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Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh

SPECIMENS OF

THE ORAL LITERATURE OF MIDDLE INDIA

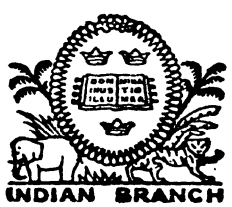
FOLK-SONGS OF CHHATTISGARH

VERRIER ELWIN

D.Sc.(Oxon)

WITH A COMMENT BY

W. G. ARCHER



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In this volume Dr Verrier Elwin has collected and translated 497 folk-songs from Chhattisgarh, that important but little-known country lying in the south-east of the Central Provinces of India. The 'anthology' is arranged to show how poetry dignifies and inspires with beauty every aspect of the Indian peasant's life from the cradle to the grave.

In his Comment, Mr W. G. Archer, I.C.S., the authority on Uraon poetry and Santal law, says that 'Verrier Elwin is to Indian poetry what Arthur Waley is to Chinese', for in these poems he 'has gone far to reveal the Indian sensibility in some of its most truly indigenous and spontaneous forms.' He adds, 'Although much love poetry has been written in our time, I do not know of any which expresses a contemporary attitude quite so fully as Verrier Elwin's translations', and concludes, 'These translations are a fusion of two sensibilities—the collective sensibility of certain Indian castes and tribes and the alert sensibility of a scholar-poet and it is because of this that they have given something new to contemporary English poetry.'

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FOLK-SONGS OF CHHATTISGARH

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WITH SHAMRAO HIVALE

Songs of the Forest (ALLEN & UNWIN)
Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills (O.U.P.)

TO

SAROJINI NAIDU

IN AFFECTION AND ADMIRATION

Men, patterns of moving dust, loving those familiar
Limbs learned to think lovely, curves so tenderly
Shaped to receive and give,

Closed their long eyes, their thighs cooled in the old
Tribal water and cooled their dreams in unending
Memory, endless years.

FREDERIC PROKOSCH : *Daybreak*

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COMMENT

IN the development of English poetry, translation has always played a significant and at times a major part. 'A great age of literature', says Ezra Pound, 'is perhaps always a great age of translation; or follows it'. 'Golding's *Metamorphoses*; Gavine Douglas' *Aeneid*; Marlowe's *Eclogues from Ovid*—in each of these books a great poet has compensated by his own skill any loss in translation; a new beauty has in each case been created.' 'Golding was no in considerable poet and the Marlowe of the translations has beauties no whit inferior to the Marlowe of original composition.'[1] Pope and Dryden also used translation to extend their material while Shelley, Browning, Rossetti and Swinburne in varying degrees all resorted to it for the creation of new poetry. In our own time, W. H. Auden has written versions of Toller. David Gascoyne has produced *Hölderlin's Madness*, 'not a translation of selected poems of Hölderlin but a free adaptation introduced and linked together by entirely original poems—the whole constituting a *persona*.' George Barker has translated from the Montenigrian. Geoffrey Grigson included versions of Rilke in his poems, *Under the Cliff*, while Cecil Day Lewis has extended his own style in a version of the *Georgics*.

'A poet', Stephen Spender has said, 'should, if possible, acquire a virtuosity in interpreting the great poetic achievements of the past, as Mozart, Brahms and Beethoven had in playing the works of their predecessors and contemporaries. For a poet, translating foreign poetry is the best possible exercise in interpretation. A poet's aim as a translator (from this view point) should not be absolute accuracy, but to return to the source of the poet's inspiration and to create a parallel poem in the English language. Thus the poet gains sympathy with poetic experiences outside his own, and with techniques outside the ones he would use to express his own experience. Poets in the past have devoted enormous powers to the unrewarding task of translation.'[2]

[1] Ezra Pound, *Make It New*, 101, 125.
[2] *Horizon*, 1944, 208.

But besides assisting the poet in his own writing, translation has a number of other important uses. Just as an original work influences its age by expressing new attitudes or communicating a new content, a translation can also affect a generation by naturalizing foreign work. The Authorized Version is the most outstanding example of such an influence extending beyond a generation to a whole tradition of culture. But on a lesser scale important examples are by no means rare. Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, Burton's translation of the *Arabian Nights*, Arthur Waley's *The Tale of Genji* —all these slightly modified their times by the insertion into culture of new moods and attitudes borrowed from abroad.

'The oriental literatures,' Charles Madge has said, 'stretch away from us to the other side of the world. But it is a shrinking world and we can expect in the next few hundred years new and surprising cultural cross-fertilizations. Already the impact of Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Persian and Arabian art and culture has modified our own patterns of perception to a marked extent. But we may be sure that the interpretations that have reached us so far are partial reflections only and that great riches remain to be assimilated.'[1]

Moreover even when the attitudes in a foreign work are by no means new to English, the circumstances of the time may give to an alien work a new contemporary relevance. 'We need', said T. S. Eliot, 'a digestion which can assimilate both Homer and Flaubert. We need a careful study of Renaissance humanists and translators. We need an eye which can see the past in its place with its definite differences from the present, and yet so lively that it shall be as present to us as the present.'[2] 'Each generation must translate for itself.'[3]

'The fascination of the *Georgics* for many generations of Englishmen', Cecil Day Lewis has stressed, 'is not difficult to explain. A century of urban civilization has not yet materially modified the instinct of a people once devoted to agriculture and stock-breeding, to the chase, to landscape gardening, to a practical love of Nature. No poem yet written has touched

[1] Herbert Howarth & Ibrahim Shakrullah, *Images from the Arab World*, with a foreword by Charles Madge (London, 1944), vii.

[2] T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood* (London, 1928), 77.

[3] Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*, edited with an introduction by T. S. Eliot (London, 1928), xvii.

these subjects with more expert knowledge or more tenderness than the *Georgics*. In our love of domestic animals, in the millions of suburban and cottage gardens, we may see the depth and tenacity of our roots in earth to-day. It may, indeed, happen that this war, together with the spread of electrical powers, will result in a decentralization of industry and the establishment of a new rural-urban civilization working through smaller social units. The factory in the fields need not remain a dream of poets and planners: it has more to commend it than the allotment in the slums.

'I believe that every classical poem worth translating should be translated afresh every fifty years. The contemporary poetic idiom, whether it be derived chiefly from common speech or a literary tradition, will have changed sufficiently within that period to demand a new interpretation.'[1]

There will always in fact be a number of alien classics which will vary in immediacy with the temper of the times, which although translated once can be translated again, and which will yield new significance with every new interpretation.

But it is not merely by the expression of attitudes that a translation may profoundly affect a contemporary literature. 'Translation', said Malinowski, 'must always be the recreation of the original into something profoundly different,'[2] and Ezra Pound has asked 'Is a fine poet ever translated until another his equal invents a new style in a later language?'[3] The rhyme and rhythm and even the basic images of an original cannot always go into English.[4] There is therefore a tension between the English version and the original—the latter pressing on the English, forcing it to adopt alien methods, imposing often an alien style as well as an alien content. 'Any literal translation of Chinese poetry', Arthur Waley has said, 'is bound to be to some extent rhythmical, for the rhythm of the original obtrudes itself. Translating literally, without thinking about the metre of the version, one finds that about two lines out of three have a very definite swing—similar to that of Chinese lines. The remaining lines

[1] C. Day Lewis, *The Georgics of Virgil* (London, 1940), 7.
[2] B. Malinowski, *Coral Gardens and their Magic* (London, 1935), ii, 11.
[3] Ezra Pound, *Make it New*, 105.
[4] Charles Madge has drawn attention in his foreword to *Images of the Arab World* to the difficulties attending 'accurate' translation of early Arabic imagery.

are just too short or too long. I have therefore tried to produce regular rhythmic effects similar to those of the original. Each character in the Chinese is represented by a stress in the English, but between the stresses unstressed syllables are of course interposed. In a few instances where the English insisted on being shorter than the Chinese, I have preferred to vary the metre of my version, rather than pad out the line with unnecessary verbiage.'[1] By grafting Chinese technique on to English poetry, Arthur Waley developed a new form of 'free verse' and created a new kind of English poem. More recently A. L. Lloyd achieved not dissimilar results in his translations of Lorca for here also the effort to convey an alien original without either distorting its form or changing its images has resulted in verse forms of a kind new to English.

Again the act of translation may result in the exposure of new methods of imagery or in the re-vitalizing of a previous technique. In his introduction to *The Book of Songs* Arthur Waley has pointed out that 'Early Chinese songs do not as a rule introduce a comparison with an "as if" or "like" but state it on the same footing as the facts that they narrate. European traditional poetry sometimes uses the same method. Our English folksong does not say "My feelings after being forsaken are like those of a person who has leaned against an apparently trusty tree and then found that it was insecure." It says:

> I leaned my back against an oak
> I thought it was a trusty tree
> But first it bent and then it broke;
> My true love has forsaken me.

That is exactly the way that images are used in the early Chinese songs. For example:

> The cloth-plant grew till it covered the thorn-bush
> The bindweed spread far over the wilds.
> My lovely one is here no more
> With whom?—No, I sit alone.

If we want to understand that poem, we cannot do better

[1] Arthur Waley, *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (London, 1918), 19-20 (1928 edition).

than compare it with this *uta* from the old Japanese anthology Manyoshu.

> From you with whom I am entwined
> Like the bean-plant that has crept
> Over the face of the thorn-bush
> That grows by the road
> Must I now be parted, go away?

The Japanese poem, besides helping to explain the image in the Chinese one, handles this image in a way that is a stepping-stone between the early Chinese method and that of modern poetry; for the comparison is linked to the question with which the poem ends only by a frail particle *no*, which probably means no more than "so" or "thus". To put in a "like" or "as if" where there is none in the original, is to alter the whole character of a song.'[1]

Translations from Indian poetry have also demonstrated this method. W. V. Grigson's beautiful version of a Muria poem consists entirely of a long series of parallel images.

> Leja, leja, O dear vine, take my one-stringed fiddle
> To the flooded river, plunge in and play with it.
> Leja, leja, O sliced gourd, in the long days that have passed
> Since I last saw you, you have grown plump and lovely.
> Rain has fallen and fallen, the pond is brimming.
> But, dear one,
> Do not touch me, for my heart jumps to see you.
> We have been separated long, too long, my darling,
> And now, leja, O leja, we must live together.
> Beloved I'm carried away by the pock-mark on your dark, shining face,
> By the glossy hair on your dear head.
> Throw a fiddle at the plum-tree, and the fruit will fall.
> But who will soften the Englishman to the tale of our love?
> My tender fern, he is not our own Bastar-born king
> Who would listen to our tale, and you would walk before him
> In your loveliness, and melt him to sympathy!
> Leja, leja, O wild berry, would you leave me?

[1] Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs* (London, 1937), 13-4.

Leja, leja, though, wealth of my heart, I know
That you are not mine, nor for me to touch, yet
Leja, O leja, desire will flare in your heart;
Will you come then for a while to my house?
Leja, leja, O wealth of my heart, the summer rains
Have soaked the fields, the rains of June.
My heart blazes with passion, my flower
(Let go my loin-cloth a moment; the white girl is coming).
Leja, leja, sweet bug of my bed, what have you done to me?
I see you, and all our past love leaps to remembrance.
Why though you snuggle do you struggle, why cry and try
To keep yourself back, though I've tumbled you down?
Leja, leja, give in, give in, shining brow,
Or, by the Mother! my love will become hate.
Leja, leja, O wealth of my heart, the summer rains
Have soaked the fields, the rains of June.
My heart blazes with passion, my flower!
(Let go my loin-cloth a moment; the white girl is coming.)
Leja, leja, sweet saunterer, leja, O love,
Lend me your jewels, for me to go to Jagdalpur fair.
Leja, leja, O love, you will remember your promise,
For as the deer leaves tracks, I have left an itch in your body,
And I shall learn how to tell the English ruler about you.
The wild beans and berries have dried up under the hill,
But your memory came fresh there to me at night,
And I could not sleep, leja, O leja!
Ye, de, O little goldfish, O shining brow,
Do not cry over what happened last night;
Leja, leja come, dear vine, let us enjoy ourselves first
And then, if you will, tell the foreigner.
The rain is falling, sweet bug of my bed,
Why should I listen to your silly pleading?

Why are you striving and crying, pulling and pushing?
You'll be all right, yes, you'll be all right.
There, there, sweet bug of my bed, dear wild berry,
Lend me your plough and bullocks,
And I will sow a crop of maize.
Leja, leja, re leja re, who will play my one-stringed fiddle?
All night I thought about you. Come and plunge and play in my pool!
I will play with you, as a shuttle flashes through the warp of a loom.
Listen, O listen to the pouring rain of June.
The wild beans and berries have gone dry under the hill,
And you tell me to sing to you about God.
God is everywhere in the world; but your singer,
Your singer, my flower, is with you in Bastar.
Leja, re leja, re leja re, sweet saunterer, my berry, my plantain-vine,
You know, one who walks on the edge of Ganga-moonda lake
Is bogged in the mud; but that mud is the place
For sowing rice seeds, leja, leja, O leja!
Ye, de, burn, my berry, burn, my only jewel,
And think and long for the night.
The tall plantain-vine bears a fine cluster of fruit.
Be ready for me, dear bug of my bed, comb
And decorate your hair, my only jewel, for to-morrow
Desire will fire me and I shall come back to you.'[1]

Similar long poems are given by Verrier Elwin in *The Baiga* and in the following dialogue between a boy and girl the lover's wishes are at each stage demonstrated by parallel references to forest life.

BOY: You have drawn water from the well, you are standing in your garden.
How am I to come to you, my friend?
GIRL: Wrap up your supper in parsa leaves,
And come and sit with me, O friend.

[1] W. V. Grigson, 'A *Leja*, or Love Song, of the Murias of the Amabal Pargana of Bastar State', *New Verse*, Feb-March, 1937, No. 24, 17-9.

BOY: I want to cut my bewar, but I can't find an axe.
I have searched through all the village,
But there is not one girl unmarried.

GIRL: When you take your pipe, how the smoke puffs out of your mouth!
On yonder hill two Baiga boys are fighting over me.

BOY: When I drive an arrow, I do not miss.
To-night I will make you cry, holding your head in your hands.

GIRL: I can see your bones sticking through your skin.
Who are you to make me cry?

BOY: Whenever I go to cut wood in the forest,
I will always think of you, my friend.

GIRL: In my red sari I go there every day.
But all you remember is that I belong to another.

BOY: I'm going to the forest to get a bee-hive.
You have lovers inside your own clan.

GIRL: I'm going to the bazaar to buy a cloth.
You think of nothing but your own pleasure.

BOY: I'm going to the forest to dig roots
Tell me truly, will you come or no.

GIRL: You have climbed half-way up the hill.
And now for weariness you throw yourself down

BOY: How silent and lonely is this jungle.
Who is there to see anything we do? [1]

In this poem 'cutting bewar', 'driving an arrow', 'cutting wood', 'getting a bee-hive', 'buying a cloth', 'digging roots', 'climbing the hill' are all images of the encounter of lovers.

Among the tribes of the Maikal Hills, a whole poem is often only the pairing of two images—the first line symbolizing an aspect of the second.

He bent the mango branch and twisted it
I have wept for desire of my slender-waisted love.

The gun is crooked, the bullets are soft
Though others think you mad, how sweet are your words to me.

[1] Verrier Elwin, *The Baiga* (London, 1939), 257.

The long-nosed rat wonders all over the new house
You wander everywhere after me.[1]

Similar examples occur again and again in *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh.*

You have broken
The golden pitcher
Where did you lose
Your lusty youth?

In the new field
I have sown kodon and rice
My uncle's daughter
Is a field untilled.

I cut up and ate
The ripe mango
I understand
The pretty girl.

The ploughman is driving his brown bullocks over there
To enjoy its woman, the rat scampers to the hill.

The flood comes down
In swirling eddies
My love, to see you
I have climbed a tree.

O lovely girl
The flowers grow quickly
And we who once were small
Are ready now for love.[2]

It is true that similar methods have at times been used in English poetry, but in poetry as in painting each age creates its own values, its own shifts of method. These Chinese and Indian translations give a new stress to methods which are native to English poetry but have been obscured by long disuse.

Yet another use of translation is to expose a new relation between poetry and society. When I was translating Uraon poems in 1936, I was struck by the intimate relation which all the poems assumed between tribal poetry and the tribe it-

[1] Verrier Elwin and Shamrao Hivale, *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* (Bombay, 1944), 102, 104 and 106.
[2] op. cit., 31, 70, 74, 192, 196 and 211.

self. In many Uraon poems the actual subject of the poem was never referred to and to one who was neither an Uraon nor versed in Uraon poetry the poem apparently possessed a meaning quite the contrary of its actual signification.

In the fields at Sissai
The bear does not eat paddy
The bear does not drink water
The bear comes
The bear comes.[1]

The subject of this Uraon poem is not a bear but a bridegroom. The same use of 'deceptive' images occurs in European Church Art where a sculpture seems often to be only of a lamb but is actually of Christ. Here also the traditional acceptance of certain symbols makes possible a sensitive relation between art and the community.

In a similar way the connected problem of 'political' or 'communist' poetry will, I think, only be solved when poetry is seen to be neither the direct expression of political dogma nor the announcement of a political programme nor even the literal expression of political indignation but, in last analysis, as a system of symbols which are compulsive only because of their vitality as images. When the hammer and the sickle have been reinforced by other images—the whole comprising a set of symbols understood and accepted by society—we shall be on the verge of a communist poetry which will be not merely communist but poetry. To suggest that in Uraon poems we possess a clue to a new kind of western poetry would obviously be to exaggerate their importance but in making available the experience of other societies and in demonstrating a new kind of equation, translation may well have a practical relevance which is not the least of its values.

In a note in *New Verse* (Feb-March, 1936) Geoffrey Grigson referred to *Songs of the Forest*[2] 'as topically instructive' and added: 'Poems such as The Rain Song (86):

Gently, gently falls the rain.
In the courtyard, moss has gathered.
A little orphan girl has slipped on it.
The old mother has run to catch her,
But she has caught hold of the branch of the mango tree.

[1] W. G. Archer, *The Blue Grove* (London, 1940), 123.
[2] Shamrao Hivale and Verrier Elwin, *Songs of the Forest* (London, 1935).

or Poem 106—

> On the mountain of red earth, a green parrot had its home.
> On this side lived a pigeon, on that side lived a maina.
> The one was sold for five rupees, the other went for ten.
> On the mountain of red earth, a green parrot had its home—

are element poems. Blake turned the element of English folk-song into great poetry which was individual and communal. These Gond poems are elements for us in the same way, elements as Eskimo carvings or Azilian painted pebbles are now for the sculptor and the painter.'

Finally, a translation may have simply the value of a new contemporary poem. It need not obviously expose a new method, neither need it convey a revolutionary attitude. It need not even demonstrate a new type of verse. In all ages there will always be a certain common denominator which is the style of the times. To express in that contemporary idiom the attitudes and imagery of an alien work is to contribute to a contemporary movement, to swell the small group of 'sensitive amusers and masked amazers', to assist a generation in formulating its approach to life.

II

If we now examine translations of the last thirty years and omit Europe from our scrutiny it is from China and Japan, India and the Middle East that translations have in the last thirty years contributed most to English poetry. T. S. Eliot has said, 'when a foreign poet is successfully done into the idiom of our own language and our own time we believe that he has been "translated", we believe that through this translation we really at last get the original. Chinese poetry, as we know it to-day, is something invented by Ezra Pound. It is not to say that there is not a Chinese poetry-in-itself, waiting for some ideal translator who shall be the only translator; but that Pound has enriched modern English poetry as Fitzgerald enriched it.'[1] But even more important than Pound's has been the work of Arthur Waley. *Cathay* pre-

[1] Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*, xvii.

ceded *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* by only three years and was not followed by any further volume. Arthur Waley on the other hand has added *More Translations from the Chinese, The Temple and other Poems, The No Plays of Japan, Japanese Poetry* and *The Book of Songs* to the first significant collection. *Cathay* contained only seventeen translations; Arthur Waley's versions now amount to almost one thousand. Moreover the scholarship of Pound was confessedly parasitic and the dangers of such derivation are patent when we compare two versions of the same poem. Ezra Pound's version is as follows:

> The rustling of the silk is discontinued,
> Dust drifts over the court-yard,
> There is no sound of footfall, and the leaves
> Scurry into heaps and lie still,
> And she the rejoicer of the heart is beneath them
> A wet leaf that clings to the threshold.[1]

Arthur Waley translates the same poem:

> The sound of her silk skirt has stopped
> On the marble pavement dust grows.
> Her empty room is cold and still
> Fallen leaves are piled against the doors.
> Longing for that lovely lady
> How can I bring my aching heart to rest?

If Ezra Pound was the first to introduce Chinese poetry to our age, it is to Arthur Waley that we owe the full expression of that poetry in modern English.

It is in the light of this comparison that Indian poetry should be approached, for if Edward Powys Mathers is the inventor of Indian poetry for our time, Verrier Elwin is its Arthur Waley. Powys Mathers' translations range from his wonderfully beautiful renderings of the Sanskrit *Chaurapanchasika* and poems of Amaru and Mayura to versions of Afghan, Hindi and Kafir poetry and I will give two examples which will illustrate his work:

> Last night my kisses drowned in the softness of
> black hair
> And my kisses like bees went plundering the softness
> of black hair.

[1] ibid., 88.

Last night my hands were thrust in the mystery of
black hair,
And my kisses like bees went plundering the sweet-
ness of pomegranates.
And among the scents of the harvest above my
queen's neck the harvest of black hair.
And my teeth played with the golden skin of her
two years.
Last night my kisses drowned in the softness of
black hair.
And my kisses like bees went plundering the softness
of black hair.[1] (Afghan)

'Before your father was a youth I was a young man, yet I went into the forest when I had seen you, to follow and find the coupling place of the tigers. His feet about the gilded one and his rod flushing out to crimson were as nothing to my youth, who am an old man and a king's poet.

'Rain scents of the coupling of the trees come to the assembly of poets again. You went to bathe in the river, and I took new interest in the king's stallion. He roared for the quick mares to be brought to him, he drummed with his forelegs upon them, O woman moist with a boy's love.'[2]
(Mayura)

Such versions of Mathers however are comparatively few and just as Pound had little knowledge of Chinese, the scholarship of Mathers was also to a great extent derivative. Mathers had only 'a very small smattering of Sanskrit and Arabic' and everything in his great series, *Eastern Love*, was translated at second hand—'sometimes from the work of scholars, but quite as often from the notes of a government official or soldier or trader with a flair for colloquial language and an acute interest, typical of the French, in the people and especially the women, among whom his lot was cast. It would have been, of course, impossible for any one man, however gifted, to have covered so wide a field while translating from the original tongues. And it may be worth while to point out here, that the true European Oriental scholar not only is born and not made, but is only born occasionally. Great genius has descended in the past upon such men as

[1] E. Powys Mathers, *Love Songs of Asia* (London, 1944), 3.
[2] E. Powys Mathers, *Amores of Amaru and Mayura* (*Eastern Love*).

Stanislas Julien, Richard Burton and Herbert Giles, and, in the present, upon such as Professor Margoliouth, Mr Arthur Waley and Mr Jacob Leveen; but for the most part, the study of any Eastern tongue is a slogging business, and often the knowledge gained and the use to which it is put is, from the literary point of view, quite uninspired'.[1]

This is, I think, a complete justification of Mathers' work but delight in its achievement should not blind us to its defects. In many cases the translations are given without any references to their sources. We cannot even check their truth by reference to scholars in the language. Ezra Pound has said, 'I do not know that strict logic will cover all of the matter or that I can formulate anything beyond a belief that we test a translation by the feel, and particularly by the feel of being in contact with the force of a great original.'[2] Reading the translations of Edward Powys Mathers, I have often felt a slightly treacherous facility—a certain smooth slickness which has made me uneasily sceptical of their accuracy.

Against the small but brilliant output of Powys Mathers, we may put the massive achievement of Verrier Elwin. This poet-scholar has not only produced two books of translations in his own name but in collaboration with Shamrao Hivale has also published two others. *Songs of the Forest* contains 290 songs, *The Baiga* 279, *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* 619 and *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh* 497. Besides these collections, there are many further translations in *The Muria and their Ghotul*, printed side by side with the Gondi texts. The originals of all of these poems were recorded for the first time at Verrier Elwin's instance and the translations are thus not merely an index to Indian poetry but a guide to a literature which was previously only oral. In a contribution to *Surrealism* Herbert Read emphasized the need for collecting primitive vernacular poetry and in presenting these poems Verrier Elwin has gone far to reveal the Indian sensibility in some of its most truly indigenous and spontaneous forms.

But the importance of this work is not merely numerical. To claim that Verrier Elwin is to Indian poetry what Arthur Waley is to Chinese is to insist at once on the scholarship which underlies his versions and on their value as contemporary poems. 'The ethnographer,' said Malinowski, 'has to

[1] E. Powys Mathers, *Eastern Love*, xii, 91.
[2] Ezra Pound, *Make It New*, 151.

see and to hear; he has personally to witness the rites, ceremonies and activities and he has to collect opinions on them'.[1] 'Translation in the correct sense must refer not merely to different linguistic uses but often to the different cultural realities behind the words.'[2] 'The translation of words or texts between two languages is not a matter of mere readjustment of verbal symbols. It must always be based on a verification of cultural context. Even when two cultures have much in common, real understanding and the establishment of a community of linguistic implements is always a matter of difficult, laborious and delicate readjustment, when two cultures differ as deeply as that of the Trobrianders and the English, when the beliefs, scientific views, social organization, morality and material outfit are completely different, most of the words in one language cannot be even remotely paralleled in the other.'[3] If applied to Gond or Baigal culture, this assertion is obviously an over-statement for it is certainly not true of Chhattisgarhi that *most* of the words cannot be remotely paralleled in English. Yet there is undoubted force in Malinowski's main contention, for only an intimate knowledge of a language in terms of its actual living use can give to translations their vital veracity.

For such a work Verrier Elwin is completely equipped, for he has immersed himself in the life from which these poems spring and in the company of his friend and collaborator, Shamrao Hivale,[4] has learnt from actual living the meaning of their terms. *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* and *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh* are primarily collections of poems but they are also commentaries on a whole way of tribal life. *The Baiga*, an ethnographic monograph, contains some of Elwin's finest translations and was in fact the first book on an aboriginal tribe to use songs everywhere as 'documents.' Indeed in all his work it is difficult to say where ethnography ends and poetry begins; for the poetry is ethnography and the ethnography is poetry. The originals of Verrier Elwin's translations have now been edited by Shamrao Hivale[5] and will shortly be published but even in their absence all the circumstances of his work testify to its scholarship.

[1] Malinowski, op. cit., ii, 3.
[2] ibid., 14. [3] ibid., 14-5.
[4] Verrier Elwin's description of Shamrao Hivale as 'the window through which he has seen into the Indian mind' is a tribute to their years of friendship.
[5] *Hazar Pahari Git.*

III

If we now ask why these translations are contemporary, we must consider the type of poetry they present. In earlier periods of English verse, symbolism was sometimes used for particular effects. In Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, for example, there is the following exchange:

MISTRESS OPENWORK: She has a horrible high colour indeed.

GOSHAWK: We shall have your face painted with the same red soon at night, when your husband comes from his rubbers in a false alley. Thou wilt not believe me that his bowls run with a wrong bias.

OPENWORK:—It cannot sink into me that he feeds upon stale mutton abroad, having better and fresher at home.

GOSHAWK:—What if I bring these where thou shalt see him stand at rack and manger?

Symbolism of this kind was also used by Blake.

I saw a chapel all of gold
That none did dare to enter in,
And many weeping stood without,
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a serpent rise between
The white pillars of the door
And he forc'd and forc'd and forc'd
Down the golden hinges tore

And along the pavement sweet,
Set with pearls and rubies bright,
All his slimy length he drew,
Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out
On the bread and on the wine,
So I turn'd into a sty
And laid me down among the swine.

But it was not until the second half of the 19th century and then at first in France that symbolism became a dominant

principle in poetry. In an essay, *De Baudelaire au Surréalisme* M. Marcel Raymond has said:

'D'autre part, Baudelaire adopte vis-à-vis de la nature extérieure une attitude extrêmement remarquable. Il voit en elle, non pas une réalité existant par elle-même et pour elle-même, mais un immense reservoir d'analogies et aussi une espèce d' excitant pour l'imagination. "Tout l'univers visible", écrit-il, "n'est qu'un magasin d'images et de signes auxquels l'imagination donnera une place et une valeur relatives; c'est une espèce de pâture que l'imagination doit digérer et transformer." Il s'ensuit que la Création doit être envisagée comme un ensemble de figures à déchiffrer—de même qu'on lit le caractère d'un homme, selon Lavater, en interprétant les traits de son visage—ou comme une allégorie mystique—Baudelaire dira: "Une forêt de symboles"—dont faut découvrir le sens caché'.

This use of symbolism characterizes the work of Yeats and Edmund Wilson has compared Yeats' poem 'On a Picture of a Black Centaur' with a sonnet by Mallarmé. 'The centaur, the parrots, the wheat and the wine (in Yeats' poem) are like the swan, the lake, and the frost, not real things (except that the centaur is something Yeats has seen in a picture) but merely accidental images which by an association of ideas have come to stand for the poet's emotion. But where the French poets were obliged to depend almost exclusively upon such symbols, which tended to become more bewildering as they became more heterogeneous, Yeats found in Irish mythology unfamiliar even to Irish readers, and in itself rather cloudy and vague, a treasury of symbols ready to his hand. The Danaan children, the Shadowy Horses and Fergus with his brazen cars . . . have little more objective reality than the images of Mallarmé; they are the elements and the moods of Yeats' complex sensibility. But they have a more satisfactory character than such a French symbolist mythology as Mallarmé's—because they constitute a world of which one can to some extent get the hang, where one can at least partly find one's way about.'[1] 'It is not merely that Yeats loves the marvellous; he is also intent upon discovering symbols which may stand for the elements of his own

[1] Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle* (New York, 1928), 28.

nature or which shall seem to possess some universal significance.'[1]

This exploration of symbolism underlies all major English poetry in the twentieth century but it is to Freud above all that we owe the analysis which has most influenced recent writing. In his *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, Freud analyzed the symbolism which occurs in dreams and showed by implication that many of the previous symbols in poetry are artificial compared with those which spring spontaneously from dream experience. He pointed out that while 'the human body as a whole, parents, children, brothers and sisters, birth, death and nakedness are treated symbolically an overwhelming majority of symbols in dreams are sexual symbols'. He then listed a number of these symbols and added, 'The complicated topography of the female sexual organs accounts for their often being represented by a landscape with rocks, woods and water, whilst the imposing mechanism of the male sexual apparatus leads to its symbolization by all kinds of complicated and indescribable machinery.'

The influence of this analysis on contemporary English poetry has been two-fold, for not only has it resulted in a widening of the content of poetry but it has reinforced the process of poetic composition itself by making available the methods of the dream.

To cite the poetry of Dylan Thomas is to refer to only the most obvious instance of a poetry influenced by Freud. Here, as Francis Scarfe has pointed out, 'the sexual symbolism seems to work largely as an assertion of sexuality, of the sexual basis of all thought and action. The poems also contain some implied defences of this sexuality, justifications offered by the poet to society and to his own conscience. A little probing reveals not a liberated body but an obsessed mind (as in D. H. Lawrence).

> And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose
> My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

Dylan Thomas's imagery is predominantly masculine, to the point of onanism and homosexuality. And although the male sexual images are bold, harsh and triumphant, there is a sense of impending tragedy and frustration. The male is constantly expressed in heroic images, such as the tower, turret, tree,

[1] ibid., 18.

monster, crocodile, knight in armour, ghost, sailor, Jacob's ladder, skyscraper. But side by side with these are other equally male sex images which carry also the idea of death and disgrace, such as the snake, the slug, the snail and the maggot:

> In the old man's shank one-marrowed with my bone,
> And all the herrings smelling in the sea,
> I sit and watch the worm beneath my nail
> Wearing the quick away.'[1]

But it is not only Dylan Thomas who exemplifies this influence. If we examine the poems of W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Louis MacNeice, Lawrence Durrell or David Gascoyne we shall also find verses which from time to time employ this kind of symbolism. It is because Indian poetry makes also the widest possible use of such methods, that symbolism of this kind is the essence of its style and content, that it is of compelling relevance to contemporary English poetry.

Verrier Elwin's latest collection, *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh,* aims at illustrating the domination of poetry over every phase of life (and thus has to include much that is not conventionally 'poetical') but sexual symbolism marks at least two hundred of the poems. Had these been omitted, in the fashion of the older translators and ethnographers, the result would have been an entirely distorted picture of the village life of Middle India, and much fine poetry would have been lost. It is in 'The Story of Rasalu Kuar' that this symbolism reaches its most lyrical climax. Verrier Elwin has himself drawn attention to certain aspects of this poem and I will therefore indicate only the ways in which it is contemporary with English.

In this ballad the encounters of a prince, first with one lady and then with another are recounted and the story stresses how after marrying each beauty, the hero observes chastity until he reaches the end of his wanderings. After one of these marriages Rasalu Kuar remained for some time in the city, but when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride, though she was lovely as clear well-water and shone like her own ring. 'The fish did not enter the trap though the waters came down in flood; the hare did not enter

[1] Francis Scarfe, *Auden and After* (London, 1942), 112-3.

its burrow though the rain fell in torrents; the crab stayed outside its hole in spite of thundering clouds above. The royal elephants trumpeted outside their stable and all the cooking vessels of the palace were empty of rice-water. "I had a friend", said the boy. "He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would not fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no. Get me food ready for the journey." But the girl sang,

The oyster lives in the sea
But it is crying for thirst
I have married you
But my hope is not fulfilled.

'But the boy persuaded her and she prepared his food and bedding and he mounted his horse and rode away. Presently he came to the city of another Raja. There was a tank of clear water and clean stones. The boy thought he would wash his clothes there. He tied his horse to a mango tree and began to wash his clothes in the water. The Raja's daughter came by—there were seven serving maids in front and seven behind—and when she saw the boy she thought in her mind, "If only I could marry this boy!"

'But Rasalu Kuar said not a word. There was a garden by the tank and the girl sat there and watched him. That garden was full of roses, and the scent came to the boy as he worked. The bees moved from flower to flower. The fruit of the guava was a perfect round, firm and ready to be picked. The secret nest of the koel was small and as yet there was no room for eggs to be laid there but it was lined with down, warm, smooth and very sweet.'

The ballad then proceeds and after narrating further adventures it describes how during the prince's absence his fifth wife is seduced by a Pathan who pretends to be his younger brother. 'The Pathan lay down on the bed saying he was tired and the girl laughed. Clouds gathered overhead, and there was a little thunder and a warning of rain. They heard the peacock cry in the forest and the crackling of a fire on the distant hills.

'That night the Pathan did not go home. As a long *kotri* the fish swam into the trap, then as a little *turu* escaped but six times returned to play with its delicious fate. At last the

crab pushed its way into its hole and the hare into its long-closed burrow; the koel stirred in its nest and the sweetest honey in the world was taken by the bees. That night the storm broke; great clouds swirled white about the temple; rain fell in torrents and the thunder was like the sound of a thousand marriage-drums.'[1]

This extract has an exquisite parallel in *The Story of Dhola.*

The camel greeted the princess Maru. 'Now remove
your pitambar sari.
It is the cause of all your woe. Put on a plain white
cloth.
Take sandal oil and with your delicate hands massage
your husband'.
They lie down together on the ground behind the
grain-bin.
There is no bed of scented flowers—there are no
shining diamonds.
With the sweet oil Maru massages Dhola's weary
longing limbs.
All the love denied to them comes surging in their
bodies.
He loves her breathlessly, and panting on her heart
Lies as if lost in a new world of joy and blessing.
But first as with her delicate hands she presses his
aching limbs,
He strikes her suddenly with a sharp blow of passion.
With anxious eyes she looks with longing at him,
and forgets the blow.
He too forgets at once and stretches out his hand to
pick the lemons of her tree.
He eats them both and his mouth is full of nectar.
He passes through the mango grove to the little
secret well:
Parting the grasses by the mouth he lets down his
silver bucket.
O never was a sweeter bucket, never purer water!
How short the night was, and their enemy the dawn
drew near.
'O master, I am tired. You have pounded me till
I am soft as a seedless mango.

[1] op. cit., 268-9 and 274-5.

There is no juice left in me. Now let me sleep a little.'
When the cock crew they were slumbering side by side,
Exhausted and unconcerned, not caring for the world.[1]

How close these passages are to English and particularly contemporary English poetry I will now make clear.

The symbol of storm, wind and rain, occurs at a very early period in English verse and I will add a few examples to those given in the text.

O western wind, when wilt thou blow
That the small rain down can rain?
Christ that my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again.

It re-appears in Rochester's poem, *Strephon*.

Nymph, unjustly you inveigh,
Love, like us, must Fate obey.
Since, 'tis Nature's Law to Change,
Constancy alone is strange.
See the Heavens in Lightnings break,
Next in Stores of Thunder speak;
'Till a kind Rain from above
Makes a Calm—so 'tis in Love.
Flames begin our first Address,
Like meeting Thunder we embrace;
Then you know the show'rs that fall
Quench the fire, and quiet all.

In contemporary poetry, there is a similar use of 'natural objects not only symbolizing the act of life but providing a sympathetic setting for it.' Ezra Pound writes:

Spreads the bright tips
And every vine-stock is
Clad in new brilliances and wild desire
Falls like black lightning.

Louis MacNeice uses similar symbolism:

But now when winds are curling
The trees do you come closer
Close as an eyelid fasten
My body in darkness, darling;

[1] op. cit., 398.

Switch the light off and let me
Gather you up and gather
The power of trains advancing
Further, advancing further.

Blackness at half-past eight, the night's precursor,
Clouds like falling masonry and lightning's lavish
Annunciation, the sword of the mad archangel
Flashed from the scabbard.
If only you would come and dare the crystal
Rampart of rain and the bottomless moat of thunder,
If only now you would come I should be happy
Now if now only.

Dylan Thomas in *The Map of Love* connects a storm with the meeting of lovers.

'It is quiet here, she said as they stood looking out to sea, and the dark coming over the land. Is it always as quiet?

'Not when the storms come in with the tide, he said. Boys play behind the hill, lovers go down to the shore.'

Stephen Spender uses a similar background:

Lightly, lightly from my sleep
She stole our vows of dew to break
Upon a day of melting rain
Another love to take.

W. H. Auden makes expressive use of the symbol of the gale:

Lost if I steer. Gale of desire may blow
Sailor and ship past the illusive reef,
And I yet land to celebrate with you
Birth of a natural order and of love.

David Gascoyne in an original poem in *Hölderlin's Madness* writes:

After the blow, the bruised earth blooms again,
The storm-wrack, wrack of the cloudy sea
Dissolve, the rocks relax
As the pallid phallus sinks in the clear dawn
Of a new day, and the wild eyes melt and close
And the eye of the sun is no more blind.

Equally the symbols of flower and fruit are in no way alien but part of current English poetry. Dylan Thomas's *Eighteen Poems* includes the following lines:

> The plum my mother picked matured slowly
> The boy she dropped from darkness at her side
> Into the sided lap of light grew strong
> Was muscled, matted, wise to the crying thigh
> And to the voice that, like a voice of hunger
> Itched in the noise of wind and sun.

Cecil Day Lewis's *From Feathers to Iron*—itself a lyrical account of pregnancy—is strangely parallel to pregnancy poems in *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh*.

> Contact of sun and earth loads granary
> Stream's frolic will grind flour
> Tree's none the worse for fruit. Shall we
> Insulate our strong currents of ecstasy
> Or breed units of power?

Lawrence Durrell in *A Private Country* uses similar symbols:

> The season
> Like a woman lies open is folding
> Secret growth upon growth. The black fig
> Desire is torn again from the belly of reason
> Our summer is gravid at last, is big.

> Sleep and rise a lady with a flower
> Between your teeth and a cypress
> Between your thighs, surely you won't ever
> Be puzzled by a poem or disturbed by a poem
> Made like fire by the rubbing of two sticks?

Dylan Thomas refers to:

> the lame flower
> Bent like a beast to lap the singular floods
> In a land strapped by hunger,

and

> The sun that leaps on petals through a nought
> The come-a-cropper rider of the flower.

But perhaps the most explicit use is by Stephen Spender:

> Our sexes are the valid flowers
> Sprinkled across the total world and wet
> With night . . .

while David Gascoyne in *Man's life is this Meat* writes:

> At least alone at last
> When gone the body's warmth
> The incisiveness of glances
> The unwinding crimson thread
> The given flower
> Forgotten mouths forget.

Finally in 'The Story of Rasalu Kuar' there is a line in the encounter with the Pathan which deserves special notice. 'Clouds gathered overhead and there was a little thunder and a warning of rain. They heard the crackling of a fire on the distant hills'. Even this last symbol is not nearly as remote from English poetry as we might at first suppose. Rochester has the following verses:—

> Have you not in a Chimney seen
> A sullen Faggot wet and green,
> How coily it receives the Heat,
> And at both ends does fume and sweat?
>
> So fares it with the harmless Maid,
> When first upon her Back she's laid;
> But the well-experienc'd Dame,
> Cracks and rejoices in the Flame.

Dylan Thomas gives a lyrical version of the same image in *The Map of Love*. 'This was the end to the untold adventures. They sat in the grass by the stone table like lovers at a picnic, too loved to speak, desireless familiars in the shade of the hedge corner. She had shaken a handbell for her sister, and called a lover over eleven valleys to her side. Her many lovers' cups were empty on the flat stone.

'And he who had dreamed that a hundred orchards had broken into flame saw suddenly then in the windless afternoon tongues of fire shoot through the blossom. The trees all round them kindled and crackled in the sun, the birds flew up as a small red cloud grew from each branch, the bark caught like gorse, the unborn blazing apples whirled down devoured in a flash. The trees were fireworks and torches smouldered out of the furnace of the fields into a burning arc, cast down their branded fruit like cinders on the charred roads and fields'.

Against this background the Indian poem is completely at one with contemporary English.

But it is not merely through its symbolism that Indian poetry in Verrier Elwin's translations is parallel with modern English poetry. Edward Powys Mathers has said of Islamic poetry:

'Every country has a convention of images with which to describe the beloved, and with us, the best images in love poetry are those we consider the most inevitable, the rightest, but Islam, with even a narrower range today of such images, has always honoured the inventor of the most extravagant . . . The poet is forgetting the human woman and by exaggeration worshipping the idea.

'Again—and where this last is a vice in poetry, surely this next is a virtue—the Islamic poet takes his veneration and description from the navel to the knees without altering his key of worship. Few English poets have been able to do this. Donne comes to the mind as one who could, and he was for a very long time considered 'queer' and Carew, who has always been held to be vicious and Prior who is, on the whole, neglected. But Chaucer and the balladists, Drummond and the Elizabethans and Rochester as representing the Restoration, and Swift and Burns and certain of the great Victorians could not mention the female pudenda without waiting, as it were, for the laugh to follow. Breasts they could manage and remain the devout lover; but the rest was a matter for mirth.' In the 20th century it was not for nothing that Donne received belated rehabilitation. D. H. Lawrence in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* used sexual terms with a passionate sincerity to suggest a new attitude. Verrier Elwin's translations go much further, for they convey a view of love not only as rapture but as an exercise in charm and delight. Although much love poetry has been written in our time, I do not know of any which expresses a contemporary attitude quite as fully as Verrier Elwin's translations.

Finally, it is necessary to say something of their literary form. Edward Powys Mathers has said, 'Translations in verse libre or prose tend to lessen the difference between a folk-song and a poem written to elaborate artistic specification, and also the difference of language and convention between compositions of different times. French prose versions, for

[1] E. Powys Mathers, *Eastern Love*, xii, 96.

instance, of a lyric by Spenser and one by W. H. Davies would not properly show the difference in time between the two, nor would translations in free verse of *The Trees they do Grow High* and a sonnet by Lord Alfred Douglas show the difference in consciousness and in technique.

