveyed his suspicions to the Maharaja. The sirastadāra, who still bore Phakirmohana a grudge, confirmed these suspicions. Thirdly, the Maharaja suspected Phakirmohana of being a party to the avalanche of petitions, which were posted from Anandapura to the Superintendent in Cuttack and the Lt. Governor in Calcutta.

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 183-185.
informing them of various grievances.

Phakirmohana had already decided to resign, when he learnt that in any case the Maharaja had appointed his successor. The Lt. Governor appointed Raya Nanda Kisora Dasa Bahadura as political Agent in Ketujhara. When he arrived in Anandapura, accompanied by the Maharaja and Babu Madhusudana Dasa, Phakirmohana resigned and handed over the custody of the kaceri and treasury to his successor.

Phakirmohana had become popular in Ketujhara with all classes of society. When he returned to Balasore after his dismissal, the people gathered by the roadside and silently saluted him as he passed. They did not dare give him an ovation for fear of the Maharaja. One source of Phakirmohana’s popularity was the abolition of a vexatious stove-tax, which had borne heavily on widows.

Only two things grieved him at having to leave Ketujhara, two unfulfilled projects; one was the dredging of tanks in the outlying districts to relieve the water-shortage during the hot season, and the other was the building of a brick-built school in Anandapura. Both had been started and were in a fair way to completion when he left.

Phakirmohana’s last months in Ketujhara were very trying. He was afflicted with a recurrent fever; his favourite dog died; and his wife and children were ill-treated by his relatives in Balasore. During his captivity he had been reported killed. On the receipt of the news, his wife had fasted. The insensitive attitude of her relations had only intensified her sufferings. After Phakirmohana’s dismissal, the family broke up. His cousin Radhamohana and nephew Jalmohana each took a third of the family property and home. Henceforth the Senapati united family was at an end.
b) Comment and Discussion.

Phakirmohana's editor was presumably sceptical about the reliability of Phakirmohana's account of the causes of the revolt, for he furnishes the two following footnotes:

i) "The causes of the revolt given by the late Mrtyumjaya Ratha in the 5th number of the 22nd volume of Utkala Sahitya are reproduced below:

"The main cause of the revolt was the excessive tyranny of the former Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja Deva, which so incensed the peasants, especially the Bhuyas, that they rebelled. The leader of the revolt was a youth named Dharani Dhara Nayaka. The revolt commenced in the following manner. Dharani Dhara was educated on a royal scholarship at the School of Surveying in Cuttack. After passing his final examination, he was employed as an unsalaried surveyor in Keujhara. During the border dispute between Keujhara and Simhabhum, the King sent Dharani Dhara to the disputed area. Whilst there, he learnt that on the King's orders his brother and several other Bhuyas had been arrested without trial and that on his return he would suffer a similar fate. He instantly left the King's service and took refuge with his brother-in-law, Narendra Mahapatra. Then in order to end the King's tyranny, he began inciting the Bhuyas and raising subscriptions. In January, 1891, they sent a statement to the Commissioner and a copy to the Manager of Mayurbhanja. When nothing came of these, Dharani Dhara was formally instated as leader of the Bhuyas, and this fact was secretly disseminated. He was soon..."
joined by 500 Bhuyās and supplied with signed affidavits from numerous villagers, testifying to the King's tyranny. To maintain his troops, Dhara raided the Royal granaries and to prosecute his war, he collected three cannons and various other military equipment. In view of this, the Maharaja fled from his kingdom to Cuttack."(1)

"In May 1891 there took place an insurrection of the Bhuiyans of Keonjhar against their Maharaja, resulting in his flight to Cuttack and final restoration accompanied by Rai Nanda Kishore Das Bahadur as Government Agent. The oppressions and exactions of the Maharaja were the immediate cause of the disturbances, which were promptly suppressed by local officers with the aid of Government police. A detachment of troops from Calcutta was also ordered under arms, but it was only held in reserve and not called into action."( C.E. Buckland, Bengal Under the Lieutenant Governors p.911) (2)

Both these accounts attribute the revolt to the oppression of the Maharaja, whereas phakirnohana states that the Maharaja was vindicated by Madhusudana Das. The account of the case recorded by Madhusudana's biographer, Naba Kisora Das, also indicates that the Maharaja was vindicated.

The account of the case related by Madhu Babu is given below.

Laying the blame for the revolt in Keonjhar on the

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 159-160. (2)Ibid, p. 188.
raja, the Government assumed administrative control of the state. The King fled to Cuttack, where one day, wearing only a dhoti and gamucha, he presented himself to Madhu bābu. 'I am Dhananjaya Nārayana Bhaṇja, King of Ketljhara,' he said. 'I have heard of your reputation and come to Cuttack to see you. There has been a revolt in my kingdom. Being led to believe that it was due to tyranny and oppression on my part, the Commissioner has sent a white man to depose me. I am innocent; I need your help. I came away without money or clothing.' Hearing this, Madhu bābu immediately laid out more than a hundred rupees from his own pocket on clothing, toilet requisites and accommodation for the King. Then the following day he wrote to Mr. Toynbee, the Superintendent of the Gadajata Mahāla, requesting an interview on the King's behalf, and later the King also wrote. Owing to a biased report he had received from the Manager of Ketljhara, Mr. Toynbee had become so averse to the King that he refused to grant the interview and told Madhu bābu that he had no wish to discuss Ketljhara with him. Then Madhu bābu telegraphed the Lt. Governor and as the King's lawyer inspected the relevant files in the Commissioner's office. Discovering evidence of intent, on the part of certain government officials, to assume direct control of Ketljhara, he saw no prospect of remedy from Mr. Toynbee and resolved to appeal to the Lt. Governor.

"Despite having managed with exaggerated reports to turn the Lt. Governor against the King, Mr. Toynbee grew afraid that an appeal was about to be made to
the Lt. Governor, when he saw that Madhu Babu had the
Lt. Governor's permission to inspect the files. Consequently, he more than once invited Madhu Babu and
the King to come to see him. On Madhu Babu's advice
Raja Dhanamjaya Bhanja replied, 'You refused us an
interview to discuss Keujhara; we do not therefore
feel able to come.'

Having prepared the grounds for the appeal and
printed the King's petition, Madhu Babu went to Cal-
cutta on the King's behalf and submitted the appeal
to the Lt. Governor, Sir Ashley Eden (sic). Mr. Toyn-
bee's reports had rendered the Lt. Governor intrans-
sigent. He contemptuously rejected the appeal, the
moment Madhu Babu submitted it, saying, 'The revolt
was due to the King's oppression. The King was
guilty. I refuse to listen to any more about it.'

Hearing this, Madhu Babu thought, 'I shall fight
for what I came for, even if it costs me my life.'
Then he said to the Lt. Governor, 'Then I shall take
my leave, Sir. There is nothing more for me to say,
since you have already passed judgement, without
hearing a word from the accused. I used to believe
that the post of Lt. Governor was created so that a
just remedy could be obtained against the oppression
and injustice of local officers. That misconception
has now been removed. I am now convinced that it was
created to give free scope to the despotism of local
officers. I shall take this conviction back with me
and tell the King not to expect justice in this
world. Very well then, goodbye.'

Madhu Babu perceived that his words had sent the
Lt. Governor red with rage. He ceased speaking, salamed and left the office. He had gone no more than 15 yards from the door, when he heard called, 'Please come back, Mr. Dasa'; and, turning round, he saw that the Lt. Governor himself was calling him from the door of his office.

"At their first interview the Lt. Governor had been so angry that he had not even asked Madhu Babu to sit down and had flung the petition onto the floor. As soon as Madhu Babu was seated, the Lt. Governor picked up the petition and read it attentively. Then he said, 'My conduct annoyed you, Mr. Dasa. Now tell me, do you believe in your heart that the King is innocent? What fee has he given, or promised, you?' 'If this were my dying day,' Madhu Babu replied, 'then with my last breath from my deathbed I should say to you, "The King is not oppressive; on the contrary, he is oppressed by bureaucracy." Far from receive a fee from the King, I paid out money from my own pocket to cloth and shelter him, when he presented himself at my door like a beggar, with only the clothes he stood up in. Such and such papers in the files I saw in Mr. Toynbee's office clearly reveal that there was a bureaucratic plot against the King.'

"Madhu Babu then cited the substance of three letters. The saheba was silent for a while. Then he said gently, 'I can see that the raja of Ketejhora has been done an injustice. Tell him to go to see Mr. Toynbee, who will issue orders for the return of the kingdom.'"
"Mr. Toynbee may now be Superintendent of the Gadajatas," Madhu Babu replied, "but, when he retires and returns to England with his pension, he may have difficulty in finding shelter. The King of Kethjara, on the other hand, is of royal blood; thousands upon thousands of people would come to pay respects even to his corpse, let alone his living body. The difference between the King of Kethjara and Mr. Toynbee is the difference between a man born to rule and a man hired to collect taxes. The King asked Mr. Toynbee for an interview; Mr. Toynbee refused. In these circumstances, even if he never gets his kingdom back, he will still refuse to see Mr. Toynbee; and I won't advise him to either, because Mr. Toynbee has himself refused to speak to me about the King of Kethjara. Since I am the King's lawyer, however, I'll go to Mr. Toynbee provided he retracts and invites me to discuss the King's affairs."

"The Lt. Governor reflected for a while and then said, 'I shall instruct Mr. Toynbee to convey to you, as the King's lawyer, the order whereby the Government will relinquish possession, so that you can assume control from the Government-appointed Manager. I shall be coming to Cuttack myself in 3 months time. I should like to invite the King to meet me there.' The Lt. Governor then invited Madhu Babu to tea that evening, and when they were taking it, the Lt. Governor said, 'Mr. Toynbee reported to me that the King was wasting money, giving you thousands of rupees. I replied that it was the King's own money. He could throw it down the drain,
if he wished. The Government had no right to say anything."

Madhu Babu returned to Cuttack, where he was shown the Lt. Governor's orders by Mr. Toynbee. The King went back to Keujhara and assumed control of his kingdom. Some months later the Lt. Governor came to Cuttack and stayed at the Commissioner's residence. The King came to Cuttack and he and Madhu Babu were summoned by the Lt. Governor, who effected a reconciliation between the King and Mr. Toynbee, who apologised for his rudeness towards the King." (1)

It would take far longer than one can afford to devote to this matter to disentangle from these, and possibly other, accounts, the precise details of what occurred in Keujhara in the Winter, Spring and early Summer of 1890/91. For the purposes of this thesis, however, such knowledge, though desirable, is not strictly necessary; for, despite inconsistencies, there is a considerable degree of congruence among these accounts. Though differing over the cause of the revolt, for example, Mrtyunjaya's account can be seen to corroborate Phakirmohana on two points:

i) Mrtyunjaya states that Dharani Dhara's brother was arrested without trial; Phakirmohana also states that he had seen Dharani Dhara's brother chained to a stake in Nijagada jail, six months prior to the revolt.

ii) Mrtyunjaya states that Dharani Dhara sent evidence

(1) Naba Kisora Das, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, pp. 38-41.
of oppression in Kețjhara to the Commissioner; phakîrmohana records that at his first interview with Toynbee he had the impression that Toynbee had already received a report about the revolt from elsewhere.

On the other hand, though agreeing in other respects, the accounts of phakîrmohana and Madhusūdana differ on at least three points:

i)
Phakîrmohana states that the Lt. Governor was Sir Charles Alfred Elliot, K.C.S.I.; Madhusūdana that it was Sir Ashley Eden.

ii)
Phakîrmohana that the Lt. Governor declared his intention to come to Kețjhara to make a full on-the-spot inquiry; Madhusūdana merely that he intended to come to Cuttack.

iii)
Phakîrmohana that Madhusūdana was appointed to act for Kețjhara whilst the King was still on the throne; Madhusūdana after he had been deposed.

But these differences in detail are of the type that are due to faulty memories. Phakîrmohana's account was written at least 25 years after the event and Madhusūdana's was recorded about 70 years after by his biographer. Such discrepancies are therefore to be expected.

The only important discrepancy in these accounts is that between Phakîrmohana and Madhusūdana on the one hand and Mrtyumjaya and Buckland on the other in regard to the King's guilt. The two former maintain that he was innocent; the two latter that he was guilty of oppressing the peasants.
It should be pointed out, however, that nowhere in his account does Phakirmohana betray his true opinion in this matter. He merely records what he did and said at the time. It is perfectly clear from his account, however, that his intention, and to some extent that of Nanda Kisora and Madhusudana also, was to mislead Toynbee and the Lt. Governor. He deliberately minimises the seriousness of the revolt, both in his first interview with Toynbee and in his telegraph to the Lt. Governor, stating that troops were needed merely to avert bloodshed; he tells the Maharaja to be suitably dressed when seeing Toynbee so as to give the impression that the revolt has not in the least inconvenienced him; and he tells Toynbee that the fort is adequately guarded and secure, because it is encircled by loyal villages, when, as he himself later records, there was a very real danger of massacre. His knowledge of the assassination of the former dewan and his determination to press on to defend the Queen at Nijagaḍa also indicate that he was well aware of the real dangers. Thus one is justified in assuming that on this occasion, as earlier in his deception of Beames, loyalty to the King led Phakirmohana to deceive the British.

It should be remembered in reading Phakirmohana's account that at the time he was writing (circa 1917),

a) the feudal system was still in operation in the Gadajātas; and

b) the Oriya nationalist movement needed the support of Gadajāta kings.

This second consideration made it unlikely that Phakirmohana, as a worker in the national cause, would antagonise Gadajāta kings by making clear his true feelings. Even in his speeches, (1) Phakirmohana goes out of his way to flatter Gadajāta kings. Thus one can hardly expect to find him condemning the

King in his account of the revolt.

Reading between the lines, however, one discerns glimpses of Phakîrmohana's true attitude to the King. Phakîrmohana records that he himself had achieved popularity with the people of Keujhara and that, when he resigned, they lined the route to bid him farewell, though they did not dare give him an ovation for fear of the Maharaja. Phakîrmohana had abolished a tax on stoves; dredged tanks to improve water supplies; and started building a school. It would seem that here as elsewhere Phakîrmohana had tried to improve the lot of the tenants. Although he records (1) that the Maharaja was passionately devoted to the improvement of his realm, it is clear that the Maharaja did not envisage the amelioration of living standards for his tenants as part of that improvement. At immense expense the King had saved one temple from possible inundation and had constructed another in Nijagâda. These were the type of grandiose schemes aimed at enhancing personal glory that Phakîrmohana was later to condemn in his prose fiction. One of these schemes had cost 1½ lakhs of rupees. When one considers that labour costs were nil, because of the system of forced conscription then operative in the gada-jatâs, the real cost to the kingdom of this scheme must have been far in excess of this figure. Yet when Phakîrmohana suggested spending Rs.10,000 on improving water supplies and irrigation in Nijagâda, the King remarked testily, 'All the Manager ever wants to do is to spend money.'

Furthermore, Phakîrmohana's account of how the Bhuyâs selected their first king and how this ceremony was reenacted at each subsequent coronation suggests that he considered them to some extent justified in assuming that by tradition

(1) See, section vii of this chapter, p. 33.
they had acquired the right to select their own rulers. Similarly, his account of the construction work at Macha Kandana Joja implies that Bictrananda, the Assistant Manager, drove the Bhuyas too hard. They were forced to work from dawn till dusk with only a two-hour break, during which to prepare their meal. In phakirmohana's view, it was these harsh working conditions that precipitated the revolt.

Thus the difference between phakirmohana on the one hand and Mṛtyumāya and Buckland on the other is slight. phakirmohana attributes the revolt to harsh working conditions; the others to oppression on the Maharaja's part. The difference may be slight, but it is crucial. Harsh working conditions may appear to constitute oppression, but, in the eyes of phakirmohana and the Maharaja, they presumably do not. Under the feudal system the Maharaja was presumably entitled to exact this kind of service from his tenants. Consequently, it was the system that was oppressive, not the Maharaja; and, therefore, the system needed changing, as phakirmohana was to demonstrate in his prose fiction; but to blame a man for behaving according to a system that he did not create was, in phakirmohana's eyes, wrong; for, it should be remembered, that phakirmohana had on occasion behaved, in what may appear, a very harsh manner indeed, in implementing the feudal system. He had once high-handedly forced the head of the brahmin community in Nilagiri to pay a subscription, by confiscating the man's pony and auctioning it; and he had also once ordered the sitha behera of Pomapad to be prostrated and flogged in a muddy road. Presumably such behaviour was not unusual under feudalism.

Two more observations should be made before this discussion is concluded. The first concerns Madhusudana Dasa, who
had taken great pains to indicate to the Lt. governor the respect due to Oriya royalty. It would seem that in doing so Madhusudana was merely trying to exact respect from the British for Oriya traditions; for he himself seems to have had no great respect for Oriya royalty, as the following extract shows.

"Despite serving the King so well, Madhusudana used to reproach him for his faults. This is revealed in an amusing incident. Madhu Babu once told the King to come to see him at 8 o'clock one evening. The King was late. It had gone half past eight by the time he arrived. When informed of the King's arrival by the peon, Madhu Babu said, 'Tell him to wait.' The King waited one and a half hours, whilst Madhu Babu attended to other clients. Then at ten o'clock Madhu Babu summoned the King. The first thing he said to the King was, 'How much do you think that clock on the wall cost?' 'About a hundred rupees,' the King replied. 'That hundred-rupee clock didn't wait for you,' Madhu Babu said. 'It didn't think, the King of Keujhara is coming at eight, I must stop then. Is Madhu Babu of less value than that clock? I sent for you to ask you that. You can go. You can come when it's convenient to me.'"(1)

It is possible that Phakirmohana's attitude was similar; i.e. he was loyal to gadajata kings because they were Oriyas, not kings, and because they represented the last vestiges of Oriya independence.

(1) Naba Kisora Das, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, p.42.
The second observation regards phakirmohana's writing. Phakirmohana had served the King with devotion, even at the risk of his life. Finally, Toynbee had tricked him into writing an insulting letter, which undid all his good work. Phakirmohana knew that the Maharaja was angry with him and that to continue in his service was impossible. The whole business thoroughly depressed him. Yet in this mood of deep depression he managed to produce in two days, part of which were spent on elephant back, his first really original work, *uktala Bhramanam*.

ix) Dewan for the second time in Pomapada (1894-96) (age 51-53)

Towards the middle of 1894 phakirmohana received a telegraph from Brajendra Kumara Manasimha Bhramarabara, King of Pomapada, and going to Cuttack by steamer was appointed dewan of Pomapada on a salary of Rs.120 per month.

Brajendra Kumara was good natured and honourable, but lazy and easily-led. He had received an excellent education and was proficient in both English and Sanskrit; but since his accession had lost interest in literary studies and read only Medicine. He had no time for the fort's affairs and preferred living in Cuttack, which tended to be expensive and beyond his means. His father had at one time been in debt to the tune of Rs.60,000, but had repaid all but a fraction of it by the time of his death. Brajendra Kumara had already managed to inflate this fraction to Rs.25,000. Shortly after phakirmohana's appointment three deaths occurred in the royal family. The King's widowed mother died; his wife died; and his grandmother, the Queen of Tikkali, also died. The last rites of each were performed with great pomp. To attend those of the grandmother as the King's proxy, Phakirmohana had to spend almost six months in Tikkali. Having nothing else to do, he engaged a
tutor and studied Telugu.

The death of Brajendra Kumara's wife convinced phakirmohana of the truth of Hindu astrology. The Queen had been pregnant. In order to learn whether she would give birth to a son or daughter, an astrologer, who enjoyed a large reputation in Pomerada and neighbouring states, was sent for. After making numerous calculations, the astrologer finally laid down his chalk and declared, 'I'm sorry, but the Queen will die.' Phakirmohana was incredulous. 'But there's nothing the matter with her, except normal labour pains.' 'Nevertheless, eight planets are against her, the ninth can't save her.' The astrologer left. At nine o'clock that night phakirmohana went to see him again to get the latest bulletin. 'The predominance of the hostile planets will persist till morning. The Queen will be safe, if she can get through the night, but she can't.' Another odd thing had happened that day. A jackal kept coming to the lion gate, throwing back its head, and howling. When driven from there, it came to the garden gate, and when driven from there, it returned to the lion gate. Its howling persisted from early morning onwards. Such howling is described in the Utpata Sagara (Book of portents) as ominous. As the first cock crowed, phakirmohana was drawn to the confinement room by a great wailing. Peering through the threshold, he saw the floor awash with blood. The Queen was fading fast. Her new-born daughter was alive, but the nurse had not cut the cord properly. It ulcerated, and within a fortnight the child was dead. (1)

(1) Phakirmohana's belief in astrology is reflected in his fiction. In Mamn the birthcharts of both Cândamani and Pissham Dei both prove correct, and in Kamala Prasada Gorapa the ship returns in accordance with the astrologer's prediction, thus confounding the Captain's fraudulent claim that it had foundered.
Astrologers had predicted that Phakirmohana's wife, Krsnakumari Dei, would not live beyond her 34th year. On entering that year, she developed chronic indigestion. All treatment failed. She could not even digest light food. She was confined to bed and finally at 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 10th day of the bright fortnight of Bhadra (Aug. Sept.), 1894, she died. Loneliness, which had dogged Phakirmohana's footsteps since childhood, gnawed at him once more. He writes,

"It is almost twenty years now, since I lost my wife. I have still not got over it. I have no one in the world to tell my troubles to. Whenever anguish envelopes me, I sit by her tomb in the garden and am comforted.

"My wife was one of the main causes of my learning to write poetry. She enjoyed hearing it. At first I wrote to amuse her, but since her death I've written to relieve my sorrows. Most of my poetry was written at times of severe illness, crisis or mental depression. Krsnakumari used to read bits of my Ramayana and of the first book of my Mahabharata every day after her bath.

"When my wife died, my son was 13 and my daughter 11. I did not dare leave them with my hostile relations in Balasore, and if I had taken them to Pomapada, their education would have suffered, so I decided to leave them in Cuttack; and took them there by steamer. My good friend, the deeply devout Madhusudana Rao, said he would like them to stay with him. He was then Superintendent of the Normal School in Cuttack and had quarters at the School. I
gave him Rs. 100 for their keep for the following 3 months and went to Pomapada. They stayed with him for a year. Then I rented a house for them there."

(1)

Shortly after the last rites of the Queen of Pomapada had been celebrated, several proposals arrived for the King's second marriage. There was one from the royal family of Barikuda, one from Khallikoṭa and one from Kanika. The one from Khallikoṭa was the most favoured by the King's relatives, for the lineage of Khallikoṭa was highest in point of honour and caste. The least favoured was that from Kanika, for the King's relatives discovered that the girl in question was not of royal blood, but of obscure Khandayata parentage in Puri. She had merely been raised by Her Royal Highness, Queen of Kanika. Narendra Kumara Manasimha Bhramarabara, King of Pomapada, was a ksatriya. His relatives feared that he would lose caste by the marriage. The Queen of Kanika was, however, prepared to settle the King's debts, provided he agreed to the marriage. When apprised of this by Phakirmohana, the King replied, 'I'll have no objection to whatever arrangement you make.' Despite opposition, Phakirmohana therefore pushed through the marriage with Kanika. At the wedding the promise to settle the King's debts was repeated, but it was not kept. Very little was repaid to the moneylenders.

At about this time a serious swelling developed in Phakirmohana's right armpit. It was lanced by an incompetent doctor and grew worse, giving rise to fever. The head of the swelling was small, but pus had accumulated from the armpit to the elbow. All forms of medicine, ayurvedic, homeopathic and allopathic, proved equally abortive. The wound finally healed when one of the King's relatives suggested a poultice of padma pālaśa leaves, spread with ghee, warmed and applied to

During my illness the King dismissed me at the suggestion of the Manager of Kanika and the Kanika princess. The King was, as I have already said, weak-minded. When it was put to him that all his debts were due to me, he dismissed me. His debts were not my fault, however, but his. During the three years prior to his marriage to the Kanika princess, the following expenditure had been incurred, in addition to normal living costs:

- Last rites of the King's mother: Rs.9,500
- Last rites of the King's wife: Rs.3,500
- Rebuilding of the royal palace: Rs.5,000
- Survey and reassessment costs: Rs.3,000
- Last rites of the King's grandmother: Rs.500

Total: Rs.21,500

Not a single penny of this had been borrowed money. Oh well, I had pushed through the Kanika marriage in the teeth of all opposition. This was my just reward. I had to suffer the fruits of my deeds."

Several years had elapsed since Phakirmohana had made the last assessment in Domapada in 1877. In the meantime much waste land had been brought into cultivation, and for this the Royal Government was receiving no income. Phakirmohana therefore made a fresh survey and assessment, as a result of which a further Rs.3,000 came into the treasury each year. He also made various improvements in amenities. He rebuilt the palace, built a guest house and well outside the lion gate, and, as a memorial to his wife, constructed a well at the edge of the

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 198-199
village to save the villagers the long walk to the river for drinking water in the hot season. He also began the construction of a school, but by the time of his dismissal in 1896 only the walls were complete.

When he received news of his dismissal, he rose from his sick bed and travelled by palki to try to see the King. Unable to see him, he journeyed to Kanika and saw the King of that state. They chatted with all the old familiarity and affection, but Phakirmohana did not raise the question of his dismissal. At the time of parting Phakirmohana little realised that this was their last farewell. Five or six days later, as he sat dozing in his chair, he suddenly cried, 'Ah! The King of Kanika is dead!' 'Which king died, Father, which king?' asked his twelve-year-old daughter who was seated nearby. 'It's nothing,' Phakirmohana replied, rousing from his drowsiness, 'I was just talking in my sleep.' Two hours later the news of the King's death arrived. Phakirmohana estimated that the King must have died at the very moment he himself had cried.

After his recovery his old worry about money returned. He was summoned to Brajendra Kumara's residence in Baksi Bajara in Cuttack and offered a pension of Rs.100 per month. Unwilling to accept so much without earning it, Phakirmohana declined. Instead he accepted Rs.40 per month for stabling the King's horses and carriages at his Cuttack home, and being the King's companion in the mornings. He soon tired of the job, however, and gave it up.

The King's debts steadily mounted to Rs.70,000. His creditors prepared to sue. He was rescued from their clutches by Madhusudana Dasa, who raised a low-interest loan from the state of Phéknāla and paid off the King's outstanding debts.
Though freed from debt, the King was not freed from anxiety. A deep unease, generated from within, gnawed his vitals. His body and mind decayed. Lonely and disconsolate, he roamed Orissa and finally came to Calcutta, where on the banks of the absolving Ganges his tormented spirit found its rest.
(1) The years in Cuttack. (1896-1905) (age 53-62)

Phakirmohana had for a long time wished to live in Cuttack. The house he had acquired there in the 1880s was to some extent a mistake. It was in Baksi Bajara and inconvenient for schools, offices and friends; much too large and expensive for a person of his means; and in any case most of his time was spent in the madajata mahala, so quite early on he sold half and rented the rest for Rs. 40 a month. Then, 20 years or so later, one of his spells of temporary poverty forced him to sell his remaining share to Madhusudana Dasa, the lawyer. The second house he acquired in Cuttack was more conveniently situated. He bought the site cheaply and had a house built on it to his own design. It stood in three fifths of an acre of land, enclosed by a brick wall. Being unemployed, he set himself up in business as a timber merchant and door and window manufacturer.

"It had been decided to hold the conferences of the Indian Congress and Indian Unitarians in Madras on 25th December, 1898. The late Anandamohana Bose was Congress Chairman that year. Both the Balasore National Society and the Balasore brahma samaj selected me as their delegate and wrote to the conference officials in Madras informing them of the fact. I travelled to Madras by rail from Baranga. It was in Madras that I had my first and last experience of Congress. Most of the topics were political. Although there is no immediate likelihood of
our political aspirations coming to fruition, it would nevertheless be wrong for us to sit quiet, leaving our grievances unvoiced. Congress is made up of well-educated, patriotic Indians from all regions, who desire to free their motherland from her evil condition and are joined together by ties of unity. Lack of unity was the main cause of India's decline.

"One day on my way to the museum in Madras I saw Balagangadhar Tilaka in conversation with some people. I spoke to him and when, after conversing with him for some time, I made to salute him, he caught my hand and said, 'No, you mustn't.'"

"On another day I went to Madras harbour, which was built by the Government to protect ships from the force of the ocean waves. Two stone embankments extend from the shore gradually out to sea. The two ends do not meet, but remain apart. The embankments take all the force of the ocean waves, none of which enters the harbour. On the banks of the harbour have been constructed beautiful jetties, laid with railway lines right to the end. Goods are unloaded by crane from the ships straight onto the railway trucks, which transport them into the interior of the town." (1)

Before leaving Madras Phakirmohana took the opportunity of visiting Kancipuram (Kanjiveram) and other sacred spots in the South.

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 204-205.
In 1899 Phakirmohana received a telegraph from the jamidāra of Kendrapada, Lakṣmi Narayana Jagaddeba, inviting him to accept the post of dewan. He accepted and arrived there by steamer at 8 o'clock in the evening of 27th October, 1899.

There were two jamidāra families in Kendrapada, descended from two brothers, Rādhāsyama Narendra and Gaurīśyama Narendra; both families were equally in debt, owing to their excessive entertaining and religious observances, in which each family vied with the other to the detriment of both and to the benefit of tricksters and impostors alone. Whilst Phakirmohana was there, a sādhu arrived from Braja, and Kirtana was held before the image of the god.

"Look," the sādhu cried, when the kirtana was over, 'see how the Lord's face is shining.' My quarters were nearby. When told of it, I went along to have a look, but there was no brightness to be seen. 'Brightness used to emanate from the Lord's face like this, when he was grazing the cows,' the sādhu declared. There and then it was decided to celebrate Kṛṣṇa's grazing of the cows (gocarana līlā utṣaba) the following day. The next day a few clay cows, calves and bullocks arrived, together with a clay Kṛṣṇa and one or two child-gopālas with sticks in their hands. The bill for the celebration came to sixty or seventy rupees. Since the treasury was empty, the money had to be borrowed at high interest. This was how they went on."(1)

The most famous and ruinous event of the year was the four-month feeding of the sādhus that took place in Kendrapada from

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, pp. 208-209.
June to October. Rogues, impostors and idlers from the length and breadth of India used to turn up, all dressed as sadhus, with matted hair, ash-smeared bodies, small loin clothes and immense appetites. The jamidāras of Kendrapada supplied their sadhu guests with such an abundance of expensive food that not a few of their unworldly guests sold part of their share in the markets and within a few years set up as moneylenders.

The estate was so heavily in debt that little was left from the annual revenue, once the interest had been paid to the moneylenders, and there was no hope of repaying the principal, without selling all or part of the estate. In addition to this there was an execution suit pending for Rs. 100,000. Phakirmohana reckoned that with stringent economies about half of the estate could be saved, but the jamidāra would not hear of cutting down on his religious expenditure. Seeing no other way of saving the estate, Phakirmohana resigned, after only 9 months' service.

Phakirmohana's retirement from Kendrapada at the age of 57 was his last retirement. Thereafter he never again accepted employment. He withdrew into his little cottage at Cuttack and surrounded it with flowers and fruit trees till it had all the charm of a sylvan bower; and there he dedicated his vintage years to literature.

"Much of the poetry of my last years was composed in that little house. One day a rose and the next a rajanī-gandha would catch my eye and of these I began to write. Then I noticed that for several months every morning at the stroke of nine, two hajadibasanta birds would come and sport in my flower garden. I wrote a poem about them, then another about two pigeons flying side by side in the sky, and then
another about the thoughts that arose in my mind as I sat on the stone embankment of the Kathayodi at evening time. I gathered all these poems together and published them in a book called **Abasara Basare** (Leisure-time Verse).

"I first began writing poetry whilst I was teaching in Balasore. I used to write amusing verse for a magazine, put out by the local press, called **Podhadayini Patrika**. I also wrote a story for it, entitled **Lachamania**, which may well have been the first Oriya story ever published. It was read with enthusiasm, but by how many? When I left Balasore to work in the Gadajata Mahala, I gave up writing. For nine or ten years I wrote nothing. Then, when my first son died, I began translating the **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata** to console my wife. My translation of the **Mahabharata** was started in 1881, the year my second son was born. The whole eighteen books were finally finished in 1902, the year my son took his B.A. When I was working in Domapada for the second time, my wife Krsnakumaridied. I poured all the anguish of those days into two slim books of verse, **Puspmala** (Flower Garland) and **Upahara** (Presentation). While living in Cuttack I began reading the **Upanisadas** and translating them into Oriya. I have always suffered from pains in my legs. **Purnacandra Dasa**, the son of an eminent Balasore Jamidara, was staying with me in Cuttack and studying for his F.A. at Cuttack College. He helped me considerably, whenever my legs troubled me, and was also of signal service, when I was translating the **Upanisadas**. I used to lie on my sick bed, translating and dictating the verses, and he recorded
them. Without pūrṇacandra's help, my translation of the Upaniṣadas would never have been published.

"While I was living in Cuttack, I began writing novels. First of all I wrote a story called Rebati and gave it to the editor of Utkal Saḥitya to publish in his magazine. The stories and novels I wrote at this time were published under the pseudonym 'Dhurjajī', which was suggested to me by my dear friend Madhusudana Rāo. Then I began a story called Cha Māṇa Ātha Guntaha. It gradually grew and grew till it became a full-length novel. After that I began a novel called Apūrba Milana (Wonderful Meeting), which was published (serially) under that name in Utkal Saḥitya. But when it was published in book form, I renamed it Lachama. These novels and stories were very popular, especially Cha Māṇa Ātha Guntaha. When the account of Mangarāja's trial in this latter work began to appear in Utkal Saḥitya, some naive country folk came to Cuttack to attend the trial.

"In 1905 my son was appointed Sub-Deputy in Balasore and I left Cuttack to move there with him." (1)

ii) The last years in Balasore. (1905-1918) (age 62-75)

"I came to Balasore in 1905. I have been living here for 13 years now. My wife Kṛṣṇakumārī died and left me long ago. My son is constantly away on government business. And most of the time I have been living here my daughter-in-law has also been away. Cut off from friends and relations, I have spent these 13

long years in almost complete solitude. Constant loneliness has been my destiny. In childhood I was an orphan. In youth I was in faraway places, separated from my wife. And even in old age I live alone, parted from my son. Solitude affords me plenty of time for reflection. I am not good at work, because of my constant illnesses, but times of illness and stress seem to improve my writing. During these long years of loneliness I have been granted peace by Kṛṣṇa-kumārī's tomb in my garden and in the garden near my house that I call 'tranquillity grove' (śanti-kānana). Cradled in this peaceful solitude I composed the last works of my life, Mānu, prayascitta, Baudhāvatāra Kābya and this present work, Atma Jībana Carita."(1)

"Whilst I was alone, Nandakiṣora Bala, the poet, was appointed Head Master of Balasore District School. We began living together. During the summer we used to put a couple of easy chairs out in the courtyard and chat from sundown till nine or ten at night. Most of our talk was of Oriya literature. Whilst together, we wrote numerous poems and stories. But Nandakiṣora Babu was shortly transferred elsewhere. I am not destined to enjoy the pure happiness of such nocturnal companionship ever again. We both remain engaged in literature, dedicated to the advancement of our mother-tongue ... For me such days of happiness have completely ceased."(2)

In July 1909 his bailiff, śrīkanta paṭṭanāyaka, gave him

a drink of undiluted sulphuric acid, believing it to be medicine. He was burnt from tongue to stomach. The Assistant Surgeon deemed him unlikely to live. He remained conscious, but paralysed; and just lay there, awaiting death and meditating fixedly on God's name; somehow his daughter-in-law's nursing effected a complete recovery. Just two years later phakīrmohana was afflicted with prsthābrana (back boils), a most disagreeable disease. Fortunately it was diagnosed early, and he was saved the full brunt of it. One day while he was still under treatment, Maharājā Baikunthanātha De came to see him, carrying two leaves in his hand.

"These are guhālia leaves," he said. 'I recommend them for your back. They are a certain cure.' I agreed to use them. After talking with me for some time, the mahārājā prepared to go and said, 'I'm off to Calcutta in the morning, phakīrmohana Babu. I'll see you when I get back.' Alas, to the misfortune of Balasore, he never did get back. He took fever in Calcutta and died. I heard the news on my sick bed. I have met very few true altruists like Baikunthanātha De. He used to rush to my side whenever I was ill or in trouble. It was not only me that he rushed to help, but any gentleman in the town, the moment he heard the man was not well. In Balasore he took the lead in promoting education, in striving for the advancement of our language, and in every work for the public weal."(1)

The day after the mahārājā's visit, I read a substantial article on Ayurvedic medicine in a Bengali monthly called prabāsi, which stated that the

leaves of the guhalia creeper had been known to the Maharsis as a cure for prsthabrana. After I had engaged men to search for some, a Medinipura jamidara, named Dvarakanatha Maiti, came to see me. He told me that a female relation of his had been cured of prsthabrana with paniuli leaves. There were some in my tank. I sent for some and had them bandaged to my back. A few days later small holes appeared in the affected region and exuded pus. By the grace of God, I was shortly cured.

"Unbroken enjoyment of neither health nor happiness was ordained for me. Ten or eleven months after my recovery from prsthabrana, I was afflicted with an exceedingly painful case of urustambha (an abscess of the thigh, which often proves fatal). My left thigh began to suppurate in several places and to exude pus. I was confined to bed for a considerable time. During that illness I received help and sympathy from numerous people. Baikunthanatha's successor, Kumara Manmathanatha De, used to come to look after me almost every morning and from time to time he brought me medicine from the hospital. One day Maulavi Asaph Ali Kabyaratna arrived with lots of sweetmeats for me from Calcutta. And earlier when I had been laid up with that acid, a young friend of mine, a distinguished Oriya author, Mrtyunjaya Ratha Kabyatirtha Vanibhusana, had travelled up from Cuttack to see me. I recovered from this dreadful disease.

"Towards the end of 1915 a dedicated patriot and servant of Orissa, the leading member of the Bihar-
Orissa Council, Gopabandhu Dasa, stayed with me for two days on his way back from Calcutta. On the morning of his departure, he stood motionless, gazing fixedly at me, with tears streaming from his eyes. When a little while later his composure was regained, he said gently, 'These last two days have taught me the condition you're in. You're weak, helpless and alone. You need more than servants to care for you now. You really ought to have some relations staying with you to help you and look after you.' Such sympathy from my fellow-countrymen has been the comfort of these last years of mine.

"In these last years my fellow-countrymen have rewarded me well for the little service I have done for our literature and land. In 1916 I received the title of 'Sarasvati' from the Guratarangini Committee in Bamaranga. The chairman at the presentation was Raja Saccidanananda Tribhubana Deba. My fellow-countrymen honoured me immeasurably, when towards the end of 1917 they selected me to chair the conference of the All-Orissa Oriya-speakers. And now, bowing with reverence to my readers and all fellow-countrymen, who wish me well, I take my leave." (1)

Phakirmohana Senapati died at the age of 75 on 14th June, 1918.

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(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 219-220
PART TWO.

PHAKIRMOHANA'S PROSE-FICTION.
FOREWORD

The main body of this part of the thesis is devoted to a discussion of phakirmohana's four novels, Cha Mēsa Ātha gunṭha, Lachamā, Māmā and Prāyaścitta, together with his short stories that were published collectively under the title, Galpa Svalpa. Since, however, phakirmohana's prose-fiction is interrelated, thematically and derivatively, with his other writings, principally his autobiography, Atma-jībana Carita, but also his speeches, newspaper articles, and personal correspondence, where it has been thought that the inclusion of material from these other sources might prove illuminating, such material has been included. Thus our discussion of phakirmohana's prose-fiction includes the discussion of these additional materials.
CHAPTER I.

Summaries of Phakirmohana's Four Novels.

i) Cha Meda Atha Guntha.

Rama Chandra Mangaraja was jamidar of Phatepura Sarasandha estate, which comprised five villages. The largest of these was Govindapura, where Mangaraja's palatial home was situated. Mangaraja's childhood had passed in poverty. Orphaned at seven, he had been unable to afford a sraddha for his father or to repair the thatch of his home. So the house crumbled down, leaving him homeless. Life had been a struggle, but he managed to hire two maenas of land from the village headman and he lived on the produce of these, until he succeeded in ingratiating himself with a debauched spendthrift in Bengal, Sekha Dilda Ram Misra, who was jamidar of Phatepura in Orissa. Mangaraja became the jamidar's estate manager and general factotum. He began swindling his master, pretending that he had been unable to collect the rents, and thus forcing the jamidar to borrow from him in order to pay the taxes on time. Finally Mangaraja got the jamidar to sign a mortgage bond for Rs.30,000, whilst in an intoxicated stupor. He then sued for payment in the Cuttack courts and thus became jamidar of Phatepura Sarasandha.

But when rich, Mangaraja was unable to abandon the habits enforced on him by poverty. His clothes and surroundings remained filthy and lice-infested till the end
Maṅgarāja was married with three sons, all of whom were wastrels whose time was spent in attempting to satisfy their cravings for drugs and hunting-thrills. His relations with his sons were far from cordial. His wife was an exceedingly virtuous creature, who devoted her life to the selfless service of her worthless husband and to succouring the pitiful victims of his legal depredations. She nursed the sick, fed the needy, and distributed to the poor, whatever money happened to come her way. But her character lacked force. She failed to establish her authority among the womenfolk of the household. Thus life in the women's quarters was one perpetual quarrel.

Maṅgarāja's household included numerous women in addition to his wife and daughters-in-law. Some were servants, but the majority were beautiful widows who at one time or another had caught Maṅgarāja's fancy and found a niche in his home. The most important of these women was Campā. Campā had no great claim to beauty, but she was intelligent, and had managed to achieve an intimacy with Maṅgarāja and a power over his actions, that far exceeded those enjoyed by his ineffectual wife. Campā and Maṅgarāja had risen from the same dark depths and shared the same passion for property and envy of established prestige. It was a passion and envy that consumed all their energies and forged from their wits a keen-edged weapon with which to carve an empire from the surrounding country.

For three whole years Maṅgarāja had been longing to possess a little parcel of land (cha mana atha guntha) just
below the village that enjoyed all the village's waste water. It was pure joy to farm. Year in year out, come rain or drought, its unrivalled fertility guaranteed an abundant harvest to its owners, a young weaving couple Bhagia and Sari. Bhagia and Sari were a pair of innocents, who lived in a world of their own, unsullied by contact with the village. Their bliss bore but one imperfection; they were childless. Sari had a cow called Neta, on whom she lavished all the affection of her frustrated maternal instincts. The cow was to all intents and purposes a daughter to her, to whom she unburdened all her cares. But there were times, when commissioned to make a colourful garment for a child, or when invited to a sathighara (a ceremony some six days after the birth of a child), that released her suppressed yearnings and on her return home, her eyes welled with tears, and on a plea of ill-health, she retired to bed, supperless. At such times Bhagia was powerless to comfort her. All he could do was mumble something about the random gifts of providence.

Sari's yearnings did not go unobserved. One could no more spend time worshipping Ma Mangal, the local goddess, than one could go traipsing back and forth from the doctor's, without someone noticing that something was amiss. Campii was quick to grasp her opportunity. She informed Mangaraja of Sari's weakness and immediately set out to exploit it. She waylaid Sari on her way back from the tank and talked to her in seclusion. Presumably thinking Sari akin to herself, she assumed that Sari's troubles were financial. She told her that she, Campii had had a dream in which Ma Mangal had appeared to her and expressed satisfaction with Sari's devotion, intimating that Sari should build a temple in her
honour. Once one had gained the goddess's favour, one would enjoy wealth in abundance, Campā argued, and urged Sarī to do as the goddess bid. There was no need to worry about money. Maṅgarāja would be delighted to supply all that she needed. But Sarī was unmoved. Campā saw it in her face. She realised that Sarī was not interested in money and changed her tack. Money was not everything, Campā observed airily, the great thing was children. Sarī must have noticed that people avoided her first thing in the morning. It was a harsh world, but after all Sarī was barren, and barrenness was inauspicious. Once Sarī had satisfied Maṅgalā, however, she would be granted plenty of children. Sarī was tempted, but she murmured something about land mortgaged to Maṅgarāja being land lost for ever. Campā dismissed this as malicious gossip, inspired by spite and envy, with which the village was riddled. But even the prospect of children was not sufficient to induce Sarī to mortgage her land. Campā saw it and played her last dart. Failure to obey the goddess resulted in immediate widowhood, she stated. At last she had hit the bull's eye: Sarī grew alarmed and readily agreed to take Campā's advice.

Maṅgarāja rigged a ceremony at which Sarī prayed to the goddess and was granted a boon. What Sarī took for the voice of the goddess was the voice of Rāmā the washerwoman, who was concealed in a hole behind the sacred objects. The following morning children discovered the signs of the ceremony and declared that the goddess must have appeared to someone in the night. The villagers crowded round. Maṅgarāja came and pointed out the hole. It looked to him like a tigers lair, he said, and winked at Rāmā. The street cleared. Bhīmā, the oldest female villager, probably in order to
maintain her position as a walking compendium of human experience), declared that she had actually seen the goddess's mount the night before. A great tiger such as she had never set eyes on before, even in all her countless days. To establish their own subordinate claims to venerable age, other old people swore to having heard from behind hastily-closed doors the majestic march of the tiger down the centre of the street. And as an extra unsolicited favour to MaAgarfija, Rami added the finishing touch by declaring that she had seen a massive spore.

For Bhagi and Sari there could be no more doubting now. They mortgaged their property that very night and MaAgarfija immediately had it registered. At the end of the six month mortgage period, Bhagi and Sari were dispossessed of their property; their house was demolished, their furniture and effects sold, and their cow Neta added to MaAgarfija's herd; and their parcel of land, that MaAgarfija had lusted for so long, fell beneath MaAgarfija's plough.

Meanwhile MaAgarfija had been insulted by neighbouring aristocrats of the Beghasimha family, full-blooded fighting men, who for honour would spill their lives as readily as a housewife pouring away waste water. MaAgarfija seethed with impotent rage, till Camp suggested a plan of vengeance. At the time of the Smanayatra, when the menfolk were bound to be away, Camp visiting their mansion pretending to be a distant relative of a recent bride. The bride tried to look at her, but Camp immediately pulled down the girl's veil, remarking that standards of etiquette and modesty among brides these days were not as they were in her youth. Thereafter the bride became a model of decorum and saw less than a blinkered horse. Having gained a thorough knowledge of the
lay-out, Campa left, only to return at the dead of night to fire the house. Maṅgarāja was avenged.

Maṅgarāja's triumph was short-lived. Bhagirathi had gone crazy and roamed the village like a lunatic. Sūri was distracted and died in Maṅgarāja's compound, pleading for the return of her land. Maṅgarāja's wife, the pious Sāanti, finally lost all faith in her husband and with it the will to live. She died and the fate of Maṅgarāja was sealed. The authorities arrived to investigate Sūri's death. The village caukidara Gobara Jena, who hitherto had been hand in glove with Maṅgarāja, turned against him and fabricated perjured evidence, which, if accepted, would convict Maṅgarāja of murder. Maṅgarāja was arrested.

Campa followed him on the hot burning sand, as he was marched off for trial in Cuttack. "Where are you going with my master?" she wailed, continuously like a dirge. The walk earned her several burns and blisters, but also the keys to Maṅgarāja's valuables. Thus equipped, she stole them, and set off to live in luxury and sin in Cuttack with her latest lover, Govinda the barber. Thieves fall out. On a pitch-black night by the ferry, their bickering reached its head. Govinda had wanted to return to his village, to buy land and a good herd, and to live in comfort with his wife and family, as well as his mistress Campa. But Campa wanted to live in Cuttack as a lady, flattered and fawned on by the riff-raff from which she had risen. Her arrogance and effrontery were a constant slur on Govinda's manhood. She treated him little better than a lackey. Panned by her taunts, his resentment smouldered and finally burst into flame. He flung himself upon her like a leopard on a sow, slashing her to death with
his razor.

The morning sun found Govind's seated in the ferry, which was being hailed by impatient officials from the shore he had just left. "Don't go back!" he screamed. "Take me to the other side." The ferryman turned and saw for the first time in the growing light Govind's blood-drenched clothes. "What's all this blood?" he asked. "Have you killed someone?" The barber ignored the questions and pleaded to be ferried across. "Do you want me arrested?" the ferryman replied, swinging the boat back towards the shore. Assuming that the pursuit had already caught up with him, the barber leapt into the river with MaAgaraja's treasure, but his forlorn swim ended in the jaws of a crocodile.

Campa's body was discovered in a hut, whose walls were spattered with blood like those of a slaughter-house. Her feet were lopped off to free the last ornaments from her legs and, presumably so as to keep them, the bored official decided to report that the body was that of a vagrant, killed by snake-bite. The inflated corpse was then flung out onto the river, to be dragged down, as the ferryman noticed, at the very spot where the barber had been seized by the crocodile.

Meanwhile another form crocodile was approaching poor MaAgaraja: a modern lawyer, Ram Ram Lal, who compelled MaAgaraja mortgage all he had to finance his defence. The trial took place. Gobara Jena's perjured evidence broke down under cross examination and Gobara was jailed for perjury. The trial brought out the full extent of MaAgaraja's callous exploitation of tenants and debtors. The judge admitted
that Maṅgarāja was a blackguard and scoundrel, but insisted that he had the authority to try him only on those charges of which he stood accused; and that on those there was insufficient evidence to warrant conviction. Sāria's death was due to natural causes, not murder at the hands of Maṅgarāja. The only charge that could be substantiated was one of theft. Maṅgarāja had stolen the cow Neta and on this charge he was sentenced to six months hard labour and fined Rs. 500. Whilst in prison Maṅgarāja was violently assaulted by a gang of dams he had betrayed, and has his nose bitten off by the insane Bhagia. Death was certain. So the prison authorities allowed him to be released. He was taken to his palatial home, which now stood ransacked. There on a rickety bed, gurgling cha mana thā guntha, he died.

ii) Mamū

Mamū is the story of two families: a middle-class family, the Dāsas; and an aristocratic family, the Rayas. The Dāsas were karanas (writer-caste). They had served the Rayas for several generations and in reward had received a large parcel of land. Dāsarathi Dāsa, the present head of the family, had forsaken the family's traditional employment and was now in Government service in Cuttack. At first he had tried to keep up a separate bachelor establishment in town, but the expense of running two homes had been too much for him. His wife had therefore joined him, and the family was now settled in Cuttack. The arrangement had its advantages, for the education facilities were better, and his sons would need English, if they were to follow in Dāsarathi's footsteps. Dāsarathi's wife was a chronic invalid. The household was run by his wife's sister, Sarasvatī Deī, a most capable and
accomplished woman. Dāsarathi had two sons: Bānābara and Naṭabara; and a daughter, Cāndamāni. The daughter had been enchanting from birth. She was a perfect beauty and Sarasvatī Deś doted on her. An astrologer had predicted that Cāndamāni would marry well and have two handsome sons, but might suffer because of one of her brothers.

Two of Naṭabara's classmates were Rāyas: Pītāmbara Choṭārāya and Pratāpa Udita Malla Uttarārāya. The Rāya property had been divided; the Choṭārāyas now held a quarter; and the Uttarārāyas the remaining three quarters. The Uttarārāya portion was at present being administered by the Court of Wards, for Pratāpa Udita Malla was an orphan and not yet of age. One day Pītāmbara and Pratāpa Udita Malla called at Dāsarathi's home to invite Bānābara and Naṭabara to a football match. Sarasvatī Deś saw them and was particularly taken by Pratāpa Udita Malla, in whom she immediately saw a husband for her beloved Cāndamāni. Her scheming bore fruit and the couple were married. It proved to be an excellent match.

Dāsarathi's eldest son Bānābara also married. His scholastic achievements had not been such as to guarantee success in Government service. He was given charge of the family land. He was delighted and went off to the village to farm it. Dāsarathi's second son Naṭabara had shown a mean streak ever since infancy. He was intelligent, but rebellious, and perversely insistent on doing the opposite of all that was asked of him. Dāsarathi determined to marry him off, before the boy got into serious trouble. Finding a suitable bride for him was an exasperating business. Dāsarathi finally decided to marry him to the very next girl proposed, no matter
what she was like; but in the event he relented, for the next girl turned out to be the daughter of an impoverished widow, with an eighteen year old son, still unmarried. Dasarathi was reluctant to give the match a second thought, but politely listened to what the astrologer had to say about her. The astrologer predicted that the girl would somehow acquire a vast fortune, but probably remain childless. At the mention of a fortune, Natabar's ears pricked up. His father's obvious reluctance added to his inclination for the girl. He determined to marry her, no matter what her looks and background were. The marriage took place, cheaply and quietly in a remote suburb. Almost immediately Dasarathi's health declined, forcing him to retire. Dasarathi had hoped to go on working for a number of years to pay off the debts incurred by his children's weddings. His British superior was sympathetic. He arranged for Natabar to take his father's post as mājara, even though he was too young for such responsibility. Natabar interpreted this as evidence of the truth of the astrologer's prediction. He warmed towards his wife proportionately.

Meanwhile Sāmanta Pratapa Udita Malla Uttararāya was proving an ideal jamidāra. He personally supervised the running of the estate; was sympathetic towards tenants' problems, lending them money at low interest, saving them legal fees by deciding all their disputes himself, and making adequate provision for widows of good family. The tenants believed themselves to be already in rāmarājya (virtual paradise).

Dasarathi Dasa died. Natabar went to attend the śrāddha in the village. He alleged that the expense of the ceremony was so great that it had run him into debt, though the villagers had seen that Bānabar and pratapa Udita Malla had
supplied more than enough to entertain the guests. Significantly, Bisäkhã Deī, Nåtabara's wife, was presented with some expensive new jewellery by her husband. When Nåtabara was about to return to Cuttack, Bisäkhã Deī threatened suicide, unless he took her with him. She claimed that she was put upon and neglected in the village home. "Nonesense!" declared Sarasvatī Deī. "She is waited on hand and foot by Bânåbara's wife." Fearing that her suicide might blight his hopes of fortune, Nåtabara sided with his wife and took her to Cuttack. The following morning the village women had a wonderful time discussing the scandalous behaviour and repulsive appearance of Bisäkhã Deī. The girl had not only dared to open her mouth in the presence of her mother-in-law, but had even allowed it to pour forth abuse. Kaliyuga had indeed arrived!

On her arrival at her new home in Cuttack, Bisäkhã Deī is troubled by the presence of Citrakāla, who appeared to occupy the position of a servant, but looked and dressed like a lady, and behaved with Nåtabara like a second wife. Citrakāla sensed Bisäkhã Deī's hostility, but managed to gain her confidence, by shopping more economically than any of the peons. Even so, Citra's easy intimacy with Nåtabara continued to disturb Bisäkhã Deī, until Nåtabara pointed out that Citra was a rich widow, who had promised to bequeath all her property to them. This instantly endeared Citra to Bisäkhã Deī and the ménage a trois became an established, if unrecognised, fact.

The ménage soon became endangered by the intrusion of Nakaphodiâ Ma, a gossip, coiffeuse and flatterer of distinction. Citra was convinced that it was only a matter of time before Nakaphodiâ Ma ferreted out the true nature of her relationship to Nåtabara and revealed it to Bisäkhã Deī. She
determined to get rid of her, but realised the need for circumspection, otherwise her efforts to avert trouble might well precipitate it. One day when settling up after shopping, Citra spied her chance and took it. Bisakha Del remarked on the wide discrepancy between the price Citra had paid for betel-nut and the price Nakaphodia MS had claimed to have paid the previous day. "Nakaphodia MS paid the same price and pocketed the difference," Citra stated. "She's noted for it." Unfortunately for Citra, Nakaphodia MS had arrived a little earlier and was eavesdropping on their conversation. She now emerged from concealment and alleged, among other things, that Citra was Naṭabara's mistress and had been receiving money and jewellery for her favours. The battle of words soon degenerated into a battle of blows. Bisakha Del became entangled in it, and received a battering and bruising from both sides at once. Naṭabara returned to find the yard strewn with vegetables and the house dark and apparently deserted.

For Citra the situation was delicate but not unmanageable. Fortunately for her the battle of blows had occurred in the gathering gloom of evening, so the details were a little blurred. As soon as Bisakha Del had been coaxed out of hiding, Citra proceeded to piece together a plausible picture of what happened and inserted into it a prominent image of herself gallantly shielding the sacred body of her mistress from the savage blows of Nakaphodia MS. Having established this as the true pattern of events, Citra mentioned almost as an afterthought the impudence of Nakaphodia MS in asserting that Naṭabara had been buying jewellery for her, when all the world knew that the jewellery had been bought with her own money. This final remark pleased them
all:  i) Bisäkhä Dēś, because it was one of the possibilities she had thought of herself. It therefore proved her perspicacity.

ii) Naṭabara Dēśa, because it saved him from embarrassing explanations.

iii) Citrakaḷē herself, because it found such ready acceptance with the others.

Eight years later, Pratāpa Udita Malla died. His death stunned Cändamaṇi and her aunt Sarasvatī Dēś, and before either of them was sufficiently in possession of her faculties to realise what was happening, Naṭabara and Citrakaḷē had rushed on the scene with a cock-and-bull story about an intrigue by the Choṭarāyās to take possession of the estate, and got Sarasvatī Dēś to forge Cändamaṇi’s signature to a report recommending that Naṭabara be given de facto control of the estate, in order to safeguard his nephew’s inheritance. Part of the intrigue would, according to Naṭabara, be an attempt on his nephew’s life. This gave him a pretext for sealing off the palace with guards specially brought in from Cuttack. His official position enabled him to stifle any opposition and give to his action an air of legality.

The Choṭarāyas realised immediately that Naṭabara was up to no good, but assumed that since the estate must revert to the Court of Wards, until Cändamaṇi’s son Naru attained his majority, Naṭabara would be powerless to do any real harm. But for years Naṭabara had been sedulously ingratiating himself with superior, the District Collector Dawson Gaheba. He had become almost indispensable in the running of the Dawson household and was trusted implicitly by both Dawson and his wife. Thus when Naṭabara turned up, red-eyed and weeping over the death of his brother-in-law, and pleading that the
estate be placed in the care of his sister Cândamani, who was educated and competent to run it, he instantly got the support of Mrs. Dawson and finally that of Dawson himself. Pitāmbara Choṭarāya, who had been confidently predicting that the estate would revert to the Court of Wards, and who was now working as peśkara to the Collector, was therefore astounded, when later that morning he was instructed to write out the order which would give Naṭabara virtual control. From then on Naṭabara began milking the estate and plotting and scheming to get complete ownership.

Cândamani's son Naru passed the minor examination and came to Cuttack to attend College. Naṭabara accommodated him. Then Bisākha Deī pressed Naṭabara to allow her mother and brother Rāghaba to come to live with them. Naṭabara reluctantly agreed. Rāghaba shared Naru's room. They were complete opposites. Rāghaba was an absolute oaf, dazzled by the bright lights of Cuttack and the splendours of Naṭabara's home, and bewildered, yet delighted, by his sudden elevation to the status of bābu. Naru was a born aristocrat, fastidious in his tastes and sensitive in disposition. The intrusion of this uncouth lout into his measured routine of study and sleep was almost last straw. The last straw came when Rāghaba fell in with prabhu Dayāl, a young rake, whose prodigality had dissipated an entire fortune and landed him in penury. Prabhu introduced Rāghaba to the less wholesome pleasures of Cuttack; dance-shows, drinking and late-night dinners; and induced him to steal from Naṭabara to finance their revelry. Thus while Naṭabara was amassing money to finance his final coup on the estate, prabhu was debauphging Rāghaba and using him as an instrument for robbing Naṭabara. Naṭabara was just on the verge of triumph, when prabhu, Rāghaba and Citra (an ex-mistress of prabhu's more monied
days) landed him in jail on an embezzlement charge.

Thanks to Rāghaba, prabhu Dayāl had acquired keys to Naṭabara's safe. On the eve of the Easter Holidays, three peons arrived at Naṭabara's office with Rs. 5,000 road cess money. It was too late to pay the money into the treasury, so Naṭabara had to bring it home. He was seen placing it in safe by Citra. Prabhu rigged a sale, whereby Rāghaba "bought" a derelict bungalow in a remote suburb as a permanent location for their debauchery; and to raise the money he got Rāghaba to steal the five thousand rupees. On the Tuesday after Easter, Naṭabara was arrested for embezzlement, when he failed to deposit the road cess money in the treasury. Naṭabara pleaded not guilty. As there were no signs of forced entry, the police decided that the robbery must have been an inside job. They tracked down Rāghaba, drunk and unconscious, in the derelict bungalow. Under duress he confessed. He and Citra were arrested. prabhu had meanwhile made a successful getaway and was not heard of again.

Meanwhile Naṭabara was remanded in custody. He had ample time to reflect and repented for his misdeeds. people were surprised by his dignity and composure when he was committed for trial. At the trial he confessed to all his misdeeds. The judge dismissed the confession as irrelevant to the charge of which he stood accused and to which he had pleaded not guilty. He acquitted Naṭabara of implication in the robbery, but found him guilty of culpable negligence and ordered him to make restitution. Rāghaba and Citra were both found guilty, but the judge was lenient with Rāghaba, sentencing him to only one year's hard labour, for it was obvious that he was of subnormal intelligence and therefore
of diminished responsibility. Citra he sentenced to five years' hard labour, describing her as an "intelligent, evil, common prostitute", who had seduced Naṭabara and enabled the other two to commit the crime by supplying them with information.

iii) prāyaścitta.

Prāyaścitta is the story of two families: the paṭṭanāyaka Vidyādhara Mahāpātra of Candanapura; and the Mahāntis of Samasarapura. Vaishnava-carana pattanāyaka Vidyādhara Mahāpātra was the jamidāra of Candanapura. He was the hereditary head of the śrī-karaṇa community and was extremely jealous of his position. Saṅkaraṇa Mahānti was jamidāra of Samasarapura. Unlike Vaishnava-carana, he had acquired his jamidāra not by aristocratic birth, but by innate ability. He had made his fortune by contracting in Calcutta, and with part of it bought the jamidāra of Samasarapura.

But the social advantages that came with birth could never be attained by ability. Saṅkaraṇa Mahānti had had the misfortune of being born into what was known as the golaṁa Mahānti sub-caste of the karaṇas. As such, he was socially inferior to Vaishnava-carana. It became his ambition to attain equality of status. Saṅkaraṇa Mahānti's easy generosity soon attracted admirers in the śrī-karaṇa community who sympathised with his social aspirations and were prepared to advocate his case. But when one of them asked Vaishnava-carana what objection there was to intimate association with Saṅkaraṇa Mahānti, Vaishnava-carana replied that as a leading member of the śrī-karaṇa community his questioner must obviously know that their community could never dine with a golaṁa Mahānti.
Vaiśṇava-carana's reply was offensive, for his mention of the title Gōlāma Mahānti was calculated to resurrect the memory of a shameful incident in that sub-caste, when for money they had accepted an inferior as an equal and thus degraded the lot of them. Vaiśṇava-carana had intended to be offensive. The constant praise of Saṅkarṣaṇa Mahānti that he was subjected to these days piqued him. In his view, he alone, as head of the community, was entitled to praise and adulation, not this little upstart Saṅkarṣaṇa Mahānti. Saṅkarṣaṇa was stung by this reply, and bent on vengeance he sought every opportunity of humbling Vaiśṇava-carana. Since the two jamidāras were neighbours and their estates largely contiguous, he had not far to seek. Opportunities for litigation were sprouting like weeds; there were enough to keep the courts busy for eternity; and Saṅkarṣaṇa was determined that they should be.

Vaiśṇava-carana had an only son Govinda-candra, who was named after the family deity. He was the apple of his parents' eyes. One day on a visit to Cuttack, Vaiśṇava-carana was persuaded by an acquaintance to educate his son in English, as otherwise the boy was unlikely to gain a hearing in Government circles later. Accordingly, Govinda-candra and Sadānanda, an orphan fostered by Vaiśṇava-carana, were installed in a house in Cuttack and enrolled at the Mission School.

Some ten years later Govinda-candra and Sadānanda were still studying in Cuttack. Govinda was now 19 and Sadānanda 22. Govinda was of a poetic temperament. His verses had earned him praise and respect in the Alocanā sabhā, (the students' union). As luck would have it, Rajiba-locana, the self-styled nephew of Saṅkarṣaṇa Mahānti, was also a member of
the union. He was infected with the family feud and in order
to belittle Govinda he once remarked that though Govinda's
verses were good, they lacked the vigour and refined diction
of "our Indu's". This fortuitous remark had momentous con-
sequences. It turned out that "Indu" was a girl. Rather than
be put out by being assigned second place to a girl, Govinda
felt strangely drawn to the unknown poetess. The attraction
did not escape notice. Rajiba-locana and Sadananda strength-
ened it by by sedulously adding judicious, though apparently
fortuitous, touches, to their portrait of this female pro-
digy, Indumati, only daughter of Sankarsana Mahanti.

By the end of term Govinda was wan with love. His mother
noticed the decline in his health and appetite. She closely
questioned Sadananda and Saita, their servant, but received
no satisfactory explanation. She concluded that early mar-
riage might provide a cure and arranged brides for both
Govinda and Sadananda. Sadananda was appalled at the pro-
spect. He had been intriguing with Rajiba-locana to bring
off a marriage between Govinda and Indumati. If successful,
their intrigue promised to be lucrative, for Sankarsana
was open-handed, when pleased. On a plea of completing their
studies before marriage, he and Govinda managed to postpone
the planned double wedding and return to Cuttack.

Sankarsana was now au fait with the possibility of a
marriage between his daughter and Govinda, and gave Rajiba-
locana and Sadananda his full financial support. Rajiba-
locana set himself up in a luxurious establishment and be-
gan entertaining Govinda and Sadananda to lavish dinners.
These dinners were blessed with after-dinner speakers in
the best British tradition. The speakers were commissioned
to speak on topics specially selected by Rajiba-locana, who
was thus able to use them as an instrument of propaganda to mould the attitudes and opinions of Govinda in the desired direction, marrying Indumati. Even so, Govinda was reluctant to defy his father and caste elders, who were bound to condemn such a marriage. Sadananda needed all his eloquence to persuade him.

The marriage was arranged with great secrecy. Sadananda contrived to stay in Cuttack when it took place so that no one would suspect his part in the affair. The moment the wedding ceremony was concluded, fireworks burst upon the air with such resounding reverbration that the people of neighbouring Candanapura concluded that there had been an earthquake, but the news of the wedding that arrived at dawn the following day was much more devastating. Govinda's mother took to her bed and never rose again; Vaishnava-caranā's pride was crushed; the litigations ceased; and a defeated air descended upon the Sri-karanas of Candanapura.

But all was not well for Sāṅkarṣāṇa Mahānti. The wedding had been a nervous strain and the weeks that lay ahead were fraught with anxiety. Govinda was his son-in-law, but for how long? Once the boy returned to Candanapura, the marriage would be dead. As the term neared an end, Sāṅkarṣāṇa's anxiety grew. Govinda's mother lay dying. She sent for her son. Sadananda persuaded Govinda that the message was a trick to lure him back to Candanapura. Then from Indumati came a poem that ached and sobbed for Govinda's return. Govinda was ecstatic and set out for Samasara-pura.

The river was in full spate. The sky brooded dark and thundery. For his whole retinue a crossing was impossible. Govinda and Sāti crossed alone. Once across, Govinda
ordered Saita to await the palanquin and to follow on at dawn, promising to join him in front of the palace, when he arrived. Then with his head full of visions of a midnight tryst with his beloved, Govinda set off along the forest path. The rains had begun. What path there had been was obliterated beneath the undergrowth. Thorns snatched at his fine clothes, reducing them to shreds. Mud sucked at his shoes and seeped into them. He squelched forward, picking his way by lightning flashes, whilst love's vision flickered warmly in his mind.

Meanwhile Indumati and her companion Marua were settling down for the night. There had been a series of daring robberies in the district. Their nerves were on edge. There was a tap on the shutters. They started. The taps grew insistent. They raised the alarm. Pandemonium broke out. Servants, maids and guards flew about in confusion. A lightning flash illumined Govinda. He bolted, was run to earth, pounded into senselessness, dragged to a cell, bound and left there till morning.

Saita arrived, heard of the raid, went to see the captured bandit, discovered his identity and tended his wounds. Consternation shot through the palace. Sankarsana Mahanti was dumbfounded. Indumati fainted. Only Rajiba-locana kept his head. He advised his uncle to plead ignorance of what had happened and to leave Saita to remove his master to Cuttack on his own initiative. Meanwhile Rajiba-locana put it about that Govinda had been responsible for the recent robberies.

Indumati brooded. The poem sent to Govinda had been a fake. It had been composed by Rajiba-locana and Sadananda
with the express purpose of luring Govinda to Samasarapura. She had refused to sign it, for the wording had made her blush, and in any case to sign it would be to lie and thus to sin. Sāṅkaraṇa had ordered her to sign. Duty towards her beloved father had striven in her mind with her duty to truth. Finally, resolving to tell Govinda of the true authorship of the poem the moment he arrived, she had signed. She had sinned. Her husband had suffered. Remorse and anguish consumed her. At the dead of night she crept down the river stairs into the gurgling embrace of death.

Her suicide brought Vaiṣṇava-caraṇa and Sāṅkaraṇa Mahānti to their senses. Remorse weighed heavily on them both and to expiate their sins they placed all their property in trust to the family deity and departed on pilgrimage. Meanwhile in Cuttack hospital Govinda slowly recovered his physical health and with it his religious faith also. Remorse at the death of his mother and the suicide of his wife weighed heavily upon him. He too disposed of what valuables he had with him and departed on pilgrimage. The paths of pilgrimage converged on Vṛndāvana. Father, father-in-law, son and servant (Saita) came together once more.

Vaiṣṇava-caraṇa and Sāṅkaraṇa Mahānti were the first to meet. Both had become sannyāsīs. Vaiṣṇava-caraṇa pointed out to Sāṅkaraṇa the idleness of remorse. It was vain to claim I did this or he did that. All acts proceeded from God. It was equally vain to describe events as good or bad. Who was to judge? One described Indumati’s death as bad, yet it was this very event that had freed them both from worldliness. They both resolved to dedicate the remainder of their lives to meditation in Vṛndāvana. But when Govinda arrived, they
commanded him to return to manage their estates. He was still young. There were two forms of dharma: worship and service. By worship Govinda would undoubtedly benefit his soul, but his youth and gifts would be wasted. These should be dedicated to the service of man, for all men were the children of God. Thus service of man was worship of God.

Govinda and Saita therefore returned to manage the joint estates. They were joined by Marua, Indumati's companion. All three were burdened with guilt. They each remained celibate and dedicated their lives to the estate, receiving only a small honorarium for their services. The remainder of the income from the estate was spent on the health, education and religious instruction of their tenants.

iv) Lalchema

The story is set in the 1740s, when Marathas and Moghuls were battling for control of Orissa. Lalchema and her warrior husband, Badal Simha, were childless and were travelling to Puri with their parents in the hope of obtaining a son, when suddenly at a place called Godikhaia their caravan was set upon by a party of Maratha brigands. Their fathers were murdered, their mothers lost, their goods and chattels stolen and they themselves separated.

Lalchema found refuge in Raybani, a fortress on the Bengal/Orissa border, commanded by Manadhatma Samaanta, a loyal servant of the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Alibardi Khan. Manadhatma and his dutiful wife Mahadevi were also childless. They were charmed by Lalchema and secretly resolved that, should Badal Simha return, they would adopt Lalchema and bequeath to them the fortress.
But fate decreed otherwise. Bhaskara pandita, the Maratha commander, sent a learned emissary to Manadhata, seeking to bind him by treaty to the Maratha cause. This learned emissary, Siusaṅkara Mālabīra, claimed that Śivājī had been Kalkī Avatāra of Viṣṇu, descended to destroy the wicked Yabanas and re-establish sanātana Hindu Dharma. It was therefore Manadhata’s sacred duty to unite with his co-religionists, the Marathas, against the Yabana, Ālibardi Khān. Manadhata’s court pandita, Vanamāli Vācaspati, refuted Siusaṅkara’s arguments, pointing out that if there was any enemy of Hinduism in Orissa, it was not Ālibardi Khān, but Bhaskara pandita, who had so recently butchered a party of pilgrims at Godikhalā.

Meanwhile Ālibardi Khān felt himself obliged to enter Orissa on a punitive expedition against Bhaskara pandita. He set forth from Murshidabad in great pomp with a vast army, lavishly equipped and supplied, and preceded by an advance party, whose duty it was to repair roads and bridges to facilitate their progress and to prepare camping sites to administer to their comfort. This unwieldy cavalcade of cardboard splendour was rapidly cut to shreds by Bhaskara pandita’s rough-riding cavalry, whose harassments soon dispirited Ālibardi’s troops and set them on the verge of mutiny and defection. Indeed one of Ālibardi’s generals, Mīr Habīb, a low-born Persian of the Sunni sect, did defect with his entire command to the Maratha side. Ālibardi’s life and fortunes were saved by a valiant Hindu, who suddenly appeared from nowhere, killed his assailants, and led a successful counterattack on the Marathas. The Hindu was none other than Bādal Śimha.
Meanwhile the fortress at Raybahana was about to be overrun by the Marathas. Lachamā was escorted to safety. Manadhātā was severely wounded and captured. Rather than fall into Maratha hands, Mahādevī and her attendants drowned themselves. On recovering from his wounds, Manadhātā stood trial before the Marathas on a charge of treason. He fearlessly denied the charge, claiming to be a loyal servant of the true overlord of Orissa, Alibardi Khan. Though offered clemency, provided he respectfully craved the pardon of Bhāskara pandita, Manadhātā manfully refused to humble himself before what he considered a child-butcher and brigand, and was executed.

One night Lachamā dreamed that she was united with her husband. She there and then solemnly vowed to seek him out and also to avenge her father’s death. Disguised as a betel-seller, she followed the Marathas into Bengal, constantly on the look-out for an opportunity to kill Bhāskara pandita.

Meanwhile Alibardi Khan was again in difficulties. Balaji Rao Hulkar was ransacking Bihar to raise his cautha; the Badar of Delhi was demanding his arrears in revenue; and Bhāskara pandita was once more threatening war. Alibardi decided to buy off Bhāskara pandita, but was dissuaded from doing so by Bādal Simha, who urged him to assassinate the Maratha. Alibardi reluctantly consented to Bādal's plan.

Bhāskara pandita was invited to the village of Manakara, a desolate spot midway between the Nawab’s capital, Murshidabad, and the Maratha stronghold, Katoya. Despite precautions Bhāskara pandita fell into the trap and was stabbed to death as he entered the Nawab’s tent, not only by Bādal Simha, but also by Lachamā, who had managed to attend the meeting in the guise of a Maratha groom.
Badal Simha left for Gaya to perform his father's śrāddha, before lachamā had the chance to disclose her identity to him. By chance, however, she also decided to go to Gaya for her father's śrāddha, and whilst offering pinda on the banks of sacred river, husband and wife met. The rest of their lives were spent in administering the estate and fortress at Raybania, granted them by the grateful Nawab.
CHAPTER II.

People, plots and settings.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to indicate the way in which Phakirmohana's characters, plots and settings are interrelated.

1) People and plots.

Despite incidental differences of class, occupation and background, Phakirmohana's early* (i.e. pre-June 1913) prose-fiction exhibits only two sets of character, good and bad. These sets are distinguished only by sex. His good male characters such as Syamabandhu Mahanti in Rebati (Oct. 1898) are generally fond of pauranika literature, religious, honest and reliable; his good female characters such as the smantini in Cha Mana Atha Guntha (Oct. 1897) are dedicated to their husbands, modest in deportment, patient and tolerant, and generous to the poor, the sick and the needy. His bad male characters such as Mangaraja in Cha Mana Atha Guntha are generally hypocritical, cunning and deceitful; mean, avaricious and bad-tempered; unfaithful to their wives, disloyal to their employers, and disobedient to their parents. And his bad female characters such as Campi in Cha Mana Atha Guntha are generally lazy, vain, greedy, disrespectful, immodest and sometimes promiscuous. In short, the central characters in Phakirmohana's early fiction are stereotypes of good and bad people in earlier, and contemporary, Orissan society.

* These dates in brackets refer to the earliest known dates of publication as set out in the appendix of Natabara Sama- ta Ray's Vyasa-kavi Phakirmohana.
This use of stereotyped central characters does not presuppose, on Phakirmohana's part, a lack of interest in, or understanding of, human psychology. Being primarily a moralist, however, Phakirmohana concentrated his attention on the problem of good and evil in Orissan society. It was this concentration upon a single problem, which drove Phakirmohana to endow his central characters with the limited range of good or bad characteristics possessed by either the virtuous or the vicious in his society; so that he might demonstrate how, in his opinion, a man's personality is formed; and the role played by social class and cultural, economic and political circumstances in furthering either the development or the suppression of good and bad traits. Thus, in effect, when one views Phakirmohana's fiction as a whole, one sees only one character, man, and only one plot, the formation of his character for good or ill.

As early as 1897 Phakirmohana wrote,

"... though all men are basically the same, not two men in ten million are physically identical; and just as men's bodies differ, their minds also differ. Some men have strong propensities, others weak, whilst the propensities of still others may lie dormant. At some particular time a turn of events may awaken these dormant propensities. Who would have thought that those drunken reprobates, Jagai and Madhai could have become devout Vaisnavas? Or that that tyrannical enemy of Christ, Saul, would now be worthy of a seat amongst the most venerable of seers? On the other hand, the
asceticism of that royal seer, Visvamitra, son of Gādhi, that had endured for thousands upon thousands of eons, and his even greater steadfastness in Brahma, tottered at a single glance from the beauteous Menaka... the cause of all these sudden changes was a particular circumstance or meeting

..." (1)

The basic plot of almost all phakīrmohana’s prose-fiction is inherent in that quotation. The plot is: there was once a person whose way of life was wrong/right; one day he was caused to suffer for this; and, provided he survived, his way of life changed.

Some of phakīrmohana’s stories are so rudimentary that the plot is not fully exploited; for example, Maunāmaunī (June 1907), Bālesvārī Rāhajānt (July 1907), and Kamalā prasada Gorapa (May 1913) end with the suffering of the central characters, who are arrested and imprisoned by the police. In other stories the central character does not survive: Mangarāja has his nose bitten off by Bhagā, whose land he had taken, and dies of internal bleeding after a savage attack by the damas he had betrayed; Campa is murdered by her barber-lover, whom she treated as an inferior and with whom she refused to share her spoils; Dhuliś Babā (Feb. 1913) burns to death in his own sacrificial fire; Bhāskara pandita, the villain in Lachamā (June 1901), is stabbed to death by Bādal Simha and Lachamā, the young couple whose family he had plundered; and Madha Mahānti, the avaricious father in Madha

(1) Cha Mana Ṇaṭha Guntha, pp. 278-279; quoted earlier in this thesis, p... 130.
Mahanti Kanya Suna (Oct. 1915), dies as a result of his greed. But many other central characters do survive and their lives are transmuted: Candramaṇi paṭṭanaṇava, the drug-addict and drunkard in patent Medicine (Sept. 1913), is transformed into a model husband under the battering blows of his wife's broomstick; Nimā, the arrogant and indolent bride in Suna Bohu (June 1913), is humiliated into becoming an ideal housewife by her sister-in-law, Campā; Naṭabara Dāsā in Māmā (1913) is brought to repentance by imprisonment and for a while enjoys renewed faith in God, before the enormity of his sins drives him beyond remorse and into insanity; and Govinda in prāyaścitta (Sept. 1915) is transformed by a savage beating and the suicide of his wife from being a headstrong romantic who tramples on his parents' wishes to becoming a dedicated servant of society.

In all the cases so far mentioned the way of life of the central character was initially wrong; i.e. he had been, not a hero, but an anti-hero; and finally his waywardness had brought him suffering, which transformed him into a hero. This is the most frequent direction of the personality change recorded in Phakṭirmohana's fiction, but the possibility of change in the opposite direction was not excluded from the formula of Phakṭirmohana's basic plot. Gopāla Sinha in Dēka-Munṣi (Sept. 1912) is an instance of change in the opposite direction. At the outset of the story he was presumably a dutiful son, but as a result of his education he acquired a higher station in life than that of his father. In consequence, he began mixing with a more sophisticated, westernised class of people. In the company of his new friends, he was occasioned acute embarrassment by his father's old-fashioned dress and ignorance of European etiquette. His suffer-
ings on this account grew so intense, that he finally drove his father from the house. Similarly Bhagia, a quiet inoffensive weaver, is driven vicious and insane by Mangaraja's trickery and eventually assaults him violently.

Thus in its final developed form, phakirmohana's plot is the literary equivalent of the psychological process known as conditioning, whereby behaviour patterns imposed or re-moulded. The beating of the drug-addict in patent Medicine, for example, is a violent and crude form of aversion therapy, whereby the addiction becomes associated with unpleasant experiences and is consequently relinquished. Not all phakirmohana's plots conform to this basic pattern, but even when they deviate, the conditioning process remains inherent in them. BiBri BiSala (Oct. 1913) and Sabhya Jamidara (March 1914), for example, each contain two stories and plots. The second story and plot of BiBri BiSala conforms to the basic pattern and was later developed into Madha Mahantiaka Kanya Suna. The first part of BiBri BiSala demonstrates how BiBri was conditioned into becoming a good farmer by being set to work early and his cousin into becoming a wastrel by parental indulgence. Sabhya Jamidara points out the same lesson in two separate stories: the first shows how an orphan became a businessman by imitating his master; and the second how the businessman's son became a wastrel by being born rich and given a western education.

ii) Characters and Settings, real and ideal.

phakirmohana's early fiction takes the reader into the 'assumptive world' * of his childhood. prior to june 1913, * 'assumptive world' is a term used in American psychiatry to denote the totality of a persons assumptions and expectations about the behaviour of people both towards each other continued on next page ...
Phakirmohana's virtuous characters corresponded in almost every particular to the virtuous people in his life, especially the female characters. These had been embodiments of the traditional virtues of obedience to, and service of, their husbands; of meekness and unobtrusiveness in almost all other situations; and of charity to the poor, the sick and the needy. All these characters had probably been modelled upon the two really virtuous people he had known in life, his grandmother Kucilā Deī and his second wife Kṛṣṇa Kumārī.

Even in 1913 virtuous characters of this type were still appearing in his fiction. The similarity between these two extracts, for example, is obvious,

a)

"She was of a calm disposition and simple nature. Her conversation was calm and gentle. She was never heard to raise her voice. There were a number of quarrelsome widows living in the village at that time. Whenever they started quarrelling, my grandmother retired to her room. My aunt and her daughter-in-law were somewhat sharp-tongued and overbearing. When either of them started shouting abuse, my grandmother withdrew..."

b)

"Bimalā Deī was always upset by quarrels. She was afraid of arguments and invariably fled from them.

continued from previous page

If a quarrel started in the street, she locked the door."

The first is taken from Phakirmohana's autobiography, *Atma Jibana Carita*, and the second is from his short story *Suna Bohu*.

The setting too of Phakirmohana's early fiction was contemporary, or past, life in Orissa, as experienced by Phakirmohana, either in actuality or in imagination. The gloom of his childhood pervades his early novels and stories. Around the virtuous characters in his fiction, as around the virtuous Kucila Dei in his life, lingers the same aura of ineffectual goodness. Blind fate seems to hover and brood over the pitiless world that they inhabit. Landlords, lawyers, shopkeepers and even washermen hang like vultures over the wreck of human happiness, ready to swoop and enjoy the pickings. Here, for example, is Hari SS in *Rebatī* relentlessly squeezing a profit out of Rebatī's grandmother,

"She (Rebatī) was asking for water. She had not touched any for six days. She will be up and about soon, when she has some food inside her, the old woman thought, and went to look for food. She hunted high and low, but there was none in the house. She sat down and thought for a bit. Then she picked up a battered old pot and set out for Hari SS's shop... The moment he saw her, Hari knew what she was after, but he waited till she told him, before he took the pot, scrutinised it and then informed her that he had sold out of rice and that in any case the pot was worthless."
He had not sold out, of course, and he had every intention of keeping the pot in exchange for rice; but the point was, how little would she accept? The old woman was at a loss. She did not know what to do. The girl had only just recovered from fever, what was she to give her? She sat there thinking. The sun had set. She cast a couple of glances at Hari. 'I'd better see how she is,' she thought and prepared to go. 'Alright, give me the pot,' Hari said, 'I'll see what I can do.' He gave her four maunds of rice, half a maund of dāla and some salt in exchange for the pot. After stopping to rest five or six times, the old woman finally arrived home."

And even the washerman, who is at least willing to help, keeps his weather-eye open for possible pickings.

"But old woman Cholera was no stranger to the village washerman, Bana Sethī. Some day or other she was bound to pop you in her basket, and ten to one you'll leave your washing unclaimed at the laundry. So Old Man Sethī bound up his loins in a towel and shouldered his axe," before going off to lend a hand with the cremation of Jyāma-bandhu Mahānti.

Robbed by death of the affection of his parents and the love of his adored second wife, (whose company he had never been able to enjoy for long, because of prolonged absences in the Gadajata Mahāla), phakīrmohana had been subconsciously
schooled to assume that domestic happiness was a mere bubble, whose very fragility was at once the source of its enchantment and the guarantee that only tragedy could result from it. The tenacity of this assumption can be seen in Phakirmohana’s early fiction, prior to June 1913 (and sometimes even afterwards) whenever Phakirmohana set out to describe domestic bliss, Death cast its shadow across his page. The happy marriages of almost all the virtuous couples in his early fiction, such as Bhagia and Saria in Cha Mana Atha Guntha (Oct. 1897), Manadhatu Samanta and Mahadevi in Lachama (June 1901), Pratapa Udita Malla and Cendamani in Mamt (1913) and even Sapna and Cem in Bagula Baguli (Apr. 1914) are destroyed by the premature death of one or both of the partners. (1)

Two external agencies of vengeance from Phakirmohana’s ‘assumptive world’ are introduced into his early fiction, dharma (justice) and the police. These ensure that even though the virtuous suffer and die, the vicious also suffer. Even so, the outlook of Phakirmohana’s ‘assumptive world’ was bleak and he must have realised that to continue to communicate it to others through his fiction could only perpetuate in Orissan society a sense of futility and powerlessness in the face of evil and oppression. Undoubtedly, at the root of Phakirmohana’s ‘assumptive world’ was his grandmother Kucile Devi, whose response to evil was almost invariably to withdraw neurotically into herself, comforting herself perhaps with the consolation offered by the puranas that ‘virtue will triumph, and vice be vanquished’ (Pharmara jaya, adharmara parajaya). Up till June 1913 this remained the only consolation Phakirmohana could offer his readers.

It may have been by pondering upon the behaviour of
Kucila Dei in his childhood and upon his own subsequent behaviour in the Gañajatas that phakîrmohana came to write Suna Bohu in June 1913. If so, then by that date phakîrmohana had clearly realised that his first marriage need not have been a failure. Like phakîrmohana’s first wife, Ifalbatî Devi, Nimâ in Suna Bohu was “naturally bad-tempered”. Like Nimâ, Ifalbatî devi had probably been badly brought up. Nimâ had been encouraged by her mother to think that she would become the mistress of her husband’s home. Consequently, she regarded her mother-in-law Bimâ Dei and her sister-in-law Campâ almost as servants living on the bounty of her husband and herself, and treated them accordingly. In a young bride such overbearing self-importance plainly needed curbing. In the story Nim’s is curbed; in real life Ifalbatî devi’s could also have been curbed, if only Kucila Dei had had the strength of character to assert her authority.

This thought (if only Kucila Dei had had the strength of character to assert her authority) opened a whole range of fascinating possibilities. Would Mangarâja have been such an unmitigated scoundrel, if the sãmanta had had the courage to defy him and drive his mistress Campâ from the house? Would Campâ’s wiles have succeeded, if Sûri had not been so gullible? Why was Sûri so gullible? Because she was so well-behaved; because well-behaved young ladies do not talk to people in public; because in fact they scarcely talk to anyone except their husbands. By not talking to people, they deprive themselves of the opportunity of becoming adequate judges of their fellow men and adequate managers of human situations. Deprived of such opportunities, the shy, inarticulate Sûri was easily duped by the wily Campâ. Supposing,
however, that Sāriā had had a friend to counsel her; a woman, whom early widowhood had forced to fend for herself, and who had thus learnt how to handle others and protect her own interests, would Sāriā then have fallen such an easy victim to Campā's wiles? Or might she not have resisted and perhaps even averted the loss of her cha māṇa sātha guntha of land and the tragic fate of Bhagiā and herself?

Campā, the daughter-in-law in Sunā Bohu, possesses just such a widow friend to counsel her, as Sāriā might have had. This widow Anī Mī is something of a reformed rogue and it is as a result of her scheming that Nimā's arrogance is curbed. Phakīrmohana writes of Anī Mī,

"Anī Mī had been really quarrelsome in her time, but she had always been quick to make friends and do people a service. When quick wits were called for, she could devise underhand schemes with the best of them. It is small wonder that villagers sought her advice when they were in trouble, even though she was only a poor little widow."

Phakīrmohana's life had not been one of unblemished virtue. During his early manhood in Balasore he had been led astray by his companions and during his career in the gada-jātas he had, on occasion for the sake of expediency, had to tell something less than the truth. (2) This side of his

(1) Sunā Bohu, p.569.
(2) On 26th Oct. 1892, soon after the publication of Utkala Bhramanam, a writer using the pseudonym Sri Sri Bhenkāta Nāidu pantalegāru gave the following unflattering portrait of Phakīrmohana:

"As treacherous conspirator and rebel, He stands unrivalled in rogues' gallery. In all manner of mischief, from the ruin of kingdoms To the fall of houses, he is well qualified. No such brilliant forger ever met arrest."

continued on next page....
nature had hitherto found expression in villains such as Maṅgarāja and Cāmpā in Cha Māna Āṭha Čuṇtha and Nāṭabara Dāsa and Cītrakalā in Māmā, but from June 1913 it was to find expression in such reformed rogues as Anī Ālī, whose successors, as, for example, Padī in Mādha Māhāntīṅka Kanyā Čunā (Oct. 1915) and Suṅkī in Gṛudi Mantra (Nov. 1916), have all the intelligence and cunning of Cāmpā and Cītrakalā; they are virtuous women who are prepared to use trickery for a good purpose.

Thus from June 1913 onwards there is a change in the character of Phākīrmohana's virtuous heroines: they begin more and more to stock virtue's armoury with the weapons of vice. Simhānlī in Rāndi pūra Anantā (July 1913) is more feared and respected than Cāmpā in Cha Māna Āṭha Čuṇtha; Suṅcānlī in Patent Medicine (Sept. 1913) abuses and beats her husband; and Kamalī in Bīrei Bīsālā (Oct. 1913) steals from her father. The behaviour of these heroines is a complete reversal of that of Phākīrmohana's earlier pattern of virtue. Rather than quarrel Bimaṇī retired to her room: Simhānlī leaps from her house like a lioness when the schoolmaster comes storming abuse at her son. Rebatī had dared only once (at their final parting) to gaze into the eyes of her beloved Vāsudeva; Kamalī deliberately pours away water in order to have a pretext for casting side-glances at Bīrei as he comes striding in from the fields. The sāntānī had never passed

Continued from previous page

His smooth tongue is peerless in persuasion. In verbal gins he ensnares the world...

a word of censure on her husband Maṅgarāja. Sulocana was constantly ready with a word of abuse to check her husband Candramaṇi. Viewed from the standpoint of tradition, the behaviour of this new class of heroine is scandalous. Sulocana's behaviour is so odd that even the servant is struck by it,

"The brahmin cook went off with a smile. 'She's an odd creature, my mistress,' he thought, 'she has the utmost reverence for the master. When he's off colour, she can't do enough for him. But when her temper's up, she'll hit him with whatever happens to be handiest, a stick, the broom, anything. Yet, for all that, the mistress is a good woman, of good family, and a very good wife. Her heart is definitely in the right place. But she's inclined to be quick-tempered and sharp-tongued." (1)

And the behaviour of Kamalī is so at variance with conventional morality that when she is suspected of being pregnant on her wedding day, one is not in the least surprised. Hers has been the type of behaviour that courts such consequences. The surprise comes, when one learns that the abdominal swelling is not due to pregnancy, but is a money bag she has stolen from her father. Thus in Phakīrmohana's later (i.e. post-June 1913) fiction the line between virtue and vice begins to blur and this blurring produces characters who are neither completely good, nor completely bad, but a

(1) Patent Medicine, p. 512
combination of the two. These characters present more vivid approximations to reality than their predecessors and are thus not flat and uninteresting, but rounded and capable of contributing surprises to the development of the plot.

The emergence of this new set of round characters was probably due to two factors: one, the exigencies of Phakirmohana's more developed plot, which required some reforming agency; and two, a deeper understanding of the nature of virtue. By June 1913 Phakirmohana was beginning to realise that there was no such thing as absolute virtue. Virtue, like personality, was dependent on circumstances. What was a virtue in one circumstance could be a vice in another. The proof that he had finally reached this conclusion came in June 1915 with the publication of Pathor Bohu. Pathor Bohu was the embodiment of all the traditional virtues. She was a good, well-behaved housewife, but her reticence, her unwillingness to utter one word of criticism about her husband, had tragic-comic consequences. She suspected that he was being unfaithful to her and yet dared not mention the fact, even when asked by a solicitous neighbour why she was brooding. Had she been less "perfect", she would have voiced her suspicions there and then and thus gained relief from the mounting tension which her solitary brooding generated within her. But she was "perfect" and so her tension continued to mount, till it resulted in a violent outburst, which could easily have been the death of her, and which, even so, probably disfigured her for life.

This change in the nature of Phakirmohana's heroines, necessitated by his more developed plot and facilitated by his deeper understanding of virtue, required a concomitant change in his anti-heros and anti-heroines. Since his new class of
heroines were acquiring more and more of the characteristics of anti-heroines such as Campã and Citrakala, this latter type of evil female character disappeared after June 1913. Since personality and virtue were seen to be dependent on circumstances, the social circumstances and settings of his central characters became crucial. Phakirmohana realised that people of middle-class background who had enjoyed religious instruction in childhood were in the long run less likely to become vicious than either the extremely poor or the extremely rich, all of whom tended to exaggerate the importance of wealth. Consequently, the majority of the central characters in his later fiction are of middle- or upper-middle-class origins. Furthermore, since a man's total environment (the educational, cultural, economic, political and legal systems of his society) constitutes such a potent force in moulding his personality, there is a tendency in Phakirmohana's later fiction for the real conditions of 19th century Orissan society to be gradually replaced by the ideal conditions of Phakirmohana's utopia, as will be seen in later chapters.

The following three chapters will be devoted to a discussion of three of Phakirmohana's main themes, local history, education and justice.
CHAPTER III.

The Theme of Local History: Orissa both before and during British rule.

i) The pre-British period.

Much of Phakirmohana's prose is concerned with the history of either Orissa as a whole or Balasore in particular. Kalika Prasada Gorapa (Aug. 1913) describes Balasore's maritime trade in the pre-British period. Several ships have been mysteriously lost at sea. Various theories have been advanced to account for their loss, but none is entirely satisfactory. Then one day the mate of one of the missing ships returns to Balasore and a meeting is called so that the shipowners may hear his report. The survivor narrates the attack of his ship by Portuguese pirates.

"Their appearance petrified us with terror. Massive fellows, with proportionately heavy shoulders, as strong as oxen, and ruddy-complexioned like Europeans (phirigis). Their clothes and hats were European-looking too; and their eyes beady and red. Their breath stank of drink... and they loped about our decks, brandishing cutlasses, whilst from their hips dangled scabbards and carbines... We were being trussed together in pairs, when our Captain made to protest. One slash of one of these devils' cutlasses sent his head shooting in the air to land several feet away, leaving his body to collapse into a writhing, twitching mass upon the deck." (1)

(1) Kalika Prasada Gorapa, p. 618.
In view of the danger from Portuguese pirates, the shipowners decided to restrict shipping to the Calcutta run only, firstly because this was the safest sea-lane open to them and secondly because the British were the most honest and reliable European traders. The discussion, at the end of which this decision is reached, is interesting. Part of it is quoted below.

"You don't know what you're talking about," Babu Parama parija protested. 'Listen to me... I've heard it thousands of times from the Europeans themselves. Due east of here on the other side of the ocean there's an island called Bilhota(Europe). It's a long, long way off. If you keep sailing due east after leaving the mouth of the Balasore river, it'll take you about a year and a half to get there. There are lots of merchant sub-castes in that country, just as there are in ours. There are the Dutch, the Danes, the English, the French and so forth. Haven't you seen how they all live separately here in Balasore. These Portuguese are another sub-caste of the phiriNgis. Hasn't the mate here just told us that the Portuguese don't work on Sundays, that they go to a church and worship, that their priests wear flowing black robes like our pala singers, and that they light candles in daytime and kneel down, sprinkling water about?'

"Yes, you're right," Babu Rama Rama patra concurred. 'They're not a separate caste. The other night I saw the French saheba... dining with the big Dane. They obviously belong to the same caste.
All hat-wearers are of the same caste.

"'No, you're wrong,' Babu Raghunatha objected. 'They do belong to separate castes. Haven't you noticed how their warehouses, homes, docks, ships and business deals are all separate? As regards eating together, who cares what one does abroad? Anyway, despite the fact that the English may be phirängis like the rest of them, nevertheless, in my opinion, they're their highest caste, their brahmins, so to speak. Haven't you noticed how the other phirängis have all built their homes in Balasore, but the English won't come near them? They've set up their trading post at the river mouth in Balarama Gada. Furthermore, the other phirängis are reddish in colour, the English are whitish...'

"'The phirängis are at war with each other in Bilisita,' Raghunatha De explained. 'On one side are the English and on the other the rest of the phirängis. When they spot an English ship, they attack it...'

"'Have you heard of this Sutanuti (Calcutta) they speak of?' Raghunatha De interposed... 'There's an English phirängi there, who's very religious. He never touches meat or wine; bathes in the Ganges every day; and worships at Kālighat. He lives on barley(yaba) and corn(cana). He's well-known in Bengal. They call him yaba-cana-khi (eater of yaba and cana; i.e. Job Channock). He's a very honest dealer... The Bengalis revere him like a brahmin. Businessmen and landowners have come from far and wide to settle in Sutanuti. The town is full of
tall buildings. The saheba's Telugu soldiers stand guard in the markets. Thieving is unheard of. Do you know what the saheba has done? He's dug a great ditch to the north of the market to keep the Marathas out. It's absolutely safe. People can leave their belongings there in complete safety.'