'My way, therefore, is the worst, though often the only method if we wish to study an individual poet or poem in relation to others but surely the best, if we want to find the spirit of a people or religion. I have reduced to an unrhymed common denominator twenty self-conscious poems, dating from the middle of the eighth century to the middle of the nineteenth, and forty-five simple, traditional, dateless songs.'[1]

Verrier Elwin's translations use the same 'unrhymed common denominator' but with the corollary that all his originals are folk-poetry. For versions of classical Sanskrit poetry or of modern Bengali poetry such as work by Bishnu Dey, 'absolute simplicity' might result in the kind of 'interpretation' which Charles Madge has defended in his foreword to *Images of the Arab World*.[2] By emphasizing certain qualities in the originals it would constitute less a translation than a form of criticism. But for folk-poetry nothing less than simplicity is proper, for it is only by the use of words at once 'acid and austere' that the originals can be expressed at all.

In *Confessions of a Young Man* George Moore has said, 'There is no translation except a word for word translation.' In aiming at the strictly literal, Verrier Elwin has adopted the methods of Arthur Waley and it is obvious that in style his translations presuppose the latter's work. But 'originality', as T. S. Eliot has pointed out, 'is by no means a simple idea in the criticism of poetry. True originality is merely development; and if it is right development it may appear in the end so inevitable that we almost come to the point of view of denying all "original" virtue to the poet. He simply did the next thing.' If Verrier Elwin's translations are of the same type as Arthur Waley's they are also extensions of his method and no one could, I think, confuse the two. As in the Chinese, so also in these versions of Indian poetry it is the

[1] ibid., 97.

[2] 'Of the Howarth and Shukrallah method of translation as a whole, one feels that even if it departs from an accuracy which in any case may be impossible, it does not superimpose an alien poem like the versions of Carlyle and that it has a speed and compression which perhaps conveys a special quality in the original hitherto unrendered'.—*Images of the Arab World*, ix-x.

impact of the originals on a poet's sensibility which has finally determined the style. The rhythms and verse forms, which have resulted, are neither wholly Indian nor are they wholly Verrier Elwin. If Verrier Elwin were to write original poems, it is certain, I think, that they would differ from these songs. 'Good translation is not merely translation, for the translator is giving the original through himself, and finding himself through the original'. These Indian translations are a fusion of two sensibilities—the collective sensibility of certain Indian castes and tribes and the alert sensibility of a scholar poet and it is because of this that they have given something new to contemporary English poetry.

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Dumka
Santal Parganas
The Sohrae Festival, January 1946

INTRODUCTION

I

THE conventional idea of Chhattisgarh as a great arid plain chiefly populated by Chamar forgets the great diversity of scenery and population in this little known but fascinating part of India. The plain itself is drained by the Upper Mahanadi and its tributaries. To the west the broken spurs of the Satpura Hills divide it from the Wainganga valley. To the north is the Maikal range which loses itself in the wild and rugged country of the western Chota Nagpur States. In the south are the still remote and sparsely-populated territories of Kanker and Bastar. The broad expanse of level country, which includes most of the *khalsa* portion of the Raipur, Bilaspur and Drug Districts as well as parts of the Kawardha, Chhuikhadan, Khairagarh, Nandgaon, Sarangarh, Raigarh and Sakti States, is thus shut up on all sides by hill and forest, 'most of which form the estates of chiefs and Zamindars whose ancestors, originally officials under the ruling dynasties of Chhattisgarh, had, by virtue of the wild and difficult character of the tracts they administered and their remoteness from the headquarters of the paramount power, obtained an hereditary independence and a quasi-proprietory status which was acknowledged by later Governments.'[1] The country, which was originally the home of primitive tribesmen, was colonized by settlers who came in from the north through the Jubbulpore and Mandla Districts.

C. U. Wills, the historian of Chhattisgarh, emphasizes the 'marked individuality' of the area. 'In their speech, their dress and their manners the inhabitants of the country have many peculiarities of their own. There is more homogeneity among them than is to be found in other parts of the Province. And their political history also has developed on independent lines.'[2]

The earlier aspects of that history are well summarized by

[1] *Census of India, 1911*, x (Part i), 12 ff. from an account probably taken from Wills, on which this whole paragraph is based.

[2] C. U. Wills, 'The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Mediaeval Chhattisgarh', *J.A.S.B.*, xv (N.S. 1919), 197.

the same writer. 'In the 10th century A.D. a powerful Rajput family ruled at Tripuri or Tewar near Jubbulpore. Issuing from this kingdom of Chedi a scion of the royal house, by name Kalingaraja, settled, about the year 1000 A.D. at Tuman, a site at present marked only by a few ruins in the north-east of the Lapha Zamindari of the Bilaspur District. His grandson, Ratnaraja, founded Ratanpur which continued the capital of a large part of the country now known as Chhattisgarh until it passed into the hands of the British. Of the varying fortunes of this royal house we know little or nothing; and we search in vain in the writings of Indian historians for any reference to this extensive territory. All we can affirm is that the dynasty continued in vigorous life for some six centuries; that about the 14th century it split into two portions, the elder branch continuing at Ratanpur while the younger ruled in semi-independent state at Raipur; that about the end of the 16th century it acknowledged the suzerainty of the Great Mogul; and that thereafter it sank into complete obscurity but was never dispossessed until the Marathas, after conquering the country, deposed Raghunathsingh, the last survivor of the Ratanpur house, in 1745 A.D., and ten years later removed Amarsingh also, his kinsman on the Raipur throne.

'One would at first suppose it an easy task to recover the main outline of the Rajput regime in Chhattisgarh, lasting, as it did without interruption so far as we can learn, for over 700 years. But memories are nowhere shorter than in the "Immemorial East". Few Europeans have been interested in this obscure corner of the Empire, in spite of the fact that it presents the remarkable picture of a Hindu Government continuing till modern times outside the sphere of direct Mohammedan control; and, when we try to discover the social or political organization of the country prior to 1745 A.D., we find ourselves groping almost in complete darkness.

'That any relics of the old order of things survived long enough to be observed and recorded by the first British officials who visited the country must be attributed to the extraordinary isolation of Chhattisgarh. It was in pre-British days a territory "surrounded on all sides by almost uninhabited jungles varying in breadth from about fifty to more than two hundred miles and during the rains perfectly inaccessible from the want of good roads" (Hewitt's Report of 1869, paragraph 31). In this land-locked seclusion curious institutions, survivals of

an earlier society, found it possible to persist in a recognizable if mutilated form.'[1]

In 1818 Chhattisgarh first came under some sort of British control. In 1854, when the province of Nagpur lapsed to the British Government, it was formed into a Deputy Commissionership with headquarters at Raipur.

'Chhattisgarh,' says P. N. Bose, in an account of the area as it was over fifty years ago, 'comprises a central plain covering an area of about 10,000 square miles surrounded by a forest-clad hilly country of a somewhat wider extent (about 12,000 square miles); strictly speaking, the plain country alone should be called Chhattisgarh, and it is only for the sake of convenience that we have included the surrounding hill tract within it. The contrast between the hill and the plain country is sharp and striking. The former is clothed with thick jungle, little cultivated, and sparsely populated, the population consisting chiefly of aboriginal tribes. To the *shikari*, it affords sport in abundance; the tiger is especially abundant in the southern, and the wild buffalo in the eastern jungles, while in every direction, the antelope, the spotted deer, and other varieties of game may be found. The plain on the other hand, is almost flat, perfectly denuded of jungle, well cultivated, and thickly populated. With the exception of a small narrow strip in the western portion, it is what is called *khalsa*, that is, under the direct management of the British Government. The hill tracts are partitioned amongst a number of zamindars and feudatory chiefs, who pay an annual tribute. The zamindars maintain their own police. The feudatory chiefs, whose gross revenue in most cases does not exceed that of a second-class zamindar in Bengal, are invested with authority equal to that of a Holkar or Nizam. They not only keep their police, but also have their jails and civil and criminal courts.'[2]

The Chhattisgarh plain has an average rainfall of 49 inches, and extensive irrigation projects have made large areas independent of the capricious weather. In the red and yellow soils of the flat lands great crops of rice are obtained. The heavy black soil which lies in stretches along the Sheonath and Mahanadi rivers and elsewhere in the hollows

[1] Wills, op. cit., 197 ff. The first full account of Chhattisgarh history was written by Sir A. Cunningham in *The Archaeological Survey of India*, xvii.

[2] P. N. Bose, 'Chhattisgarh: notes on its tribes, sects and castes', *J.A.S.B.*, lix (1890), 269 f.

and depressions of the undulating country, is as good for wheat. But during the present century the area under wheat has steadily declined and the rice now occupies over half of the cultivated area; on good land it is double-cropped with wheat, linseed or one of the spring pulses.[1]

The Bengal-Nagpur Railway runs across Chhattisgarh, which has thus been seen by thousands of travellers who have probably seldom cared to make further investigations about it. Another railway, connecting Chhattisgarh with the markets of the north, runs from Bilaspur to Katni. A third goes down from Raipur south-west to Dhamtari, the nearest railhead to Kanker and Bastar. Yet another line, which was completed in the late twenties, runs from Raipur to Vizianagaram and has opened the great markets of south-eastern India to the rice of Chhattisgarh. Good roads connect Bilaspur and Raipur and run thence to Sambalpur: other roads go west to Drug and Nagpur, and south-west to Dhamtari and Jagdalpur. Communications in the rest of the area are deplorable.

The Chhattisgarh Division is the easternmost of the four Divisions into which the territory known as the Central Provinces and Berar is divided. There had previously been five Divisions, but in 1931 the Nerbudda Division was abolished. At present the Chhattisgarh Division consists of five Districts, Raipur, Bilaspur, Drug, Bhandara and Balaghat. This book is concerned with the first three, typical, Districts only: Balaghat, like Mandla, has come under Chhattisgarh influence but it is distinct: Bhandara belongs culturally to Nagpur. Indeed both these Districts belonged administratively to the Nagpur Division before 1931 and for statistical purposes they were included in the 1931 Census as part of the Maratha Plain Division.

The Chhattisgarh Plain Division (that is to say, the Census, not the administrative, Division) of 1931 gives a better idea of what is meant by Chhattisgarh than any other classification. It is based on the three 'British' Districts of Raipur, Bilaspur and Drug; but includes the 'Chhattisgarh' States of Kawardha, Chhuikhadon, Khairagarh, Nandgaon, Kankar, Bastar, Sarangarh, Raigarh, and Sakti. This is almost co-terminous with the Chhattisgarhi linguistic area, except that the language is also spoken

[1] *Census of India, 1911*, op. cit., 13.

in the east of Balaghat and only in the north of Bastar. I have only room in this book for songs from the three Districts: I hope to give specimens from the States in a later volume.

II

Raipur has an area of 9,717 square miles and is the second biggest District in the Province. Before 1906 it was over 2,000 square miles larger. In that year, however, there was considerable administrative re-adjustment. The new Drug District was constituted out of the western part of Raipur, part of Bilaspur and four Zamindaris of Chanda. To Raipur was added in exchange parts of Bilaspur and western Sambalpur, which indeed was always a Chhattisgarhi-speaking area. Later the Khariar Zamindari (from which a number of songs are included in this book) was transferred to Orissa when that was constituted a separate Province.

The population in 1941 was 1,525,686, of whom 19.7 per cent were aboriginals, the majority being Gond (nearly all have forgotten their own language), but including over 30,000 Kawar and nearly as many Binjhwar and Savara.

Bilaspur is one of the most interesting of the C.P. Districts. The headquarters town is a deplorable confusion of mean dwellings and dirty narrow streets but a road to the north quickly leads to a splendid drive by the Arpa River out to Ratanpur, a ruined city of forts and temples and then on through pretty wooded country to beautiful Katghora and the great loneliness of the northern estates. South from Bilaspur town roads run through open country to Raipur and to Seorinarayan, site of a famous fair on the bank of the Mahanadi. All this south country is flat and open, heavily populated and richly cultivated. But the north—the territory of the Satgarh Zamindaris—is hilly and covered with forests. The road by which I have so often travelled down to Bastar or Sarangarh through Lamni, Achanakmar and Kota to Bilaspur, gives as good an impression of the isolation and wild beauty of the Middle Indian jungle as any I know.

Bilaspur is the most heavily populated District in the Province with a total in 1941 of 1,549,509, over 20 per cent of which was aboriginal. The incidence of the population is also heavy; it was, for example, 367 to the square mile in the Janjgir Tahsil in 1931. During the present century there has been considerable territorial readjustment and the District is

now some 7,500 square miles in extent. The north of the District is entirely occupied by the seven Satgarh Zamindaris, all of which are partially excluded areas and are owned by aboriginal Zamindars of the Tanwar sub-division of the Kawar tribe. A beautiful Zamindari to the west is Pandaria with a Gond Rani related to the Sarangarh family. Indeed throughout Bilaspur the Gond predominate above all the other aboriginals. They number over 175,000, but there are some 70,000 Kawar and the Dhanwar, Binjhwar and Bhaina each number over 12,000.

An excellent account of the Satgarh Zamindaris was given by Jayaratnam who settled them in 1929. He points out the remarkable contrast between the people of the hills and those of the plains. 'The balance of advantage undoubtedly lies with the people of the plains. But the abundance of land, the extensive *nistar* facilities, the products of the forest, absence of cut-throat competition and the general spaciousness of life compensate the hill cultivator for his isolation. He does not yearn for the life of the crowded plains, and retreats further—a migration which has now been considerably retarded—when the old time conditions in his village change with the march of events.'

He goes on to describe how the population is entirely rural and even now fifteen years later there are few towns of the least importance. 'It is difficult to give any precise idea of the distribution of the rural population, but it may be said generally that the less hilly the country the greater the density of population. In Uprora and Matin, for instance, there are wide desolate stretches with not a village in sight, while in the south of Korba conditions are more akin to the open plains. There are only ten uninhabited surveyed villages in the Satgarh and sixteen in the open country. The Satgarh can comfortably absorb a much larger population even on the methods of agriculture prevailing there now.

'The composition of the people in the three open country estates is very similar to that in the *khalsa* of the district. The principal castes are Satnami, Teli, Kurmi, Gond, Rawat, Brahman, Marar, Panka and Mahar. No separate description of them is necessary. But it is impossible to refrain from stating that the standard of living of these people is incredibly low. They have, to all appearances, found rock bottom, and I was credibly informed by village *gaontias* that the majority of the average open country people find, on the

average, two or three annas a day sufficient for their maintenance. This is not a matter for commiseration, for it is due to a defect in character born of generations of aimless existence, and an utter lack of enterprise and ambition.'

Jayaratnam was impressed by what he felt was the inevitability of emigration from the District. 'Emigration is inevitable and this is what is taking place. The coal-fields of Bihar, the factories of Calcutta and other places near by, steadily attract numbers of people from the open tracts of the district. My view is that the destiny of the open country Chhattisgarhi is not agriculture. He is the grist for the mill of the great industries of India of the future. The very geographical situation of the tract would seem to lend support to this speculation.

'Of the people of the hill country one has a different tale to tell. They are a happy, simple people with more cohesion and character. Candour and truthfulness are their most striking characteristics.'

Drug is a comparatively new District. It was carved out of Bilaspur and Raipur in 1906. The following year four Zamindaris—Ambagarh Chauki, Aundhi, Korcha, and Panabaras—were taken from the Chanda District and added to it. The population in 1941 was 928,851 of which over 20 per cent was aboriginal. There were over 100,000 Gond and 50,000 Halba. The incidence of the population is much lighter and resembles that of the neighbouring Bastar State. In the Sanjari Tahsil it was only 140 to the square mile in 1931.

Drug extends south to the Bastar border and its southern hills have many affinities with the Muria territory of that state. At one time the Ghotul flourished and even today lingers on in spite of so-called reforms. The Halba have gods called Anga Pen of exactly similar construction of those in Bastar. The people dance the Hulki and still worship Lingo, though I have not discovered any memory of his legend. The south of the District offers a rich field for anthropological investigation.

III

The people of Chhattisgarh may be divided roughly into four classes. There are first the authochthonous tribes—Binjhwar, Bhumjia, Baiga and Kamar. Of these the Kamar appear to be the wildest and least affected by the march of progress, while the Binjhwar are comparatively civilized;

some of them are wealthy landowners. The Baiga in the hills of Pandaria and the reserved forests are as unsophisticated as any I have seen and it is here that Baiga culture can be viewed to best advantage.

Secondly, there are the tribes which must now be called semi-aboriginal—Gond, Kawar, Halba and Dhanwar. Many of these now have settled in the open country and have adopted the ways of the ordinary Hindu cultivators. The Kawar, whose representatives rule over the Satgarh Zamindaris, are a progressive vigorous tribe, more intelligent than the Gond and likely to surpass them in the struggle for prosperity. The Dhanwar, an ancient tribe of hunters and bowmen (as their name implies) have been gradually settled as a result of official restrictions on hunting.

Thirdly, there are the wandering professional minstrels —Dewar, Ojha, Bhima, and Pardhan. There are not very many of these but naturally, since they are the repositories of the poetic tradition of the country, they are very important for our purpose. The Pardhan are described in the earlier volumes of this series and an excellent monograph on them by Shamrao Hivale has recently been published.[1] The Ojha are the genealogists and diviners of the countryside and some of them recite the longer songs and legends charmingly. The Dewar are famous for their dancing. They keep herds of pigs and wander round with their animals, earning a scanty living by performing in the villages they visit. The Bhima is another tribe of dancers and singers.

Finally there are the ordinary pre-literate peasants— Satnami, Teli, Kurmi, Ahir or Rawat, Panka, Bharewa and others.

The people in each of these four groups resemble one another to a greater or less degree in standard of living, in dress, in social custom. Most of the tribes or castes, however, have certain characteristics that distinguish them and naturally there will be a great difference in appearance and way of life between a poor Kamar and a rich Satnami. There will be less difference between a well-to-do Baiga and a poor Rawat. Many of the apparent differences are a matter of economics rather than of tribal or caste tradition.

But, as I say, most of the tribes have their own special contribution to make to the general picture. Thus Satnami

[1] Shamrao Hivale, *The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley* (Bombay, 1946).

religion, so vigorously reformed, is distinct from any other. The Rawat have special customs connected with cattle. Dewar dancing is readily distinguished from Bhima dancing. Some of the Dhanwar pride themselves on the special strictness with which they treat a menstruating woman. The Baiga have their traditions of Nanga Baiga. The Gond look back to Lingo and the great heroes of their special clans. The Pardhan celebrate the virtues of Hirakhan and Marakhan. Yet the similarities between the different peoples greatly outweigh the differences and this must be my excuse for including songs from different sources in a single book.

For indeed many of these songs are the common heritage of the whole countryside and although I have recorded, for example, the Rasalu legend from a Rawat and the Lorik legend from a Dewar, that does not mean that these stories are not known to and recited by members of other tribes.

I have given only this very brief account of the people whose names figure in this book, since anyone interested can look them up in Russell and Hiralal's four volumes, where he will find sufficient information for his purpose. In the text I add such explanatory notes as are necessary and any new material that I have recorded.

IV

Chhattisgarhi is a delightful, vigorous and flexible language: in its wit and punch it often reminds me of Elizabethan English and especially of Shakespeare's prose. Technically it is a dialect of Eastern Hindi, the language of Rama, and its allied dialect Awadhi has a notable literature including the *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das.

Chhattisgarhi is the common, standard, name, but the language is also known as Khaltahi, the tongue of the lowlands, to the hill-people and as Laria to the Oriya-speakers of the east. It is spoken in its purest form in Raipur, Bilaspur and the west of Sambalpur. But it is also spoken 'in considerable purity, in Kanker, Nandgaon, Khairagarh, Chhuikhadan. Kawardha, in the north-east of Chanda and in the east of Balaghat. The Chhattisgarhi of Sakti, Raigarh and Sarangarh, though slightly affected by Oriya, is of a high standard. In Northern Bastar, it is competing successfully with Gondi and Halbi. In Korea, Surguja, Udaipur and western Jashpur it appears as the Surgujia sub-dialect.'[1]

[1] G. A. Grierson, *The Linguistic Survey of India* (Calcutta, 1904), vi, 24 f.

The language is probably spoken by well over four million people.[1]

'The forms that strike a stranger who is familiar only with pure Eastern Hindi', says Grierson, 'are the sign of the Dative-Accusative which is often *lā* even in the Accusative, and the plural termination *man*, which may be compared with the Oriya *mānē*'.[2] But he considered that Chhattisgarhi did not differ from the Bagheli dialect so much as was commonly supposed and maintained that if a Chhattisgarhi speaker was set down in Oudh he would find himself at home with the language of the locality in a week. 'The termination of the past tense in *-is*, as in *kahis*, (he said) or *māris* (he struck), which is what everybody notices in Chhattisgarhi, is pre-eminently the typical Shibboleth of a speaker of Eastern Hindi and is commonly heard in Calcutta from servants belonging to Oudh.' The use of *o* instead of *e* for the negative of the personal pronouns—*mor*, *tor*, 'my, thy'—is found in all the eastern Hindi dialects; so is the past tense *bhaye*, 'was', and the use of *rahana* for the past imperfect, as in *dekhat raheun*, 'I was seeing'. Other particularities are the instrumental in *an* as *bhukhan*, 'by hunger', and the addition of *har* to a noun to give definition as *garhar*, the neck. 'To indicate the plural *sab*, *sabo*, *jama* may be prefixed with or without *man*. Thus *jama puto-man*, 'the daughters-in-law.' An old form of the plural ends in *ān*, thus *baila*, a bullock, plural *bailān*. In declension the following postpositions are added to the noun which itself remains unchanged: *ka*, 'to', *la*, 'for'; *bar*, 'for'; *se*, 'by', 'from'; *ke*, 'of'; *ma*, 'in'. The *ke* of the genitive does not change; for example—*laika*, 'a boy'; *laika-ka*, 'to a boy'; *laika-ke*, 'of a boy'; *laikaman-ke*, 'of boys'. There is no difference between the conjugation of transitive and of intransitive verbs. The construction of the past tense is always active, not passive. The syllables *ech* and *och*, meaning 'even' and 'also', are profusely used in ordinary conversation. Thus *dai-ch-ka*, 'even to the mother', *toroch*, 'thine also.'[3]

In the Bindra-Nawagarh and Khariar Zamindaris,

[1] The census figures were 3,189,502 in 1901, 3,011,124 in 1931. The Linguistic Survey figure for the whole of India in 1904 was 3,755,343.

[2] op. cit., 26.

[3] I have taken most of this paragraph from a summary account in A. E. Nelson, *Raipur District Gazetteer* (Bombay, 1909) which is itself based on the descriptions of Chattisgarhi in the *Census of India, 1901*, xiii (Part i), 60 f. and the *Linguistic Survey*. See also H. Kavyopadhyaya's *Grammar*, *J.A.S.B.*, lix.

Chhattisgarhi is considerably corrupted by Oriya and by vague recollections of Gondi: in the western areas, Marathi and Gondi have been at work on it. Yet everywhere, as I know from personal experience, the Chhattisgarhi-speaker soon finds himself at home.

V

I have arranged this book with the idea of showing how poetry even in what at first may not seem a specially poetical part of India can bless with beauty every aspect of human life, how—in Shelley's words—'Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change: it subdues to union under its light yoke all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.'

Indian folk-poetry indeed goes further in this than even Shelley thought possible: it includes in its scope such subjects as pregnancy and the longings of pregnancy, menstruation, the prices of things in a bazaar, the different kinds of fish.[1] It does not succeed in making all these things 'poetic' to a Western or urban ear but it certainly transforms them in its own opinion. This means, however, that any collection of really representative Indian folk-poetry is bound to contain a good deal of material that will try the patience of the general reader who should bear in mind the warning of T. S. Eliot: 'The reader who does not like Pound's epigrams should make very sure that he is not comparing them with the *Ode to a Nightingale* before he condemns them'. There is a danger that a tribe may be represented as more 'poetic' than it really is. It would be very easy to make a selection of the best songs of Chhattisgarh which would show the people as delightful, witty, romantic: in fact the majority of them, like

[1] Usborne gives Punjabi songs about such apparently uninspiring things as a match-box (42), the Pindi Jail (81), and an outbreak of plague (38).

the great plain itself, are pedestrian enough. This is illustrated in the fact that the most popular songs are those that describe ornaments, fish, the prices of things, the tedious details of marriage negotiations and the frankly obscene. For in the words of C. Day Lewis,

> Never was cup so mortal but poets with mild
> Everlastings have crowned it.

It is often said that there is no such thing as a village poet or a village folk-lorist, that the tales and songs of the people are very old and owe little or nothing to modern individual effort. My own experience leads me to doubt this. It is true that a great many of the songs are the possession of the people as a whole; nobody knows when they were composed; they are repeated again and again and the only change is often a change for the worse. But at the same time gifted individuals do arise in the peasant communities. Even these do not regard their poems and songs as copyright. They compose them in the excitement and rapture of the dance and before they know what has happened, they have become public treasure. A man sings his beatitude in the excitement of a love-affair and soon every youth and maiden in the countryside is making love in the same words.

Life in Chhattisgarh is hard, dusty and unrewarded: it might well be hopeless were it not for the happiness that song brings to the meanest hovel. The ends of poetry are 'pleasure and exaltation' and these peasant songs achieve in their small measure the same artistic triumph that crowns the work of splendid poets. 'All art', said Schiller, 'is dedicated to joy, and there is no higher and no more serious problem than how to make men happy. The right art is that alone which creates the highest enjoyment'.

VI

Perhaps the most obvious technical device of these poems is their symbolism. This is only an extension into verse of the habits of ordinary life, for people actually do converse all day long in symbols. When a man has daughters to marry he tells his friends that he has kodon in his house; when he goes to ask for a girl in marriage he says that he has come for a gourd in which to put his water or for a flower

to put in his hair. In Bastar a boy does not ask his girl directly for her favours but begs her to give him some tobacco.

This symbolic method is found everywhere in Indian folk-poetry. Two excellent examples come from the Punjab Rasalu legend. When Raja Rasalu returns home, he speaks to Rani Kokilan in a way that closely blends reality and symbolism.

'Who hath used my well, Rani? The brim of my well is wet, Rani.'
'I was dying of thirst, Raja; and thus the brim of thy well is wet, Raja.'
'Who hath eaten my mangoes, Rani? The rinds are fresh, Rani.'
'The gardener's wife brought them, Raja, and so the rinds are fresh, Raja.'
'Who hath bathed on my stool, Rani? The splashing hath spread afar, Rani.'
'I was hot and bathed, Raja, and the splashing spread afar, Raja.'
'Who hath lain on my bed, Rani? The cords of my bed are loosened, Rani.'
'I was in great pain and lay on it, Raja; and so the cords of thy bed are loosened, Raja.'[1]

Another example of this symbolism occurs in the speech of Hira the Deer, after Raja Rasalu had cut off its ears and tail because he was jealous of his wife's affection for it.

'I am a deer of the dark mountain and have come down from it.
I have not drunk the water of thy well, nor have I eaten the grass of thy pasture.
Without fault hast thou shorn ears and tail, for no fault is proved against me.
Thou shalt know my name to be Hira, the deer, when I bring a robber to thy palace.'[2]

Again in the Punjab version of the Dhola story, the princess Marwan writes a letter to her lover.[3]

[1] Temple, iii, 224.
[2] Temple, iii, 234.
[3] Temple, ii, 295 f.

My youth was flourishing as flourish the clouds in July.
Blooming youth encompassed me as a garden encompasseth the gardener.
Now my youth is declining as a wall of sand.
The millet is drying in the yard; hear, Raja Dhol,
The millet is drying up in the earth,
The princess is pining for her love, the wife of Dhol for her husband.
The mango is ripe, its juice drips and the gatherer is far.
The wheat has ripened, come and take the gleanings.
The thatch is growing old, the bamboos creak.

Here is combined direct statement, ordinary simile and symbolism.

Of Munda poetry Hoffmann writes: 'The Mundas exhibit a marked predilection for clothing their ideas so completely in similes and symbols always taken from nature as it surrounds them, that an alien might understand every word of a song without as much as guessing what idea the song is meant to convey. Songs of this kind they call *banita kaji*, "fictions" or *jonoka kaji*, "word measures," a piece where the ostensible words are used as a measure or counterpart of something not expressly stated. They will symbolize an idea by translating it into a different order of nature, sometimes in its more striking outlines, sometimes into its details and leave to the listener the task of applying the simile, and of feeling and dreaming himself into the emotion the poet intends to stir up by the picture he presents. Many of these similes are chosen with a genuine poetic instinct and with a correctness which reveals depth of feeling as well as a close and appreciative observation of nature.'[1]

W. G. Archer has studied the Uraon method of symbolism with great insight. He describes how Uraon marriage poems use the twin-levels of an image system—the poems being apparently about objects of nature, but actually referring to aspects of marriage. There are a number of 'clue' poems which reveal what the different symbols mean and thus ensure that the people will always be alive to the method that is used. Sometimes a slight distortion is used to expose the second meaning. A fig tree blossom becomes a girl because its scent

[1] Hoffmann, 105.

spreads for forty miles. A calf becomes a girl because it belongs to the mother and in this way part of the object symbolized is added to the image symbolizing it and the system appears through the distortion. In many poems however there is no distortion and the second level is detected by the marriage context in which the poems are used and by the employment of pantomimic images.

'Wild buffaloes and cobras are equated with opposing relatives because their actions are similar. The action of a bridegroom's party in descending on the girl's house is paralleled in a line of storks descending on a river or a flock of sparrows settling on a tree. A leaping member of the bridegroom's party acts like a frog. The actions of negotiators in closing round a girl resemble bees round a flower and spiders on a web. In these poems the marriage context suffices to show that the images are pantomimic and the accuracy of the pantomime exposes the symbol.

'In the poems which relate to the bride and the bridegroom the clue remains in the context, but the types of symbol vary more widely. Those of the bridegroom consist either of colour analogies (the green parrot) or power images (the bear, the tiger, the otter). In the case of the bride, certain images are based on the comparison of qualities. Doves, pigeons, wild geese and fish, for instance, possess varying qualities of elegance and speed which resemble the grace or flirtatiousness of a girl; while calves and fawns resemble a girl in their weakness and dependence. Certain other images, such as brinjals, mangoes, figs and bamboos are based on sexual parallels—the connection being either visual or through a fertility power.

'In all the poems it is the marriage context—the presence of an audience for a marriage purpose—which enables the images to be used without explanation, and in fact to form an image system. They do not need to refer to the objects they symbolize because the occasion itself makes the audience see them as symbols.'[1]

In the Bilaspur version of the Rasalu legend there are some remarkable passages where the sexual act is indicated by symbols; unless the reader has the key to the method he can have little idea of what is intended. Here we find natural objects not only symbolizing the act of life, but providing a sympathetic setting for it. With these passages

[1] Archer, 100.

may be compared the beautiful account of people sleeping in the Bengal ballad, 'The Blind Lover':

'It was the dead hour of night. Reclining on its bed of leaf the flower-bud lay silently asleep, and on the bosom of the flower the bee slept sweetly. On the breast of the king lay the queen like a loose garland of flowers unconscious in sleep.'[1]

A very common erotic image is that of cloud and storm—the cloud that covers, the rain that falls, the storm that tosses to and fro—they occur again and again in these and other songs. The Chaumasa Seasonal Songs recorded by W. G. Archer in Patna District are rich in such symbols:

June is the month of parting, friend
The sky glowers with gloom
Leaping and reeling the god rains
And my sweet budding breasts are wet.
All my friends sleep with their husbands
But my own husband is a cloud in another land.

One of Devendra Satyarthi's Dogra Songs has a similar theme:

The Raj of the Dogra king is hard
O when should I come to you, my love?
Small rain-drops are falling
The sky is heavy with the clouds
Your shirt is made of the flowered cloth
And inside it move two round lemons.
The Raj of the Dogra king is hard
O when should I come to you, my love?

Sometimes the cloud and storm are not directly expressive of the intercourse of lovers but provide a suitable setting for it. Temple recorded a vivid poem describing a love-affair between Raja Rasalu and his gardener's wife. There is no manifest expression of the actual encounter of the lovers, but everything is achieved by latent symbols. 'At midnight the rain fell'. The jealous Rani prays that the hut of the gardener's wife may leak. The Raja returns home wet through and the Rani gives him a cold bath.[2]

But Temple's comment on this shows, what indeed is evident throughout his otherwise admirable work, that he

[1] Sen, iv, 229 f.
[2] Temple, iii, 225 f.

did not grasp the principle of symbolism in Indian folk-poetry. 'It will be observed', he says, 'that there is an allusion to a certain wet night, and all through the long legend of Raja Rasalu there are like mysterious allusions brought into the story in the most inappropriate manner'.[1]

In the Bengali ballad 'The Love of the Washer-Maiden', when the girl Kanchanmala ventures out of her house to meet the Prince, all the descriptive symbols are of storm and rain. Her lover's flute 'drives her like a storm.' As she waits for her parents to sleep, 'the black clouds roar in the sky', the showers fall all round. She reflects, 'I imagine your fair fair figure to be wet with rain. I am not near you in this depth of night. With what care would I not wipe away water from your body, brushing the drops with my flowing hair?'[2]

This method of poetry, which is very popular in China, has been less fully developed in Europe. The symbolism in the East is so much a part of life, so recognized and so easily understood that it naturally dominates its poetry. This is not the case in Europe, and those poets who have used symbolism to any considerable extent have often been accused of obscurity. The beautiful poems of Dylan Thomas are not easily understood because there is no universal tradition against which they can be interpreted. But Garcia Lorca gets astonishing results from his employment of this device, as in his 'Thamar and Amnon', for example:

> Leave me in peace, brother.
> Your kisses in my shoulder
> are wasps and light breezes
> in a double swarm of flutes.
> —Thamar, in your high breasts
> two fishes are calling me,
> and in the tips of your fingers
> there are murmurs of sealed rose.

[1] ibid., 218.

[2] Sen, ii, 12. These images are very old. The *Ramayana* uses the simile of the wives of Ravana following him as flashes of lightning follow the cloud. 'The association of lightning and cloud has always typified the union of man and woman; for example, Ravana, the huge dark shapeless monster is joined with his slim and graceful wife.' Menaka bathing in the blue waters of a lake looks like lightning in a cloud.—K. A. S. Aiyar, 'Studies in the Imagery of the *Ramayana*', *The Journal of Oriental Research, Madras*, 1929, 346.

VII

Another technical device constantly employed by the Chhattisgarh poets is a parallelism that distantly resembles the essential method of Hebrew verse and has been noted for several Eastern peoples. Ladakhi poetry, for example, 'makes use of the rhyme of sentence, generally called parallelism when occurring in European poetry. Two or more sentences are constructed accordingly and in the corresponding places different words are inserted.'[1] Thus—

Nachung brgyabai yogkhorla brdzes
Khyogthong brgyabai skyed khorla brdzes.
Fasten it to the sheep-skin of a hundred girls
Fasten it to the girdle of a hundred youths.

This is exactly in the manner of many Karma and Saila songs, the kind of song that goes like this—

Come with me to Mungeli
And I will give you bangles
Come with me to Lamni
And I will give you anklets
Come with me to Lormi
And I will give you ear-rings.

There is an interesting use of the same technique, with remarkable success, by Garcia Lorca. In his 'Gazelle of the Morning Market, he advances through three stanzas, each nearly ide'tical.

Through the arch of Elvira
I want to see you pass
to know your name
and begin weeping.

The second and third stanzas change the second line to 'I'm going to see you pass': in the second stanza the last line becomes—

to drink your eyes

and in the third stanza—

to feel your thighs.

Another song which, in Spender and Gili's translation, begins—

The girl with the beautiful face
is gathering olives

[1] Francke, 87-106.

—is constructed round three invitations to her. Four riders say, 'Come to Cordoba, lass'; three young bull-fighters say, 'Come to Seville, lass'; a youth bringing 'roses and myrtle of moon' says, 'Come to Granada, lass'. The girl pays no heed but continues to gather olives

> with the grey arm of the wind
> encircling her waist.

The song might have been translated, not from the Spanish, but from the Chhattisgarhi.

VIII

The problem of translation is as difficult here as anywhere else. This is particularly so in the translation of the long ballads. To my mind the free verse form is ideal for the translation of the shorter poems of any language, but I have been told that it becomes tedious when applied to longer poems. It would probably have been more satisfactory to have turned the ballads either into prose or into some form of rhymed verse. Dames put his Balochi ballads into 'simple prose, while avoiding the baldness of an absolutely literal translation.' D. C. Sen gave his Bengali ballads in prose of a very poetical type. Temple, however, translated his Punjabi ballads into the same sort of free verse as I have adopted, though I do not pretend to compete with his mastery of this medium.

In the beautiful version of the Rasalu legend, the mixture of 'verse' and 'prose' represents the original, for part of this is told as a straightforward narrative while the dialogue is sung. The difference between verse and prose here is in the voice of the narrator rather than in the quality of the aesthetic excitement aroused, for often the narrative prose is much nearer poetry than the verse. But the convention apparently is that when people are talking about something it is prose and when they talk to each other it is poetry.

This is very close to actual life, for this is really how people do address one another. Friends engaged in the most fascinating of human pursuits, the gradual approach to intimacy, sing to one another in the jungle. A Gond or Pardhan girl sings to her lover in bed. At one time the aboriginals used to bargain at the bazaars in song and it is possible that the

songs containing details of prices and things for sale are a relic of this old and pleasant custom.

In this book I have followed the principle that was adopted in *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* and have translated everything with the utmost simplicity, avoiding above all the addition of any alien image or any elaboration. If any criticism is to be made of the older workers in this field it is that they tended, perhaps, in the manner of their day, to be diffuse and wordy.

As an example, of how folk-poetry ought not to be translated, I take this from the Rev. C. Swynnerton's *Romantic Tales from the Panjab*.[1] The original, deeply moving in its complete simplicity and economy, is—

Sada na bāgin bulbul bole
Sada na bāg bāhārān
Sada na rāj khushi de honde
Sada na majlis yahārān.

This is Swynnerton's version—

For evermore, within the bower's recesses,
No bulbul sits and sings melodious lore;
No verdant April leaf the garden blesses
For evermore!

A monarch, robed in might and wrapt in splendour,
Reigns not for aye from sounding shore to shore;
And friends companionship must fain surrender
For evermore!

Translators of the classical Sanskrit songs and epics had an easier time; the richness of the original enabled them to spread themselves richly in their translations. The difficulty in dealing with the folk-songs is that their supreme simplicity requires an equal simplicity in the translator and this is one of the hardest things to achieve.

I do not want to suggest however that the earlier translators, even those who worked in rhyme and metre, failed to produce real poetry which more or less accurately reflected the original. For example, there is a song by Usborne[2] which seems to me to be genuine poetry and which anyone acquaint-

[1] Swynnerton, 461.
[2] Usborne, 9.

ed with the technique and themes of Indian folk-songs will realize cannot have been greatly elaborated.

When the evening comes my lady attires her head
(Ah me! how the fire is burning in my heart!)
In a kerchief broidered with rare and curious art
And with flashing jewels her neck is engarlanded.

Her maidens cluster around her fair to be seen,
Fairer than stars in a scented Indian June
Shine round the path of the glorious golden moon—
So her maidens laughing gather around their queen.

When I see their swaying figures delicate clad,
Fairer than swans of Kabul or Kandahar,
Pass by the city gate through the long bazaar,
Spring shines in my heart and my soul is happy and glad.

Roses of Persia, see how my love's queen goes
Fair, clad in delight, passing the whispering vale
Down to the river, while every nightingale
Chants of her beauty to every listening rose.

Singing they go, singing in pure delight
To fill their pitchers down by the river's bed.
Would God that I were the pitcher upon her head,
And her marble arms were around me day and night.

Another pretty folk-song in the older manner is the translation from the Telugu made by J. A. Boyle in 1874.

The creeper's tendrils clasp the river;
And shall my love's arms clasp me never
Beside the river, mother mine?
This day alone I cannot live:
A youthful husband, mother, give,
To say he loves me, mother mine!
In this dark house my youth is spent;
Ah! were a youth in pity sent
To say he loves me, mother mine!
Love's arrows lurk his form within,
My budding breasts may surely win
And bear that burden, mother mine!

'Twere sweet his manly front to deck
And dash my head encircled neck
With sandal sweetness, mother mine!
Can I caress his tresses bright,
Those locks with silver wealth bedight,
Nor mar their beauty, mother mine?
He bound a jewel on my brow,
Ah! could I change that jewel now
For his dear kisses, mother mine![1]

IX

The preparation of this book was a solace to me during a time of strain and anxiety in the hot weather and rains of 1944. I first visited Chhattisgarh at the beginning of 1932 and indeed my original experience of jungle life was in the Pendra Zamindari. Since then I have travelled through that fascinating land again and again. When I was working in Bastar State, my way from Patangarh to Jagdalpur took me through two hundred miles of the Chhattisgarh countryside. My Agaria enquiries took me frequently to the Satgarh Zamindaris and to Phuljhar. Friendly visits to Sarangarh acquainted me with the eastern part of the area. On many of these and other tours I was accompanied by Shamrao Hivale, on some by my wife: to both I owe an incalculable debt for their company and aid.

My assistant Sundarlal, whose knowledge of aboriginal India now extends to three Provinces and a score of tribes, was by my side throughout the entire business of translation and interpretation. He also recorded many songs, among them the beautiful new version of the Rasalu legend. Ram Pratap Baghel was responsible for most of the Kamar songs which were obtained with great difficulty. Shankar Pardhan wrote down the long Lorik and Chandaini ballad and the tale of Bakaoli: he has a remarkable gift for conveying the singers' words with accuracy. Tabalchi (also called, according to one's mood, Buchul and Saunu), another Pardhan, and like all the Pardhan a true poet, gave valuable help in interpretation.

I owe a continued debt of gratitude to the Warden and Fellows of Merton College for assistance towards the expenses of research connected with this book.

[1] Boyle, 5.

The originals of the songs have been prepared for the press by Shamrao Hivale and when the money for their publication is available, we hope to issue them together with the originals of *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* under his name.

VERRIER ELWIN

24 *March* 1946
Pringeli
The Kuttia Kond Hills
Orissa

THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

PREGNANCY SONGS

SONGS about pregnancy are not very common. Durga Bhagwat has recorded three in the Central Provinces, one from the Kamar, a second from the Bharia of Chhindwara and a third from the Gond of Betul. I give one Panka song from the Kenda Zamindari and an interesting Satnami chant, half charm and half song, used when there is a danger of miscarriage.

Miss Bhagwat's Kamar song is rather commonplace, but the Bharia song is linked in an interesting way with the *naldi-chagāna* theme of a Bharia marriage. 'The beauty of the song is that the reference to applying turmeric to the expectant mother is very skilfully introduced in the marriage rite by a question from the bride's grandfather as to when turmeric is to be applied to his grand-daughter. The answer suggests that it is to be applied from the second month of pregnancy.'[1] The Gond song begins by enumerating the months from the second to the tenth and then continues,

The first lamp has come, O Nanda Gawalan
The second lamp has come, O Nanda Gawalan,

and so on up to twelve lamps. Miss Bhagwat notes on this that 'the period from conception till the third month after birth is critical. Light is very efficacious in combating evil forces'.[2]

Roy gives a remarkable Kharia song used during the ritual exorcism of a woman when she is known to be pregnant. The people dance round wife and husband throwing ashes over them and fanning them with brooms and peacock's feathers while they sing,

O Sun Moon! O Ponomosor!
May this woman bear twelve sons and twelve daughters
Her waist-belts are elephant's tails
Her breasts are worn-out brooms
You spoke to each other as man and wife
You treated each other as man and wife
May you have twelve sons and twelve daughters.[3]

[1] Bhagwat, 44. [2] ibid., 45.

[3] Roy, *The Kharias*, 276 f. I have slightly modified Roy's translation after consulting the original.

A pregnant girl is supposed to get very *dhongi* (deceitful): she pretends to be in pain, demands attention, 'craves' for a lot of things that she could be without. The husband has a very tender love for her at this time. 'Even though she says, "Don't leave me alone. Give me this to wear, that to eat. Stay with me all the time", he is glad to do so for she is to be the mother of his child.' 'She must be treated like a flower, for otherwise the light may fade from her blossom.'

I

The full moon rises
Yet my head is clean
I go to the well
The full moon rises
The fish rejoice in the deep pool of Koeli-Kachhar
Branches of the mango grove bend low to the earth.

Moon of the second month casts its shadow
There is a new bud in the garden
My lord desires me for the scent of my flower.