"Then what's the point of further discussion?" Bābu Jagad-bandhu Malla asked. 'I propose we abandon trade with all other phiringis and from now on do business only with the English. Let's send our ships to Calcutta only.'

Lachamā, set in the 1740s, depicts the anarchy that prevailed in Orissa in the pre-British period, when Orissa, though technically under the Muslim suzerainty of Bengal, was virtually ruled from the Maratha court of Berar. Like Kālika prasāda Gorāpa, Lachamā also contains evidence of partiality towards the British. In chapter eight Siuṣāṅkara, the emissary of Bhāskara pandita the Maratha phaujdāra, arrives in Rayabanī and attempts to persuade Mānadhāta, the Oriya fortress commander, to join forces with the Marathas to drive the Muslims from Orissan soil.

Siuṣāṅkara claims that Śivājī had been the kalkī avatarā of Viṣṇu, whose mission had been to destroy the Mlecchas (Muslims) and to save sanatana vaidika dharma. Śivājī had inflicted heavy damage upon the Empire of Delhi and its downfall was now inevitable. It was the duty of all Hindus to band together in the common cause of bringing about the

(1) Kālika prasāda Gorāpa, pp. 620-622.
final collapse of Islam and the triumph of Hinduism. The Hindus were not lacking in military courage and strategy. Internal dissension alone had been responsible for their past defeats.

Answering on Manadhātā's behalf, Rayaguru expresses scepticism about the possibility of a grand Hindu alliance: 'Hindus were not destined by providence to unite.'

Whilst reluctantly conceding that permanent Hindu unity was perhaps not feasible, Śiūṣaṅkara argues that it is surely possible to achieve temporary unity, to expel the Muslims from Orissa.

"Orissa would be better off without Maratha assistance," Rayaguru replies. When urged to explain, he goes on to contrast the peace and prosperity Orissa knew in the days of her independence and of early Mogul rule with the turbulence and poverty she was now experiencing, owing to Maratha depredations.

"Just as after the decay of the trunk, the branches of the Banyan become separate trees, being supported on their aerial roots, so after the fall of the Gajapati dynasty its generals and descendants continued for a considerable time to live happily in their individual realms within the area from the port of Bīṣakhāpattan to the port of Tēmrālippta and between the sea and Subarṇāpura. At the request of king Tōḍara Malla and of Ambareśvara Māṇsimha, the worthy Hindu general of Akbara the Emperor of Delhi, who looked with equal favour upon both Hindus and Muslims, and in order to preserve the peace of their motherland, the rulers of
Orissa accepted the nominal overlordship of the Moguls. Even so, the Moguls never interfered with the independence of the Oriya rulers in the hills. Mogul sovereignty was accepted only on the coastal plains, that are now known as the Mogul-bandar. But now there is peace nowhere in Orissa. Everywhere there is poverty, distress and terror. Hundreds of thousands of khandayata settlements have been raised to the ground... The whole coast from Harisapura to Tamarapura used to be crowded with merchant ships. Orissa's maritime trade extended to such places as Yaba, Brahma, Sukhatar, and Laksadvipa. The Portuguese pirate Genjaliisa destroyed all that... All that was left was the over-land trade... Orissa's losses can't be made good in a thousand years. If we were to drive out the Moguls with the help of the Marathas, what would happen? The Moguls would go, but the Marathas would take control. What benefit would that be to us?"

Misrule has rendered the Marathas loathsome in the eyes of the people of Orissa.

"Oriya khandayatas enjoyed independence for a thousand years. Hundreds of happy khandayata villages have now been turned into graveyards. The people of Orissa now fear the Marathas more than man-eating tigers... It is futile for a race that is so distrusted and feared to hope for kingship. Rule by brute force can never be stable. The relationship between king and subject is the same as that
between father and son... what do you call your sovereignty, ruling or plundering? The tyranny of your phaujdāras has laid waste village after village. The intention of the Mahatma Sivāji was to establish dharma — what chance was there of the kingdom prospering under the present Marathas?

The sole interest of the Marathas in Orissa is in extracting money by fair means or foul. They are indifferent to the welfare of her people.

"Orissa is auctioned off at the court of Berār. The phaujdārt goes to the highest bidder. You can rest assured that the phaujdāra will get back with interest every penny he's paid out. What does he care if the people live or die? He goes on trying to raise more and more money from them, because he distrusts the court of Berār. He keeps looking over his shoulder in case someone else was granted the sanad at the same time as himself. The people were better off under the alien Turk..."

The enemy of Hinduism in Orissa is not the Muslims, but the Hindu Marathas.

"If there is any enemy on the holy soil of Orissa, then it is only the descendants of the Hindus of Maharashtra, because of whose oppression on the riverside at Atharanala the poor are deprived of the merit accruing from pilgrimage. In what way does this differ from Aurangjeb's jijia?..."
Neither the Hindus nor the Muslims are fit to rule any longer.

"The authority of neither the Hindu nor the Turk will endure in India. Both have forsaken their religions, and are remiss in the performance of their duties. God is averse to both of them. Of regal virtues like universal tolerance, fairness, patriotism, impartiality, and truthfulness, they have none. Real kingship was extinguished in both races with the death of Akbar the Just and Shivaji the Righteous..."

In Calcutta, however, there are white men from a foreign land, who are fit to rule.

"Some white men have come and opened trading posts in Sutanuti Govinda-pura. They are as virtuous as they are white. Hindus distrusting Hindu kings and Muslims distrusting Muslim rulers have taken refuge with these white men of a different religion and unknown origins and are living in peace and security. These white men remain honest even in business where crookedness and selfishness are to be expected. There is no doubting that if they acquired sovereignty, the people would be happy under their rule. Nothing lasts for ever. India has had enough oppression. These days of misery will surely cease. The Hindu and Turk have abused their power. God will send a fresh ruler. Otherwise, if supremacy remained in the hands of either the Hindu or Turk, men's blood would flow
internecine wars for ever.

Their religion, though alien, seems nevertheless in its essence to reflect the best principles of Hinduism.

"I went to bathe in the Ganges at Makara Baruni last year. I met a white man at Kalighat. He was called a padudi (padre); he was a white priest. He spoke the vernacular fluently. I talked with him for a long time. The gist of what he said is: "The ruler of the universe is the one Supreme Lord. The human race are His children. One should dedicate one's knowledge to the advancement of mankind. The man who harms His children becomes an object of His displeasure... Grant unto others the forgiveness and mercy you crave from Him..." Aren't the words of the padre the injunctions of our śastras?"

Thus in both Kalika prasāda gorāpa and Lachana phakīrmohana welcomes the coming of the British as a relief from the anarchy and depredations that had beset Orissa in the 18th century. (1)

ii) The Eradication in Orissa of crimes of violence during British rule.

One chapter in phakīrmohana's autobiography (2) and two of his short stories, Maunamaunī and baleśvarī Rāhajānī, are

(1) Phakīrmohana expresses more or less the same opinion of Marathas and of Maratha rule in Utkala Bhāṣāra Bhūta Bhābis-yata, pp. 1047-1048.
(2) Atma Jībana Carita, chapter 6.
concerned with the gradual eradication in Orissa of theft and robbery during British rule.

In his autobiography Phakirnathana records that it was still dangerous to travel between Balasore and Calcutta in the 1860s.

"The danger from thieves and dakoits between Calcutta and Bhadrakha was very great. Robberies took place daily. There were many dakoit bands. The most notorious in the Balasore area was that of Sardara Gadei Khandara. He had roughly sixty or seventy dakoits under him. The dakoits scoured the roads between Ranigunj Calcutta and Cuttack on the lookout for rich wayfarers and merchants. When he got wind of any, he sent out his underlings to rob them. He finally retired from banditry when he made a 'haul' of fifteen to twenty thousand rupees from a merchant. He spent his last days in listening to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa like a holyman, and paying reverence to gods and brahmans. He also donated to worthy people and good causes.

There were lots of small bands in addition to Gadeis and there was no shortage of petty thieves near villages either. These petty thieves used to lie in wait by the roadside after dusk. Their occupation was stealing from bullock-cart passengers. The driver would usually be sitting at the front dangling his legs and dozing, and his passengers comfortably bedded down on straw in the back, when, spying his chance, the thief would cut the matting
door at the back of the cart and make off with whatever he could lay hands on. The crunching sound of cut matting was drowned by the creaking of the moving cart. The passengers were sound asleep. They did not realise a thing till the morning when the theft was discovered. This sort of thing used to happen every day.

"Many of the wayside shopkeepers were either dacoits themselves or dacoits' accomplices. They did not live on their premises, but two or three miles away. They used to come in the morning, spend the day selling pressed rice, rice, cooking pots and fuel to wayfarers and return home at night. There was a kind of poisonous tumeric they used to sell, which was used in making curries. Travellers, who had eaten curry prepared from it, would fall unconscious and the dacoits would come in the middle of the night and rob them of all they had.

"Lower-class people from Orissa have been going to Calcutta to do menial jobs for ages. On their way home with their earnings after two or three years in Bengal, they were often robbed. Consequently they used to return in groups of twenty-five or thirty. Even so, they were sometimes robbed. There used to be a saying:

'If you can escape the tumeric and get past Nārāṇa-gāḍa(1) you will see your relations.'

(1) There are variant spellings of this name. In Pāleśvarāt Rāhājāṇ, p. 582, Phakīrmoḥana spells it as 'Nārāyana-gāḍa'.
"Other kinds of thieves used to scour the roads all over India, from the foot of the Himalayas to Ramesvara. They were known as thugs. They originated in the west. Their period of operations was from September to June. They would not hesitate to murder for as little as one rupee. They were completely eradicated by the British. In my childhood I saw a thug imprisoned in Balasore. In many districts thousands and thousands were imprisoned. Some were transported, some hung. Not that only thugs were imprisoned, of course. Some people were imprisoned for life, though they had bought only a couple of pence-worth of stolen goods. These stringent laws were enforced to eradicate the thugs, I suppose." (1)

MaunSmaun is set in the 1850s and concerns bandits or wanted criminals who passed themselves off as religious mendicants. At that time there were apparently large bands of this type throughout the whole of North India, who oppressed the peasants and were finally crushed by the British. The focus of attention in MaunSmaun are two groups of religious imposters, a band of dacoits and a young couple who were wanted by the police. The young couple pretended to be observing a vow of silence and are thus the 'silent man and woman' of the title. The 'silent man' was formerly business manager to an eminent Calcutta gentleman and the 'silent woman' a beautiful widow from that gentleman's household.

The two groups were eventually brought to justice by two

(1) Atma Jībana Carita, pp. 27-29.
detectives who were acting under the instructions of the 'Thugi Commissioner' in Calcutta. Disguised as devotees, these detectives went to stay in the bābajīs' hideout in Khandagiri. Thus they were later able to identify the gang and the young couple and to help in the recovery of property which had been stolen from Calcutta and elsewhere.

Bālesvarī Rahajant (Highway Robbery in Balasore) is described in Galpāsvalpa as satya ghatāñg (a true story). The story opens with a description of the improvement in communications between Puri and Bengal and the North West. Then follows a description of how the well-to-do used to travel by bullock-cart and dāka pālīnki. Then the subject of the dākoits is introduced. Phakīrmohana relates how they used to waylay wealthy travellers, till one day by mistake they attacked and robbed a British official, a certain Mr. 'Rempini', Assistant Magister, Balasore District. The attack caused a sensation in Government circles. Large-scale manhunts were carried out to track down his attackers, but without success. The police then resorted to stealth. Plain-clothes detectives roamed the pāna villages picking up scraps of information, which led to the capture of some dākoits, but not Mr. 'Rempini's' attackers.

Since the police more or less knew the location of the strongest gang in Balasore District, they sent Inspector Gārada Prasāda Bōṣa into the vicinity, disguised as an astrologer. The Inspector was captured by the dākoits and taken to their leader. The astrologer predicted that if the dākoits were to raid a village to the east on a certain day, they would make a large haul. As an astrological prediction this proved correct; as a police strategem it failed.
Most of the dakoits were finally arrested, when two constables disguised as convicts were led to the dakoits' hideout and managed to persuade them to mass all available men for a great raid, which would be guaranteed to keep them in luxury for a whole year. On the eve of the raid the two constables held a feast. When the dakoits were all either drunk or drugged, the police attacked and captured many of them, though in the confusion some escaped. Of those who were captured, most were transported, but some were sentenced to hard labour. Thus, as these stories indicate, the coming of the British did eventually establish conditions of peace and security.

iii) The Decline of Local Industries in Balasore during British rule.

A chapter in Phakirmohana's autobiography, one of his newspaper articles, and three of his short stories concern the theme of local industry in Balasore during British rule. Balasore had long been an important port on the eastern coast of India. 'It was renowned for its textiles, timber, iron, rice, and salt... Balasore iron once flooded Bengal. It fetched high prices in Calcutta markets... There were numerous iron foundries in the old village of Balasore on the eastern edge of Balasore town. My imagination boggles to think how those blacksmiths used to cast anchors of up to 1½ tons without the aid of machinery. Not only were local ships fitted out by those foundries, but foreign ones too.'(1)

In Phakirmohana's boyhood, the two most important industries were probably salt and shipping, in that order.

(1) Baleśvara Bandarare Olandāja Jāti, p. 1082.
"All the fame and prosperity that Balasore then enjoyed derived from the Nimak Mahal (the Government Salt Offices). Salt used to be manufactured all along the eastern sea-board from the mouth of the Subarnarekhā in the north to that of the Dhamra in the south."(1)

a) Salt.

Phakirmohana's short story, Balesvari panga-luna, is actually more of a documentary than a story, and is appropriately described in Galpasvalpa as satya ghatana (fact). It is an account of the salt industry in Balasore. Phakirmohana begins by stating that the British probably had an interest in the industry even before 1803, when they assumed political control of Orissa. After the acquisition of power, they took direct control of the industry. The head of the industry was the District Collector of Balasore, who was ex officio 'salt agent'. The salt agent had two assistants, each of whom supervised a department in the kaceri, the munsikhana (administration) and the hisabakhana (accounts). After listing the various officials in each department, he continues,

"In the month of Asvina (Sept. Oct.) the government paid an advance to the salt manufacturers. The advance was actually paid to the guliāṣ (contractors). The guliāṣ received the advance, on signing a Government contract. The time when the

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, p. 20.
advance was paid was like a festival in Balasore. Lots of money changed hands and shopkeepers stocked up in readiness. Just about everyone from beggars to ne'er-do-wells had money in his pocket. An advance of more than a lac of rupees used to be paid out. As soon as the general run of country folk got their hands on a little money, they dashed out to buy presents for their wives and children.

"The moment the gulia got the advance he went to the cati, the place where the salt was manufactured. A group of catis was called an adam. The catis and adams were, of course, located on the shore. The gulia did not manufacture the salt himself, but hired others. He himself merely supervised the work. When a suitable site had been selected, the stoves were built by the padhis. The stoves were not the same as ordinary household stoves. Those of you, who have seen Lord Jagannatha's stoves in puri, will know the type I mean. Salt stoves were pyramid-shaped like Lord Jagannatha's, but much larger, some of them having a base-circumference of up to 20 or 30 cubits, and a height of between 3 and 4 cubits. The largest stoves could hold between 2 and 3 hundred pots at a time. The pots were not the size of household rice pots (handi), but of the large puri temple pots. The potter delivered the pots, as soon as the stoves were ready. Each stove produced between 20 and 25 maunds of salt at each burning. There were 3 burnings a day. Some of the more efficient padhis even managed to hold 4 burnings a
As soon as the stoves were ready, the malangis began to scrape up the surface of the beach. The surface sand was all piled together. This was called a badi. Sea water was then poured on to the badi and the malangis trampled it with their feet, till the sand and sea water were reduced to a sloppy paste. A hole, know as a kundi, was dug along side the badi. The malangis then took a straw and pushed one end of it into the badi, whilst leaving the other end to dangle over the kundi. Their action was much the same as that of camars, who insert a leaf between a slit in the trunk of a date tree and a small pot. The liquid oozed along the straw into the kundi, till the badi was completely dry. This salty liquid was called dahapani. The dahapani was then boiled in the pots, till all the water evaporated to leave only the salt (panga luna). Between 8 and 16 men were employed in stoking the stoves. The fuel they used was not wood, but a kind of grass, between 3 and 4 cubits high, that grew on the shore. It was as if God had placed it there expressly for the purpose. There were men called jaliyas, specially employed to cut this grass. They had a sharp-edged tool called a jaba, which they held in both hands. Stooping from habit, they could cut a great deal of grass in a very short time. When the grass had dried, it was bundled up in sheaves and taken to the stores by the carters (baladias). The Government employed fuel-storemen
(jala caukias) to look after this grass. There were thousands of bullock carts and carters engaged on this work."(1)

"Nine lacs of maunds of rice were produced in Balasore District each year. Of this one and a half were warehoused in Phadrakha and Balasore for consumption in Balasore District and the remaining 7½ lacs were transported to Sālikë(2) entrepot on the west bank of the Ganges near to Calcutta for consumption in Bengal(3)."

The salt production season lasted for about 9 months, production ceasing during the rains.

"Each year prior to the commencement of salt manufacture, a pūjā was held to Jhadesvara Mahadeva, to ensure the continued prosperity of the industry. The whole expense of the ceremony was borne by the Government exchequer. All the people employed in the industry were Hindus. This was done to humour them."(4)

b) **Shipping.**

Phakirmohana describes the shipping industry in a chapter in his autobiography.

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(1) Balesvarī Paṅga Luna, pp. 597-598.
(2) Also spelt Sālima, see Atma Jibana Carita, p. 20.
(3) Balesvarī Paṅga Luna, p. 599.
In my childhood, Balasore had a thriving shipping industry. It had between five and six hundred ships at sea, seventy-five percent of which were salt-carriers; the rest were engaged in exporting goods to Rangoon, Madras, Colombo and the islands.

These seagoing vessels were sail-driven. Some of them required between six and twelve sails of various sizes, depending upon the vessel's design. Some of the sails were square, some triangular, and some oblong. Each vessel needed sails in proportion to her size. If the sails were too large, the vessel was likely to capsize in a high wind; if they were too small, the vessel would not move. It took experience to know exactly which size sails to fit to which size of ship.

The shipping industry's season was from Kartika (Oct.-Nov.) to Caitra (Mar.-Apr). When the south wind gained in force, the ships could not leave the river mouth. They remained at their moorings till Kartika. Thus all activity came to a standstill. Nevertheless, everyone—financiers, ship-yard workers, contractors, ship's captains, and office-workers—earned enough in the season to tide him over the off-season.

Hundreds of Brahmins were employed to read the Candī Pātha and to worship the local deities to guarantee the safety of the ships at sea. (1)

(1) Atma Jibanā Carita, pp. 18-20.
In Kamala prasada Gorapa phakirmohana describes some of picturesque ceremonial that attended the commencement of a voyage.

"At the prow of the ship a religious ceremony was held. The captain bathed, and with vermillion marks on his head, neck and arms, he sat before the offerings. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the priest threw sunned rice over the captain and shipowner, and then garlanded them both. Having received a gātu (betel nut) as an earnest of the owner's intent to have the candi patha read, to ensure the ship's safe return, the priest went ashore.

"'Stand to!' called the captain, and the sailors and helmsman assumed their appointed positions. The mate stood overlooking the pulley of the forward anchor and six men grasped the handles of the great winch.

"The owner, priest and astrologer stood on the shore facing the ship. The captain, leaning over the ship's side, watched the face of the owner. The astrologer alternately consulted his almanac and the sun. At exactly 12 o'clock the owner and astrologer roared in chorus:

"'Captain!'

"'Weigh anchor!' bellowed the captain to the crew." (1)

(1) Kamala prasada Gorapa, p. 633.
Kamala Prasada Gorapa also provides information about the classes of ship and the financing of the voyage and its cargo.

"Balasore ships fell into three classes. The largest were called gorapas, the larger ones sulupas (sloops), and the small ones duunis. The sulupas and duunis were restricted to the Calcutta run. The gorapas were ocean-going vessels. Each vessel bore a name such as Kamala prasada, Uma prasada, Durga prasada, Lavar prasada etc...."

"Babu Ramahari Nayaka was a small-scale shipowner, having only four vessels, a gorapa, the Kamala prasada, which plied between Rangoon, Colombo and Madras; and three sulupas.

"Svarupa Behera was the captain of the Kamala prasada, with twenty years service behind him, a most trustworthy and reliable employee. Absolute trustworthiness was, of course, a prerequisite of a captaincy, for a captain handled a great deal of money.

"Captain Svarupa had taken a cargo to Madras, and reported that the ship had foundered on the return journey. The sinking of the Kamala prasada entailed losses not only for the ship's owner, but for many other people as well. By long-standing custom, the ship's captain had the right to transport one eighth of the cargo free of charge; i.e. if one supposes that the vessel was carrying 8,000 maunds of cargo, then 1,000 maunds would belong
to the captain. The shipowner would receive no transportation fees for those 1,000 maunds, and the captain would get any profit which accrued from the sale of them. But even though the captain had this right, he did not normally possess sufficient personal capital to avail himself of it. So what happened was that he raised the necessary capital from the shipowner's employees, his servants, watchmen, agents and so forth. The capital he raised was called batama. The captain bought and sold merchandise with the batama and of the profit accruing from it, he kept half for himself and paid half to the subscribers. "(1)

c) The Decline.

The decline of Balasore had already been set in train before Phakirmohana's birth. There were several causes:

i) The silting up of the river mouth of the Budhabalanga.

"Balasore had attracted Danish, Dutch, French and English merchants to establish trading posts there, long before they had ever heard of Bengal."(2), but "they were forced to set up their main factories in Bengal, because the mouth of the Balanga River was not deep enough for them. The river was narrow and its waters shallow. It was navigable by their big, ocean-going vessels only with the utmost

(1) Kamala Prasada Gorapa, p. 632.
difficulty. They had to anchor five or six miles from its mouth."(1)

ii) The coming of the steamer gradually put the sailing ships out of business and the ship-building industry of Balasore fell into decay.

iii) Then the railway came and provided alternative means of transportation, so that the port facilities were no longer needed.

iv) The demand for Balasore wares fell off. It had been renowned for its textiles, timber, iron, rice and salt, but gradually it lost its markets for all but timber and rice.

v) The Government abandoned the local salt industry.

"The people of Balasore subsisted on two things, rice and salt. A third of the people in the district were directly or indirectly employed in the salt trade. The Budhabalanga River used to be crowded with ships and its banks with people. It is as desolate as the grave now. There is not a sign of a Balasore ship. Where now are those families, who for generations were engaged in ship-building and sea-faring( and who were unaccustomed to any other industry)? Mercifully they were all put to rest by the Na Ânka famine. Otherwise, they would be having a thin time of it now.

(1) Baleswara Bandarare Olandaja Jati, pp. 1081-1082.
"The Government abandoned salt-manufacture in 1861. Thereafter the industry continued for a few years as a joint enterprise financed by a number of Balasore businessmen. But for some reason unknown to me, they made heavy losses and were forced to relinquish it. Some of them were completely ruined.

"Did the Government abandon salt manufacture because it was unprofitable? The Government production costs were five annas a maund and the sale price was two rupees; i.e. they were making a profit of one rupee eleven annas per maund. Just calculate the profit on nine lakhs produced in Balasore alone, not to mention Cuttack and Puri...

"Balasore was so prosperous that even if it experienced bad seasons for three or four years at a stretch, it could still manage. But it is doubtful now whether even in good seasons, when harvests come up to expectation, as many as two thirds of the ordinary people of Balasore eat two hot meals a day. The condition of the middle class is almost the same. The sole reason is shortage of money. Everything ended when salt manufacture was abandoned. The artisan families were completely uprooted. There is not a single Balasore businessman of note left. Commerce is now entirely in the hands of non-Oriyas: Marwaris, Kachhis, Bhatis and Nakho-das. No native of Balasore has the money to compete with these rich foreign merchants."(1)

(1) Balesvar Panga Luna, p. 600.
Balasore had in fact declined from being an exporter with a balance of trade in her favour to becoming an importer with a deficit. By 1907, the date of publication of *Baleavaripanaga Luna*, she had practically nothing to export but rice, which she herself probably needed.

"Almost a crore of rupees' worth of paddy and rice is exported from this small district every year. The railway station is packed with sacks of rice. The rice is hauled to the station in cartloads day and night. Most people watch it go, sad-eyed and empty-bellied.

"The country people do, of course, make a little out of this sale of rice and paddy, but they hold no paddy in reserve, as they should. As soon as they get money in their pockets, they dash out to buy German-manufactured goods. Let them experience one bad season and they'll die in droves.

"Once the people of this country sold soil from the shores and earned good money; now they're selling good rice and buying German 'soil'. I call these manufactured goods 'soil'. Nine 'lakhs' of salt used to be produced in Balasore each year. If salt had continued to be produced, then with improved methods of production the figure would now be in the region of twenty lakhs at the very least. There would have been twenty lakhs of rupees coming into the country. What an advance these sea-faring families with a thousand years' experience behind them would have made in this scientific
"What little splendour Balasore now possesses is all due to non-Oriyas. The businessmen are all non-Oriyas. The high officials in the kaceri are almost all non-Oriyas. The Oriya has not been born who can land a job on the railway. The jamidāras are helpless. Farming is the only occupation left, yet where is the land?

"God be in the mouth of our merciful Government! Let Balasore District start manufacturing salt once more."(1)

Phakirmohana's statistics are unreliable. In Kamala prasāda Gorāpa he estimates the labour force of the shipping industry as 10,000(2); in Bālesvari paṅgā Luna as 5,000(3). In Atma Jibana Carita he estimates Balasore's merchant fleet at five to six hundred ships; in Bālesvari paṅgā Luna he implies that there were no more than 400. Despite these statistical inconsistencies, his impression of the decline of local industries and crafts must have been founded on truth. "Lady Luck (Bhāgya Lākṣmī)" had indeed "deserted Balasore for Liverpool (4) and elsewhere."(5)

Thus though initially local industry had prospered in the new conditions of peace and security created by British rule, it had been adversely affected by innovations in transport, administration and trading policy in the latter half

(1) Bālesvari paṅgā Luna, pp. 600-601.
(2) Kamala prasāda Gorāpa, p. 631.
(3) Bālesvari paṅgā Luna, p. 600
(4) W.W. Hunter provides the explanation. "Liverpool salt often comes out at very low rates, often indeed as ballast, to Calcutta. In the districts east of the Hugly it has driven the native manufacture out of the market." W.W. Hunter op.cit., Vol.I, p. 41.
of the century and suffered a serious decline. Poverty had appeared once more in certain sections of the community.

iv) Legal 'crimes' practised under British rule.

Though during British rule banditry and armed robbery were virtually eradicated in Orissa, the mentality that, in Phakirmohana's view, gave rise to crime, namely excessive worldliness and materialism, persisted and was to some extent encouraged by the ethos of the new régime. Spiritual values declined, as status began to be measured in economic, rather than spiritual terms. In one caste fathers regarded their daughters as investments of capital to be realised, prior to the wedding, from their bridegrooms. In other sectors of the community, monks and jamidāras, to whom devotees and tenants once turned in times of crisis for spiritual guidance and material assistance, now used their positions as a means of exploitation. It was in order to mobilise public opinion against such inhumanity and oppression that Phakirmohana wrote such works as Bīrei Bīsāla and Madha Mahāntiṅka Kanya Sunā attacking the practice of bride-selling; Dhulia Bābā against religious fraud; and Chā Mana Atha Guṇṭha and Adharmā Bittā against money-lenders.

The problem of bride-selling was restricted to a particular caste, the Balaṛaṁa Gōtrī caste, as Phakirmohana points out in Bīrei Bīsāla.

"But though he (Bīrei) had decided to marry, how was he to raise the money? He did not belong to any ordinary caste, in which one marries the moment one has a mind to. For some reason brides in the Balaṛaṁa Gōtrī caste were scarce, and their prices
extremely high. To the present writer's knowledge, some brides fetched from 500 to 2,000 rupees. The reader may be wondering how the price was arrived at. Were brides perhaps measured or weighed, and their prices calculated at so much an inch or so much a pound? No, not at all... Let me explain. Virtually all the members of the Balarama gotri caste are comfortably off. They are very hardworking and extremely thrifty. Consequently, they all have a little put by. The bride's age, or beauty, or other qualities do not enter into it. The bride price is computed on the basis of the groom's age. A groom is old enough to marry, say, but his family can't afford a bride. So this prospective groom works and saves. By the time he has saved enough, he's fifty, or if he happens to be rich and marrying for the second or third time, his age may even be sixty. The bride's age, on the other hand, will be between 10 and 11. In such cases as this, the bride price is high." (1)

The complete indifference of Rāghaba pātra, the bride's father, to any but financial considerations in regard to marriage is illustrated in the following extract.

"Fixing on an auspicious day, Miśra went to see Rāghaba pātra. pātra had presumably got wind of what was coming, for he welcomed Miśra with great respect and effusiveness, and spread a mat for him to sit on. After the snuff-taking and the small

(1) Btei Bisaļa, p. 559.
talk were concluded, they got down to business.

"Well, Patra, how about marrying your daughter Kamali to Birei?" Misra asked.

"Yes, agreed," replied Patra.

"The suitor is a very nice chap, extremely likeable," observed Misra.

"Yes, agreed," said Patra.

"The bride will be very happy," suggested Misra.

"Yes, agreed," said Patra.

"Then as to price..." Misra began.

"Yes, let's get down to the crux of the matter first," Patra interposed. "I'm telling you straight, the bride-price is 1,000 rupees cash, and I'll not take a penny less."

Misra was silent for a while, then he said, "Be reasonable, how can you expect Birei to afford so much? He can go as far as 500."

"I got 2,000 rupees cash for my other two daughter," Patra exclaimed. "You were there and saw it, so why are you taking this unjust attitude now?"

"The circumstances were completely different," Misra argued. "Both those grooms were sixty, and both were marrying for the second time. Haven't you seen the distress the two girls are in now as widows? Birei, on the other hand, is a young man."
"'Hang on, Miṣra!' pātra objected, somewhat angrily, 'how on earth can an educated man like you make such wild accusations? It was their fate that they should be widowed. I may have fathered them, but I did not father their fates(karma).'

"'That issue is beside the point,' Miṣra countered. 'I'll not argue it with you. Have pity on the fatherless lad. Agree to his 500.'

"'There's no place for pity in honest business,' pātra replied. 'Besides, the other two girls were only 9 years old. This one is 14. She'll be able to keep house for her husband, the moment she marries. You won't find another mature bride like her in our caste. I've had to spend no end of money on her food and keep. 500 you say, Dīnu Pariṣa from Sivapura and Syama Mahapātra from Govindapura were both here a month ago with the cash in their hands. I wasn't willing to settle for 500 then, and I'm not now. It's no use continuing this discussion, Miṣra. If you've a thousand to offer, say so. If not, there's the door."

Rāghaba's avarice had rendered him so insensitive to shame or delicacy that he bluntly revealed his mercenary instincts even to his own daughter, whom he frankly regarded as an investment of his capital.

"'I've clothed and fed you for 14 years, and now you say, you'll drown yourself. Drown yourself then, see what I care. But before you do, you can

(1) Bīrei Bisāla, p. 560.
just give me the 500 rupees it's cost me to keep you in food and clothing the last fourteen years. Then you can drown yourself with my complete consent.'"(1)

By having Rāghaba pātra publically humiliated by the village children and by causing Mādha Mahānti, the avaricious father in Mādha Mahāntīṅka Kanyā Suṅā, to die as a result his own greed, phakīrmohana registers his strong disapproval of this inhuman practice.

Owing to the new land-tenure laws introduced by the British, the old jamidāra class on the coastal plains was gradually ousted by self-made men, whose fortunes had been acquired either in business in Calcutta or by corruption in Orissa. Regarding their estates, not as moral responsibilities, but as sources of income, the sons of this new jamidāra class often preferred to lead the luxurious town life, that British rule had made available to them, and in consequence they left the management of their estates to agents and bailiffs, who, because of their masters' inexperience of business, found it easy to deceive, and sometimes even to dispossess, them.

In Cha Māṇa Atha Guntha and Adharma Bitta phakīrmohana illustrates how the new land-tenure laws could be manipulated to rob both rich and poor alike. Hypocrites like Maṅgarāja and Kubera Sāhu were able to ingratiate themselves with rich landowners and, by duplicity, establish a legal title to their lands. Then under the pretense of assistance, these upstart landlordors advanced money to their tenants on the

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(1) Birei Biśāla, p. 561.
security of a mortgage on the tenants' holdings, and later, by foreclosing on the loan and suing for possession, were able to rob them legally.

In Dhulia Baba Phakirmohana describes how a fraudulent abbot, the Dusty Father of the title, was able to squeeze an income out of the legal system itself. By publicising his readiness to intercede with the gods on behalf of prospective litigants, he had succeeded in inducing both parties to every local litigation to consult him prior to the hearing. The amount offered by each party in the event of a favourable decree was recorded by the abbot's disciples at the time of the consultation and collected from the winning side at the conclusion of the case. It was a most profitable sideline. One day an important case was filed concerning the division of a joint property between two brothers. Only one of the brothers, Rama, consulted the abbot. When the other brother, Sama, was asked why he had failed to do so, he replied, "What abbot has power in kaliyuga? Why should I consult him?" This reply incensed the abbot since he realised that it threatened his income from other litigants. "The broadcast fire of my cilama shall speak," he declared. This news was by the abbot's disciples, and from far and wide people dashed to consult the abbot. Some had incurable diseases, some had lost cows, and some had lawsuits pending.

True to the abbot's prediction on the full moon day of the month of Agima, the fire of the abbot's cilama spoke. people were ecstatic with religious fervour. Sama began to quake in his sandals, convinced that the case would now go against him. He begged the abbot to forgive him. This the abbot ultimately did and an even greater homa was arranged.
The sacrificial fire burned in a small room and in a small cavity beneath there sat concealed one of the abbot's hemp-addicted disciples. He was the source of the voice of agni which struck such awe into the multitude. When the fire was asked to grant a boon to sama, the voice failed to respond. In an intoxicated stupor, the bulky dhulika baba heaved a hefty blow at the burning log with his mighty tongs. The log crashed down into the cavity, followed by the baba, who was dragged after it by the impetus of his own blow, straight into the embrace of the flames and the addict below. Seeing this, sama was overwhelmed with joy. "Agni is manifest and in human form is embracing the abbot." The ecstatic hari-bols of the frenzied multitude drowned the screams of dhulika baba and his disciple, who burned to death in the sacrificial flames. The stench of burning flesh convinced the crowd that agni was devouring the abbot and they all fled in terror. The following morning the police arrived to investigate. They discovered how the fraud had been perpetrated, and sent the corpses for postmortem.

v) phakirmohana's attitude towards individual britishers and towards british rule in general.

Thus, as was seen earlier, british rule was welcomed, because it put an end to the anarchy that had prevailed in the 18th century and established conditions of peace and security in which trade could prosper; but this prosperity had been short-lived and a gradual decline in living standards ensued; and crime was not really eradicated; it merely took new forms. Disappointment with british rule engendered in phakirmohana an ambivalent attitude. He generally admired, or at least sympathised with, individual britishers, but he
attacked the rule itself and its consequences, though in the main only obliquely.

His attitude towards individual Britishers has already been revealed in the discussion of his life (1), but it is also discernible in his characterisation of Britishers in his prose fiction. Of the Britishers he portrays some remain mere caricatures, because of their peripheral role in the action. These are the police officers and magistrates, whom he depicts as fond of hunting, shooting and horses. Even so, these portraits are in general flattering and kindly, and not devoid of humour. One, for example, highlights a quality he particularly admired, perseverance.

"When after days of fruitless effort he (the Indian Inspector) reported his lack of success, the British Superintendent replied encouragingly;

'Your method of investigation is satisfactory. Don't leave the four villages till you have apprehended the dacoits.'

This is a British characteristic, which explains why we are the conquered and they the conquerors. When we fail, we despair and give up. But the British have a different approach: they stick at it till they succeed." (2)

Another of these portraits highlights the generosity of the average Britisher and his amusement at his subordinates' inadequate knowledge of English. A herdsman has just done

(1) See pt. I, ch. VII, sec. i, pp... 118-120.
(2) Baleśvar Rāhājanī, p. 584.
the British official a service and the official wishes to reward him.

"Would you like to be a constable?" (The official asked in Hindi.)

The herdsman did not immediately reply. Then he said (in Oriya): 'I can't say till I've discussed it with the wife.'

The saheba did not understand. He turned to the Corporal, who had a reputation with his men as an English scholar on the strength of his having read the First Book in its entirety and being able to sign his name in the roman script. The Corporal translated what the herdsman had said.

'Sir, this guala Mahakur says he ask his wife. If she says, he will constable.'

The saheba smiled to himself. It took him a while to understand what the Corporal meant. Then he took a notebook from his pocket and wrote:

'Subal Singh is fit to be a constable. He seems to be a clever man and knows how to show respect to the fair sex.'"(1)

The three most important British characters appear in Māndū, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson and Jones. They are portrayed with considerable sympathy.

"The present Collector of Cuttack is Mr. Dawson. Many British officials are veritable gods incarnate.

(1) Randi Pua Ananta, pp. 518-519.
(dharmāvatāra) to their staff and subjects. Our Mr. Dawson is one of these. Though an officer of considerable experience, he either fails to notice the deceitfulness of his staff, or deliberately blinds himself to it. His attitude is: my subordinates are poor; it won't do to be too severe."(1)

Naṭabara Dāsa was able to take advantage of Dawson's deliberate blindness to ingratiate himself with Mrs. Dawson, to whom he supplied groceries and provisions more cheaply than anyone else.

"The thing is the saheba's household was provisioned gratis or at half price by the rural jamidāras. This benefited both the saheba and the jamidāras; and the najara bābu (naṭabara Dāsa) was not one to mediate such deals without personal profit. He put in a good word for the jamidāras to the saheba and thus expedited their legal business, so it didn't hurt the jamidāras to send provisions free or at half price in exchange. The saheba knew nothing of this, of course."(2)

Consequently, when Naṭabara turned up, red-eyed and in apparent distress to report the death of his brother-in-law and plead that the estate be administered by his sister, he was able to manipulate the saheba's sympathies and also get support from Mrs. Dawson, who, as a feminist, was in favour of educated women (such as Čandamaṇi was alleged to be)

(1) Māmu, p. 151. (2) ibid, pp. 151-152.
getting the opportunity to exercise their talents.

Jones is a less sympathetic character. He was irritable, moody, and ambitious. It was he who eventually arrested Naṭabara. Even while depicting his faults, however, phakir-mohana does so with insight and compassion.

"It is often said by people who have visited Europe that educated upper-class Englishmen are perfect. We have also met many such civilians, and their praises are constantly heard. But there is good and bad everywhere. A young man from a cold climate with no knowledge of human nature, who, having successfully passed a difficult examination, cherishes hopes of promotion, crosses the vast ocean and disembarks in India. His body is scorched by the wind's hot blasts, and his mind fevered by thoughts of supremacy. During his early days in India, he lives in perpetual contact with lower-class Indian cooks, stewards and bearers, on whom he is dependent for the purchase of everyday necessities. Not unnaturally he is constantly cheated. His servants' conduct moulds his attitude towards all Indians for a long time to come. His attitude thereafter is rarely sympathetic and more often than not he prescribes harsh treatment for them. The clerks fancied that our Joint Magistrate, W. Jones Esq., was a man of this stamp."(1)

Though drawn generally with admiration and always with compassion, the Britishers remain aliens, never fully com-

(1) *Māma*, p. 170.
prehending, or caring deeply about, what goes on about them. Dawson is the best of them, yet it was his finest quality, tolerance, that was responsible for much of the mischief in Mama. Essentially the Britishers in Mama are marionettes that dance to the dictates of their subordinates. Dawson was persuaded to sign over the estate to Naṭabara Dūsa, and and Jones' anger was directed against Naṭabara by the wily Khoda Baks.

Of Phakirmohana's attacks on British rule, some will appear in the following chapter on the theme of education and others in the one afterwards on justice, below we give only a few, none of which could be described as particularly obvious or penetrating, but sufficient, it is hoped, to indicate an underlying sense of dissatisfaction on Phakirmohana's part.

Three of these attacks concern trade and suggest that the root of Phakirmohana's dissatisfaction was the economic decline of Balasore.

a) "Later, in the 15th century, when a way was discovered round the Cape of Good Hope by the famous navigator, Vasco da Gama, European merchants fell upon India like vultures who had sighted a corpse." (1)

b) "It is undeniable that trade is the root cause of Europe's prosperity... Under the pretext of trade they (the European nations) have been able to extend their sovereignty and prestige throughout the whole world. Their sceptres of supremacy are transformations of their shopkeepers scales." (2)

(1) Balesvara Bandarare Olandaja Jati, p. 1081.
(2) ibid, p. 1080.
c) "About a score of white, and four or five grey, herons have been digging about in the mud like labourers from morning till night... suddenly out of the blue come darting two water-crows and in three or five dives their bellies have been filled and they are flitting off. Another water-crow sits on the water's edge indolently spreading her wings in the sun like a memsahiba with her gown. Look at the British water-crows, you Hindu herons; they fly in from abroad with empty pockets and fly out again with stomachs stuffed with Orissan fish, yet you nest in the Banyan on the water's edge and wade about all day to gain a mere minnow or two. A struggle for existence confronts you. From now on more and more crows will be after your fish. Unless you, like them, learn to cross the seas to foreign parts, you are done for."(1)

Two of these oblique attacks on British rule are almost identical:

d) "Historians say that Lord Clive obtained the provincial governorship of Bengal from the Emperor of Delhi in less time than it takes to buy an ass. Then what delay was there in Mañgaraja's obtaining the agency and full control of Phatepura Sarasanda?"(2)

e) "History tells us that it took the Company as long as it takes to buy an ass to acquire the debānd of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Emperor of Delhi; but though

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 257.
(2) ibid, p. 245.
they hurried through the sale of the bungalow as quickly as possible, it still took more than five or six hours."(1)

The first implies that Clive was as big a scoundrel as Mangaraja. The sale of the bungalow referred to in the second was a swindle, from which one infers that the acquisition of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was an even greater swindle.

The last of these attacks refers to the sacrosanctness of white flesh and raises the age-old question of racial discrimination:

f) "They knew that they might possibly rob a raja or maharaja with impunity, but they'd certainly be for it if they laid hands on pure white flesh."(2)

Though none of this is particularly strong evidence of aversion to British rule, it does, when taken together with other available evidence, at least suggest ambivalence.

(1) Maman, p. 210
(2) Bāleśvarī Rāhajānī, p. 583.
CHAPTER IV.

The Theme of Education.

The Effects of Western Education on Young Men in 19th Century Orissa.

The conservatism of 19th century Orissan Society militated against the acceptance of western education, seeing in it only disadvantages. Western educated sons were seen to abandon their religion and, even though the majority of them might not actually become Christians (1), at least they adopted alien fashions, in dress, speech and behaviour, and sometimes alien vices, such as drinking. In the early days of western education, orthodox society, fearing such effects, sometimes punished its members, who sought employment in western schools. In 1860, for example, a pandita, who became a Sanskrit teacher in Puri District School, was excommunicated by brahmin society for a period of two years (2). In consequence, the number of Oriya pupils in Government schools was small. Of the 58 pupils who matriculated in 1868, for example, only 10 were Oriya, the rest were Bengali. (3)

Phakirmohana to some extent shared, and even encouraged, the prejudices of orthodox society; for, in his view, western education seemed in the main to teach Oriyas only how to despise their own society and culture, not how to improve

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(1) It should be remembered that phakirmohana was almost converted to Christianity as a result of teaching at Balasore Mission School. Madhusudana Dasa, the great Oriya patriot, was converted and remained a Christian throughout his life.
(3) ibid, p. 62.
it. pandita Govinda Ratha probably voiced the scorn felt by phakirmohana and many of his contemporaries for this new class of 'dark sāhebas', when he wrote Future sāheba.

"I'll be a sāheba in my next birth
And top my red face with a cap.
I'll slay Guinea Fowl with a gun
And eat my meals from a table top.
I'll cry out 'Dirty' and drive him away,
When I spot a native coming my way."(1)

In his prose fiction phakirmohana satirises the ill effects of western education, in the hope of producing, on the part of the educated, a more constructive attitude towards the problems of their society. prayascitta reveals the effects of western education upon the impressionable son of a rural jamidāra. Govinda, the son of Vaiśnava Carana Mahāpatra, was an Arts student in Cuttack in the latter half of the 19th century. As a result of reading certain sceptical books in English, he temporarily lost his religious faith, and this exposed him to the influence of a fellow student, Rajībalocana, the self-styled nephew of Saṅkaraṇa Mahānti, Vaiśnava Carana's enemy. Through Rajībalocana, Saṅkarsana was able to commission a series of after-dinner speeches on topics specially selected to mould Govinda's attitudes and opinions in favour of marrying Saṅkarsana's daughter, Indumati, hoping that by this marriage he (Saṅkarsana) would achieve social equality with Vaiśnava Carana, the hereditary head of the Gṛī-Karana community.

(1) Quoted by Krṣṇacarana Behera, pragati sāhitya, puri 1958; p. 116.
In one of these after dinner-speeches, Kamala Locana demonstrated how Darwin's Law of Natural Selection, which, he alleged, was inherent in the mating systems of uncivilised aborigines and also of advanced western countries, was being negated in India as a result of the strictures of the "deluded authors" of the so-called sastras, whose "illogical" opinions sanctioned those "superstitious practices" which were responsible for the backwardness of Hindu society. Therefore, for the good of society and the nation as a whole, Kamala Locana argued, it was the duty of every educated young man to reject the traditional way of selecting wives and to remember "the fundamental law of Nature, that in mating both the male and female should depend upon their own individual tastes, intellect and discretion, and not upon the intervention of any third party."

The after-dinner speech proved a neat propaganda device, for it exercised a group pressure upon all present to acquiesce in the final resolution. Govinda was induced to sign a declaration of intent to disregard the "petty" distinctions between the sub-castes of karanas, "to refrain from marrying a stupid, illiterate bride", and "to marry only a girl from a village with a girls' school"; i.e. he had in effect agreed in principle to marry Indumati. Even so, Govinda was reluctant to defy his father and caste elders, who were bound to condemn such a marriage. Sadananda needed all his eloquence to persuade him.

Sadananda first of all pointed out that if one was to contribute to the advance of one's nation, one had to regulate one's every act with intelligence and reason, which alone could lead to a better future, and not by stupidity and pre-
judice, which alone tied one to the evils of the past. "True," said Govinda, "but Father..."

Sadānanda then tried to project into Čovinda's mind an image of himself as a reformer and patriot, whose every act would benefit society and his fellow-countrymen. Caste divisions were at the root of their nation's political subjection. Marriage to Indumati would be a blow for social equality and a step towards political freedom. It would end this ruinous litigation which was beggaring his father and Saṅkarṣaṇa Mahānti, and burdening their hapless tenants. "True," said Govinda, "but Father..."

Then Sadānanda pointed out that financially Govinda had everything to gain. He would become Saṅkarṣaṇa's heir, even if his own father disinherited him, and Saṅkarṣaṇa was by far the richer of the two. But Govinda's filial piety was strong.

"One's father is heaven, one's father is justice, One's father is supreme penance. He who has the love of his father has also that of all the gods."

(pitā svarga pitā dharmah pitā hi paramam tapah pitari prītimāpanne priyante sarvadevatāḥ)

Sadānanda agreed that in general one's duty to one's father was unquestionable, but when one's father was an impediment to national progress, a danger to society, and a threat to his son's happiness, did one remain morally bound to obey him?

Sadānanda then outlined the disadvantages of the traditional bride, who was, in his view, invariably illiterate,
repressed, and inhibited. What likelihood was there of such a bridesatisfying an educated man? Indumati, on the other hand, had everything that a man could want in a woman, beauty, intelligence, education, talent and taste.

Battered by this avalanche of persuasion, Govinda's head was now in a whirl. He recalled a scrap of religious instruction from his days in the Mission School: "A man should abandon his parents and cleave only to his wife." He assented and Sadananda made arrangements for the wedding.

The thesis that Phakirmohana so ably demonstrates here is this. Western education had bred in Hindu youth sets of emotional attitudes of admiration and condemnation towards certain ideals and concepts. The western-educated young man would have absorbed, perhaps even subconsciously, a respect for science, logic and reason; admiration for social equality, political freedom and patriotism; and abhorrence towards illiteracy, stupidity, prejudice and backwardness. These emotional attitudes could be played upon by the unscrupulous to induce naive, immature young men to defy the traditional forces of authority in Orissan society, namely their fathers, caste elders and religious beliefs; and to commit in the name of reason acts of stupidity. There is a subtle irony underlying the arguments, whereby Govinda was induced to perpetrate an intercaste marriage. All the arguments were in fact directed against arranged marriages, yet the marriage Govinda was persuaded to enter was just as arranged as any other, perhaps even more so; for he had never seen the bride before the ceremony and had fallen in love with her purely on the strength of hearsay.

Daka Munsi reveals a further effect of western education,
snobbishness. Gopala Babu had presumably been a dutiful son whilst receiving his education, but after getting a post as sub-postmaster his attitude towards his father began to change. He began being irritated by his father’s dress and behaviour.

"He’s an ignoramus. He doesn’t know English. He’s just a navvy, and wears dirty clothes. Whatever will people think when they learn he’s my father? I saw him walk in front of some fashionably-dressed ladies the other day. He wasn’t even wearing a shirt. It’s disgusting. I’ll have to get rid of him, or I’ll have no respect left.

‘Look, dad,’ he once remarked, ‘you’re not doing my reputation any good. Now if you like you can stay, but otherwise clear out. And listen, I’m not having you showing your face when gentlemen call!” (1)

Gopala began treating his father like an unpaid servant, but when the old man fell ill, things rapidly came to a head.

"Life in the country didn’t suit the old man. He got fever and a hacking cough, which grew worse at night. It disturbed Gopala’s sleep, so he ordered the peon to fling the old man out onto the fence. The peon was an ignoramus. He didn’t know English. His sentiments were entirely home-grown. ‘What the Dickens does he mean? Am I supposed to turn a sick man out into the garden?’ One day the old man had a raging fever. He’d not eaten for three days. It

(1) Daka Munsi, p. 566.
was midnight, dark and cold; and the old man's cough was worse than ever. Gopala was furious. He punched his father in the chest a couple of times English-fashion. Then he flung the old man's bedding outside. The old man went off to his native village."(1)

The point phakirmohana is making in Paka Munsi is that western education had introduced into Indian society an entirely new feature, social mobility. Previously the caste system had more or less ensured that a son entered the same profession as his father, where, by his inferiority in years and experience, he would remain lower in status to him. But now by acquiring western education a son could achieve a higher position in life than his father. The natural tendency in such circumstances would in any case be for a son to lose some of his respect and awe of his father, but when, as in this case, the professional difference also involved a cultural difference, the results were even worse.

In order to maintain his newly-acquired social and professional status, Gopala Babu was obliged to adopt western standards of dress and to speak English. His father in his traditional native dress and speaking only Oriya was a constant reminder of his humble background and in consequence an acute source of embarrassment in public and a permanent irritation in private. Thus in Paka Munsi phakirmohana demonstrates how western education, whilst benefiting a man materially, could nevertheless harm him emotionally, by exposing him to pressures to conform to alien standards, thereby sowing in his mind the seeds of hatred of his own kith and kin.

(1) Paka Munsi, pp. 566-567.
Sabhyā Jamidāra illumines the cultural differences between the orthodox and the newly-educated. A khānsāma in Assam had sent his daughter, Nayanatāra Duhkhapasara, to a Scottish Mission School, where she had become thoroughly westernised. She wore socks, shoes, jacket and skirt; spoke English, sang and danced; had no respect for the male sex; and was thoroughly independent. In consequence, it was impossible to find a suitable match for her in Assam, so she was sent to Calcutta, where, through a matchmaker, she met and married a westernised bābu, Rājbalocana. Being brought up in a boarding school, she was ignorant of how to behave in an orthodox Hindu family. On her arrival at Rājbalocana’s home, she went clip-clopping into the family temple in her high-heel shoes (which she should have removed), to say “How-do-you-do” and shake hands with her mother-in-law (to whom she should have prostrated herself in reverence). “Don’t touch me,” the mother screamed at the approach of her sacrilegious daughter-in-law, and immediately left for Puri, never to return. Unabashed, Nayanatāra later clip-clopped into the kitchen, horrifying the cook by her failure to remove her shoes and being horrified herself to see the oven being smeared in cowdung. In a country where most cooking preparations are done on the floor, it is sound hygiene to remove shoes and wash one’s feet before entering the house; and, since flies spread disease, discouraging them from settling in the kitchen by smearing the oven in a solution of cowdung, (which for some reason discourages flies) is another sound hygienic measure. Being western-educated, however, Nayanatāra was ignorant of this and was therefore revolted by the “hideous” practice.
In outlining Nayanatāra’s predicament, Phakirmohana demonstrates how western education might unfit people for life in an orthodox home. Nayanatāra’s predicament is, however, only part of a larger issue raised in Sabhya Jamidāra, the value of western education. Sabhya Jamidāra comprises two contrasted stories on training and education: that of Gopāla Mahāpatra and of his son Rājibalocana. Gopāla Mahāpatra’s education and training were entirely practical. He learnt by observation from experienced and competent practicians, first to be an excellent cook and then to be an expert businessman, and in consequence he rose from being a penniless orphan to becoming a rich landowner. Rājibalocana’s education, on the other hand, was of the western Arts variety, which filled his head with a passion for a multiplicity of abstract ideals and an insatiable appetite for discussion and argument, but which provided no training in translating his ideals of social and national progress into practical propositions. Thus, whilst he talked and drank with gusto, the combined impact of his own extravagance and his estate-manager’s peculations set his estate firmly on the road to ruin, and he descended from being a rich landowner to becoming a penniless khānsāma in the wilds of Assam.

Phakirmohana had touched on this theme a year earlier in Mamū, when he outlined the scholastic career of prabhu Dayāl, whose circumstances were almost exactly parallel to Rājibalocana’s. By assiduity to his business, prabhu Dayāl’s father Rama Dayāl Bhagata had risen from being the penniless son of a servant to becoming a rich moneylender. One day when called as a witness in a court action, he had learnt how, through western education, Indians were able to become officials and pleaders whose earning powers were prodigious. Consequently,
despite opposition from his fellow-caste members, he had decided to educate Prabhu Dayāl in English, and to try to get him appointed as an official, or at worst, set him up as a pleader. Prabhu Dayāl proved a scholastic failure; even so, he considered it beneath his dignity to take up the customary business of his caste, moneylending; otherwise, "Where would be the prestige of English education, which had cost so much to acquire?" (1)

Phakirmohana seems here to be making two points: fathers like Gopāla Mahāpātra in Sabhya Jamidāra and Rāma Dayāl Bhagata in Māmt were treating western education as vocational training, imagining that it was going to equip their sons for careers in business management or in administration and law; and their sons, who received the education, were becoming incompetent romantics and dreamers, dazzled by powerful emotional concepts like culture and progress, and imagining themselves somehow raised by their expensive educations to some higher plane where the mundane humdrum business of earning a living was unnecessary. In consequence, the western-educated became spendthrifts and wastrels, when (ironically) they might, like their fathers, have contributed to the wealth and prestige of their nation.

Western education brought with it a further danger, dissipation. Western education was becoming really popular in Orissa only towards the end of the last century, when phakirmohana was commencing his career in prose-fiction. Thus the students he was writing of were largely first-generation students, whose parents had no idea of the costs involved. Consequently, students like Rajabalocana and prabhu Dayāl were

(1) Māmt, p. 181.
able to exaggerate the fees and costs to their fathers and so acquire a large surplus of money to spend on all the illicit pleasures that the towns could provide. Some young men, like Candramani Patanayaka in patent Medicine, became so addicted to drink and drugs that they borrowed at excessive rates from money-lenders and threatened to dissipate their entire patrimony. Phakirmohana does not fully exploit this theme, nor does he imply that such dissipation was entirely due to western education. In Cha Mana Aths Guntha he shows, in the career of Chota Mia Khā, that the same problem was likely to arise as a result of Persian education. The fault was probably not in the education itself but in the opportunity, provided by the pretext of study, of being free from moral guidance and control and of having vast amounts of money to squander. It was essentially a problem peculiar to rich young sons, as he observes in Mamu "youth and money are" two of "the sources of delinquency."

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that what phakirmohana sought to satirise in his prose fiction was largely the effects of western education in Arts, which, in his opinion, tended to alienate the student from his own society and culture. As far as phakirmohana was concerned, a western Arts education was intrinsically no more valuable than an education in Bengali, Oriya, Sanskrit or Telugu literature and culture.

"Our newly-educated ... have studied all the really important matters in this world ... They will be stumped, of course, if you ask them their great grand-father's name, but

(1) Mamu, p. 222.
they have the names of England's Charles III off pat to the 15th generation. But then if you study English or French culture, you're entitled to call yourself educated, whereas to know anything of your own culture of that of your neighbours is downright unnecessary."(1)

Indeed, in view of its alienating effects, a western education in Arts harmed an Indian, because it equipped him with a value system that was inimical to the society and culture in which he was to live, and which, in phakīrmohana's view, it was his duty to improve.

This does not mean that phakīrmohana considered that the West had nothing to offer. On the contrary, he was full of admiration for western science and technology, regarding them as essential, if Indian industry and agriculture were to progress; but he saw no reason why such knowledge should not be made available in Oriya. (2) He was also a staunch advocate of education for women as is demonstrated in the next section.

ii) The Education of Women and Children in 19th Century Orissa.

Before this discussion can proceed any further several things must be clarified. Firstly, a word should be said about our conception of literature. We believe that literature expresses an author's system of values, which may be at variance with that current in his society. This value system is expressed partly in stray comments, but mainly in characterisation, and in the rewards and punishments the

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 249.
author metes out to his characters. Thus in discussing phakirmohana's prose-fiction, it is requisite to interpret his value system, by translating the concrete examples supplied in his novels and stories into general statements about Orissan society and the changes phakirmohana would have liked to see effected. Accordingly, an attempt will now be made to clarify two things: the conception of education held by contemporary society in phakirmohana's time; and phakirmohana's conception of education and the reforms he would have liked effected.

As noted in the previous section, phakirmohana was dissatisfied with the system of higher education current in Orissa in his day. Fundamentally his objection was twofold: western education produced only an 'educated' élite; and it alienated this élite from its own society and culture. These incidentally were the defects of every system of higher education India had ever had. Sanskrit and Persian produced the same results. In phakirmohana's view, an élite, educated in an alien tongue, was of little value to the nation as a whole. True education was the education of the whole nation through its mother-tongue.

Phakirmohana was equally dissatisfied with the system of elementary education through the vernacular. The basic conception of, and attitude towards, education, held by contemporary society, was, in phakirmohana's view, extremely narrow. (1) Education was commonly regarded as synonymous with

(1) "Our modern education omits two things: patriotism and the traditional teacher-student relationship (guru-sisya sambandha), but Satyabadi School is demonstrating the type of education we need. They are dedicated altruists. They are not content to teach only reading. Their constant concern is to teach humanity. The children are learning how one must make sacrifices for the sake of the nation..." phakirmohana's views on education as recorded in the proceedings of the 9th congress of Utkala Sammilani. Quoted by Natabarasa Samanta Ray, p. 117.
learning to read; and learning to read was an ability re-
quired only by those who were to earn a living by it, as
is clear from the following remarks made by phakirmohana's
characters:

a) "There's no need for my son to study. We have sufficient
capital to live on for three generations without doing
a stroke." (the aunt in Birei Bima).  
b) "What's the use of a B.A. to you? You're not going to
work in a Government office." (The grandfather in Garudi
Mantra).
c) "You work in the kaceri, so for you education is essen-
tial, but what use is it to me?" (The housewife in
Pathof Bohu).
d) "What, educate a girl! Whatever for?" (The Grandmother
in Rebati).

The words "education" and "intelligence" are often mis-
understood even in the West. 'Education', as defined by the
husband in Pathof Bohu, meant 'developing one's intelligence.'
Thus, in phakirmohana's view, the two concepts were mutually
interdependent. In the West people often erroneously regard
'intelligence' as synonymous with 'intellectual potentiality;
whereas in fact it is merely a quality of behaviour. In
short, one either behaves intelligently or stupidly. As was
made clear in the previous section, many of phakirmohana's
western-'educated' people behaved stupidly; i.e. in phakir-
irmohana's opinion, they were not educated at all; for to him
education meant being trained to behave with intelligence.
Such training begins at home. The education of Orissan Society could not therefore begin until the women were made aware that education was not merely vocational training, that could be delegated to some cane-swinging teacher, but a means of stimulating intellectual growth so that from infancy children could learn to tackle the various problems of life with intelligence. Thus the initial step in the education of children was to educate mothers. The education, or training, of mothers in Orissa had hitherto meant merely the inculcation of traditional housewifely virtues. This did not always result in intelligent behaviour. Generally it resulted in blind obedience to the guru, the gurujana. Phakirmohana did not wish to abandon traditional training root and branch. It was, in his view, fundamentally right that the young should obey and respect their elders, but they should do so, not blindly, but with intelligence. When their elders were clearly in the wrong, it was their duty to dissent, but to dissent with tact, kindness and affection, like young Lakṣmana Misra in Adharma Bitta. (1) This seems to have been the essence of Phakirmohana's views on education. In the remainder of this section, we shall discuss some of the evidence on which our generalisations are based. (2)

a) The Education of Children.

Phakirmohana gives a description of the educational facilities available in Balasore in the 1850s.

"I was almost nine by the time I began attending school (catagali). There was a school to every big village in the district, and one to every two or three small villages. The well-to-do engaged

(1) See the speech of Lakṣmana Misra quoted in pt.II, ch.VIII: p. 483-484.
(2) The rest of the evidence will be adduced in pt.II, ch.VII. Pp. 438-442.
private tutors. The children of untouchables, kandaras and bauris, used to sit a little way away from the upper-caste children.

"At that time teachers used to come to Balasore from Cuttack, especially the pragana of Jhaṅkāda. Caitra (Mar. Apr.) was the month for importing teachers. You could always tell a candidate for a teaching post by his clothes. They wore pakha-la-kariās to below the knee, gamuchās wrapped round their heads, and slung over their shoulder would be a brass pot big enough to boil about half a seer of rice, a small light lota, two or three manuscripts, and a piece of cloth about eight or nine cubits long. These were the marks of the candidate. You would see them wandering up the road from the middle of phaguna (Feb. Mar) to the end of Caitra.

"The majority of teachers were karaṇas by caste, but some were mati-bamsa ojhas. Mati-bamsa ojhas had a tremendous reputation for arithmetic. They were reputed to know the Ādi-labatī sutra (a treatise on mathematics by Bhāskarācārya). I was told in my childhood that the ojhas could compute the leaves on a tree and the feathers on a flying bird; they were so clever."(1)

"Every single thing was against the rules in the catastalt. There were rules for everything, and transgression of them led to inevitable punishment. When you get tired of sitting in one spot,

(1) Atma Jibana Carita, pp. 9-10
you have to ask politely, 'Sir, one.'; i.e. 'May I urinate?'; 'Sir, two.'; i.e. 'May I defecate?'; 'Sir, five.'; 'May I have a drink of water?'

Here are a few of the punishments that were meted out in schools:

i) Caning;

ii) Standing on one leg;

iii) Standing with one's nose in one hand and one's hair in the other;

iv) Kneeling with one's left hand on one's head and a piece of chalk in the palm of one's outstretched right hand;

v) A rope is prepared from the stalks of palm-leaves. It is about one and a half cubits long. It is put round the offender's neck and noosed round his big toes.

After school each day the pupils receive sūnya-cāti. The teacher and the monitor make a mental note of the time of arrival of each boy. When it time to go, all the boys line up in front of the teacher in order of their time of arrival with both arms outstretched, palms uppermost and placed together. The first arrival receives a tap on his hands from the teacher's cane. That is naught (sūnya). From then on the strokes increase one by one and crash down on the boys' hands, two, three, four and so on till the last boy. Not all the strokes are applied with the same force; there are whacks and taps. The teacher looks to see who is next. Any likelihood of parental repercussions reduces the force.
"If a boy oversleeps and sees by the sunlight on the roofs outside that it is late, then he does not go to school that day for fear of the cane. Instead he makes for a safe place such as the kitchen and busies himself with the pots. But there is no escape for him even there. A few fellow-caste members slip off their clothes; enter the kitchen; and carry the truant bodily into the school, where the teacher summarily sentences him to a few strokes across the back.

"I commenced my education in a school such as this. We did chalk-reading in the morning and manuscripts in the afternoon. After school the other boys went home; but I had to remain behind to wait on the teacher and help prepare his meals. The teacher's name was Vaisnava Mahānti and he came from Cuttack District....

"A school was held in Nandā Gosāi's monastery. I got admitted. The school was closed on the day of the new moon, the day following, the eighth, the fourteenth, and the day after the full moon each lunar month. On those days we older boys used to band together and spend the afternoon singing to the village women, who gave us rice for the teacher. This was the teacher's salary; he sold what he did not want himself and pocketed the proceeds. He received lots of rice besides; he used to receive an offering each time a pupil began a new subject. The usual offerings were: a seer of
rice, a betel nut, some molasses and puffed rice, or some flowers.

"There was a free Persian school in Balasore at that time. After leaving the cataract, I began attending the Persian school. There were three Muslim teachers and one Oriya. The Oriya's name was Vanamāli Vacaspati. The instruction was limited to how to correspond with one's father and brothers, and how to appeal to the law-courts.

"There were no printed books in Oriya with the exception of the Bible and there was no printing press in Orissa with the exception of the Cuttack Mission Press. The Western missionaries ran a school in Balasore. Only the printed Bible was taught there. But no Hindu children would attend the school for fear of losing caste by reading their printed book."

To supplement this description, we give below an account by one of Phakirmohana's contemporaries, Madhusūdana Dāsa.

"A teacher, qualified to read and write Oriya, was charged with my elementary education. He also knew Arithmetic. He received a monthly salary of Rs. 7, in addition to food and clothing. Part of our own house constituted the school-room. The room's floor and walls were of mud. Brick or stone-floors were not considered suitable for a school-room ... for in the village cataract one

(Ortma Jibana Carita, pp. 13-17.)
was taught to read, by writing in chalk on mud-floors. The teacher wrote characters on the floor and the pupil read them aloud as he traced over them (with his chalk). The mud walls were used (like a black-board) for the teacher's calculations, for noting down other information, and for drawing pictures of people, animals and other scenes. These pictures were often very good. They were painted in red chalk, mixed with water and applied with the finger as a brush. They often served to stimulate in the children an interest in painting or fine arts.

"Children had to sit in the cahals for prolonged periods. The whole weight of their bodies rested on their feet, for they were not provided with seats (asana)... Whilst writing, they had to remain seated, and this constituted an excellent form of exercise for the lower part of their bodies.

"The teacher had some coconut matting to sit on. Having learnt to trace out the characters on the floor, the pupil was taught how to write on palm-leaf, for in those days in Orissa palm-leaf and style were the customary writing materials. Though pen, ink and paper have now come into use, they have not completely ousted palm-leaf and style, which remain essential in villages and are still used for the writing of panji in the Jagannatha Temple, birth charts and wedding invitations, and in some religious festivals. The palm-leaf is cut to shape with the style's edge and the characters
are formed with its point."(1)

Madhusudana Dasa was fortunate in having a private tutor. The tutor was well-paid, receiving Rs.7 per month in addition to clothing and keep. (2) This indicates that the man's abilities were probably above average. It should be noticed that Madhusudana makes no mention of discipline. His tutor appears to have retained his attention merely by stimulating Madhusudana's natural curiosity with drawings and paintings. The account of phakirmohana's primary education, on the other hand, consists mainly of a catalogue of punishments. As the attitude of his uncle purusottama senapati suggests, in the 1850s caning was regarded as synonymous with teaching. (3) The aim of village education, according to gaurisankara Ray, was merely to teach children how to read manuscripts. Comprehension was not deemed necessary. (4) Since the average teacher made no attempt to stimulate interest or even to explain the meaning of what was being read, it is small wonder that the cane became the primary teaching aid. Such violence is a confession of failure on the part of the teacher; for it denotes frustration, an emotional reaction to a situation, in which his powers of reason have proved inadequate.

In Randi Pua Ananta phakirmohana presents a child of considerable physical strength and intellect, who, when treated with affection, is always ready to use his strength in

(2) Pay scales for clerks in the civil court at this time ranged from 3 to 10 rupees; see, pt.I, ch. VI,p... 107.
(3) See, Pt.I, ch.VI,pp.... 103-104.
(4) See, Pt.I, ch.III, p... 35.
the service of others, yet who becomes a whirlwind of destruction, when slighted. At the end of the story the boy sacrifices his life to save the village from inundation by damming a breach in the bund with a huge temple door, held in position by a dhiṅki (a large log used for husking rice) and his own great strength, whilst the villagers shovel earth on top of him, to repair the bund. His last words, before finally being buried alive by the villagers, who are working with such concentrated fury that they do not realise what they are doing, are Haribol, māṭi pakṣa (praise the Lord and shovel earth on). The point of the story is probably to indicate how the immense energies of the illiterate masses are being wasted. One sees in the story the poor half-starved Bhuyās of Ketujhara, who, like most adivāśis (aboriginals), are honest, hard-working and generous, flinging away their lives on the preservation of a temple. The implication is that given education and training, they could have applied their immense vitality to the progress of Orissa.

In the course of the story Ananta is sent to the village school, by his mother Simhana, who, like the typical village women of her period, apparently saw no intrinsic merit in education itself. She merely sent him there to keep him out of mischief. As Phakirmohana's portrait of the teacher shows, however, it is as well that Simhana's aims were so modest; though even these seemed unlikely to reach fulfilment in this particular school, for the teacher spent most of his time bullying his pupils into stealing little luxuries for himself.
"At nine o'clock the teacher felt the urge to visit the lavatory. He called for tobacco, matches and water-pot (lota). Five or six children dashed to fetch them for him. The children do everything for the teacher. They massage his legs, wash his clothes, clean his pots, everything. No matter whose child he happens to be, he cannot escape the massaging of the teacher's legs; for it is a great aid to learning. The teacher rolled a cigarette and, lighting it on a taper, took a couple of draws. 'Not very good, Mukunda,' he remarked, as he exhaled.

"'I cannot help it, Sir. It is the only tobacco Dad bought yesterday,' Mukunda said.

"'Hey, Sindia. How is it you stopped bringing that Balesvar tobacco your father bought in Cuttack?' the teacher asked.

"'It's not my fault, Sir. Mother has bundled it up and put it on the top shelf, out of my reach.'

"'Right, then listen. When your mother goes for her bath, you turn a large basket upside-down, climb on it, and reach down the tobacco. You're only to take 3 or 4 leaves, mind. Bundle up the rest and put it back on the shelf. I want to see some here tomorrow, or you can watch out for my cane.'"(1)

In Ananta's treatment of the teacher, Phakirmohana avenges

(1) Randi pua Ananta, p. 522.
himself on the bullying pedagogues of his own childhood. All the teacher's efforts to discipline the boy failed, for Ananta was scarcely conscious of the canings the teacher gave him. Then one day the teacher hit him with a walking stick. This hurt a little, so Ananta sought vengeance. He scraped some prickles from a certain creeper and mixed them with a solution of sticky mud; then he poured this glutinous mixture into the schoolmaster's lota. When the teacher went to the "lavatory", the prickles stung him so alarmingly that he came dashing back to the school screaming for water. Ananta had also "doctored" the teacher's kitchen water, so the master was violently stung again. His face and eyelids swelled up, till he could neither see nor speak, but just lay there on the ground moaning. The villagers came and, by bathing and massaging him in oil, managed to alleviate his sufferings. Once recovered, he set out for Ananta's home in a towering rage, screaming abuse at Ananta; this unleashed the fury of Simhanâ, who leapt from the veranda, bent on destruction. The teacher took to his heels in terror and was never seen again.

b) The Education of Women.

It was largely in order to combat the narrow utilitarian attitude to education current in his society and to demonstrate the need for education as an antidote to superstition, as a protection against exploitation, and as an aid to more compatible marriages that Phakirmohana wrote Rebati, Gunâ Bohu, Pathôf Bohu and Garudi Mantra. In Rebati he describes how the arrival in her native village of a handsome young graduate from Cuttack Normal School affected the life of an unsophisticated village girl. The young graduate Vasudeva
had come to set up a primary school in the village. Since he belonged to the same caste as Rebati's father Syamabandhu, a rent collector for the local raja, Syamabandhu struck up a friendship with him and Vasudeva became a regular visitor to Syamabandhu's home. One day Vasudeva happened to mention that a girls' school had opened in Cuttack, where young girls learnt to read and sew. Syamabandhu suggested that Vasudeva might teach his daughter to read and Vasudeva consented to do so.

The moment Rebati's grandmother heard of it, she protested strongly,

"What, educate a girl! Whatever for? She must learn to cook and to serve a meal, to make a cake, decorate a house, and churn curds; but reading? Never!"

The point is that in an Orissan household there was a sharp division of labour between males and females: the men did all the work outside the house, their professional work, shopping and family business etc; and the women did all the work inside, cooking, cleaning and decorating. Thus to the traditional way of thinking, as exemplified by Rebati's grandmother, there was no need for a girl to learn to read.

It is not really clear from the story why Syamabandhu wanted Rebati to learn to read either. The only justifications he gave for his decision was that the daughters of one of his neighbours could recite the Bhagavata and sing the Pahidesha Bilsa correctly. Possibly he merely wished to encourage his daughter's interest in pauranika literature, because of its moral value for herself and for any children that she might bear. Rebati had already learnt several Bhajana (devotional songs) from hearing them sung by her father. It
may have been that her father merely wished to extend her repertoire; or it is possible that he had an ulterior motive.

Śyāmabandhu was in an awkward situation; for he had no son. This meant that unless he could induce some young man to marry his daughter and live in the family as a son, his income would cease the moment he retired. It is possible that right from the start he had seen in Vāsudeva a future son-in-law and had cultivated his friendship with this object in view; and it is also possible that this same object had lain behind his suggestion that Rebatī should become Vāsudeva's private pupil. At all events, as the story progresses, it becomes clear that Vāsudeva would have married Rebatī and been content to join the family as a son, if cholera had not so disastrously intervened.

No matter what motive lay behind Rebatī's being taught to read, however, the events of the story make it obvious that some education for the women of the household was essential. Firstly, as her grandmother's subsequent behaviour reveals, village women were extremely superstitious. All the evils which befall the family were attributed by the grandmother to Rebatī's desire to learn to read.

"The old woman couldn't see very well now. She had gone half-crazy. She had got over her grief to some extent but she'd begun to abuse Rebatī. She'd made up her mind that Rebatī was to blame for all their misfortunes. Her son would be alive today and so would his wife, and they'd still have the cows, and the bullocks and ploughman, if this pig-headed, evil little witch of a grand-daughter,
Rebatā, hadn't taken it into her head to study."(1)

This superstitious attitude of attributing misfortune to human misbehaviour engendered almost incredible callousness, not only in the old lady, but in society in general. When Ṣyāmabandhu was struck with cholera, no one but Vasiṣṭha, who was educated, came to help. Everyone else locked his door, because it was thought that "Old woman cholera was walking the streets, popping people into her basket." And when Rebatā finally took fever, the old woman did nothing for her, because in her view the fever was due, not to natural causes, but to an unnatural desire to study. Consequently, medicine would have been powerless to cure it. Had the grandmother been a little more educated and enlightened, phalārmohana seems to imply that Rebatā would not have gone down with fever in the first place and would probably have survived. As it was, by her superstitious brutality her grandmother added guilt to the girl's already intolerable burden of grief, crushed her will to live, and virtually abandoned her to die.

The second way in which women would have benefited from education was in acquiring the ability to manage their affairs in the absence of a husband or son. As the callous conduct of the jamidāra, the washerman and the shopkeeper Hari Ga reveal, it was a harsh world that Rebatā and her grandmother inhabited. Almost everyone was out to take advantage of ignorance and inexperience. Because of the women's lack of business knowledge, the jamidāra was able to claim their valuable cows in payment of a non-existent deficit in Ṣyāmabandhu's

(1) Rebatā, p. 506.
accounts. The washerman generally profited from sudden death, because clothing remained uncollected at the laundry; and because the grandmother had no idea of prices, Hari was able to cheat her, when for the first time in her life she went shopping. Thus in Rebat phakir-mohana demonstrates the need for female education and the distress that can result from the lack of it.

Nevertheless, as he points out, 'education' had its dangers too. What Rebat's grandmother may have feared was that 'education' would make Rebat dissatisfied with her role as a housewife and unwilling to accept the authority of her elders. Is is significant that Rebat reacted to her grandmother's attempts to dissuade her father from allowing her to study with impudence.

Nima in Sung Bohu is an extreme example of what may have become of Rebat. Nima had a smattering of education, but no knowledge of housewifery, and an inflated idea of her own importance. She was somewhat older than the usual bride, being in her 17th year at the time of her wedding rather than the 13th as was then customary. She had been given to understand by her mother that her husband was salaried and that she would be the mistress of the house. In consequence, she regarded her mother-in-law and sister-in-law as servants, and was unfitted for her role as housewife and daughter-in-law. Her behaviour was a complete parody of what it ought to have been.

"Her mother had told her that she must not address her mother-in-law directly, but make signs. Accordingly, when the new bride was eating and needed
more rice, she made signs, by banging on the floor with her cup and plate. And if she felt hungry and her mother-in-law was a little behind with the meal, she went into the kitchen and made signs, whimpering and rubbing her tummy, so that her mother-in-law got the message that her daughter-in-law was hungry."(1)

this parody of good behaviour was kept up, even later when the daughter-in-law was angry.

"The new bride did not forget her mother's instructions even when she was frankly annoyed with her mother-in-law for being late with the meals. At such times she may have abused her mother-in-law, but she always did so most politely; for she made sure that she was correctly veiled and that she was facing away from her mother-in-law, as was proper, before she let her have the rough edge of her tongue." (2)

By eventually causing Nima to be humiliated into assuming her true role in the household, Phakirmohana demonstrates his thesis that, whilst a little education was a desirable thing in a woman, it should not take precedence over her traditional training as a housewife and mother, otherwise domestic unrest was inevitable.

In *Pashori Bohu* Phakirmohana returns once more to the

(1) *Sunā Bohu*, p. 570.  
(2) ibid, p. 571
theme of Rebatl, the need for female education. Gopāla Ṣābu was a kaceri official. He was reluctant to marry, because he feared that his widowed mother's idea of a suitable bride would not coincide with his own. He desired to marry an articulate bride, who was competent to keep household accounts and write a letter, and with whom he could spend companionable evenings discussing subjects of mutual interest.

Finally his mother inveigled him into agreeing to marry. The bride who was eventually found for him, Sarasvatī Deī, was from a remote jungle village. She was beautiful and domesticated, but illiterate. Imagining that he would be able to transform her into the type of bride he desired, Gopāla Ṣābu married her. His attempts to educate her failed largely because, like Rebatl's grandmother, she could see no reason why a wife who spent all her life in the home should learn to read.

"You work in the kaceri, so for you education is essential, but what good is it to me?"

"Education will develop your intelligence," Gopāla replied, and Sarasvatī laughed in his face. Gopāla Ṣābu felt insulted, though Sarasvatī had intended no insult. To her way of thinking, she already was intelligent. She had been told so constantly by her mother and friends in her native village, and indeed in domestic skills it was impossible to fault her.

By this time Gopāla's mother was dead. He lost interest in improving his wife and began to spend all his evenings at the village club, the bhakti-dayinī-sabhā, where the
purānas were read and discussed. Sarasvatī Deī began to sus­pect that he was seeing another woman. One day she tackled him about it.

"Where do you go every night?" she asked.
'To the bhakti-dāyini-sabhā,' he replied.
'What's that you say, bhagabatī dānī?'
'Yes, that's right,' he said with a laugh.
'What's she like? Is she beautiful?'
'Very,' he assented and was off.

Actually Gopaīla was annoyed that his wife was so illiterate that she heard bhakti-dāyini-sabhā as bhagabatī dānī. Meanwhile Sarasvatī Deī began to brood about the beautiful witch with whom her husband spent all his evenings. She asked Arjuna the servant about bhagabatī dānī. Arjuna did not really know what she meant, but, reluctant to admit ignorance, he reflected for a while and then, concluding that she meant the image of the goddess he had seen at a recent festival, he told her about the image. His description of the goddess's charms set sarasvatī's blood boiling. She started smashing up the kitchen and got herself scalded in splashing rice water. Then she pounded her forehead on the floor till her forehead split, and blood spurted forth.

Besides pointing out once more the need for female education, phakīrmohana here raises another more important issue, the defects inherent in the traditional training of a bride. Hitherto the caste system had more or less ensured compatibility between husband and wife, because both came from almost

(1) Pathor Bohu, p. 592.
identical backgrounds. Weavers married the daughters of weavers and washermen the daughters of washermen. Thus previously daughters and sons had needed only to model their behaviour upon that of their mothers and fathers to achieve economic, marital and social success. But in modern times patterns of employment were changing and so were living conditions. Therefore, unless a bride retained sufficient adaptability, even the most 'perfect' traditional training and behaviour was no longer guaranteed to bring her success in marriage. This is the underlying theme of Pathol Bohu.

By traditional standards, Sarasvatī Deī was undoubtedly the perfect bride, and it was her very 'perfection' which ultimately harmed her. A less perfect bride would have revealed what was troubling her about her husband's conduct. A neighbour's wife had noticed earlier that she was brooding and had solicitously inquired after the cause. But it was not done to complain of one's husband, so when the woman had assumed that Sarasvatī Deī was grieving for her mother-in-law, she had not disabused her. Thus she had lost the opportunity of relieving her mounting tension, and the final violent outburst became inevitable.

Garudi Mantra develops the theme of Pathol Bohu a little further. Madana Mohana was the son of a rich jamidāra. He was a student in Cuttack, and his novel-reading had set him dreaming of a wife like a novel heroine. His attitude to the traditional bride was satirical.

"She walks with a stoop like a hunch-back;
Her lovely features are hidden beneath a deep veil."
She doesn't speak; she signals.
She skulks in a corner and broods.
Her eyes are shut tight like a cat's and
Her body is bedaubed with oil and turmeric."(1)

One day his grandfather visited him in Cuttack to inform him that his marriage was all arranged. Madana tried to wriggle out of it on the pretext of completing his studies, but his arguments were silenced by his grandfather's remarking,

"What's the use of a B.A. to you? You're not going to work in a Government Office.'"

So Madana married and much to his surprise grew extremely fond of his wife. He longed to spend all his time with her, so that he could educate her and they could enjoy talking together, but traditional etiquette stood in his way. Traditional etiquette had taken human form in padi, who had been engaged by the bride's parents to ensure that the girl did not disgrace them by bad behaviour.

"Padi clung to his wife like a leech. She may have been only a servant but she was an authority on etiquette. She had a considerable reputation in her native village. When any daughter of the upper-classes was about to be married, the mother always engaged padi for a fortnight prior to the ceremony to teach her daughter how she must weep and wail when leaving her father's house, how much veil she must wear, how she must walk with a stoop and speak through signals. Padi was unsurpassed in the art of teaching etiquette. It is most

(1) Gārudi Mantra, p. 528.
regrettable that with the spread of education, and especially of girls’ education, the livelihood of such worthy women as padî was fast coming to a close.”(2)

Madana’s problem was now how to separate his wife from the leech-like padî. He eventually hit upon a stratagem. First of all, he induced padî and his wife to believe that he was expert in curing snake-bite by magic. His magic depended upon the victim’s – always supposing the victim to be a woman – throwing back her veil and looking him straight in the eye, while he pronounced the magic formula. Failure to comply with this stipulation resulted in death. padî took his point. ‘Life’s more important than modesty,’ she declared. Then Madana Babu painted a strip of paper to resemble a snake and lay in wait for padî and his wife near the entrance to the grove. As they entered, he hurled a stone with the paper attached across their path so that the paper seemed to slither and writhe and brush against their legs. Then with a pin attached to a bamboo pole he struck his wife’s heel. At the sudden pain, she instantly collapsed. Sukî, Madana Babu’s trusted maid, immediately arrived on the scene and summoned Madana to cure his wife.

Sukî and padî pinned his wife’s arms behind her back and, despite her struggles, unveiled her. She was then ordered to look Madana in the eye, while he uttered the incantation. That done, a string was tied about her throat, and was to remain there throughout the five days of the treatment, during which time she was to hear the mantra morning and evening.

"Madana could see that much of the real poison had been drawn off. Whilst he uttered the incantation, his wife pressed her lips tightly together.

(2) Grâudi Mantra, p. 530.
to prevent herself laughing outright." (1)

On the fifth day the string was removed and Madana said that it must be taken away by a widow who was not to appear again for 3 months, 3 fortnights and 3 days. As he had hoped, padī volunteered. She had in any case been longing to escape from this snake-infested region.

The point that phakirmohana is making in both pāthoī Bohu and Gārudi Mantra is that in certain modern situations traditional etiquette prevented rather than facilitated marital happiness. Previously marriage had been more the affair of the family than of the individual. Marriages had been arranged largely for the mutual benefit of the two families and only two things were required of the bride:

i) that she should not disgrace her father's family by misbehaviour in her husband's home; and

ii) that she should fit in with her husband's family as unobtrusively as possible.

Traditional etiquette ensured that these requirements were fulfilled. The bride's silent submissiveness enabled her readily to accept the discipline of her mother-in-law; her almost perpetual veil lessened the likelihood of her attracting undesirable attention from other male members of her husband's home; and her induced disinclination to criticise either her husband or anyone else made for a happy relationship between her husband and herself and also with the family as a whole.

But as pāthoī Bohu had shown, the bride's silent submissiveness could, and often did, hide a deep dissatisfaction and

(1) Gārudi Mantra, p. 532.
resentment. Too much enforced suppression of her feelings was ultimately bad both for herself and her husband; and in any case such behaviour was no longer necessary with the modern educated husband. Educated young men were now not marrying till the age of 21 or 22, whereas previously men of their class had been marrying at 13. The more mature, educated husband was forming a clearer picture of the type of bride he required. He wanted an articulate woman, whose personality was not repressed and inhibited by adherence to conventional restrictions, but capable of expression in free and easy companionship.
CHAPTER V.

The Theme of Justice.

1) Cha Māna Ātha Guntha.

Much of Phakirmohana's prose fiction is concerned with the theme of crime and punishment, or more simply, justice. The theme of Cha Māna Ātha Guntha is the contrast between temporal and spiritual justice. Temporal justice as represented by the local police and the legal profession was venal, corrupt and inadequate. Gobara Jenā, the village constable, typified the graft of local affairs. He was a pāna (an untouchable) and lived in the dama quarter of the village. He was in league with Maṅgarāja and the damas, whose acknowledged occupation was robbery and theft. He insured himself against future arrest by taking presents to the entire police station staff, from the lowliest peon to the muni, each time he went to make his monthly report; and when he was finally implicated in a series of robberies, he bribed the muni and was acquitted. He used his authority to intimidate the villagers into feeding him each night. If for some reason the particular villager whose turn it was to feed him refused to do so, then some time after he would take a night off and mysteriously, during his absence, that villager's home would be attacked and robbed by the damas. He was a sly, cunning rascal who could be trusted by no one, and it was he who eventually betrayed Maṅgarāja.

The immense fortunes that could be gained from corruption whilst in police service can be judged from the career of Sekha Dildāra Mia, commonly known as Ali Mia. Ali Mia was at one time a horse dealer. One day he happened to supply
a particularly fine mount to a British official and to show his gratitude the official decided to give him a well-paid post provided Ali Mia was sufficiently qualified. So he asked Ali Mia, whether he could read and write. 'Yes, Sir, I know persian,' Ali Mia replied, 'Give me a pen and I'll write my name in full.' On these meagre qualifications Ali Mia was appointed as police daroga, a post he occupied for thirty years or more. During this time he amassed an immense fortune.

"In addition to his house, garden and furniture, he possessed no less than four estates. Estates (jamidarfs) used to be auctioned off in Calcutta. Mia once went there in connection with a murder case and bought the jamidar of phatepura sarasanda at an auction. You may be inclined to doubt my word, for a police daroga was only the equivalent of what is now the rank of Inspector in the Bengal police. How could he possibly have earned so much? Shut your eyes and read on, it's the Gospel truth I'm telling you. There's a well-known story about a brahmin name Govinda panda and a Deputy Magistrate, who once decided a case in the brahmin's favour. 'May you become a daroga,' the brahmin said by way of blessing. Do you get the point? A hint is generally enough for an intelligent person. The famous Calcutta millionaire, Moti jila, began by selling empty bottles. A wine merchant once complained, 'Moti jila made his millions by selling empty bottles. I sell full ones and am in queer street.' I fear that some babu, who has passed his B.A. and M.A., may hear of Ali Mia and
complain, 'Can you beat it? This oaf Mia can write no more than his name and he becomes a jamidāra, whereas I, who can dash off long essays, am scarcely able to scrape a living.' The thing is, sir, that 'It's neither brain nor brawn that counts, only destiny.' (1)

Little digs at the legal profession prepare one for the entrance of Rāma Rāma Lālā long before his appearance in the story. The immense wealth of the legal profession and the dubious means by which it is acquired are hinted at in the description of Maṅgarāja's house in chapter III.

"If one didn't know, when seeing Maṅgarāja's mansion for the first time, one would take it for the home of a lawyer, who had passed his B.Ll. degree, or the spoils of four score other homes." (2)

These digs are sometimes in the form of innocent-looking similes.

"In the cornices sit spiders, waiting for flies and mosquitoes to drop into their nets, just as lawyers lean back in their book-lined rooms, waiting clients." (3)

Rāma Rāma Lālā and his breed have made of justice one more commodity to be bought and sold.

(1) Cha Māna Ātha Guntḥa, p. 241.
(2) ibid, p. 233.
(3) ibid, p. 243.
"Maṅgarāja (beseechingly):

'What am I to do? Save me. Spare my life. You're a guardian to me. I'm a child in comparison, with the intellect of a child. It's up to you.'

"Lawyer (Rāma Rāma Lal):

'You need tell me nothing. I'm fully acquainted with your case. I'll take care of everything. But you bear in mind one thing: it's a difficult case, very difficult, a hanging matter. If you don't watch out hanging's certain. What's more, the daroga's got his knife into you. Now you're a clever chap. I don't need to explain to you. You know all the ins and outs of court cases. It's going to cost money. It doesn't do to be niggardly. You'll have to lash out. You've heard what the daroga's saying, haven't you? Capital murder. You've got to save your skin. Did you earn the money or did the money earn you. You'd better make up your mind quickly.'

"Maṅgarāja (whimpering):

'How much will it cost? I've not a penny with me and I've no one to turn to at the moment. The daroga won't let my estate manager speak to me. Get me off and I'll give you one thousand rupees, once I get home.'

"Gopi Simha (a court official):

'Come on now, Maṅgarāja. This isn't the way you ran your estate, I'll be bound. This is not a market that operates on credit. 'The client says, 'Save me', and the lawyer says, 'pay up!'. Let's see your money. You want to win, don't you?
So let's see your money. I'm sorry, Mr. Lala, but I can no longer allow you to speak to the accused. The najara gave permission for only a word or two. There's not only me. There are four of us.'

"Lawyer (Rama Rama Lala):
'Did you hear that, Mañgaraja? It's no easy matter. We've got to buy them all, from the peon to the officer-in-charge. It's such a tricky case, that had it been any other lawyer, he wouldn't have touched it for less than Rs.10,000. It's only because I'm different, that I'm taking it on. How can I let you down, when you look upon me as a guardian? Right, I'll bear the whole cost of the case. It won't be a penny less than 10,000. Mortgage your estate to me. It won't cost the full amount, of course. I'll give you a detailed account, when you're acquitted.'

"Mañgaraja knew he was beaten. It takes a snake to see snake's legs. Mañgaraja knew very well what would happen if he mortgaged his estate, but a drowning man will hang on to even the tail of a tiger."(1)

The full inadequacy of the legal system came out at the trial. Though convinced that Mañgaraja was a black-guard and scoundrel, who, by cheating Bhagia and Saria of their cha mana atha guntha of land, had been ultimately responsible for the tragedy that overtook them, the judge scrupulously

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 289-290.
insisted that he could try Maṅgarāja only on the charges that had been preferred against him and that on the evidence adduced Maṅgarāja was innocent of all but one of them, a charge of stealing the cow Neta. In his report of the case Judge H.R. Jackson wrote,

"There is sufficient reason to suppose that the whole business of foreclosing on the mortgage was a trick, but all that is irrelevant to the present case. We are convinced that Bhagīa's going insane and Sarīa's starving to death were both due to the accused's taking possession of their cha mana ātha guntha of land and of their other belongings. This does not make the accused guilty of murder, however, ....

"We have sufficient proof of the accused's being skilled in appropriating other people's property. .. Being powerful himself and knowing Bhagīa to be weak and unable to retaliate, he stole the cow. .."(1)

But though temporal justice might be faulty and inadequate, there was another law (dharma), whose workings were infallible and inexorable.

"Man suffers the fruits of his deeds... The cunning may delude themselves that what they do in seclusion and with stealth will go unseen. It is true that a small seed, once planted, does go

(1) Cha Mana Ātha Guntha, pp. 293-290
unseen, yet the tree which grows from it, cannot escape notice. The fruits of that tree must be endured by you and sometimes by your family for generations... "(1)

Thus none could escape the consequences of their acts. Campa, the instigator of the plot whereby Bhagia and Siria were robbed, suffered the most hideous death in the whole of Oriya literature.(2)

"Pitch-black night. Not a hand visible in front of you; the wind howling, the rain lashing, and the Banyan tree like a conglomeration of darkness. Bats fly in like little blobs of darkness and dangle upon this dark conglomeration, which sways and creaks alarmingly. Blobs of darkness fly out again, and screech and snap at the Banyan fruits, which thud to earth. Even amidst this demonic din the snores of Campa within the hut grow louder. Govinda is suddenly startled by the snap and snarl of two beasts beneath the dark conglomeration and peers out. Though the lamplight in the hut is fading... he clearly discerns two jackals fighting over the Banyan fruit. They seem to suggest something to him; he stands; peers round cautiously; and then scrutinises Campa from head to toe. His barbering equipment lay in a niche in the wall. He reaches in and carefully selects something; then he tightens his clothing; and clenches the thing, all the while gazing fixedly at Campa, like a leopard at a sleeping sow, his two eyes burning

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 306.
(2) Surendra Mahanti, Phakirmohana Samiksa, Cuttack, 1955; p. 61.
and his right hand clenching this thing ... He scarcely dares breathe. The moment he steps forward, a flash traverses Campa's body and travels round the room. Govind starts so violently that he is thrown back over the threshold. A cautious glance round assures him that there is nothing there ... Then he realises that the flash had come from the thin in his hand; and he trides back into the hut with renewed courage. He leaps on Campa like the leopard on the sow. In that moment the lamp splutters and extinguishes, leaving total darkness. From the hut emerges the grunts of violent effort and the beat of limbs; then utter silence. The sudden burst of sound sends the jackals scampering; and there is a harsh beat of wings as the bats scattered like blobs of darkness from the tree. Right then a powerful gust of wind rattles the branches and shakes the hut. It seems in that moment as if the invisible darkness houses destruction."

Her sufferings did not cease with death. Her body was discovered in a hut whose walls were spattered with blood like those of a slaughter-house. The air was thick with the stench of decay and the body bloated fit to burst. It was dragged from its foul enclosure into the glare of the sun. Campa's silken sari caught on the door and was drawn clear of contact with her hideous, bloated flesh, which immediately attracted jackals and vultures. Her feet were lopped of to free the last ornaments from her legs and, presumably so as to keep them, the bored official, who had arrived to investigate her

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 297-298.
death, decided to report that the body was that of a vagrant, killed by snake-bite. Thus relieved of any implication in the crime, the villagers instantly agreed and furnished statements about the snakes that infested the region. The inflated corpse was then flung out onto the river, to be dragged down, as the ferryman noticed, at the precise spot where the barber had been seized by the crocodile. On the hot sandy shore the jackals and vultures disputed over the severed feet.

Govinda the barber who had murdered her was eaten alive by a crocodile. Gobara Jena, who had rigged evidence of murder, by burning marks of assault on Sari's body, after she had starved to death, and then producing witnesses to testify that she had died of a flogging from Mangaraja, was trapped in the witness box; jailed for perjury; and murdered by the damas he had helped Mangaraja to get falsely convicted of theft. And finally Mangaraja, who had once offered a Munsi a bribe of Rs.1,000 to imprison these damas and had later failed to pay up, found himself before that same Munsi on a murder charge. Had he honoured his word, the charge could perhaps have been quashed, but the Munsi bore him a grudge and was determined to prosecute for the maximum penalty. As luck would have it, Mangaraja was acquitted of the murder charge, but he was detained in the same prison as those same damas he had had falsely convicted; and thus he met his death at their hands rather than those of the hangman.

ii) Māmā

Phakirnohana continues the theme of justice in his novel Māmā, but concentrates more upon reform than upon punishment.
Even in Cha Mana Atha Guntha he had raised the possibility of Mangaraja's repentance, long before the full consequences of his misdeeds overtook him.

"Judging by Mangaraja's behaviour, we suspect that he is both grieved and repentant ... Does he perhaps discern a close connection between his own evil deeds and the death of his wife? And does this fill him with remorse? ... Who can say? Who can fathom the shifting sands of man's nature? The Lord God made us all with the same ingredients, our bodies from flesh and blood, bone and sinew, and our minds from the emotions of compassion, love, tenderness, violence, enmity and hate. When endowed with these emotions in the right proportions, a man is a man, but if one of these emotions is excessive and predominates over the others, then the man loses his humanity and becomes either a god or a demon ... Thus though all men are basically the same, not two men in ten million are physically identical; and just as men's bodies differ, their minds differ also. Some men have strong propensities, others weak, while the propensities of still others may lie dormant. At some particular time a turn of events may awaken these dormant propensities. Who would have thought that those drunken reprobates, Jagai and Madhai, could have become devout Vaishnavas? Or that that tyrannical enemy of Christ, Saul, would now be worthy of a seat amongst the most venerable of seers? On the other hand, the asceticism of that royal seer Visvamitra, son of Gadh, that had endured for thousands and thousands of
eons, and his even greater steadfastness in Brahma, tottered at a single glance from the beauteous Menaka ... The cause of all these sudden changes was a particular circumstance or meeting. We should all remember the words of the Blessed Sāṅkara Cārya,

'A moment in the company of the good in this world, becomes a boat to cross the ocean of existence.