Moon of the third month casts its shadow
The life within me desires strange food
I long for mud and kodon dirt.

Moon of the fourth month casts its shadow
With gifts my mother comes for Sidauri
I sit in her lap and eat the seven foods.

Moon of the fifth month casts its shadow
The secret life stirs within me
O my darling I can hear your heart-beats.

Who can tell what fish is in the deep water?
When they catch it, we will know if it is saur or kotri.
Moon of the sixth month casts its shadow

Moon of the seventh month casts its shadow
Black are my nipples—it will be my father
My belly is long—it will be my mother.

Moon of the eighth month casts its shadow
The hour approaches, my husband comes no more near me
I saw a snake in the path and it went away blinded.

Moon of the ninth month casts its shadow
How weary is the life within; when it sees its dark prison
It struggles to be free and make its camp on earth.

The symbolism of this song is interesting. The first stanza describes how the woman is able to go to the well and has 'no impurity on her head' although her monthly cycle is completed. The fish—emblems of fertility—rejoice and the mango branches heavy with fruit bend low.

The second stanza refers to the belief that a woman is more desirable to her husband when she is pregnant. In the third we hear of the pregnancy cravings which are attributed to the life of the child desiring food: these are generally erratic, for it has not yet learnt the taboos of earth.

The Sidauri rite is mentioned in the fourth stanza. This is a little ceremony intended to satisfy the cravings. The woman is visited by her mother, or her brother, who brings seven different kinds of food: she sits in her mother's lap and is ceremonially fed. The fifth month sees the quickening; the sixth and seventh show the mother inquisitive about the sex of the child—black nipples suggest a boy, but a long belly a girl. The snake that was blinded in the eighth stanza recalls the common superstition that if a snake sees a pregnant woman, it will go blind.

The next song is a Satnami one and is intended to avert the danger of miscarriage. For this, a magical remedy such as the string of a bed knotted ten times or indeed anything that is well tied up (it must, of course, be undone before delivery)—is bound about the waist and the people sing:

2

Day and night the stream flows under the moon
The true Guru has come and built his temple amid the waters
The river is very deep; no one can find the bottom of the dark pool
How has he built his temple in the middle of the stream?
Where has the boat come from, and where the paddle?
O carpenter, how did you make them in the middle of the stream?

The boat is of truth, the paddle of the word, the bamboo pole of memory
It was on the full moon day that the carpenter built the temple.

Whence is the lime and whence the cloth? How did they stick together?
The bricks are the father's, the stones are the father's; by the mother they were stuck together
It was on the full moon day that the carpenter built the temple.

Where is the lime and whence the cloth? How did they colour the walls?
The lime is of silver, the cloth is of Ram, with truth they coloured the walls.
In the walls they set the bones, here and there, and tied them inside
They made 3,608,000 divisions of the temple
And through it a path for the wind.

DELIVERY SONGS

SONGS used at the time of delivery are again rare. In the Chhattisgarh plain there is no taboo, as there is among the wilder tribes, on the employment of midwives. The songs refer to the knife to cut the umbilical cord, the pot used for the mother's bath of purification, and the 'flower' or placenta, which is buried in a pit, sometimes in the actual place of birth, sometimes outside the house.

Many methods are used to accelerate a difficult delivery, and many have been recorded. Two that are, I think, new may be mentioned here. A Brahmin gave a Gond woman a railway ticket, telling her to wash it and drink the water, whereupon she would be delivered with the speed of a train. A Pardhan who had been married three times was in some demand, for the water in which the feet of so adventurous a traveller had been washed was regarded as very efficacious.

3

THE sun is red in the sky
The crows are talking
Call the midwife
For my darling is weary
My body is tormented with pain
Call the midwife quickly
My darling is tired of the dark
He is fighting to escape.

4

FATHER-IN-LAW is asleep in the yard
Mother-in-law is asleep on the verandah
My little dewar is in his coloured palace
Wake wake sister-in-law
Tell my child's father
There is pain in my belly
Send for the midwife
My sweet baby is coming
The knife is of gold
The pot is of silver

The flower is a rose
Or is it a lotus?
The cord is cut
The flower is buried
Deep deep is the pit
My sweet baby is crying.

The 'little dewar' is the husband's younger brother, with whom a traditional intimacy is permitted: the reference here may mean that he is the child's real father. The knife is to cut the cord: the pot is for the ceremonial bath: the flower is the placenta: the pit in which it is buried must be deep, for should a witch steal it or an animal dig it up, it would be disastrous for the child.

5

LALLU'S born, Lallu's born
Run boy and get the midwife
What knife shall we use to cut the cord?
What pot shall we use for the bath?
With a golden knife we will cut the cord
With a silver pot we will bathe.

6

A SON is born today, brother
A son is born today
In their best clothes my wife's friends are coming
When my wife's son was born
The pain scorched her body
A son is born today, brother
A son is born today
I called the barber and washerman
They soon did their work
Daily the child grew bigger
And my life was filled with joy
Blessed be my wife's body
Though her loins were undone with pain
I watch her night and day
A son is born today, brother
A son is born today.

7

In the early morning a son was born
Jagat Raja has gone to sleep
Before the midwife will cut the cord
She demands a present in Neng
She has taken my nose-ring in Neng
Jagat Raja has gone to sleep
Before the barber will cut the hair
He demands a present in Neng
He has taken my anklets in Neng
Jagat Raja has gone to sleep
Before the washerman will wash the clothes
He demands a present in Neng
He has taken my red sari in Neng.

The word Neng covers a social custom and an attitude of mind that is characteristic of this part of India. On all ceremonial occasions—it may be birth, marriage, festival, funeral—certain privileged persons, relatives, or officials of the rite, hold up the proceedings and demand a present. Nothing can proceed until the ceremonial tax is paid. This is a fruitful source of dispute in weddings, for on such occasions there are many relatives to be bought off. Here, after the birth of a child, the midwife, barber and washerman refuse to fulfil their proper functions until they are given the proper dues. This is Neng, a word of great importance for the understanding of the Chhattisgarhi mind.

A CHHOHAR MANGAL SONG

AFTER the birth of a child, the Satnami perform a ceremony to ensure its happiness in the world and to give it a name. They sing the following Chhohar Mangal song.

8

WHERE have you come from, little one?
Where were you staying before?
Today where have you made your camp?

I came from the sky; till now I was staying in the belly
Today I have camped on earth.

You came down to the world with your little fists clenched
You have forgotten the five divine names
You have forgotten them in love of your new home
The semur tree climbs up to heaven
Its cotton flies into the sky and whirls about the world
Where will it find rest?

I cannot make the *expression* of this song more beautiful than the original, but there is much that is beautiful in its *thought*: the child who is camping on earth, only camping in a temporary home: his forgetfulness of the divine names in love of this lovely but quickly passing world; the baby breaking from the womb as the silk-cotton bursts from the pod of the bombax tree and is tossed and whirled through life by the wind of fortune.

CRADLE SONGS

9

Tigdigi digi wo noni tigdigi godi ma
Little daughter play in my lap
Mother's gone to bring rice from the market
When you eat it your mind will be happy
Pretty pretty eyes and ears, pretty are your teeth
Tigdigi digi wo noni
When mother comes with parched rice from the market
She will take you with her.

10

Thunug munug dhāri ghutku banjāri
Your aunt has gone to the brinjal garden
And a fox has carried her off
Run uncle run
To see what has happened
Digi digi digi digi.

11

In my lap I put my baby
Child of my weary body
In my old age he has been born
Night and day I spend
Thinking of my child
In my lap I put my baby
Since my first wife was barren
I took a younger girl
Soon there was a baby
From my weary body
Now we two, true yoke-mates
Play with our baby
We kiss his cheeks together
I take him in my lap
She takes him
We kiss his cheeks together

12

O-ey O-ey O-ey my mother, my father
My diamond, my heart, my wealth
Who has hurt you?
Ho re ho re let sleep come
Let sleep come, sleep sleep
Let little sleep come
I will never beat you, my father
My water-pot, my cooking-pot
My little bird, let sleep come
Sleep, sleep, sleep.

To address a child as 'mother' or 'father' is the curious, but rather charming, custom of the village people. There is an old Dhimar woman in Patangarh who invariably calls *me* 'Mother'.

Cradle songs are everywhere very much the same: in talking to a baby all the world uses the same language. Compare the Punjabi song:[1]

A swing-cradle for your bed,
Hung with silken ropes;
The nurse has come from Kabul
To make the cradle swing:
Sleep, sleep, my baby,
Sleep, sleep.

Crooke recorded a number of similar cradle songs, of which the following is a sample:[2]

O mother moon come up quickly
Bring milk and rice in a golden cup
And put it in darling's mouth.

[1] Temple, 'Some Hindu Folksongs from the Punjab; Nursery Rhymes', *J.A.S.B.*, li, 218.

[2] Crooke, 'Cradle Songs of Hindustan', *N.I. Notes and Queries*, iii, 34.

TATTOOING SONGS

13

THE Pankin tart is being tattooed
How it hurts, what a fuss!
First time she's having a boy
How it hurts, what a fuss!

14

THE Godharin has come to tattoo you
I want to be friends with you, my bird
So that I may enjoy you
Come, bird, come.

15

MY shoulder hurts
Tattoo me gently
First do mother-in-law
Then do sister-in-law
Then you may do my shoulder.

16

THAT fair fair arm!
Tattoo your marks upon it
Hide your two bre sts
With a jacket of rich cloth.

17

TATTOO me gently tattoo
First do my mother-in-law
Then do my sister-in-law
Then do my arms.
Tattoo me gently tattoo
First do the anklets on my feet
Then do my thighs
Tattoo me gently tattoo
First make the marks between my breasts
Then do my back

Tattoo me gently tattoo
First on my forehead
Make the sign of a hearth
Then do all my body
Tattoo me gently tattoo.

SONGS OF THE MENARCHE

A GIRL'S first menstruation is always an occasion. If it is delayed, the neighbours tease her—'As soon as you're touched, you'll be pregnant'—'When is the pot going to break?' and so on. Two girls of the same age may kick one another to hasten the process.

When the fact is known (and it seems always to be known at once), the news flies round the village. There is no reticence about it: why should there be? 'It is a beautiful thing: the girl's tree bears red blossoms; she is a woman now.' Boys, and even older people in a joking relation to the girl, shout, 'The mouth of the new pot is open', 'The pot is broken', 'The stream is flooded', and so on. Songs are improvized: they usually discuss the matter with entire frankness and some obscenity.[1]

18

THE red flower
Has blossomed
The lake
Has broken its banks
The lemons
Have ripened
The tender wheat-cake
Is ready for dinner.

19

WHO dug the bank of the lake
And let the water flood my field?
The fish leap in the shallows
On the bank stands a crane.

[1] 'When girls attain puberty it is, or rather has been, customary for all the young girls of the village to collect and sing songs of the most obscene nature. I have naturally given no specimens of these.' Natesa Sastri, 254. He says this is in 'Southern India' but characteristically is not more precise.

20

How big
Is the red flower?
How high
Is the dark grass?
How long
Is the deer's horn?
How deep
Is the well?

21

She still
Looks like a parrot
But the well
Is full of water now.

LOVE AND THE APPROACH TO MARRIAGE

THE NATURE OF LOVE

22

You have to grind
The rough gram twice
Love is a hard thing
You cannot forget it
When you sleep on a bed
The bed-bugs bite you
When you sleep on the floor
Your body aches
Love is a hard thing
Her arms and legs are very lovely
Love is a hard thing.

Indian poetry excels in its delineation of the inexorable demands of love. Usborne translates a Punjab lyric:

'Love of you has killed me even as a goldsmith draws a fine wire from out of the press. Love is like a hailstorm, it destroys countless homes. When love is fled and the links are snapped it is like a red-hot iron when the blacksmith's stroke has missed and the bellows stop blowing.'[1]

23

O FRIEND I will not stay
Without my love, I will not
I will not stay
Wear your kusum-coloured sari
Put on your decorated cloth
Dressed in that cloth
I sit swinging in my swing
Phagun has come
We will make music on the drum
Weeping weeping
My fair love goes to her husband's house
Without my love
I will not stay
I will not.

Phagun (February) is the month when the exciting Holi

[1] Usborne, 34.

Festival is celebrated, and the people use the drum (here the large *dhol* drum) to accompany their songs.

24

THE legs are of gold
The bed is made of jewels
Though I have been tricked into your bed
Talk sweetly to your young love
All night I spent in tears
On your jewelled bed
With its legs of gold.

25

THE legs are of saja
The frame is of sarai
O girl with tinkling bells
I will make music
On your bed tonight.

26

How dark my bed is now
Your body was a moon
Your eyes were antelopes
Long was your hair, my diamond
You loved me for two days
And went away to your own land
How dark my bed is now
The koel cries on the mango branch
In the forest calls the peacock
On the river bank the crane
And I mistake their music
For the voice of my love
How dark my bed is now.

27

THE moon rises
Stealing the sun's light
Between her thighs
The man steals the nectar
Between her thighs.

28

You shook the mango branch
You pulled it down and broke it off
You have made me weep for love
You cut a rope, you tied it to the branch
You pulled it down and shook it to and fro
A slender youth of Chiknimuhi village
Is flirting with me in my house
Come let us go to the forest.

29

The moon comes up
Crowded by many stars
If you do not desire me
Do as you will
But for love
I will not go far away
For love of you.

30

In the flooded lands of Makri Amora
There are many clods of earth littering the fields
I am coming after supper, keep the door open
Sweet flower, do not deceive me, it would be a sin to do so.

Come come come come in. I will wash your feet with milk
I will sit before you who are like a goldsmith's peg
I will sit by you, leaning against you.

To look at it, how beautiful! To the touch it is like a lotus
What do you call this fruit?
Give it to me, my darling, and I will be content.

In my garden are the fruits of palm and mango
In your garden is a tree of nuts
When they ripen and fall down
The little parrots cannot eat them.

You have the fruits of palm and mango
I have only the little nut-tree
The heart of your fruit was eaten by my pet parrot
By Dassara all was over, there is nothing now.

31

I DO not mind
Your habits
Or your morals
So long
As your tongue is sweet
And you look after me properly.

32

GIVE me a little water from your well
I will clean my mind and say
O mind be calm
But how can I explain a thing like that
To my body?

33

GIRL, I will never leave you
Whatever is in store for us
We will share together
Mother Earth was born first
Then men were born
They drive nails in every boundary
You do not understand
Girl, I will never leave you.

34

GIRL, show me the way
To Semra, Bhadaura
Gudum and Deori
There are no trees
I can see no village
I have no one with me
Who will keep me company
Girl, show me the way.

35

THE moon is two days old
They are all playing in the house
Love, I could not find you even in a dream
And when I woke at midnight
I searched and could not find you.

36

In the garden I sowed the gay-coloured keonra
By the hut I planted marigolds, parrot.
By which road goes my gay-coloured keonra friend
By which road goes my marigold, parrot?
By the road of lovers goes my gay-coloured keonra
By the road of fair girls goes my marigold, parrot.

The reference here is to the very popular custom of making 'flower-friendships'.

37

Why are you crying, girl?
When I speak sweetly
Still you cry
I have never cursed you
I have never quarrelled
I have not turned you from the house
Why are you crying, girl?

38

How am I to cross the hills?
Without you the level plain
Is like a mountain
Without you the flooded river
Is a parched plain in time of drought
Without you the sarai tree in bud
Is dry and blackened in a forest fire.

Compare the Bashahr song:

For a loved friend the peak appears to me a ridge
And a ridge like a plain country
A forest like the city
A house like a sacred place
A river like a small channel
A channel like a small pond
I think there is no difference now
But a very little difference.[1]

[1] T. R. Joshi, 593.

39.

You have looted my store of love
My townsman, playing at Holi like a boy
You have looted my store
Of beautiful love, you have looted
The spangle from my forehead
The garland from my neck
My nose-pin, my ear-rings, the armlets on my arms
You have stolen the bangles from my wrists
The rings from my fingers, the anklets from my feet
You have taken everything
My whole store of love
You have looted.

Compare a stanza translated from Bhartrihari by P. E. More:

O wanderer heart! avoid that haunted grove
The body of thy love;
Nor in her bosom stray, wild mountain fells
Where Love, the robber, dwells.[1]

40

You have cut in two
My heart
You have sat upon
My head
You have deceived me
Jackal.

41

Her eyes shoot arrows
She shoots the kusum-coloured charms
The haldi cooked with garlic
Makes the dish smooth as sandal
But too much chilly spoils it
And brings everything to ruin
Her eyes shoot arrows.

Compare lines attributed to Kalidasa, translated by A. A. Macdonell.

[1] *A Century of Indian Epigrams* (Boston, 1898).

This maiden like a huntsman is;
Her brow is like the bow he bends;
Her sidelong glances are his darts;
My heart's the antelope she slays.

'To feel the pangs of the five arrows' is a Bengali expression for falling in love.[1]

42

THERE is a heap of kodon straw
Underneath the kadam tree
She has put her child to sleep
And gone to sparkle in the street
O you from the kadam tree
Look well to your baby.

43

THE hemp is spun
Into thread, into rope
I have made my body clean
For love of you.

44

UNDER the nim tree
Stands a girl disconsolate
Her two eyes
Flow with tears
Plant a mango
Plant a tamarind
Make a fence across the road
Under the nim tree
Stands a girl in tears.

45

BELLS bells bells silver bells
After endless days
I have found you
Now I will not let you go
For endless days.

[1] Sen, i, xxvii.

46

THE adorable boy
Has thatched his house with grass
But the rain leaks in
At the bottom of his garden
Is a little pit
We would all go there
But for the spotted panther
How cold he must be
When the rain drips on his bed
The adorable boy.

ASSIGNATION

47

I WENT to the garden
To find my desire
I reached
The mango grove
I wandered
Among the tall bamboos
My mind was sad
Among the tall bamboos
To find my desire
I went to the garden.

48

IN the great garden
The shade is cool
Who will lie with me there
Adorable bird?

49

GIRL come with me to gather mahua flowers
The tamarind is crooked
The jamun plum is black
The plantain grows in bunches
Girl come with me to gather mahua flowers.

50

BOY, the birds chatter when the dawn comes.
Who is sleeping in the coloured palace?
Who has enjoyed a night of sin?
The girl is sleeping in the coloured palace
The boy has enjoyed a night of sin
But the birds chatter when the dawn comes.
How did you climb into the coloured palace?
How did you climb into her bed?
With a rope I climbed into the coloured palace
By the firelight I climbed into her bed.

51

THE tree is planted
The creeper has grown
Your bed is in the loft
I will climb by the ladder.

52

ABOVE in the loft is my bed
He climbed up by the ladder
The dewar is playing
In his bhauji's bed.

These Dadaria, sung by Teli oilmen of the Raipur District, derive their poetry and romance—in the minds of the singers—from their references to the *patauhi* or *atari*, the loft or upper storey of a substantial village house. It is from this loft that the shy heroine of many a ballad looks down and sees the hero; it is in such lofts, with their comparative remoteness and privacy, that lovers find a convenient meeting-place.

Another song, from a Panka of Bilaspur, has the same theme.

53

IN the newly-built loft
You have put your bangles
Joy-giver, in my loving mind
You have put delight.

54

A ONE rupee dhoti
Eight anna shoes
A four anna cap
Two annas of oil
Put them all on, boy
And run away with me.

55

How I long
To force that ring
From your finger
How I long
To catch you alone
And throw you on the ground.

56

He :

I WOULD go to the bank of the lake
To pick oranges
But I am afraid
I may fall in and drown.

She :

I too would go to the bank of the lake
To pick a plantain
But I too am afraid
I may fall in and drown.

57

She :

CUT the green brinjal into seven pieces
Bring sixteen pots of water
Cousin, give me a sari
I am going dancing to the field-hut.

He :

Cut the red brinjal into seven pieces
Cook it in sixteen pots of water
Now you say, Give me a sari
I too will go dancing to the field-hut.

58

WITHOUT a net
Prawns do not let themselves be caught.
Without a go-between
No girl is ever ready, friend.

59

RED as a rose
Come to your madman's bed
Come as a bird
Come to your madman's bed.

The idea of the lover as a madman is very common. The people do not say, 'He is in love with her'; they say, 'He is mad for her.' A Chitral song uses the motif effectively.

The folk ask of me
Madman, whither goest thou?
I am a roving friar
Of the order of love
And wander
In search of my nightingale.[1]

In a Bengal ballad Naderchand wanders 'like a madman' in search of his 'sweet parrot', the gypsy girl Mahua.[2] When he finds her it is as though 'the mad bee had found the scent of a full-blown lotus'.[3] Chand Binod also, in another ballad, is like a madman when he cannot find his darling Malua.[4]

60

YOU are lovely
As the sesamum in colour
Like a red seed
Is your body.
With no dog barking
The village seems deserted
Without its buffaloes
The shed stands empty
Without my man
My bed is lonely
And my womb is barren
Your body
Is lovely as the oil-seed
Your body.

[1] Howell, 389. [2] Sen, i, 13. [3] ibid., i, 14. [4] ibid., i, 69.

61

You said 'In the stream'
But you went to bathe
In the pond
You lying Gondin
You have deceived me
Again.

62

You have broken
The golden pitcher
Where did you lose
Your lusty youth?

'A poor old woman was once creeping along the road supporting herself with her staff. A young fellow met her and said, "Mother, what are you always looking for on the ground?" "My son", she answered, "I am looking for my lost youth".'[1]

63

The river-bed is dry
Flower-girl go and bring me water
The lake is dry
For there is no lotus there
The fairest girl is dry
Who has no lover
Flower-girl go and bring me water.

'As the bathing-ghat of a pond or a river practically gives an outsider the only opportunity of meeting a girl of a Hindu or Moslem family', says D. C. Sen, 'it is quite natural that the place becomes often the meeting-ground of lovers.'[2] In the Bengal ballads there are many charming scenes where the heroine is found alone with her water-pot and is wooed and often won. Sonai and her royal lover meet on a river bank. Chand Binod sees Malua for the first time at a bathing-ghat. The washer-maiden Kanchan falls in love with her prince on the bank of a pond. From the window of his palace Shyam Ray sees the Dom girl bathing and never forgets her.[3]

[1] Recorded in the Fatehpur District. *N.I. Notes and Queries*, iii, 141.
[2] Sen, iii, viii.
[3] For these and many other references, see Sen, ii, 3; ii, 97; ii, 166; ii, 367; iii, 146; iii, 209.

In a Punjabi song, the lover declares,[1]

I was going to the watering-place to draw water,
And my lover met me on the road:
All my trouble went away altogether,
And my heart blossomed greatly like a flower.

[1] Temple, 'Some Hindu Folksongs from the Panjab', *J.A.S.B.*, li. 195.

DREAMS

64

I HAD a heavy dream
Beneath the parsa tree
Dreaming I cooked pulse and rice
Dreaming I fed my lord
Beneath the parsa tree
I made the bed, I spread
The decorated sheet
Dreaming I put my lord to sleep
Beneath the parsa tree.

The parsa is the Flame of the Forest and the picture intended is of the glorious scarlet and golden spread above and the poor little 'decorated sheet' on the peasant's cot and the dreams below.

65

THE golden casket has a silver lid
Come soon go soon
But on your way
Give me at least a dream.

66

I SAW you in a dream
In colour lustrous as a bumble-bee
You were at work on your dark hair
Making the parting with your comb
Black bangles on your arms
I opened both my eyes and looked around
How lonely was my bed.

67

WHEN the dog barked in the village
I had a dream
But when I woke
There was nothing.

Compare the Japanese Tanka of Sukune Yakamochi, translated by Arthur Waley:

These meetings in dreams,
How sad they are!
When, waking up startled
One gropes about—
And there is no contact to the hand.

68

How sleepy I feel
In my dream I'm getting married
I have gone round the pole
They have given me the five vessels
And money at the time of greeting
My lord looks in my face
And carries me away.

69

NEVER break love, my friend, my lover
I was in a deep sleep
I forgot everything in my dreams
A thief took away my anklets
Never break love, my friend, my lover.

70

YOU did not wake when the dogs barked
You did not stir when I tried to rouse you
Out in the court I tried to wake you
Then I tried on the verandah
I went to your bed and whispered
But you took no notice.

BEAUTY

WHAT do the people of Chhattisgarh consider beautiful? It is not always possible to say, for India has inherited a heavy burden of poetic diction from its Sanskrit past. As D. C. Sen rightly points out:

'The same stereotyped and hackneyed comparison without one word of original observation is to be met with everywhere. The face was to be like a lotus, the ears like those of a vulture, the neck of the form of a conch; the gait of a lady was compared to the grace of an elephant's movement; the lips were always like the *bimba* fruit in the delicacies of their colour, the eyebrows like the bow of Cupid or the rainbow. In the case of a man his arms must reach the knees, the eyes should be so large as to stretch up to the ears, the nose to be like the beak of Gadura—the king of birds. What one poet writes, the other poets repeat. The elegant poets tell all this in an attractive language; those who are not so gifted use a commonplace and stale language; but the same thing recurs in the descriptions; and so stereotyped the accounts are that the readers might altogether omit many passages without the risk of losing any poetical treat, however great the poet whose work they might be reading. This is the characteristic of all poets of the Renaissance School.'[1]

But the folk-tales and folk-songs of India have managed to a certain extent to break with this old tradition. The eyes of a lovely girl, says D. C. Sen, are compared in 'Kamala', 'to the beautiful *aparajita* flower. This flower grows abundantly in the countryside and offers a striking likeness to the dark eyes of the Bengali women. It is certainly curious that the Bengali poets have so often stumbled over the huge blocks of Sanskritic figures, when there was such a simple patch open to them near their own village-homes. The freshness of a mahua flower, the emblem of health and undecayed charm, which is a familiar sight here, never struck a Renaissance poet who seemed to see everything through the eyeglass of classical culture. In these songs the face of a woman is often compared to the mahua flower with great effect. Jayadeva, the Sanskrit poet, who had a greater knowledge of his

[1] Sen, i, lviii.

rural country than the poets who followed him, once referred to this flower and called it *madhuka,* and in the "Krishnakirtan" of Chandidas, which is full of rural charm, we find references to it. The blind poet Fakir Faizu, who wrote one of these ballads—"Adhua Sundari and Surat-Jamal"—beautifully describes the eyes of the heroine without caring for classical metaphors. "He who has seen the dark eyes of the maiden, will never care to glance at the dark clouds of the sky or the dark waters of the river." This at once brings the whole wealth of the dark colour of the oriental woman's eyes vividly before the mind!"[1]

Let us examine some of the folk-songs of Bengal and elsewhere, for there are some remarkable descriptions of famous loveliness available for comparison. I put first the glorious account of the girl Hasanu'l-Jamal in the 'Song of Hasanu'l-Jamal and Badaru'l-Munir', a Mopla folk-song which was written down in Malayalam, towards the end of the last century.

'The beauty of the girl when she was ten years old cannot be described. Her hair was darker than the black clouds and more shining than the wings of the beetle and when untied reached the sole of her foot. Her forehead was arched and narrow; her eyebrows were like the rainbow or the half-moon; her eyes were black as if blackened by eye-salve; her teeth were small, and white like the seeds of the pomegranate; her tongue was like the petals of the red water-lily; her lips were of the colour of the red coral; her face was like the lotus. She was the first fruit of the tree of gold. Her neck was more graceful than the deer's; her breasts, round at their base, were like blossoms of the jasmine. They were like two golden cups, as the knobs on the head of a caparisoned elephant; they were of full size, without flaw, of never-fading beauty; and yet, only a handful. Her waist was very slender, about her thighs she was fleshy, and her legs were like the plantain tree. She walked like an elephant, with wavy side to side motion, her head slightly bent. She looked with quivering eye which resembled the bee that has seen honey.'[2]

This is definitely in the older tradition, as is the account of the beautiful Thseringskyid. 'She had a mass of matted hair full of turquoises, glorious like the moon on the fifteenth,

[1] ibid., i, lix.

[2] Fawcett, 'A Popular Mopla Song', *The Indian Antiquary,* xxviii, 66.

with eyebrows like the O of the Tibetan alphabet, a girl with teeth like curdled milk and pearls, with a waist like a monastery bell, with a chin like a pile of religious books.'[1]

The descriptions in the Punjab ballads, however, are rather stereotyped. For example, Chatr-mukat is described as one,

Beautiful as Krishna
Whose body shines like unalloyed gold.[2]

The Punjab popular version of the ancient classical tale of Nala and Damayanti records Rani Damwanti's beauty.

Her gait as a swan's, sweet words speaks she with her lips;
Eyes as an antelope's, her youth in its prime; her face bright as the moon.[3]

Another account of the Rani stresses her ornaments.

Her lotus face glorious as the moon:
An ornament amidst all her maids:
Garland of pearls round her neck; lovely rings in each nostril;
Flowers on her head captivating the hearts of all who see her,
Anklets and toe-rings and jewels on her forehead;
All who see her are ravished; eyes as of antelopes.[4]

The Bengal ballads also, although they may not use conventional Sanskrit methods, often repeat the same symbols and descriptions again and again. For example, the beauty of Kamala might be that of any other dozen Bengali heroines.

'Her voice was like the cooings of the cuckoo. Black as the clouds of August hung down her profuse hair, sometimes in braids and at others in curling locks. The dark blue *aparajita* flower was no match for her two beautiful eyes. When she wore clothes of the colour of flaming fire, her beauty surpassed that of the heavenly stars.'[5]

Compare also the account of Malua with that of Mahua. This is Malua:

'Her dishevelled hair, black as clouds, almost touched her feet—this hair alone was worth a lakh of rupees! She looked like a fresh mahua flower in a deserted garden. What a pair of large eyes! Their glance was enough to madden even a saint's heart.'[6]

[1] Francke, 95 ff.
[2] Temple, ii, 92.
[3] ibid., ii, 210.
[4] ibid., ii, 213.
[5] Sen, i, 109.
[6] Sen, i, 44.

And this is Mahua:

'Her beauty was so dazzling that she looked like a gem on a serpent's hood or a bright stone in a dark house. Whoever saw her was charmed. When she walked, her long-flowing tresses seemed to touch her very ankles. One could see the champa flower blooming, as it were, on her cheeks. Her large and bright eyes were as lovely as evening stars. No one who saw her for a moment ever forgot her. Even a saint would harbour thoughts of her in his mind, forgetting his ascetic vows.'[1]

The descriptions are interchangeable.

And what of the people of Chhattisgarh? It is notable that their songs are interested in describing men as well as women. 'He is handsome as a constable', said a romantic little girl.

71

WHEN the moth
Sees the beautiful lamp
It forgets the world
And dies.

'His eyes'—here is another description—'are beautiful as the sliced halves of a mango: his nose is straight as a mahua bud; his eyes are black; he has a *much-much* moustache and curly hair; his calves swell so that they appear ready to shoot away from his body; his teeth are like cucumber seeds'.

But 'a man's beauty is only for a few days, then it is lost; but a woman's beauty endures till the withering of the tree'.

In the assessment of woman's beauty, the people seem to pay most attention to her hair, her ornaments and her figure. Their attitude to the breasts is tender and beautiful, worthy of a land of poets. No student of the court paintings or rock carvings of Hindu India need be reminded of the delicate and absorbed attention given to the female breast in antiquity. In the folk-tales of the *Katha Sarit Sagara* cycle, we read of the 'lovely full bosom' of Upakosa,[2] of Madanamanchuka with her breasts like 'clusters of mandaras',[3] of Madanasena whose breasts were like 'pitchers half revealed'.[4] Penzer notes

[1] Sen, i, 1.
[2] N. M. Penzer, *The Ocean of Story* (London, 1924-28), i, 30.
[3] ibid., iii, 146.
[4] ibid., vii, 5.

that the Hindus have always admired the full breast, while the Arabs admired firmness rather than fulness.

There is an elaborate classification of breasts, both according to their beauty and the quantity of milk that they secrete. Admiration for the breast requires something more than beauty: it demands a rich store of milk which will nourish a strong and handsome child. This is an important point. A great deal of village aesthetics has a utilitarian basis. The most lovely girl is not long admired unless she is a good cook; she may have a perfect figure, but if she is lazy at her grindstone, she will not keep her lovers long.

Perhaps the most admired breasts of all are compared to those of a tigress whose milk is strong and plentiful and which produce a child strong as a tiger-cub.

Then there are the breasts small and round as a deer's, those that are full of rich milk like a cow's, those that the lover compares to a gourd and are said to give great pleasure. The 'monkey breasts' stand up like those of a monkey and have a long tip to the nipples. The rice-pounder breasts are long and thick. There are breasts that sway like a child's swing, breasts like a silk-cocoon, breasts like sour limes. Both in ordinary speech and in song the breasts are compared to guavas, mangoes, oranges and mushrooms. The little nut-like sarai fruit to which the breasts of young girls is compared is much admired.

Finally, is the 'pair of maiden worlds unconquered', the 'breasts so lovely that no one dare touch them but must gaze at them from far'.

There is no doubt that this is the supreme form of erotic attraction. All night, sings a girl in Raipur,

> All night you ate the bel stone
> And were drunk at dawn.

And this was interpreted to mean 'All night you fondled my breasts in ecstasy'. But I have nowhere found the thought so vivid in Shakespeare's England, that he who holds a girl's breasts will feel the tumultuous beating of her heart.

But the figure is not everything. 'The most satisfying girl', said a Binjhwar, 'is one who has broad shoulders and slender hips. A girl who goes straight from head to legs gives no pleasure'.

In some places, a girl's body is regarded as an index to her character and this too is important to people whose ideas

of beauty are often utilitarian. 'A girl whose breasts have broad bases'—it is a Gond opinion—'and good nipples will be faithful'. 'A girl with long breasts and a hidden nipple, who puts her legs tightly round a man in intercourse, who washes her loin-cloth daily is a wanton'. 'A woman with broad forehead and arched instep either kills her father-in-law or always stays in her mother's house, refusing to join her husband'.

Colour should usually be light. The typical skin-colour of the Brahmin is that which is most admired. But the rich golden brown of many Gond women, especially when it is set off with silver ornaments and bright coloured ribbons in the hair, is equally attractive. Ornaments are always necessary: without them a woman looks 'like a rice-pounder'.

The eyes are not often mentioned. When they do occur in a poem, it is their fire that seems to strike the observer. 'Your eyes are fireflies', says one singer and another refers to the eyes that shoot arrows and subdue the lover.

The waist should be slender, swaying like a thin bamboo, and the hands and feet should be neither too large nor too small but should be just right and always decorated with ornaments.

On the whole, the descriptions in the folk-songs are astonishingly simple and austere. In many cases, of course, the poet feels that no description is necessary. When he calls a girl a parrot he expects his hearers to realize that he means something lovely and highly coloured. When he calls a lover an amarbel creeper he has in his own mind a picture of the beautiful yellow creeper hanging like a mass of golden hair from the fresh green tree and he does not feel it necessary to elaborate this in detail, since every one of his hearers will have the same picture in his mind. To say that a girl is tiger-breasted is sufficient. All his hearers know what he means. They have seen many such girls and they can see this one now with her splendid round firm breasts and erect carriage, a girl who will be a perfect mother and will bear a noble child.

In the end, the supreme beauty of a woman is her child. 'Woman's beauty is hidden under seven coverings. Her beauty is like nature: it dies and is renewed with every child she bears. How quickly a barren woman's beauty disappears! Her breasts shrink and soon only a nipple is left.'

72

Look at the dark girl
With a necklace of black beads
Round her sweet dark throat
A red sari on her dark body
A red flower in her black hair
Look at the dark girl
When she sees a boy
Her mind is filled with pleasure
She talks *lahar-lahar*
Her mouth is very smooth
But peep from below
There is no *ras* in her.

73

E hay hay she adorns herself, she decorates her body
With soap she bathes in water, she puts oil on her body
She wears a cloth and jacket and throws a shawl about her
Surma and *kājal* are pretty, but your eyes are prettier still
Pearls are in your hair, the parting is full of pearls
Your hair twines like cobras, your black black hair
Fair lady, you have green bangles on your arms
Red patterns on your hands
You have made yourself like a new girl, on your teeth you put *missi*
You eat *pān supāri* and your lips are red
On your forehead is a spangle, above it is the silver *bindia*
In your ears are *dhār* and on your feet
Are *toda* and *rulai*, *pairi* and *paijjan*.
Round your plump arms cling shapely *bahunta*
At your wrists are *kakna* and above them *banwariya*.
That *munga* necklace is wonderfully pretty; that is a *hawel* round your neck
Pretty are the rings on your finger, pretty those in your ears
In your nose is a stud of silver and gold
You wind the plaits of your hair into a bun and tie it round with cord
You have taken away my life into the girdle round your waist.

Surma and *kājal* are the eye-salves of village India: *kajal* is prepared at home from lampblack, *surma* is bought in the

bazaars. The repulsive habit of staining the teeth with red or black *missi* or with red *pān* aims at improving beauty: it is not perhaps much worse than the use of powder and lipstick. The *bindia* is a beautiful ornament tied across the forehead, and is attached at either end to the silver *dhār*-shields with their hanging chains. *Toda, rulai, pairi, paijjan* are different kinds of anklets, of which the *pairi* with its tinkling bells are the most popular. *Bahunta* are thick silver armlets. *Kakna* and *banwariya* are broad silver bangles decorated with sharp protrusions. The *munga* necklace is of red beads; the *hawel* is a string of silver coins.

To the Gond girl a song which consists of nothing more than a catalogue of coveted ornaments—the *dhār*-shields for her ears, the Raibajan anklets, the *bindia* to frame her face in silver beauty, the Sawatdigai armlets, necklaces, bangles, rings—is fully as exciting in poetic appeal as the 'business song' of Autolycus:

Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cypress black as ere was crow;
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;
Masks for faces, and for noses;
Bugle bracelet, necklace amber,
Perfume for a lady's chamber;
Golden quoifs and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears;
Pins and poking-sticks of steel.
What maids lack from head to heel:
Come buy of me, come: come buy, come buy;
Buy lads, or else your lasses cry:
Come buy.

74

My dark love is walking slowly
Come, wild berry, bare your arms
Show your feet adorned with anklets
Give me your hand
With its nine hundred rings
Open to me your breast
Your love, your body
Open your dark body.

75

THE lemons are ripe
Bring a pole to bring them down
But the lemons may rot
Before I give them to you.

76

YOUR eyes are fireflies
Your hair, my love, is curly
O love, how beautiful you are
The bread in the pan is burnt
My eater of supper is dying of hunger
Your eyes are fireflies
My beautiful love.

77

The girl:

I HAVE been turned black as coal
I have become black through their gossip
It is not my father-in-law
It is not my mother-in-law
It is not my husband
Who has turned me black
It is my lover who gives me such sorrow
He is turning me to ashes.

The lover:

Who has been troubling you?
Because you show me
The bones below your breast?
Is it an axe that cuts your tree
Lightning that strikes it
Frost that withers it?

The girl:

How can I make you understand?
Under the gnarled and twisted tree
Stop your play of love
I want no more water
One day your life will leave you
Because of my black skin.

This is a blacksmith's song, a Karma of the Mahali Asur of Lapha Zamindari. The blacksmiths are often very dark in colour.

The colour most admired in India, as I have said, is the pale brown of the Brahmin's skin, and by contrast the heavy black of the typical aboriginal is regarded with distaste and fear. But many aboriginals are far from dark: some are a beautiful golden brown, some have an almost Mongolian hue; these are greatly admired. An interesting and unusual defence of the black colour is found in the Punjab ballad of 'Jalali, the Blacksmith's Daughter'.[1] Rode Shah the Fakir goes to her house to beg for alms and asks to see his beloved. Hearing this Kamali went to Jalali:

'Black, black as a beetle, hath fallen in love with thee
He will not take the alms of pearls, he would see thee!'
Hearing this Rode Shah the Fakir shouted to the Blacksmith's daughter:
'Who is she calling black? Blackness is a deep stain.
Black is the hair of the head, the adornment of man.
Black are the pupils of the eyes, beloved of the whole world.
Black are the clouds of the West, that water the whole earth.'

78

Her juvescence shows
Under the thin cloth
Wet with the rain
And blown by the wind against her body.

'Juvescence', T. S. Eliot's word, is an exact translation of the original *joban*, youth as expressed in the firm strong breasts. Girls treasure their youth: it is a fleeting prize, and they would enjoy it to the full. It is the dearest gift that they can give a lover. So in the Bengali ballad of Shyam Ray, when the Dom girl begs her lover to come again, she says, 'Be pleased to come to my house tomorrow also, and I will gather all the flowers from our garden to present you a cup of honey and all that my youth can give will be for you!'[2]

Compare also the song by Amaru, translated by E. Powys Mathers.

Her robe clung close to her body
And the tissue of it became transparent
I thank you, rain.
You were, Sanabavi, as if you were naked.
But when the rainbow broke in flower
Who warmed your little shivering breasts for you?

[1] Temple, ii, 171. [2] Sen, iii, 211.

HAIR

79

PLOUGH the little field
Sow it with new rice
To the waist hangs her hair
She ties it up with flowers
She ties my heart in her hair.

80

GENTLY, gently, maina, gently
Carefully untie your long long hair
Some take care to make the parting
Some take care to tie the bun
See it for a moment and the mind is taken
Your body is the moon
Your eyes are antelopes
Long long is your hair
My mind is for you
Give me a quick embrace
Take a bamboo comb
In your hand and tie the bun
Tie it with ribbons
Go with your uncovered head
Gently, gently, maina, gently.

81

IN the long grass
The hunter's feet are caught
The yellow creeper
Hangs about the tree
I search your body
For the tangled grass
The twining creeper
And my life is lost
In your dark hair.

'Nothing but a flower or a load is ever seen on the head of

a Mundari woman.'[1] This is true of the unsophisticated Gond or Baiga, but not of the civilized Kurmi or Satnami.

Hair has magical significance in Chhattisgarh as in many other parts of the world. It is shaved at a funeral or when someone is to be readmitted into caste after excommunication. It is dangerous to allow hair-clippings to fall into the wrong hands. In the *Alhkand,* Indal cuts off the hair of Sema the witch and thus destroys her power.[2] On the other hand, women in South India sometimes sow seed with their hair hanging loose, so that the rice may grow luxuriantly and have long stalks.[3] And there is a tradition in Mandla that until hair grew on the bodies of men, the crops did not grow in their fields.

Elsewhere in aboriginal India, there is an association of hair with the dangerous, the spiritually electric, the taboo. The Juang believe that woman originally had a hair growing from her tongue and so went about cursing people.

But here, of course, it is the erotic appeal of hair, and especially of a woman's hair, that interests us. In seventeenth century England, hair was a noose or net to catch the heart. The Countess, in Marston's *Fawn,* when bidden to put up her hair before execution, exclaims,

> O these golden nets
> That have ensnared so many wanton youths.

And Beaumont and Fletcher speak of,

> Hair woven in many a curious warp,
> Able in endless error to enfold
> The wandering soul.

The tresses of Milton's Eve were long and not displeasing to Adam.

> She, as a veil down to the slender waist,
> Her unadorned golden tresses wore
> Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
> As the vine curls her tendrils.

Aldous Huxley considers that 'in many, perhaps in most, young men at the present time, long hair inspires a certain repugnance. It is felt, vaguely, to be rather unhygienic, somehow a bit squalid. Long hair has become, as it were, a

[1] Hoffmann, 110.
[2] Waterfield, 194.
[3] H. V. Nanjundayya and L. K. A. Iyer, *The Mysore Tribes and Castes* (Mysore, 1935), i, 265.

non-conductor of desire; no more does it attract the lightning.' But T. S. Eliot, at least, loves hair: his hyacinth girl has 'her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers'; and there is a lovely picture of

Brown hair over her mouth blown
Lilac and brown hair;
Distraction.