(ksaṇam iha sajjana-saṅgatieke bhavati bhavānavataraṇe naukā)

The teaching of Sānātana Brahma Dharma is, You must hate the sin, not the sinner.

Who can say whether or not the faculty which gives rise to remorse had not now been activated in Maṅgarāja? We are not omniscient. We do not know what Maṅgarāja was feeling. Even if we knew it would be beyond our power to describe how grief and remorse gripped at his throat and blanketed his mind."(1)

Thus Phakīrmoçanā was not without compassion for Maṅgarāja and his condition, but Maṅgarāja lacked the advantages that would have made true repentance possible, as becomes clear from the career of Naṭabara Dāsa in Māmū. Māmū is basically the same as Cha Maṇa Ātha Guntha. The theme is the same, and the characters of the main protagonists, Maṅgarāja and Cāmpā and Naṭabara and Citrakāla, are basically the same. These similarities between the characters and circumstances of Maṅgarāja and Naṭabara were probably intended. Maṅgarāja and Naṭabara were intended to appear 'basically the same' but 'not identical'. Their circumstances and

(1) Cha Maṇa Ātha Guntha, pp. 278-279.
careers were intended to appear 'basically the same' but 'not identical'. The slight differences were in fact accentuated by this basic similarity, and were intended to be noticed, for they form the basis of the moral superiority of Natabara over Mañgaraja.

Natabara Dasa belonged to the middle-class and this ordinarily should have saved him from becoming over-interested in wealth and property and thus prone to delinquency...

"As a matter of fact, if the mistress of the house is good, religious and unselfish, then real peace and happiness reign constantly in a middle-class home. Ordinary people, of course, envy the easy affluence and empty pomp and splendour of the rich, but the rich rarely enjoy pure, undiluted happiness. The rich are so concerned with acquiring and increasing their vast incomes, that they have no time to care for the well-being of their souls; and they are so intent on their own affairs that they seldom realise that they have a duty to watch out for the interests of others. The consequences of the things in life that they consider agreeable are pure poison; and at the end gazing with anxious yearning upon their foul and spotted fortunes, they quit this world most miserably.

"The lives of the poor and underprivileged are also wretched, but in a different way. Because of their lack of money, they have to endure dreadful hardships to sustain life. And sometimes they
stoop to vile measures to alleviate their poverty and thus become the cause of their own torment in this world and the next. A number of people are, of course, goaded by their own temperaments, dubious means, but in many cases poverty leads people into crime. Good, honest, religious middle-class people are free from these vexations." (1)

Māgārāja belonged to the 'poor and underprivileged'. He was an orphan and at one time a homeless waif. He had therefore learnt early that life was a harsh struggle in a world without mercy. He saw that wealth and property were the only bulwark against harsh reality and employed all his native cunning and shrewdness in the acquisition of property and power, thereby increasing the harshness and bitterness of life both for himself and for others. Māgārāja was therefore one of those whom 'poverty' had led 'into crime', whereas Natabara was one of the people who were 'goaded by their own temperaments into acquiring wealth by dubious means'. Though Natabara had enjoyed better environmental conditions in childhood than Māgārāja, these conditions had been unable totally to suppress his innate propensities.

"...though a person's propensities may be temporarily held in check by moral instruction, good influences, environmental conditions or the hereditary propensities of his parents, they are never completely eradicated; and though, generally speaking, a man acquires the prevailing characteristics of his family, class or society, exceptions are by no means rare ... Naṭabara was intelligent and studious, but also crafty and pleasure-

(1) Mānu. pp. 98-99
loving. Even in childhood he began to show signs of meanness."(1)

Despite enjoying various initial advantages, he became, like Mangaraja, a thorough-going materialist, prepared to perpetrate crime to satisfy his cravings.

"It was Naṭabara’s conviction that the sole purpose of life was the acquisition and conservation of wealth. Wealth came only to the intelligent. They alone were worthy of respect. But wealth did not come like the rains from heaven. It had to be taken from others by cunning. That scrupulousness, known as dharma, was only for the idle and the stupid."(2)

These convictions made Naṭabara a cunning materialistic atheist to whom no crime was impossible.

"People refrain from wrong because of their fear of either God or the law. Since on proof of crime the law punishes, it is not unnatural that the cunning should commit their crimes with secrecy and precaution. But if they believe that a watchful and all-seeing God sits in the innermost recess of their hearts observing their every thought and deed, and that that God punishes their vices and rewards their virtues, then very probably they will be afraid to commit crime. The materialistic atheist, however, has no such fear. On the age-old principle of 'Borrow money and eat

(1) Māmū, p. 100. (2) ibid, p. 114.
ghee', he proclaims, 'Commit crime and be happy, for there is no such thing as good and evil consequences.' (1)

Nevertheless, this materialistic atheism in Naṭabara was only acquired, not congenital, as it seems to have been with Maṅgarāja. Naṭabara had acquired his materialistic outlook, not in the cradle and the home, but, most probably, at school where he had imbibed western attitudes and values. His materialism was therefore no more than an acquired blindness to the existence of a world of beauty and affection where God existed. At the first touch of adversity, this blindness was shattered.

A seed had been sown, but a stone was lying on it, preventing it from germinating, by cutting it off from light, rain and air. Yet the seed was not destroyed; it was still intact. Long after, when the stone was removed, it germinated and foliation ensued. Naṭabara Dāsa was of stainless stock, so naturally some slight seminal purity remained secreted in his heart. His childhood too had been spent with virtuous people. Old Viṣṇu Śarma states that the causes of delinquency are youth, money, property, power and thoughtlessness. They had all suddenly descended upon Naṭabara Dāsa. Furthermore, moralists say that youth is the seed-bed of vice and virtue, and that each of us takes to the path of either the one or the other in accordance with the influences that befall us.

(1) Mama, p. 146.
"All the causes of delinquency suddenly descended upon Naṭabara Dāsa the moment he married. 'Lust, anger and greed, these three are the gates of hell; says the Blessed Vasudeva. No matter how many virtues may have lain dormant in Naṭabara's heart, these three gates stood open in his character. Now that the consequences of his wickedness were upon him, all his waywardness had left him, and the seed of dharma secreted in his heart seemed suddenly to have germinated and burst into leaf ..."

"It would seem that in order to return man's erring soul to the path of rectitude, god sends a powerful directive in the form of adversity." (1)

Consequently, when remanded in custody awaiting trial on a charge of peculation, Naṭabara was moved to remorse and repentance and a renewed faith in god, which at first lent him a startling composure and dignity in accepting the consequences of his misdeeds, but which later became so intense as to precipitate madness. Thus in the event Naṭabara did not reform, but the basis of reform had been there, a belief in God inculcated in childhood. In Phakirmohana's final novel prayāscitta it will be seen how this belief tends ultimately to dispose a man towards repentance, reform, and finally atonement.

iii) prayāscitta.

prayāscitta continues on more or less the same theme as Māma but concentrates on the contrasting claims of the world. (1) Māma, pp. 222-223.
and the spirit. Govinda Candra, the central character, had much the same career as Nātabara Dāsa. He was upper-middle-class and Western-educated and, as a direct result of reading sceptical Western philosophy, he became atheistic and crime-prone. By chance his misdeeds earned him a particularly savage beating, which landed him in Cuttack General Hospital. This afforded him ample opportunity to review his past record and, through conversations with his old friend, Doctor Sukanta Rāya, he regained his faith in God and was consumed with remorse for all the harm he had done. Before leaving hospital he wrote to his friend,

"Though I had many friends in Cuttack, you were the only one who frequently talked to me of spiritual matters. As you well know and have often heatedly observed, an atheist considers himself omniscient and scorns to listen to good advice. I myself used to laugh at what you told me, but now I ponder over it incessantly. I became sceptical of God's existence as a result of reading several works on Western philosophy. Though God's infinite greatness and boundless mercy pervade the universe and permeate our lives at every moment, in his ignorance an atheist deliberately blinds himself to the fact. I had a serious go of fever four years ago, and you saved me. You have been exhorting me to worship God ever since. But an aimless, irresolute, self-centred atheist prides himself on flouting such exhortations. You may not remember, but I do; you once said: 'There's no crime an atheist
is incapable of. Only the fear of the law restrains him. How very true. Intent upon his own selfish enjoyment, an atheist is either unable or unwilling to begin to appreciate the pain he occasions others. I myself an a flagrant example. I betrayed my father, killed my mother, and was responsible for the death of an innocent, young girl as perfect as an angel.

"There is no atoning for my heinous crimes. As I review them one by one I am consumed in a flaming fire of remorse. The world has lost interest for me. All the bonds of my life have been severed. Death alone will bring me peace, yet I will not increase my sins by suicide. I have dedicated my heart and mind to God. I shall spend the remainder of my life meditating upon His holy name in every sacred spot. There is a limit to my sins, but not to God's mercy. Thus I may hope for forgiveness. Let God punish me, as He pleases; let Him smash my sinful soul; death at His hands will endow me with fresh life."(1)

Yet, as Vaisnava Carana pointed out to Sāṅkara Mahānti in Viṣṇuvana, remorse was idle.

"It is equally idle to claim I did this, or he did that. All works proceed from the Supreme Lord of the universe Govinda. All acts are controlled by His command alone."(2)

(1)prayascitta, pp. 490-491. (2) ibid, p. 494.
Men had a duty to both the world and the spirit, and there was an appropriate time for each.

"We have two duties, one towards our bodies, and the other towards our souls. The body is transitory, but the soul is eternal and indestructible ... It is completely proper that as long as we are able-bodied and capable of physical work, we should try to increase our happiness and comfort in lawful and socially-approved ways. This is as God intended ...

"When, however, we are infirm and incapable of work, then it is proper that we should strive to improve our souls ..." (1)

But men became so engrossed in the world that they neglected the spirit.

"In order to ensure the continued existence and improvement of human society, the supreme Lord and Controller of the universe has so enwrapped the world in illusion, that it is difficult for man to penetrate it. We are convinced that worldly wealth and riches, fame and prestige are transitory. Dharma alone is the supreme ally of our souls. Yet man is constantly engaged in the pursuit of worldly desires and negligent of the acquisition of virtue, which is our greatest wealth." (2)

(1) Prayaascitta, p. 495. (2) Ibid, p. 495
Men were so plagued with desires for worldly possessions, that they failed to realise that such desires jeopardised their spiritual progress.

"Sāṅkhya philosophy plainly states: 'Desire is a thorn on the path to deliverance. Oppressed by the sorrows of man, Mahāmuni Buddhadeva also concluded... 'Desire is the cause of all evil'. Man is so enswathed in the Divine Illusion, that he is not easily inclined to relinquish desire the source of all sorrow."(1)

Nevertheless, it would be wrong for the young to abandon the world too early, for there were two paths to spiritual emancipation, as Vaiṣṇava Caraṇa pointed out to his son, Govinda.

"Remember, Govinda my boy, that dharma has two parts, worship and service. Every man and woman on earth is a son or daughter of God. Thus to subordinate all your desires and to dedicate all your capabilities to the increase of peace and happiness and to the welfare of human society constitute God's service. The Supreme All-merciful Lord endows us with various capabilities and seems to enjoin us to strive for the welfare of mankind. God in His mercy has granted you immense wealth, abililty and knowledge. It is incumbent upon you to worship your ancestral gods, and to foster numerous dependent subjects. By the grace of God

(1) prāyaścitta, p. 495.
you are in possession of immense wealth. Expending it in spreading education throughout your estates, tending the sick, and succouring the needy. It is possible, of course, for you to improve your soul by worshipping God in a retreat for ascetics, but this would be selfishness on your part, and a waste of all the capabilities granted you by the grace of God." (1)

IV) A Trilogy on Justice.

Cha Mana Atha Guntha and Mann end in trials, but in both the trials are a mockery, as far as Mangaraja and Natabara are concerned, for they are tried, not for their main crimes, but for minor ones. This is the defect of temporal justice, which regards crime as particular acts, restricts its attention to particular charges, and examines the evidence relevant to those alone; but, as far as phakirmohana is concerned, these particular acts are only symptoms of a disease affecting the total personality. The disease is excessive worldliness. Its symptoms are grasping greed, theft, robbery, exploitation, mis-appropriation, vanity, callousness and cruelty. Its cure is pain, for worldliness leads inevitably to suffering, either at the hands of the police, or of those one has wronged, or through one's own conscience. Suffering may however lead to repentance and reform, for it stimulates a man's more noble instincts, provided he believes in God. Without belief in God, the conscience cannot operate and repentance and reform are rendered impossible.

In Cha Mana Atha Guntha Mangaraja does not repent. He is

(1) Prayascitta, p. 501.
an evil man from the lower classes. He is thoroughly vicious and is punished both through the courts and through his victims by a kind of natural or poetic justice. In Mātmā Nāṭabara does repent and is also on the verge of reform, but he goes insane, presumably under the stress of conscience. Nevertheless, reform was possible in Nāṭabara, for he was middle-class and had enjoyed the advantage of religious instruction in childhood. In prayāscitta everyone eventually repents and reforms. Sadananda alone goes to prison to do so; the rest punish themselves through their consciences and strive to atone for their misdeeds by dedicating the remainder of their lives to dharma, either through the service of God or of man, both of which constitute worship. Thus Cha Māna Ātha Guntha, Mātmā and prayāscitta constitute a trilogy on temporal and spiritual justice, in the course of which phakīrmohana gradually moves away from temporal law in favour of eternal law (dharma), and the term 'crime' becomes imperceptibly replaced by the term 'sin'.


The temporal law that phakīrmohana gradually rejects in the course of these three novels is that introduced by the British. Viewed from one angle, Cha Māna Ātha Guntha can be seen as a subtle satire on British justice. It is in the style that much of the satire lies. The extracts we are about to present in order to illustrate this are long, but a close study of their phrasing will illustrate the subtlety of phakīrmohana's control of innuendo.

1st extract.

"Mr. Rāmacandra Maṅgarāja is a country jamidāra
and moneylender ... He is very religious. There are only 24 ekādasīs per year, but even if there were 40, he would observe them all. The other day in the course of conversation Mr. Maṅgarāja's personal barber Jagā let slip that on the evening of each ekādasi he places one seer of milk, some puffed rice, sugar and ripe bananas in the squire's bedroom for his breakfast the following morning and that at the crack of dawn the following day he removes the empty dishes. This news was greeted by Jagā's friends with raised eyebrows and knowing smiles and one of them remarked that if one were cunning enough, one's crimes would escape the notice of even Mahādeva. We are not sure how this remark was intended to be taken, but we assume that it was derogatory. We are not prepared to allow such remarks to go unchallenged and accordingly we join issue on the squire's behalf. What evidence is there that the dishes were emptied by Mr. Maṅgarāja? Hearsay and inference are unacceptable as evidence. This is the ruling of the courts. Furthermore, it is a scientific fact that all liquids evaporate. Milk is a liquid. Surely the squire's milk would not dare to defy the laws of science? Then again were there no rats and mice in the house? After all what house is without flies, mosquitoes and cockroaches? All God's creatures are constantly on the watch for food, especially when they are unaware of the extreme venerableness of our Mr. Maṅgarāja. We therefore consider it infamous to cast aspersions upon the religious
sincerity of Mr. Mañgarāja. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon judges to pay particular attention to contingent circumstances when assessing the value of evidence. Mr. Mañgarāja does not even touch boiled paddy, let alone fish of any description. He does not breakfast on the twelfth till he has personally fed all the local brahmins. Lest any impediment should obtrude upon such a sacred duty as the feeding of brahmins, Mr. Mañgarāja has set aside in perpetuity one mana of land each for the fisherman and confectioner. On the morning of the twelfth the fisherman supplies two baskets of pressed rice and the confectioner one pound of molasses. All the brahmins from the twenty seven brahmin households in the village of Govindapura are invited to the feast ... at which Mr. Mañgarāja serves with his own hands. After serving each of them a single helping of rice and molasses, Mr. Mañgarāja respectfully addresses his guests:

'If you require more, gentlemen, please do not hesitate to say so. There are rice and molasses in abundance. Nevertheless, I am not unaware that brahmins like all other mortals have large eyes and small stomachs, and that you already have more than your stomachs can hold.'

"Should some brahmanic Oliver then ask for more, the squire flings a spoonful or two more upon his plate. All the brahmins then cry out in chorus; 'We are well satisfied. Well satisfied.'; and giving vent to long belchings and blessings, they arise. Mr. Mañgarāja then most reverently partakes
of the remaining basket of rice and half pound of molasses. The reader may be wondering how 27 brahmins could possibly have been satisfied with only one basket of rice. Ah, the ways of God, my friend, the ways of God... Our Lord Jesus fed twelve hundred on two loaves of bread... SRI Krsna fed twelve thousand on a single scrap of Sgga (vegetable)... If the reader has such little faith in the powers of the mighty, then we hardly dare ask him to continue to read of the character and career of Mr. Mānagarāja "(1)

2nd extract.

"The road in the weaver's quarter is spick and span; i.e. there are no muck heaps or piles of cow-dung on it. You of course will have concluded... that the Municipality dust cart has carted all the rubbish away. We warn you, never jump to conclusions. We have had to undertake much research and sift masses of evidence to obviate errors such as that. It is not our practice to scribble down any old nonsense. We will listen to nothing that contravenes the rules of logic or for which there is not incontrovertible evidence... The Nyaya Sastra (a treatise on logic) states: parvato vahniman dhumat; i.e. smoke issues from the mountain because the mountain contains fire... There is a necessary connection between cause and effect. Na kāryam kāranam vina... we can demonstrate with incontestible logic that there is a necessary connection between cows and cow-dung. You will

(1) Cha Mānā Ātha Gaṇṭha, pp. 229-230
concede of course that there is no effect without a cause. Consequently the cause of the absence of cowdung is the absence of cows; that is, there are no cows in the weavers' quarter, therefore there is no cowdung. Another difficulty may be troubling you. Cows are not bears or tigers to run wild; they are domestic animals and as such they should be found near to domiciles ... Where there is water, there are fish; similarly, where there is a domicile there are domestic animals. That is as clear as the nose on your face. The weavers' quarter is the collective domicile of the weavers, so why are there no domestic animals there? The good Lord's creation has many anomalies. He was either negligent or slack. All species, whether animals, birds, worms or insects, have two classes, male and female, yet we come across the occasional neuter nevertheless. Similarly, though the weavers' quarter constitutes a collective domicile, it possesses no domestic animals; that is, in relation to animals it is neuter; it has neither wild animals like the tiger and bear, nor domestic animals like the cow and ox. This too may have a cause, for as the Nyāya Gastra says, there is no effect without a cause. When grammarians are unable to get their rules right, they solve their problems by declaring that certain features are irregularities. This is a kind of cheating. We would never stoop to that kind of thing. But never mind that, concentrate on the reason for there being no cows in the weavers'
quarter. The Bible states: 'No servant can serve two masters' ... which means, no man can do two jobs at once; that is, since the weavers spend all their time weaving, they do not have time for farming. Since they do not farm, they do not need cattle. Since they have no cattle, there is no dung. Since there is no dung, there is no muck heap. Since there is no muck heap, the street is clean."(1)

3rd Extract.

" The tank has fish in it. Whatever was the point of writing that, you may ask. Where there is water, there is fish. Not necessarily. There is no necessary connection between water and fish, as there is between bodies and bones, say, or sugarcane and molasses. If there were, you would get fish from your water jug, would you not? It has always been our practice to eschew the fanciful and illogical in all that we write. Thus we shall adduce irrefutable evidence that there are fish in Asura Dighi tank. Now look, on the southern edge of the tank just three yards back from the water lie three crocodiles of varying dimensions. They always lie there. Why do they lie there? What do they live on? Has anyone ever seen them grazing like cattle? Or are they, like the Jains, aware that non-violence is the highest virtue? No, obviously not. They eat something from the tank. But what? This species of crocodile is sometimes called māchuṣa kumbhīra (fishy crocodile); i.e. they eat fish. But you may object, 'Yes, we know, but they get them from

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 247-248.
elsewhere.' Now both fresh fish and dry fish are available in the markets, of course, but has anyone ever seen a crocodile go there to buy some? Women sometimes barter with the fishwives offering rice and paddy in exchange for fish. We are ready to swear on oath that we have never in all our lives seen one of those crocodiles bartering rice and paddy for fish. Thus we have proved that there must be fish in the tank."

The first extract is from the opening chapter, which is set out in the form of an address to the jury, and in which Phakirmohana himself as the loquacious and discursive narrator-advocate labours to defend Mañgaraja's religious sincerity. Ironically the more arguments he advances, the more he exposes of Mañgaraja's hypocrisy. The first muted notes of the attack on the British legal system sound from that irony. The other two extracts are similar humorous dissertations in mock-legal language and form. The humour in both of them lies in the speaker's entirely missing the point. He is overburdened with erudition, and his arguments have an air of irrefutable logic, but there is no cowdung in the weavers' quarter, because Mañgaraja has stolen the cows and crocodiles eat people.

The attack continues in the series of digs at the legal profession, already quoted; though it only once comes out into the open, and then in a conversational aside, which at the time appears to have little or nothing to do with the story.

"At the end of the weavers' quarter stand the

(1) Cha Manaatha Guntha, pp. 256-257
Bhagavata Ghara and the Dadhi Bama Temple. The temple was built with the weavers’ caste money (jati tanka). Do you know what caste money is? You yourself obviously don’t need telling, but our newly-educated do, for they have studied all the really important matters in this world, and know all about them. They will be stumped of course if you ask them their great grandfather’s name, but they have the names of all the ancestors of England’s Charles III off pat to the 15th generation. But then if you study English or French culture, you’re entitled to call yourself educated; whereas to know anything about your own culture or that of your neighbours is downright unnecessary. Well, never mind, there’s no need to antagonise these gentlemen unnecessarily. Caste money means that if any member of the caste misbehaves, then the caste council fine him; and if he can’t afford to pay, they raise the money for him by a small levy. The money is deposited with the headman. The temple was built with money of that kind. This wonderful system is fast dying out. We have courts nowadays, you see, because we are enlightened — civilised, so to speak. No one cares about the caste councils. ‘Watch your step, mate,’ says English law; ‘If you commit a crime and I get legal proof of it, then you’re for it.’ ‘But I’ll see to it that you don’t’, says the clever man, and his barrister slaps him on the back and says, ‘Have no fear. Cross my palm with silver, and I’ll prove that black’s white and white’s black.’
The result is that clever, rich men by the dozen are committing crimes by the hundred and getting off scot-free, whilst the poor and innocent are getting into hot water. Thanks to legal costs, both sides to the dispute are reduced to beggary. It's all money down the drain. You'd never pull the wool over the caste council's eyes like that. They'd see to it that the fine was collected from the real culprit and that it was put to good use."

(1) Chama Guntha, p. 249.

The trial is the final irony. Maṅgarāja is a black-guard and scoundrel, yet British justice can convict him only of the theft of a cow; whereas implicit in the conversational aside quoted above, is the assertion that under the old Indian system of justice he would not only have been made to suffer, but also that any fines imposed would also have been put to a good use. The implication is that under the British system only the innocent, such as Bhagia and Sāri, suffer, the guilty get off scot free.

vi) Turning away from the concept of 'crime'.

Implicit in Phakirmohana's condemnation of British justice is his turning away from the concept of 'crime' in favour of the indigenous concept of 'sin'. Both Maṅgarāja and Naṭabara had committed crimes, but it was for their sins that they were punished, Maṅgarāja dying of a violent assault by a knid of natural or poetic justice and Naṭabara going insane under the stress of conscience. It is significant that when remanded in custody and awaiting trial, Naṭabara's
conscience was troubled, not by the crime of which he was accused, but by the sins he had committed: his meanness to his mother, whom he denied her paltry supply of opium, which relieved her pain-racked body; his treachery towards Sarasvati Del and his sister, whom he had caused great hardship; his oppression of the tenants of Naripura estate; his deception of his British superior Dawson, to whom he owed all his advancement; his unfaithfulness to his wife, Biskha Del; his recalcitrance towards his father; and finally his hypocrisy towards Almighty God. It is equally significant that Govinda in Prajapacitta had committed no crime at all, only a transgression against the Hindu social code, an intercaste marriage, which would be regarded as a sin.

This same gradual turning away from the concept of 'crime' in favour of 'sin', which is observable in these three novels, is also discernible in phakirmohana's short stories. Some of the earlier stories concern crimes, such as theft (Mauna-maun), highway robbery (Peleavari Rahajani) and misappropriation (Kamalaprasada Gorapa). In these the central characters, who commit these crimes, are arrested and imprisoned, as a result of the operations of the plain-clothes police. In other stories, such as patent Medicine, Suna Bohu and Madha Mahantiaka Kanya Suna, the central characters do not commit legally punishable crimes, but transgress the ethical code that phakirmohana is developing, and are punished, not by arrest and imprisonment, but by beatings, humiliation and accidental death.

Thus when stating that much of phakirmohana's prose fiction is concerned with crime and punishment, it must be pointed out that his conception of crime was wider than that
envisioned by the legal code; for it embraced not only legally punishable crimes against persons and property, but also socially reprehensible behaviour such as drunkenness and whoremongering (Patent Medicine), sloth (Suna Bahu) and greed (Madha Mahantinka Kanya Suna), which would be regarded as sinful.

It was probably this wider conception of 'crime-sin' that set phakirmohana at variance with British law, as may be demonstrated by an examination of his short story, punar Musiko' Bhava. Punar Musiko' Bhava tells the story of an untouchable Kinarama Simha, who was appointed a constable in the Salt Police and allowed himself to be banqueted and feted by the villagers on his beat, all of whom were engaged in the manufacture of illicit salt, which it was his duty to prevent. After an abortive trial of one of the villagers, who, taking advantage of the constable's inexperience, got acquitted on perjured evidence, the constable allowed himself to become part of a conspiracy, whereby each month one willing dama was arrested and imprisoned for illicit salt manufacture on evidence fabricated by the villagers. Kinarama's luxurious reign eventually ended when the Government got wind of these fabricated cases and sent plain-clothes police to investigate.

So punar Musiko' Bhava, like Maunaunim andalesvar Rahajaniem, ends in the arrest and punishment of a criminal, Kinarama Simha. Again the arrest results from the operations of plain-clothes police, whom phakirmohana obviously admired, but the villagers, who were technically criminals, escape scot-free, and Phakirmohana obviously intended that they should. Why did Phakirmohana allow only Kinarama to be brought
to justice and not the rest? If Kinārāma were initially guilty of any 'crime', then it was only excessive self-importance in one who ought by birth to have been humble, an untouchable barber; and for this it was perhaps right that he should have been ridiculed; but if his crimes eventually exceeded this, then it was only at the instigation of the villagers, who to a man were engaged in the manufacture and consumption of illicit salt, and who were prepared to indulge in bribery and corruption in order to continue. The only possible conclusion is that phakīrmohana considered the salt laws unjust. It was wrong of the Government to abandon the production of salt locally and to insist on the consumption of European salt, when people's incomes were insufficient to allow them to purchase it. phakīrmohana's position is perhaps that of most people who consider that the law must accord with public opinion, otherwise these laws which do not will be flouted and this will engender contempt for the law as a whole and a readiness on the part of the general public to indulge in corruption. Obviously the whole population of Balasore considered the salt laws unjust and frankly flouted them, as phakīrmohana points out in the introduction to the story. The whole comedy inherent in punar Muśiko' Bhava depends upon the reader sympathising with the Balasoris and rejoicing in the downfall of Kinārāma.

Thus, in the scheme of values that phakīrmohana is evolving, Kinārāma's 'social crime', bloated self-importance in a petty untouchable, is the really serious 'crime' in punar Muśiko' Bhava and is punished both legally, by imprisonment, and socially, by his fellow-caste members.
vii) The wider implications of phakirmohana’s trilogy.

The conclusions that one draws from a study of phakirmohana’s trilogy on Justice are these. The Rule of Law had undermined the indigenous system of authority that had existed in India before the British came. This system had rested upon the combined authority of kings, aristocrats, caste councils and parents, each supported by the others, and all reinforced by a code of ethics called dharma, that carried the sanction of religion. Viewed in Western terms, the implications of this system were that the state (kings and aristocrats), Church (caste council) and Family were all operating in conjunction to enforce morality. Since most property was vested in either one or other of these institutions, and since moral and secular law were virtually the same, under this earlier system, law, religion and finance (the possession of control of property) had operated in unison for the good of society.

The economy upon which this system was based depended mainly on agriculture. Thus power had resided in the control of land, the main means of production. Even before the coming of the British, however, the merchantile classes had been gaining increasing social importance, but had, up till then, failed to secure any real power. By a change in the tenancy laws, the British enabled the merchantile classes to invest their fortunes in land; and thus during British rule, the power of the old aristocracy declined in favour of this new class of upstart landowners who bought up large landed estates that were auctioned off in Calcutta. These new landowners had none of the old sense of responsibility for their tenants that had characterised the old aristocracy. Coming from commercial
backgrounds, they viewed their estates purely as business investments, not moral responsibilities. They were interested only in the profit and prestige that could be squeezed out of their estates, not in the welfare of their tenants.

Thus in his novels Phakirmohana demonstrates marked contrasts between the older aristocracy as represented by the Bāgha Simhas of Ratanapura in Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pratāpa Udita Malla in Mamū and Vaishnava Carana Mahapatra in prayascittā and the new class of upstarts as represented by Mangarāja in Cha Mana Atha Guntha, Naṭabara Dāsa in Mamū and Saṅkarsana Mahānti in prayascittā. The older aristocracy were imbued with the values of the old (pre-British) régime: the new landlords with the materialism of British rule. The Bāgha Simhas were fighting men who put their trust in the strength of their arms in open combat, not in their powers of cunning; pratāpa Udita Malla was an enlightened aristocrat, who utilised western agricultural methods to increase the yeild of his estates and who dispensed justice to his tenants and lent them money at low interest, to protect them from both moneylenders and lawyers, who would have impoverished them; and Vaishnava Carana was a pillar of piety, whose one fault lay in his excessive pride in the purity of his lineage. Thus in effect these three characters demonstrate how under the old aristocracy, law religion and finance were combined in the person of the ideal monarch and jamidāra. In contrast to these ideal rulers stand Mangarāja, Naṭabara and Saṅkarsana all of whom use the law and morality as weapons to further their own selfish ambitions.

The Rule of Law was on the whole a paradise for the exploiter and criminal. Admittedly there were points in its favour. The British magistrates and police officers were scrupulously honest and conscientious; but these advantages
were offset by the failure of the British superiors to check the scheming of their Indian subordinates. Naṭabara, a civil servant, was able to exploit his official position as a means of obtaining control of his sister's estate; the court muni could generally be relied upon to quash charges in return for a bribe; lawyers were adept in producing perjured evidence; and local constables were often in league both with the grasping landlord and the established criminal classes. By adroit manipulation of the law, landlords were able to increase their holdings at the expense of tenants; and in the anonymity of the towns with the aid of corrupt lawyers and venal court officials, criminals were escaping not only from conviction, but also from any twinge in their consciences. Furthermore, this new legal system was expensive to operate. As a result of engaging in it, even kings with vast estates, were falling into the clutches of moneylenders; and only one class was benefiting from it, the legal profession. The old indigenous system, on the other hand, had been cheap to operate and had benefited the whole community.

Thus Phakirmohana wanted a return to the old system. Knowing, however, that such a return was in reality not possible, he brought it about only in fiction. The realistic settings of his early novels and stories were forced to give way to visions of his ideal society. The settings of Cha Mana Ātha Guntha and Rebati were, as far as phakirmohana was able to recreate it, the real world of 19th century Orissa: the settings of Prayāscitta and Bagula Baguli were only partly real, but mostly imaginary. The whole ethos of Cha Mana Ātha Guntha and Rebati was of grasping, corrosive materialism, in which virtue was at a disadvantage and must perish. In Bagula Baguli, on the other hand, the whole society from the jamidāra to the lowliest untouchable was generous and good-principled. At the root of their communal
virtue was the Bhagavata Ghara, where every night the purana pandita read the sacred books to the assembled villagers and where afterwards all the elders sat on to discuss village affairs.

Phakirmohana depicts his ideal feudalistic society most clearly in prayascitta, in which an upstart of the new regime competes for the leadership of society with a member of the old aristocracy. Their lengthy litigations go a fair way to begging their estates, before the suicide of Indumati brings both of them to their senses and puts an end to their worldly cravings for status and prestige. Finally both realise their essential position as the trustees of God and both arrange for their estates to be run for the benefit of the children of God, their subjects, so that all the wealth accruing from their estates is dedicated to the education and welfare of their tenants, and Govinda and his help-mates, who supervise the management, keep back mere subsistence salaries for themselves.

Thus in his prosefiction on this fundamental theme of justice, we see Phakirmohana groping back towards an ultimate unity in the agencies of law, religion and finance, such as he believed existed in feudal society, as the basis of a just and happy life for the people of Orissa.
CHAPTER VI.

Aesthetic Aspects.

Though it is now certain that the subject matter of Phakirmohana's works, as printed in his Granthabali, is more or less as Phakirmohana intended it to be, it is not certain in some instances how much of the style is Phakirmohana's own and how much that of others. It would appear that Phakirmohana was always diffident about the quality of his work, especially his poetry, and at times sought the assistance of Radhanatha Raya in improving it, as the following letter indicates.

"Dear Radhanatha Raya,

Look through this poem for me.
It is not quite as I should have liked. The language is not as elegant as it should be. If you would re-write it for me, then I could really treasure it.

Yours,

Phakirmohana Senapati. (1)

There is also evidence to suggest that Visvanatha Kara 'improved' the style of Phakirmohana's later novels (2) In

(1) Debiprasanna Pattnayaka, Kavi-lipi, p. 102.
(2) Nilakantha Dasa, introduction to Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. iv. This reference is translated as a footnote to Pt. II, ch. IX, p. . . . . 516, footnote (1).
these circumstances, it has been thought best, in discussing
the aesthetic aspects of phakīrmohana's prose-fiction, and
particularly his humour and style, to confine attention to
the one work where no such suspicions have arisen, namely
_Cha Mangarāja_ in discussing the subject-matter,
treatment, and structure, however, such restrictions have
been ignored, since it is unlikely that these aspects would
have been modified by his associates.

i) Humour and Style.

As the extracts translated above will already have re-
vealed, the most prominent feature of phakīrmohana's prose
was humour; but translation can reveal only part of his
humour, for much of it, being dependent on the nature of the
Oriya language itself, is untranslatable. Oriya is a Sans-
kritic language. It is heavily indebted to its parent langu-
age for neologisms and an educated Oriya is therefore pre-
sumed to have some knowledge of Sanskrit. Much of phakīr-
mohana's humour presupposes such knowledge, for it consists
in mistranslation of Sanskrit sayings. In describing Manga-
rāja's relationship with his children, for example, phakīr-
mohana quotes the Sanskrit maxim:

'Lālayet pā̀ncavārṣāni daśavārṣāni tā̀dayet
prā̀pte tu śoḍāsē varṣe putram mitravadācāret.'

(One should fondle him till he is five; discipline
him _till_ he is ten; but when he reaches sixteen
one should _treat him as a friend_)

He then proceeds to interpret it ironically as:

'Sons slobber _till_ they're five; one should shun
_till_ they're ten; and after they reach sixteen,
one should treat them as badly as one does one's friends.' (1)

The humour here depends largely upon the chance resemblance of Oriya and Sanskrit words: e.g. lāl Sanskrit 'foster', Oriya 'saliva'; tād/tad Sanskrit 'discipline', Oriya 'drive away'; vad/bad Sanskrit 'like', Oriya 'bad'...

Sometimes phakirmohana does not so much mistranslate as deliberately misinterpret Sanskrit maxims. These misinterpretations result in unexpected similes, which render them not only comic, but at times also satirical, as in the following example, which highlights the rapacity of the legal profession by likening lawyers to jackals.

"rajadvare smaşane ca yas tiṣṭhati sa bāndhabah - aṭtha okilamāne kacerīre, biluāmāne smaśānare thānti, emāne bāndhaba."

"He who stands by one at court and on the burning ground is indeed one's friend (Skt. maxim); i.e. lawyers attend one at court and jackals on the burning ground, these are one's true friends." (2)

Allied to this humorous use of mistranslation or deliberate misinterpretation is phakirmohana's deliberate use of stylistic defects. It is considered improper to juxtapose Sanskritic and colloquial diction. Such juxtaposition impairs the dignity of prose. Its effect is in fact comic, which is precisely why phakirmohana resorted to it; e.g.

"naba-phena khandabat sukla-barna chepa khaṅkāra semaṇāṇka mukharu bāhāri cāri āde bhasu-achi.

(1) Cha Mana Ātha Gaṇṭha, p. 235. (2) ibid, p. 289.
The Sanskrit elements in this sentence (underlined) lend it the fragility of poetry, and this fragility is shattered on the jagged crudity of such highly colloquial words as chepa (spit) and mali (dirt). The English rendering below is but a poor shadow of the original.

"Like speckles of fresh foam, sparkling white spit drops from their lips and floats all around; and faintly incarnadine, petal-pink tongue-scrapings drift by in gobs."(1)

A similar rapid descent in diction from the Sanskrit buddhira prākharya (perspicacity) to the colloquial alīm (muck) adds to the comic effect of the following.

"Our perspicacity informs us that a broom occasionally wanders round this room, otherwise how did so much muck assemble in the corners."(2)

Similar to this sudden linguistic descent in diction is the psychological descent from the sacred to the profane via unexpected metaphors.

"Christians say that at the end of the world all the dead will rise again at the last trump, played by a heavenly messenger. The party had died of boredom; it was resuscitated by the clink of Maṅgarāja's cash."(3)

(1) Cha Maṇa Aṭha Guntha, p. 259. (2) ibid, p. 243 (3) ibid, pp. 244-245.
Sometimes he achieves his comic effects by the use of a mock-serious tone of the utmost gravity and moral fervour. We have already seen examples of this in the various dissertations on the religious sincerity of Mr. Mangaraja, the reason for the cleanliness of the weavers' quarter, and the proof of there being fish in Asura Dīghi tank. Two more examples are given below.

a)

"We are unable to give a precise list of exactly which, or how many, childless women have given birth to sons as a result of the goddess's grace, but we are prepared to swear on sacred offerings, that all the women in this village who now have families were absolutely childless at the time of their weddings."(1)

b)

"Yaşodā was standing waist-deep in water cleaning her teeth. A five year old child named Mārkandīa started leaping and dancing about and muddying the water. Yaşodā was getting splashed, so she moved back and began scolding the child abusively. She had just reached the point where she was wishing him an abbreviated life-span, when the child's mother stepped in and began to retaliate. When finally defeated, Mārkandīa's mother slapped the child and picking up her water jar began dragging him homewards with a series of violent tugs, leaving a trail of howling and wailing in her wake. The battle was over.

(1) Cha Mana Ātha Guntha, p. 240.
Thunder continues to rumble long after the fall of the thunderbolt. This discussion continued long after the quarrel was over. The old and middle-aged women took sides, one side supporting Yasoda and the other Markandia's mother. A detailed investigation and minute analysis of the affair inclines us to conclude that Markandia was the root-cause of the disturbance. He is absolutely guilty. His crime is unpardonable. Abuse him still more, beat him, do what you like to him, we are prepared to take full responsibility. Water is our very life. We all drink water from the weavers' steps. Muddying it is no mean crime. Consider the circumstances. A dozen or so women have come to bathe. Like speckles of fresh foam, sparkling white spit drops from their lips and floats all around; and faintly incarnadine, petal-pink tongue scrapings drift by in gobs. What else may be drifting by is not for us to say, but the women will all have come here to wash after their morning visit to the fields (to defecate). Yasoda herself will readily admit the fact, so we need not trouble the other ladies. But after all this is long-established custom, not some crime to be hidden. Some wit once said that women leave a quarter as much water behind them in the tank as they ever take out of it. They may do, but we have no eye-witness accounts of such. Some of the women are washing the mats they've slept on, and some their babies' nappies and other bits and pieces of cloth, but no matter what any of the women happen to be doing, none of them is
leaping and dancing about the way Markandia was. Water is not muddied, unless one deliberately jumps and dances about in it. Thus we conclude that Markandia's crime was positively heinous." (1)

The humour in these two extracts serves forcibly to underline the state of ignorance and superstition in the village. Phakirmohana may be ironical and at times satirical but there is a deep and loving sympathy in the way he gently pokes fun at the attitudes of the village women, who believe that children come as a boon from the local goddess and that muddying the drinking water is a more serious crime than polluting it. Similarly in other places he hints wittily at the limited range of interests of the women-folk (1st extract below) and at the superstition that pervades the village.

a) 

"In the north west corner lie the weavers' steps. Being in the centre of the village they become a regular women's market in the mornings. You must not be misled by the use of the word 'market' into assuming that women are bought and sold there. We used the word owing to the similarity in regard to noise and congestion. When the cooks come to bathe, there is a terrific crush. If the village were to put out a daily newspaper, the reporters would need only come here with a pencil and paper to collect all the information they wanted. Who had what to eat last night and who will have what this morning; who went to bed when; who was bitten by how many mosquitoes; who has no salt in the house; who has had to borrow a drop of oil; the

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 258-259.
shyness of the new bride in Ram's mother's house; the date of Kamal's wedding; and the fact that Sarasvati's cooking is as perfect as her character. Pad is sitting in the water delivering a short speech on the unrivalled excellence of her own cooking. All these items of essential and inessential information come pouring out in an unabating stream."

b)

"The Goddess has absolute title to the flowers. A man once swam out to pick one. She enchained his legs and dragged him down. No one has looked at them since.

"Asura Digiti has four flights of steps. In practice there are only three, for no one uses the southern flight. The last rites of the dead are performed there. It is an eerie place. No one will set foot there in day time, let alone night. The steps are overhung by a massive peepul tree, which, as all the world knows, houses a pair of ghosts. Lots of people have actually seen the ghosts dangling their legs from the ends of the branches at the dead of night. The names of these witnesses are not known, but there is no doubting the truth of what they have seen." (2)

Here and there he wittily satirises the rapacity of the brahmins and the corruption of the village constable.

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 258. (2) ibid, pp. 257-258.
a) "The kite is very intelligent and most circum­spect. He sits quietly on his bough like a brahmin. He can last a whole day on the spoils of a single swoop. The brahmin stays on his verandah almost all the year round, swooping down on his clients but once a year."(1)

b) "This is the brahmin meeting place, where snuff and hemp are taken and important questions like how much to charge clients are discussed. Sometimes there is an awful rumpus here, and then you know that they are sharing out the rice from someone's śraddha or the fees from some ceremony. When people hear them at it, they say that the confounded brahmins are fighting over a handful of rice again like dogs. We find these remarks extremely distasteful ... brahmins may be idle, but after all they are the cream of our social system. It is entirely wrong to compare them to dogs. The simile is not even correct. The brahmins are quarrelling about soggy, uncooked rice that has been offered to the spirits; the dogs are arguing about left-over cooked rice. There is a world of difference between the orts of spirits and the orts of man, between soggy, uncooked rice and warm, cooked rice. Besides dogs bite each other. Brahmins may strike each other, but no one has ever seen them bite or claw each other. Just as vultures circling in the sky denote the presence of a corpse, swarms of brahmins decked out with sacred threads and vermillion

(1) Cha Mana Ātha Guntha, p. 257.
marks denote a funeral."(1)

c) "Gobara Jena's (the village constable's) efficiency occasions Mr. Mangaraja great satisfaction. He visits Mr. Mangaraja in his office each morning and evening. He has often been observed in private midnight consultation with Mr. Mangaraja. Lots of pūnas reside on the estate. They are suspected of living by theft, robbery and banditry. The grounds for this suspicion are their intimate connections with the police and jail. Gobara Jena has one great virtue: when any pūna is imprisoned, he looks after the man's family, helping himself from Mr. Mangaraja's silos for the purpose. Malicious scandal-mongers will never leave anything alone. They put a different construction on this philanthropy. They even drag Mr. Mangaraja's generosity into their insinuations as well, which we feel to be grossly unfair."(2)

These strpy, spasmodic attacks on the parasitic and venal legal profession, ignorant grasping brahmins, oppressive landlords, and universal superstition and corruption cumulatively harden in the reader's mind into hostility towards these objects of Phakirmohana's gentle, repetitive satire; and this of course was the very purpose he wished to achieve. He achieved it with humour, far more surely and effectively than he ever could have done with vehement condemnation however well substantiated.

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 246. (2) ibid, pp. 255-256.
ii) Humour and Characterisation.

Thus humour was Phakirmohana's most characteristic and consistent quality. It was his humour that largely animated his characters. As was seen in an earlier chapter, phakirmohana has in the main only two sets of characters, good and bad. With his pre-June 1913 characters the question of humour or animation does not arise. Being modelled upon his grandmother Kucila Dei they were virtually inert, as the following snaps of early virtuous characters will indicate.

a) "The saantani keeps to her room in the mansion, and does not speak to anyone. No one seeks her out except the hungry and the destitute ... "(1)

b) "No one knows what she thinks, for she's a very shy woman, always deeply veiled, who neither mixes with anyone nor talks to anyone." (said of Saria) (2)

c) "Then is their happiness incomplete? Who knows and how can anyone tell? It's all the same whether a salgrama sits or lies. (A salgrama is an image and is therefore inscrutable). Man's feelings are revealed in laughter and tears, but no one has ever seen this couple either laugh or cry. One could of course divine their feelings from what they say, but they don't say anything to anyone." (said of Bhagia and Saria) (3)

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 236  (2) ibid, p.240  
(3) ibid, p. 254.
It is the harmless failings and foibles of minor characters, such as the vanity of Rāghaba Mahānti and the tall stories of Haribola Bārika in Māmā and the crazy quarrelsomeness of Jagā Phatesimhara Mā in Lachamā, which provide much of the comic relief in the novels. The pet failings of each of these characters is illustrated below.

a)

( Bisakhā Deśi's marriage to Naṭabara Dāsa had in effect elevated her younger brother Rāghaba almost overnight, from boorish peasant to foppish gentleman. For the first few days after he had been thoroughly scrubbed, groomed and manicured, his stylish new clothes were at once a botheration and constant delight.)

" Mr. Rāghaba Mahānti was unable to walk properly for the next few days. His long wide clothing kept entangling his feet. Nevertheless, he was unable to sit still in his smart clothes. He simply had to stroll along the road amongst the peons, and keep darting glances at passers-by to see whether or not they were admiring his new get-up; and he often wished that his village cronies, Bhika, Bhimā and Bāna, could only see him now." (1)

b)

( When Naru Bābu passed his Entrance Examination in the 1st Division, he was granted a scholarship of Rs.15 per month and given three months' money in advance by the principal. Naru Bābu sent the money

(1) Māmā, p. 180
to the palace for his mother. Soon a rumour was circulating the village that the 'Officer' in Cuttack was pleased with Naru Baba and had granted him a scholarship of Rs.500.)

"Someone said it was Rs.1,000 and someone else that it was Rs.2,000. In order to learn the precise details and exact number of rupees, some people dashed to consult Haribola Barika, who always knew everything about everything. People regularly consulted him about their difficulties. Barika was never stuck for an answer, no matter what he was questioned about. Barika could see nothing wrong in telling a lie to enhance his own reputation or to get things done, but where lying would harm others, he was the soul of virtue (dharma Yudhisthira). The moment they put the question to him, Barika replied, 'Eh, Haribola, (an habitual exclamation from which he derived his name, Haribola Barika). Jejima summoned me. As a matter of fact, I've only just this minute got back. I myself counted the money into the bags and tied up their mouths. A couple of bags each contained a thousand rupees, and the third contained one thousand and one rupees. Officers don't like giving out naught rupees, so they add one extra.'

"What are naught rupees?" Rama Parida enquired.

"Eh, Haribola," Barika replied. 'Don't you even know that, son? When you write one thousand, the
last figure is naught, so they add one extra.' He picked up a stick and began writing on the ground. 'Here look,' he said. 'This is 1,000. The last figure is naught. So when you add 1, it becomes 1,001.'

"Everyone was delighted with the explanation and went away convinced that Bārika was also expert in book-keeping."

(1) Māmā, p. 193
her crazy. She's Jagā phatesimhra mā. Who would think, to see her now, that she once had a nice home. The old woman's mouth never closes; she quarrels the whole time. She picks a quarrel with everyone she meets in the village. But the villagers avoid her. And she isn't always able to get people to quarrel with. So she quarrels with dogs, cats, trees, leaves, crows and kites, whichever she happens to meet. But her quarreling reaches its crescendo during the night, for mosquitoes and bed-bugs are very quarrelsome, and are at the old lady all night long."(1)

Providing comic relief is not the only function of the faults and failings of these minor characters, however, they also contribute to the development of the plot. It is Rāghaba's vanity that provides Prabhu Dāyāl with a lever to prise open Nātabara Dāsa's coffers and this ultimately leads to Nātabara's arrest for peculation; the same pride, which is at the root of Haribola Bārika's hunger for applause, also goads him into organising a peasant revolt, when offronted by one of Nātabara's new clerks; and the crazy quarrelsomeness of Jagā phatesimhra mā points a more poignantly bony finger of accusation at the Marathas than the most detailed description of their depredations could ever have done. Thus once again one becomes aware of the economy and effectiveness of Phakirmohana's humour.