In classical Indian opinion the five beauties of women were hair, flesh, bone, skin and youth.[1] In Kalidasa's *Dynasty of Raghu*, Aja laments over his dead wife crying,

Your bee-black hair from which the flowers are peeping,
Dear, wavy hair that I have loved so well,
Stirs in the wind until I think you sleeping,
Soon to return and make my glad heart swell.[2]

In the Bengal ballads there are many references to the beauty of hair. Sen has suggested that 'perhaps Bengal and Orissa owe their artistic manipulations of the hair forming into knots and chignons of various fashions, to the Tibeto-Burman races in the North. A very superb description of manifold arrangements of the long and curly hair of women in which it is made to imitate scenes from human society and animal-life is found in the Maynamati songs.'[3]

The exiled princess Sannamala has 'long flowing hair that seems to kiss her feet. It is so beautiful that one could stake a lakh of rupees for that hair alone'.[4] And in the beautiful 'Shyam Ray' ballad we are shown the poor Dom girl reflecting how unworthy her wretched hut is for her princely lover. 'You will have to give up your golden bed and couch. But should you feel pain I will spread my long and flowing hair in the bed to make it easy for you. But afraid am I, since even a bed of flowers seems rough to you, that my hair may be found stiff. But should you dislike the bed of hair that I will spread for you, my breast may be found soft to lodge you in.'[5]

In South India, there is a famous story of a Morasu Okkalu girl of extraordinary beauty, whose hair was so luxuriant that she used it as a rope to lead her pet calf.[6]

[1] Penzer, op. cit., viii, 248.
[2] A. W. Ryder's translation.
[3] Sen, iii, xi.
[4] Sen, iii, 273.
[5] Sen, iii, 210.
[6] Nanjundayya and Iyer, op. cit., iv, 227.

In Chhattisgarh, hair is equally important as a means of erotic attraction, though the stress is not so much on its length or luxuriance as on the way it is tied. Hair should indeed be 'long and glossy as a horse's tail', but even so it looks best when it is well oiled, carefully parted and tied tightly on either side. A large bun, bound with gay-coloured woollen ribbons, is much admired.

THE DIAMOND

82

My diamond love
In the middle of the road
You are swaying to and fro
Always you give me lies
Today tell me the truth at last.

The diamond is a common symbol in these songs for a beloved, a use that has probably come down from classical antiquity and gradually spread to the villages. The earliest history of the diamond in India is obscure: it is not certain that it was known before Kautilya and the early Pali scriptures of Buddhism. In the classical writings (as in the *Milindapanha*) it is a symbol of the monk's purity, his association with men of highest excellence, his aloofness from bad company—for the diamond cannot be alloyed. To the Buddhist the *vajrasamādhi*, the diamond ecstasy, describes one of the degrees of contemplation. The Buddha's throne is a diamond because of its solid and indestructible character; so also Dante's angel of God in the *Purgatorio* sits on a diamond throne, intended to indicate the strong and solid basis of the Church. In Sanskrit *vajra* means both Indra's thunderbolt and a diamond. To the people of Chhattisgarh, however, the diamond simply means something rare, beautiful and precious.[1]

[1] B. Laufer, *The Diamond* (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1915), 16. See also S. K. Aiyangar, 'Note upon Diamonds in South India', *Quart. J. of the Mythic Soc.*, iii, 129; C. Oldham, 'Diamonds in Bihar and Orissa', *J.B.O.R.S.*, xiii, 195 ff.

THE HUNCHBACK

83

WHAT do you see in the hunchback girl
Girdhari, that you should so lust after her?
In the hunchback's basket
Are new new jackets
In her new jacket the hunchback goes for water
In her new sari
With her new anklets
With a new love
The hunchback goes for water.

'Erotic symbolism probably shows itself in its simplest shape in the tendency to idealize unbeautiful peculiarities in a beloved person, so that such peculiarities are ever afterward almost or quite essential in order to arouse sexual attraction. In this way men have become attracted to limping women . . . A defect becomes an admired focus of attention, the embodied symbol of the lover's emotion'.[1] Here Girdhari, or Krishna, the supreme lover of classical antiquity, is shown idealizing the hunchback. It is possible that there is a reference to Krishna's traditional encounter, described in the *Vishnu Purana*, with the hunchback girl Tribakra. Krishna met her on the road: she was carrying perfumed unguent for Kansa. Krishna called her beautiful and spoke sweetly to her. She gave him some of the unguent and he made her straight and the most beautiful of damsels.

But the hunchback is important in magic as well as in erotics. 'The hunchback or gobo is a popular protector against the Evil Eye in South Italy . . . Hunchback figures were worn as amulets in Egypt and Phoenicia and are now (1901) worn in Constantinople. The Indian belief, probably an early belief, is that the cause of a child having a hunchback is that some spirit has taken a fancy to the child before or after birth and making his abode in the child disfigures it so that no human may be tempted to fall in love with the child and rob the spirit of the child's affections. In return for the

[1] Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (New York, 1936), ii, i, 12.

possession of his beloved dwelling, the spirit in the hunchback sees that no ill-luck befalls the child's home. Some rich families in Bombay believe that they owe their success to the luck of having a hunchback child. The hunchback Punch has a spirit-lodger who supplies his special stores of wit and wisdom'.[1]

[1] J. M. Campbell, 'Notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom,' *The Indian Antiquary*, xxx, 101.

THE DANCING HORSE

84

SPARKS from the fire
The sparks of youth
Khar-khar the bamboo creaks
And the drums thunder
The horse sparkles on the plain
It comes dancing like the lightning
On the horse a flag
An arrow like a needle.

85

LET us go, my darling
To get water from the river
Above the stream
The Pandava's mare is dancing
On the waters of the stream
If you dance like that
Many boys will come to watch you.

THE KITE

86

FROM the diamond roof
Of the many-coloured palace
My darling dewar is flying his kite
The kite is of gold
The string is of silver
My darling dewar is flying his kite
The kite in the sky
Is tossed in the wind
The white cloud takes it
The cold hail subdues it
Come down, my kite
To the many-coloured palace
My darling dewar is flying his kite.

Compare the Punjabi song:[1]

Which were the days, love, when you were the kite and I the string?
When the wind of love blew, where was the kite and where the string?
Which were the days, love, when there was not even a garland between us?
Now the Creator has so made it that there is a mountain between us.

[1] Rose, 'Three Songs from the Panjab', *The Indian Antiquary*, xxxviii, 39.

THE CLOUD

87

YOUR pitcher has been filled
My golden love
Like a cloud full of thunder
Is your fresh youth
Like the lightning
Shines your face
Drop by drop
Your pitcher has been filled
And your youth is ruined
My golden love.

88

LIKE a branch
In the wind
Your slender body
Sways in my wind.

89

THE messenger deceived me
My fair came to the door
And went away
Your body is a cloud
Filled with unshed rain-drops
You are twelve years old
And have never known a storm.

90

BLACK clouds thunder in the sky
From the anthill the cobra calls
The fingers drum above the breasts
The tiger roars in the cave.

91

CLOUDS in the east
And to the south the rain
Your growing youth, my love
Rains fire.

THE BEE

92

THE bee flies round and settles on my breast
It sips the juice and buzzes as it goes
It flies round and round and settles on my head
It sips the juice and buzzes as it goes
The bee buzzes in the garden
It flies round and round and sits between my thighs
It sips the juice and buzzes as it goes
To the eyes the bee is ugly, but its words are sweet
If I could meet that bee I would clasp it to my heart
I would keep it in my thighs and give it my honey
The bee buzzes in the garden.

93

MY marigold, you made me love you
Then you forgot me, filling your hair with flowers
When I remember your dear ways
Pain fills my heart
My diamond
Your pure body will one day be mixed with dust
Love you have broken
You have made me drunk with poison
How beautiful
Are two mates like a pair of bees
I would become a bee
I would have you turn into a flower
But this pure body
Will be earth and turn to dust.

94

AT the bottom of the garden
The black bee
Hides in the temple of flower-buds
In youth
What enormous joys there are
In age
The hour of death draws near.

95

THE bee
Buzzes as it flies *bhanabhan*
The bee
Buzzes *bhanabhan* below
The bush
In the Kamarin's garden
Bhanabhan
The bee buzzes.

96

CUT off the top
Of the honey-comb
A bee has stung
The bride's vagina.

For a full account of the symbolism of bees and honey, see *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, 139 ff.

THE SPIDER

97

The spider
Builds its web
Between the thighs of the plantain
Silver is the web
Golden is the plantain
The spider
Builds its web
Amidst the fruit of the orange tree
Silver is the web
Golden are the oranges
The bee
That came to rob my spider
Is caught in the silver web
Below the golden plantain
Among the golden oranges.

THE EARTH

98

EXPECTANT lies the field
The grass is cut
The tax is paid
The embankment is complete
Nothing is wanting
But the ploughman
And his sharpened share.

99

SWEET-SMELLING earth
Where grass grows quickly
Beneath storm and cloud
I drove my plough
The rain came in torrents
My earth was fertile
My plough was strong
Is there any beauty
To compare with the ripe harvest?

Woman is the earth: she is the field tilled by man. Earth as the mother is worshipped in a score of different forms. 'Woman is like earth: you may dig again and again, but she remains firm. But man is like the wall of a house: once it is loosened, it falls.' It is a very common way of talking. A youth says, 'We cannot dig in a field that is not ready or the plough-share will be damaged'—that is, it is not advisable to attempt intercourse with an immature girl.

THE LAMP

100

INTO the darkness
Of my empty heart
She brings her lamp
And my house is full of light.

101

HE waits
In the dark grove
Night presses down
She comes
And her lantern
Drives away the night.

102

EVERY house
Must have a niche
Where the lamp can light its gloom
Without a girl
The richest house
Is dark.

The lamp frequently appears in Indian poetry and painting as a love-symbol.[1]

In the Punjab ballad of the love of the princess Chand Karan and Raja Chandarbhan, when the princess prepares to receive her lover Chatr-mukat, three hundred and sixty beds are laid in the palace and the swan who arranges the meeting directs:

Light up all the candles,
And pray to the lamps,
Hear Golden Lamps hear my prayer,
Today I meet my love, burn all the night.[2]

Chandaini, the heroine of the Lorik epic, is everywhere called 'the lamp'.

[1] *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, 130 ff.
[2] Temple, ii, 92.

THE EARTH

103

YOUR silver moon
Has stolen my sleep
Your golden water
Melts my clay
O bird, your wings
Flash round my heart.

104

BY day she is the sun
By night the moon
My lovely girl is gold
Fresh from the Sonar's house
Golden are her hands and feet
Golden her teeth
But she is hard to win
As the gold mohur to find.

To the people of Chhattisgarh the word 'gold' awakes memories of the Golden Age now sunk to iron, of the days when monarchs handled gold mohurs, of exquisite fabled ornaments made of the precious metal. Gold has always had a high place in the poetic imagination of India. Winternitz describes how in ancient times,

'At the first feeding of a child, it was made to taste honey and milk from a golden spoon. Gold was frequently used at auspicious rites by the ancient Hindus, and was also worn as an amulet for long life. "The gold which is born from fire, the immortal, they bestowed upon the mortals. He who knows this deserves it; of old age dies he who wears it." It seems to me highly probable that the auspiciousness of gold is due to its supposed origin from fire. "The seed of Agni (Fire)" is a frequent designation of gold. As fire could not be worn as an amulet, gold was used instead.' [1]

In popular folk-song, gold and silver images recur continuously and, to my mind at least, with invariably successful

[1] M. Winternitz, 'Witchcraft in Ancient India', *The Indian Antiquary*, xxviii (1899), 79.

effect. A Rajmahal hillman sings his host's praises after dinner or improvizes a poem to his love:

I have given her a golden necklace
I have given her a silver necklace
She said, I will go to him tomorrow
Why has she not arrived?[1]

A charming example comes from the Punjab:

The fan with the golden fringes;
The fan with the golden fringes:
No one else is loved by me.
Bring me the fan of my desire.
The fan with the golden tassels;
The fan with the golden tassels:
Indeed I will speak to no one else.
Bring me the fan of my desire.[2]

It is the delight and excitement of the nursery which is sometimes one with the passion of great kings.

Go to bed first, a golden purse
Go to bed second, a golden pheasant
Go to bed third, a golden bird.

The lovely song which begins,

I had a little nut-tree
Nothing would it bear,
But a silver nutmeg
And a golden pear,

is entirely in the Gond manner, except that the Karma singers would add a refrain—

What is the nutmeg made of
What colour is the pear?
The nutmeg is silver
The pear is gold.

[1] Cole, 121 f.
[2] Temple, 'Some Hindu Folksongs from the Panjab', *J.A.S.B.*, li, 199.

MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE SONGS

FULL and detailed accounts of aboriginal marriage ceremonies have been given in *The Baiga*, *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* and *The Muria and their Ghotul* and many marriage songs have been recorded. Here I give a few additional songs from Chhattisgarh and in particular a selection of the remarkable Kamar songs from Bindra-Nawagarh and Khariar and of Bhunjia songs from Khariar.

The Kamar are a small tribe resident mainly in the Bindra-Nawagarh and Khariar Zamindaris, the area from which the following songs have been recorded. Elsewhere the name Kamar means an iron-worker, but this Kamar tribe does no work in iron and is probably an offshoot of the Gond.[1]

The Kamar marriage songs are generally short and many of them are addressed to the 'Mohariya' (trumpeter). This suggests that they are not very old, for they must date from the time the tribe adopted the comparatively modern practice of employing a low-caste band led by a man who tortured the air with the wailings of the *mohari* trumpet. Most, but not all, of the songs rhyme, a practice that undoubtedly cheapens the sense. The first line of the song is often of peculiar construction, thus:

Ek phul phulai te tuma ke ek phul.
A single flower bears the creeper, a single flower.

Or,

Kodri khuri khuri mohariya kodri khuri khuri.
Of the barking-deer the hoofs, the hoofs, O Mohariya, of the barking-deer the hoofs.

Or again,

Gaur chām chām mohariya gaur chām chām.
Of the gaur the skin, the skin, O Mohariya, of the gaur the skin.

Such is the first line and the second often rhymes with it: it would be pleasant if we could regard the second line as an echo or interpretation of the first—only too often,

[1] Russell and Hiralal, iii, 323.

however, as with the Dadaria, it is obviously suggested by the rhyme. Thus,

Gaur chām chām mohariya gaur chām chām
Dulhi ghariya dhāngri kay nahi dey kām.
Of the gaur the skin, the skin, O Mohariya, of the gaur the skin
You give no work to the girl of the bride's house.

Gaur chām chām mohariya gaur chām chām
Tum ham basiyo mohariya samdhin yāne sām.
Of the gaur the skin, the skin, O Mohariya, of the gaur the skin
You and I will sit in the *samdhin's* house this evening.

There is no logical or symbolic connection between the two lines. *Chām* obviously suggests *kām* in the first song and *sām* in the second.

Other typical rhymed Kamar Biraha are:

Sāj pān pān mohariya sāj pān pān
Dulhi ghariya dhāngri gegha māriya bān.
Saja leaf leaf, O Mohariya, saja leaf leaf
Make the girl of the bride's house sleep
And fire your arrow at her.

Sāj murghutiyo mohariya sāj murghutiyo
Dulhi ghariya dhāngri kāy konha murkutiyo.
My finery has fallen down, O Mohariya
Instead, in some lonely corner
I will bring down the girl of the bride's house.

The technique of the Kamar songs is of a high order: here is another song of clever sound-effects:

Kukri tui tui mohariya kukri tui tui
Jama jay mohariya jama jāy jama chui jay achhe.

I do not pretend to be able to give an exact translation, but my informants say that it describes a hen being covered. It cries *tui tui* at the beginning and gasps *chui* when all is over. Sung rapidly over and over again, it gives an admirably realistic effect.

Some of the Kamar songs are longer and I have translated them, not in two, but in four lines for the reader's convenience: there is in fact a definite break in the middle of the Kamar line which makes this not illegitimate.

Bhunjia marriage-songs from the same area are on the same model and I add a few examples. Gond and Panka Biraha (marriage) songs from Chhattisgarh are usually rhymed couplets on the Dadaria pattern. Many are very obscene and I have omitted the majority, not from prudery but because there is no poetry in them.

105

THE moon comes up
The evening sun is red
Lovers in ambush
Throw stones to call their loves.

106

HE catches fish
She plucks green berries
Give me your fish, says she
I'll share my berries.

107

TAMARIND scraps, tamarind scraps
The bride is running away
He hunts her down
And lies with her.

108

THE tamarind branch cracks
The bride is startled
She begins to cry
Give her some bread to calm her.

109

NEW mat, new sleeping mat
The bride
Sleeps on the new mat
And the cobra comes.

110

THE bread is parched
The pole is creaking
Little girl
Get up and listen.

111

FINISH the mahua sweets and get up quickly
And we will go together to hunt for birds
Where the bird cries *teh teh*
We will eat the sweets together.

112

UNDERNEATH the kusum tree
By just saying 'Push it in'
It doesn't go in
By just saying 'Pull it out'
It doesn't come out
Underneath the kusum tree.

113

THE hoofs, the hoofs
Of the barking-deer
There are so many dancers
The ladle cannot serve them.

114

FROM Malewa Hill
Down tumbles the stream
Her face is pretty
But it does not shine.

115

THE herd has climbed
Malewa Hill
All night I waited for you
Now let the haldi climb me.

116

ON Malewa Hill
Look, there is haldi growing
Let us offer coconuts
And make it climb for our wedding.

117

I AM going to the hill
To cut a stick of ebony
When the Jaitmalin comes
I'll pay for her ruined daughter.

118

I BUILT a house
And fenced it with poles
On my broad chest
Are strings of beads.

119

I WENT to the broad river
To find a root to eat
But, friend
I got nothing.

120

THE black bullock coughs
Mohariya, it coughs
When she sees a man
A girl smiles.

121

IN the new field
I have sown kodon and rice
My uncle's daughter
Is a field untilled.

122

How can the lower waters
Climb to the roof?
By your talk
You turn all things upside down
Like a string of beads
Open my clothes
And put me to sleep by your side.

123

LIKE a thick broom
The bush conceals her well
Round her smooth face
The hair falls long
I will take such a girl
Home to my own land.

124

VERY private are the steps
Down to the tank
The water-girls
Go there to bathe
And soon set you to work.

125

INSECTS devour the four-cornered house
Till not a thing is left
When the caste-men take away a girl
The home is desolate.

126

THE Gond of Paragaon
Have cut up a cucumber
A monkey has stolen
And eaten the bits.

127

IN the creeper's shadow
The boy is picking beans
Leave the beans, boy, and come
With me to dig for rats.

128

CLOUDS clouds over the sky
The plantains are ripening
Bring a cloth to cover them
Soon we will pick the stalk.

129

LONG is the kaner fruit
Round is the semur
Look, daughter, you can see from here
Your father-in-law's village.

130

THE creeper bears
A single flower
Point me the way
For the blue sambhar.

131

THE jogilatti bears
A single flower
Show me the way
To undo your secret cloth.

132

THE gourd-vine bears
A single flower
Point me the road
Down to your well.

133

No one
Has such a wretched fate as mine
I am old
Yet I have never found a mate.

134

YOU can see the nests of the crows
Up in the saja tree
We will give uncle's son
A turban of silk.

135

WHEN you cut down a tree
New shoots appear
That pretty girl
Is making signs to me.

136

WHEN the gourd flowers, little daughter
Is it pretty or no?
A dark boy with a fair girl
Are they pretty or no?

137

THE flood in the Pairi River
Stops the traveller crossing
Her parents have stopped her
Wait, then come to me Paithu.

'To come Paithu' means that a girl comes to a man's house, enters it and declares herself his wife.

138

ON the road
To Baloda Bazaar
Stands the wild buffalo
And will not let her pass.

139

I WENT to Baloda Bazaar
To buy dry fish
The slender-faced girl smiled
When I looked at her.

140

ERECT stands
The green rice-stalk
I am going with a sweet-faced girl
To the Kharua Marhai.

141

TOMORROW I am going
To Baloda Bazaar
I will buy
A cord of elephant-creeper
A cock's tail
Some peacock's feathers
At Baloda Bazaar.

The following Najariya song is also used in a Kamar wedding, but is slightly different in form.

142

I WENT to Baloda Bazaar and I bought dry fish
The sweet-faced girl smiled at me
As she tied some lac in her cloth
There was a pretty ring in the Jaitmalin's shop
I lit a fire and was burnt by the sparks
May that fire burn the Jaitmalin's life.

143

TOMORROW my Raja we will go to Chura Marhai
The grasshopper and the fly are going
The great drums will sound
And we will come home again.

144

I CUT up and ate
The ripe mango
I understand
That pretty girl.

145

THEY reap the grain
And store it in piles
For my lovely girl
I will bring a bundle of tobacco.

146

THE kundru has two roots
Girl, grind the grain quickly

There is pleasure in getting a husband
But pain in the birth of a child.

147

IN Chhatarpur
With his crooked golden staff
Your mad Raja
Has killed a tiger.

148

THE wild dogs
Howl *kay kay*
When she hears them, my *samdhin*
Farts *tay tay*.

149

IN the early morning
They can't make water
These itchy boys
Don't know how to dance.

150

CREEPER, creeper, Mohariya
The insects destroy the creeper
The girl in the bride's house
Has her bottom full of oil.

151

THE fair girl husked the rice
The rat ate the rice
The man ate the rat
The bear ate the man
The two-pointed arrow ate the bear
The wild cat's vagina swallowed the arrow

152

O THE chicken curry
There is a wedding at Bamhni
The news has gone

153

THERE is fine rice in the mortar
There is milk in the pot
There's a marriage at Bamhni
My son will not drink his milk.

For he hears the sound of the drums and wants to go and dance.

154

WHEN we make a mat of reeds
We let our own caste-fellows sit there
To Durga we dedicate a twelve-year-old pig
And let it sit in our village.

The Kamar will not permit anyone outside the tribe to sit on their special reed-mats.

155

THE kappu bird flew down
And sat on a lump of earth
The maiden addressed it
O bird, if you will help me
If you will watch and warn me
I will give you little beads
And a bunch of bel fruit.

BHUNJIA MARRIAGE SONGS

156

THE hoofs, the hoofs
Of the barking-deer
A crowd of men went hunting
But they got no leaf-plates.

The hoofs are round like leaf-plates. But the hunters got nothing and so had nothing to put on their plates.

157

THE mat, the sleeping-mat
Weaving the sleeping-mat
Like a girl's bush
Appears the mat.

158

I WENT to the forest
And killed a viper
What did you say to me, my love
In the sarai forest?

159

THERE is rice in the pot
Jhunki watches and stirs it
I told her to take it out
She gave it to me weeping.

160

THE sun has risen, but still there is no heat
The boys are only pretending they cannot dance
In the evening they will give us their crooked leaf-pipes
At night the horse-flies will bite our bellies.

161

WILD millet flowers in Sawan
And the grass is white in Bhadon
Girl, there's stale rice in the pot
Eat it in the earthen dish.

PANKA BIRAHA

162

DAWANJARA is on the railway line
Our bodies are weak for we can get neither grain nor water.

163

ON the roadside the old bullock dies; the crows come to eat it
I offered to the Mata its lotus liver, and the bullock went
home again.

GOND BIRAHA

164

I HAVE *bahunta* on my arms, in my ears cheek-kissing *dhar*
On my neck the Ganga-Jamna *sutwa*; my *hawel* hangs down to my navel.

165

ON the banks of the lake grow the mango and tamarind
The water-girls are searching for clean steps.

166

GREEN green are my mangoes and tamarind and beautiful the banks of the lake
Lovely is the crowd of water-girls seeking their lovers' steps.

167

THE mangoes hang about the tree; the creeper bears a single gourd
I have not found one fruit to pluck; nine hundred Baghel are gathered round.

168

FROM the struck flint comes the fire and burns Koeli-Kachhar
The ants and caterpillars fly to save their lives.

169

THE linseed flowers sparkle
The mustard blossoms like the light
A son flowers in the parents' house
A girl blooms in her husband's.

GAWAN

170

OUR little sister's cloth is now so long
It brushes the courtyard
The wedding clothes in the lidded basket
Are rustling *kasmas-kasmas*
She says to her bhauji
When will you send me to my husband?
Let Phagun come, little sister
And I will give you a palanquin
I will sell a bullock
And send you to your husband.

When boys and girls are married young, the Gawan or ceremony when the husband takes his wife to his house is almost as important (probably more important to the girl) as the marriage itself. The Gawan is the central point in the plot of 'The Song of Sitaram Naik', which is printed later in this volume.

A poetical way of indicating maturity is to say that a girl's sari or a boy's dhoti is getting too long. Compare, for example, the Ho song:

O youth, when you were a bachelor
You kicked at your dhoti which reached the ground,
Now when you were married O youth,
The ground-kissing dhoti rose up to the knees.
Again, when you get children
It is a troublesome burden to you.[1]

The desire to go to 'one's own country' often means no more—or no less—than to go to one's parents' home. *Pardesh*, a foreign land, may mean for a girl the husband's house. Visits to the scenes of her childhood are always thrilling and exciting to a girl, as the Punjab song shows.

[1] Majumdar, 'Some of the Characteristics of Kolarian Songs', *J.A.S.B.*, xx (N.S.), 183.

To-day I must go to my own country:
Making myself handsome, making myself smart.
There the water is pure, and the wind is cool,
And the faces beautiful to look upon.
Today I must go to my own country.[1]

[1] Temple, 'Some Hindu Folksongs from the Panjab: Home Customs', *J.A.S.B.*, li, 206.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

THE NEW BRIDE

171

THE blue colt
Won't let you saddle it
The new bride
Won't let you do it.

172

THIS little girl
Has an enormous husband
Weeping weeping she spreads
An old sari for his bed.

The consummation of a marriage is everywhere a matter of absorbing interest to the villagers. There does not seem to be, in Chhattisgarh, any custom of formal bedding of the bridal pair; but there are strict conventions of behaviour. The bride must resist all she can; she must try to escape, she must weep, she must beg to be let off for a few days. The older women say, 'Silly child, let him husk the grain properly' or 'A tree cannot grow without water, nor can love'. The husband's share is described symbolically: 'his medicine has gone down her throat', 'his shadow has pierced her', or 'his knife is hollowing out the gourd'. The last simile recalls Garcia Lorca's

Little knife,
Which scarcely fits into the hand,
But which penetrates thinly
Through the astonished flesh.

The more intimate aspects of married life are described in songs, even in many songs, and are sung with gusto at marriages and festivals. I will spare the reader the majority of these, and all those which describe in detail the act of copulation, but I include a few which seem to me to reach a level of poetry. Moreover, to omit such songs altogether would be to give a false picture of Chhattisgarhi verse. The singers themselves do not regard these matters as immoral or unclean; to them sex is a proper, healthy and natural

activity, and the fact that they can sing about it so frankly does to some extent expose the whole subject to the exhilarating and purifying influence of poetry.

173

SINCE I saw your thing like an anklet
My mind has not left it
Like a fiddle your thing plays *sururu sururu*
Like a trumpet it sounds *tiriri tiriri*
Like a drum it thunders *damdam damdam*
Like a kettle-drum it goes *tangtang tangtang*
Now I have seen your thing
I will go with it to life's end.

174

YOUR thing is a broken pot
It is the back of a tortoise
An open flower, an empty gourd
When it is five years old there grows above it a horn
When it is twelve it is a dry wheat cake
When it is sixteen the cake is soft and swollen
At sixty it is a withered piece of wood.

175

THE hair grows over it
Like a bean-stalk across a gate
It climbs up over the fencing
Of the field of rahar pulse.

176

ON your young body
Are big big breasts
Between your thighs
Is a single eye.

These attempts to express poetically the mysteries of the physical parts of sex will, I think, bear comparison with the efforts of modern poets in the same field. For example, Dylan Thomas—

A candle in the thighs
Warms youth and seed and burns the seeds of age;
Where no seed stirs,

THE IMPOTENT HUSBAND

The subject of impotence, generally discreetly veiled in sophisticated society, is discussed with the utmost frankness in the Indian village.[1] The following Dadaria songs are from Gond and Panka singers in Bilaspur.

185

THERE is a lock
On the new door
My key is broken
What shall I do?

186

THERE is a charred shaft
For the new axe
I was not thinking
That is how I spoilt it.

187

THE iron peg is soft
Do not boast about your strength
You ought to be ashamed.

188

MY dark love
You are dark and beautiful
Your husband is impotent
And all he gives you is a curse.

189

THE golden ring
Looks lovely in your ears
Your husband is impotent
So you take delight with others.

[1] See my article, 'The Attitude of Indian Aboriginals towards Sexual Impotence', *Man in India*, xxiii, 127-46.

190

FILL the pot with water
Strain out the pulse
Your husband is impotent
Whom will you trust?

191

MY mind is on fire
Yet my heart is sad
I stand in water
Yet I die of thirst.

192

ON the tulsi platform
The pot looks pretty
To look at you are fine as a wild cucumber
But when I eat you, how bitter you are.

193

To adorn my body I wear anklets and bangles
But my mind is not content.

194

THE silver ring
Has turned to copper
Who is there
To satisfy my mind?

Generally, satisfaction is not so difficult as the singer would have us think. 'If the husband's threshing-pole is crooked, wild pigs come to eat the crop.'

THE JEALOUS HUSBAND

195

My jealous husband is always beating me
I will stay no longer in his house
At sunset, girl, there was no fire in the house
I went to get fire from the neighbour
And the body of my lord was full of rage
He beat me and I will stay no longer.

196

I was collecting cowdung
But by the time the cakes were made
Night had come
My Raja keep me with you
I was cutting wood, I had to tie it in a bundle
By the time I reached home
Night had come
Raja, husband, yoke-fellow, keep me with you
I touch your feet, I beg you
I fall before you
My Raja keep me with you.

197

I came to see you in your house
You never told me not to stay
O friend, and it grew late
When I got home
Mother-in-law was waiting in the court
Father-in-law was waiting on the verandah
My husband was waiting inside.
How could I bid you, Do not stay?
When you go ploughing I will go for water.
If we meet on the way
I will bid you stay with me.

198

My husband never lets me dance
If he catches me at it he beats me in the road
With which foot shall I go?
On which foot is the dust?
With which foot shall I climb and see
If my husband is watching?
If he catches me at it he beats me in the road.

POLYGAMY

199

ON the freshly-made road goes the elephant
The husband of two wives dances on their breasts.

When the elephant goes along the newly-made road, it breaks it at every ponderous step. But the husband of two wives is so thin and exhausted that he can break nothing down; he can only dance on his wives' breasts as if he were a baby.

200

WHEN he beats his youngest wife the eldest gets angry
When he beats the anklet-girl they both go laughing home.

The 'anklet-girl' is the second or middle wife, of whom the husband is particularly fond and to whom he has given anklets to the annoyance of the others, who become united in opposition to their lord.

201

ONE wife does what you want
But when there are two, they both belong to others.

202

YOU are a queen
I am a queen
So who is to bring the water?

203

THE new pitcher is full of pure water
Hay hay the pure water
He has destroyed love and desire
Since he kept that widow as a co-wife.

204

THE bangles are old, the anklets are new
My co-wife has come, the foe of my life.

205

WE two are a perfect pair
We work together for our living
Raja, it will be misery for me
Do not bring a co-wife to my home.

206

I AM his real wife; I came to him in childhood
Now this co-wife has come, where shall I go to live?

207

THE house is broken when scandal is repeated
So the co-wife is an enemy and the husband goes away.

208

MY goose is no longer mine; I lie awake till dawn
A new girl has come and he is now my enemy
My body is scorched with fire; I lie awake till dawn.

DEWAR AND BHAUJI

THE following songs illuminate the romantic and tender relationship, which is socially approved, between a girl (*bhauji*) and her husband's younger brother (*dewar*).

209

Chhur chhur cat! *Dur dur* dog! Who is that at the door?
Bhauji it's not a dog or cat it's your little dewar who would delight your mind.
Little brother, you have done well to come; sleep there on your brother's bed.
But bhauji on my brother's bed I'll get no sleep I'll be awake all night
Bhauji it would be better if I slept on your bed then sleep will come swaying swaying.
Brother, there's a black she-cobra in my bed; it will bite you and take away your life.
Bhauji if my life departs it will be good for then I will be able to fulfil my desire.

210

THE pearls hang on the branches of the little munga tree
Make me some little bangles
The maker of little bangles has gone to Ratanpur
And I have no news of my neglectful dewar
Make me some little toe-rings
The maker of little toe-rings has gone to Takatpur
And I have no news of my neglectful dewar
Make me some sounding anklets
The maker of sounding anklets has gone to Mungeli
And I have no news of my neglectful dewar.

211

WHEN the scorpion bites, my bhauji
All the body runs with sweat
Bhauji's name is this or that
Brother's name is Khorbahara
For ten or twenty-five rupees

I had a watered garden made
But when the Koshta and Mahara died
No one would touch their corpses
Until Buddhu Chamar took them away.

212

Haur haur barks the dog
And startles the loving dewar
Beat him, beat him, the husband cries
The thief is running away
In the middle of the night
He was playing in the court
But now he is running away.

213

THE kitchen is full of my husband's elder sisters
The court is full of my husband's elder brothers
And now how am I to avoid
My younger sister's husband?

214

O THE zoolum of my little dewar!
When I go to draw water
There he is, dancing *funnu funnu* round me.
With my eyes I punish him
But he takes no heed
And as he fondles me I cry
Hai O father! Hai O mother!

O the zoolum of my little dewar!
When I go to cook
There he is, dancing *thunu thunu* round me.
I pelt him with sweets
But he takes no heed
And as he tickles me I cry
Hai O father! Hai O mother!

O the zoolum of my little dewar!
When I go to sleep
There he is, dancing *chunu chunu* on the bed
But now I conquer him
With my love and beauty
And as he falls he cries
Hai O father! Hai O mother!

LIFE IN THE FARM

SONGS ABOUT GRAIN

'POETRY,' says Shelley, 'lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes the familiar objects be as if they were not familiar.' This is the function of song in dealing with the details of life about the farm: religion has already played its part by consecrating with sanctity such familiar objects as the winnowing-fan and pestle: now poetry comes to clothe them in an 'Elysian light'.

The most important and popular grain of the Chhattisgarh plain is rice: its production has been greatly assisted by the irrigation schemes of Government. There are many different kinds of rice, but 'not so many as there are kinds of human beings; that is why human beings are greater'. In the hills, the best rice is that known as *bagri*: this can be sown anywhere and is impervious to the attacks of gods and ghosts. 'Rice is the proper diet for gods and visitors.'

After rice, there is kodon. This is specially popular in the hills where it is not only loved, but revered. A whole folk-tradition has grown up about it. There are five main varieties—*mai kodon, haruna, dassareli, ladri* and *bara. Mai* is 'very good; sweeter than the other kinds, and gives great strength'. *Haruni* has a tall stalk, but 'the ears are not so good; only two look like hiran's horns'. *Ladri* has ears 'heavy with small grain': it can be sown anywhere.

'Long ago when *ladri* was first born in the world, a man went to his field and threshed three handfuls. He burnt this in the fire and held his head, crying, "*Ladri kodon* is burnt; my house is filled." From this he gained great profit, and people have followed his example ever since.'

Bara kodon has a large grain; the plants are thick and bushy, but it is said that there is small profit in it. 'It is like *jurai* rice when cooked, but does not taste so good.'

Kodon is valuable both as food and medicine. As food it is said to be strength-giving, economical (it lasts longer, and one seer of kodon equals a seer-and-a-half of rice), and it takes longer to digest. 'It is warm: you are not hungry again for a long time.' It should be given to visitors at marriages or funerals, for it is less expensive. It can be sown in any soil: it is easy to cultivate and the crop rarely fails.

As a medicine, it is a useful tonic when recovering from fever. If a man is struck by lightning or knocked cold and unconscious by hail, the people massage his body with roasted kodon. They make the patient sleep on a layer of kodon, put a sheet over him and cover this also with kodon. Its gruel should be given to nursing mothers.

'*Deo* and *bhut* sit in kodon.' It is believed that the older it is the better it gets. Any dirt or stones in it disappear of their own accord. 'Kodon is so strong that it grinds them into dust.' 'Kodon feeds on its own rubbish and increases year by year.' To increase it, hairs are removed from a bullock's tail and made into a ball with its dung. If this ball is kept in the bin, the grain increases. It lasts twelve years, but after that it declines.

If a Gond says to a friend, 'Come to me: I have kodon in my house', it means he has daughters to give in marriage. The fact that it can be used as a girl-symbol shows how precious kodon is.

Kutki is a smaller millet: its use is more or less confined to the wilder tribes in the hills. It too has five varieties—*bhadeli, nangdewan, sitahi, barirali* and *pudgi. Nangdewan,* with its long ears and fat grain, is the best. There are not so many stories about kutki: it has less 'character' than kodon. During the Laru Kaj ceremonies, in the 'Girgitwa' songs shouted after the pig has been sacrificed, kutki is praised.

215

QUEEN Kutki looks ugly
But when it is cooked
It is lovely as a lotus flower.
With urid and mung and pulse of butterflies
Eat it, Gosaiya eat, Narayan Baba, eat.

Another song compares the different grains.

216

KUTKI and kodon boiled with channa
Will you eat it, bird?
It will stick in my throat, says the bird
Rice boiled with urid pulse
Will you eat it, bird?
Yes, it will go straight down, says the bird.

'For kutki and kodon are hard', says my informant. 'They are not soft like rice. Channa pulse is hard, but urid is slimy and easily slips down the throat.'

Of pulses channa is regarded as the best. A dozen different kinds are used in Chhattisgarh; of these rahar, mung and masur 'are for big men'. Urid is 'for everyone, gods, visitors, chaprassis, anyone'.

217

CHANNA pulse tastes as your heart desires
But it ruins digestion
Urid pulse is slimy
But everyone enjoys it.

218

OF grains kodon is the greatest
Of wealth the best is the milk-giving cow
Of cloth the chief is the black blanket
That never goes to the washerman's house.

219

SAYS rice: I was born in a flooded field
Says kodon: My birth was in good black soil
Says kutki: O brother, sow me in stony earth
And I'll not beg for one drop of water.

220

RICE asks for meat and fish
Urid and mung, says kodon
Cook me with rahar pulse, says kutki
And pour milk over me.

221

ALL the grains are different; let us touch the feet of all
From birth rice is a deceiver; it breaks when we husk it
For supper I eat kodon: how it laughs with urid pulse
Dear little kutki is always tiny; but with milk it swaggers
Sawa says, I grow in Sawan, I am sweet with buttermilk
Wheat-flour we cannot eat, for it makes us very hot
Fish taken with bread tastes wonderfully sweet
Gruel of maize is good to look at
But we do not like it without buttermilk
When they eat it with gram shoots, the Gond become proud.

A rather similar recipe-song was recorded by Ram Gharib Chaube:

THE pulse of arhar and the rice of Silhat;
The small lime of good flavour.
The curd of the buffaloes' milk as white as the conch shell;
If a woman with bright eyes serve the dinner,
A high storied house and a pleasant breeze—
Ghagh says that this is real enjoyment.
The pulse of urid and the winter rice
The ripe lime and warm clarified butter;
The four brothers sitting down to eat together;
And the curd of the buffaloes' milk served by the mother;
The high storied house and a sweet breeze—
Ghagh says that this is real pleasure.[1]

222

KODAI, how the world desires you
I took a pot to beg; as I went my shoes grew heavy
Weaker I got and weaker until my wife abused me
One would give a handful, another a pinch, yet a third gave only curses.
On the road the dogs barked and the housewives cursed me
I took a pot to beg; when I came home I put it down
With chatni and chilly I ate the rice; there was no vegetable or curry
The earth has lost its honour, the rain stays in the sky
Everywhere sin has increased and heavy is the world.

223

I FILLED the hollow to level the ground
Khotni bhāji has a shaven head
Chunchuniya has long tresses
Poor *khedna* parts her hair
Kochai is a great rascal
I filled the hollow to level the ground.

The tender leaves of the *khotni* vegetable are picked from the top and the stalks are left with shaven heads *Chunchuniya* is of low, spreading, habit and its 'long tresses' are picked for food, as are the stalks of *khedna*, straight as a girl's hair-parting. *Kochai* is a rascal, for it is apt to irritate the mouth.

[1] *N.I. Notes and Queries*, iv, 198.

A PADKI WEEDING SONG

224

Tari nāri nāri tarichanāri nāri suwāri ho
Where are you grazing your cows, Ahir
Where do you take them to drink?
O Brahmanand I wander alone
In Madhuban Kajli I graze the cows
In the tank I let them drink
O Brahmanand I wander alone
Fruit from the jungle I eat
And drink water out of the stream
O Brahmanand I wander alone
I have no necklace, I have no girl
O Brahmanand I wander alone
I put my rain-blanket over my shoulder
A stick in my hand, a flute to my lips
Brahmanand I wander alone.

A HALBA WEEDING SONG

225

INDAL my Raja has been born.
Other children grow up slowly,
But Indal daily grew taller
While yet in his mother's lap he began to play.
When he was ten years old he played with the boys in the village street.
The boys beat Indal and he ran and told his mother.
Indal's mother reported it to Raja Bir Singh.
The Raja's teeth chattered *kat-kit kat-kit* in anger.
He slapped the cheeks of the boys who beat Indal.
On the second or the third day when Indal went to play,
No one would come to play with him.
Indal went running to his mother and said,
'O mother, tell me where is my uncle's[1] village?'
'O son, you have no uncle or aunt in the world'.
'Then my mother, where were you born?'
'O son, my birth was in Surhi Bhimora;
It was the milk of the black cobra that I drank'.
But Indal did not trust her and he asked again,
'O mother, if you do not tell me the name of uncle's village,
I will cut open my belly and die'.
His mother thought, 'If I do not tell he will cut himself and die',
So at last she told him of his uncle's village.
'O son, your uncle's village is Rai Sindhola'.
Indal said, 'Then I am going to my uncle's village'.
She said, 'Don't go there, son, don't go. There is a great jungle;
The mountains are like dark clouds that are always sounding *jhan-jhan*'.
But the boy took no heed and got ready to depart.
His mother tried to stop him, 'Don't go, my little son;

[1] Throughout this song I translate *māma* and *māmi*, mother's brother and mother's brother's wife as 'uncle' and 'aunt'. Under the common system of cousin and cross-cousin marriage, the maternal uncle and aunt are also often the parents-in-law and the same words are used, *māma* for 'father-in-law', *māmi* for 'mother-in-law'.

There is much magic there; they kill people with their eyes'.
But Indal left her weeping and quickly went away;
He carried coal and water, buttermilk and curds;
By night he walked and all the day he ran.
O brother, in the midst of the jungle Dunda Raksin came before him.
She opened her mouth and stood in the road before him.
O brother, with Indal were six score and six Jugti-Mohani;
O brother, the Jugti-Mohani drove the Raksin away.
Indal went on his way and came to Rai Sindhola.
Outside the city he rested by the lake.
A hundred thousand water-girls came in a line for water;
Each filled her pot and put it on her knee.
Indal sent his Jugti-Mohani to sit in the pots.
When the girls tried to lift them they were too heavy for them.
'O brother stranger, lift up our pots for us.
Of what city are you Raja? How have you come to this land of magic?'
Indal called back his Jugti-Mohani.
Now the girls could lift their pots and Indal said,
'O sister water-girls, go and tell the news,
Go and tell my uncle that his nephew sits by the lake.
Come quickly to welcome him into your house'.
The girls went running quickly and told the Rani.
She proclaimed it through the city and the drums began to sound.
They went to the lake to bring the nephew in.
They put Indal on a horse and made it stand in the inner door.
Indal's aunt lit a lamp and greeted him with Arati.
'O nephew, get down from your horse. I would greet you with Arati,
And wash your feet and drink the water.
The people of this land go to bathe in Ganges water.
Nephew, you are my Ganges; you have come to my house'.
'O aunt, first listen to my prayer. Where is my uncle gone?'
'Nephew, your uncle is gone to destroy the fort of Bara Bathi Bengala'.
O brother, that Rani was pregnant with the Raja's child.
'Aunt, I will not dismount till you call me son-in-law'
'O nephew, I have no daughter; how can I call you son-in-law?'
'Listen, listen, aunt, when your child is born,
If she is a daughter give her to me

But if he is a boy then keep him in the house'.
'O nephew, if she is lame or mad you will have to marry her.
Nephew, I will call you son-in-law; now get down from the horse'.
When Indal heard this he dismounted and his aunt washed his feet.
She waved the lamp before him and brought him to the house,
She spread a bed and made him sit, she gave him *pān* and *bidi*.
She cooked the thirty-one vegetables and the thirty-two kinds of food.
She gave him long *chachera* and *brinjal* cooked in turmeric,
She provided fine *kundru* and the bitter *karela*.
With great joy she cooked the food for him.
In a pot the Rani brought water and gave it to her nephew.
Indal got up to eat, he washed his hands and sat;
His aunt gave him food and Indal ate with pleasure.
Indal ate his food and drank and then sat on the bed.
She gave him *pān* and *bidi*, Indal slept on the bed.
So passed one day and two days passed;
Every day the boy talked with his aunt.
'O boy, till today I called you nephew; now you are my son-in-law.
O boy, come for food, you are Lamsena for my daughter'.
Indal went to eat, but now his mother-in-law gave him
Rice that was only half-cooked, rough and coarse like kodon;
She put the gruel before him, the cooked pulse was like iron.
O brother, the Lamsena began to weep loudly.
His six score and six Jugti-Mohani came and asked,
'Why are you weeping, little brother?'
Indal told them and the Jugti-Mohani sat on his thirty-two teeth.
Now he drank the gruel *gat-gat, charan-charan* he munched the pulse.
The Lamsena ate and drank and then his mother-in-law said,
'O boy, go and bring a load of wood without tying it up'.
Indal thought in his mind, 'How can I bring wood without tying it?'
He went to the thick forest and sat there and wept loudly.
A cobra crying *sar-sar* came and twined around the wood.
By the strength of his Jugti-Mohani Indal brought twelve loads home.
He put them carefully on the ground and the cobra crying *sar-sar* went away.