Phakirmohana's central characters are rarely heroic. More often than not they are villains, for phakirmohana was an early exploiter of the so-called anti-hero. It was in the

(1) Lachamā, pp. 367-368.
satirisation of these anti-heroes and anti-heroines that Phakirmohanā's humour came into full play. Ample evidence of his satirical skill is already available in many of the extracts quoted above, as, for example, the quasi-legal speech in defence of Maṅgarāja's religious sincerity and the parody of traditional etiquette discernible in the behaviour of the new bride in sunā bohu. A few more examples are added below.

Here is his description of the abbot in Dhulia Baba.

"He was an extraordinary man, well over six feet tall, with heavy cheeks and jowls which drooped to his chest, completely obliterating his neck. His arms were thicker than most people's thighs and his belly was like an enormous cooking pot. If you weren't told, you'd swear he was stark naked, for his span-wide loin cloth was submerged beneath the bulges of his massive thighs and the protruberance of his immense belly."(1)

And here is yet one more dig at the meanness of Maṅgarāja.

"Some say that Maṅgarāja bought five mānas of land at five rupees per māna. But they have misunderstood. When you sow one bharana, you reap five, don't you? Well, is Maṅgarāja's money unproductive? Will no interest accrue from it?"(2)

(1) Dhulia Baba, p. 575. (2) Cha Māna Atha Guntha, p. 247
The following extract satirises the laziness of Natabara's wife, Bisākhā Deī, when she was first married.

"The moment evening came, Bisākhā Deī's head began to ache and she went to lie down. Her mother-in-law got the meal ready and by dint of much calling managed to raise the 'invalid', so that she might partake of a little sustenance. It was indeed fortunate that despite the severity of her afflictions, her appetite remained unimpaired."(1)

The two extracts below reveal part of phakirmohana's satirical treatment of Campā.

a) "Absolutely no one at the Hall knows the precise relationship between Mr. Maṅgarāja and Campā, alias Harakaḷa, alias Mistress Campā. Everyone is equally ignorant of her family background and caste. It is impossible to know from her behaviour whether she is one of the servants or the mistress of the house. We can say with certainty only this. Her power at the Hall is unlimited; indeed, it exceeds that of the squire's wife."(2)

b) "Because of her exceedingly close connection with Mr. Maṅgarāja's household, Campā's name will crop up incessantly in the following pages. It is therefore incumbent upon us to describe her character and appearance with exactitude. Indeed, it is

(1) Māmu, p.115. (2) Cha Maṇa Ṭṭha Gunṭha, p.236
one of the laws of literature that authors must describe their heroes and heroines. Things have in fact reached the stage at which authors become unmindful of delicacies even, in their eagerness to describe their heroines at the first possible opportunity. It must not be supposed, of course, that we are incapable of such descriptions. After all, in the old days one would have had only to compare the various attributes of Campana with the various aspects of flowers, fruits, leaves and trees, such as the citron, the pomegranate, the banana and the plantain, for one's description to be complete. But nowadays such old-fashioned similes will not do. In order to appeal to the English-educated classes, one has to find appropriate English similes. An old-fashioned Indian poet would, for example, describe a beautiful woman as possessing the gait of a perfect elephant. Such a comparison would be obnoxious to an Englishman. 'To be beautiful a woman must gallop like a horse,' he would declare. From the way English education is sweeping over this land like the monsoon floods, we can see that the day is not far off when our educated young men will be ready with whip and spur to teach their wives to gallop. But be that as it may, it seems to me that no ancient poet has managed to find the correct simile to describe a lovely lady's walk. After all, both the horse and the elephant have four legs, and we know for a fact that Campa possesses no more than two. Consequently, it is quite inappropriate to apply to her
such epithets as 'possessor of the gait of a perfect elephant' (gajendra-gāminī) or 'of a thoroughbred' (āśva-bara-gāminī), since we have no idea what Campā would look like on all fours. In view of her similarity to a swan in regard to the number of her feet, however, it would not be inappropriate to call her marāla-gāminī (having the gait of a swan). A swan seems to advance sometimes by the power of its legs alone and sometimes with the additional impetus of a flutter of its wings. When Campā walks down the village street, the silken ends of her sari flutter like wings; thus she may rightly be called marāla-gāminī."(1)

Satire also enabled phakirmohana to give to tragedy the surface of uproarious comedy and thus to wring from his readers' eyes tears of laughter rather than of anguish. In Cha Māna Ātha Guṇtha he presents two scenes of the utmost villainy, yet one's immediate reaction to each is unrestrained laughter. One is Maṅgarāja's robbing of a poor peasant and the other is the firing of a rival landowner's house by Campā.

In farming Mr. Maṅgarāja does not distinguish between 'his' and 'theirs'. The śāstras tell us that only the mean-minded think in terms of 'ours' and 'theirs'. Mr. Maṅgarāja is as attentive towards the farming of others as he is towards his own. Intelligent readers will grasp our meaning if we relate the events of a single day, for by squeezing one grain of rice from the cooking pot, one can easily judge the state of all the rest. One morning

(1) Cha Māna Ātha Guṇtha, p. 237.
Mr. Māngarāja’s head ploughman informed him that there were still one and a half mànas of land to be planted, but that they had no more seedlings left to plant it with. Mr. Māngarāja greeted the news with silence ... and then went to inspect the fields ...

"Svāma was bending down repairing a small embankment between the fields. Stopping nearby, Mr. Māngarāja wished him a good morning in warm and winning tones. Svāma started, when he saw the squire, and flinging down his mattock, prostrated himself in the mud before him. 'Do get up, my boy,' the squire said. 'Do get up'. Svāma rose and stood about five yards away with his hands respectfully folded in mute salutation. Then a long cosy chat took place between Svāma and the squire. We won't bore our readers by recording the whole of it, but only the gist; i.e. that the squire took a warm interest in Svāma's family. Apparently Svāma's father Aparttiś had used to come to the Hall each morning to report how he was getting on with his farming and to ask the squire's advice on how best to increase the yield of his paddy and so forth. But Svāma does not do so. Meanwhile the squire's gaze suddenly alights on Svāma's fields, and in apparent astonishment and a guardian-like air he observes, 'Dear me, Svāma, whatever have you been doing? You're an absolute fool. You don't know a thing about farming, do you? How can you expect your paddy to flourish, if you plant it so densely? You've left no room for the plants to breathe. pull them out, pull half..."
of them out!' Govinda took a close look and sup-
ported the squire. Syama was trembling. 'But, Sir, I plant like this every year. Everyone does.' 'You stupid idiot, you won't take good advice when it's given to you,' the squire replied angrily and casting a glance at Govinda said, 'Just show him what we mean, Govinda.' The words had no sooner left the squire's mouth, when Govinda and Pandita had half emptied two beds. Syama was rolling at the squire's feet and wailing in despair ..
.. Finally the squire called, 'That's enough, Govinda, if he won't listen, let him do as he likes! Mr. Mangaraja and his ploughmen then set out with the two bundles of seedlings towards his field that had still to be planted.'(1)

The account of Campa's villainy begins with a description of the weather. It is scorchingly hot. There's not a breath of wind. It has not rained for two and a half months.

"There's not a cow or calf to be seen in the fields. Like Vaishnavas swinging their garlands and chanting Hari's name, the cattle lie drowsily ruminating beneath the trees."(2)

A covered paliinki approaches the village and excites the curiosity of the village women as to who it can be. Some say it's the bride of the so and so; others that it is a constable; and still others that it is a saheba. The paliinki stops at the Basha Simha residence. People conclude that it is a relative of the new bride.

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 234-235 (2) ibid, p. 269.
All the men from the Bagha Simha family and most of the men from the village have gone to Kendrapada to see the snana yatra. The task of welcoming the unexpected visitor falls mainly upon Manika, who is a village know-all after the manner of Haribola Barika.

"There's nothing that Manika doesn't know. Manika is the village women's sole source of information about life in Cuttack or in a saheba's house, and about Puri temple and so forth. A tank may exist without fish, but the existence of a village without detractors is impossible. Some say that Manika is a lying gossip who speaks before she's asked, and that for the last three generations none of her family has even been outside the village, so she can't possibly know about life in Cuttack or sahebas' houses."(1)

Under Manika's prompting, the unexpected guest receives an enthusiastic welcome from the ladies of the Bagha Simha family, and her presents of food are displayed in the inner courtyard. All the village women come to have a look.

"Sakra's mother had been decorating. She'd not had time to wash the powdered rice from her hand. So she held it up-raised like a cobra's hood. The Bagha Simha courtyard was filled to capacity. The women were staring at the visiting aunt's finery. But the aunt's loveliness had no attraction for village rascals like Bania, Banskia, Kalia, Banamalia, Gopalia, Ramia, Umesia, Kasi and Daityari.

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 270
With the fixity of cats' eyes on fish baskets, their eyes were all glued on the ripe mangoes and bananas. Their behaviour was doubtless frowned upon by the śāstras; and had the quick-witted Manika not noticed how their circle was gradually contracting, appreciated what fell intent this portended, and dispersed them with a menacing swish of her right arm, there would very likely have been a case of looting."(1)

The aunt is smothered in jewelry and the women conclude that she is definitely 'society'. The aunt settles herself down and expresses her longing to see her niece, who 'must be languishing for her mummy, the poor darling.' The new bride is sent for. She enters, deeply-veiled and with bowed head; and immediately takes the dust of her aunt's feet. Her aunt embraces her and melts with abandon into tears of joy at being reunited with the niece whose absence has 'taken the sight from her eyes' and 'the flavour from her food'.

"Puzzled by the strange voice, the niece ... went to raise her veil a little to look at her aunt's face. The clever aunt spotted her niece's intention, and pulling down the girl's veil, said, 'Who could teach decorum to my little shy-face, eh? Her mother was just the same. She died an old woman without ever having opened her eyes, or raised her veil, in the presence of her mother-in-law or seniors. Even when she was angry with her mother-in-law, when she abused her seniors, she

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, p. 271.
invariably did so from beneath her veil. You don't get weeds from paddy seed, or rotten creepers from a tulsi plant. What use is a girl without modesty? Such a girl doesn't bear talking about. In consequence, the niece sat all covered up like a little frog. She had once heard talk of an aunt in Tāngi, a cousin of her mother's. She concluded that this must be she.  

(1)

On the pretext of visiting the toilet, the aunt then makes her preparations to fire the house and during the night (after the aunt has left) the house mysteriously burns down. Though investigation proves that the aunt was an imposter, and though people remark on the striking resemblance between the aunt and Maṅgarāja's Campā, the blame for the catastrophe is laid at the door of the new bride, whom people conclude to be inauspicious. She has eventually to be removed from the Bāgha Simha household by her father for fear of her life.

Both these scenes are undoubtedly amusing, especially the second, where one is gradually prepared for a humorous response by the playful comparison of cattle to Vaiṣṇavas in the opening description of the weather, the outline of Manika's character, and the vivid picture of the greedy village rascals casting longing eyes upon the ripe fruit. The effrontery of both Maṅgarāja and especially of Campā in impersonating a relative are of the very essence of comedy; and to some extent one's sympathy and admiration are engaged on their behalf, because of the sheer verve and debonair insouciance, with which they quick-wittedly bluff their schemes through.

(1) Cha Mana Atha Guntha, pp. 271-272.
Thus one's initial response is undoubtedly to laugh uproariously; but gradually as the cumulative monstrousness of this evil pair impresses itself upon the mind, as one witnesses the distress that results from their comic antics, one recoils in horror at them and to some extent also in shame-faced disgust at oneself for having laughed. It is then that one becomes aware of the operations of poetic justice that have been set in train by the course of events; and thus one exults all the more in their final downfall, because in their destruction the shame of one's own laughter in also erased.

iii) The progressive decline of phakirmohana's novels owing to the restraining of his satirical bent.

Phakirmohana's most characteristic stance is that of the self-satirical anti-hero. In real life he had behaved with chivalry and valour. He had attempted, like the kṣatriyas he so admired to save the honour of the Queen of Keujhara and in doing so had fallen foul of the rebellious Bhuyās; and in consequence had spent several days in captivity. His account of these events, as was seen earlier, is comic, rather than heroic. He marched into battle with an ill-equipped motley crowd of ancient infantry; and though the bullets he faced were real, the emotions he evokes are not fear and suspense, but hilarity, as if defeat were a foregone conclusion, and death an impossibility.

This self-satirical, mocking attitude was at the core of his literary success. It is the chief source of one's enjoyment of the best of his prose. Where it could reinforce his moral fervour, it imparted immense gusto to his characterisation and narratives. Unfortunately, however, he could
satirise only what he despised. Consequently, the most artistically successful of his characters are his worst morally. Mañgarāja and Campā are perhaps the most vital and memorable characters to have emerged in the modern period of Oriya literature. When, however, phakīrmohana wished in his characterisation to excite sympathy, compassion, and perhaps even admiration; when he desired, not to create an anti-hero, but a hero in the making, momentarily lost and confused, he felt himself compelled to check his own satirical propensities, and in doing so, to deprive his characterisation of its most potent source of vitality. In consequence, as phakīrmohana's scale of values became more clearly defined, and his desire to project his ideal visions of the perfect society intensified, his muzzling of his own satirical bent grew more and more complete and his characters and narrations more and more insipid. It was this increase of progressive self-restraint which partly accounts for the steady decline of his artistic success in Lachamā, Māma and prayascittas.

Fortunately, the change in phakīrmohana's conception of virtue, outlined in an earlier chapter, enabled phakīrmohana to produce in his short stories virtuous characters possessing some of the characteristics of early anti-heroines such as Campā and Citrakāla. Thus whilst his novels steadily declined, his short stories progressively improved.

iv) The Construction of 'Cha Māna Ātha gunthā.'

Phakīrmohana was no novelist. His masterpiece, Cha Māna Ātha gunthā, is now in the form of a novel, it is true, but it began as a short story and was only gradually inflated to its present form. In construction it is unique. The time
sequence is disordered. In Chapter I, Mañgarāja is jamidāra of phatepura Sarasanda. In Chapter VIII, though narrated as if occurring in the present, one learns how Mañgarāja became chief agent and supplier of Choṭa Mia Khā the former jamidāra, whom Mañgarāja later ousted. Chapter VII describes the discovery of the hole from which, one later learns, the voice of the goddess Budhī Mangala had emanated, instructing Bhagia and Saria about the building of the temple; in Chapter XIII, which again is narrated as if occurring in the present, one learns how Campa induced Saria to perform the act of worship, the vestiges of which were discovered in Chapter VII.

Thus darting backwards and forwards in time and space, Phakirmohana in his discursive conversational way gradually builds up the elements of the story. Right from the start we learn that Mañgarāja is a hypocrite and villain; then we learn of the superstition in the village; then of the corrupt police; and, here and there, of the greed and avarice of brahmins and lawyers; and, by hints, of the exploitations of British rule. Gradually by little snap-shot pictures of life in the village and of the activities of characters, and by those lengthy digressions which set the emotional, cultural and moral scene, the atmosphere of his times is projected. It is an atmosphere in which distrust and scepticism ought to be rife, yet into it he introduces two characters as innocent as chicks that have just emerged from the egg. Already we know of the psychological forces that can be mobilised to swindle them, and of their superstitious beliefs, which can be skilfully played upon by Campa. We also know of the corrupt state of the agents of law, religion and government, as a result of which the swindle must succeed. Towards the
end, however, Phakirmohana introduces a further element, karmaphala, a law that exists above the law and whose workings are terrible and inexorable; and thus we know that Campā and Maṅgarāja will surely be crushed.

In construction and mood, Cha ṇāna Ātha Guntha falls into two almost distinct halves. In the first half the emphasis is on character and situation; in the second on action and consequences. The mood of the first half is facetious and light-hearted; of the second pathetic and tragic. The first of the novel is rather like a modern film in which one is taken on a guided tour of the estate by a learned and witty commentator, who is aware of all the follies and foibles of mankind and is apparently angered by none. At this stage it seems almost as if phakirmohana has no story to tell. Each chapter seems dedicated to apparently unrelated persons, scenes and incidents. It seems almost as if phakirmohana is merely talking at random about whoever or whatever happens to draw his attention. His gaze sweeps forward and back over time and space and at first seems to be entirely without direction. But gradually out of this apparent jumble of random comment and description a pattern forms. A whole living situation has taken shape before one's eyes. One has become, as it were an inmate of the village, aware of the undercurrents of graft and corruption and of the almost all-pervasive ignorance and superstition. One feels on intimate terms with Maṅgarāja and Campā, Bhagīś and Gārī, the saṁtānī and Gobarā Jena. On the whole by the middle of the novel one's attitude towards all of them is somewhere between sympathy and amused detachment.

By the middle of the novel, however, the trap is set.
Campā has baited it and Bhāgī and Gāri are about to walk into it. The tragedy is about to unfold. From this point on the action quickens. The discursive comments grew fewer. The light bantering tone gives way to earnestness. In the first half, Phākirmohana as the commentator shares the centre of the stage with Māṅgarāja. In the second he abruptly withdraws. His witty commentaries and lengthy asides are replaced by citations from official reports, witnesses’ depositions, and the judge's summing up. In the first half the obstruction of Phākirmohana’s personality, wit and charm obscures, and apparently lessens, the corruption and greed of Māṅgarāja and his accomplices; his withdrawal and objectivity in the second half highlight and accentuate the tragedy and pathos, and prepare one to exult in the murder of Campā and the death of Māṅgarāja.

Judging by the three novels which followed, one concludes that Phākirmohana was somewhat ashamed of Cha Māṇa Āṭha Gunt ha and unaware of having produced a masterpiece. The style of his later novels was 'improved'. It was not necessary with them, as it had been with Cha Māṇa Āṭha Gunt ha, to add a glossary explaining the colloquialisms, when reprinting them in Phākirmohana’s Granthabali. In Cha Māṇa Āṭha Gunt ha he spoke directly onto the paper. All the familiar accents of contemporary speech are captured and transfixed. In his later novels the style is polished and all the vulgarities, which lent force to Cha Māṇa Āṭha Gunt ha were removed. The construction of the later novels was 'improved'. The time sequence and the causal sequence of events was straightened. Characters, plot and theme were planned to interlock perfectly. The final novel Prāyascitta is 'perfect'. Each chapter emerges from the one before as smoothly as the segments of a telescope. Yet the birth of the craftsman marked the death of the artist.
The more skilled Phakirmohana became in the novelist's craft, the less vigour and vitality he imparted to his creations. Coffins for characters to die in, like Lachamā, Māma and Prayascitta can be planned with precision and polished to perfection, but a masterpiece in which the characters live and breath is suddenly conceived as a whole and then planted to grow wild, as it pleases, like Cha Mana Atha Guntha.

v) Phakirmohana's powers of observation as revealed in his short stories.

Curiously enough, whilst Phakirmohana's success as a novelist declined, his success as a short story writer increased. This was perhaps in part due to his acute observation, wide social experience, and deep knowledge of people of all ages and all walks of life. He had the knack of penetrating their mentality and portraying them with precision.

Below we give his picture of a lowly peon Hari Simha, wheedling a favour out of his superior, the post Master.

"The Post Master was very fond of Hari Simha. Despite having paid servants, the post Master used to have one or two odd jobs done for him by Simha after work. Nobody could prepare the post Master's hooka quite so well as Hari Simha so that the post Master could smoke whilst reading the English papers in his arm-chair. One day Hari Simha prepared it to perfection. The post Master puffed away at it like a steam engine in the sheds before beginning to doze off. 'Now's the time,' thought Hari Simha, and broaching the matter with the
greatest possible respect and unction, he launched into a detailed account of his difficulties. He also included an account of the high ambitions he entertained for his son Copala. The post Master's eyes remained closed, but he said in a deep voice, 'Right, make out an application.' The post Master was confident of success, because the postal Inspector and Superintendent stayed with him when on tour. He always made impeccable arrangements for their comfort. At such times he was constantly heard issuing instructions to Hari Simha. Hari was an old stager. He'd seen lots of officers come and go. He knew all their little moods and likes and dislikes; and was often busy till midnight attending to their needs, for if any of them had a touch of stomach trouble due to the wretched Orissan climate, Hari soon got them right with soda water and lemons and so forth. Only when the officers were comfortably settled in bed, did Hari go back to his own place for supper. Consequently he was well-known to his superiors.(1)

Some of Phakirmohana's delicacy of feeling and sensitivity of touch is discernible in his pen-portrait of Rebat and the first timid quickenings of her love for Vasudeva.

"Syamabandhu: Well, what do you think, Mother?
Old woman: It's a grand idea alright, but what about his family and caste?
Syamabandhu: I've been into all that. He comes of good karana stock. He's poor, mind you,

(1) Daka Munsi, pp. 564-565.
but there's good blood in him.

Old Woman: Well, you know what they say:
  'Blood's more important than brass,
  Caste's more important than cash.'
But do you think he'll live with us?

Svāmabandhu: I can see no reason why not. He's an orphan, after all.

"Rebatī was sitting near by, eating her evening meal. Whether she caught the drift of this conversation, she alone knows, but from that day on a change came over her. She would sometimes become suddenly shy during her lessons, when her father was watching them; and sometimes she would giggle for no apparent reason, bury her head in her chest, and try to suppress her laughter; and sometimes during the tuition she was unduly subdued; and at others she scarcely said a word and dashed off to her room, the moment she saw Vasudeva coming. She rarely emerged again, before he had called her at least five times."

vi) phakīrmohana's experiments in short story construction.

In this section only three stories will be singled out for detailed comment, but this should not be interpreted as an indication of poor quality in the remainder, many of which are also of a high order of merit.

Parāk Mūnsi (Sept. 1912) marks phakīrmohana's first important advance in construction. It is the first example of what one might call his 'double-story' construction; for it comprises two stories, one outlining the career of Hari Simha, and the other that of his son Gopāla. phakīrmohana's initial

(1) RebatiI, p. 505.
serious tone in describing the struggles of Hari Simha to educate his son Gopala leads one to expect a tragic conclusion, possibly even the death of Gopala. Gopala's sudden change of character after his appointment as Sub-post-Master, though convincing, comes as a surprise, and his final utter ingratitude and snobbishness provide the expected ending of tragedy.

Dhulia Baba (Feb. 1913) marks a further advance in Phakirmohana's mastery of the story-teller's art; for in this story he successfully intertwines diverse elements of experience into a powerful illustration of his morality. Dhulia Baba is based on fact, as had been many of his earlier stories. Phakirmohana had once lived near a monk, who claimed to have witnessed the consecration of Puri Temple. (1) He refers to the same man in Maunamauni. (2) The particular fraud practised on litigants by Dhulia Baba had in fact been operated in Dasapalli, though in real life the culprit had been detected, not burnt in his own fire. (3) Dhulia Baba therefore has the same theme as Maunamauni, religious fraud; but Dhulia Baba is the greater artistic success. Like Maunamauni, the story could have ended with arrest, trial and imprisonment, but Phakirmohana makes Dhulia Baba meet a fitting and well-deserved end by falling into his own fraudulent device, the fire. This piece of poetic justice invests the story with gruesome humour, but it also does more: it strikes a note of utter finality to the Abbot's false claim of superhuman power, and thus provides a potent anti-dote to superstition. Phakirmohana uses the Abbot's false claims well, fashioning from them an introduction which gives to his modern realistic tale a dimension of folk literature.

The story opens with a survey of the miraculous powers of Dhulia Baba's two predecessors, the first of whom was abbot for twelve hundred years, twelve months and twelve days, and the second for 1,500 years. The first was able to move objects at will and the second once spread his tiger skin on the raging Mahanadi River and sailed across on it, accompanied by his entire retinue, to meet a British officer, who had had the temerity to enquire why the abbot was enjoying so much land tax-free. Needless to say, the abbot's feat brought profuse apologies from the lips of the officer, together with an injunction to continue his tax-free enjoyment of the land.

The present abbot, Dhulia Baba, had come to Orissa from Ayodhya to attend the consecration of Puri temple and had been prevailed upon to stay in Orissa by his Oriya disciples. The folk-tale atmosphere of this introduction to Dhulia Baba and that evoked by the gigantic stature and fantastic strength of the Simha family in Rendi pua Anantā (July 1913) is one of the few indications that Phakirmohana's literary position was in a period of transition between Medieval and Modern literature. The atmosphere is clearly a survival from the medieval past that was still enjoyable in his day and indeed still is in ours.

The year 1913 marked another important literary innovation in Phakirmohana's short stories, the intriguing opening. He had first used this in Kamala prasāda Gorōpa (May 1913), which opens with a powerful evocation of the gloom that pervades a shipowner's household. In explaining the presence of this gloom, Phakirmohana unfolds his tale. Kālikā prasāda Gorōpa (Aug. 1913) makes even more dramatic use of the same device. The story opens with a hastily called meeting and
unfolds almost entirely in the dialogue of the characters, which, whether consciously intended or not, preserves the three unities of time, place and action. But to our mind the best use of this device is made in patent Medicine (Sept. 1913).

Patent Medicine opens with the anti-hero, Candramani pattanayaka, trying to devise a scheme to escape from the constant surveillance of his wife so that he can enjoy one more bout of drinking and drugs. His wife is up to all his tricks, but Candramani understands her weaknesses and exploits them. He claims to have received a message from an astrologer, khadiratna, which promises to cure him once and for all. This, of course, is what his wife sulocana has been praying for, but she is suspicious. At first Candramani says he must go on a tour of Bhubanesvara, Khandagiri and Udayagiri, visiting all the shrines and making offerings. The tour is to last three days and cost a small fortune. His wife refuses. Then he suggests visiting all the shrines in Cuttack. She agrees and calls for a buggy to accompany him. He immediately feels unwell; and then brightening up he plays his last card, a prolonged meditation beneath a blanket that is to last the whole day and must be absolutely undisturbed. She agrees.

Candramani bribes the brahmin cook to take his place beneath the blanket and is off, to return at midnight completely intoxicated and expatiating elatedly on the charms of his exciting mistress as compared to his dull wife.

"At midnight Candramani arrived silently at the door of the gambhirī ghara. He was completely intoxicated. His speech was slurred; his feet unsteady; and he opened the door with a crash. 'Makra' (the brahmin cook, whose place has meanwhile been taken by Sulocana) lay in meditation.
The babu was elated. He danced and sang,

'Oh, what a gay dog am I. The true connoisseur
is the man who knows a good wine and drug.'

'Up you get, Makrā. There's a good fellow. Up you
get. There's no need to fear the old hag now. Oh,
what a time I had, Makrā, what a time! Your con-
founded mistress has had me straining on the leash
for two months. But I've quenched two months'
thirst in a day. Today wasn't the first time by
a long chalk. I've been in love with this little
lady for over 3 years. I met her when she came to
dance at Gopāla babu's. Oh, but she knows how to
have a good time, that one. Do you know what her
name is? Your mistress's name is sul-cunā. sul is
what happens in the lavatory and cunā's some rotten
cake. Ugh! What a name! But her name is Us-ma-n-
tārā. And she is as lovely as her name. She is so
clever and affectionate. She'd not forgotten her
old friend. She sent for me, the moment I set foot
in Cuttack. I felt like a man who'd struck gold,
and she was overjoyed to see me. No sooner Had I
sat down, when we started. She'd got everything
ready. Ganjā, opium pellets, the hooka, everything.
First we cracked a bottle of the best. Not that
Askā rum either, but genuine British, first-class
stuff. If you'd ever tasted any, you'd know what
I mean. The pair of us finished the bottle. Your
mistress gives me dainties and puddings everyday.
That stuff's fit for cats alone. But she gives me
real man's fare, salted peanuts, fried salt fish,
and plenty of the hard stuff. I ate my fill. A
marvellous time. I wheedled ten rupees out of your mistress. A man can't go to town empty-handed, now can he? When I put the money down in front of her, she glanced at it and made a face. I'm very quick, not dull-witted like your mistress. I could tell she wasn't pleased. There was no reason why she should have been. She can earn hundreds in a single night, if she wants to. I've promised to give her a hundred rupees tomorrow. 'The money is of no consequence,' she said with a smile, 'so long as I have you.' And that's the truth. It's not the money she wants, but the enjoyment. She's not short of money, but I'll keep my word nevertheless. My word is my bond. Do you know where I'll get the money from tomorrow? Aha ha! It's really terribly funny! Your mistress has put all the rent-money in that steel chest. I'll prise it open and help myself. I've done it a time or two already. Your mistress will never know. She's loaded that chest with cash, because she knows that if I get my hands on it, I'll fritter it away on frivolities in Cuttack. But if she ever tasted a drop, she'd understand the pleasures of alcohol. Us-man-tara understands. But my old lady's too strait-laced. I've had a regular 'skinful' tonight though, such as my wretched father-in-law can never have experienced in a thousand years.'"(1)

(1) Patent Medicine, pp. 513-514.
sciousness with the broom. The following morning both are full of guilt and contrition and hardly dare look each other in the eye, as Sulocana bathes his wounds and makes him comfortable. But the 'Patent Medicine' of Sulocana takes effect; for thereafter drink and drugs become anathema to Candramani and he never touches them again.

"His fellow citizens and former friends and acquaintances were astounded at the change in him. His father Syama pattanayaka, the jamidara, had given him a good education both at home and at school, but all his education had been in vain. He fell in with a bad set and became thoroughly vicious. Drugs had such a hold on him that he could not leave them alone for even a moment. He didn't have a shred of character left. All his nights were spent in the red-light areas of the town in the company of drunks and layabouts. 'The only thing that'll cure him is marriage,' his father was advised. Ramakrsna Mahanti had a daughter, an absolute beauty and extremely virtuous. Syama pattanayaka made her his daughter-in-law. Even so marriage failed to reform his son. He continued to steal cash and articles from the house and to squander the proceeds. He'd borrow five rupees and give a handnote for twenty. His father saw that it was no good. The wastrel would dissipate the whole family property. So his father bequeathed everything to his daughter-in-law. All the exhortations of his father and father-in-law had fallen on deaf ears, yet suddenly within the space of a
night here he was a completely changed man! How was it possible? Gopi Babu was a wit. 'This is the result of those blows his wife rained down on him with her broomstick,' he quipped. 'No matter how incurable the addiction and bad habits may seem, they are all cured by this good lady's medicinal broomstick.'

Thereafter Sulocana and Candramani were idyllically happy and spent all their leisure time together.

As with the two earlier stories, Phakirmohana commences *Patent Medicine*, by plunging in medias res. The babu is being kept under surveillance. This arouses curiosity as to the reason. The reason comes out in the course of a masterly conversation in which the characters of Candramani and Sulocana are revealed. The conversation is a battle of wits, in which both parties are fully aware of each other's weaknesses and weigh each other's words accordingly. The psychological situation is handled most credibly. The irony of the long recital of Usmantara's charms is wonderful. One can well understand the explosive effect it produced. The severity of the beating was bound to be proportionate to the fury incited by this speech. It is small wonder that Candramani was rendered unconscious. The ending too is good. The full history of Candramani is given in the closing paragraphs. It fully satisfies one's curiosity and at the same time is imparted with humour so that one enjoys the narration. *Patent Medicine* is undoubtedly one of Phakirmohana's masterpieces.

CHAPTER VII.

Phakīrmohana's impulse to write: patriotism.

Phakīrmohana's concern with the need to promote Oriya literature.

Phakīrmohana was concerned at the relative backwardness of Oriya literature and with the need to promote its development. He wrote one article and two addresses on this theme. (1) The article, Utkala Bhāṣāra Bhūta-bhabisyaṭaya, seems to have been written on his own initiative and was published in Utkala Sahitya, Volume 3, in 1900. Of the two talks, the first was commissioned by Mṛtyunjaya Ratha and the second by Madhusūdana Dāsa. Both were delivered to what has become the Utkala Sahitya Samāja, the literary society associated with the periodical Utkala Sahitya. It is not clear when the first of the two talks was delivered. If the editor's note in Phakīrmohana's Granthābali (2) is correct, then the address was delivered to the fourth annual meeting of the Kātaka Alocana Sabhā, which would have been in 1898; but if, as Phakīrmohana implies in his opening remarks, the address was delivered to the Utkala Sahitya Samāja, a later form of the Alocana Sabhā, then, assuming that it was delivered at its fourth annual meeting, the date would be 1907. This latter date seems the more likely, since it lessens the interval between the date of delivery and the date of publication, 1912 in Mukura, Volume 7, No 1. The editor of the Granthābali

(1) All of them are reprinted in Phakīrmohana's Granthābali: Utkala Bhāṣāra Bhūta-bhabisyaṭaya, pp. 1045-49; Sabhāpati Abhibhasana, pp. 1092-1101; Abhibhasana, pp. 1105-1111.
(2) Phakīrmohana Granthābali, p. 1101.
supplies no information about the date of delivery or date and place of publication of the second talk, but internal evidence suggests that it was delivered to Utkala Sahitya Samāja, probably in 1915. Phakīrmohana was apparently invited to become permanent chairman of Utkala Sahitya Samāja by its secretary, Madhusūdana Ādasa. (1) The talk appears to have been Phakīrmohana's inaugural address to the society. In the course of it, he mentions being awarded prizes for textbooks 45 years earlier. (2) Since these textbooks, Ākāmālia and Bharatabarṣara Itihāsa, Volumes I and II, were published in 1870 and 1869-70 respectively, the address was probably delivered in 1915.

Since, however, the article and talks appear to be expansions and elaborations of each other, it has seemed best, in trying to formulate a comprehensive statement of Phakīrmohana's views, to present them in logical, rather than chronological, order.

ii) A Comprehensive Statement of Phakīrmohana's Views on the Need to promote Oriya Literature.

Nationality is based on language.

a) "Language is, so to speak, the mother of society. Just as individuals identify themselves by their parents' names, so nations identify themselves by the name of their mother tongue."(3)

b) "A nation or state is identified in accordance with the name of its language. Which state is Bengal?

(1) Phakīrmohana Grantha-balika, p. 1105; (2) ibid, p. 1111
(3) ibid, p. 1046.
The state in which Bengali is spoken. Who are the Bengali nation? The people who speak Bengali."

Since nationality is based on language, the prestige of a nation depends upon the prestige of its language and literature.

a)

"The nation whose language is undeveloped is unawakened. It lacks initiative" and "is unable to maintain self-respect. Its place and prestige among civilised nations is low. It is constantly mocked and ridiculed."(2)

b)

"A study of the periodicals available in Orissa will reveal the status of our mother tongue. At the present time Bengal puts out 300 monthlies, Madras 149, Bombay 303, Punjab 103, The United Provinces 98, Bihar 20, Central provinces 15, Assam 4, and - please listen with especial attention - Orissa only 2; and even those two are not particularly thriving."(3)

c)

"People of Orissa, bear in mind, that there is no way of improving the status of one's nation without improving the status of one's literature."(4)

There are three impediments to national and linguistic progress: i) cultural; ii) political; and iii) financial.

(1) phakirmohana granthabali, p. 1096 (2)ibid, 1094
(3) ibid, p. 1107 (4) ibid, p. 1049
A) The cultural impediment to national and linguistic progress.

The cultural predominance in Orissa of alien tongues has been the main cause of the backwardness and low prestige of the Oriya language.

a) "One of the main causes of the decline of Oriya is that Persian was the official language from the time of the coming of the Muslims till 1836. Since Oriyas were ignorant of Persian, Orissa was crowded with people from other lands, who came as government officials; and since Persian was the official language, no one paid any heed to the vernacular." (1)

b) "50 or 60 years ago, Persian was the official language of Orissa. Consequently, it was one of the languages we studied ... In those days it was a mark of education to speak in a mixture of either Persian and Bengali or Persian and Oriya. (2) The rich used to keep all their household accounts in Persian. Only religious texts such as the Bhāgavata and Rāmāyana remained in Oriya." (3)

In Phakirmohana's view, the effort spent in cultivating Persian was a loss to the nation.

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, pp. 1106-1107.
(2) A speech by Raṅgalāl Bandopādhya to the Utkala Bhāgoddipāpani Sabhā, reported in Utkala Dīpikā for 19-5-1867, refers to the profusion of Persian and Arabic words in spoken Oriya, far greater than in Bengali; see Debi prasanna paṭṭanāyaaka, Kavi-śi, pp. 36-37.
(3) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1095.
a) "One must remember that true literature is the property of one's mother tongue."(1)

b) "If only our forefathers had cultivated their mother tongue as well as the official language what riches they would have bequeathed to us!"(2)

Phakirmohana's contemporaries were making the same mistake as their forefathers, except that now, in stead of Persian, they were devoting all their linguistic energies to English.

"Persian used to be the language of the courts. All legal documents were written in Persian. English officers merely added their signatures in English. Consequently, Indian government officers did not need to learn English ... Almost 40 years ago, I forget the precise date, some Cuttack gentlemen petitioned the Government and got Persian abolished from the courts. Since then Persian has gradually faded away. The Government issued instructions that both English and Oriya were to be used in the courts. Thus finally after many centuries Oriya has been accorded this privilege. Actually, however, Oriya is used much less than the Government intended. From habit and for the convenience of British officers, everything is done in English. The attitude of the British is, 'So much the better', since it is easier for them to understand; and the attitude of the Indian graduates, who become

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1094; (2) ibid, p. 1095
officers is, 'Come off it, after swotting English for twenty years to get our appointments, you can hardly expect us to write Oriya, now can you?''(1)

This cultivation of English on the part of the educated classes was, in Phakürnohana's view, unlikely to result in national progress.

a) "No nation has ever progressed by losing its mother tongue ... The decline and decay of any nation which neglects its mother tongue is inevitable."(2)

b) "Though our official language, English, is now being extensively studied, such a difficult foreign language can never filter down to the lower classes. It is futile to hope that our womenfolk will ever master it; and so long as our womenfolk, who are the true educators and teachers of our young, remain uneducated, it is futile to expect any real diffusion of education. If only for the sake of future mothers, the development of our mother tongue is essential. How we strive to earn and save money for the benefit of our sons and grandsons, the future men of our families. Yet is it not also necessary to improve our literature so as to facilitate their acquisition of knowledge and render them worthy of recognition among the civilised nations of the world? Just glance at Bengal. See how far they have achieved prestige in the eyes of the civilised world, owing to the translation of Bengali books into foreign languages. Yet where

(1) Phakürnohana Grantha-balı, p. 1048-49(2) ibid, p.1046
would be the Bengali nation without its language, Bengali? You are aware, of course, of how quickly they acquired their present prestige, due to their peerless passion and indomitable pride in their mother tongue?"(1)

Education in a foreign language impedes the diffusion of knowledge. If India is to progress, her farmers and craftsmen require technical education, but this will not be possible through English.

"Thanks to the Government, English education, the door to a whole mine of knowledge, stands open before us, enabling us to learn such abstruse subjects as Chemistry, physics and philosophy, which are particularly useful for the advancement of education in our country. But such subjects are not accessible to the general run of our population. It is necessary to improve the condition of our farmers and craftsmen, by educating them in science ... But we will never manage to spread a foreign language amongst them, even if we try for a thousand years. There is no evidence of any nation ever progressing through a foreign language. English is both the official and ordinary language of the freed-slave nations of Liberia (?), yet that nation cannot be said to have made the least progress in the last one hundred years. The Welsh realise the truth of this. English is their neighbouring language, and even though it bears a strong

(1) *phakirmohana granthabali*, pp. 1095-1096.
affinity to their own language, they are making strenuous efforts to retain their mother tongue. Education through a foreign language is like a drop of ghee falling onto water; the knowledge remains confined to the heart of the learner. Education through one's mother tongue is like a drop of oil falling onto water; it spreads throughout the whole country. An illiterate cowherd boy will let the cattle graze and sit beneath a tree, singing a verse or two from the Bhagavata or Upendra Bhanja. How long will it be, do you think, for him to be able to recite the poetry of Milton or Shakespeare?" (1)

The point Phakirmohana is making here is that English education, like Persian before it, is enabling an educated elite to acquire advancement in Government service, it is impoverishing their national literature, by diverting their linguistic energies away from the cultivation of their mother tongue; and it is impeding national progress, by deferring the day when the scientific and technical knowledge available in English will become accessible to the agricultural and artisan classes, and also to their womenfolk, on whom the education of children ultimately depends. If genuine progress is desired, the language of education and administration in Orissa ought to be Oriya. A telling example of the truth in a modern context of Phakirmohana's contention would be Japan, which has made phenomenal progress via its mother tongue. Earlier examples would be the progress of most European nations, since they abandoned Latin in favour of the vernacular.

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1107.
B) The political impediment.

The dispersal of the Oriya-speaking tracts in the early days of British rule constituted the political impediment to the development of the Oriya language.

"One of the main obstacles to the hoped-for development of Oriya is the division of the Oriya-speaking tracts by the Government. The division of Orissa into four parts, Bengal, Central provinces Madras presidency and the Gadajata Mahala, is impeding the development of mutual sympathy amongst Oriya speakers and precluding any possibility of cooperation amongst them." (1)

Oriya intellectuals like phakirmohana were aware of the threat this constituted to the continued existence of the Oriya nation. People of Oriya parentage were beginning to pass themselves off as Telugus, Hindusthanis and Bengalis.

"According to the 1882 census, there are 8,200,000 Oriya speakers in India. We are not prepared to accept this as the true and correct figure. Having had occasion to visit such places as Piskhapattn to the south of Orissa, Hajaribaga and Chibasa to the west, and Tamaluka and Dantana in the north, I am to some extent familiar with the type of language the people of these regions speak in their homes. Though they may introduce themselves in public as Telugus, Hindusthanis and Bengalis, at home they speak Oriya and keep all their household

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1049
accounts in that language; and in the homes of many of the well-to-do Jagannātha Dāsa's Bhāgavata is duly worshipped. Many Oriyas have long since settled permanently in such places as the 24 parganas, Deoghara and Calcutta. Even so, they have been unable to abandon their mother tongue. When these people are taken into account, together with the increase in population between 1882 and 1900, the number of Oriya speakers will exceed 10,000,000."(1)

A further danger was presented by the apparently capricious behaviour of British officials who could suddenly issue instructions that the use of Oriya for official purposes would be discontinued.

"Now, just as Oriya was beginning to raise its head, Sāmalaṭa Woodburn sāheba has struck it with his stick.(2) The harm he has done by abolishing Oriya from the courts will not easily be remedied. Oriyas will long remember this with regret."(3)

The only remedy open to the Oriyas was to petition the Government.

"And now I have a small request to make of the general public. For a long time the people of gharasūa

(1) phakirmohana Granthābali, p. 1047 (2) Sir John Woodburn abolished the use of Oriya in Sambalpur in 1895. It was finally re-instated as a result of the efforts of Madhusūdana Dāsa; see Nabakīsora Dāsa, Utkala Gauraba Madhusūdana, p. 62. (3) phakirmohana Granthābali, p. 1049
and Simhabhūma have been put to inconvenience by the abolition of the use of their language. Come let us strive to take to our breasts our separated brothers. A way of doing this has occurred to me. Let a few patriotic and educated young men collect the signatures of a few thousand Oriyas and send them to the Government."(1)

The Oriyas had actually been petitioning for the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts since the formation of the Utkala Sammilanī in 1903.

"As a result of much effort on Orissa's part, the chief representative of the Supreme Ruler visited Orissa. 10,000,000 Oriyas waited expectantly and hopefully, wondering whether or not he would grant a boon that would end all Orissa's tribulations, the reunification of the Oriya-speaking tracts. Heaven knows through what fault of ours it was, but that boon was not granted. Nevertheless, Oriyas have always been loyal, regarding the supreme Ruler as a deity, from whom boons are acquired only as the result of long penances (tapasya), austerities (śādhanā), and contemplation (dharāna). If from this moment on, we, our sons and grandsons, constantly pray for the removal of our difficulties, then one day the seat of that deity in Britain will surely move. Our aspirations will be fulfilled.(2) and (3)

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, pp.1110; (2) ibid, pp.1109-1110
(3) The Supreme Ruler obviously refers to Queen Victoria, but it is not clear who the chief representative was. It may have been Lord Hardinge who held a darbar in Cuttack in 1912, or

Continued on following page ....
C) The financial impediment.

Lack of capital had also impeded the development of Oriya literature. For one thing, educated Oriyas were disinclined to buy Oriya books.

(1) "Educated Oriyas have still not acquired the habit of purchasing Oriya books. This is particularly regrettable because of the effect their indifference will have upon other sections of Oriya society, which tend to imitate them. Educated people are invariably eager to clap in public meetings at the mere mention of such people as Upendra Bhanja or Jagannatha Dasa, but how many of their works have they actually bought? No Christian home is without its Bible, or Muslim without its Koran, yet how many Oriya Hindu households can produce a copy of Jagannatha Dasa's Bhagavata, which is our equivalent? When asked why he kept on buying Bengali books, which he apparently never read, the late Nilaikantha Majumdar, former principal of Cuttack College, replied, 'If I don't buy books in my mother tongue, then why should others? In that case, our mother tongue would not progress. You people

Footnote continued from previous page

Mr. E.S. Montague, the Minister for India, who visited Orissa in December, 1917. Both were approached about the question of Orissa's unification. If the address was delivered in 1915, then presumably it was Hardinge; if it was Montague, then one must presume that the address was delivered shortly before Phakirmohana's death in 1918. See, Nabakisora Dasa, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, Cuttack 1951; p. 66

(1) This is a summary, rather than translation, of Phakirmohana's views.
fail to realise this, which explains the decline of Oriya."

On another occasion a Bengali had remarked to phakirmohana.

"Oriyas are more eager to buy Bengali newspapers and periodicals than they are to read their own, so the eventual extinction of Oriya is inevitable."

phakirmohana remarks,

"Take a look at your bookcases, gentlemen, and see how many valuable English and Sanskrit volumes are stacked there, as indeed they should be. Note also that you have purchased a number of Bengali books for pleasure. Yet have you bought any in Oriya? The likelihood of so neglected a literature ever progressing is extremely remote."(3)

The plight of Oriya periodicals is an indication of the backwardness of Oriya.

(4) "Bengal produces 106 periodicals. In Orissa even the word 'periodical' would be extinct, were it not for the dedication and self-sacrifice of such men as Visvanatha Kar and Brajasundara Dasa. phakirmohana once urged two educated Oriyas in good (3) ibid, pp. 1097-1098 (4) This again is a — (1) rather than translation, of phakirmohana's views. (2) ibid, pp. 1097-1098 (4) This again is a summary, rather than translation, of phakirmohana's views.
positions to subscribe to Utkala Sahitya. One replied, 'What is there in Oriya periodicals, that we should lay out good money to buy them?' And the other retorted, 'Doesn't anyone ever buy Oriya periodicals except as a show of patriotism?'''(1)

Phakirmohana continues,

"If they had ever touched Sahitya or Mukura, they would know that these two are as good as many second-class Bengali magazines. The position of the weeklies is the same. Dipika is a contemporary of Soma prakash and the Education Gazette in Bengali. Our Bengali brethren were as indifferent towards their mother tongue 40 years ago, as we are towards ours now. In those days the subscribers of Soma prakash and the Education Gazette numbered no more than 2,000. Now there are countless periodicals in Bengali. 400,000 copies are put out by Calcutta alone. .... You can judge your national prestige from Utkala Dipika. Yet I know Orissa imports as many copies of Bengali periodicals as it buys copies of Utkala Dipika. Nothing in this world was ever accomplished without the expenditure of money, care and effort. I do not dare ask you to spend your valuable time studying our ill-starred Oriya language, but you could undertake to spend a little money each month on books and magazines in Oriya, so as to encourage writers in our mother tongue, and to enhance our national prestige. You would soon see how many writers would come forward..."(2)

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1098. (2) ibid, p. 1098.
Lack of capital was impeding production in Oriya literature.

"Orissa possesses plenty of talented educated people, who could write excellent books, if they wanted to. With practice, any educated man can become an author ... With concerted effort there is nothing that cannot be accomplished. Oriya authors are poor. Much of their work lies unpublished for want of capital." This has "caused many authors to cease trying. So what hope was there of new ones coming forward?"(1)

Publishing in Orissa was not properly organised. Authors had to publish and market their own works. Inadequate financial resources resulted in limited editions, which were expensive and difficult to sell.