When the mother-in-law saw it she told her neighbours,
'O neighbours, my son-in-law is a wonderful worker.
I told him to bring wood and he has brought twelve loads'.
The neighbour was an old Maharin and she said,
'O friend, boil your clothes in marking-nut oil
And test your wonderful Lamsena with that'.
The mother-in-law boiled her clothes in marking-nut oil and said,
'Go my son, my dear Lamsena, make these clothes white as a white crane's feathers.
O son, if you cannot, you cannot win my daughter'.
Indal took the clothes to the tank and sat on the bank and wept.
The six score and six Jugti-Mohani joyfully washed the clothes
Until they were white as arrowroot.
O brother, the Lamsena came home and took the clothes with him.
When their mother-in-law saw them, she told the Rawatin who brought water,
'O my sister, see how my son-in-law has washed my clothes'.
The Rawatin abused her, 'You devourer of your brother, why do you trouble the poor Lamsena?'
Again the mother-in-law gave the boy uncooked rice and gram like iron.
'O Lamsena, go now to cut a *dahi*-clearing'.
'Then, mother-in-law, give me an axe and adze'.
'O boy, there is no axe or adze in the house,
Where would I get such things to give a Lamsena?
Without an axe cut the *dahi*, then you will win my daughter'.
Indal went between the twelve hills where there was thick jungle.
Indal sat and wept and the Jugti-Mohani came.
By their help he cut the *dahi*-clearing.
In the shade of a tree Indal sat while the Jugti-Mohani cut the trees;
They cut the trees and burned them and when it was ready they went home.
Dear son Lamsena came home and told his mother-in-law what he had done.
'Now all is ready, mother-in-law, give me seed and ploughs and bullocks'.
'O boy, there is no plough nor bullocks, there is no rice or kodon,

Make a plough of a scorpion and yoke a bear and tiger to it.
Make a goad of a black cobra, get dust from the rubbish-heap to sow'.
The Lamsena took a load from the rubbish-heap.
The Jugti-Mohani turned into bullocks.
They turned into rice-seed; of its own accord it was sown.
When all was done the Lamsena returned to his mother-in-law.
After some days Indal said to his mother-in-law,
'Come, mother-in-law, see the rice-clearing I have made'.
The grain has grown breast-high, O brother, his mother-in-law went to see it.
When she had seen it she returned back home.
Then the Lamsena came and said, 'Come, come, mother-in-law, to reap the rice'.
She said, 'You must reap the grain and gather it yourself'.
O brother, the rice grew above his head, the Jugti-Mohani reaped it.
Standing in a row across the field they reaped it and tied it up in bundles.
They piled it in a stack, Indal went to his mother-in-law.
'O mother-in-law, I would thresh the grain', but there were no bullocks for it.
The Jugti-Mohani became bullocks and threshed the grain;
There were a hundred carts of rice.
Then the mother-in-law's pains began,
And that day there was born a daughter.
On the very same day the Rawat's daughter-in-law gave birth to a son.
Running running the midwife came. She said, 'Change the babies,
I will give you ten lakhs of rupees if you change the babies'.
The Rawat gave his son to the Rani and she gave him her daughter,
So that Indal should not take her child from the house.
But the Rawat told Indal what had been done.
'Go and take the child, the little girl, from my house
And go quickly for safety to your own land'.
The Lamsena went to the Rawat and took his girl:
He ran away quickly back to his own land.
Other children grow up slowly
But this girl grew like the moon.
Her name was Surajbhan Kaina.

When she was grown and ready they were married at once.
In one day was betrothal and in one the bride-price,
In one day was haldi and the booth and going round the pole.
The Raja gave Indal his kingdom.
Eating, drinking, happily they ruled the land.
Indal Raja and Surajbhan Rani ruled over the land.

A REAPING SONG

226

I AM going to reap the grain
But on the bank sits the wanton boy
While I am reaping
His eye catches mine
How can I go on reaping
If our eyes rob one another?
My husband beat me
He beat me at midnight
So I must be very careful
My handsome wanton takes my arm
He speaks sweetly to me
When the reaping is over
He will go away for ever
And in the world
There will be nothing more for me.

227

O BULLOCKS, make it more, bullocks
Let the birds and insects
Let the grasshoppers
Let all who have eaten the crop
Bring their thefts back again
Make it more, bullocks.

228

PULSE-CAKES, pulse-cakes
The cock is fried
The cqym is boiled in oil.

229

Reri reri reri
The Teli eats raw grain
The pestle has entered
The Telin's crock
The Teli is running
From stream to stream.

230

Darbari darbari
Drive round quickly
As you go round
Break the ears of corn.

231

THE bullock near the pole
Goes slowly
The outside bullock
Has to run
The middle bullock
Ignores the fuss.

232

Lusi lusi lusi
The thresher has *dāl-bhāt* to eat
But the bullock-man gets dirt.

SONGS OF THE HUSKER, BROOM AND FAN

233

Do not send me
To my husband this year
I am still a little girl
I do not know
How to grind wheat
How to husk rice
How to shake the winnowing-fan.
I am still a little girl.

234

PESTLE, pestle, with your tip you husk the rice
Bhakras bhakras she husks the rice, in the fan she winnows it
This girl of shining colours thinks
I husk the rice, I clean the rice, I winnow in the fan
But mother-in-law, sister-in-law
They listen with their ears
Whether I work or no
I cook the rice, with the bits I roll the bread
I give thin bread to my husband, I like it thick myself.

235

I COWDUNG the courtyard
I spread the rice to dry
The Brahmin bird pecked it up and ate it
Mother, give me a sieve and fan
I will winnow and clean the rice
Brother, get ready the mortar and pestle
Make the mortar of sarai wood
Make the pestle of khair
Bhauji is treacherous
Bhauji is jealous
She refuses to help me husking the rice
We have visitors coming this evening
But the rice is ready
In the early morning I got it ready.

236

UNDER the arbour of bean-vines shaken by the wind
The fair girl is husking rice
O fair one leave your husking
He who will carry you away has come
Let him who is coming come
I will husk the rice and feed him on rice and pulse
For six months I will let him plough
Only then will I go to his house
May fire catch your yoke and plough
Let your rice and pulse remain in the pot
I will pitch my tent in the middle of the road
And I will carry you away.

237

O THE Lahari is laughing, the Lahari is here.
The bean-stalk throws its shadow, the fair girl husks below it
Fair one, leave your mortar and pestle and come with your love
The mortar sways
The pestle sways
O sways the girl husking
From above down falls the rice
Catch it, O winnowing fan.
The cooking-pot sways
Its cover sways
O sways the girl in the kitchen
From above down falls the rice-water
Catch it, O cooking-pot.

Two kinds of rice-pounders are used in Chhattisgarh. One is a pedal-machine which is worked by two people and is fixed in the ground. One of the workers stands at the pedal end of the machine and works the long wooden pedal with the foot while at the mortar end a woman squats to put the grain into the mortar and clear it when it is ready. The other method of husking the grain is in a mortar usually let into the ground but sometimes made of wood and portable. The grain is then husked with a long heavy pestle of wood with an iron ferrule at one end.

The importance of the rice-husker in the everyday life of the people is seen in the very large number of riddles that are made about it. The *dhenki* is a black bitch that jumps when kicked on the hill; it is 'the man who roars when kicked'; it

is 'the man who vomits rice when his bottom is kicked', or 'who farts when you kick his buttocks', or 'who goes on eating no matter how you kick him'.[1] There are many songs about the rice-husker also and the noise made by the *dhenki* when it is being pedalled is represented as *dhik-dhok*. The rice-husker is generally regarded as lucky among Hindus, for it was one of Baldeo's weapons. During a marriage it is tied to a churning-pole and waved over the bride and bridegroom to make them fertile. The husker is often used by a jester during a marriage as an imitation phallus, probably with the idea of promoting the potency of the bridegroom. In Orissa the head of the pedal machine is worshipped by small boys and girls on the Khudrakani Osa and this worship is supposed to ensure them a life of prosperity. It is said that girls who make it a point of observing this festival get married into rich families and are never in want.[2]

Sometimes when the rains fail, disaster can be averted if a rice-husker is placed upright in a dish. When not in use the husker should always be kept carefully as it would be dangerous to insult it by treading on it or kicking it with the foot.

To the aboriginals of Chhattisgarh the broom is primarily something that sweeps away refuse. For this reason brooms are carried out to the boundary of the village and hung up there as a sign that poverty and disease has been swept away. Sometimes sticks from the special brooms made of chir grass are used in divination. The magician takes two or three of these sticks and measures them over and over again with his hand.

Brooms are also used by the people at the time of husking grain or grinding wheat. The housewife sweeps away the chaff and gathers together the grain with the broom which thus becomes something of a sacred implement on account of its association with the grain. For this reason there is a certain belief in a broom being lucky or at least infected with some kind of magical power. A broom, for example, should never be left standing upright in a house as this might lead to a quarrel between husband and wife. It is unlucky to see a broom early in the morning but, on the other hand, if the

[1] *Man in India*, xxiii, 332.

[2] S. N. Roy, 'Some Popular Superstitions of Orissa', *Man in India*, v. 227.

grass used in a broom is burnt and the smoke allowed to enter the nostrils of a newly-born-child it will do it good.

At the Holi Festival a special broom is made of chir grass and hung up in a cotton tree. When the Holi fire is to be lit, this broom along with a branch of the cotton tree is put in the middle of the pile of wood and after the fire has been started the broom is snatched out and bits of it are put into the thatch over the door of every house in the village.

The winnowing-fan is one of the most important of domestic implements. It is used by men for winnowing grain at harvest time. Women must not touch it then, but they can use it at all other times. They clean the grain with it before husking and again clean the husked grain before cooking. The winnowing-fan makes a very convenient open basket in which chillies, haldi-roots, salt and many other things are temporarily placed for use in the kitchen. The refuse of the house is swept into an old winnowing-fan and partly because it is used for this purpose it is taken along with the broom to the boundary at the ceremonial purification of the village. When a child is born, rice is put in a winnowing-fan. This is covered with a cloth and the child is laid in it. At a marriage when bride and bridegroom are bathed they are fanned with a winnowing-fan possibly with the hope that all the unlucky chaff in their lives may be blown away. Finally when a woman dies her winnowing-fan is taken and placed by her pyre or on her grave.

This is quite enough of itself to make the winnowing-fan sacred but there is another cause. It is used as a sort of planchette by the Gunia magician. In Chhattisgarh the Gunia puts rice in the winnowing-fan and rubs his hands over it in a rhythmic circulation, muttering charms as he does so until the god comes upon him. Dalton records that at a Santal funeral, 'towards evening it is customary for a man to take his seat near the ashes with a winnowing-fan, in which he tosses rice till a phrensy appears to seize him, and he becomes inspired and says wonderful things'.[1]

The Uraon also use the winnowing-fan as a sort of divining rod to conduct the person holding it to the door of a man most fitted to hold the office of a village priest.[2]

I have not been able to find any myths about the origin of the winnowing-fan except one recorded for the Medar, a

[1] Dalton, 218.
[2] ibid., 247.

caste of bamboo-workers in Mysore. They have a story that they are descended from a man who was specially created to make winnowing-fans for Parvati. He came out of the bull Basava while it was chewing the cud after swallowing iron grains. Siva turned the serpents on his body into bamboos for him. Parvati was so pleased with the fans made by this man that she rewarded him with a basket full of precious stones, but he did not know their value and ran away from his good fortune. Parvati was annoyed at this and ordained that the man, who was the ancestor of the Medar, should never get more than a pittance from his trade.[1]

[1] Nanjundayya and Iyer, op. cit., iv, 192.

SONGS OF THE GRINDSTONE

238

SHE washed the channa pulse
She spread it to dry in the court
She has gone to grind the wheat
She has finished the wheat and now
She puts flour in the great earthen pot
I will grind the flour, she sings
I will make sweet bread with oil
My love is going away
He is going to the house
Of my sister's husband
And will bring her back home to me.

239

GRINDSTONE is my mother-in-law
Grinding-peg my brother
But the silver armlet on my arm
Is from my husband's earnings.

240

FATHER, my father, make me a little grindstone
Bhauji is very charming, she is grinding wheat-flour
What will you do with wheat-flour? Are you going to your mother's house?
If coarse flour comes from the grinding
Mother-in-law will abuse me
Chaff comes from grinding the rice
We make porridge out of wheat
Hands hurt after grinding wheat
Head aches when you make the bread
My nanand is tricky and wanton
How quickly she passes on gossip
She grinds and gets her flour-wages
But she hides bread behind the hearth.

The grindstone and the curry-stone are familiar objects in every Chhattisgarh house. The most common grindstone is

made of circular stones of the same diameter. The upper stone, which is the heavier of the two, revolves on a wooden pivot which is fixed in the middle of the lower stone. This is sometimes worked by two women, each of them holding the same handle, though often one woman grinds alone. The work is heavy and it is one of the great differences between the life of the modern woman, who is not only able to buy flour ready made but even bread ready cooked, and the village woman who has to grind sufficient for a family every day of her life. Poor women and widows in Chhattisgarh earn a scanty living by grinding for their wealthier neighbours. There are many songs about the grindstone and many riddles. Most of the riddles are based on the idea that the grindstone is an old woman who eats and eases herself or vomits at the same time. It is, for example, according to the Uraon, 'the woman who passes a powdered stool' or 'the old woman who eases herself as she eats'. To the Kharia, it is the woman who vomits ashes or who is always moving about and always easing herself. To the Gond, the grindstone 'eats, runs and vomits all at once'. The Baiga give a characteristic sexual reference and describe the grindstone as 'the mother who lies still while the father moves about on top of her' or again as 'the sleeping man shaken by a girl'. The Uraon again describe the grindstone as 'the cow with one horn that feeds on its master's food' and the Baiga suggest that it is 'a dog that growls when you catch hold of its tail', a reference to that most familiar sound in an Indian village, the roar of the grindstone in a neighbour's house.[1]

Naturally a thing used in such close association with the sacred grain is bound to be lucky. Throughout India great respect is paid to it. 'Part of the earliest form of the marriage ritual consisted in the bride standing on the family grindstone. At the present day she puts her foot upon it and knocks down little piles of heaped grain. It is waved over the heads of the pair to scare evil spirits. In Bombay it is said that sitting on a grindstone shortens life, and the Kunbis of Kolaba place a grindstone in the lying-room, and on it set a rice-flour image of a woman, which is worshipped as the goddess, and the baby is laid before it. Such a stone readily passes into a fetish, as at Ahmednagar, where there is a stone with two holes, which any two fingers of any person's hand can

[1] *Man in India*, xxiii, 331 f.

fill, and the mosque where it stands is, in consequence, much respected'.[1]

At a Kharia marriage also the bride is made to stand on a curry-stone and the husband on a yoke and throughout Chhattisgarh the grindstone is put in front of the bride and bridegroom when they sit for ceremonial greetings during their wedding.

A SONG OF SELLING VEGETABLES

241

O BUDDHU'S father, I have been selling vegetables in the bazaar
I got an anna for the onions, four annas for the garlic
O Manglu's father, I have been selling vegetables in the bazaar
I sat on my stool and sold the vegetables
I sat on my wooden stool and sold the brinjals
When I went to the bazaar, my husband watched me secretly
With my vegetables and brinjals I sat underneath the fig tree
I sold all the rotten ones and gave the rest in dues.

A CHURNING SONG

242

NANAND *speaks to* BHAUJI

THE churning cord is broken
The pot is smashed
The buttermilk is spilt
All over the house
When my brother comes home
From grazing the cows
He will take the rope
And give you a thrashing.

BHAUJI *answers* NANAND

I'LL soon make a new cord
For the one that is broken
I'll buy a new pot
At the next bazaar
When your big brother comes home
From grazing the cows
I'll soon make him laugh
And give me a beating.

A WEAVING SONG

243

BROTHER, who will set the warp?
Riding on an elephant I set the warp
Riding on a camel I tie the woof
Riding on a horse I weave at the loom
Brother, who will set the warp?
Riding on a mule I set the warp
Riding on a camel I tie the woof
Riding on a goat I weave at the loom
As I am sitting I waggle my buttocks
I make my first wife throw the shuttle
I make my middle wife raise the heddles
I make my youngest wife work the treadle
Brother, who will set the warp?

Matakāna, to waggle the buttocks, is a common trick of the Panka comedian and the weaver here adopts this method of amusing his wives and encouraging them to do better work. The expression is also used of a flirtatious girl who walks about with hips swinging.

SEASONAL SONGS

A NUMBER of seasonal songs have been given in *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*: now I record a few others from the low country. Here, as in the hills and in Bihar, the theme is mainly sexual frustration. The songs are sung either by women during the Sua dance or by men (curiously enough) in the Danda or Stick Dance. Yet the point of view is always, and even emphatically, the woman's.

There is a note on these very simple Baramashi in the previous volume. Here it will be sufficient to add how far these, and the Bihar, songs differ from the Baramashi of the Bengal ballads. The old poetic tradition of Bengal was that the plot of a poem must be based on an account of the twelve months. Some of the older poems are actually called Baramashi, 'though they comprise many things more than the word literally implies—it being a traditional and common name for lyric songs characterized by pathos. The story of Lila is called "Lilar Baramashi" and that of Kamala as "Kamalar Baramashi". We have found Baramashi even from the days of the aphorisms of Dak and Khana, composed probably in the ninth century. In the poems generally called by the name of Baramashi, the poets usually presented accounts of the twelve months associated with the joys and sorrows of the chief characters delineated in them along with other things. And often an exaggerated importance is given to the Baramashi, not quite consistent with the thread of the narrative. Bharat Chadra and Jay Narayan Sen (18th century) were the last great poets who described the months, following the footprints of the earlier Bengali poets.

'Among the Mymensingh Ballads, "Mahua" is by far the most free from all conventional ideas, but the Baramashi is still there, though not in a loudly pronounced form. The poet Dwija Kanai does not halt over this poetic convention giving it an undue importance, to the detriment of the natural progress of the story, but only takes a passing notice of the months which, compared with the lengthy classical descriptions of other poets on the subject, does not strike us as a deviation from the main topics. In "Lila and Kanka", the poets freely yield to the fascination of the old convention and

to a certain extent mar the simplicity and flow of the story by introduction of long accounts of the months. It became quite a craze with our old poets to describe the Baramashi, and the stories have often lost some of their compactness and unity owing to the breach caused by such deviations.'[1]

But the Baramashi in the 'Ballad of Dewana Madina'[2] is short, appropriate and affecting. Sen says that he knows 'of no rustic song so highly appealing, and so full of rugged and homely beauty'.[3] But in many of the other ballads, the conventionalism of the Baramashi weakens the narrative in spite of the occasional beauty of its descriptions.

It is noteworthy that there is not a trace of the Baramashi technique in the Chhattisgarh ballads, though 'The Tale of Sitaram Naik' would have lent itself admirably to it. On the other hand the natural seasonal songs have no obvious tale to tell and are simple and austere beside the luxuriant beauty of the Bengal poems.

A curious song recorded by Usborne and entitled by him 'The Death of *Sardi* (Cold)'[4] is on the same lines as the Baramashi in the text. Since Usborne's book is now unobtainable except in the largest libraries I will quote the song in full.

Cold in August is conceived
In the womb of earth received,
All September under-ground,
Lying hidden safe and sound.
One long month before his birth,
Being nourished by the earth.
At the sowing of the corn,
In October he is born.
In November fast he grows,
A lusty lad and apt to blows;
In December squares his back
To do battle and attack,
And when January is come
Sounds his horn and charges home.
Doomed alas! his death to meet
Slain at February's feet.
March puts ashes on her head

[1] Sen, I, li.
[2] ibid., i, 307f.
[3] ibid., I, xc.
[4] Usborne, 13.

To lament the mighty dead;
April next with streaming eyes
Comes to do his obsequies;
But in May he's clean forgot
And in June the wind blows hot.

244

WHEN will he come, O talk to him and bring him
In Sawan the swings are prepared
And all the bond-friends go to swing
Friends and companions, swing all of you
I wander alone without my lord
O talk to him and bring him soon
In Bhadon the nights are dark and the lightning flashes
My hair shines with the flash, the thunder roars, my mind is filled with dread
Kuar has come, but my love has not come
O if my love came now I would hold him to my heart
The full moon of Kartik rises
My friends go to bathe in the river
In Ganges, in Triveni, they make offerings of pearls
In Aghan I sent him a letter, yet my love has not come
I will burn that land that keeps my darling back
In Pus I got the cotton and spread the mattress carefully
O if my love came now I would make him sleep there
In Magh the mango flowers and the koel makes its nest
And you, my koel, toss from side to side, and I wander alone without my lord
In Phagun is the Festival and all our friends play Phag?
My loved lord is not with me, how can I play the Phag?
In Chait I got bamboo cut and made a fine house
I spread a bed in that house
I will put my love to sleep, I will keep him there
O talk to him and bring him soon
In Baisakh and Jeth the heat is terrible
I care not for house or court
Were my love here I would fan him, I would put my best ornaments on his body
With Asadh the twelve months are ended. There is no hope of his coming now.

245

GIVE me a sign and go
I love you night and day
Asadh month has fallen due
The birds are building their nests
Alas my neglectful love
Cut grass to thatch the roof
But he has left my world
And gone away to trade
Give me a sign and go
Sawan has come; the rain is coming down
I strip my green body when I dress again
My Raja, I remember you
I love you night and day
My sweet wild berry, my dear plum of love
In Bhadon it is very dark
The lightning flashes, its glory fills the house
Seeing the light I think my love has come
I love you night and day
My food, my sweet desire, my dancing horse
Kuar has come, the ears of grain hang over
O love, shall I stay at home
Or go out to the field?
I love you night and day
My cloud, my rain, my fertilizing plough
Kartik has come and now Diwali comes
In every house they light the lamps
They give the cattle salt
I love you night and day.

246

WHICH is the lamp that burns by day?
Which is the lamp that burns all night?
The sun is the lamp that burns by day
The moon is the lamp that burns all night
The lovely girl burns in the temple
The boy in the darbar hall
In Asadh clouds rumble *gham gham*
The peacock wanders among the trees
In Sawan how happy we felt
Flowers bloom in the forest
In Bhadon we eat *pān*

Bhawani Mata swings in her cot
Like the moon appears her body
There is a red spangle on her brow
In Kuar the drums thunder *dham-dham*
We offer washed rice and bel leaves
On our Mata's head
In Kartik Kausaliya Mata brings out her toys
The mother leaves her temple, her anklets sounding
In Aghan our Mother is pregnant
And goes from house to house to tell the news
In Pus the ground is coloured white
The peacock calls at sleeping-time
Parrot and goose swing their chicks on their wings
In Magh Ahibal takes curds to Hingan
In Phagun they wear coloured saris
O Jalani, they wear rings on every finger
When the moon of Chait rises
Bhawani takes a branch of the lime-tree in her hand
She goes to the cool shade of the Ganges waters
She leads the Barua by the hand
In Baisakh, how lovely blooms the lotus
And in the forest the kekti, keonra and chabela flowers
Mother, dazzling are the diamonds round your throat
In Jeth have love and pity
For I sing songs of love.

The following is a Danda or Stick song sung by Gond during the Stick Dance: it was recorded at Lawai in the Raipur District. The refrain which is repeated after every line is *Nāno rina mori nāna ho*!

247

In Chait Ramcharan was born at Ayodhya
The court was cleaned with sandal paste
With elephant pearls the platform was prepared
A lamp was lit above the golden pitcher
In Baisakh Jasbrikamlal was born
The wind blew, the fire whirled in the sky
There was dust on every side, fire shadowed all the sky
In Jeth the clouds roar loudly, the peacock calls, the bird of sin complains
In Asadh the rain falls gently and the nim shoots are green
My love is not with me and my young breasts are lonely

In Sawan, wind and water! I wear my kusom sari, my body sways but not with him. The sky is half full of light.

In Bhadon every day is dark, the lightning flashes to and fro

My necklace shines in the gleam, when will my darling come?

It is very hot in Kuar. O husband leave your work

Bring home your plough and lay it up. Lie down to rest and I will fan your body

In Kartik there is Diwali: in every house they worship Gobardhan, the Ahir dance and rouse the cows

But without you, my love, how sad I feel.

In Aghan I had sad news; I wrote a letter on paper, when will my lord return?

In Pus the frost is bitter; my legs tremble, my head shakes, without you my liver trembles

In Magh Sita goes with Rama and Lakshman to the forest

In Phag they bring out the red powder, in every house friends sing,

They come together to play Phag.

LIFE IN THE WOODS

HUNTING SONGS

In the hills of Chhattisgarh game is still plentiful and preserved from the local inhabitants by law, from the privileged visitor by the difficulty of communications. North-western Bilaspur and the hills round Amarkantak are still famous as a haunt of tigers.

The professional hunter has almost disappeared, but Baiga and Bhunjia, Kamar and Dhanwar still know how to use their bows and arrows. The Pardhi or Bahelia mentioned in one of the songs is a small tribe of hunters and fowlers; the Pardhi is correctly represented as hunting with the bow and arrow, for the tribe has some kind of taboo on the use of fire-arms. The Lodhi mentioned in another song is a rather warlike caste, with a reputation for violence (Russell gives a proverb: 'A Lodhi's temper is as crooked as the stream of a bullock's urine') but it is not specially known as expert in the hunt. There is probably some local reference.

248

The tiger goes ahead and the jackal slinks behind him
The one-eyed hunter has set his traps on the hill
O twelve Lodhi brothers, come and let us go out hunting
We are covered with mud. Alas the shining necklace
Excites all the world to love
O twelve Lodhi brothers, come and let us go out hunting
The char tree ripens, the ebony ripens
The mahua is in bud
When a boy wanders his girl is angry
In your hand is a gun and in your mouth a love-charm
O twelve Lodhi brothers, come and let us go out hunting.

249

But yesterday, my lord, you were lurking in the jungle
Today what a Darbar our Raja has!
Whose goats used you to steal and whose milk-giving cows?
You took the tenants' goats and the Raja's milk-giving cows.
Where did you get the goats?
Where did you get the milk-giving cows?
On the hill you got the goats
In the jungle the milk-giving cows.

250

CARRYING his crooked gun, O friend
The hunter has passed between the hills
Where Hirasing the tiger lives
And Singbaghnin his lady
The hunter thinks, what plan can I make?
Out comes the tigress with her cubs to seek for food
She is looking for an elephant or a camel to eat
She finds nothing, and the hunter is afraid
He remembers his ancestors and the gods
Help me and I will offer you a goat
Deceive the horned tiger
So saying the hunter lets loose a goat
The tiger leaps upon it
The hunter sounds his *chutki bāja*
Dancing dancing, the tiger eats his supper
The cubs cry loudly to their mother
The tiger lifts his head to look
The hunter fires his loaded gun
Senseless the tiger falls
The drum of joy sounds through the world.
I have sung this song of hunters
That all the world may know.

251

WHO has the crooked gun
Who has the sword?
The Raja has the crooked gun
The Lallu has the sword.
How much for the crooked gun
How much for the sword?
Twenty rupees for the crooked gun
Ten rupees for the sword.
What can you kill with the crooked gun
What can you kill with the sword?
Sambhar and antelope are killed with the crooked gun
Goats are killed with the sword.

252

TIGRESS go slowly slowly
Along the fringe of the forest
On what branch does she hide
From what tree does she spring?
She hides in a hollow
She springs from a height
In one leap she gets her victim
In the fringe of the woods.

253

AT sunset a little light comes from the moon
The tiger comes lurking lurking through the woods
They cut green wood and make a platform
The three brothers sit thigh to thigh
Big brother says, Wait a moment
Middle brother says, Shoot, shoot
Little brother fires the bullet
As it sends out the bullet the gun roars
And down falls the tigress
They go one mile
They go two miles
But they cannot find the tigress
Like the tigress is the cat in our house
It has caught and eaten our pet maina
The stars appear scattered across the sky
The brothers are weary
But they have no news of the wounded tigress.

254

UNDER the ebony tree
In the deep shadow of the creeper
Is the hare's burrow
The hare sits with quivering ears
Were my lord good and strong
He would shoot the hare
And I would cook it for his supper.

255

UNDER the parsa tree sits the Bahelia
O Pardhi listen. The Pardhi shoots five arrows
The antelope is grazing on the level plain
Its lady is at the salt-lick
Come come, my antelope, come let us run away
Fate is dancing on our heads
We will not run, for if we do
We will betray our Kshattri birth
O Pardhi listen. We were not stealing wheat
We had not broken into the field of maize
The Pardhi took no heed and drew his bow
But Bhagavan checked the arrow, the deer went undisturbed.

Some of the best hunting-songs in India have been recorded from the Lakher,[1] for whom the shooting of the white-tusked elephant or clean-horned bison is a supreme triumph. 'I have shot a bull elephant', sings a young man, 'and a wild boar. I am beside myself with joy, I have actually shot what till now I had only seen in dreams.' And another asks, 'Have you ever seen a bison with bright horns shining like ripe plantains when you have been pursuing game in the jungle?' N. E. Parry found 'very impressive' the song of Lushei returning down a river in boats after shooting game.

I, a poor brotherless man,
All by myself have slain a wild beast.
Beneath the flowers of the chestnut tree
I am weeping for joy.
O Thanglunga.
A gun has been fired on the hill
The boys all rush out of the houses to meet the hunter.
Let all the young men who are love-making
Follow my example, and seek a better pastime,
And come and meet the hunter also.[2]

[1] Parry, 174 ff. [2] ibid., 181.

SONGS ABOUT BIRDS

CHHATTISGARH bird-lore follows the usual lines: some of the birds are associated with the erotic adventures of historic lovers, others with the personages of Hindu mythology. The fidelity of birds to each other is often held up as a warning and inspiration to less constant human partners: the *chakka-chakki* birds (either the Ruddy Sheldrake or Brahminy Duck), for example, remain together 'like the two parts of a grindstone'. Curiously, they are said to have 'no children till they are very old'. The expression *sārus-jori* given to a devoted husband or wife is derived from the well-known love of the *sārus*-crane for its mate.

Without its mate
What great sorrow for the crane!
Only if Fate demands
Will it ever live solitary
When it is left alone it weeps at midnight.

About the maina a tale comes from Raipur. 'The maina was born in the Gondwana and the parrot in the Hindwana. Raja Kuhimansha had a daughter called Ramo; she was twelve years old and very lovely. She and Mara Kshattri loved each other, but he did not come for her. So Ramo made a maina from the dirt of her body. She told it everything and sent it to Mara. When Mara saw it, he caught it and shut it up in a golden cage. There it told him so much about Ramo that Mara thought it was Ramo herself and refused to let it go. But at last he was persuaded to go with it for his bride.'

In fact, the maina is, after the parrot, probably the most popular bird among the villagers of Chhattisgarh. It is often kept as a pet and is charming and entertaining in captivity. In folk-tales the maina, like the parrot, is sometimes a go-between of lovers. In a Kashmir story the bird is sent by a Raja who has sixteen hundred wives to arrange a match for his only daughter by finding a prince who should be the only child of another Raja who also has sixteen hundred wives.[1]

In more than one folk-tale—the motif has been recorded

[1] J. H. Knowles, *Folk-Tales of Kashmir* (London, 1893), 65 f.

in the Punjab and in Kashmir—there is a dispute between a maina and a parrot as to which is greater. The maina declares that it is so important that anyone who eats it will become the Diwan of a great kingdom, but the parrot says that if anyone eats it, he will become a Raja. Two brothers overhear the discussion and the elder kills and eats the parrot and in due course becomes a Raja. The younger brother eats the maina, marries the daughter of a Diwan and himself becomes a Diwan.[1] In the Kashmir variant the names of the birds are not given but it seems probable that they are the parrot and the maina. The great bird Sudabror explains to its mate Budabror the virtues of two singing birds, saying that whoever eats one of them will become a Raja and whoever eats the other will become a Wazir and the richest man in the world, for every morning when he gets up he will find seven priceless jewels under his body. Two princes overhear the conversation and the younger one kills the birds and cooks them. The elder brother becomes the Raja and the younger a wealthy Wazir.[2]

Like the parrot, the maina is often the home of the life-index of hero or villain of a story. Like the parrot also it sometimes acts as a messenger and in one of Stokes' stories it tells the hero the sorrows and misfortunes of the heroine.[3]

256

WHOM shall I invite for the hawk's marriage?
I will ask the flycatcher with a tail like a hare's
I will invite the crow to act as the barber
And the koel to give the marriage-abuse
From the ebony tree the sparrow comes running
It says, I too must go with the party
We will also sing songs of joy
The peacock comes and says, Listen my friend hawk
Send out your invitations wisely or I will peck out your eyes
So it called the little quail and the green pigeon
It invited the ascetic crane which calls on Kabir's name.

[1] F. A. Steel, *Tales of the Punjab* (London, 1894), 130 ff.
[2] Knowles, op. cit., 168 ff.
[3] M. Stokes, *Indian Fairy Tales* (London, 1880), 149 ff.

257

O KOEL, may your koel-nature burn
May your caste be consumed
You made me love you—
But where did you spend the night?

My koel-nature will not be burnt
My caste will not be consumed
O the friends of my youth—
With them I spent the night.

258

O BLACK koel, cry *kuha kuha*
I have a mind
To pick red spinach
I have a mind
To open the window
And pick the brinjals
I have a mind
To go with the Ahir
And get curds to eat
O black koel, cry *kuha kuha*.

The refrain of this song is the lovely line—*Kuhakāle kāli koeliya kuhakāle*. With the entire poem we may compare a song recorded in the Dudhi Estate, Mirzapur District: the original is printed in *North Indian Notes and Queries* (iii, 215) and I give a new translation.

The sweet-tongued koel perches on the bean-vine
O koel, take pulse and rice, but leave the bean-vine
O sweet-tongued koel
I will burn your pulse and rice: I will not leave the bean-vine
O koel, I will give you a ring and a garland
O sweet-tongued koel
I will burn your ring and throw your garland in the lake
I will not leave the bean-vine
O sweet-tongued koel, I will give you my husband's younger sister
If you will leave the bean-vine
No sooner were the words spoken than it left the bean-vine
The sweet-tongued koel.

FISHING SONGS

THE Kewat, who are closely related to the Dhimar, are the professional fishermen of Chhattisgarh. They believe that as a reward for saving Chaurasi Devi from a flood she has given them the art to catch four times as many fish as anyone else. They have many songs and much folk-lore about their fish. Both Kewat and Dhimar have the knack, rather uncommon among semi-aboriginals, of entering into the feelings of their victims: in their songs they sometimes speak from the fish's point of view, and mourn the disaster that the net and hook will bring upon them.

The *padina*, they say, is the Raja of all fish. Five cubits long, with its three cubit moustache, it lives in a cave deep below the water, as cunning as it is distinguished. 'At the beginning of Asadh, the *padina* calls its family saying, "Let us go in the marriage-party". They decorate themselves by catching water-snakes which they hold in their mouths so that the head and tail sticks up on either side like a tuft. The Raja goes up the river leading its family, exploring the way with its moustache.'

250

As it goes, it lays its eggs
Like a goat it cries *bo-bo bo-bo*
The Kotwar crab comes out of its hole
'All is well now; but wait for me
You have come leaping and playing in the water
I have come slowly on my eight feet.
What will you do? You have no hands or feet.
How will you build your house?
Leaping and playing in the water
You have climbed Binjh Pahar
But your son and daughter will be eaten by a stork.'
Raja Padina weeps, remembering Sarwa Tal.

If the *padina* is the secular head of the fish tribe, the *gadni* is its bishop. There is a long story about the love of Marra Deo for the youngest daughter of Raja Indra; she took the form of the *gadni*—it is long as a man's first finger,

very clever and the prettiest of all fish with three white lines on its body. The Gunia diviners take its name when they are seeking spiritual information, for they believe that Marra Deo will remember his old love and reward them.

The *bāmi*, *gorbam* and *churiya* are supposed to belong to one family. They are all 'good to eat, with few bones'. The *churiya* is 'small, like a knife'; the *gorbam* is described as two cubits long, thick with a speckled skin: its tail is very strong and it can 'beat a man till he bleeds and the wound burns'. It is difficult to catch, for it swims very quickly. The *bāmi* is an eel-like fish, black in colour, usually about a cubit long, and in the poetic fancy of the people is a symbol of deceit. 'It wriggles and twists like a Brahmin.'[1] And 'when Mother Narbada was running away from Amarkantak and Bhimsen tried to stop her at Bhimkundi, she took the form of a *bāmi*-fish and slipped under him without his noticing and so escaped'. Hence the Dadaria song:

O dark-coloured girl, you were going along the road
Like a *bāmi*-fish you cheated me of my pleasure.

The *karhari* is the Sub-Inspector of Police. 'It looks very fine: on its back are the signs of rupees and they flash like silver. It is a cubit long and a cubit broad.' When the *padina* is assembling its marriage-party, it sends the prawn, who is the Ujir or Assistant Kotwar, to collect the fish. 'If any refuse to come, the *karhari* beats them with its tail and the prawn pokes their privates with its moustache.'

The prawn is the crab's Pardhan: the crab is its Thakur, and has to listen to its songs and give it food and presents when it comes to beg. The prawn is 'the greatest *nakta* (lover)': it lays eggs all the year round. 'By eating it, you get great strength.'

260

THESE four are beautiful
The youth with a moustache
The bull with long horns
The horse with a fine tail
The prawn with splendid hairs.

The *aind* eels are divided by the Kewat into *parawan*, *asariya* and *domi*. The first is two cubits long, 'thick as your thigh', spotted, and 'makes a noise like a cat'. The

[1] Hiralal, 'Why Kewat Women are Black', *The Indian Antiquary*, ix, 35.

asariya is much longer but thinner, 'only thick as your ankle'. The *domi* is black and very strong, like a snake. 'These three have heads like snakes and tails like fish. When the Kewat are going to poison a stream, they first burn the grass along the banks. For the *aind* always knows what is going to happen and it leaves the water and goes to hide in an ant-hill. The fishermen are able to follow its tracks through the ashes and so catch it. The *aind* usually lives in a hole: there are three doors to its tunnels. The Kewat block up the doors and the eel dies. It is pleasant to the taste and gives abundant oil.'

The most famous fish for food, however, is the *saur*. This splendid fish is called *tanawa* when small and *lowa* when a little bigger. 'It is useful for everything.'

The *katiya* (also called *katwa*, *baira*, *patola*, according to size) with its big head and long bones is also very good to eat. It lives in the sandy bed of a river. The beautiful *tengna* is notorious for the perversions of its sex life. 'It never ceases, and is always trying to have fish of other castes.' It is very full of fun and likes to live near a bathing place and come to nibble the toes of the bathers. The little *turu* and *kotri* have the same habit. These are small and pretty: the *turu* is sweet and the *kotri* bitter to the taste. 'They love licking the bodies of men.'

The *sodhe* or witch-fish is small and red. It performs magic against the other fish. If it bites a man, he will get fever. Yet cooked with tomato or buttermilk it is said to make an excellent dish.

Some of the songs are straightforward and realistic. They describe the best way of cooking various fish, or the sensations of the fish when Kewat or Dhimar go out to catch them. Others are symbolic. The use of the fish (Lorca's 'fish without scales or river') as a sexual symbol is world-wide; it occurs in the life and traditions of many Indian peoples.

In Bengal a pair of Indian *shad* fish are taken on a ceremonial occasion into the house, worshipped and their scales are put by the centre-pole: this is believed to increase the fertility and wealth of the family.[1] Hindu marriages in Ben-

[1] Tarak Chandra Das, 'The Cultural Significance of Fish in Bengal' *Man in India*, xi, 280. ff. and xii, 97 ff. The whole article is of great interest. See also E. Westermarck. *The History of Human Marriage* (London, 1925), ii, 484 f.

gal are invariably connected with fish in every part of the province. Gifts of fish are included in the preliminary rites and it is noticeable that the fish must be a pair, one of the fish generally being larger than the other. The symbolism is obvious. When the bride comes to her husband's house for the first time, she enters it with a fish in her hand. During the days following marriage, until the symbolic marriage tie is united, the couple must have fish to eat at every meal; otherwise the bride will soon be widowed. A widow must never eat fish at all.[1] A woman should always eat fish on the day which is popularly believed to represent the zenith of her own fertility, the day she bathes at the end of her menstrual period. In the Jias tank in the Dacca District the people preserve a small vermilion fish, the name of which means 'living': women who wish their children to live and thrive catch the fish, daub its forehead with vermilion and let it loose again.[2]

The use of fish in marriage ceremonial is also found in Southern India, as among the Holeya[3]; in Assam, as among the Chongli and Mongsen, the Ao[4] and doubtless other tribes; in the United Provinces where a Lohar bride held in her hand a fish made of flour which her husband tried to shoot; and in Kanara where Brahmins took a married pair to a pond, and made them throw rice into the water and catch minnows: they let go all except one, and marked their foreheads with its scales.

Most interesting is the use of fish as a cure for impotence and in love-charms. In the Poona District there is a fish that cures impotence. 'The patient strips off his clothes, grinds some black gram, baits a hook with it, and when he has caught the fish he rubs vermilion on its head and says: "O fish I am changing my state for yours by taking the slime from your skin. Accept my offering." He then removes the slime and when it is dry eats it in the form of pills which restore his strength.'[5]

The Lhota Naga prepare a love-potion by mixing a root with cooked fish: if the suit is hopeless the loved one removes

[1] Das, op. cit., xi, 286.
[2] D. N. Majumdar, 'Customs and Tabus observed by an East Bengal Woman', *Man in India*, iii, 236.
[3] Thurston, *Castes and Tribes*, ii, 330.
[4] Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, 270 ff.
[5] Crooke, quoted by Das, op. cit., xii, 98f.

ll doubt by being sick on the spot.[1] Of the same order of leas is the Sema Naga taboo on the *akhaki* fish (which looks ke a large 'miller's thumb') and is avoided by the younger ıen because of a story which ascribes its origin to a man's enis which he accidentally knocked off with a stone after successful love-acair.[2] A Kayesth poem of the Shahabad District uses the fish-symbolism to suggest enchantment.

Fish of the Makhdum pond
Come into the river and stream
Yes, into the river and stream
O mother, my charm
What sort of girl
Enchants my son
Enchants my son?
O mother, my charm
What lovely boy
Casts his net
Casts his net?
O mother, my charm.[3]

In the present collection, it is in the Rasalu Kuar song ıat this symbolism is most fully developed. For other ɔngs about fish and for a further discussion, see *Folk-Songs f the Maikal Hills*, 155ff., and *Songs of the Forest*, 91ff. n *The Compleat Angler*, Walton has some similar stories bout fish. One is 'the mitred bishop', another 'the cowled iar'. The sargus is said to be notorious for adultery.

261

We three are going to fish
What is the hook and what the rod
And what is the line you will use?
We three are going to fish
Golden is the hook
Silver is the rod
Silken is the line
We three are going to fish.

[1] Mills, *The Lhota Nagas*, 168.
[2] Hutton, *The Sema Nagas*, 94.
[3] Archer, 'Seventeen Kayesth Poems', *Man in India*, xxiii, 15.

262

WHAT says the *kotri* fish?
I am bitterest of all
But with a little buttermilk
I am made sweet to the taste.
What says the *tengni* fish?
I have three bones
When I am cooked with tomato and brinjal
The last to eat finds nothing left.
What says the *turu* fish?
I am the Guru of them all
When something sour is cooked with me
Not even my juice is left.

263

THE rain pours down and slippery is the road
Down flops the Kewatin onto her buttocks
Her parched maize and rice is scattered about
And the town-boys run to pick it up and eat it
It was on a Friday, a Saturday or a Tuesday, lucky days
That this Kewatin was born
She is black, her name is Phulmat, her lord
Sits at the edge of the bazaar, but she sits in the middle
She spreads her shop of maize and rice, and the Baghel Shah Raja passes by.
'O Kewatin, tell me the price of your fish.'
'O Raja, what shall I say is the price of my fish?
If you once touch my fish I will cut off your ears
O Raja, hear the price of my fish
My armlets are as costly as your Baghelin's
My cloth is rich as a Koshta's
When I sell my parched rice I put on a *surra* necklace
When I sell my gram I put on my *chutki* anklets
My fish-basket is as valuable as your head
My net is worth your grandfather's whole body
My *pelna* trap is as costly as all your ancestors.
Listen then, O Raja, to what my fish are worth
The *dandwa* fish is for the Ganda, the *dandai* for the Mahara
The jumping *dema* for the Ahir; how can I say what my fish are worth?
The *malbijalwa* fish is for the Chauhan, the *karhari* and *khokhsi* for the Gond

The *aind* eel for the Teli, the *kokiya* for the Lohar
The *soriya* for the Sonar, the *medho* for the Gadaria
The *odha* and *kirri* for the Oriya, the *bāmi* for the Brahmin
The *khudwa* for the Kalar, the *ghasra* for the Kaser
The *padina* for the Pande, the *munda* for the Panka
The *bisahatengna* for the Pathan, the *jarahatengna* for th
Turka
The *jhaipurru* for the Chamar, the *maharali* for the Patw
The *bhakur* for the Kurmi, the *loi* for the Lodhi
The *kotri* for the Kewat, the *kewai* for the Kawar
The *awalsinghi* for the Rajput, the *rawacha* for the Dhima
The *sarangi* for the Sarangiha, the tortoise for the Ghasia
The *patharchatti* for the Dhobi, the crab for the Maradaniya.
So saying the Kewatin goes round from bazaar to bazaar
She hawks her wares for sale
She lifts her cloth for the money
The Raja runs after her, chases her with a basket
She stamps and kicks the Raja
He goes home in a furious temper.

264

Fish, you are wonderfully sweet today
There's no buttermilk so I'll cook you in tomatoes
And I'll mix in lots of chillies
The Munshi and Daroga put fish in *massāla* and fry in o
But we poor folk cook in water
Where can we get *massāla*?

265

The fat Kewat prepares his net
He catches the fish at night, by day he mends his net
He throws his net so cleverly that the fish's life is sad
The Kewat's son is dangerous, he makes the mesh so fine
When that Chandal throws his net those who are caught ca
never escape
The fish come and go, the crab is hanged
The crab is the crocodile's brother's son

266

Chhur chhur chhur chhur
The *saur* and the *gadni* fish
Hide in the middle of the stream
I will have to come swimming
To the middle of the stream
I throw the net towards you
But it cannot reach you
Friends, do come nearer
For your families are very large
The fish say, Brother, listen
Our death is in your hands
By killing us you feed the world
And our name will remain
Friend, when you men eat us
We fulfil our destiny
We will no longer hide
In the middle of the stream.

267

Tai tai the little fish is playing in the sand
When it gets caught in the trap
How frightened the fish is
But soon it begins to swing to and fro.

268

My lusty Kaharwa is making a net
A child is born in the Dhimar's house
They spread the net above his head
The fish in the deep pool weeps
The destroyer of my life is born
My lusty Kaharwa is making a net
As he throws it tinkles
As it settles down it spreads its wings
It kills a hundred thousand lives
Yet itself is always fasting.

269

FISH fish come and take your evening supper
All round are pebbles and dirt, but right in the middle is gold
I do not want your pebbles or dirt and I do not want your gold
I will not go to your house with you to take my evening supper
Fish fish why not come with me?
There are two or four visitors in my house
I will invite them to supper too, they are watching the road for us
I do not want your pebbles or gold, I will not go with you
Catch two or four *bod* fish instead and invite them home for your supper.

270

DOWN comes the rain, the fish swim up
Chhiriri chharara
Bring the nets and bamboo traps
Chhiriri chharara
Come sister's daughter
Chhiriri chharara
I will fill your basket
Chhiriri chharara.

271

LOVER, take your trap and catch the *mungri* fish
In what river swims the *mungri* fish
In what river swims the *gharihar*?
In the golden river swims the *mungri* fish
In the silver tank swims the *gharihar.*
Which brother catches the *mungri* fish
Which brother catches the *gharihar*?
Big brother catches the *mungri* fish
Little brother catches the *gharihar*
Lover, take your trap and catch the *mungri* fish.

272

THE *bod* fish is in the trap
It is jumping about
It will not let you catch it
In the middle of the night
You are just like a fish.

THE HUMOUR OF ANIMALS

THESE curious songs reflect the humorous attitude to animals and birds that is so common in the folk-tales. But here the humour is condensed and not always obvious. This is also a technique of Uraon poetry. For example,

The dhichua is wedding the hawk
The heron marries the wealthy maina
The parrot the big-eyed panther.

This is at once amusing to the singers and at the same time symbolizes the union of the gentle non-assertive bride with the aggressive male—the hawk, the maina, or the panther.[1] With this song W. G. Archer compares the English nursery rhyme:

A cat came fiddling out of a barn
With a pair of bag-pipes under her arm;
She could sing nothing but fiddle-de-dee,
The mouse has married the bumble-bee;
Pipe, cat—dance, mouse
We'll have a wedding at our good house.

There are other songs in Archer's Uraon collections which resemble those in the text.

The lightning dazzles in Jashpur
The rain is streaming, mother
The fields are filling
The crab has gone to plough
The snake is levelling the soil
The dragonflies are sowing
The egrets plant the seedlings
The scorpion summons the boon companions
The frogs perform the songs
The dhichua takes the chair
The sparrow brings the blossom
The owl dons his hat
My mother.[2]

[1] Archer, 66.
[2] ibid., 74.

This is a cultivation poem: another song of the same type reflects a marriage situation.

The cobra comes
With his hood raised
Asking alms
The heron comes
With his neck straight
Twirling his moustache
The frog comes
Diving and swimming.[1]

This gentle mockery of the animal world is seen also in village riddles. Here we find the pig described as 'the largest mouse in the village';[2] a bear as 'the animal who never has his hair cut';[3] a crab as 'a headless man who squats at the door'[4] or 'the limping headman who digs a well'[5]. A hen is 'a little old woman with a load of rags on her back';[6] bats are 'the white soldiers who lie downwards'[7] and a field-mouse and its mouth is 'an old woman who gathers rice for beer'.[8]

Garcia Lorca occasionally reveals the same tendency in his poems, as in the 'Song':

The he-lizard and the she-lizard
with little white aprons

Have lost without wanting to
their wedding ring.[9]

And in the 'Ode to the King of Harlem':

With a spoon
he scooped out the eyes of crocodiles
and spanked the monkeys on their bottoms.
With a spoon.[10]

[1] ibid., 122.
[2] *Man in India*, xxiii, 279 (Savara).
[3] ibid., 284 (Asur).
[4] ibid., 288 (Kharia).
[5] ibid., 289 (Munda).
[6] ibid., 272 (Baiga).
[7] ibid., 306 (Santal).
[8] ibid., 285 (Kharia).
[9] F. G. Lorca, *Poems*. Translated by S. Spender and L. Gili (London, 1942), 9.
[10] ibid., 67.

Simplest, and deepest in our memories are such nursery rhymes as—

Sing hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon!
The little dog laughed to see such sport
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

273

FISH from the river cowdung the platform
The tortoise clangs the cymbals
The hostile crocodile blows the conch
The prawn hums the note
The poor little frog gets ready the liquor
The water-snake is drunk already
Well done, my crab, my dear enemy
You have brought out the earth
There is nothing for us in all the world.

274

HUTUK my girl, catch the dove by its two wings
And wave it up and down
The poor little antelope is at the plough
The monkey is master
Your field is Ganges and Jamna
The tank is your threshing-floor
The twelve bullocks go round
A lizard is driving them round
He picks the grain out with his finger
That wretched prawn has come for alms
But the monkey kicks it away
The prawn weeps and says, Listen, you monkey
If ever you come to my river
I'll up with my whiskers and give you a hiding.

275

YOU are pock-marked and thick-skinned
Your face is red
When you see people
You blow out your cheeks

May your nature burn!
Astonishing is your colour and your shape
How crookedly you go
Little boy says, Look out you frog
With one blow from my stick your fate will come
May your nature burn!

The expression *khadra-bhasra*, which suggests a very ugly person, pock-marked and with a thick unpleasant skin, is regarded as very insulting. I cannot explain why this song—from Uprora—should be so hostile to the frog, which is eaten with pleasure by many aboriginals.

276

THE *kotri* swims up the shallows
The *padina* mounts the middle of the stream
The crab climbs into its burrow
The crocodile goes with the marriage-party
Lovely girl, what did you say
In the middle of the stream?

277

THE tiger beats the *bāgh-dumur*
The bear blows the *tur*
The fox plays the *ran-mohar*
And the big-tailed peacock dances.

278

THE stars come up
In crowds into the sky
May the lives of all be saved
The tiger sits with the winnowing-fan
The jackal takes the patient's pulse
The bear rocks to and fro in trance.

The three animals are represented as working like Guniā-magicians—the tiger broods over the winnowing-fan seeking to divine the cause of the disease; the jackal pretends to feel the pulse, the bear swings its head and body in trance.

The following song is not specially about animals, but since it is meant to be funny, I include it here.

279

SARWAN had three tanks dug
Two were dry, in one there was no water
Three Kewat plunged into them
Two were drowned, of one there was no trace
They caught three *kotri* fish
Two were rotten, one had no belly
They sold them for three rupees
Two were false, and one could not be traded
With this they bought three calves
Two went astray, one would not come
The calves had three graziers
Two were deaf, one could not hear
They had three wives
Two were dumb, one could not speak
They had three sons
Two were barren, one had no children.

The song actually repeats a common formula probably widely current in village India. An early version was printed in *North Indian Notes and Queries* (iv, 136). 'There were three tanks on the point of a thorn; of these two were dry and the third held no water. In the one which held no water settled three potters; of whom two were handless and one had no hands. The one who had no hands made three pots; of these two were broken and one had no bottom. In the last were cooked three grains of rice; two turned out raw and the third did not soften. To eat the one which did not soften were invited three guests: two were angry and one could not be conciliated. The one who would not be conciliated was given three shoe-blows. Two missed him and one did not hit him'. And so on into a long tale of nonsense.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

POLITICAL SONGS

In recording songs whose nature can generally be called 'political', it is necessary to try to distinguish those which are genuine folk-songs from those (and there are many) which have been circulated as propaganda by political movements. The songs in this section represent, I believe, the untutored reaction of pre-literate people to current topics, the war of 1939-45, the Congress Movement, high prices, the returned soldier. The most deeply felt of the songs, however, are those dealing with a more ancient grievance: the loss of land and position in the face of modern competition.

280

Aho Gandhi Maharaj, through the world your name is spread
In some places you give lectures, in some you wave the flag
Cloth is cheap now and grain goes for a rupee a *khandi*
In all the world your name is known.
Now cows are sold, and buffaloes. Our bullocks are all taken
There is the German-English war and Gandhi's gone to jail
Now two hands of cloth cost a rupee and a hand-and-a-half of homespun
Now we cannot get even a bellyful of food
And all mankind is ruined
Your name is famous throughout the world.
Bring back your rule again.

281

That lovely girl's sari is dragging in the dust
Everywhere in the world flies Baba Gandhi's flag.

282

The little boy is wearing a tattered bit of cloth
We put on home-spun, at Gandhi Baba's order.

283

In the new house a pillar is planted
The world turns round at Nehru Baba's order.

284

WHEN you bathe you clean yourself and put on fresh cloth
Bhagavan himself is fighting for our religion.

285

GANDHI strikes with a spear, Jawahar shoots his arrow
Nehru soothes the sorrow of Bharat Mata.

286

WHEN a temple is built the people come to see it
Gandhi seeks Shivraj for the sake of our religion.

THE WAR OF 1939-45

287

Eh hey hai the German-English war
From Jubbulpore the lorries run
From Bombay come the cars
The railway comes from Delhi
From Raipur runs the wire
As I was selling sweets
In the Raipur bazaar
The English troops came running
The planes flew overhead.

288

By work we fill our bellies
By the German war we die.

289

We can't get fish
We can't get rice
We all are ruined
By the German war.

290

Knives, swords and guns
What a lot of them there are
O you who would go to the war
Beware.

291

The English Raja
Has a golden fort
German mothers and children
Are fighting to get it.

292

O GREAT English King
Throughout the world your name is known
We are the singers of Karma songs
The German-Japan war is on
But the English are winning
Victory to the Kingdom.

THE SOLDIER ON LEAVE

293

THIS year he is enjoying his Holi
A topi on his head, a pair of boots, gaiters
Coat, waist-coat, pantaloons
A five-coloured muffler round his neck
Cigarettes in a packet and a box of matches
He cleans himself with a brush
He has done his hair 'English style'
No oil for him—he puts attar
When he takes off his topi
He looks like a Bengali
His dhoti goes down to his ankles
At home he talks English, the house-folk do not understand
He calls for 'Water' and when they bring bread
He abuses them for their ignorance
'Commere commere' he says to his friend, 'let's go to the istation'
Babu has shown 'Singal down', the train will soon be coming
He talks English *gitpit gitpit* and no one understands
No more 'Salaam' or 'Ram-ram' for him, he bids you 'Guda moraning'.

THE LAND

294

ONCE the Gond Raja
Had the land
Now the English
Have the Raj
Now before you put down your foot
You must blow on the path to clear it
Rama and Lakshman were dwellers in the forest
They chased the deer and killed it
When the Gond Raja
Had the land.

295

Do not trick us into decay
In the old days
The Gond Raja
The Gond landlord
Remitted our taxes
Let us graze our cattle free
But today
The Hindu landlord
The Hindu merchant
Taxes twice as much
And snares us with sweet words.

296

How dangerous is a Sahib's order
For little things he takes a fine
The Lord gave them the kingdom
Their wisdom is great
They give their orders throughout the world
Now to man, now to woman
Where is Ramachandra?
Where is Lakshman?
Where is Janakdulari?
Ramachandra is away in Lanka
Lakshman is away in Parlanka
Janakdulari is away in Janakpuri.

THE INSPECTOR

297

THE Inspector
What a good thing he is transferred
For a pice
He took fowls and eggs
And who could buy cloth in the bazaar
For a pice
But the Inspector?

*

FAMINE SONGS

FOR the peasant, history is a matter not of wars but of harvests. I have never heard a song about the Mutiny or the Boer War or the War of 1914-18; I have not heard one (out of a collection of many thousands) which so much as mentions a Viceroy or a Governor by name; in recent times it has been possible to collect a handful, but only a handful, of political songs. On the other hand there is an extensive folk-literature of poverty and famine.

There are reports of famine in Chhattisgarh in 1828-9, in 1834-5, and in 1845, but the first great famine of which we have a full account was in 1868-9. The rains failed early in August and in Raipur the harvest was only a quarter of the average. Tenants surrendered their rights to land in order to gain relief and large numbers of people left the area. Villages of forty or fifty people were reduced to two or three and many were wholly deserted and given back to the jungle. The forest tribes, however, as so often happens, were able to fall back on a successful kodon crop. In May 1869 cholera broke out on the relief works and the Deputy Commissioner, Captain Twyford, who went to organize medical relief, was himself attacked and died.[1]

In 1886 the rains were again poor and the high-lying rice was destroyed. The second song printed here describes the distress in Bilaspur.

There followed the tragedies of the very end of the century. In 1896 the rains were erratic and, after heavy floods, almost entirely failed in September; the rice-crop withered and the ground became too dry for spring crops to be sown. Famine was severe in Raipur and Bilaspur, though Sambalpur had a good crop and attracted many immigrants from the stricken districts.[2] There was a rush of labourers in Raipur to the public works during the hot weather, and at one time as many as 70,000 persons were being employed. In May 1897 over 100,000 people were receiving relief in Raipur and 90,000 in Bilaspur. The mortality rose steeply (in Raipur

[1] A. E. Nelson, *Raipur District Gazetteer* (Bombay, 1909), 207 ff.

[2] R. H. Craddock, *Report on the Famine in the Central Provinces in 1896 and 1897* (Nagpur, 1898), i, 75.

from 41 per mille in 1896 to 81 per mille the following year) and the birth-rate fell. The practice of *langni*, or starvation treatment, in fever added to the deaths.[1] The name of H. M. Laurie, then Deputy Commissioner of Raipur, will long be remembered as a symbol of enterprise and devotion to the cause of relief.

The people turned to all manner of wild roots, fruits and vegetables. They ate the unwholesome fruit of the sal, a bitter and irritative nut, and the rank chikora or wild indigo. But it was the mahua tree that saved the lives of thousands of starving people. 'The mahua blossom', says H. Sharp, 'is of so valuable a nature that the prospects of the mahua crop are regularly recorded in the Gazette. It provides the people, when dried, with a wholesome diet. This year the crop was a heavy one; the people expended their energies in gathering it; much was eaten and but little stored.'[2]

The century opened with yet another famine, and the rains failed again in 1902-03 and in 1907-08. More recently the crops have been protected against the capriciousness of the seasons by great irrigation works. Between 1920 and 1930, the Tandula canal in the Drug District and the Mahanadi canal in the Raipur District were completed and shortly afterwards the splendid Maniari and Kharung schemes in Bilaspur were brought into action. By 1931, 147,282 acres were being irrigated in Raipur, 112,388 in Drug and 43,807 in Bilaspur.[3]

In 1940, the high prices of war combined with a failure of the rains to cause a partial famine which is recorded in one of the songs printed in the text.

298

THE virgin grain is perishing of hunger
The water maiden dies of thirst
The god of fire is shivering with cold
The stone breaks to excrete.

[1] ibid., 131.
[2] H. Sharp, 'Note on Famine in Mandla District', Appendix i of ibid., 3.
[3] *Census of India, 1931*, xii, Part i, 49.

299

1868

Hai there is nothing one can say
The Dhobi left his work of washing clothes
The Rawat forgot his Doha songs
The boys threw stones at every house
We cooked gruel of sawa, even the kutki was finished
I fall at thy feet, O Mahua, it was you who saved our lives
We went to market to buy earthen pots
In the famine of '68 the hyenas bit men's buttocks as they slept by the wayside
Bara Saheb and Chhota Saheb made poor men's kitchens
There was no sign of caste or tribe; everyone ate together
Little children were so thin the kites could take them off
At this time came the Census-men; they wrote on the walls
From village to village wandered beggars, earthen dishes in their hands
They begged a little rice-water and thus they saved their lives
They made a soup of leaves and thus they saved their lives
As mother-in-law sat with daughter-in-law for food, the crows would bite their noses
The Bara Saheb and Chhota Saheb made us break stones
They gave us six pice a day and thus they saved our lives
They cooked rice and curry, stirring it with wooden spoons
Husband and wife slept for weariness, and their children wept.

300

1886

Eh he hai I cannot tell it all
In '86 what happened I cannot tell it all
The Chhota Saheb, the Bara Saheb, they came to open kitchens
There was no place for separate castes or leaf-plates
The beggars went from place to place, with vessels in their hands
O sister, give us some rice-water and that will save our lives
Along the roads they break the stones and get three annas each

Not a cowrie is left; they blame their hapless fate
Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law cook separately
Nothing is left in the pot
When any visitor comes by, the people run away.

The usual Chhattisgarh tradition of hospitality collapses; when a visitor comes the people hide for fear that he will ask for food and they be compelled by their own good-heartedness to give it.

301

1897-8

Hai brother hear what happened in '98
There was famine in '97; next year death came with cholera
By the great heat in Chait and Baisakh we were saved
In Jeth and Asadh we began to die of cholera
In some places one or two, in others ten or twenty were counted
In some houses there were none left to weep for the dead
For fear no one would come to drag the corpses out
It was forbidden to go from place to place
Men smelt the stink of rotting flesh
Why did Bhagavan devise this way of dying
That the soul should go out in excreta and vomit?
With parched throat the sick man begs for water
They give it from afar, afraid even to look at him
Some lost mothers, some fathers, brothers, daughters, sons, there was great sorrow everywhere
Sometimes husband and wife died together; some men lost wives, many woman were widowed
They did not cover the corpses properly with earth; dogs and crows ate the bodies
When I tell this, water falls from my eyes; those who saw it know it true, it is a tale for those who hear
In each village the Baiga worked his magic and offered sacrifice; the doctor gave his medicine
With great difficulty Mata Dhuki Dai was appeased
It was dry in Sawan, no rain fell, it was hard to get water
With Asadh's rain the rice sprang up; with Sawan's drought it withered
We held our heads and wept
Puddling ceased, there was no weeding to be done

There was no work to be had, there was no food to eat
This is what happened in '98; in front came Dhuki Dai,
behind her came the famine.

302

1940

In '40 there was a great famine
Fence the gardens, keep a hole in the wall
The children of the house are begging for bread
Hail has taken away the wheat
The oil-seed has dried
The children of the house have died of hunger
Even the rats have run away
Even the cats are gone.

SONGS ABOUT EACH OTHER

SONGS and catches about the different castes always go well in Chhattisgarh villages, which often have a mixed population. Take, for example, the following poem:

303

On every roof the flowering gourds are swinging
The Kewat boy is strong
With what force he pushes the *pelna* trap through the water
The Dhulia boy is strong
How vigorously he weaves his baskets
The Lohar boy is strong
With what might he hammers the iron
The Panka boy is strong
How deftly he threads the warp
The Gond boy is strong
With what power he ploughs his field.

This is probably an apt characterization of the boys of the different castes. Songs about the girls reflect rather on their morals.

304

A TELI girl is smooth and oily
A Gondin's hair is always tousled
A Panka girl is highly coloured
She soon calls you indoors.

305

A TELI girl is smooth and oily
A Pardhan girl has a straight parting to her hair
A Panka girl goes visiting from house to house
An Ahir girl spreads gossip everywhere.

The words used are expressive. The Telin is *chikan-chandan*, with hair smooth and glossy with the oil that it is her profession to extract. The Gondin is *jhinjri*, wild and dishevelled. The Pankin is *rangraili*, exciting and colourful—and of easy morals. The Pardhanin is *māng-chiknin*, an

expression which exactly describes the habit of making a very straight emphatic parting with the hair pulled down hard and tight on either side. Finally, the Ahirin is *chugli-batain*, for in her function of seller of curds from house to house or grazier of other people's cattle she naturally has many temptations to gossip and as naturally yields to them.

The Panka, who is not only a weaver but often holds the post of village watchman, is a stock figure of mockery. He was 'born of drops of water'; 'he went out to fight and was frightened by a frog'. His morals are generally suspect.

306

PANKA boys are *rangrasiya*
If the cloth is not even they smooth it with rice-water.

307

PANKA, Pardhan, Patan
These three are great Satan.

308

THE Panka girl has sand in her parts
Bring your digging-stick and get it out.

309

THE stupid Gond
Is like a measure made of castor-wood
He sells his cattle
To pay a petty fine.

The Gond is regarded as abysmally stupid. His treachery and untrustworthiness (I do not support the fiction of the 'honest' Gond of Chhattisgarh) is emphasized in the proverb—'A Gond, a woman, or a dream: never claim that these are yours'. And 'so hard-hearted is the Gond that he might have cows'-bones in his belly'. His meanness is also notorious. 'There is none more generous than the Gond—but he won't part unless you kick him.' 'The Gond are so united, they even share a little bit of bread with one another.'

The Ahir too, even in their own songs, are given the worst of reputations.

310

AHIR and Gadaria are a dirty lot
They excrete at midday
And wash their arses at night.

311

THE Rawatin has an always open door
The *domi* snake has gone inside.

312

THE Ahir and Gadaria are stealers of *bāsi*
They beg frog-soup from house to house.

313

THE Chamar, Sonar, and Darji
If you don't know how tricky they are
Put them in the scales and see.

314

IN the Chamar's house
Is a stool of sandalwood
The Chamar awakes
And at once cuts up cow-hide
Poor Sandalwood
It thinks in its mind
I've fallen into a fool's hands.

THE DANCE

KARMA SONGS

315

We children have come to see the Karma
Let us join in the dance
We had never seen this village
We did not know the road
We asked our way as we went along
Let us join in the dance
We have brought no vessels
We have no rice or pulse
We came begging along the road
Let us join in the dance.

316

Enjoy yourself as you can
It is written in your fate
That by your labour in the world
You will at last get the fruit
Your name is Eunuch
For you have taken woman's form
Enjoy yourself as you can.

317

Were you a eunuch
I would embrace you
I would hug you in my arms
We would go together to Ganga-Jamna
Were you a eunuch.

The eunuchs of Chhattisgarh are called Halba, Gandu, Marua and most commonly Karba. Many explanations are given of their origin. A Binjhwar declared that in a previous birth the first eunuch gave worthless seed to a friend to sow, and now he is punished by being seedless. Korwa opinion preferred the view that 'such men are born because their father was exhausted and mother particularly vigorous at the time of conception'. A Satnami said that the condi-

tion was a punishment for intercourse with a sister or a cow in a previous birth.

'The eunuch is a man who has no pleasure or profit in anything.' He is considered a god, for a woman can embrace him as she would an idol, even in front of her husband. He is believed to be easily irritated: if people laugh at him he may expose himself or excrete in front of them. In East Mandla there was once a famous pair of male-female twins, both eunuchs, belonging to the Bhima tribe. They had the right to demand a basket of rice and a rupee from the wealthier Gond.

318

WHEN the wind blows I am reminded
Bend down your head, O Rawan
Sur sur sur sur blows the wind and the trees sway
Khir khir khira the leaves fall on the cows' resting-place
He bathes in the dark pool
And gathers spiral shells
He turns the stone over
And three times blows the conch
He makes his rice yellow
And calls the gods of the four quarters
Today the wind blows and I am reminded.

319

SHYAM has plunged into the river.
There is a wonder I have not seen before
On Jamna's bank a corpse is standing
Its flesh leaves the bones and talks
Shyam rows his boat across the river
The ant goes in the marriage-party
Nine lakhs of camels bring the bride
Shyam puts the elephant under his armpit
And rows his boat across the river.
There is another wonder I have not seen before
The peasants plough on rocky ground
Fire burns on water; without water they make bread
Shyam rows his boat across the river.
There is another wonder I have not seen before
Fire is burning in the well
The water is boiling and the fish play Phag.

320

ALHA carried a sword for the sake of his bhauji Sonwa
Loveliest of birds is the koel
Loveliest of snakes is the cobra
Loveliest of women is Sonwa for whose sake Alha carried a sword
Who fights in the streams and hollows?
Who fights in Kajli-Kachhar?
Who fights in the narrow streets?
Alha fights in the streams and hollows
Udal fights in Kajli-Kachhar
Malkhe fights in the narrow streets
O Alha carries a sword for the sake of his bhauji Sonwa.

This Karma refers to the heroes of the *Alhkhand*, the very popular cycle of poems that relate the exploits of Alha and Udal. These were two warriors who were engaged by Raja Parmal, the Chandel ruler of Mahoba in Bundelkhand, against Raja Prithivi of Delhi. Raja Prithivi finally defeated Parmal in A.D. 1182 and broke the Chandel power. Sir G. A. Grierson has given a resumé of the story, which contains interminable accounts of battles wherein the heroes display their powers, in *The Indian Antiquary*, xiv, 255 ff. and Temple has recorded an incident from the cycle about Malkhe or Malkan, a Zamindar who fought against Prithivi Raja and was killed by him.[1]

321

OUR village Pandit is a very holy priest
As soon as he lies down to sleep
He gets up for a bath
His sacred images are the two breasts of a woman
His conch is the vagina
The Gond girls of his village are wonderfully adventurous
They climb every day onto the hollow bamboos
They adore the plantains
That grow by the Pandit's cottage
And you can find them any moment
Busy in his cucumber garden.

[1] Temple, iii, 39 ff. For the entire cycle, see Waterfield, *The Lay of Alha.*

322

SANDAL is not haldi's equal
Haldi was born in the garden of a Marar
It goes to the house of the Seth
Sandal is not haldi's equal
I haldi change the young boy's state
I sandal am offered in worship
Sandal is not haldi's equal.

SUA SONGS

THERE is little difference between the Sua dancing and singing in Chhattisgarh and in the Maikal Hills. The women dance in a circle, bending forward and clapping their hands. As they move round they lift their feet in imitation of a parrot's walk. At festivals they sometimes make clay-parrots and carry them on their heads.

In these songs the parrot appears as the confidant and adviser of women, especially of young married girls.

This is in the classical Indian tradition which represents the parrot as a learned bird and acquainted with the four Vedas.[1] In a Kashmir folk-tale Raja Hams, who is the lord of all the birds, takes advice from a parrot because of its great knowledge and wisdom.[2] In the Bombay Presidency, according to Enthoven, 'the parrot is worshipped by singers desiring to improve their voices. It is also worshipped by dull persons desirous of improving their intellect'.[3]

This wisdom makes a parrot the ideal messenger between lovers and in Indian folk-lore its special task is the uniting of husband and wife, devoted friends or separated lovers. In a Santal tale a Raja's daughter falls in love with a man whose hair is twelve cubits long and she sends her parrot to find him. The parrot very cleverly steals his flute and leads the hero back to the Raja's daughter with the result that the two are married.[4] In a Bengal folk-tale, recorded by Day, a parrot arranges the marriage of a Raja with a beautiful woman who lives beyond the seven seas and the thirteen rivers.[5] A parrot performs similar functions in several Kashmir tales.[6] Garib Chand, distracted with an impossible love for the wife of a Mussalman neighbour, sings, 'Fly, parrot, give my message to my Beloved. Kiss her feet. Tell her with tears of my plight.'[7]

[1] Samuel Butler knew a man who disliked parrots because they were too intelligent.
[2] Knowles, op. cit., 450.
[3] R. E. Enthoven, *The Folklore of Bombay* (Oxford, 1924), 220.
[4] A. Campbell, *Santal Folk Tales* (Pokhuria, 1891), 16, 114.
[5] L. B. Day, *Folk-Tales of Bengal* (London, 1889), 156.
[6] Knowles, op. cit., 65, 317.
[7] Usborne, 28.

It is not for nothing that in Hindu mythology the god of love, Kamadeva, has as his vehicle a parrot.

An excellent Mirzapur story describes how a clever parrot restored her husband to a princess.[1] Another tale, from Pilibhit, tells of the wisdom and justice with which Ganga Ram the parrot ruled over its fellows.[2]

As a messenger the parrot constantly occurs in the whole range of folk-lore. In the *Alhkhand,* Chandrabal has a parrot called Hiraman who carries letters for him. Sumwa has another parrot of the same name.[3] In the Punjab folk-tale, 'The Wonderful Ring', the hero's parrot brings him news about his abducted wife.[4]

But the parrot is something more than this. It is the confidant and friend of hero and heroine. In the beautiful Bengal ballad, 'Kajalrekha', the parrot is the inseparable companion of the sorrowful heroine. 'Every night she talks of her hopes and sorrows to the bird. She asks the question over and over again as to when her evil days will be at an end. The bird soothes her by sweet words as best as it can'.[5] In several of the versions of the Rasalu legend, the parrot is one of the hero's trusted friends; it resists all attempts of the Rani's seducer to corrupt it and finally tells Rasalu the whole sad tale.

For indeed it is as a spy and reporter that the parrot is commonly represented and here its character is not always seen in a very favourable light. In the Kashmir tale the 'clever' parrot spies on the hero's wife and informs him of everything she does. In the 'Kajalrekha' ballad, when the heroine is accused of unchastity, the parrot which had been in the room with its mistress all night could easily have cleared her character when called on to do so, but it refused and suggested that she should be banished to the forest. Sen in a foot-note tries to apologize for the bird by saying that it saw with its prophetic eyes that its evidence would not be believed and that it was no use standing against fate[6] but it is not very easy to admire the bird's conduct on this occasion even though at the end of the ballad it comes to the rescue, vindicates its mistress and as a Dharam-

[1] *N. I. Notes and Queries*, iv, 27.
[2] ibid., iii, 101.
[3] Waterfield, 210.
[4] Steel, op. cit., 185-94.
[5] Sen, i, 271.
[6] ibid., 273.

mati goes straight to heaven. But this parrot is a good and admirable creature compared to the odious bird in the ballad of Sitaram Naik which does its best to ruin a young bride's happiness and nearly leads to the destruction of its master.

The close association of the parrot with human beings leads to its being frequently represented in the folk-lore as a bird into which people are transformed by magic. The Apsara Ghritachi transformed herself into a parrot in order to avoid the importunities of the great Rishi Vedavyasa. In the *Alhkhand*, Indal, the son of Alha, is turned into a parrot by a sorceress and is ultimately married to her.[1] Udan too is turned into a parrot by the wandering gipsy girl Subhia Birini.[2] The life-index of ogres and magicians is often contained in the body of a parrot. This is so in the tale of Punchkin from Western India where the hero's life-index is in a small green parrot in a jungle many thousands of miles away.[3]

The parrot then readily becomes, like the maina, a girl symbol. Malua, the gypsy girl, is a parrot; so is Mahua, a sweet parrot lost from a golden cage.

The parrot is often associated with the maina, as in one of Temple's songs from the Punjab.

> The parrot screams on the branch of the mango tree; the maina chatters in the hedge.
> Repeat the name of Ram: the days are short, and the nights long.
> Come, my parrot, sit in the cage, I feed you with pearl-food.
> I will give milk and rice to the parrot; and crumbs and *ghi* to the maina.[4]

323

> WHO dug the tank, parrot?
> Who prepared its banks?
> Father had it dug, parrot
> Mother made the banks
> Brother planted a garden round
> Bhauji cares for the flowers.

[1] Waterfield, 212.
[2] ibid., 256 f.
[3] J. Jacobs, *Indian Fairy Tales* (London, 1892), 34.
[4] Temple, 'Some Hindu Folksongs from the Panjab', *J.A.S.B.*, li, 176.

324

DIGGING with my fingers, parrot
I planted cassia flowers
That flower blooms at midnight, parrot
The Brahmin boy put my flower in his hair, parrot
And went to the great Raja
Laughing he made Johar, parrot
O Raja, accept my salutation
The Raja gives him a sandal seat
And Bengal *pān* to eat, parrot
'Will you take the Blue-Goose horse
Or ten villages as a gift?' Did you hear, parrot?
The Blue-Goose horse may stray or die
The ten villages may be lost
My dhoti comes to my knees, parrot
It should hang down to my toes
I will go to visit your Palace
The Brahmin boy is so handsome, parrot
He sends his glances afar
On a seat of gold sits the Raja's daughter
The boy's love is for her, parrot.

325

MY parrot opens the ripe ripe mangoes
Its cuts them open and eats them
My parrot throws down the ripe ripe lemons
It sucks the fresh juice
Thence my parrot flies away
And sits on a branch of the guava tree
My parrot, I am drying rice on tamarind leaves
The King of the Sparrows
Pecks and eats it, parrot.

326

MOON-PEARL King has a daughter, parrot
She is doing her hair
With her long comb, parrot
In the courtyard, parrot
She has put her golden basket
On the verandah, parrot
She is cleaning the silver rice

327

THERE is fruit on the guava tree
The boughs hang down, parrot
O beautiful flute!
On the roof the plantain leaves
Look pretty, parrot
O beautiful flute!
Digging with my finger
I planted beans, parrot
Now the stalk is heavy
Father-in-law
Give me a golden pole
For I want to pick my beans
Daughter-in-law
We have no golden pole
Send for one from your mother's house
May fire burn this place, parrot
But flowers blossom in my mother's house
Father-in-law
Give me a golden sickle
For I want to cut my bean-stalk
Digging with my finger
I planted it, parrot.

328

YOU sit with your flute
In the cold shadow of the kadam tree
The cows are scattered
In the honey-sweet forest
Listen little brother
Asks the parrot
What sorrow has withered you
In the honey-sweet forest?
Go home today, little brother
I will look after your cows.

A HALBA SUA SONG

329

WHICH bird looks green O parrot and which has dark wings?
The parrot looks green and the koel has dark wings.
Where does my green parrot live and where my koel?
In the crowded garden lives my parrot, on the mango branch the koel.
What does my green parrot eat and what my koel?
The green parrot drinks the juice and the koel eats the mango.
What does my green parrot say and what my koel?
Karan karan says my parrot, *kuhuk kuhuk* says my koel.
Rani Sukhmatiya hears them calling and she thinks in her mind.
Sukhmatiya asks her friends, 'What birds are those calling?'
Her friends answer, 'Listen, princess Sukhmatiya,
The parrot and the koel call at midnight'.
'My heart is pleased with their talk, go all about and catch them'.
'O daughter, how can we catch birds, they won't settle on our hands'.
Sukhmatiya says to her friends, 'Somehow or other you must catch them'.
Her friends say, 'What will you promise us if we do?'
Sukhmatiya says, 'O elder sisters, what can I promise you?'
'Promise this, that whoever catches the birds—you will marry him'.
The princess thought it over and wrote a letter to her father.
'Father, the parrot and the koel are in my garden, I will marry whoever catches them.
Proclaim this in your royal city'.
The Raja read the letter and proclaimed it in the city.
'Let all the city youths go today to catch the birds.
I will give my daughter to whoever catches the parrot and the koel'.
The chelik of the city heard it and quickly made ready.
When they reached the garden they tried to catch the birds.
There were thick leaves and branches and the birds hid in them.

The chelik tried every means and not one could catch them,
Until at last they wearied and went home and told the Raja.
When Sukhmatiya heard it she sent a letter to Bairagarh.
She first wrote Ram Johar and then twice Salaam;
She wrote it all and said, Read this and come quickly.
She tied it on her dog's neck and sent it to Bairagarh.
In eight days the dog reached Bairagarh city.
It went into the Raja's house and dropped the letter from its mouth.
The Raja read it and proclaimed the matter in his city.
The chelik read the letter and considered in their minds.
Next day they got ready and put on their decorations;
Each put on ten men's adornments and nine-coloured turbans.
'O girl, they have come and are camping in the garden;
From outside they drive the birds, inside they spread their nets;
They spread the bird-lime, they spread nets in every place'.
They remembered the gods of their house and called on them for aid.
'Let the birds be caught and we will sacrifice to you'.
The gods went round about and caused the birds to be caught.

When the parrot and the koel were in the net,
The Raja's son of Bairagarh took them in his hand.
Carefully he caught them so that he could take them living.
Lovingly he put them in a golden cage.
Rani Sukhmatiya saw it with her eyes and there was joy in her heart.
At midnight she heard the birds talking and she was very happy.
Next day the Raja thought, 'O brother, I promised my daughter'.
He built the green green booth and prepared for the marriage.
Sukhmatiya and the prince went round the pole together.
When the wedding was over they had every kind of joy.
The Raja gave them half his kingdom and many diamonds and pearls.
The two ruled together and the hopes of many hearts were fulfilled.
For twelve years the prince lived in his father-in-law's house.

Then the Raja's son of Bairagarh got ready to go home.
He climbed on a horse and picked his Rani up behind him.
The Raja drove his horse and it galloped to the city.

In four days they reached the city Bairagarh.
With Ram Johar he greeted his mother and father.
With Sitaram they saluted all their friends.
The two were like two cranes and the villagers were pleased.

330

THE dark koel sings *kahar-kahar*
At midnight calls the peacock
How beautiful is the peacock's cry
Happily sleeps the village
But the headman cannot sleep
For his daughter has gone to her husband's house
She has written and sent a letter
'Send my brother to bring me home?'
'Sister, how can I come to bring you?
The river flows between and stops us.'
'Brother, give the boat-girl ten rupees
And she will bring you over.'
'Stay here tonight', says the boat-girl
'And tomorrow I will take you over'.
'But sister what will you give me to eat
In the cold night how will you cover me?'
'In the day I will give you bits of fish to eat
At night I will cover you with my fish-net.'

RECREATION

DADARIA SONGS

ON the general form and technique of the Dadaria songs (in Chhattisgarh they are also called Ban-bhajan or Salho), sufficient has been written[1]: here I will only give a brief summary to make the songs that follow more intelligible.

Throughout India, as in Spain and China, two-line rhyming songs are very popular. These may either be sung as single poems or a number of them may be improvized, strung together, and bandied to and fro for a considerable time. In Chhattisgarh, the Dadaria are sometimes sung competitively between men and women, and it is said that if a man wins he can take the woman; if she wins, she can take the man and her own husband must go elsewhere. I doubt, however, if this bargain is ever kept.

Of a similar type are the *tappa* or *misra* songs of the Pathan[2]. The *dastānagh* of the Baloches are short love-songs of a few lines sung to the *nar* or Baloche pipe, free open-air compositions, 'prevailing only among the hillmen and tending to die out in the more settled parts of the country'[3]. But these are not true Dadaria, though resembling them, for they are not exclusively two-lined. Nearer to the Dadaria in form and method are the couplets of the long Punjabi song *Hār Phulān de*, translated by H. A. Rose, in which a man and his girl address each other in rhyme.

Man:

Thy locks have fallen into curls like black snakes
Thy cheeks are fairer than the rose.

Girl:

Thy colour is fairer than the moon
Thy navel is more intoxicating than a flask of wine.

Man:

Thine eyes are sweeter than the mango or the pomegranate
Thy nose more slender than the edge of a sword.

[1] See *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, 89 ff.; Bhagwat, 2 ff.
[2] Devendra Satyarthi 'Song-harvest from the Pathan Country', *The Modern Review*, Oct. 1935.
[3] Dames, xxix.

Girl:

O why dost thou sit and let loose the arrows of thine eyes
O why dost thou pierce my breast with the spears of thy glances?

Man:

The arrangement of thy hair is captivating
The pomegranate of thy jacket is full of juice.[1]

In this collection the Doha of the Ahir and the Biraha of the Panka are of the same technical type as the Dadaria.

The method is two-fold. Sometimes the second line is a genuine extension of the first; sometimes it is merely suggested by the rhyme.

Bahera ke khodra ma pakade maina
Tor masti jawāni ma galāye lamsaina
Mor karela re dos.
In the hollow of the bahera you caught a maina
For your strong youth you have kept a Lamsena.

Here the first line was probably inspired by the need to find a rhyme for *lamsaina*, yet here is a true Dadaria with correct parallelism between the lines. The maina, the pet, in the hollow; the Lamsena, pet boy in the house, for the girl's lusty youth.

But this kind of couplet is only for the rhyme:

Sāwan re bhādon wode la kamra
Satnāmi ke maram nahi jānay chamra.
In Sawan and Bhadon wrap yourself in a blanket
The Chamar does not know the ways of the Satnami.

There is no possible connexion here between the two halves of the song; they have come together through the necessity of rhyming *kamra* and *chamra*.

But in many others the connexion is subtle but true and their study throws a light on the mentality of the singers.

For example, the first line of No. 364 creates the atmosphere: the young mushrooms are sprouting in August, the bamboo-shoots, young and vigorous, are coming up; mushrooms often symbolize the immature breasts of young girls, little bamboo shoots are equally suggestive of youth. Then in the next line 'How can I spend my days while my body is

[1] Rose, 'A Triplet of Panjabi Songs', *The Indian Antiquary*, xxxviii, 34 f. I have given the final couplet to the man, departing from Rose but following the Editor.

green', we see the mushroom-girl, green and immature as a bamboo-shoot, longing for maturity and the expression of love. Mushrooms and bamboo-shoots are things to eat, and the green body too will be eaten when it is ripe.