"Poverty is the reason for the decline of the Oriya language. Because of poverty, authors are unable to publish their works. Let me cite one example. Pandita Gopinatha Nanda of pārkākhimundī, the philologist, has put years of research into the compilation of an excellent dictionary and for 56 years he has wandered from door to door trying to get it published. Between two and three hundred people wrote to him to buy copies when it was published. I believe that if a group of businessmen had got together on the lines of the pustaka prakāsa samiti in Bengal and printed the dictionary, within three years they would have made a profit of at least two thousand rupees. Secondly the rich of this

(1) phakīrmoṇa granthabali, pp. 1098-1099.
country are unwilling to buy books and the educated unable to afford expensive books. As a means of circumventing this difficulty, I should like to draw your attention to the way magazines are operated in Bengal. Bengali houses are full of books because in Bengal excellent books worth Rs. 5 sell at 8 annas a piece. By these means the assets of Bengali magazines have risen from 10 to 12 lakhs. The means are these: when twenty thousand copies of a single book are published at once in an engine press, the cost of each copy is 6 annas, to which is added 2 annas profit. Thus in one year they make 20,000, multiplied by 2, annas profit. When in Orissa an author has 1,000 copies printed, the cost per copy is 3 rupees. He adds two rupees profit. Who can afford a 5 rupee book? Consequently, only after aeons of effort does an author's book see print. I hope and pray that this literary society will deliberate on this matter."(1)

The only way out of this impasse seemed to be Government aid.

a)  
"One of the main factors which facilitate the development of a language is government patronage."(2)

b)  
"Another important reason for the decline of the Oriya language is lack of government patronage. In order to encourage many authors in Bengal, the Government buys up their works and distributes them to the public. I have heard of a few indigent

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1110  (2) ibid, p. 1047
authors receiving grants, but nothing of this sort occurs in Orissa. As I have said, without government patronage no language ever progressed. Still, I shall be guilty of ingratitude if I do not mention one thing. 45 years ago I received prizes amounting to 1,000 rupees for composing a few ordinary textbooks. I have heard that Jagannātha Rao got 2,000. Mr. Ravenshaw, whom we all revere, and Rādhanātha Rāya commended us. I think that if someone were to raise the matter of indigent authors in Orissa, the Government would help. Authors in Bengal have received help and are turning to the production of new books, because many Bengalis who are desirous of improving their mother tongue have important posts on the Lt. governor's staff and in other departments and are thus in a position to lobby the support of the Government. I hope that poor Oriya will one day be able to enjoy similar official favour." (1) and (2)

When, Phakirmohana wondered, would all classes of Oriya society cooperate in the promotion of their mother tongue, as the Bengalis were doing.

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1111.
(2) It was unlikely that such official patronage would be forthcoming. According to a letter from Rādhanātha Rāya to Gangadhara Mehera, dated 18th June 1899, and marked 'confidential', the Government was discouraging the promotion of vernacular literature. "You must have read reports in the papers about the Government not favouring the development of vernacular literature for political reasons. Literature fosters patriotism and nationalism, and in consequence is not without dangers, as far as the Government is concerned. If these reports are correct, it is futile to expect any improvement in our literature." See, Debiprasanna Paṭṭanāyaka, Kavi-lipi, pp. 88-89.
"I read in the paper about Bengal's leading citizen, Maharaja Mahendra Candra Nandi, a retired High-Court judge, and other notables of comparable standing, attending the 5th session of the Banga Sahitya Sammilan in Cuttack, about the success of the meeting, and of how Rs.50,000 were raised for the promotion of Bengali literature. I felt a great yearning and wondered, when, oh when, would all the leading people of all sections of Orissan society unite for the promotion of their mother tongue."(1)

Every educated man had a duty to cultivate his mother tongue.

"Who is responsible for the promotion of our mother tongue? Every single man in the land - every single educated man, that is, for fifteen sixteenths of the population is illiterate and unable to understand."(2)

D) Appeals to patriotism.

Phakirmohana called upon the educated to contribute to the cause.

"Just consider, gentlemen, what our reputation is in the civilised world, despite our dwelling in this holy land, which is a veritable treasure house of natural wealth and beauty. Consider the courage, inventiveness, intelligence, steadfastness, and piety of our forefathers. Yet how far we have fallen behind in this twentieth century when science and

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabal, p.1093. (2) Ibid, p.1096
education are available in such profusion. How often Mister Dāsa has begged us to devote at least 5 minutes out of the 24 hours in each day to thinking about our country! But thinking is no longer enough. Now we must act, for our country, our nation and our mother tongue. We must make sacrifices. Nothing will be accomplished without capital. It has been proposed that we contribute at least one day's pay to the promotion of our mother tongue. Come, let us try to get that proposal put into effect from today. Our educated young men are the hope of the country. I hope and pray that from this auspicious moment they will come forward to help the cause."(1)

Phakirmohana appealed to the educated to buy books, if not for themselves, at least for their womenfolk.

"In order to stop our housewives, daughters and sisters, from wasting their time in indolence, daydreaming and gossiping, buy a number of books and magazines for them. In England and America books and magazines have become an indispensable item of expenditure, which explains the world-wide predominance and prestige of those nations."(2)

It was their language which bound the nation together. Thus they had a patriotic duty to cultivate it.

"The purāṇas state that language is brahmamayah, for it binds the society together. Hence the study of

(1) The Mr. Dāsa referred to is Madhusūdana Dāsa. Phakirmohana Granthabalī, p.1101; (2) ibid, p.1098.
one's mother tongue is an important act of merit (punya-kārya). Hence ... Mahātma Rammohan Ray states that meditation on God, the performance of one's duty, and the promotion of one's mother tongue constitute one's highest obligations (paramā-dharma)." (1)

The patriotism of Madhusūdana Dāsa was an example to the whole nation.

"Some years ago some slight dissension occurred between the Bengali and Oriya nations. A certain Bengali spoke slightingly of Orissa. Madhusūdana Dāsa replied in typically vigorous language, 'You may disparage me; you may abuse me; but you not the least right to mention my country.' (That is, you may attack me personally, but I will not allow you to speak ill of my nation.) A person whose patriotism is so great can easily dedicate the whole of his wealth and ability to the service of the country, as Madhu Bābu is demonstrating not only in words, but also in deeds. (2)

(1) Phakirmohana Granthāballi, pp. 1107-1108.
(2) As Orissa's first barrister, Madhusūdana Dāsa earned an immense fortune; e.g. he got one lakh of rupees for his part in the case of Puri Temple (see, Naba Kisorā Dāsa, Utkala Gaurabā Madhusūdana, p.35) and another lakh when acting for the king of Khandapada (ibid, p.37); but he spent the whole of it on patriotic works, such as the Orissa Art Ware Works, which he founded in 1897 and the Orissa Tannery in 1905.

"Though Madhu Bābu would accept contributions to the national cause from people of all classes, rich and poor alike, he did not wait for them, but spent thousands of rupees from his own pocket. How often have we heard him say, 'By the time you have got all the subscriptions in, the house is knee-deep in water.' Even when he was penniless through spending in the national cause, he used to say, 'I wasn't born with a

Continued on following page ....
never forget, not even for a moment, how much merit (punya), assembled over how many ages, has enabled Orissa to acquire such a son. Madhu Babu is a god, driven to earth by a curse. (s̄epa-bhraṣṭa devatā)."

(1)

By the time of phakirmohana's second address, the ḍaḍajāta rulers had begun to come out in support of this patriotic cause.(2)

"Now that the Maharajas of Bāmuda, Sonapura, Cikīti, Dharakōta and Sarāngi, the royal family of pārśa-khemundi, the prince of Tikkaḷi, and the rulers of Tālcer and Baḍakhemundi have come out as either patrons, poets, song-writers or dramatists, there can be no doubt that in the near future the Oriya language will progress, for the progress of the vernaculars depends entirely upon royal patronage."

(3)

Footnote continued from previous page

money bag in my hand. I earned what money I had. So what does it matter, if, after spending it on my mother, my country and my brothers, I return empty-handed? What does matter is this, I have failed to fashion my nation and my country in accordance with my heart's desire." (ibid, p. 53)

(2) For example, after Lord Hardinge's darbar in Cuttack in 1912, Sāi Bhūṣana Raya raised over Rs. 30,000 from ḍaḍajāta kings for the erection of a permanent home in Cuttack for Utkala Sahitya Samajā. See, Bibidha Ratna-samgraha, (An Oriya Encyclopaedia) compiled by Lāla Nagendra Kumāra Raya, Cuttack 1936; pp. 683-684.
(3) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1109
Presumably so as to ensure that this royal patronage continued, Phakirmohana bestowed fulsome praise upon two royal patrons attending his second address.

"The manifestation of a god is never vain. By coming to Cuttack and granting aid to the society, the rulers of Sonapura and Bāmanda, who are themselves patriotic poets and desirous of improving their mother tongue, have encouraged us all. There is no doubt that one day this society will succeed." (1)

E) Four ways of stimulating production in Oriya literature.

Phakirmohana listed four ways in which the educated might promote their national literature.

"Four means should be resorted to by the educated to promote our national literature:

i) read it;

ii) induce others to read it;

iii) write; and

iv) induce others to write." (2)

As the existence of the society itself indicated, the educated were now interested in the cause of Oriya and some were already writing. Though it was encouraging to see young writers contributing to the cause, Phakirmohana noted with regret that they were not basing their styles upon the Oriya classics.

"Whatever other defects they may have, old Oriya authors like Upendra Bhanja, Dinakrṣṇa and Kabistūrya

(1) Phakirmohana Granthālabālī, p.1110; (2) ibid., p.1097.
exhibited polished styles and diction. They ought undoubtedly to constitute models for modern writers. I know something of the younger days of our famous poet Radhanātha. He spent many years assiduously studying old Oriya epics, especially the poetry of Upendra Bhanja, before he began writing. I too try my hand at poetry now and again. I always model myself upon Dīnakṛṣṇa and Jagannātha Dāsa."(1)

Phakīrmohana drew attention to the importance of prose-fiction, drama and short lyrics in popularising one's mother tongue.

"Bengali has made phenomenal progress within the last fifty years. The foundations of this progress were laid by such people as Ṣvara Candra Vidyāśāgara. But their language remained confined to class-rooms and libraries. The sudden rise to fame of Bengali is due to the novels of Baṅkim Candra, the plays of Dīnabandhu, and the songs of the world-renowned Rabindranātha. Educated Bengalis used to despise their mother tongue. Now educated Bengali ladies and tired Bengali gentlemen are constantly seen holding books in their mother tongue. Since all classes of Bengali society, including rājas and maharājās, are striving for the promotion of their mother tongue, the language has progressed immeasurably. Thus one may state categorically that in order to popularise one's mother tongue with the general public, three classes of book are needed in profusion, novels, dramas and songs."(2)

(1) Phakīrmohana Granthābali, pp. 1093-1094. (2)ibid, p.1108.
He expressed becoming modesty in his own aims and achievements.

"Of course, some of you may be thinking that, because I happen to have written a couple of novels myself, I am so enthusiastic over novels, but my defence is this, talented engineers don't lay beautiful roads through dense trackless jungles, till the coolies have prepared the ground for them; I am merely preparing the ground for the educated authors of the future to write their novels on."(1)

Though in the main Phakirmohana's impulse to write seems to have derived from patriotism, he was not unaware of the moral influence that could be exerted by literature. Thus one is justified in assuming that his patriotism was reinforced by moral purpose.

"From time to time a novel or drama exerts a great influence on the general public. Educated people know of the immense good achieved by such dramas as Nil Darpan and Kulfin kul sarbasva in Bengal ... Every educated Indian had in his heart love for his mother-land, but they were all separate; then a novelist (2) showed them a picture and pronounced, 'Bande Mataram'; from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, the cry arose in chorus, 'Bande Mataram'. Having read Uncle Tom's Cabin, millions of Americans dashed out onto the battlefields to give their lives for the abolition of slavery ... "(3)

(1) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1109.
(2) Bañkim Chandra Chatterjée.
(3) Phakirmohana Granthabali, p. 1109.
iii) Phakirmohana's dedication to Oriya literature as revealed in his correspondence with Visvanatha Kara.

Phakirmohana's dedication to the cause of Oriya literature is also revealed in his correspondence with Visvanatha Kara, editor of Utkala Sahitya. (1) It is doubtful whether Phakirmohana ever made any profit out of his writing. Some of his works, as, for example, the first edition of Utkala Bhramanam and part of his Rámâyana, were printed at his own expense and distributed free. The rest he tried to sell, but made frequent losses.

"21/10/15 (2)
All that you say about book-selling is correct. Throughout my career I have endured endless trouble and suffered considerable losses. Some people have taken copies of Māndū without paying. I have no idea when I shall get the money from them. I think that the person in Sambalpur is not an ordinary customer. He's probably a retailer. I feel like sending them cash-on-delivery. That way I shall be paid by someone, if not by him." (3)

It should be remembered that from 1896 onwards Phakirmohana had no regular paid employment. The difficulties he had in raising money to finance the publication of his works and in supervising sales can be imagined. He seems to have had to pay the cost of ink and paper, the moment publication was requested.

(1) Some of this correspondence has been collected by Surendra Mahānti and published in the appendix of his Phakirmohana Samākṣa, Cuttack 1955.
(2) The year is not given. Surendra Mahānti suggests 1915, p.172.
(3) Surendra Mahānti, p.172.
8/8/15

I have received numerous requests for Utkala
Bhramanam. I can’t refuse any longer. I have sent
Cakra Dhara Babu along with the revised version.
You must have received it by now. I’ll send the
money for the paper by the end of this month at the
latest. Try to print it ... (1)

24/2/14.

I hope to send you some money for the paper of
Abasara Basare in a few days time."(2)

In his last years Phakirmohana’s health was poor. He was
fortunately able to delegate part of the burden of selling
to Visvanatha Kara.

23/9/13 (3)

Make what arrangements you think best about the
sale of Mamû, but I generally ask Gaurisankara to
stock 50 copies in the Company Shop for me. This
arrangement with Sahitya press will hold good for
Mamû. The Press Office is not to claim any commis-
sion on copies sold to students at reduced rates
before the end of September. The Press Office is
to get 25% commission on all copies sold at the
full rate after October 18th.

Yours
Phakirmohana Senapati.

(1) Surendra Mahanti, p. 169; (2) ibid, p.164; (3) The year is
not given, but 1915 seems probable for two reasons: one, the
letter talks of people praising a recent story; and two, about
the sale of Mamû. Mamû was first published in 1913 and in Sep-
tember that year appeared Phakirmohana’s master piece, Patent
Medicine.
P.S. You'd better put in an advertisement about the sale of the book."(1)

This correspondence also reveals part of phakir mohana's motivation in writing. He apparently undertook to write short stories in order to popularise Utkala Sahitya.

23/9/13

If Sahitya's reputation rises even a little because of reader's liking the story, then I am glad. As you well know, I possess strength of neither body, mind, nor learning, only a constant and ineffectual desire to serve Sahitya. You praise my story, yet whether it be praised or blamed, you are the one who is ultimately responsible. I didn't take up writing stories voluntarily. It was you who first told me to and then proclaimed in print the fact that I was going to. I was trapped and started writing. If I manage to write twelve for at least one year, I shall consider myself absolved. There's nothing difficult about writing stories. The world is full of them. What I lack is time to think and strength to write. When I receive word from you, I sit up for an hour or two at bed-time, after I've eaten and try to get the plot straight. Then I start writing. But now I am too tired even for this small effort."(1)

Though phakirmohana found the mental effort of short-story writing slight, the physical effort was great; he was seldom able to write for long.

(1) Surendra Mahanti, p.166 (2) ibid, p.165
I've begun a story. (1) I write for half an hour each night. I expect to have it finished in 4 or 5 days' time. (2)

Phakirmohana was diffident about the value of his stories. That he continued to write them seems to have been due to Visvanātha Kara's encouragement and the public's appreciation.

I had decided to give up writing stories last year ... But if my paltry writings interest people and benefit sahitya, then it is my duty to write ... I shall go on writing as long as I have strength. If my health had been better when I was writing Sabhya Jamidāra for the last issue, the characters would have been more developed and it would have made pleasanter reading, but would have needed 6 or 7 more pages to print. Because of having to complete it in a hurry in time for sahitya, I didn't quite get it to my satisfaction, but I've just received a letter from a graduate, saying he was enchanted with it, and you also write that you liked it. If it's lucky enough to have a reprint, I'll write it properly ... "Knowing that you'll be sending for one, I've started another story. It's called Bīsa Manji. It's already 24 to 25 sahitya pages long. Some complicated problems have turned up ... To solve them may take another 50 pages. Nanda Kiśora (3) suggests I write

(1) This may have been Sabhya Jamidāra, which appeared the following month. (2) Surendra Mahānti, p. 163. (3) probably his old friend in the Political Department, Raya Nanda Kiśora Dāsa Bahādurā.
as a novel. I don’t know what to do. Let me know if
the idea doesn’t appeal to you. I’ll abandon it
and start another. I won’t be able to finish the
present one in time. I only write for half an hour
in the evenings.”(1)+(2)

Presumably Bīsa Mānji (poison seed) did not appeal to
Visvanātha Kara, for nothing more was heard of it. A few days
later, Phakīrmohana wrote,

" 9/4/14

... I began a story(3), but my rheumatism flared
up. I’m having difficulty in writing this letter.
I’ll begin writing the story tomorrow. It will take
two or three days. Don’t expect to find anything
out of the ordinary in it...”(4)

Another reason for phakīrmohana’s writing stories was
the hope that others might emulate him.

" 17/6/15

I saw that the success of many Bengali magazines
was due to short stories. That’s why I began trying
to write them. Another reason was that others might
emulate me. My desire has been fulfilled. The stories

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(1) Surendra Mahānti, pp.173-174; (2) Surendra Mahānti gives the
year as 1917, but 1914 seems more likely for two reasons:
phakīrmohana discusses dispatching rice to Visvanātha Kara, a
subject which is resumed dated 9/4/14; and also the reception
of Sabhya Jamidāra, which, according to Naṭabara Sāmanta Rāya,
Vyāsa-kavi Phakīrmohana, p.224, was published in March 1914.
(3) This may have been Bagula Bagulī, which appeared in
Sahitya that month.
(4) Surendra Mahānti, p.164.
in the last number of *sahitya* were very promising. Now I'm free...

"Rest assured I shall have a story for *sahitya* when you send word. It's stored away in my brain. I'm feeling a little better now that the rains have started. I'm able to write for up to an hour in the mornings, but I can't see very well in the evenings any more.

"I had the temerity to dash off mentally in a couple of days - the story I had planned. When you need it, I'll write it down and send it to you." (1)

The rains of 1915 obviously refreshed him. He was still able to write for an hour a day in August.

"8/8/15

... I am now writing for an hour - each morning. I have half finished a story, (2) hold between 8 and 10 pages for me in *sahitya*. I think it will be longer than usual...

"(3)

But this burst of energy was soon dissipated.

"21/9/15

... The more I try to finish the story (4), the longer it gets. Two more hours would see it finished, yet where am I to get two continuous hours writing? After writing for between 5 and 7 minutes, I have to lie down. I've got persistent fever and am worn out.

(1) Surendra Mahānti, pp. 167-168; (2) probably Madha Mahāntiṅka Kanya Suna, published in October 1915. (3) Surendra Mahānti, p. 169. (4) He was probably still talking about Madha Mahāntiṅka Kanya Suna.
with it. I didn't sleep last night and I didn't eat this morning. I am feeling a little better now. I had felt like writing a verse for the puja, but the feeling died.

"... If I had been a little stronger, this story may have been a little better. As it is, I've abandoned all pretensions to Art. I'm just hanging on to the plot. Even so, the wretched thing is giving me trouble. Look through it carefully. It will take me two days to read and correct it."

Despite his physical debility, his will remained strong.

21/10/15

... I'll keep my vow. I'll send one story a month to Sahitya. I've started one now. I got tired after writing two or three pages. I'm very unwell, both physically and mentally. And very on edge. The story will be finished, if I get 8 to 10 hours of good health. Reserve 9 or 10 pages for me. I'm having difficulty in writing this letter ... I can't write any more."

Whether this vow was kept or not is difficult to say. Possibly he continued to write stories throughout the following year, but only one more was published, Garud Mantra in November, 1916. Even if he abandoned short stories, however, he never abandoned writing. 1916 saw the publication of two works in verse, Samabaya Rna Samiti prasanga and Candogya Upanisada; and right up to his death he was writing his autobiography, Atma jibana carita.

CHAPTER VIII

Attitudes and values.

1) Phakirmohana: a populariser of sacred Sanskrit literature, even in his prose fiction.

As the appendix indicates, Phakirmohana wrote much else besides prose fiction. The majority of his other works were verse translations from Sanskrit, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, Sri Bhagavat Gita, Khila Harivamsa, Upanisada Sangraha and Chandogya Upanisada. He also composed a long narrative poem, based on the Jalita Vistara, his Baudhavatara Kavya. From the fact that he commenced his career as a translator and populariser of Sanskrit literature, long before launching into prose fiction, and that he continued to translate from Sanskrit both during and after his career as a fiction-writer, one infers that, in Phakirmohana's eyes, his translations may have been of greater value than his prose fiction, or were at least of equal value. In view of this, it is both fitting and proper, in a chapter on his attitudes and values, that an attempt should be made to ascertain why he valued Sanskrit literature so highly and strove for so long to popularise it.

As the characterisation in his prose fiction shows, Phakirmohana considered the puranas a good moral influence. Most of his virtuous characters, such as Syama Bandhu Mahanti in Rebati and Bidi Patra in Bagula Baguli, were fond of puranika literature; and it was this literature that accounted for their virtue. For example, addressing his son and daughter-in-law from his death bed, Bidi Patra says,
"Listen, son, you have been going with me to listen to the purānas ever since your childhood. I have taught you much. Don’t forget,

'Thou shalt commit neither theft, adultery, nor murder. Thou shalt not covet other men’s goods. Nor shalt thou bear false witness.'

And listen, Cemi, Sapna’s your husband … your god … Do as he tells you ... "(1)

Phakirmohana believed the purānas to be the origin of the novel.

"Many educated people think that we learnt of the novel through western education, whereas, in fact, the source of the novel is India … the story of Naciketā and the dialogue of Indra and Varuṇa in the Vedas, composed thousands of years ago, may both be described as Vedic novels … To propagate religious literature amongst the masses, the venerable Veda-Vyāsa composed the eighteen purānas or novels … "(2)

Phakirmohana considered the purpose of the purāna and novel to be more or less the same.

"purānas, novels and stories are all written for the same purpose, to instruct people. purānas are merely old (puruṇa) stories. I wouldn’t be surprised if in a thousand years time the novels that are

coming out now weren't accepted as literally true (as indeed the purāṇas are by the unsophisticated)."

Phakirnohana's speeches and prose fiction bear the imprint of his paurāṇika reading. In his address to Utkala Sāhitya Samāja, for example, he observes, "No matter how incompetent I may be, I have a duty to promote my mother-tongue. Even the squirrels (gundīcī musā) joined in the construction of the bridge" (by which Rāma attacked Lāṅkā in the Rāmāyana)(2) Instances of arguments based on paurāṇika precedents, such as

a) "This is my vow. I consider the slaughter of my father's enemy meritorious. The dharma śāstra enjoins us to kill our enemies by whatever means we can. Our Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa murdered Jarāsandha by a stratagem."

(3) and,

b) "Lord Vāsudeva said to Arjuna, the pāṇḍava, 'All evils spring only from greed: greed is the door to destruction.'" (4),

are common to all Phakirnohana's novels. The chapter entitled pandita sābhā in Māmū is an abbreviated paraphrase of the substance of his Čandogya Upāniṣada; and the conversation between Vaiśnava Carana and Śaṅkaraṇa Mahānti in Chapter 50 of prayaṣcitta is reminiscent of the Bhagavat Gītā, that he had translated some years earlier.

Thus, in creating his prose fiction, Phakirnohana was not, (1) Aja-nāti Kathā, p.581; my brackets. (2) Ṣabhāpati Abhi-bhāṣana, p.1093. (3) That is, Pādal Sinha had paurāṇika sanction to murder Bhāskara pandita; Lachāma, p. 394. (4) Said when the plot is being hatched to lure Bhāskara pandita to his death; Lachāma, p.396.
in our view, breaking away from his career as a translator and populariser of sacred Sanskrit literature. He was merely translating ideals and concepts derived from that literature into forms that were more acceptable to English-educated tastes. For those tastes that were untouched by Western education, however, he continued to translate directly into the verse forms of Medieval Oriya literature, used by his acknowledged masters, Jagannatha Dasa and Dinakrsta. In the remainder of this chapter we shall discuss the ideals and concepts that phakirmohana was attempting to translate to Western-educated Oriyas.

ii) The values phakirmohana tried to communicate via his prose fiction.

phakirmohana wished to inculcate in his Hindu readers the traditional values of their society in regard to family life, ksatriya honour, and respect for religion and the ruling classes. He considered family life more valuable than honours or possessions.

"Neither a hundred thousand honours, nor a hundred thousand estates could compensate him for what he had lost. When one has no family to share in the enjoyment of worldly property and pleasure, the acquisition of wealth becomes a source of sorrow."(1)

The effects of the loss of her parents upon a daughter were indescribable.

"How can we express what a mother is? What simile

(1) Lacham, p.403.
can convey what a mother is? She is more sacred than heaven itself. In comparison to her, all the heaped treasures of paradise are as nothing. How can we explain what a mother is? Even if love, compassion, fondness, affection and unselfishness could gather themselves up in human form, that form would still not compare to a mother. Having witnessed the murder of such a mother at the hands of vicious human brutes, what young daughter would not break down? We are unable to express the horror experienced by a daughter, who has witnessed the slaughter of the father she worshipped, who both gave and safeguarded her life, and was her true mentor."

This sloka extolling the importance of the father occurs innumerable times in his prose fiction.

"pita svargah pita dharmah pita hi paramam tapah
pitar pritim apihane priyante sarvadevatah"

The importance of the father's śrāddha is also indicated.

"Alas, I am the only living member of my family. There is no one else to save my father's soul. I have neglected my duty. It is obviously my duty to save my father's soul."

In Chapter 29 of prayāscitta phakīrmohana depicts the struggle in a girl's heart between her duty to uphold truth

(1) Phakīrmohana lost his mother very early. Some of his own yearnings for maternal affection are expressed here.
(2) lachama, p.336. (3) ibid, p.406.
(dharma) and her duty to her father, when ordered to sign a passionate letter to her husband, that she has not written; an act which in her eyes is tantamount to lying.

"Sense of Righteousness (dharma jnāna) ,
'Listen, Indu. I am the earth's core; the saviour of mankind; the bestower of happiness and prosperity; the sole refuge of this world and the next. Forsake me and your damnation is certain.'

"Filial Piety (pitr-bhakti) ,
'Listen, Indu. Your father is your supreme deity. You are an intelligent girl; you know this well; you have never disobeyed him before; are you to defy him now? Don't you remember the loving care with which he has reared you since your mother died? Who sat by your bed when you were ill? Who would sacrifice everything he has, even life and limb, for your protection and pleasure? ... He has none but you to love. Night and day he strives for your well-being. Are you to hurt him now?" (1)

In Lachama Phakirmohana speaks of the value of a son.

"Like the firmament without the moon, or a garden without flowers, or a flower without fragrance, or beauty without eyes, that house is empty, which contains no son." (2)

(1) prayascitta, p.455. (2) Lachama, p. 338.
Phakirmohana considered conjugal love the highest bliss.

a)

"The Uttararāyas are now experiencing heavenly bliss. Not unnaturally, some of our female readers may envy Cāndamāni's happiness, but they should remember that true happiness does not depend on the possession of vast estates and immense incomes. If there is any likelihood of happiness in this sorrowful world, then it lies in conjugal love. Though riches, honour, learning and fame — many things, in fact — may bring men happiness, these things are as nothing compared to conjugal love. Fate has decreed that these other sources of happiness shall be confined to certain classes of men, but conjugal love is available to all, from the Emperor in his palace to the poor man in his hovel; as if, by virtue of many penances man in his misery has been granted by Providence this jewel of paradise, conjugal love... We have seen couples united by bonds of beauty, desire and finance, but none of these unions is worthy of being called conjugal love, for they all originate in selfishness. Unselfish, conjugal love is different. It lasts for ever; the death of one partner is like the death of the other, but their love survives it. Those unions resulting from sexual infatuation in youth cannot be called conjugal love. Conjugal love is that bond which inspires one to abandon self-interest for the sake of the other's virtues, painted on one's heart, and to sacrifice personal happiness to mutual happiness. The joy and delight of such conjugal love is boundless and
indestructible. Bound by conjugal love, a husband loves his wife because he has to; because she is the love-giving light of his eyes, and his inseparable shadow; and to his wife, a husband is her god, her refuge, the ultimate source of all her happiness... The chaste wife cherishes her husband with all her heart and soul, regardless of all other duties and obligations; for, as far as she is concerned, he is her god; and for his part, the husband feels that his wife is his life's blood. (1) The Uttararṣyas were united by true conjugal love. In consequence, their joy in each other was pure and immense."(2)

b)

"Suffice it to say, that this royal couple were one mind and one soul, inhabiting two separate bodies."(3)

Though monogamy is not enjoined upon Hindus, phakīrmohana's concept of perfect conjugal love led him to regard it as a mark of virtue in a man.

a)

"Mahādevī was Manaḍhata's sole wife. He had no concubines."(4)

b)

"Sire, you know my vow. I have no need of worldly wealth. ... I have vowed to my wife to remain monogamous. I shall never look at another woman. As long as I live, I shall think only of my wife."(5)

In Māmū Phakīrmohana stresses the value of a husband to a wife.

"Whether her husband is handsome or ugly, rich or poor, virtuous or sinful, as far as a Hindu wife is concerned, he is her highest god; her companion and support in this world and the next; her means of livelihood and her source of happiness. By her husband's greatness she is great; by his riches, rich; and by his fame, famous. All the wealth he earns, she enjoys. What else can a husband be called but his wife's 'all in all in life' (jībana sarbasva)? The flower garland bound round their wrists by the priest and witnessed at the altar by the Guardians of the Ten Directions remain inseverable throughout their lives. A Hindu wife has no sense of separateness — her husband is her all in all. Even if true conjugal love is lacking between a husband and wife, they are bound to each other in all matters pertaining to this world and the next. Without a husband, a wife is helpless, destitute, unclean, inauspicious...

In the Deccan a widow shaves off her hair and keeps her head covered, whilst the head of the wife, whose husband lives, remains uncovered and her hair flows free, for her husband is her head's covering. It is an excellent custom; for no matter how vulgar, ugly, or penniless, her husband may have been, his death is an intolerable blow to a wife, agonising and annihilating."(1)+(2)

(1) Phakīrmohana is probably rationalising here his mother's death of grief after his father's death. (2) Māmū, p. 134.
In view of the paramount importance of a husband to a Hindu wife, it becomes essential for her to remain chaste, for loss of chastity, or even the suspicion of it, may lead her husband to reject her.

"Her fears gradually intensified. Would her husband accept her? After all, she had been alone and living amongst all kinds of men?"(1)

Yet though loss of chastity may result in rejection by the husband, its retention was popularly supposed to endow a woman with great power. Phakirmohana fostered this popular belief.

a) "The eyes of the satī (chaste wife) contain such power that no man dares ogle her."(2)

b) "I have never done or said anything to offend my husband. . . . Mother said - and I've heard it in the purāṇas too - that chaste women, devoted to their husbands, are never widowed. Ājñā, Śadvitā and Sakuntalā were all devoted to their husbands, and all of them remained unwidowed. O God, bring back my husband; grant me the strength to find him; I see his image everywhere; it floats before my eyes at every moment.' Lachamā had read in the purāṇas that evil times were intended to test the satī. The satī always remained steadfast in crisis. Their satīhood protected them. Satīs could perform the impossible"(3)

Besides stressing the value of Hindu domestic virtues, Phakirmohana also idealised the ksatriyas, who constituted the old ruling class.

a) "His eyes flashed. Who had suddenly come into his thoughts? The mistress of his heart? She had been abducted by the enemy. This was intolerable to any man, especially a ksatriya." (1)

b) "If they had been prepared to abandon their belongings and throw themselves upon the mercy of the horsemen, some of them might have escaped with their lives, but ksatriyas were not made that way ... For as long as life remains, they refuse to humble themselves before an enemy. The man who shrinks from laying down his life in the defence of a woman's honour, is, in their eyes, better dead, for he is a disgrace to the living. (2)

c) "I am not alone. Omnipotent God, Ekaliṅga, is my support. If my cause is right, the Lord will help me. The omnipotent Lord aids all right resolves ... On God's name, I have sworn to kill either my father's murderer or myself. Ksatriyas are true to their word; the vow of a ksatriya is unshakeable; neither an obstacle of any kind, nor any kind of temptation, shall make me swerve from the fulfilment of my vow." (3)

(1) Iṣṭamā, p.382. (2) ibid, p.330. (3) ibid, p.393.
phakirmohana also stresses the qualities of the ideal king and ruler.

"Being endowed with such good qualities as religious sincerity, affection towards their subjects, benevolence and generosity, the King and Queen reigned for many long and happy years." (1)

To rule a king needs virtue.

"Neither the Hindu nor the Turk shall prevail in India. Both have forsaken their religions and are negligent of their duties. God is averse to both of them. They lack the kingly virtues of universal benevolence, justice, patriotism, impartiality and truthfulness. True kingship disappeared from both races with the death of Akbar the Just and Shivaji the Faithful." (2)

A true king is a god among men.

"A universe without God and a kingdom without a king cannot survive for a moment." (3)

He is a father to his subjects.

"The relationship between a ruler and his subjects should be the same as that between a father and his sons." (4)

(1) Lachamā, p. 408. (2) ibid, p. 351. (3) ibid, p. 352. (4) ibid, p. 349.
Phakirmohana also stresses the power of religion, faith and the brahmanic curse.

a) "No matter how deceitful, selfish or irreligious a man might be, mention of religion (dharma) frightens him a little." (1)

b) "O Lord, if I be chaste, if I have faith in Thee, then help." (2)

c) "Know this, if you slaughter this innocent, pure-blooded brahmin, then his curse will devastate the whole of Maharashtra." (3)

iii) Phakirmohana reaffirmed traditional Hindu values to counteract alien influences.

Thus in creating his prose fiction, Phakirmohana was pursuing the same aims as in translating and popularising Sanskrit literature, for he was trying to inculcate into Orissan society the traditional values of Hinduism. In this section an attempt will be made to ascertain why.

In seeking to answer this question, the first thing which must be made clear is that Phakirmohana was advocating certain values, not because they were Hindu, but because they were indigenous to Orissa; i.e. his motives were not religious, but patriotic. That Phakirmohana was operating from patriotic, rather than religious, motives, is clear from Lachama.

(1) Prayaascitta, p. 454. (2) Said by Lachama. She is chaste, she does have faith in God, and she is helped to destroy Bhaskara Pandita. Lachama, p. 370. (3) Ibid, p. 366.
Had his desire been to establish Hindu values in Orissa, he would have proclaimed the superiority of Hinduism over both Christianity and Islam; whereas, on the contrary, he was at pains to place all three religions on a footing of equality, saying of Christian precepts, "Are not the words of the padre the injunctions of our śastras?" (1); and declaring through the mouth of Bādal Simha, the Hindu hero, "By your reckoning, I'm an infidel, but, gentlemen, infidels also have an omnipotent God, who is none other than your Allah. In the name of that Allah, I have come to seek your help." (2)

As we have seen, Phakirmohana was sympathetic in his delineation of European Christians. He was equally sympathetic in his treatment of Muslims. In Lachamā he depicts them as possessing such admirable qualities as loyalty and patriotism.

a)

"Brothers, I swear on the holy Koran that from this moment I have sold the heads of my sons, daughters and myself to the service of the Lord (i.e. the Nawab). From today he has the right to every drop of blood in my body." (3)

b)

"You (the Nawab) are the head of our nation, our supreme commander; we are in complete agreement with you; we have never disobeyed you; we never shall." (4)

c)

"Mustaphā is a hero ... His belief in Islam is

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(1) Lachamā, p. 352. (2) ibid, p.381 (3) ibid, p.380. (4) ibid, p. 380.
firm. He possesses man's highest virtue, patriotism. He is intent upon the preservation of his nation's prestige. "(1)

Phakirmohana even describes the Nawab as monogamous.

"Despite innumerable faults, the Nawab possessed one supreme virtue: he was monogamous ... It was this that made possible for him that rare happiness, conjugal love." (2)

Though Phakirmohana had no religious objections to either Muslim or Christian rule in Orissa, he had, nevertheless, economic, cultural and moral objections. In the long run, British and Muslim rule had proved almost as bad for Orissa as Maratha rule, and for essentially the same reason. All three were but variants of the same thing, alien rule, which, as far as the subject nation is concerned, is almost invariably bad. Under alien rule Orissa had been impoverished to the enrichment of Murshidabad, Berar and Calcutta.

The adverse effects of alien rule were not confined to the economy, however; culture and morality were also affected. The predominance in Orissa of both Persian and English had each in turn inhibited the development of the Oriya language, diverting the energies of the educated classes away from its cultivation. Owing to this neglect, Oriya culture had stagnated. Meanwhile exposure to alien ideas and concepts had weakened the hold of Hindu morality on the young, who had taken up alien vices such as drinking; and in some classes atheism was rife and parents no longer respected.

(1) Lachampa, p. 381 (2) ibid, p. 391.
It was in order to counteract these alien influences that Phakirmohanā was addressing the importance of the old Hindu virtues of respect for morality (dharma), the ruling classes (the ksatriyas), the elders (gurujana), caste councils and family life. But though Phakirmohanā was advocating these virtues, it would seem that what he was advocating was not a return to the old feudal system, but the initiation of a new social system, resting on the same values, a kind of religious socialism.

iv) Religious Socialism.

Though Phakirmohanā was concerned at the economic decline of Orissa his main objection to alien rule was not against its economic effects, but against its spiritual and psychological effects. As far as Phakirmohanā could judge from his reading of Sanskrit literature, the forces of law and authority in ancient India had rested upon spiritual rather than economic values. To rule a king needed the respect of his people and that respect would be accorded him, only if his character were immaculate and his faith in God sincere. Similarly, a father and a husband were worthy of respect, only if they believed in, and adhered to, the principles of dharma as revealed in the śastraś and purāṇas; similarly also, a wife, whose virtue and chastity did not conform to paurāṇika standards was not worthy to be called a wife and should be rejected.

In his prose fiction, Phakirmohanā reaffirms these beliefs that he had derived from his reading of Sanskrit. In Lachamā the rule of the Muslim and Turk ends, because both races have forsaken their religions; and the coming of British rule is welcomed because the British adhere to the
principles of their religion even in business, where dishonesty is to be expected.

In Phakirmohana's pre-June 1913 prose fiction, husbands are invariably respected by their virtuous wives, whose merit protects them (the husbands) from disaster. Maṅgarāja is kept alive by the power of his wife's punya; he dies only after her death. He had shared her dharma, for she was his sahādharminī, and thus, though evil, he had lived by her virtue. In Phakirmohana's post-June 1913 prose fiction, however, fathers and husbands, who err from the path of dharma, are no longer respected by their daughters and wives; Kamalī steals from her avaricious father and Sulocana beats her dissipated husband.

Thus in his prose fiction, Phakirmohana reaffirms the spiritual values of Hinduism in order to counteract the materialistic values imported into Orissan society from the West. Under western influence, the spiritual values of Hinduism were being replaced by materialistic ones. Social status was beginning to be measured in financial, rather than spiritual, terms. In Prayāscitta Phakirmohana depicts a conflict for the leadership of karaṇa society between Saṅkarsana Mahānti, a rich, self-made man, and Vaiṣṇava Carana Vidyadhara Mahāpratā, the hereditary head of the Śrī karaṇa community. Attracted by Saṅkarsana's money, even respectable karaṇas were prepared to connive in gaining him acceptance as the social equal of Vaiṣṇava Carana, but Vaiṣṇava Carana will not hear of it, for Saṅkarsana's blood had been polluted by an inferior marriage some generations earlier. Though sympathising with Vaiṣṇava Carana to some extent, Phakirmohana nevertheless shows that his pride itself is a fault. Pride in status, status-seeking and empty pomp are themselves sources
of evil, for they engender materialistic cravings. A man should be admired for his humility and virtue, not for his possessions, as becomes clear in the dénouement, when both Vaismava Carapa and Saikarjava Mahanti renounce the world to practise dharma in Vrndaavana.

Pride in status deludes men into making a false show of splendour, the expense of which often impoverishes them, and allows men of lesser virtue to acquire their property and prestige.

"Performing a deep obeissance to the brahmins, Laksmana Misra opened his address,
'I'm a child, gentlemen, so please take no offence at what I am about to say. I do not believe the moneylender to be at fault. Your ruin is not due to him, but to your own stupidity and sinfulness.'

"Hearing this, old Amanta padhI cried out heatedly, 'Steady on, Laksmana, what's all this about stupidity and sinfulness?'

"Performing another obeissance, Laksmana continued, 'You're getting angry with me, grandfather. But look, when all this tax-free land was granted to you, it was on the explicit understanding that you should study the sastras and bless your benefactor three times daily. Yet tell me, is there a single school in this whole village? All your time is spent in snuff-taking and bhang-drinking, and playing games of caupata. I doubt whether any of you so much as say the
gayatri each day, let alone bless your benefactor. If this isn't sinfulness, then what is it? And another thing, you never think how you will repay the loan, before you dash off to borrow money to make a big splash of your daughter or son's wedding, in order to show how great you are. A person who doesn't moderate his spending to suit his income is nothing but a fool. Just look, this sacred land has fallen into the hands of any old Tom, Dick and Harry, all because of your stupidity and sinfulness."(1)

Brahmins and abbots were exulting in the pride of their social positions and were more intent on enhancing their possessions and incomes, than their wisdom and virtue, forgetting that the true prestige of a brahmin derives from the latter not the former. By satire, phakirmohana sought to remind them of their true social function, the propagation of dharma.

Though opposed to materialism, phakirmohana was not unaware of the importance of economic factors in conditioning the formation of personality. As he points out, Māgarāja becomes vicious, and aggressively anti-social and acquisitive, because he was born poor. His initial poverty caused him to exaggerate the importance of wealth. phakirmohana's praise of the middle-class is essentially praise of economic sufficiency. The middle-class were rich enough to be free from economic stress; and provided they were not deluded by the desire for grandeur, they could lead happy and virtuous lives, for their incomes were sufficient to enable them to receive an adequate education and grounding in morality. It was the rich and the

(1) Adharma Bitta, p. 535.
poor who were most likely to be deluded by materialistic cravings, for both were more or less conditioned to over-stress the importance of social status and prestige, and imagine that such things derive from possessions.

Accordingly in *prāyāscitā*, where phakīrmohana proclaims his vision of the ideal kingdom, the landowners place all their possessions in trust to the temple, and ensure that the income from it is used for the education and social welfare of their tenants. Thus in effect phakīrmohana was advocating, not a return to the old feudal system, but a new type of religious socialism, whereby all the means of production would reside in the possession of the state, the landowners becoming mere trustees, and the tenants or subjects enjoying an equal share in the produce via social services. Presumably under this system, everyone would enjoy more or less middle-class status. Since all would be educated and grounded in morality, and since no one would possess sufficient personal wealth to indulge in extravagance or ostentation, crime would be eradicated, for there would be no luxurious displays of opulence and grandeur to engender materialistic cravings. All would dedicate themselves to the performance of dharma, either through the service of each other, or, when their physical powers failed, through worship in a religious retreat for ascetics.

v) Phakīrmohana's aims and intentions in comparison with those of both Baṅkim Candra Chatterjee and Rāmmohana Rāya.

Phakīrmohana's position is analogous to that of both Baṅkim Candra and Rammohana Rāya in Bengal. Being Baṅkim's contemporary, Phakīrmohana was trying to do in Orissa what Baṅkim achieved in Bengal. He was trying to create a truly national literature by getting all classes of Orissan society
to read and cultivate it; to achieve a sense of national unity; to reinvigorate his nation by reminding it of past glories; and to improve the moral climate of Orissa, by reaffirming the traditional values of Oriya society.

Unlike Bankim Candra, however, Phakirmohana was not trying to achieve his purpose by alienating the Muslims. In this respect, Phakirmohana's position accords with that of Rammohana Raya. For historical reasons Phakirmohana's background and experience were similar to those of Rammohana Raya. Like Rammohana, Phakirmohana had learnt Persian in childhood, because at the time Persian, not English, was the official language of Orissa. (i) This knowledge of Persian engendered in them both sympathy for the Muslim community and respect for Islamic religion and culture, just as their later knowledge of English led to a similar respect for Christianity and Western culture. But, being later in time, Phakirmohana had witnessed the waning of Islamic culture in India; and he could probably foresee a similar waning of Western culture in the distant future, when British power in India ceased. Consequently, it was, in his view, a mistake to concentrate on the acquisition of the trappings of Western culture in dress, behaviour and speech. Such concentration was a waste of effort on the part of the nation. One should respect the best in all cultures and seek to borrow and absorb the most admirable elements of alien culture into one's own. But it was foolish to abandon one's native culture root and branch, in favour of a foreign one, whose sojourn in India could never be permanent. This, as far as one can make out, was the essence of Phakirmohana's thought on Orissa's cultural dilemma during British rule.
vi) MohinImohana Senāpati's tamperings with phakīrmohana's works.

Unfortunately, phakīrmohana's views brought him into opposition to his son, whose education and experience were totally different from his own. It is said that Govinda in Prāyascitā and Gopāla Simha in Pāka Munsi were both modelled on phakīrmohana's son, MohinImohana Senāpati.(1) It was natural that they should have been, for after all most fictional characters must, despite the disclaimer's of their authors, be based on someone if they are to possess any verisimilitude. The better acquainted author and model are, the greater this verisimilitude will be.

Though what Phakīrmohana probably intended was merely to make general statements about the effects of Western education on Indian youth, MohinImohana seems to have interpreted these characterisations as personal attacks upon himself and vehemently resented them. This resentment led MohinImohana to alter various passages in phakīrmohana's works. In his introduction to his edition of Cha Māna Ātha Guṇṭha, MohinImohana criticises phakīrmohana's philosophy of life.

"It is only in our schools and colleges that the badly-behaved are punished; in Nature's schools and colleges things are different. There it is simply a question of cause and effect. Mārinele Mahāpātre cāhi rahile jalakā. (The cunning steal beneath your nose and you never notice it.) This is the predominant principle in Nature's institutions. With the application of sufficient force and skill, a man is certain to succeed in attaining his ambitions. Nature takes no account of whether the man is

(1) Surendra Mahānti, phakīrmohana samikṣā, p.viii
religious or not. If we set fire to a temple, it will certainly burn. Its sanctity will not save it. A properly-executed plot against the good and virtuous will be sure to destroy them. The principle that might is right is universally accepted, because it is seen to succeed in all instances."(1)

And in his edition of prāyaścitta, Mohinīmohana puts the following words into the mouth of Govinda,

"The world is fraught with danger. The intelligent manage to circumvent it, but the stupid sink in deeper at every step. Individual or national progress is rarely advanced by religion. When intent on achieving their own ends, the cruel, ruthless and determined invariably triumph. The Auraṅgjebs of this world will always be crowned with laurels and the Christs with thorns."(2)

To conceal such tampering, Mohinīmohana omitted 14 chapters from prāyaścitta.(3) His tamperings were not confined to the novels, however; he also altered passages in Atma Jībana Carita, Upahāra, the book of verse written after the death of Kṛṣṇakumāri, and Utkāla Bhrāmaṇam.(4)

The reaction of Mohinīmohana to his father's works was a purely personal reaction. It was not representative of educated Oriya opinion in regard to phākīrmohana's fiction. There

is a saying in Oriya, 'Beneath the lamp is dark', which is used in speaking of the reactions to famous men of their close relatives, who tend, because of their proximity, to see in them more faults and failings, than evidence of greatness. MohiniMohan's reaction to his father constitutes an example of this.

It is a commonplace that children often assume opposite outlooks to their parents. The process is more emotional than intellectual. It is said of Gandhi's sons that the eldest, Harilal, drifted so far away from his father, emotionally and morally, that he left home as soon as he was able; and, because his childhood had been a series of restrictions, became completely dissipated, drinking heavily and consorting with prostitutes, and, as a final act of rebellion against his father's principles, becoming converted to Islam. Devadas, the favorite son, is also said to have rebelled against his father's principles; and in adult life he delighted in luxurious motor cars and colourful clothes and surroundings, because of the drabness imposed upon him in youth by his father. (1)

It is probable that phakirmohana was well aware of the rejection of his principles by his son. One can hardly imagine him bringing the boy up without trying to inculcate in him his own scale of moral values. He was probably well aware of his son's scepticism and also of his own inability to change it. It has often seemed to me that this failure to convince others of the validity of one's own values constitutes one of the most powerful impulses driving men to write: the desire to create in fiction a world where one's values shall prevail; even when one knows that in reality such prevalence is impossible. It is this desire that has given rise to all the visions

of Utopia we now possess.

Little importance need now be attached to Mohinirmohana's attempt to distort the vision phakirmohana sought to project. His tamperings merely delayed the full appreciation of phakirmohana's works by later generations, because now that phakirmohana's original text has been restored in his granthabali, there is nothing to prevent their full appreciation.
CHAPTER IX.

Conclusion.

(1)

To understand Phakirmohana Senapati, we must understand the political and cultural context into which he was born and with which he was interacting. He was born at a time of crisis in Orissan affairs. Great changes were in process. British rule had come to Orissa bringing with it British law and British education. During Phakirmohana's life-time, the introduction of steam ships, railways and metalled roads dragged Orissa, as part of the British Empire, willy-nilly into a world-wide system of trade, based on the 19th century concept of *laissez-faire*, by which each part of the system was compelled, by the pressure of competition from the other parts, to contribute to the system only those things which it could most easily produce. Orissa's industry and commerce were too weak to withstand the fierce competition inherent in this system; whole industries, such as salt, shipping, textiles and iron, completely disappeared; local businessmen were ruined; and Orissan markets fell under the control of non-Oriyas.