No. 350 speaks in its first line of 'Clouds to the east, the rain falls in the south' and one can see the wild deserted road over the hills with a threat of storm all round. Clouds and rain are conventional sex-symbols, and lead us direct to the second line, 'You delight in the play of love, but you are anxious as you go'. The threat of rain, before which the traveller hurries home, matches the girl's anxiety as she tastes the stolen joys of love.

The proper way to translate Dadaria or Doha is in two long English lines, but I have not always been able to do that. Sometimes the poem fell naturally into four short lines, especially when the need for haste inside the line was not apparent; sometimes the song was overfull of ideas to allow of a two-line English version. But, however printed in English, the original is a two-line, often rhyming, song.

AHIR DADARIA

331

THE virgin drinks water from the well
The young mother takes it from the river.

332

FOR mother-in-law a fowl, for father-in-law a goat
For her own husband a crab beneath a stone.

333

YOU have put linseed oil on your body, my bird
I try to make you understand, but your heart is not for me.

334

THE ploughman in front has torn his nail
The ploughman behind has broken the eggs.

335

YOU are catching fish and you've a *kotri* in your hand
Into your basket, O motiari, I'll put my fishing-rod.

336

THE lapwing has its nest apart
You are opening your grain-bin to peep at the hole.

337

THE ploughman is driving his brown bullocks over there
To enjoy its woman, the rat scampers to the hill.

338

ON the hill I quickly gather mahua flowers
Out of my poverty I speak; your soul is hard, my cartman.

339

YOU eat pipar figs and say they are dumar
How can you endure, O slender love, your unripe youth?

340

I HAVE come to the forest to get a stick
How tightly you have tied your cloth, but I will pull it off.

341

THE hot dust drifts across the plain
By the quiet well I hear her anklets tinkle.

342

THERE is paper but no pen, my fate is ruined, my luck is out
Love and pity are a shadow over us, friend.

343

Phatar-phatar sounds the drum, they've beaten a hole in the hide
A stranger girl has come to hear it, a thief has stolen her baby.

344

WHEN the water is cold, you can make it hot
When your youth is growing, keep it in control.

345

GRIND a pice worth of haldi; make a trap for love
You have forgotten the trap of love.

346

THE black bullocks are loaded with sacks of grain
I will make you dance *thaiya-thaiya*, my bird, though I am but a slender youth.

347

THEY have made steps up to the new house
The young girls are waiting, the old women are drunk.

348

IN the full moon the night is spotless
Lover, you kiss and lick me all night long.

349

BELOW the vulture rises, the kite flies above
I have caught you after many days and I will not let you go.

350

CLOUDS to the east, the rain falls in the south
You delight in the play of love, but you are anxious as you go.

351

YOU made the grindstone peg into a digging-stick
Raja, why did you call me when my head was dirty?

352

THE moon came up, the night was full of splendour
Raja, you deceived me just as if you were a woman.

BINJHWAR DADARIA

353

In my lady's garden there grows a single lime-tree
When she comes on the festal day I will pick the limes.

354

The little ox-goad has a very long point
Life with an unmarried boy will soon bring down your youthful pride.

355

When you drive your cart along the dust rises in clouds
When you make love to a Kewatin you get parched rice to eat.

356

For the pet maina there is an iron cage
When you make love to a Dhimrin you get lots of fish to eat.

GOND DADARIA

357

In the new tank the water is fresh
In a hard place I have found you; I will take water from your tank.

358

O the shoots of green bamboo! O the mushrooms in the rain!
When will your quick youth mature, my bird?

359

Two cranes spread their white wings across the sky
With my young love I hurry along the empty road.

360

When you eat *pān* your lips are reddened
Girl, if you get entangled in love you will be ruined.

361

The flood comes down
In swirling eddies
My love, to see you
I have climbed a tree.

362

The dogs are barking
All round the village
My cock is a hunter
It has spied a hen.

363

Thread your rings on bark-string
But do not link my name with yours
Singing in the village
Or I'll beat you with my fist.

364

In Sawan there are mushrooms
In Bhadon young bamboo-shoots
How can I spend my days
While my body is green?

365

The lapwing
Has a lame foot
How long must I wait
Till you speak to me?

366

Let the water be in the well
Do not give me
To an already married man
I would rather be a maid.

367

Mother-in-law has gone to market
Father-in-law is out in the field
You have filled your belly, girl
In the empty house.

368

In the new tank the lotus flowers
In her face do not forget the world
For the fruit is already peeled.

369

If you would kiss her cheek
Put *kājal* in a dark girl's eyes
Give a red sari to the light-coloured maiden
Give *sendur* powder to the married girl.

370

I made sweet bread
With wheat-flour
A Kurmi has ruined
My darling love.

This song is based on the rhyme of Kurmi and *khurmi*, a wheat-bread made with ghee and sugar.

371

WHAT shall I do? And by whose wisdom shall I eat?
I forget food and water for memory of you.

372

IN the deer's home calls the antelope
My love puts a cassia flower in her hair
And the path is filled with the scent.

373

BY drinking water you can save your body
But there is no hope now
What is the use of living when there is no work to do?

374

SPARROW, you have bewitched me
If you do not understand the message of my eyes
I will poke you with my stick.

375

FOR ploughing you must have an ox-goad
My bird, you must cook the vegetable for supper.

376

THE mango is in flower; the bush is thick with berries
For her great love, my darling Brahmin girl comes running to me.

377

IN the new tank the barber's wife is swimming
Her ear-chains are lost; the Bairagi's looking for them.

378

ONE'S own home is always full of enemies; only outside is love.
You who give such trouble, may your love be burnt.

379

O THE black buffalo, its curly horns, its bushy tail!
Wait, wait for me, my ploughman.

KURMI DADARIA

380

You have tied your turban and a smart band round it
My friend why let your mind go exploring when you have a wife in your house?

381

Mother-in-law has gone to the field, father-in-law's in the village
My husband's busy in the Lohar's smithy—the falls come down in spray.

PANKA DADARIA

382

THE Bhumia lives beneath the bamboos
If your body is full of pain, call for the magician.

383

IN a new basket let's gather mahua flowers
Call me to the little garden where we can enjoy stolen love.

384

O THE stalk of the sesamum, the stalk of rahar!
Without bullocks runs the railway train.

385

LIKE a pig I have to sleep on the cow's path
Though I have left my home for you.

386

THERE'S a rolled cloth on your head and a pot above it
When I embrace you, my bird, I'll teach you the language of the night.

387

THE turban you wind is five-and-twenty cubits long
Show me the road that leads to Chhattisgarh.

388

YOUR two-and-thirty teeth are bright, there is lampblack in your eyes
On your feet are silver anklets, a yellow necklace round your throat.

389

How the Teli's bullocks long for their resting-place
O my bird, a young girl is longing for a son.

390

YOUR wrists are thick with bangles, the *ratan-kakna* bangles
By day you are ever in my eyes, at night in my dreams.

391

IN the new pot there was supper
You have come hungry
O madman
And found the pot empty.

392

IN the new tank
The water was white
For all your youth, mad girl
Your nectar is dry.

393

GOLD patterns
Silken patterns
Mad girl, amid a thousand
I am breathless for you.

394

THE monkey's chains
The horse's bridle
The girls of Gondwana
Can be bought and sold.

395

WITH your bangles and anklets
How ornamental you are
Your forehead is bright
With its spangle of cowries.

396

I DID not want to pluck the bitter karela
Love has embraced my body
Love-giver, I will not let you go.

397

WITH lonely cry the lapwing seeks its nest
Spread your young body as a bed for me.

Compare Beaumont and Fletcher:

I'll swear she met
Me 'mongst the shady sycamores last night,
And loosely offered up her flame and sprite
Into my bosom; made a wanton bed
Of leaves and many flowers, where she spread
Her willing body to be pressed by me.

398

SHE had her bangles for the asking
Her anklets too and rings
Raja, you too may win her youth by asking
Cascaded with her in the tumbling falls.

399

THERE is no wax
For the bamboo flute
The joy-giving maid has gone away
There is no joy now
For my quick-maturing body.

SATNAMI DADARIA

400

I BROUGHT you channa shoots in the evening
My slender love, the child of your womb has a share of me.

401

THE Kewat boy pushes the *pelna* trap through the water
There's no money in the house, so we're going to play in the tank.

402

NEAR the Agar River is a settlement of crows
O friend, get me anklets, the Kaser has come.

403

BY the side of the river grows a crooked bohar
You have no husband, you have married a Lohar.

404

SLENDER is my fair love, long is her hair
But parched is her face as she goes to a strange country.

405

YOU have not cleaned the *kājal* from your eyes
You have not yet taken the *sendur* from your hair.

406

WITH your lips you do not talk to me
But you have called me with the words of your eyes.

407

THE arrow is of tamarind, the bow of strong bamboo
My love, my crane, I wander alone.

408

MY arms are covered with my husband's bangles
But the two lovely silver bracelets were given by my lover.

409

GIVE my husband a leaf-cup of mahua spirit
But for my lover make the mahua into little sweets.

410

YOU are the ring between glass-bangles, my love-giver
You can make the river an excuse to meet me.

411

YOU have given twenty rupees for a bullock worth ten
My bird if you planned to leave me why did you bind me to you?

412

THE boy has sifted the chaff from the wheat
You have sucked my body empty of its juice.

413

THE cart is decorated, the bullocks are red
How smart is the driver, how loving the passenger!

414

O THE clear waters of the Agar River
When will the passion of my love stir your cold stream?

Compare Chloe's song in *The Faithful Shepherdess*:

> Those dear kisses, and those many
> Sweet embraces that are given;
> Dainty pleasures, that would even
> Raise in coldest age a fire,
> And give virgin-blood desire.

TELI DADARIA

415

THE grass is green under the falling rain
I have nothing to take or give, but I have a lot of love.

416

IN your wanderings you have come and kicked at my door
Go to your own house, deceiver, my son's father is sleeping.

417

WE pick mangoes and make them into pickle
Pathans do not know how to make friendships.

418

THE dark wings of the vulture cover half the sky
My hands are round your tender breasts, my bird.

419

YOU have made bread with mahua juice
O bird, you have taken me into your caste.

420

WHEN the cat comes out, the dog runs after it
There is sorrow in my body. How wretched I am!

421

SHE came with tangled hair wet from the lake
I filled her pot; she gave me two wild plums.

DANDA SONGS FOR THE STICK-DANCE

422

JOHAR to Guru Thakur Deo
I touch your feet
Johar to the god of the central pole
Your slave am I
Johar to my Mati Dai
I touch your feet
Your eyes are like the hills
Tanarinayo rina nāri na bhai
Tari nāna hari nāna ji.

This is what is known as a Joharni Danda song, recited at the beginning of a Gond Stick Dance to ensure protection for the singers.

423

Tana na hari nāna you are a boy of Matin
Bring the carved and coloured cart
Bring a pair of bullocks
Bring a carved and coloured necklace
Bring a pair of ear-shields
Bring a carved and coloured bangle
Bring a pair of anklets.

The word I have translated 'carved and coloured' is in the original *ringi-chhingi*, a word that has obvious rhythmic possibilities. The song is a Gond one, used in the Stick Dance.

TAMASHA SONGS

424

I'M not going to live for ever
I've made friends with the Tahsildar
I've got a constable by the hand
I always have ten men at once
I'm not going to live for ever
I've got the landlord under my thumb
The Kotwar is my lover now
And every time I give birth to twins
I'm not going to live for ever.

A Teli song from the Drug District. This is a typical 'Tamasha' song, shouted by a drunken old woman, probably with a good deal more obscenity than has been recorded here.

425

MY plantain-leaf, like my own life I would keep you ever with me
One rides on an elephant, squatting in the howdah
One rides on a horse, settling the saddle
A third rides on a black bitch, pulling up its tail
One lies with his love on a soft pillowed bed
Another on a bare cot, spreading out his legs
The girl calls her boy to her, baring her breasts to him
When he goes to her, he lights a lamp
My plantain-leaf, my lamp
Like my own life I would keep you ever with me.

426

Hai ga! We are going out to hunt
In the valley between twelve hills
In front of whom is
the barking-deer
the peacock
Ratan the maid?

O the hunter's mind is happy
When he sees Ratan the maid
In front of
little brother is the barking-deer
middle brother is the peacock
big brother is Ratan the maid

O big brother's mind is happy
When he sees Ratan the maid.

427

I MADE a drum of a gourd
Garlic I used for cymbals
In the middle of the company come and look
See how baby cucumber is dancing
They are pulling out poor *khotni's* locks
But *chunchuniya* always wears long tresses
Khedna is carefully parting his hair
Kochai as always is up to mischief
In the middle of the company come and look.

Khotni, chunchuniya, kochai and *khedna* are varieties of wild vegetable. See note on No. 223.

428

FOR once listen to what I say
In your virtue girl you go
Through the thickest jungle
If you come safe from the tiger
I will be your man
You will be my girl.

429

I LEFT my necklace in the wall
My spangle in a distant land
My husband in the honey forest
It has grown late as I looked for him.

430

THE she-buffalo's lord is dead
The bull of the herd is dead
Subhiya's husband is dead
And she weeps till dawn.

431

ON the hill the maina calls night and day
The Kewat, the Dhimar, the Shikari
Fill their fields with traps of sin
They eat and drink, they lust for money.

432

IN our country are all the usual games
The spindle begs for cotton
The Brahmin begs for his sacred thread
The barren girl begs for a son.

433

THEY bring iron from every land
They make bundles of the eight chains
Round every field
The Patwari lays the measuring-chains.

434

Thining-thining sounds your cowbell
Durgachhi is your bullock's name
The poor Brahmin goes a-begging
With bent fingers he begs for food.

435

Jhirmit-jhirmit falls the rain
The moss grows in the court
In a little pot
The potter's mother cooks her food.

436

MAKER of dung-cakes tell me
Why did little Sukul faint
As she went down the path
Without her love?

437

O RAM, what do I know?
Without my love
My life is restless
Without my love.

438

ITCH itch itch O how I am itching
The first day it is red O red
The next day it is swollen
The third day I scratch it
And out comes the pus
Itch itch itch O how I am itching.
Get *lila-thotha* with a pice
Get a little sulphur
Mix them up with sesamum oil
And put them on the place
Itch itch itch O how I am itching.

439

ON your arms you wear black bangles
Round your neck black bangles
There is tattoo on your arms
Your light is as the sun.

440

YOU eat *pān* and spit the juice
From a book you sing your songs
The crane calls at midnight
And I remember you.

BHATTRA SONGS

THE Bhattra are distributed through western Orissa, northern Bastar and the south of the Raipur District. They are probably a branch of the Gond and tend to be rather superior and communal in their religious and social outlook; some of them wear the sacred thread and in Raipur at least they marry their children young. The Bhattra of Orissa took part in the Congress revolution of 1942. The following are typical of those used in Bastar: I am told that very similar songs are known in southern Raipur.

441

Leja re leja leja leja re!
White flower
There is none like you
From a great crowd
I chose you.

442

O LOVELY girl
The flowers grow quickly
And we who once were small
Are ready now for love.

443

O GIRL with swaying hips
The plough goes straight across the field
And I will come for you
Who have hidden many days.

444

THE parrot has eaten
The green karmata fruit
O the wings of the golden bird
Those days are gone.

445

HEAVILY pours the rain
The water comes along the eaves
The girls are eating frog's eggs
The red calf is never weary
As I was digging, Malko
I found a mouse's hole.

446

DARK maiden
The rain is falling
Bring a lamp
And let us go together.

447

YOU are speckled
Like a hawk
Look carefully
To the work of my big house.

448

MY brown darling
From Amti Amod!
I'll catch her hair and beat her
Till her back teeth fall out.

449

Leja re leja my darling
There is the moon
My parents fill my belly with food
But there is no one to fill my heart.

450

IN the scrub forest
I will go to eat berries
When morning comes
O beautiful, I will find you there.

451

O YOUNG Palki
I cannot go with you on the road
But take your pot and go for water
To the river where the stream ripples down.

452

I WILL shake down the aonra fruit
Give me the gruel of yesterday
And I will be content.

Each of these Bhattra songs has a refrain of *Leja re leja leja leja re*, which is introduced at any and every point and may drag the song out to a considerable length.

DEWAR SONGS

THE Dewar are professional musicians—there cannot be more than 5,000 of them today—who wander across the Chhattisgarh plain, sometimes driving herds of swine sometimes begging with the help of bears or monkeys. There are two main divisions of the caste, named after Ratanpur and Raipur. The Raipur Dewar use a fiddle of the usual *sārangi* pattern, with a coconut-shell resonator and horsehair strings. It is played with a bow. The Ratanpur Dewar however, use the *dhungru*, a more elaborate instrument with catgut strings often played by plucking. Both sections indulge in long songs, the history of their ancestor Gopa Rai, the tale of Rasalu Kuar, the song of Dhola, and their own version of the widely-distributed story of Gujri who preserved her honour from the Moghuls.

Their dancing is brilliant. The custom is for a man to drum while a woman dances alone. In the Dish Dance, she holds large brass dishes in her hands, whirling them round in varied and complicated patterns. In the Pot Dance, she may pile a column of ten to twelve brass pots above one another on her head and so dance. Her Torch Dance is beautiful and exciting. In the Drum Dance she stands on a drum and performs the dance in almost 'classic' style by the movements of her hands.

453

THERE is no home for me
I can find no place to stay
There is no empty house
I would break stones and build a palace
But here there is no empty house
No place for me to stay.

454

THE parrot talks in the evening
The maina calls at night
Near the temple is a garden of flowers
There are steps to it from below
O little brother, there is a garden of flowers.

AHIR SONGS

AHIR SONGS

AHIR (and the Ahir are also known as Rawat or Gour) songs are of three kinds—the long or fairly long ballads sung to a flute-accompaniment; the short Bas-git (bamboo, or flute, songs) also sung to the flute; and the two-lined, often rhyming, Doha. In this section I give a few specimens of the two latter types of song: there is nothing very remarkable about them, but they give glimpses of the care-free, open-air life of the village cow-herds that are not unattractive.

D. C. Sen has emphasized the beauty of flute-music and the importance of the bamboo which is used to build the home, for a score of domestic articles, for self-defence and to produce exquisite sound.

'Bengal owed in the past a good deal of her happiness, power and poetic inspiration to the bamboo-grove with which the valley abounds. The bamboo-plants supplied her with the flute, its price being nothing. It is not sold in the market, generally speaking, but each cowboy and shepherd cuts a branch and makes a flute for himself. But compared to its sweetness of sound all the musical pipes—the sanai, the clarionet and other costly instruments—fall into the background. The bamboo supplies the Bengalis with lathis. In the lathi-play Bengali soldiers were at one time invincible. There are still skilled lathi-players who, it is said, can successfully defend themselves from gunshots by a dexterous motion of lathis. The flute and the lathi were in olden times the graze and inspiration of the Bengalis. In the Vaishnav literature the flute is a suggestion reminding the reader "of that music in our eternal souls" which has distinctly a spiritual meaning.'[1]

Nowhere is the music of the flute more exquisitely described than in the most moving of all the Bengali ballads, 'The Blind Lover'.[2]

[1] Sen, iv, 213.
[2] Sen, iv, 211 ff.

BAS-GIT

455

O DEVI SARADA, sit in the flute-player's throat
And in both the hearer's ears
If he does not like the tune, what can we do?
If he does like it, sit in his breath.
This birth and that birth
And yet a third birth
You have been an Ahir
Your stick is covered with mud
Your body is sweet as milk.

456

THE tiger roars in the forest
On the hill growls the black cobra
In the wedding-booth
Roar the seven Suasin
The bridegroom plays on his flute
Jhurhur-jhurhur flows the river
The fair girl catches fish
Muddy are her eight parts
What use is her decorated hair?
Ruchmuch-ruchmuch go your shoes
Ahir, the stream of milk is flowing.

457

IN the far forest is the yoke
The bullocks are in the belly of the cow
Unborn is the ploughman
The wife stands on the field alone
I gather broken bits of grain
The rice-dust flies away
How uncertain is life
Daily, daily it declines.

458

His wings are white
On his head is a tuft of hair
He meditates by the water
We thought him an ascetic
By his tricks he takes our lives.

This song is supposed to represent the feelings of fish in a tank about the heron, seemingly so saintly but actually their worst enemy. The idea is a common one.

459

He picks up the tobacco with his little tongs
He has *gānja* in his palm
He mixes it with a little water
Brother, take your joy of the smoke
When he drinks *gānja* he is soon besotted
When he chews tobacco he spits on every side
He loses the money from his bundle
Like a dog he barks
Brother, take your joy of the smoke.

460

Give up *gānja* and tobacco
Leave your Bengal *pān*
Stop your liquor-drinking
Or your life will leave you
Without fruit.
The Ganjeri drinks *gānja*
The Gawar has his liquor
But if you get drunk with washed kodai
You cannot rise or sit.

461

Gānja's colour is red as a rose
Opium appears as black as a ghost
Liquor is just a thorough-going rascal
When the drunkard sleeps he cares for nothing
A dog pisses in his mouth and runs away.

Gānja or Indian hemp (*cannabis sativa*), which is the same as hashish, is generally taken in the form of *bhāng*,

(also called *indrasana* or *vijaya*), a drink made from its flowers. This, like opium, is one of the sacred drugs: it turned Mahadeo's throat blue; it is popular among ascetics who pour a few drops on the ground in the name of Shankar, for it was he who brought it from the Himalayas and gave it to mankind; there appears to be little social censure on those who take it. A song addressed to Bijaya Mata sings its praises.

> She is the giver of virtue and wisdom; in drinking is honour and glory
> Who doth evil to the hemp-juice
> May his father become a cat, his mother a she-ass
> To wander laden with the hemp-juice
> Who calleth thee *bhāng* is a fool
> Who calleth Bijaya is a liar
> Thy name is Kamlapati
> That dwells with thine eyes filled.
> Saints drink thee, sages drink thee, Kanhayya drinks thee
> Who speaketh evil of Bijaya, him will Mother Kalka destroy.[1]

A medical book of perhaps the seventeenth century, the Rajavallabha of Narayanadasa-Kaviraja, says, 'Indra's food is acid, it produces infatuation and destroys leprosy. It is a desire-fulfilling drug, begetting joy and destroying every anxiety.'[2] In the ancient folk-songs of India, says Grierson, '*gānja* or *bhāng* (with or without opium) is the invariable drink of heroes before performing any great feat. At the village of Bauri in Gaya there is a huge hollow stone, which is said to be the bowl in which the famous hero Lorik mixed his *gānja*. The epic poem of Alha and Rudal of uncertain date but undoubtedly based on very old materials (the heroes lived in the 12th century A.D.) contains numerous references to *gānja* as a drink of warriors.'[3]

The value of *gānja* for military purposes was probably due to the feeling of exaltation and the delusions of grandeur which it induced, without at the same time rendering the gait ataxic. But, taken to excess, *gānja* is a common source

[1] Chaina Mall, 'Prayer of the Drinkers of Hemp-juice', *Panjab Notes and Queries*, 1883. Bijaya is an evident play on the name Vijaya for Durga and for the hemp-plant.

[2] G. A. Grierson, 'The Hemp Plant in Sanskrit and Hindu Literature', *The Indian Antiquary*, xxiii, 261.

[3] ibid., 262.

of insanity; one year in the Berhampore Asylum thirty-eight per cent of the patients traced their condition to this cause. A stage of acute mania, characterized by fleeting delusions of grandeur, and often also of persecution, by restlessness, and sometimes by indecency and destructiveness, is succeeded by a chronic stage of which the salient features are extreme irritability and a tendency to garrulousness, which is often abusive. A type of weak-mindedness, often found in sadhus who indulge in the drug to excess, has been called Cannabina Mania.[1]

Usborne gives a page of 'Poppy Songs' from the Panjab which describes the joys of opium and hemp.

If a pipe of hemp have I
What care I if I live or die?
Let me smoke and let me sleep
Let others sow if I but reap.[2]

And Crooke records from Mirzapur a rustic incantation to Bhairo.

For want of what, O Bhairo, are thine eyes red,
For want of what are thy lips dry?
For want of *gānja* thine eyes are red.
For want of *bhāng* thy lips are dry.[3]

462

THE wives of four drunkards are gossiping together.
The first gossip says:
My husband smokes his pipe, fills it with *gānja*, sits about
When I give him fire I scorch my fingers
Over their pipes ten men sit idly, telling what is in their minds
If I say anything, with red red eyes he beats me
There's no money in the house, the children cry for hunger
That's what my husband's like; he never thinks of me.
The second gossip says:
What my husband drinks is *bhāng*
I mix *koab*, endive, *bhāng* and sugar, pour cold water on the mixture
Strain is from pot to pot till my two arms are weary
My lord eats sweet food and goes to sleep

[1] For a full account, see L. S. S. O'Malley, *Census of India*, 1911, v, 413.
[2] op. cit., 6.
[3] *N. I. Notes and Queries*, iv, 160.

That's what my husband's like; he never thinks of me.
The third gossip says:
What my husband drinks is liquor
He squanders the money for the house, he swaggers down the street
He quarrels with brothers, cousins, friends
Listens to no one, with his mouth talks proudly
But let one slap him and he falls at his feet in tears
That's what my husband's like; he never thinks of me.
The fourth gossip says:
My sorrow is four times yours
What work I have to do, with bowl and strainer, pincers, fire
I warm the pot and make the little opium balls
In the pipe I put them and rouse my sleeping husband
As far as his own bed he rises and I give him opium
I fill the hookah with sweet tobacco; soon he is asleep again
That's what my husband's like; he never thinks of me.

463

FRIEND, do not drink *gānja*
It will stain your life
The *gānja*-drinker takes it *bhakar-bhakar*
He chews tobacco and spits out the juice
He drinks three pice of liquor
Soon he is barking like a dog
Friend, do not drink *gānja*
The bullocks must drag the cart
The buffaloes must drag the plough
O *gānja*-eating Raja
There's not a pice in the house
Friend, do not drink *gānja*.

Opium is taken not only by ascetics, but by Dhimar and Ahir. Few aboriginals have yet taken to it. Its popularity, says Penzer, was due to several causes. 'It was looked upon as a cure for diseases, and enabled those who took it to exist on very little food during famines; it was a great restorative, a means of importing strength in any laborious work, and was considered a strong aphrodisiac.'[1] It is an excitant and brings a break into the monotony of village life.

[1] Penzer, ii, 304.

Village opinion is strongly in favour of *gānja* as superior in its effects to any other stimulant.

The *gānja*-drinker's wife is happy
The opium-eater's wife lives like a widow
The liquor-drinker's wife cries. My bull comes snorting home.

Another proverb declares that,

The *gānja*-drinker is intelligent
Sweet-smelling *guraku* (tobacco mixed with *gur*) is a smoke for princes
Opium is only taken by thieves who envy others' wealth.

464

WHEN you were in your mother's house
You had no clothes to wear
But you did not go naked to your husband
Every fortnight you are pregnant
Every month you bear a child.

This song, a Bas-git to accompany the long bamboo pipe, is a riddle to which the answer is 'A rupee'. The mother's house is the money-lender, where the rupee lives naked and fruitless. The house of the father-in-law is the borrower. Every fortnight the interest accumulates, every month the unhappy creditor must pay up.

465

SHE is such a cunning bhauji, she makes love to her dewar
I had no betrothal, haldi oil has never climbed my body
I did not go round with my lord, I care not for his bed
She is such a cunning bhauji, she makes love to her dewar
Twelve men I visit every day, yet I have not had a son
I have not stayed in my lord's bed, I have sought pleasure from street to street
On the day I met my dewar, I got nine sons
They went to the throne of Indra and all the gods were pleased
She is such a cunning bhauji, she makes love to her dewar.

The bhauji in the song is milk, the dewar is buttermilk, the children represent butter. Twelve men drink the milk every day; it is taken for sale from street to street; but only when mixed with buttermilk is it turned into butter.

AHIR DOHA

466

COME along, black barren cow, come along fat bull
Fire has burnt your grazing-ground; they're sowing rice there now.

467

THE fire dies down; the smoke blackens the roof
O may the dark night linger and the sun's flame delay.

468

ALONG the hills the forest fires light up the lonely sky
O lover hurry, for impatient night is longing to be gone.

This is the theme of the Provencal poems in Ezra Pound's *Lustra.*

> O Plasmatour, that thou end not the night,
> Nor take my belovèd from my sight,
> Nor I, nor tower-man, look on daylight,
> 'Fore God, how swift the night,
> And day comes on!

It is the cry of lovers all over the world. The singer of an Ao Naga song declares,

> From far Lungkungchang
> All the long road to Chongliyimti
> Have I come to where my beloved sleeps.
> I am handsome as a flower, and when I am with my beloved
> May dawn linger long below the world's edge.[1]

469

TORAK-TORAK your cow-bell jingled; I thought it was a wandering cow
Had I known it was a maiden, I would have had the honey.

470

IN Sawan the wild millet ripens, in Bhadon the grass is white
When I embrace my love the falls pour down their waters.

[1] Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, 330.

In this song, as in Nos. 381 and 398, the tumbling, rushing, cascading waterfall (*dhunna dhār*) or the cloud of spray above the falls (*dhua dhār*) becomes a beautiful symbol of love. In Western verse it is the fountain rather than the fall that has caught the erotic imagination of the poets: the 'sounding cataract' haunted Wordsworth like a passion, but it was a different kind of passion. The fountain, however, often stands for love, as in Jean Lahovary's poem *La Vierge et le Jet d' Eau*, quoted by Havelock Ellis in his discussion of Undinism. A girl wanders in the moonlight to a fountain basin from which a great jet of water rises into the air and 'scatters its liquid kisses'. She is ravished in thought and comes nearer,

> Quand soudain, tremblante autant qu'une herbe,
> Le jet d'eau, triomphant, l'embrasse de sa gerbe . . .
> Ecoutez chanter l'âme de la fille
> Qui connut l'amour du grand jet d'eau blanc.

The fountain symbolism is used very effectively by Richard Aldington throughout *A Dream in the Luxembourg*, as when he speaks of the heart of the lover,

> Pouring out tenderness and devotion and desire
> Like the tall fountain in the Luxembourg
> Perpetually pouring and never failing.

Havelock Ellis gives many examples of this symbolism: the heroine of the *Song of Songs* was a fountain of living waters; the Talmud describes a man's seed as 'a running stream'. In *Myths of Middle India* there are examples of the widespread belief that water itself may be sufficient to fertilize a woman.

Another beautiful poem which uses the symbolism of rushing and falling water is Baudelaire's *Le Jet d' Eau*, with its refrain, 'La gerbe épanouie en mille fleurs' and the stanza closest to Indian sentiment:

> O toi, que la nuit rend si belle,
> Qu'il m'est doux, penché vers tes seins,
> D'écouter la plainte éternelle
> Qui sanglote dans les bassins!
> Lune, eau sonore, nuit bénie,
> Arbres qui frissonez autour,
> Votre pure mélancolie
> Est le miroir de mon amour.

In India the use of streams and rivers to symbolize love is, of course, very common. In a remarkable article, 'Studies in the Imagery of the Ramayana', K. A. Subramanya Aiyar describes the early Sanskrit images used in Valmiki's epic. He gives the following account of how a river and a woman are intimately connected in the poet's imagination. 'In autumn, we are told, the course of rivers, which exhibit girdles in the form of lines of fishes, is rather slow, like that of women early in the morning when they are weary after the pleasures of love. The sight of a river issuing from a mountain suggests to the poet the idea of a woman slipping off the lap of her lover. . . . In autumn, the rivers lose some of that abundance of water brought to them by the rains and the sand begins to show itself here and there. The poet says it is like shy women exposing their hips hesitatingly in their first unions with their lovers. While describing the sleeping wives of Ravana it occurs to the poet that some of them are like rivers, with their hips corresponding to sand-banks. In all these images, the water in a river seems to correspond to the flowing clothes of a woman.'

The author refers also to Kalidasa, where the identification of a river and a woman occurs. 'To him also, lines of fish in a river can represent the girdle going round the waist of a woman and the sandbanks stand for the hips. Ponds in autumn, too, with lines of swans for girdle and lotuses for garland, have the supreme beauty of ornamented woman.'[1]

[1] *The Journal of Oriental Research* (Madras, 1929), 341 ff.

MAGIC

A RAIN CHARM

471

LET the rain fall, Pawan Dularuwa, let the rain pour down
Your home is between the seven seas and the sixteen streams
Awake the Water Queen, for by her help the rain will fall
The Seven Sisters live in the sea
When they play in the water, when they sound *kilkora-kil-kora*
A storm comes up from the sea
Where is the thunder? Where is the rain?
Pawan Dularuwa, we have come to honour you
That rain may fall on the earth
When the rain comes we will recognize your power
The grain will grow and all the world rejoice
Pawan Dularuwa, we have come, we sing to you, now give us happiness, Pawan Dularuwa.

A CHARM AGAINST HEADACHE

472

KISNI BAI says, I will live in his hair
Wild goose and eagle say, We will not let her stay
Guru blow her away. Guruain blow her away
Kisni Bai come down from his head
Kisni Bai come down from his forehead
Take your poisonous grindstone with you
Kisni Bai says, I will settle in his eyes
Wild goose, god's goose, let it burn quickly
Sleep sleep sleep O whisper sleep little girl
Go go go little girl to your house
Your baby sister was playing; she has opened the door
Kisni Bai come down from his eyes
Go home to Rai Ratanpur.

LOVE-CHARMS

473

BAGFUL of haldi-roots
Eye-girl lighting a lamp
The dark girls, the fair girls
Hold out their hands
Go my strong strong charm
Go my leaping charm
Awake love in this girl
Love in her walking feet
Love in the dust her feet stir
Love in her seeing eyes
Love in her moving eyelids
Love in her listening ears
Love in her speaking tongue
Love in her laughing teeth
Awake, love, my charm
Love in the breasts ready to be fondled
Love in the vagina fit for love
Go my strong strong charm
Let the charm take this girl.

474

As a net spreads across the river
May my love-charm fall upon her
In my net I bind the river-weed
In my net I bind the little fish
I bind as far as nine ploughs can go
I bind the spite of witches
I bind her house and door of victory
I bind the seats of four wise men
May my love-net fall upon her
To what village will you go?
Take the four-fingers-breadth of pleasure
Under the thighs is *jujuk-mujuk*
Inside is a well
The red-beaked parrot
Drinks the water of the cloud
May my love-net fall upon her.

475

ALMOHA JALMOHA, may my love's enchantment
Take the water and the green scum on the water
And the water-girl at the time of fetching water
May my charm possess and madden
Her silver pitcher and its gold support
Her two-and-thirty teeth that shine like diamonds
Her speaking tongue, her smiling lips, her eyelids
May my love's enchantment madden
The vermilioned parting of her hair
Her bun of hair, the ribbon tying it
The silver in her ears, her nose-ring
The ten hundred rings upon her fingers
Her armlets and the bangles on her wrists
Her shining bangles and her sounding anklets
The ten hundred scorpion rings upon her toes
Her spring-lovely sari twelve cubits long
The jacket tightening round her breasts
The fish that darts *chir-chir* in the stream
May my love's enchantment madden
This girl that pisses in the mortar
Her waist-belt, the cloth round her little sister
Go, go, my love-charm
Go eight hundred Mohani, nine hundred Chhittawar
Go fourteen hundred Singhi Tumi, go
Go by my Guru's word and by my word
To such and such a girl, enchant her with my love
Let her weep when she looks at other men
Let her laugh when she looks at me
Let her close her legs when other men approach her
Let her spread them wide, lying on her back, when I come near
Let her two-and-thirty teeth shine with the happiness of love
May my love's enchantment madden her
May the eight parts of her body tremble with desire
When she sees me, let her undo her cloth
When she does not see me, let her weep *dhar-dhar-dhar,*
When she does not see me, let her breasts wobble
When she does not see me, let her thing quiver
May my love's enchantment madden her
I will sacrifice a fresh black goat
And two young fowls
When I gain my desire.

A CHARM TO DRIVE AWAY GHOSTS AND DEMONS

476

He brings the blue mare from the stable
There's a bridle on her head, a whip in his hand
He plays on his mare with two or four others
He summons the ghosts and demons
A tamarind with spreading branches stands in the middle of the road
Its fruits hang above like pearls
Below Bhainsasur is on guard
It is the buffalo of Raja Rama
The Teli and the Kalar yoke it to the plough
It drinks the liquor of twelve stills
It eats sixteen hundred goats
Yet its belly is not filled
It devours the ghosts and demons of the village
It uses ghosts as its blanket
It lies on ghosts as on a mattress
It eats nothing but ghosts and demons
On the day it does not get a ghost
It keeps a holy fast
This is the Haka of Bhainsasur
Awake! Arise! Beware!

CHARMS TO HEAL SORE EYES

477

GIRL, girl, where has your mother gone?
To the bazaar.
Girl, girl, what will she do there?
Bring a pot.
Girl, girl, what will she do with it?
Fetch water.
Girl, girl, why does she want water?
To bathe the eyes.
Girl, girl, why should she bathe them?
The eyes are sore.
Who will blow on them? The Guru will blow.
I will blow, I the Guru's disciple.
With my blowing, my blowing
I will rouse the waves of the seven seas.
I will make the eyes cool
Cool as the water in an earthen pot.

478

GIRL, girl, where have your mother and brother gone?
They have gone to the Honey Forest.
Girl, girl, why have they gone there?
They have gone to make charcoal.
Girl, girl, what will they do with the charcoal?
They will make a scythe.
Girl, girl, what will they do with the scythe?
They will sell it for salt.
Girl, girl, what will they do with the salt?
They will blow on my eyes.
Who will blow on your eyes
The Guru will blow
I will blow, I the Guru's disciple.
With my blowing, my blowing
I will rouse the waves of the seven seas
I will make the eyes cool
Cool as the water in an earthen pot.

TO DRIVE AWAY GHOSTS

479

ADAK-PHADAK dances the ghost
He drums on a golden plate
Adak-phadak dances the ghost
Crowds of merchants
Crowds of goldsmiths
Gather where our Guru stands
Adak-phadak dances the ghost
The Guru is holding a golden broom
What is the broom for?
To blow the ghost away.
Who will blow him away? The Guru will blow
I will blow, I the Guru's disciple
With my blowing, my blowing
And my golden broom
I will blow the ghost away.

480

MY charm goes *tur-turi*
Earth weakens at the sound
Away Sankani Dankani
Karuha Bir has come
He has broken his horn and made a bow
He has broken his tail for an arrow
He will shoot you seven times
He will pierce your lotus-liver
And bathe in your blood
Listen to the order of the righteous Guru
Go away to Langan-land.

TO KILL MAGGOTS IN A WOUND

481

THE white cock beneath the stone
The magic stone is in the house
Let the white cock flap his wings.
When the cock's wings flap on this side
Let the diamonds fall
When the cock's wings flap on that side
Let the maggots fall.

A CHARM TO TEASE GIRLS FETCHING WATER AT A WEDDING

482

THE ant and his wife are cooking bread
They have eaten a little for supper
They have thrown the rest in the river
O Chandli Rani bind her legs
Bind the legs of the water-girl
Stop her going a pace forward
Stop her going a pace back
Hold her still on the way for water
Let a dog be free of a bitch
Before the girl escapes my charm.

A CHARM USED BY LAMANA GYPSIES BEFORE GOING TO TRADE

483

COME come let us go trading
Let us go east for trade
Let the loads rest lightly on the cattle
Let the sacks seem light to our arms
Guard them Banjari Deo
Guard them before and behind
The drums are sounding, the god is ready
We have sold our vermilion
The haldi remains
How shall we urge the laden bullocks
Up Amarkantak Hill?
On twelve bullocks are big bells
On thirteen bullocks are little bells
O Banjari Deo, guard them
Shut the eyes of the merchant
When he counts five rupees
Let him think they are ten
Come let us go east to trade.

Charms and spells are common through the entire range of Indian literature. A number of very ancient incantations will be found in the *Atharva-Veda*; one of these, translated by Maurice Bloomfield, is a charm against fever:

Homage to the deliriously hot
The shaking, exciting, impetuous fever!
Homage to the cold fever,
To him that in the past fulfilled desires!
May the fever that returns on the morrow,
He that returns on two successive days, the impious one
Pass into this frog.[1]

Winternitz gives an ancient Hindu charm which was used to rouse a woman's love. It was addressed to the plant, *Andropogon faciculatus*: 'Clinging to the ground thou didst grow, O plant, that producest bliss for me, a hundred branches extend from thee, three-and-thirty grow down from thee; with this plant of a thousand leaves thy heart do I

[1] M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda* (Oxford, 1897).

parch. Thy heart shall parch with love for me, and thy mouth shall parch with love for me, and thy mouth shall parch with love for me! Languish, moreover, with love for me, with parched mouth pass thy days! Thou that causest affection, kindlest love, brown lovely plant, draw us together; draw together yonder woman and myself, our hearts make the same'.[1]

The literature of Indian folk-charms is less extensive, though some were recorded by Crooke and a few Oriya charms were translated with considerable spirit by Beames.

Thus against witches—

The exorcizer has come, he sits crouching
Two fingers' breadths from heaven.
What wouldst thou, hag of a potter's wife?

And again—

Thunder-bolt bar, thunder-bolt door
Four sides, four doors.
On the right Dahanchandi, on the left Balram,
In front Narsingh, behind eight demons.
The gate seal, the thunder door, has fallen on my body,
If a myriad come, do not allow one to enter!
By whose order?
The myriad orders of Kaunri Kamakhya.[2]

In English literature there is a delightful love-charm, which may be compared with those in the text, by Thomas Campion.

Thrice toss these oaken ashes in the air,
Thrice sit thou mute in this enchanted chair,
Then thrice three times tie up this true love's knot,
And murmur soft: She will, or she will not.

Go burn these poisonous weeds in yon blue fire,
These screech-owl's feathers and this prickling briar,
This cypress gathered at a dead man's grave,
That all thy fears and cares an end may have.

Then come, you fairies, dance with me a round;
Melt her hard heart with your melodious sound.
In vain are all the charms I can devise;
She hath an art to break them with her eyes.[3]

[1] M. Winternitz, 'Witchcraft in Ancient India', *The Indian Antiquary*, xxviii, 81.

[2] Beames, 169, 211.

[3] Quoted from E. H. Fellowes, *English Madrigal Verse* (Oxford, 1929), 357.

THE END OF LIFE

SONGS ABOUT DEATH

CHHATTISGARHI songs about death seem to be more 'Hinduized' than those in the Maikal Hills—though I notice that everywhere the idea of death lends itself more than other subjects to the influences of conventional religion. But grief for the dead, even to the peasant so patiently submissive to his fate, is a deep and real emotion and such thoughts as 'How will my love learn the language of that foreign land?' or 'Now my goose must leave the village' or 'He must camp alone in the forest' are of the very stuff of poetry.

In classical Hinduism, Yama is the god of the dead. He lives in the Under World and his city is Yama-pura or, as the Chhattisgarhi peasant shortens it, Jampur. His messengers, here as in the classics, are the Yama-duta who go forth to fetch souls to the ghostly city. But there is no reference here to the two dogs of Yama who, with their four great eyes and gaping nostrils, also play the part of the heralds of death. Indeed, the people—especially the aboriginals—are not entirely sure about these messengers: many of them consider them to come from Bhagavan or Rama rather than from Yama: it was Bhagavan, they say, not Yama, who introduced death into the world and who punishes (if anyone punishes) the guilty.

But it is difficult to generalize about the theological views of many types of people scattered over a great area. The general setting of the songs is clear. The most remarkable of them are the Satnami dialogues between a man's soul and his body, and a man's soul and his widow's soul.

484

THE dancing horse is tethered in the house with seven stories
We were watching by the flickering lamp
How the thieves came I do not know
From outside they bring the vessels
From the house they carry out the corpse
Four men have gathered and camp by the lake
The messenger has come from the land of death
You must break the cord and go
In the forest your body must make its camp.

485

When it is time to go we put a new cloth on him
The people sit around, his eyes are closed
The life-servant has left the body, the whole palace knows
Four men lift the cot, they snuffle *suskat-suskat* as they take the road
They take him to the burning-ground, they put him down and pile the wood above him
The bones burn like forest wood, his hair like jungle grass
Mother weeps *harar-harar*, sister weeps for six months
His wife weeps for three days
Then seeks another man for her house.