Other profound changes also took place. The replacement of Persian by English, as the language of law and administration, resulted in the creation of the new class of Western-educated lawyers and administrators, who were to gain increasing social and political importance. New systems of land-tenure initiated by the British resulted in the decline of the old aristocracy in the coastal plains. Many were replaced by self-made men, who had acquired their fortunes in industry and commerce in Cal-
cutta and who became a new phenomenon in Orissa, absentee landlords with little interest in the welfare of their tenants. Meanwhile, on the cultural plane, the exposure of Hinduism to the challenge of Christianity and Western scepticism weakened the respect of the young for their parents, caste councils and religious faith; morality declined among the Western-educated; and in the towns alien vices were indulged.

The cumulative effect of most of these changes was to lower living standards for the average Oriya. His employment prospects deteriorated. Amongst the lower classes, the decay of local industries increased the pressure on the land, which was now almost the sole means of employment. Land became a scarce commodity and, under the new tenancy laws, began being bought and sold for the first time. Amongst the middle-classes the replacement of Persian by English placed Oriyas at a disadvantage vis-à-vis Bengalis, who enjoyed a good fifty year lead in English education and Westernisation in general. Thus the key posts in administration and teaching went to Bengalis.

It was within this situation, and as a reaction to it, that the Oriya nationalist movement came into being. It seems probable that the commencement of the movement was fortuitous. In founding Cuttack Printing Company to print old Oriya literature, Gaurisankara Raya and his associates seem to have been motivated mainly by a desire to emulate Bengal's rapid cultural advance. It was the politically more astute Bengalis who saw in this gradual cultural renaissance a threat to their economic dominance of Orissa, which they had come to regard as a Bengali preserve of Official employment. In attempting to ridicule and suppress the Oriya renaissance, the Bengalis converted an attempt to preserve the Oriya literary heritage into a wrangle over the medium of instruction in Government schools in Orissa,
and finally into a struggle over middle-class employment prospects in Government service.

Once Oriyas had realised the connexion between nationality and language, the movement intensified. The dangers inherent in the political division of Orissa became apparent. Oriyas in Madras, the Central provinces, Bihar and Bengal were having to learn either Telugu, Hindi, or Bengali for the purposes of education, employment and legal business. The longer this situation persisted, the more likelihood there was of people who were Oriya by blood becoming either Telugu, Hindusthani or Bengali by education and culture, with the result that the Oriya nation would disintegrate and its language and culture virtually cease to exist. Thus it was that the Oriya nationalist movement acquired its primary objective, the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts.

Since nationality was recognised to be language-based, Oriya literature became of importance to the nationalist movement, as an agency for fostering and preserving interest in Orissa's national past and pride in her national heritage, against the day when the nation might once more be united within its own Oriya-speaking state. Since each fresh book in Oriya came to be regarded as a fresh link in the cultural chain uniting the Oriya nation, the patronage and encouragement of modern Oriya literature acquired national importance. Thus towards the end of his life Phakir Mohana was duly recognised and honoured for his services to literature as a prominent worker in the national cause and was invited to address public meetings to exhort others to cultivate Oriya literature as a patriotic duty.
It must not be supposed, however, that the whole population of Orissa was united in the national cause. The lower classes were largely illiterate and scarcely realised what was happening, and in the educated middle-classes, people tended to be guided by self-interest. Many were content to make personal progress, by educating themselves and their families in English, and were indifferent to the progress of the nation. These people were the despair of the nationalists, but their behaviour was understandable. In order to hold down jobs in Government service and keep abreast of cultural events in India as a whole, it was necessary for the Oriya educated classes to be conversant with English and other Indian languages, notably Bengali. But it was precisely this necessity which was likely to keep the Oriya race permanently in a position of inferiority. To understand why this was so, a glance at the publishing industry is necessary.

It is axiomatic that the more copies of each edition of a single work a publishing house produces, the cheaper each copy will be, provided all the copies can be sold. The large numbers of Bengalis in Government posts both inside and outside Bengal (in Orissa, Assam, Bihar etc) ensured that Bengali books could be produced in large editions. The additional demand from Oriyas, Assamese and Biharis, who felt it necessary to keep abreast of Bengali literature made Bengali books cheap enough for even lower-middle-class Bengalis to purchase; whilst the consequent loss of demand for Oriya, Assamese and Bihari books made works in these languages expensive to produce and largely unprofitable to publish. The unprofitability of publishing also rendered writing unattractive and consequently progress in Oriya literature was slight.
Nevertheless, as phakīrmohana realised, though it was possible for a few individuals to progress by means of foreign languages, it would never be possible for the nation as a whole to progress by these means. The soundness of phakīrmohana’s reasoning can be appreciated by contrasting the respective positions of India and Japan in the modern world. India’s progress through English has been slight, compared to that of Japan, where the medium of instruction has always been Japanese. Phakīrmohana favoured taking all the information one could from other nations via foreign languages, but he wished the medium of instruction in Orissa to be Oriya, so that the whole nation could progress. Thus in exhorting Oriyas to cultivate their mother-tongue, phakīrmohana was rendering signal service to his nation.

(ii)

Though a detailed history of the Oriya nationalist movement has not yet been written, it is necessary for the purpose of this thesis to hazard a few remarks upon the nature and development of the movement. The first thing that should be made clear is that it was a regional, not national, movement; i.e. it was primarily concerned with the independence of Orissa from Non-Oriya domination, not with the independence of India from British rule.

Though many of its adherents, especially aristocrats such as Rāj Baikunthanātha De, were motivated by national pride, the majority of its supporters were probably concerned mainly with middle-class employment prospects in ‘natural’ (prakṛti) Orissa, (1) and, precisely for this reason, the chief opposition

(1) the phrase used by Utkala gammilanī to denote the total geographic area in which Oriya was spoken.
to the movement probably came from the middle-class in contiguous regions, Bengal, Bihar, Central provinces and Madras; since any gain by the Oriyas was a loss to the Bengalis, Biharis, Hindusthanis and Telugus, and vice versa.(1)

The British were probably indifferent to the fate of Orissa. It can have made little difference to them whether Orissa remained divided and parcelled out as parts of other administrative regions and zones, or whether it was united as one ethnic, linguistic and cultural whole and administered as a separate region. To the Oriyas and their neighbours, however, the difference was crucial, and therefore influential people from both Orissa and contiguous regions were probably continually lobbying British officials, though with conflicting aspirations, throughout the period from 1866 to 1936. As early

(1) Until 1880, for example, when Madhusudana Dasa returned to Orissa, the Bengalis enjoyed a monopoly in the legal profession in Orissa; and they did all they could to prevent Madhusudana getting established. (see, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, p.31) Phakirmohana also records that during the language dispute the Bengalis created 'closed shops' in the post Office and Public Works; that no Oriya had ever managed to get a job on the railways; and that commerce was entirely in the hands of Non-Oriyas.

By refusing to permit the study of Oriya in the universities, Madrasis and Bengalis were effectively reducing the number of Oriya graduates. Madhusudana Dasa had difficulty in obtaining permission to write Sanskrit in the Oriya script at the University of Calcutta in 1869-70. (See, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, p.25. ) Arrangements to teach Oriya were not made at Madras University till 1873 and in Calcutta till 1902; both these victories were gained only after prolonged agitation. (See, ibid, pp.62-63) Similarly, the use of Oriya in official documents was not allowed in Madras till 1890. (Ibid, p. 62. ) Until that date Telugu-speaking solicitor's clerks enjoyed an advantage over Oriyas.
as 1866 Mr. H.H. Ridley (sic), the Secretary to the Government of India, wrote to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, proposing that Orissa be severed from Bengal. The fact that it remained unsevered was probably due to an opposing lobby in Bengal. (1) In 1903 Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India, proposed that the coastal belt (the so-called Mogul Bandi) and the hilly regions (the Gadajata Mahala) of Orissa should be united. The Home Secretary to the Indian Government, Mr. H.H. Ridley, circulated the proposal to all regional governments concerned. The Utkal Sammilan welcomed the proposal, but it was rejected at the 19th session of the Indian Congress, where, presumably at the instigation of Telugu delegates, a resolution was passed that Ganjam should never be severed from Madras. (2) As early as 1911, Britishers such as Lord Hardinge and even the Indian Congress had accepted the principle of linguistic states, on which Oriya aspirations were based, but the Government of Madras opposed the principle. (3)

Orissa's aspirations were finally fulfilled as a result of Utkala Sammilan defying the Indian Congress in 1921, when Gandhi declared non-cooperation. When the Simon Committee arrived in India, Congress issued instructions that the Committee was to be boycotted, but Utkala Sammilan sent representatives to testify to the Committee. As a result the

(1) Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, p. 61. In 1895 Mr. Cook (sic) I.C.S., then Commissioner of Orissa, proposed in his administrative report that the Oriya-speaking tracts be unified. (2) Ibid., p. 63. (3) Ibid., p. 64. The same page also records that in 1918 the Montague-Chelmsford report also expressed approval of the principle whereby states should be organised on a linguistic basis.
O'Donell(sic) Committee came to Orissa in 1931 to determine the boundaries of the proposed new state of Orissa and in 1936 the state was established. (1)

It should be pointed out that though independence from British rule was not the immediate object of the Oriya nationalist movement, it nevertheless formed one of its ultimate objectives. (2) As far as Orissa was concerned, it was a question of priorities. Had India been granted independence, before Orissa achieved the status of a separate state, Oriyas would still have been faced with the prospect of either remaining 2nd class citizens of India, in comparison to Telugus, Hindusthanis and Bengalis, or campaigning for the creation of a separate state on linguistic grounds. As future events have shown, Utkala Sammilani undoubtedly had its priorities right.

(iii)

As far as one can judge, the Oriya nationalist movement comprised two phases: a literary and uncoordinated phase from 1866 to 1903; and a political and organised phase from 1903

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(1) Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, pp.67-68. (2) ibid, p. 52. The proposal that independence from British rule should form part of the programme of Utkala Sammilani was put forward in 1921, three years after Phakirmonana's death, by Pandita Gopabandhu Dasa, an ardent admirer of Gandhi, who seems to have pursued a more extremist line that most of the members of Utkala Sammilani; for example, he initiated a non-cooperation movement in Simhabhuma in 1921, when the rest of the Sammilani favoured cooperation. There seems to have been differences of opinion amongst the Sammilani leaders on the future of Orissa also. Some wanted a separate state; some, like Madhusudana Dasa, wanted continued association with Bengal; and others, like Gopalananda Caudhuri, favoured association with the Central provinces. See, ibid, p.63.
onwards. Phakirmohana’s main contribution was to the first phase, in the linguistic dispute with Bengal in the late 1860s and in the struggle to preserve and enrich the literature of Orissa. Though he sympathised with and, when possible, helped Utkala Sammilani in its political struggles after 1903, it would seem that Phakirmohana was more of a moralist and visionary than a practical politician. Though he desired Orissa for the Oriyas as fervently as anyone in the movement, and though like Utkala Sammilani he desired the improvement of agriculture, commerce, industry, education and culture in Orissa, (1) he desired most of all an improvement in the moral climate. It was true, as his deception of Beames and Toynbee shows, that he preferred Oriyas to be ruled by Oriya kings rather than by British administrators, but, nevertheless, as far as he could see, Oriyas would make no better rulers than non-Oriyas, as long as they remained greedy and materialistic. In his novels Cha Mana Atha guntha, Mamu, and prayascitta it is Oriyas he castigates, not non-Oriyas; Oriyas who care for property and position more than for their fellow Oriyas. In doing so he proclaimed his utopian vision of the ideal kingdom, where traditional Oriya virtues and values should be cherished, and

(1) These constituted part of the declared aims of Utkala Sammilani. The other main aims were:

a) to create a sense of nationhood amongst the people of Orissa.

b) to draw attention to people’s grievances; and

c) to agitate for the unification of the Oriya-speaking tracts. See, Utkala Gauraba Madhusudana, p.54.

Utkala Sammilani provided valuable training in democracy for the people of Orissa. It was a secular organisation, open to all residents of Orissa, whether of Oriya parentage or not, who chose to regard Orissa as their mother-land and Oriya as their mother-tongue. See, ibid, p.52. Its affairs were conducted in Oriya, which enabled people of all classes to participate in its discussions. See, ibid, pp. 57-58.
where the monarch or landowner should impose upon his estates a kind of aristocratic socialism, such as Robert Owen imposed in Lanarkshire, thus creating a vast cooperative, whose produce was to be enjoyed by all in the form of education and social services. This above all was what phakirmohana desired and to some extent his visions have been realised. The pattern of Government in India since Independence has been socialistic; the rajas and maharajás have been deposed; the jamidari system ended in 1952/53; basic education schemes, such as phakirmohana would have approved, devised by Gandhi, have been put into effect; at the village level pancayat rule has been instituted; efforts have been made to improve general standards of health and to revitalise local industries; modern industries have also been established; and, phakirmohana would have been delighted to see it, a modern port has been built at Paradvlp; and in the villages workers are still trying, as he tried, to persuade Oriyas to grow and eat cabbages. Phakirmohana would find much to please him in modern Orissa.

Thus our discussion of phakirmohana's political career is concluded. In the remainder of the chapter an attempt will be made to estimate his literary importance. To do so, it will first of all be necessary to contrast his achievements with those of his contemporaries, Madhusudana Rao and Radhanathya Rāya.

(iv)

The literary age during which phakirmohana was writing was dominated by his two friends Radhanathya Rāya and Madhusudana Rāo. Each was superior to phakirmohana in education and status, and he felt an almost instinctive deference towards them both.
Being better educated, Radhanath and Madhusudana were able to keep abreast of cultural trends in Britain and Bengal and to make literary innovations. Radhanath successfully introducing blank verse into Oriya and Madhusudana the sonnet; and since they each in turn became head of the Education Department in Orissa, their innovations, styles and values found acceptance with educated classes. They became the literary kings of Orissa. To attribute part of their success to their professional status is not to imply that the whole of their success was unmerited. Their talents were real, and sufficient to have gained them distinction in almost any period or place, but not the pre-eminence accorded them in late 19th century Orissa.

Madhusudana Rao (1853-1912) was closer to the Oriya tradition than Radhanath. He was essentially yet one more mystic poet in direct line of descent from Jagannatha Dasa and Bhima Bhoi. He believed in the universal brotherhood of man,

"Let man's million voices sing in joyous chorus
of the one God and the one race of man."(1)

and in the existence of an ideal world of truth and beauty beneath the shifting surface of reality. His lyrics and sonnets faintly echo his mystic probings beneath this shifting surface.

Despite his undoubted ability, Madhusudana's reputation probably rests more upon his personality than his poetry. A firm adherent of the Brahma Samaj and a dedicated teacher, he devoted much of his energy to the propagation of his religious and pedagogical principles in the series of journals he launched,

(1) Quoted by Nanda Kishara Dasa, Amrta Santana, Cuttack 1952; p.97.
Siksaka (educational) 1873, Dharma Bodhini (religious) 1873, Siksha Bandhu (educational) 1886, Naba Sambada (religious) 1887, Asa (educational and religious) 1888, and finally Brahma (religious) 1892. Throughout his life he was associated with various literary societies and was indirectly the founder of Utkala Sahitya Samaja (The All-Orissa Literary Association), founded in 1903, which evolved from the Alocana Sabha (Debating Society) that Madhusudana started in 1894 at Cuttack Training School, where, as principal, he was moulding the future teachers of Orissa. Through these various agencies Madhusudana's impact on his age was great. He was universally revered as a pillar of piety. Phakirmohana wrote of him, "He was indeed like a great sage of old."

No other Oriya has ever enjoyed such long unbroken predominance in cultural affairs, nor such propitious circumstances for influencing the formation of educated tastes, as those enjoyed by Radhanatha Raya (1848-1908). For 31 years, from his appointment as Deputy Inspector in 1872 until his retirement as Inspector in 1903, Radhanatha was the most influential Oriya in the Education Department. When he assumed office, there was virtually no Oriya middle-class in existence. Oriyas had been reluctant to seek western education. The majority of Oriya-speaking educated people then in Orissa were of non-Oriya descent, like Radhanatha Raya himself, who was a domiciled Bengali and Madhusudana Rao a Maratha. It was only in the latter part of the 19th century, during Radhanatha's period of predominance, that Oriyas began seeking western education in any numbers. Consequently, the first graduates of the newly-developing middle-class were instructed largely under the supervision of Radhanatha who was therefore in a unique position to mould the tastes of a whole new class towards the
products of his own pen.

Despite his official position, Radhanatha would not have been able to achieve the fame he did without talent. His literary career commenced largely in Bengali, which he wrote with fluency and distinction. His Bengali works attracted favourable notices in the Bengali press, Indeed, as he himself wrote, "Oriya and Bengali are the same to me"(1), meaning that he could compose with equal facility in both languages. It was not until 1879 that he devoted the whole of his abilities to composition in Oriya. Even then, he continued to draw inspiration from Bengal; his introduction of Blank verse into Oriya, for example, was in imitation of Michael Madhusudana Datta.

All of Radhanatha's best work was produced between 1886 and 1897: Candra-bhaga and Kedara-Gauri 1886; Nandi-Kesarī 1887; parbati 1891; Cilika 1892; Mahāyātma 1893; yāti-Kesarī 1895; Urbasi and Darbara 1897. (2)

Radhanatha was an urban, mainly desk-bound poet, who suffered from Asthma. He was a romantic. His own frailty and his drab environment quickened his senses to nature's transient loveliness; and the dull dreariness of routine dropped in his mind the seeds of phantasy. He took themes from Greece and Rome, from the purānas and local tradition, and insinuated them into the landscape of Orissa, which he peopled with gods and goddesses, handsome heroes and lovely heroines. So successful was he, that educated and uneducated alike now see Orissa through his enchanted eyes. Kedara-Gauri, the famous shrine in Bhubanesvara, now reminds them of the tragic love of Pyramus and Thisbe, enacted there in Radhanatha's narrative.

(1) Quoted by Debī Prasanna paṭṭanāyaka, in Kavilipi, p. 91.
(2) Naṭabara Sāmanta Rāya, Vyāsa Kavi phakṣirmohana, p. 3.
poem *Kedāragaurī*; and *Candrabhāga*, the river gliding past the
temple of the Sun God at *Konāraka*, of the lovely maiden pur-
sued to her death by the love-lorn Sun God, *Sūrya*, in his
*Candrabhāga*. *Radhanātha* drew aside the veil of familiarity
that obscured the natural loveliness of *Orissa*; and his readers
marvelled at their own erstwhile blindness. His avowed master-
piece, *Mahāyātra*, describes the ascent of the *pāṇḍavas* to
heaven. It is in blank verse in imitation of *Michael Madhusūdana Datta’s Meghnād Badha Kābya*; but it remains unfinished.

*Radhanātha’s* position was not unchallenged. Even at the
height of his fame, he had to endure much criticism, and well
before his death his reputation was in decline. During the
controversy over the respective merits and demerits of old and
modern literature in the 1890s, *Radhanātha*, whose works were
attacked almost as much as *Upendra Bhanja’s*, was ridiculed by
a 4th year schoolboy from *purī*, who was to become the famous
patriot and founder of *Satyabādi* school in *purī* District, *gopa-
bandhu Dāsa*. As Inspector, *Radhanātha* was able to terminate
the boy’s scholarship, but not to save his own reputation.
*Satyabādi* School, that great centre of patriotic and nationalist
activity, was to become the breaker’s yard of *Radhanātha’s*
prestige. *Natābara Sāmanta Rāya* writes,(1)

"From the commencement of the second decade of the
20th century a constructive reaction to the works of
*Radhanātha* was created by the litterateurs of *Satya-
badī*. Nīlakantha Dāsa’s attitude to *Radhanātha* is
plainly revealed right from the opening pages of
*Konārake*; yet one infers from the way in which, with
consummate skill and fresh vigour, in such ballads
as *padmābati*, *Kālījaśī*, *mā Cāśa pūa* and *pharanādhara,*

GodabariSa Miśra infuses fresh life into little- and well-known incidents and scenes, revives local traditions, and impregnates them with his high sense of patriotism and deep love of Orissa, that, by his deft selection and handling of both materials and metres, he stole, with infinite stealth, even further from the traditions of Radhanathya, than did Nilakantha Dasa with his more forthright outbursts."

Nilakantha Dasa, the eminent authority on the Oriya language, denounced as alien, not only Radhanathya's rhyming schemes, but also his language, because of lapses into Bengali idiom, that are now current in Oriya due to his influence.

"I remember hearing how, when reading the Mahāyātra to his students at Maharana Training School, my childhood guru, the late Candramohana Maharana, a litterateur of taste, suddenly paused in apparent astonishment, on reading that passage describing Satakośia Ganda ... and remarked, 'The Oriya idiom is Munda Tekī, not munda toli, which is based on the Bengali mātha tule. Here it should read aikha tekī.' Nowadays one constantly notices borrowings, which are both unnatural and inappropriate in Oriya, such as ajikāra, seṭhākāra, satīka, hubahu, charakhara, niṅ dhu dhu jaluci, and se duṅkhare hāya hāya kalā. Instead of tā' bhai mariyibāru, tā' ghare kanda bobali padilā, our writers now write in refined language, tā ghare kankaṭa lagilā."(1)

(1) Nilakantha Dasa, introduction to phakirmohana Granthabali, p. i.
But well before the demolition of Radhanātha's reputation at Satyabādi, critics were attacking his unhealthy obsession with physical passion. Commenting on Radhanātha's Lekhabali, Visvanātha Kara writes,

"Although Radhanātha displays considerable skill in evocation of profound and lofty sentiments, one has to admit that his propensity for depicting love-scenes is excessive. Unfortunately, he has so far failed to give a really noble picture of love; on the contrary, one has with regret to observe that invariably the minds of his heroes and heroines are obsessed with physical beauty and sensual pleasure. In certain instances, the bounds of good taste, of propriety even, are exceeded. This applies to the final scene (sic) in the work under discussion. One wonders what earthly good such scenes achieve for society? The poet even displays contempt for sacred family bonds. We are not saying that such scenes cannot, or do not, really happen, but does that justify the poet in soiling his pen with such dirt? If such scenes require depicting, their manner is otherwise and their place elsewhere."

Nanda Kiśora Baḷa, the poet and friend of Phakirmohana, also writes in similar vein.

"The external scenes of natural beauty depicted by...

(1) Utkala Sahitya for June 1901, quoted by Naṭabara Samanta Raya, pp. 10-11. (2)
Radhanatha have a strength, wholesomeness and aesthetic charm that will endure for ever, but he has failed to depict for us the divine beauty of the human soul... A poet's right to immortalise events which happen in human society, not every day, but scarcely once in 100,000 years is questionable. Shakespeare may have done so, but he made the offence happen off-stage and depicted in bright colours its terrible punishment. Whether Radhanatha was capable of doing the same, I have not the temerity to pronounce. In his epic parbatī, however, the offence is enacted, but its punishment, from which one would have learnt not to do likewise, is not portrayed... The love of many of Radhanatha's heroes and heroines is earthy and physical, being engendered by the beauty of the body, not pure and selfless, and bred by the beauty of the mind. Such love is born of this world, not the next. It is not love at all, but lust."(1)

Writing about Madhusūdana Rao ten years later, Nanda Kisor adds,

"In this land, whose old literature is drenched in eroticism, and whose greatest modern author (Radhanatha), unable to escape the influence of the past, has even debased the sacred bonds between father and daughter, and brother and sister, you (Madhusūdana) have promulgated the value of restraint and propriety and proclaimed in deep and dignified tones the

(1) Utkala Sahitya for January 1903, quoted by Naṭabara Sāmanta Raya, pp. 11-12.
victory of virtue ... Radhanātha is a singer of apathy and despair. The world is transient, an illusion and a dream. The only reality is love, but what kind of love? A very narrow kind of love. Of the aims and purposes of life, and of the solutions to its problems and enigmas, what has Radhanātha to tell us? What conclusions did he reach? Possibly if one searches his collected works, one may find some. But in Madhusudana's slender padyābalī on every page lies a solution to life."(1)

That Radhanātha's critics were right to condemn his pre-occupation with physical passion as morbid and unhealthy is proved by subsequent events in his life.(2) At the age of 52 while stationed in Hughly, Radhanātha met and fell in love with a Bengali poetess, Śrimati Nagendraśāra Sarasvatī. The affair was sparked off by a mutual interest in poetry. Possibly Nagendraśāra, like so many of Radhanātha's admirers, sent some of her work to him to obtain his judgement on its merit and suggestions for its emendation. At all events, they became close friends, Radhanātha introducing her to his friends as his protégée (śiṣya) and she acknowledging him as her guru (master). Radhanātha wrote prefaces commending two of her works, Nārīdharmā (1900) and Amṛṭyā Gāthā (1902); and she was invited to stay with the Ṛyas (Dhabalēśvara) (1903), which she dedicated to Radhanātha's wife, Parasamāṇī Dāśī, extolling its loveliness. Earlier she had written a poem eulogising Radhanātha, ḍhūtale Svarga.

(2) The details related in the remainder of this section were brought to light by Debprāsanna paṭṭanāyaka. See, Kavi Lipī, pp. 133-142.
It appears that Radhanath was uneasy about the relationship and began blaming Nagendrabala for ensnaring him. Nagendrabala seems to have replied to his recriminations in a poem called Cora (Thief) in Amiya Gatha, pointing out that it was he who stole her heart, not she his. Her only fault was in loving him. Then Radhanath tried to suppress the two prefaces he had written, claiming them to have been based on notes supplied to him by someone else, and not upon his own assessment of Nagendrabala's works. He also complained that the insertion of one of Nagendrabala's poems in one of his own books had 'polluted' (kalusita) it. This poem does not appear in later editions, but his attempt to suppress the prefaces failed. He then issued his Atma-nibedana, publically confessing to this moral lapse; and later he composed a poem entitled To a Faithful Wife from a Faithless Husband (SatI prati satI-drohi pati-Ukti).

According to Mayadhara Manasimha, soon after the publication of his Atma-nibedana, Radhanatha went for the last time to Bamanḍa, where Jalandhara Deba reproached him for issuing his confession, declaring that it merely advertised his weaknesses, and condemning it as a vain attempt to glorify himself at the expense of the young lady. "Radhanatha had been half reclining as they talked, but on hearing this he became excited and sat up, as if this were a great shock to him. He returned home and took to his bed. The shock killed him."(1)

From the few bald facts that are known it is difficult to judge what actually happened, but the most probable construction that can be put on them is this. Though to all appearances Radhanatha had lived a life of irreproachable rectitude, in private he had always been haunted by sensual longings,

(1) Debī prasanna paṭṭanāyaka, p.141.
which, until this affair, had found either satisfaction in reading Vaisnava literature, or release in his own romantic compositions. Then suddenly at the age of 52 he had been presented with an opportunity of translating these yearnings from phantasy to reality via this beautiful poetess, Nagendra-bala. In all probability, she seduced him, not he her, for Radhanatha, though attracted to women, would, like most romantics of his temperament, have been shy and timid, and, in his case, his timidity would have been intensified by his high moral nature. Sensing that he was attracted to her, Nagendra-bala probably took the initiative. Radhanatha would have been guilt-striken right from the start and it is very probable, as indeed the evidence indicates, that he began to reproach her for ensnaring him, blaming her "corrupt character" (bikrta caritra). It is possible that his literary sense was also outraged, for he had probably, as he claims, commended her poetry without reading it; for it was of poor merit and is now forgotten. A less scrupulous, more worldly man could probably have shrugged the whole affair off, but, being a man of such intense and sincere convictions, Radhanatha suffered severely. He had planned to spend the remainder of his life, after retirement, contributing at leisure to his beloved Oriya literature, but the mental stress resulting from this affair engendered such despondency that he wrote practically nothing. Possibly it was in order to gain release from this intolerable sense of guilt and despair and to expiate his sins, that he braved public humiliation, by issuing his Atmanibedana. That Jalandhara Deba's reaction to this confession profoundly shocked Radhanatha, proves he was a true romantic, whose expectations of other people's reactions were based on literature rather than life. Radhanatha naively imagined that
his ātma-nibedana would be accepted at its face value as a grand gesture of self-abasement for his sins, rather than misconstrued as a vain attempt at self-glorification. A more experienced man would have known in advance the reception it would receive: only an innocent romantic like Rādhanātha would have had to wait till afterwards to find out. It was probably the failure of his friends and associates to recognise his sincerity and essential innocence that killed him.

(v)

Phakīrmohana Senāpati was the last and eldest of the trio who ushered in the modern age in Oriya literature, and his achievement in prose-fiction can be understood largely in terms of a reaction to the works of the other two, neither of whom was of Oriya blood.

Phakīrmohana’s reaction to the others may be attributed partly to his background and partly to his age, when he commenced his career in prose fiction. Unlike Rādhanātha and Madhusūdana, whose background and education were specially fitted for the cultural role they were to play, phakīrmohana had been intended for a career as ship-chandler in the docks of Balasore. Consequently, he had received little formal education. The decline of the salt and shipping industries, on which the economy of Balasore depended, drove him into the teaching profession, where, through the Rev. E. C. B. Hallam, his superior at Balasore Mission School, he became the linguistic informant of the European philologist, John Beames, who was then Collector at Balasore. The contact proved valuable. Beames supported him in the language dispute with the Bengalis and later got him a job as Dewan in Nilgiri in 1871. The
remaining 20 years or so of phakirmohana’s working life were spent as Dewan in various feudatory states of Orissa, a position which brought him into contact with people of all social classes, from kings to sweepers. Thus, unlike his two literary contemporaries, who remained cloistered in academic circles, phakirmohana was a man of wide practical experience with first-hand knowledge of the commercial, legal, administrative, educational and cultural problems of Orissa.

Secondly, phakirmohana was older than Radhanatha and Madhusudana, when his literary career really began. Radhanatha and Madhusudana had engaged in creative writing from their late teens. phakirmohana had, it is true, been writing on and off since his early twenties, but he had produced nothing that could be called original till he was forty nine, when, in 1892, he suddenly composed his Utkala Bhramanam. Up till then he had in the main produced only textbooks and translations. Thus, when in 1895 phakirmohana commenced his career in prose fiction, he was a man of full maturity and wide experience, and this is reflected in his writings.

Radhanatha and Madhusudana were essentially singers of only one note: Radhanatha was preoccupied with physical beauty and Madhusudana with spiritual beauty. Neither was a full man, whereas Phakirmohana was. Phakirmohana was aware of the claims of both the flesh and the spirit, but he was also aware of the claims of his country and nation. Radhanatha’s outlook was as limited as that of an adolescent, obsessed with dreams of passion and romance. Madhusudana, on the other hand, seems to have been born middle-aged, and cared only for the hereafter. Phakirmohana was an old, gnarled tree, that had withstood the buffetings of many seasons and was conscious mainly of change. One phrase recurs constantly in his prose fiction,
'Nothing lasts for ever' (kichi hi cfrasthñyñu ne). Neither youth, nor man, nor any of his pleasures or problems last for-ever. So it is equally foolish to spend one's time yearning for beauty like an eternal adolescent, or pondering man's place in the universe like an ancient seer. Since everything is merely temporary, the best plan is to tackle the problems that face us here and now, like a man mature man with one's feet placed firmly on the ground.

This is not to deny the importance of youth's yearning for beauty or age's yearning for God. Both have their place at the appropriate time in life. But love is not sex alone, and religion is not only solitary prayers. Love is that precious bond that makes two people work side by side day after day in good seasons and bad, like Bagul and Baguli, to fill each other's bellies and provide mutual comforts and pleasures. And religion is that power that keeps man's feet on the path of rectitude and goads him on to labour, while his strength lasts, in the service of mankind. In short, phakirmohana's reply to both Radhanathä and Madhusudana was that man's life should be dedicated to the service of man, through tackling and solving the practical problems of existence, and not to a purely personal and selfish pursuit of either sexual pleasure or spiritual peace.

(vi)

Whether phakirmohana's reaction to Radhanathä was conscious or not, is difficult to say, but that it was real is undeniable. It is evident, for example, in his assertion that knowledge of western culture is intrinsically no better than knowledge of one's own or of one's neighbours; in his satirical
treatment of Campā, where he speaks of modern authors (i.e. Rādhānātha) being unmindful of even delicacies in their eagerness to describe the beauty of their heroines and where he ridicules the use of alien imagery; in his gentle satire of Govinda in Prayāscittā and to some extent of Madana Bābu in Gārudi Mantra, for desiring brides like novel heroines; in the structure of Prayāscittā, which has the type of Romeo-and-Juliet situation, in which Rādhānātha delighted; and in the punishment of Govinda in the same novel for indulging in the type of romantic love that Rādhānātha seemed to advocate. It is also evident in his language and style, and whole system of values. Indeed, one might even be justified in claiming that it was in reacting to the phantasies of Rādhānātha that Phakīrmohana became the first realist on the literary scene of Orissa.

Even though in his prose fiction Phakīrmohana was reacting to Rādhānātha's ethos, and even though his works achieved popularity, he was never able to shake off his old, instinctive deference towards Rādhānātha and his diffidence in regard to the value of his own work; for Rādhānātha's language and style constituted the accepted norm in academic circles and it was on prose such as Rādhānātha's that the middle-class had been raised. To such people, the language and style of Phakīrmohana's Cha Maṇa Ṭatha Gunt̓ha was revolutionary. No one had imagined that a work of art could be composed in what was, in the eyes of cultured people, virtually slang, the common language of the village street. Thus, even though the work was read with immense enjoyment, on account of its realistic characterisation(1) and hilarious

(1) cf. Naṭabara Ṣamanta Rāya, p.25. "The men and women in Phakīrmohana's works are so close to us, so very much our own, that we respond to them instantly. We see people like the bullying Māṅgarāja and the artful Campā, and devoted couples like Bhagī and Sārī, every morning in the villages."
humour, it failed to gain complete acceptance in academic circles. Its language and style were too colloquial. As far as academics were concerned, it was the type of language one was taught to forget. (1)

Not all educated people were opposed to Phakirmonha's style, however; many of them enthused over his works and clamoured to be the first to receive copies of his new works; one Oriya student even wrote from Glasgow ordering a copy of Prayascitta; and some of Phakirmonha's admirers even made an unsuccessful attempt in 1915 to get his novels accepted as text-books. (2)

Phakirmonha could not afford to remain indifferent to his failure to achieve recognition in academic circles. Text-books were the most profitable form of publishing. In those days authors had to finance publication themselves. Phakirmonha had to abandon several chapters of Mamta, in order to reduce printing costs. In these circumstances, it was natural that he should have tried to modify his style in Mamta, Lachana, and Prayascitta in an attempt to gain acceptance for his works as text-books. This is the most plausible explanation

(1) cf. Phakirmonha's account of a pandita's method of teaching Oriya in the 1860s, Atma Jibana Carita, p. 23. The method consisted of taking a simple Oriya sentence and showing how it could be sanskritised, thus presumably elevating the style from the commonplace to the refined. The example Phakirmonha gives is:

"Kauñasi dinare goṭie kāka khandie māmsa mukhare dhari bṛksa-daḷare basithila.

Kauñasi dinare ki kehi ahnare, goṭie kāka ki eka goṭi bāyasa, khandie māmsa ki khandie pāla, mukhare dhari ki badanare dhārana kari, daḷare ki sakhare, basithila ki upabesana kari-thila." The results of such teaching are observable in the styles of Rādhānātha and Madhusūdana in Oriya and Bānkīm Candra Chatterjee in Bengali.

(2) Surendra Mahānti, pp. iii–v.
there is of the fact that while the age of Ṛđhānāṭha was coming to a close and even though phakīrmohana was in the vanguard of the reaction against it, he nevertheless modified his style in such works as prāyaścitta, to bring it in line with the accepted academic norm established by Ṛđhānāṭha and Madhusūdana. (1)

(vii)

Probably the same economic pressure which compelled phakīrmohana to accommodate his style to that established by Ṛđhānāṭha and Madhusūdana also inhibited others from imitating phakīrmohana. At all events, it was not until the 1930s that Oriya authors began to adopt the 'pure, household Oriya', which had first appeared in phakīrmohana's Cha Maṇa Ata Gunṭha in 1897. Commenting on Nandakisora Bāla's novel, Kanakalata, Viśvaṇātha Kara writes, "We have not read a pure Oriya novel such as this since phakīrmohana's Cha Maṇa Ata Gunṭha". (2) During the thirties Gopala Pṛharāja also tried

(1) cf. Nīlakaṇṭha Deśa, introduction to phakīrmohana Grantha-balī, p. iv. "Phakīrmohana was pure Oriya. He was Oriya in every form of self-expression, in thought, language and even in his simple, natural humour. Such people as Ṛđhānāṭha and Madhusūdana were not. Even so, phakīrmohana regarded them as established authors in Oriya and was deeply conscious of his own inferiority in comparison... It was mainly Madhusūdana who established the norm in Oriya prose. Such people as Viśvaṇātha Kara and Mṛtyunjaya Ratha adopted his style completely. Few people are aware that in extreme old age, when phakīrmohana's trembling hands had lost the ability to write well - some might even say - correctly, Viśvaṇātha Kara and his colleagues used to correct phakīrmohana's works prior to publication. The outstanding example of this type of correction is prāyaścitta, as a glance at its language and style will readily reveal."

(2) Utkalā Śāhitya for Ṛgṛlahyaṇa, 1936; quoted by Naṭabara Śaṁanta Rāya, p. 53.
to follow Phakîrmohana’s style in such works as Pai Mahânti Panji, Bhagavata Guigire Sandhya, Nânika Bastâni, Pai Nânika Bujuli, Amâ Gharara Halcal and Dunia Riti B. He writes,

"In prose, as far as my small abilities permit, I have tried to follow his (Phakîrmohana’s) pure, plain, household Oriya style. How far I have succeeded is for the Oriya general public to judge; though Phakîrmohana himself congratulated me on my pure Oriya; and when told, on inquiring what model I followed, that my writings were but a poor imitation of his own style and diction, he was, I have often felt, deeply gratified."(1)

Since the 1930s Phakîrmohana’s influence on Oriya has been deep and abiding. The same authentic accents of colloquial speech that rang from his pages are now heard, a little more faintly perhaps, even in academic articles. Owing to Phakîrmohana’s influence, the gap between spoken and written Oriya, which was so marked in his day, has almost disappeared. His style, characterisation and themes have, since the thirties, constituted the model that aspiring Oriya authors have sought to follow.

Phakîrmohana is now recognised as the founder of the realistic, social trend in modern fiction. Apart from the intrinsic merit of his work, he probably owes his present position to the rise during the 20th century of a genuine Oriya middle-class, who were attracted to his works for both aesthetic and patriotic reasons, and who have, since the thirties, gained greater and greater ascendancy within Orissa. It was this class who realised how accurately Phakîr-

(1) Naṭabara Samanta Râya, p. 34.
mohana had foreseen the problems and solutions of their own times and they honoured him accordingly. Naṭabara Ṣamanta Rāya writes,

"In the first stages of the development of society arise groups and group leaders; then kings; then, as society evolves, the large landowners (jamidāras) assume control of the nation's resources. No matter how society may have evolved elsewhere, in Orissa throughout the 19th, and the first part of the 20th, centuries, the jamidāras enjoyed absolute power. Though charged only with the collection of revenue from the peasants, these jamidāras were the most influential people in the village. At that time individuals had virtually no self-regard. So it was unheard of for the oppressed to cry out against the tyrannical authority of the jamidāras. For people burdened with such wretched lives, reliance on dharma was easier and safer than reliance on themselves. 'Dharma will triumph; adharma perish' was a meaningful slogan in those days. With the appearance of a modern, educated middle-class commenced the gradual decline of the jamidāras. Practically speaking, the middle-class did not fully emerge in Orissa till during the twentieth century. It is not middle-class self-regard alone, which accounts for the fall of the jamidāras. The golden thrones of the jamidāras were first set wobbling by the cataclysm created in Orissa by such things as gopabandhu Dāsa's propagation of patriotism throughout Orissa, Mahātmā Gāndhi's non-cooperation movement, and the world-wide diffusion of socialism through-
out the thirties. In consequence, the unbridled reaction in Oriya literature to all oppressors, that burst out in 1936, was undreamt of in the 19th century. The incipient decline of the jamidāras on the grounds of morality depicted by phakirmohana assumed palpable form by 1936. Though the jamidāri system was not abolished in Orissa till 1952/53, phakirmohana had foreshadowed it in mamta and prayascitta ... The end of feudalism, so clearly foreseen in phakirmohana's works, is not discernible elsewhere in Orissa till the 1930s. Cha Mana Atha Guntha is undeniably the precursor of this trend." (1)

(viii)

Though the age in which phakirmohana wrote was overshadowed by the predominance of Radhanātha Raya, and though phakirmohana always felt an instinctive deference towards him, the age of Radhanātha was in fact coming to a close and a new age was dawning; and though phakirmohana was too modest and too diffident about the value of his own work ever to suspect it, he himself the harbinger of the new age.

All thefailings of which phakirmohana was so conscious were in fact his strengths. He was aware that, from the point of contemporary taste, his own style was defective. He envied the polished styles of Radhanātha and Madhusūdana and eagerly sought their advice in 'improving' his own. He was too uneducated to be able, like Radhanātha and Madhusūdana, to add new poetic forms to Oriya. He contented himself with modelling his verse on that of Jagannātha Dasa and Dinakrśa, two Medieval Oriya poets. Unlike Radhanātha, phakirmohana was un-

(1) Naṭabara Samanta Raya, pp. 31-33.
able to enrich Oriya with alien themes; he tried, of course, in such poems as Josephain, but his reading of western literature was too inadequate to enable him to import many such tales. He was forced, faute de mieux, to fall back on translating from Sanskrit and Bengali sources and on creating stories from contemporary life. As for his language, the best he could devise was to model it upon what was intelligible to his simple village wife, Kṛṣṇakumārī.

What Phakiramohana never realised, as he blundered on, doing the best he could with what little advantages he had, was that had he been better educated at that particular time, he might have been less Oriya; his language might have come, not as it did in direct line of descent from Jagannātha Dāsa and Dīnakṛṣṇa, but from Bengal via Fort William College, as Radhanātha's had; his themes might have come, not as they did from the soil of Orissa, but from Greece and Rome, as Radhanātha's had; his characters might have been, not living, breathing Oriyas, but wooden and improbable personifications of wish-fulfilments like Radhanātha Raya's; in short, he might have been, not the father of his nation's prose literature, but a literary importer of alien themes and modes like Radhanātha Raya.

Though Phakiramohana never lived long enough to realise it, during the closing years of his life a new era was opening in Oriya literature and a new mode was coming into fashion. The long narrative poem, the kābya, that had dominated Oriya literature for over two centuries was falling into disfavour. Prose was becoming the dominant literary mode. The age of Radhanātha, whose main form had been the kābya, was ending; the age of Phakiramohana was about to begin.
Phakirmohana is something of an enigma. His impulse to write came not, as in the case of Radhanatha and Madhusudana from an irrepressible urge for self-expression that would have found release in any age and in any language, but from a love of his country and a sense of her needs. His literary career had begun with the production of text-books in the 1860s. The language dispute affected him deeply. He continued to write as a patriotic duty, because his country needed a literature to establish its identity as a separate nation. He wrote always with a glance over his shoulder at what Radhanatha and Madhusudana were doing and at what was happening in Bengal. He wrote nothing that could really be called original till he was nearly 50, when he suddenly produced his *Utkala Bhramanam* (Orissan Tour) in 1892. Its instant success was due not to its versification, which remained as indifferent as his verse always was, but to its satirical treatment of the contemporary scene. After his retirement, he turned his attention to prose fiction, probably in imitation of Bankim Candra in Bengal. Suddenly the fusion of his immense experience with his rich satire sparked off the genius in him that had lain latent so long. His first novel, *Cha Mana Atha Guntha* (6½ acres), took Orissa by storm when it first appeared in 1897. The trial of Mangaraja, the crooked landowner, and the murder of his mistress Campa were so realistic that unsophisticated villagers rushed to Cuttack in bullock carts to attend the trial.

From 1897 till his death in 1918, novels and stories flowed from his pen. "Life is full of stories; all I lack is time to think and strength to write." (1) Writing had hitherto

(1) Quoted by Surendra Mahanti, p. 165.
been his refuge in times of illness and distress; now in his declining years he poured every available ounce of strength into his writing. In his last years he was so racked with pain that he could write for no more than half an hour a day; yet still he wrote, right to the last breath. His autobiography, *Atma Jibana Carita*, commenced under these conditions in 1916, and finally published serially in *Utkala Sahitya* from July 1918, is extraordinary: it sparkles with humour.

Phakirmohana was undoubtedly a brilliant conversationalist. His novels and stories are essentially conversations on paper. In fact, he himself virtually becomes a character in *Cha Mana Atha Guntha*. His advice to young writers was invariably, "Just go on writing with your eyes shut; it can be discussed afterwards." He followed his own advice. Apart from his masterpiece, *Cha Mana Atha Guntha*, which he tinkered with till it grew from a short story to a full-length novel, he rarely rewrote anything. *Utkala Bhramanam* had been written in two days, part of which was spent on elephant back. His novels and stories gushed out in the same way. He just spoke on the paper. The effect was revolutionary. In the hands of Radhanatha and Madhusudana prose had become sanskritic and stilted, a thing for class-rooms and lecture halls. Phakirmohana's prose was like a harvest from the paddy fields of Orissa, bronzed by the sun and bearing the seeds of life. It gave his works a vitality and realism that nothing else could; it enabled him to talk with restraint and economy, because each word went straight to the belly of his readers, leaving that after-taste that only one's mother-tongue well-used ever can.

Until recently the opening phase of the modern period was referred to as the 'Age of Radhanatha'; now the eponymous
place has been accorded to phakirmohana Senapati. This is due not to a change in critical opinion, but to a change in the direction of literature itself. The majority of succeeding authors have followed phakirmohana, whose influence is discernible in all the best novels of the last thirty years, Kalindi Carana Panigrahi's Matira Maniga, Kahnu Carana Mahanti's Ha Anna and Sast and his younger brother, Gopinatha Mahanti's Paraja. Radhanatha and Madhusudana had done little more than continued the traditions of the old literature in the metrical forms of the West; phakirmohana revealed to his countrymen that the speech of common man is a fit vehicle for literature and the life of common man an inexhaustible source of themes.
APPENDIX.

A list of Phakirmohana's works together with their dates of publication, based on the appendix to Natabara Samanta Raya's Vyasa-kavi Phakirmohana and Phakirmohana Grantha Balli, pp. xii-xiii.


3. Akāmala, an arithmetic textbook. 2nd edition, 1870


10. **Cha Mana Atha Guntha**, a novel, 1st edition, 1902. (serialised in Utkala Sahitya from October, 1897)
24. **Galpa Svalpa**, collected short stories, 1st edition, 1917; individual stories:

   **Rebatī**
   Maunāmauni
   Bāleśvarī Rāhājāni
   Bāleśvarī Paṅgaluna
   Punarmusiko' bhava.
   Dūka Munsī
   Dhulīs Baba
   Kamala Prasāda Gorāpa
   Sunā Bohu
   Rāndī Pua Ananta
   Kālika Prasāda Gorāpa
   Peṭent Medisin

   Oct. 1898 (in Utkala Sahitya)
   June, 1907 (in Mukura)
   July, 1907 (in Mukura)
   Sept. 1907 (in Mukura)
   Apr. 1909 (in Mukura)
   Sept. 1912 (in Mukura)
   Feb. 1913 (in Utkala Sahitya)
   May, 1913 (in Utkala Sahitya)
   June, 1913 (in Utkala Sahitya)
   July, 1913 (in Mukura)
   Aug. 1913 (in Utkala Sahitya)
   Sept. 1913 (in Utkala Sahitya)
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1. भारताबरसरा इतिहास, 2 parts, Balasore, 1869-70.

Included in this collected edition are the following individual works:

Autobiography.
Parisista, अत्म जीवनाचरिताका कियादासा, (a supplement to अत्म जीवनाचरिता.) p.92, pp. i-iii.

Novels.

Chandra Matha Guntha 229-327
Mamū 93-228
Prayascitta 409-502
Jachama 329-408

Stories

Rebatī 503-510
Patent Medicine (Petent Medicine) 510-516
Rāndī Pua Ananta 516-526
Gārudi Mantra 526-533
Adharma Bitta 533-546
Sabhya Jamidara 546-554
Īreī Bīṣāla 554-563
Ḍēka Muniśi 563-567
SunśBohu
Dhuliśa Baba
Aja Naṭi Katha
Bālesvarī Rāhajānī
Pathoī Bohu
Bālesvarī Paṅgalūna
Mādha Mahaṇṭiṅka Kanyāsuna
Kalikā Prasāda Gorāpa
Bagula Bagula
Kamala Prasāda Gorāpa
Maunāmauni
Punarmūsko' Bhava

Miscellaneous.
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Abasara Bāsare 755-875
Utkala Bhāṣāra Bhūta Bhabisyata 1045-1049
Bālesvara Bandarare Olandaja Jati 1080-1084
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Acārya, Pyārimohana, Odāśara Itiḥāsa, (first published 1879)
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