On the tenth day after a death the Satnami perform Arati and sing a number of songs, of which the following are specimens recorded in the Mungeli Tahsil. In the following song the soul is imagined as speaking to the body it has so recently abandoned.

486

Now there is nothing to link you and me together
Dumb corpse
When you and I were together how proudly you went about
Dumb corpse
Now why do you lie so still with gaping mouth?
Dumb corpse
When you and I were together what enormous joys you had
Dumb corpse
The tank was filled, the lotus bloomed, the boat swam to and fro
Now the tank is broken, the lotus withered, the boat has sunk in the mud
Dumb corpse.

In the next song the idea is that a married man has died and his widow's soul leaves her body and addresses his soul.

487

Go go away, mad fool, there is nothing to link us now
Why are you standing there in the middle of the path?
I have cleaned rice in a little basket, I am doing Arati above it
Go go away, go mad fool

O my love is going to a foreign land, and who will teach
him its language
My lord is going to a foreign land, he takes with him all
my joys
In my breast is my door of sorrow, I have fixed the chain
and gone
The lime-tree branches are very long, the crow has spoilt
the curds
His body lies empty now, my eyes for ever weep.

488

RAM'S Hukumdar has come
Goose, you must leave the village
The five messengers have come to his courtyard
They have brought the ox-goad
With the goad they beat the soul
They break its ribs and speed it on its way
O Jambhaiyya wait a moment
The net of love is spread throughout the world
Let me tie it in a bundle
Then the goose may leave the village.

Hamsa, which I have here translated 'goose', is more commonly rendered 'swan'. In fact, it is a fabulous bird of great beauty, that lives on pearls and is often used as a symbol of the mysterious invisible life of man.

With these songs may be compared a dirge for an old woman recorded by Crooke in the Saharanpur District:

Alas, alas, for the queen of the countries, alas, alas.
Alas, alas, the living should have died, alas, alas.
Alas, alas, O matron of children, alas, alas.
Alas, alas, old woman that ate up the house, alas, alas.
Alas, alas, old mare with the limbs, alas, alas.
Alas, alas, O box of the magic, alas, alas.[1]

[1] *The Indian Antiquary*, xxxix, 336.

BALLADS AND TALES

THE STORY OF RASALU KUAR

THIS remarkable legend, which has always seemed to call out their poetic best in its narrators, has been translated several times into English, in every case from a different original. The first recorder of the tale was General Abbott, well-known on the Indian Frontier, who in 1854 translated it, after the fashion of the time, in rhymed heroic couplets, dividing his work into several 'fyttes'. This was published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.* Thirty years later two scholars in the Punjab were at work, apparently independently since neither mentions the other, on the legend. The Rev. Charles Swynnerton, a Senior Chaplain to the Indian Government, a man of considerable if rather pompous literary gifts, got his work out first. In 1883 he published in the *Folk-Lore Journal*[1] a version of the legend that he had taken down in Ghazi on the Upper Indus. In 1884 he supplemented this by his *Adventures of the Panjab Hero, Raja Rasalu,* 'consisting of eleven distinct tales, most of them of great beauty, which were derived partly from the Ghazi version, but chiefly from the versions of two professional bards, Sharaf and Juma, both famous among the villagers of the Rawalpindi Districts.' Nearly twenty years later Swynnerton produced from his retirement in England yet another version of the legend, which he had taken down from 'Sher, a bard living near Abbottabad in the Hazara District' in his *Romantic Tales from the Panjab* published at Westminster in 1903.[2] It is a remarkable and—I think—a rather charming thing that this clergyman of the Indian Ecclesiastical Establishment should have devoted a quarter of a century to the study of this legend which, however beautiful, is largely an account of crime and passion. But to Swynnerton these treasures of his research were almost part of his own classical and Christian past. 'Here and there', he

[1] Vol. i, 129 ff.

[2] A new edition was issued in 1908, and included both the *Romantic Tales* and the *Indian Nights' Entertainment,* which had first been issued in 1892. The new volume omitted all illustrations and unfortunately has no index. Crooke published a short episode about Rasalu's faithful companions—the hawk, parrot, cat and camel—recorded at Buri, Muzaffarnagar District, in *N. I. Notes and Queries,* iv, 106.

writes, 'in these old-word fragments we catch glimpses faint yet tender of the Golden Age dreamt of by the bards of yore. What could be more quaint and simple in its golden loveliness than the peaceful picture presented to us in the story of Raja Rasalu and Raja Bhoj? It is as if the man of blood had passed out of a world of battle and strife into a region of new and happy existence, as if he had stepped backward in the march of Time and was tasting the delights of that blissful era, in depicting which the wild dreamy eloquence of the Knight of La Mancha enchanted the ears of his rustic audience, for even to him it was not given to perceive until the very last that, after all, the Golden Age lies not in the visionary past, but in the bright unfoldings of an assured future, in the crowning elevation of the whole race, in the Christ that is to be'.[1] And though few today would either write in this way or agree with what is written, one's heart warms to a man who can find beauty in rustic song and love it so well.

Meanwhile, however, a person of a very different type and of far greater gifts of scholarship and poetry, had produced yet another version of the Rasalu legend. The Rev. Charles Swynnerton does not seem to have approved of Sir Richard (then only Lieutenant) Temple. He refers to the latter's *Legends of the Panjab* in a curious sentence: 'another and a very different version of Rasalu's adventures was, I understand, published by subscription in Bombay.'[2] Temple's first volume, which contained the bulk of his version, was published in 1884, and his second volume, with two additional songs, appeared the following year. But Swynnerton will not take his rival's name, and Temple retaliates by ignoring Swynnerton entirely; in the Preface to his second volume, in which he discourses at length on the study of folk-legend in India, one might have expected at least some reference to the book which had treated largely of the same material only the previous year, but he is silent.

Temple's 'The Adventures of Raja Rasalu' is partly in prose, partly in verse. The translation is almost perfect and is so modern in style and method that it hardly dates at all. The original was actually taken down by J. G. Delmerick of the Punjab Commission in 1869.

[1] Swynnerton, xxxi.

[2] ibid., xxx.

I myself was born while Swynnerton was reading the proofs of his *Romantic Tales*, and no doubt struggling with his publishers (Constable) about the illustrations, in 1902. Now over forty years later I have obtained yet another version of the legend, from an Ahir of the village of Ghuturkundi in the Bilaspur District. The new record differs in many important respects from the older versions, and this is natural when we remember that they were sung by Mussalmans of the North and this by a Hindu semi-aboriginal of the centre of India. I will compare the different versions in detail immediately.

How far is Raja Rasalu a historic figure? The legend, says Temple, 'is of unusual value both for its historical and its folklore bearings'. Rasalu is the son of Salivahan of Sialkot and the story 'gives a hint of the true history of that Indo-Scythian hero, whose courts are still found in such abundance all over the Punjab, and who must have flourished between the first Arab invasions of Sindh and Kabul and the rise of the Ghaznavide Dynasty'.[1]

Swynnerton decides that Rasalu was 'a Rajput of Sialkot, and Sialkot, as the name implies, was the stronghold of the Syals, a great tribe, still flourishing, who popularly claim descent from Raja Rasalu himself.'[2] He suggests A. D. 700 as the earliest approximate date for his rule, 'the very period when the Mohammedan invaders were over-running Central Asia'. The name Rasalu is possibly 'not so much a personal name, not a birth-name so much as a descriptive cognomen and signifies Prince of the Syals'.[3] So too the name of Rasalu's great enemy, Raja Hodi, is also dynastic. 'In the Peshawar Valley this prince is known as Hodi, a word which round Jalalabad assumes the form of Ude. And Ude is the province of Ude-nagra, answering to the region watered by the Kabul river'.[4] But Swynnerton agrees that everything is vague and uncertain; even of conjectural 'history' the legend can only suggest three things:

1. That there was a prince famous in story named Rasalu, a son of Raja Salivahan and a descendant of Vaikramajit.

2. That he sprang from Sialkot in the Punjab, and that his sway extended from Ujain to Kabul.

[1] Temple, i, 1.
[2] Swynnerton, xli.
[3] ibid., xlii.
[4] ibid., xlii.

That he became a convert to Islam and finally suffered defeat at the hands of a prince apparently inferior to himself, living west of the Indus.[1]

The Ahir story in the text, like Temple's record, knows nothing of this third point and the narrator would refute with equal indignation any suggestion either of Rasalu's defeat or his conversion. Here is the first and most important difference between the Bilaspur story and Swynnerton's version, which is written emphatically from the Mussalman point of view. While the Bilaspur Rasalu expresses his annoyance with his father and wife by going off to look for girls, Swynnerton's hero (like so many others) works off his Oedipus Complex in a change of religion. He goes to Mecca where three prophets receive him 'and their embraces so purify his heart that the locks of infidelity are broken asunder'.[2] He plans to lead a Mussalman army against Sialkot. He describes his father Raja Sulwahan as offering a Mussalman boy as a human sacrifice.[3] Finally his queen is seduced by a Hindu.

But in the Bilaspur tale Rasalu is throughout a Hindu and his queen is seduced by a Mussalman.

In other respects, the story in the text departs widely from the older versions. The resemblances are strongest at the beginning and end. All three versions open with a barren Rani who miraculously conceives (in Bilaspur through a mango, in the Punjab through a grain of rice). Rasalu is born and is at once segregated (in Swynnerton, to 'a solitary place'; in Temple, to a cellar; in Bilaspur, to a pit). When he grows up he annoys his father's subjects by breaking their water-pots and is banished. But he returns and is married. To revenge himself for an imaginary insult he cuts the marriage short and rides away.[4]

So far each version travels the same main road. But now Swynnerton's hero goes out as a warrior prince: he fights and defeats his father; he goes to see Mirshikari the great hunter, makes friends with Raja Bhoj, attacks the giants of Gandgarh. Temple's Rasalu too is a real folk-lore hero and moves in a world of giants, princesses, and supernatural beings. But the Bilaspur Rasalu, though remarkably indifferent to sex, is almost entirely concerned with matrimony:

[1] ibid., xli.
[2] ibid., 146.
[3] ibid., 150.
[4] Temple omits this incident.

he marries altogether seven wives and all his magical adventures are connected with winning them.

The versions converge again in the Raja Sirkatki (Sirkap, Sirikap) incident. In Temple's version, Rasalu meets the corpse of one of Sirkap's victims: it gives him bones to serve as enchanted dice. Rasalu plays with Sirkap at Chaupur with the head of the loser as stake. Rasalu wins but accepts Sirkap's little daughter Kokilan in place of his head. He takes her to an underground palace in the Murti Hills and plants a young mango tree: when the tree bears fruit Kokilan will be fit to be a wife. When she is grown, Kokilan goes hunting with Rasalu and catches the deer Hira: Rasalu is jealous of it and cuts off its ears and tail, thus causing it to be cast out of the herd. In revenge Hira spoils the garden of Rasalu's rival, Raja Hodi, and leads him to the palace where Kokilan is alone. The seduction scene is very similar to that in the text: the maina protests and is killed, the parrot escapes to warn Rasalu. Rasalu kills his rival and takes some of the flesh home. He tricks Kokilan into eating it and when she remarks, 'How very good the meat is today', he replies,

> Living though didst enjoy him, Rani
> Dead thou hast eaten his flesh
> Why shouldst thou not relish his flesh
> Who did enjoy thee?[1]

The girl leaps down from the palace wall and is sorely wounded. Rasalu ties her with the corpse of her lover to a horse and sends her away to Atak, Hodi's own country. There a Jhinwar water-carrier marries her and she has three sons. Rasalu returns to Sialkot.

Swynnerton's account materially agrees with this. On the way to Sirikot, the Fort of Skulls, Rasalu meets a corpse which laughs at him but gives him good advice and a cat to help him. Sirikap first tests him with riddles and then persuades him to play *chaupur*. He wins everything but just in time Rasalu remembers his cat, recovers his losses and then utterly defeats the Raja. He spares him, however, on condition that he reforms his character, draws five lines with his nose on a hot griddle and gives him his baby daughter in marriage. Rasalu goes off with little Kokla and finds a beautiful castle at Kherimurti near Burhan, and they live

[1] Temple, i, 64.

here for twelve years. Rasalu is constantly away hunting, and the girl is lonely but finds some comfort in her parrots, mainas and peacocks. Presently Rasalu insults a blue buck which revenges itself by leading Raja Hodi to the castle. Kokla gives the visitor water and lets him into her room. She kills the maina. 'When night falls, they both sleep on the one cot, and the Rani talks to the Raja and the Raja to the Rani, and all the sentinel birds, seeing this, begin to weep'. The parrot flies off to warn Rasalu and Hodi runs away. Rasalu returns and kills his enemy. There are some moving and pathetic pages describing Rasalu's meeting with Kokla, the little wife tormented with fear, the husband noting on every side the tokens of her betrayal—the smoked hookah, the water raised from the well, the maina's cage empty, the girl's broken necklace. Rasalu gives the girl some of her lover's flesh to cook and eat: when she discovers what it is, the shock is too much for her and she leaps over the battlements and crashes to death beside her lover's body.

There then—according to Swynnerton—occurs an extraordinary incident. Rasalu hastens down and 'stooping over the dead body of the only woman whom he had ever really, truly, loved, the king is said to have then felt what it was to have loved and for ever to have lost.' He takes the body of his wife and her lover, lays them side by side and covers them with the same cloth. In the evening he carries them to the Indus and throws them together into the stream.[1]

After this Rasalu grows careless and morose and when the brothers of Raja Hodi come to avenge him, he is defeated.

The Bilaspur story, although it departs frequently even in main outline from the older stories, is full of echoes of them. The miraculous conception, the concealment in a pit, the young girl's insult to her future husband, the breaking of the water pots, the banishment, the tests, the friendly animals, the laughing corpses, the gambling-scene—these are the common clichés of all Indian folk-tales: the only remark-

[1] In a note, however, Swynnerton relates an ending similar to Temple's. The Rani still breathes and Rasalu throws her into one sack and her lover's corpse into another, slings them over Hodi's own horse and sends it home saying, 'Go, tell Raja Bhatti that his son is coming to him married'. But on the way a sweeper stops the horse and rescues Kokla. He marries her and she bears him four sons.

able thing about them here is that so many of them are associated together and in the same order in each version.

Equally interesting is the combination of 'poetry' and 'prose' in each account. The main narrative is in a rhythmic prose: much of the dialogue is in song. Many of Temple's songs are rhymed couplets which would pass in Chhattisgarh as Dadaria.

Sometimes the older songs appear, a little altered and in a different context. Thus in Temple's account, there is a pretty scene where Rani Saunkhni disguised as a slave girl talks to Rasalu as he is washing his clothes by a well. She complains that he has taken no notice of her and he replies.

The land is strange, the country is a stranger's
And thou art a stranger's child
Who will save his life
That falls in love with a stranger?

And the Rani says,

I will split sandalwood
And sit on the pyre and set it on fire
If thou art in love with the stranger
Then, my Lord, I will fall on thy neck.[1]

In the Bilaspur legend, recorded seventy-five years later, Rasalu meets a princess by a well. He kills her attendants and is in great danger. He hears the war drums and sings,

Here is your mother's house
But for me it is a foreign land
For you I will lose my life
And who will send the news back to my home?

And the girl replies,

I will make a pyre of sandalwood
By my brother Biran I swear
If you lose your life for my sake
I will leap into the flames.

The scene is similar, though the atmosphere is different: the new songs clearly echo the old.

Other echoes will be found in the wonderful passage describing Rasalu's return to Kokilan,[2] in which we read how Raja Rasalu dismounted and went up to Rani Kokilan,

[1] Temple, i, 21. [2] ibid., 59.

And seeing that the brim of the well was broken in, and that there were human footprints about, he said to Rani Kokilan,

Who threw down the well-brim, Rani?
Who broke the platform?
Who has taken out the water in pitchers?
Who has thrown down the stones?
Who has broken into my palace?
Footmarks are in the palace halls!
Who has lain on my bed?
The *niwar*[1] is loose.

The Rani answered,

I broke down the well!
I destroyed the platform!
I took out the water in pitchers!
I threw down the stones!
The maina loosened my hair
And the parrot broke my necklace.
Releasing myself, Raja, I ran away.
My footmarks are in the palace.
My enemy lay on the bed and loosened the *niwar*.

The songs on page 276 are obviously an echo of this.

Among the details forgotten by the Bilaspur narrator is the extensive use of riddles in the older stories. Raja Sirikap first tries to defeat Rasalu by asking him riddles[2]; when Raja Hodi approaches Rani Kokilan she insists on his answering a number of riddles before she will admit him to her couch[3]; there are also a number of riddles about Raja Rasalu himself.[4]

The name Rasalu is based on the word *rasa* which means 'juice', 'essence', 'flavour', and lends itself readily to puns and riddles. Rasalu is born of the *rasa* of a mango: he is full of *rasa*, and is ever ready to give his *rasa* to his beloved. In Chhattisgarh a youth who is full, or over-full, of *rasa* is nicknamed Rassia: the implications are not polite. There was a handsome and flirtatious prince, Raja Rassia, who came to attempt the hand of the beautiful Ramo, princess of Chandagarh. But the word *rasa* is also used in a more elevated sense.

[1] Cotton tape stretched across the bedstead.
[2] Swynnerton, 253 ff.
[3] Temple, i, 42; iii, 238; there is similar riddling talk between Raja Dhol and his bride's companions, ii, 335.
[4] *The Indian Antiquary*, xii, 307.

Medieval Indian poetics arranged an ascending scale of the *rasa*, or flavours, of poetry. *Rasa*, says Vishwanatha, a fifteenth century writer on aesthetics, in his *Sahitya-Darpana*, is the very essence of all poetry: in fact 'poetry is a sentence the soul whereof is flavour (*rasa*).' It is understood only by those who are akin to it, and those who are competent find in the tasting of *rasa* something not unlike spiritual experience. 'It is pure, indivisible, self-manifested, compounded equally of joy and consciousness, free of admixture with any other perception, the twin brother of mystical experience and the very life of it is supersensuous wonder.'

This terminology was borrowed by the philosophers of the Bhakti movement to express the degrees of the Divine Love. There was the Shanti Rasa, the Resigned Flavour, the Sakhya Rasa—where the soul felt for God the love that exists between friend and friend, the Vatsalya Rasa, in which the devotee 'looked after God's joy and welfare like a mother', and the Madhurya Rasa, the entire devotion existing between a lover and his beloved. Descriptions of Divine Love are often more inspired than those of human passion, and a Hindu writer expounds the Madhurya Rasa in words which might have been used of Rasalu Kuar or any other earthly lover (though Rasalu would have changed the gender of the pronouns). 'In this *rasa* the sole aim of the devotee is to have the closest embrace of his beloved. He lives in and for his beloved, and gives all he has to his beloved. His beloved enwraps him, maddens him. He drinks deep in his beauty, but his thirst quenches not. He stands "eye to eye crossed", and presses him to his bosom, but his craving diminishes not: it is ever fresh and vigorous.'

Raja Rasalu, therefore, combines in himself the qualities of hero, lover and poet.

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A Raja ruled in the Punjab. He grew old but he had no child. When Mahadeo heard of his sorrow he came in the form of a Brahmin to visit him. The Raja received the holy man with great honour and told him his trouble. The Brahmin gave the Raja a bel stick and said, 'Go to your mango garden and throw the stick into any tree that is bearing mangoes. But throw it only once. Be not proud or greedy; take as many mangoes as may fall and do not try for more.'

The Raja took the stick and went to the garden. He found a tree heavy with splendid fruit and threw the stick up into the branches. A single mango fell to the ground. The Raja was disappointed, for he had hoped for a large family, and he picked up the stick and threw it again. This time the stick remained in the tree and the one mango that had fallen disappeared.

Ashamed the Raja went back to the Palace and told the Brahmin what he had done. The Brahmin gave him another stick and sent him back to the same place. This time when the mango fell the Raja picked it up and took it back with him. The Brahman said, 'Drink a little of the juice (*ras*) yourself and give the rest to your Rani.' The Raja did so and threw the skin and the stone into the stable. There one of the mares ate it. The Brahmin went home.

Soon the Rani found herself pregnant. The mare was also pregnant. The wife of the Diwan also conceived on the same day. When the time came, the Rani gave birth to a son, the mare to a foal, and the Diwan's wife to a daughter. On the day of the Chhatti ceremonies the Brahmin came again and the Raja received him with great honour. 'A son has been born to me through your blessing; now accept any gift you will.'

The Brahmin said, 'I want no gift, nor will I give the boy his name today. In six years I will return and name him. Meanwhile make a great pit and shut the boy and girl up in it.' The Raja anxious and afraid did as he was bidden. He made a great pit and put the boy and girl into it. He put beds and blankets, food and water for many years, then covered the mouth with bamboos and wood, piled earth upon it and made the top level with the ground. When he had seen this done, the Brahmin went away.

The Raja and his Diwan were very sad for a time, saying, 'Surely our children are dead,' but after two years they forgot about them. After six years the Brahmin came again and the Raja received him with great honour. The Brahmin said, 'Let us open the pit and see if the children are alive or dead.' They removed the earth and there were the boy and girl laughing and playing together. The boy said, 'I am going to marry you.' 'Are you?' said the girl. 'I'll keep you as syce in my father's stables.' At that the boy was very angry and exclaimed, 'I will certainly marry you, but I will

only do half the marriage so that you will neither enjoy me nor be able to marry anyone else.'

The Brahmin took the two children out of the pit and sent them home. He gave the boy the name of Rasalu Kuar, but to the girl he said, 'I will name you when the seven circlings of the pole at your marriage are complete.' The Brahmin went away.

The boy grew from day to day. He got a bow and used to hide by the well and break the pots of the village girls as they went for water. When they bought brass pots he got a stronger bow and broke those also. The people complained to the Raja and he often rebuked his son, but the boy took no notice. At last in a rage the Raja wrote up on all four doors of his house—'If you are such a strong boy, go and bring the daughter of Sirkatki Raja in marriage.'

When Rasalu Kuar saw this he went in to collect his things and the chaprassis shut all the four doors. When the boy had put together his gold and silver, his pearls and diamonds, he found no means of getting out, and he sang,

O guards of the windows
Watchers by the doors
Quickly open the door
Or I will strike myself
With my sword and die.

Then the Kotwar opened the door and Rasalu Kuar came out with his things. He went to the stables and said to each horse in turn, 'I am going to marry Sirkatki Raja's daughter. Will you come with me or no?' Each horse replied, 'A thousand Rajas have gone there and have been killed and their horses with them. I cannot go with you.' At last the boy came to the mare which had become pregnant after eating the mango stone and the foal said, 'I am ready to go.' The mother was anxious and tried to stop it. 'A great full-grown horse cannot go, then how can this child?' But the foal got ready and Rasalu Kuar sang,

From the *ras* was born Rasalu
From the seed the horse Shahkaran
O horse we are going to a strange country
Who can tell whether we will die or live?
Help me in this great journey
Your form is very lovely. I am Rasalu Kuar.

So the two set out. The Raja heard of it and sent for his Diwan. The Diwan followed Rasalu Kuar and persuaded him to return. They went together to the Diwan's house. But Rasalu Kuar was very angry and said in his mind, 'I will not drink the water of this Raja's Kingdom.'

As Rasalu sat in the Diwan's house he saw the girl and remembered that it was she who had been his companion in the pit. He called the Diwan and said, 'I must be married to your daughter this very day.' The Brahmin pandits were called and Rasalu Kuar said to them secretly, 'Declare that it will be auspicious only if the marriage is completed within an hour.' The pandits were pleased when he gave them a gold mohur and declared as he had bidden them.

The Diwan got the booth and everything ready and they began to make the haldi climb on the bodies of the boy and girl. When the two met at the time of going round the pole, although Rasalu recognized the girl she did not know who he was. Rasalu went round with her four times and then cried, 'I feel giddy, I must rest.' He undid the knot that held them together and went away behind the house and slept. Presently he got his horse and prepared to ride away. When she saw this the girl sang,

O brother, beard and head are become one
How did you think of such an omen?
We did four circles, yet three remain,

And the boy sang in answer,

I am Rasalu. I never will return
With my eyes I will never look on you again
Maiden, remember the pit and what you said there.

The boy rode away into the deep forest. For two or four days he was hungry. The bees flew round him but brought him no honey. He found a stream, drank from it and continued on his way.

At last he came to a city where the Raja had made a great tank with a garden of flowers and trees with a well near by. Many people bathed in the tank and the water was spoilt for drinking. Rasalu Kuar went to the well and drank, then sat to rest in the shade of a kadam tree.

The Raja of that city had one daughter. That day she went to the garden to pick flowers. Seven maid-servants went ahead and seven went behind. She stood below a mango tree.

The fruit of the tree was ripe and firm; the stalk of the plantain was smooth and lustrous; and the scent of the roses filled the mind with desire. When he saw the girl Rasalu Kuar sang,

In the forest I got no wood
In the lake I found no water
Rasalu Kuar stands hungry
On the bank of the lake.

The serving-maids did not hear him but went one by one into the garden picking flowers. When the girl saw the beauty of the flowers she sang,

The rose flowers at night
You cannot pick it by pulling
This flower does not grow in the Malin's house
It does not go to the Raja's house.

The girl went on picking flowers and as she did so a thorn ran into her foot. She bent down to pull it out and when the boy saw her do this, he sang,

You came to pick flowers
On your breast you put your hand
The thorn of love has pierced you
You are bending to the ground.

She did not listen so he sang again,

You came to pick flowers
On your jacket you put your hand
The thorn of love has pierced you
You are rubbing it to bring it out.

She still took no notice, but as she was thirsty she went to draw water from the well, and the boy sang,

The well is golden, its mouth is small
The fair lady is drawing water
She stoops to fill her pot
And her cloth is blown up by the wind.

And then at last the girl replied,

White is the stork. With one foot in the water
It seems to meditate
We thought it was a sadhu
You are a mine of deceit.

The boy had nothing to say to this, and after a while the girl sang again,

On the river bank
Stands the stork with white wings
What does it know of pearls?
It is an eater of shells.

Then they laughed at each other and became friends. The other girls gathered and said to the Raja's daughter, 'Why are you talking to this stranger? He must be some loiterer, a cheat or rascal from the town. We will tell the Raja and have him killed.'

When he heard this Rasalu Kuar was very angry. He took his sword and killed thirteen of the girls. But the fourteenth girl was behind the well and managed to escape. She ran to the Raja and came panting into his presence. 'What is the matter?' he asked. She told the story. The Raja was filled with rage, got his weapons ready and had the war-drums sounded.

Rasalu Kuar heard the drums and said to the girl,

Here is your mother's house
But for me it is a foreign land
For you I will lose my life
And who will send the news back to my home?

And the girl answered,

I will make a pyre of sandalwood
By my brother Biran I swear
If you lose your life for my sake
I will leap into the flames.

At this Rasalu Kuar began to wonder if the girl was very intelligent. He tried to make her understand his danger, and said, 'I'll hide you in the well. Go right down under the water. Poke your head out for a moment, then go down again. After that do exactly what I say.'

Rasalu Kuar put the girl in the well and sat quietly by. The Raja came with his army. When they approached, Rasalu Kuar called, 'Come brothers quickly and see what girl is in the well. Pull her out or she will be drowned.' The soldiers forgot their rage and ran to save the girl. 'How did she fall in?' they asked. Rasalu Kuar replied, 'Let us go to the Raja and I will tell him.' When he came before the Raja, he told him that he was the son of the Raja of the

Punjab. Then he said, 'I found the girls quarrelling and they were trying to push your daughter into the well. At that I was so angry that I killed them.' The Raja asked his daughter, 'Is this true or false?' 'It is true,' she said. The Raja was very pleased. He took Rasalu Kuar to his own house and after a few days married him to his daughter.

After the marriage Rasalu Kuar stayed for some time in that city. But when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride. The fish did not enter the trap, nor the hare its burrow; the crab sat outside its hole and all the pitchers of the palace was empty of water. 'I had a friend,' said the boy. 'He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would not fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no. Get me food ready for my journey.'

The girl prepared his food and bedding and tied up costly jewels and gold for the expenses of the journey. Rasalu Kuar mounted his horse and rode away. Presently he came to the city of another Raja. Here was a rest-house and he slept there. The people told him of the beauty of the Raja's daughter and when they saw his wealth and beauty they said, 'You ought to marry her.'

Rasalu Kuar went at midnight to the palace and climbed up the wall until he was able to look through the window of the girl's chamber. She was swinging in a golden swing. Rasalu Kuar climbed quietly through the window and stood by one of the pillars of the swing. As the girl swung to and fro she saw the shadows of the two pillars of the swing and a third pillar. She sang,

Are you a thief or a rascal
Or are you a Raja's son?
By the sandal pillar standing
You say not a word.

And the boy replied,

I am no thief or rascal
I am a Raja's son
I have come in search of *ras*
If you tell me where I can find it
I will take the *ras* and go.

And the girl replied,

If you are *rassia* I will give you *ras*
As I will give it to the whole world
In my *ras* you may burn yourself and die
And burnt you will turn to ashes.

When Rasalu Kuar heard this he was angry and sang,

I am Rasalu, born of *ras*
And I will give *ras* to the whole world
I will undo your jacket and break your body
Jumping on it, playing with it, I will break your body.

In this way the two became friends and the girl said, 'Marry me and take me away.' Rasalu Kuar answered, 'I cannot marry you by stealth, but I will certainly marry you.' The boy went back to the rest-house.

Now the Raja had a horse named Hansraj. He had promised that whoever rode it could marry his daughter. Many Rajas had come but none could ride it.

The next day the Raja's barber came to cut Rasalu Kuar's hair. The boy gave the barber a good mohur in payment. The barber was very pleased and when the next day and the next the boy also paid him with a gold mohur, he exclaimed, 'Sir, only the Raja's daughter is fit for you. There is a drum at the door of the palace. The rule is that whoever wants to try to ride the horse Hansraj must go and beat the drum.' Rasalu Kuar got ready and went to beat the drum. Other visitors struck it once or twice; this boy thundered on it for a long time. The Raja thought in his mind, 'What great warrior has come to my kingdom?' He came out and when he saw Rasalu Kuar and knew who he was, he had the horse saddled.

Directly Rasalu Kuar put out his hand to take the bridle the Raja struck the horse violently from behind with his whip. The horse leapt in the air pulling the rope out of Rasalu Kuar's hand. But the boy chased it and managed to get on to its back. The horse flew up into the sky, but the boy brought it down and the Raja had to give him his daughter in marriage. As a wedding gift he gave the boy a fine house and seven rent-free villages.

After the marriage Rasalu Kuar stayed for some time in that city. But when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride, lovely and charming as she was. The fish did not enter the trap to swing there, nor the hare

its burrow; the crab sat outside its hole; the visitors in the rest-house slept that night on the verandah; and all the lamps in the palace were empty of oil. 'I had a friend,' said the boy. 'He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would not fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no. Get me food ready for the journey.'

The girl prepared everything for him and Rasalu Kuar mounted his horse and rode away. Presently he came to another city and stayed in the rest-house. In that city was a great pillar and on the top of it was a small pitcher of brass.[1] The Raja had proclaimed that whoever could hit and break the pitcher with an arrow would have his daughter in marriage. Many Rajas came but not one was able to hit the pitcher, and everyone who failed had a girl's ring put through his nose and was imprisoned in the palace.

Rasalu Kuar bandaged his horse over one eye, tied his swords to its back and rode along the street up to the palace. The Raja's daughter was looking down from the attic and when she saw the boy she thought, 'Here comes a boy on a blind horse' and she sang,

On a blind horse put no saddle
Your sword will not do its work
However much sand you put in the oil-press
You will get no oil from it.

And the boy answered,

Good is the marigold and good the cassia
And good is the oil of linseed
Who talks of river sand?
I will get oil from a stone.

The girl sang again,

If the bamboo is crooked so is the split bamboo
Your bow and arrow are crooked
I thought you were a clever boy
But I see you are a fool.

[1] At the marriage of Brahma in the *Alhkhand* there was a similar test of a golden vessel on a pole, in this case guarded by two elephants. Malkhan and Udan remove the elephants and Udan knocks the vessel down with his spear.—Waterfield, 198.

The boy replied,

O hero, do not lose your courage
Without courage all is lost
With courage wealth is quickly won
Surely you will soon achieve it.

And the girl sang,

I want that kind of love
That is like the fast die of the majit tree
It does not run with washing
But continues to life's end.

The boy sang again,

The hibiscus has blossomed
They are selling it in the bazaar
O maiden, I know that you are wise
But you have made friends with a fool.

The girl answered him,

The rose is red, how deep the colour is
Yet it has but little *ras*
Now take a little *ras*
But never break love that has once been joined.

The boy finally sang,

I am a winged bird in another's charge
I have been sold in another's power
My bones and my flesh may be anywhere
But all my life is with you.

After this Rasalu Kuar went to the Raja and said, 'I will hit this pitcher with my arrow.' The Raja replied, 'Hit it if you can, but remember that if you fail I will put a ring in your nose and imprison you in the palace.' At this Rasalu Kuar said, 'Then I will not try; I am going away.' But all the people, who had heard his singing and seen his great beauty, thought, 'If we let him go, our name will be ruined in every land, and no other Raja will come here and the girl will remain unmarried.' So they changed the rule and now said, 'He who hits the pitcher may marry the girl; he who misses may go on his way without her.'

They called Rasalu Kuar back and now he came with a parrot on his hand. The parrot said to him,'Go round the pillar seven times and then shoot at it.' Rasalu Kuar did so and hit the pitcher and broke it with his arrow. Every-

one was very pleased and the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicing. The Raja gave the boy a fine palace and half his kingdom.

After the marriage Rasalu Kuar stayed some time in his new palace. But when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride, faithful and loving as she was. The fish did not enter the trap though the current of the stream flowed strongly; the hare stayed outside its burrow and the crab outside its hole. The clouds heavy with rain were blown away towards the mountains, and all the jars of the palace were empty of honey. 'I had a friend,' said the boy. 'He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no. Get me food ready for my journey.'

Now this girl loved Rasalu Kuar greatly; she was a girl who had never wantoned with the bright youths of the palace; her love was like the die that is never washed out of a cloth. So when her love was leaving her she made nothing for the journey and tried to delay him. Rasalu Kuar was angry and got his horse ready, but the girl stood before him with folded hands. 'Do not be angry,' she said. 'I will cook your food, but leave a sign with me before you go.'

Rasalu Kuar gave her a keonra tree. He planted it in the courtyard and said, 'If this tree dies, you will know that I am dead.' He put milk in a pot and dropped a thorn into it and gave it to her, saying, 'So long as the milk keeps fresh you will know that I am alive.' He put five mangoes in a jar of honey and gave them to her. 'If the mangoes dry up, you will know that I am dead.' Then the girl prepared his food, rich and tasty, and Rasalu Kuar mounted his horse and rode away.

Presently he came to the city of another Raja. There was a well outside the city and near it a snake was swallowing a frog. Rasalu Kuar called his parrot and said, 'Shall I take the frog out of its mouth?' 'But the snake is hungry,' said the parrot. 'To deprive it of its food would be a sin.' 'But to let the frog die,' said the boy, 'will also be a sin.' Rasalu Kuar thought in his mind, then he cut a lump of flesh from his thigh and threw it to the snake. The snake dropped the frog and ate the flesh instead.

The frog said to the boy, 'O Rasalu Kuar, whenever you

are in need of water remember me and I will help you.' The boy sat down by the well and rested and the frog hopped away.

Presently to that very well the Raja's daughter came to bathe, and her ring dropped from her finger into the water. She wept for the ring and her attendants tried to find it but they could not. Rasalu Kuar saw the girl. The fruit of the lime tree was round and hard but small. The bushes grew thickly round the mouth of the little well. The girl sang,

There are red beads in the bazaar
The beads embrace the throat
If you are wise you will buy them
If you are a fool you'll go home empty-handed.

And the boy answered,

An elephant must be of such a sort
That it can go into the midst of the bazaar
He who climbs on its back must not be shaken
Though a thousand dogs bark in the bazaar.

Rasalu Kuar said, 'Why are you weeping, girl? Why do you sing this song to me?' The girl replied, 'My ring has fallen into the well.' 'And if I get you your ring?' 'You may marry me.' 'And if I fail?' 'I'll cut off your head and go away.' So the bargain was made in the presence of two or four witnesses. Rasalu Kuar remembered the frog and sang,

O frog, I said to the frog
Hear O frog my word
The ring of the Raja's daughter
In a moment bring it out.

The frog jumped into the well, swam round a little, dived down, found the ring and threw it out onto the ground. The boy picked it up, put it on the girl's finger, took her by the hand and led her to her father. The Raja said, 'What is this?' Rasalu Kuar told him what had happened, and the girl said, 'Yes' and the two or four witnesses said, 'Yes.' The Raja was satisfied and the two were married and stayed in the palace.

After the marriage Rasalu Kuar remained for some time in the city. But when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride, though she was lovely as clear well-water and shone like her own ring. The fish did not

enter the trap though the waters came down in flood; the hare did not enter its burrow though the rain fell in torrents; the crab stayed outside its hole in spite of thundering clouds above. The royal elephants trumpeted outside their stable and all the cooking-vessels of the palace were empty of rice-water. 'I had a friend,' said the boy. 'He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would not fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no. Get me food ready for the journey.'

But the girl sang,

The oyster lives in the sea
But it is crying for thirst
I have married you
But my hope is not fulfilled.

But the boy persuaded her, and she prepared his food and bedding and he mounted his horse and rode away.

Presently he came to the city of another Raja. There was a tank of clear water and clean stones. The boy thought he would wash his clothes there. He tied his horse to a mango tree and began to wash his clothes in the water. The Raja's daughter came by—there were seven serving-maids in front and seven behind—and when she saw the boy she thought in her mind, 'If only I could marry this boy!'

But Rasalu Kuar said not a word. There was a garden by the tank and the girl sat there and watched him. That garden was full of roses and the scent came to the boy as he worked. The bees moved from flower to flower. The fruit of the guava was a perfect round, firm and ready to be plucked. The secret nest of the koel was small and as yet there was no room for eggs to be laid there, but it was lined with down, warm, smooth and very sweet.

The girl sat watching till she was tired and sang,

Wash your soft clothes
Wash the turban from your head
I filled my pot drop by drop from my nails
But you said not a word.

And the boy replied,

Do not approach me
Hide your face and go home
Your *bindia* has fallen from your head
Go where you will but not near me.

The girl answered,

We say Salu, Salu
O Salu, hear my word
In my father's palace
There are two or four Saluwa as good as you.

The boy was very angry and went away. The girl went home with lowered head. The boy thought, 'If there are two or four princes like me in the palace how will I be able to marry her? But marry her I will and then I will desert her.'

Rasalu Kuar made his camp by the lake. He had his horse and the parrot with him, but he was very lonely. Then the Raja sent his chaprassis to find a boy who was fit to marry his daughter. When they saw Rasalu Kuar, they took him to the palace and the Raja was pleased with his wealth and beauty and the marriage was celebrated with feasting and dances without delay.

After the marriage Rasalu Kuar stayed for some time in that city. But when they slept at night he placed a sword between him and his bride. The fish did not enter the trap, though now all the fields by the river were flooded; the hare did not hide in its burrow nor the crab in its hole; the koel did not sit in the little nest, and all the storebins of the palace were empty of grain. 'I had a friend,' said the boy. 'He was so close a friend that we agreed that when one of us was married, he would not fulfil it until he knew that the other was married also. Now I must go to see my friend and discover whether he is married or no.'

But this time Rasalu Kuar went away without asking his wife for food. As he rode through the forest night fell; he tied his horse to a tree and climbed into the branches and slept. At midnight Mahadeo and Parvati came by and sat down under a kadam tree near where he was sleeping and began to play dice together. As they played Parvati fell asleep. Mahadeo sat alone, but he wearied of that and presently he undid his hair and took out a young and beautiful girl. He played with her, but when he saw that Parvati was about to awake he tied the girl up in his hair again and lay down to sleep. Then Parvati sat up and she too wearied of being alone. She undid her hair and brought out a young and handsome youth and played with him. When the cock crowed, Parvati quickly tied the youth up in her hair again. Mahadeo awoke and they prepared to go on their journey.

Rasalu Kuar came down from the tree and fell at their feet. 'What trouble has afflicted you?' they asked. 'Tell us how we can help you.'

'There is nothing, but I beg you to come and accept my offering.' The boy went to a nim tree, cleared the grass below it, and cowdunged the place. He cut five plantain leaves and set them out in five places, and invited Mahadeo and Parvati to sit. When they had sat down they asked, 'There are only three of us; why are there five places prepared?' Rasalu Kuar said, 'Bring out those others from your hair, and there will be five of us.' They did so and the five ate their food. Then said Mahadeo, 'Ask what you will and I will give it to you.' 'I want nothing,' said the boy, 'Except the dice you played with last night.'

Mahadeo said, 'But I have already promised my dice to Sirkatki Raja and no one in the world can defeat them. How can I give them to you?' Parvati said, 'But he knows our secret; he may tell; we will have to give them.' Mahadeo said, 'Very well. But if you go to Sirkatki Raja, don't let him know what dice you have.' He gave the boy the dice and went away.

Rasalu Kuar mounted his horse and came at last to Sirkatki Raja's city. A merchant's wife had come out along the road to relieve herself early in the morning and when she saw Rasalu Kuar and his great beauty she thought in her mind, 'What a pity that such a lovely boy should have his head cut off by our Raja' and she sang,

> How beautiful is your sword and your knife
> How beautiful the colour of your body
> Who deceived you
> That you should ever come to our land?

The boy sang again,

> My sword and my knife are beautiful indeed
> And beautiful is my own country
> It was for my own pleasure
> That I came to your land.

The boy went on into the city. As he went by the palace the youngest of the Raja's seven daughters looked down from her attic and sang,

The marigold is fragrant and fragrant is the keonra
Fragrant too the pomegranate
How many brothers are there in your house
To bring honour to your mother?

The boy answered,

My brother worships Siva
My father serves Kailas
She from whom I was born
Will help my life.

Singing the boy went into the palace. At the back of the palace was a well. Now Sirkatki Raja's custom was to defeat other Rajas at dice, cut off their heads, throw the heads into the well, stuff the bodies with straw and hang them up in the wind. Rasalu Kuar saw the bodies swaying to and fro and the heads in the well, and when they saw him all the heads burst out laughing. The boy was annoyed at this and cried,

Bodiless heads, what are you laughing at?
Tell me the reason at once
Tell me the truth
Or there will be trouble.

The bodiless heads replied, 'We were not laughing in mockery, but for joy. When we saw you we thought that you would surely defeat this Raja. When you do so and have killed him, sprinkle his blood upon us and we will all live again. If you fail—well, we are just one short of a hundred, there are ninty-nine of us in this well—and you will complete the number.'

Rasalu Kuar went round to the front of the palace and thundered on the drum in front of the door. The Raja came out and brought the boy into the palace with great honour. He kept the youngest girl hidden, but he dressed the others in all their finery and brought them out to entertain their guest. Then they sat down to gamble. Rasalu Kuar lost everything he had. At last he had nothing but his own body to stake. He forgot all about the dice of Mahadeo until his parrot whispered in his ear,

Brahma is your guru
Siva has given you a gift
Mahadeo has given you his dice
Use them to throw eighteen points.

Sirkatki Raja and the six girls looked at the parrot and wondered what it was saying. As their attention was distracted, Rasalu Kuar quickly changed the dice. Sirkatki Raja said, 'What shall I stake equal to your body?' The boy answered, 'A man's body is worth a lakh of rupees.' The boy threw the dice and won. Gradually he won back all he had lost, then he began to win from the Raja—his lands, his wife, his six daughters, his seventh daughter, until only the Raja's own body was left. In the end he won that also.

The parrot whispered again, 'Kill the Raja with your sword, but do not kill the Rani. Kill the six daughters with a club, for if their blood falls to the ground many new Rakshasin will be born. You may marry the youngest, for she is not a Rakshasin.'

Rasalu Kuar did as the parrot said. First he killed the six daughters. Then he cut off the Raja's head and sprinkled the blood over the ninety-nine Rajas in the well. They came to life and he distributed the villages of Sirkatki Raja among them. He made the Rani an allowance, enough for her food and clothes. He married the youngest girl and after the marriage left that place immediately.

Now the youngest daughter was very young. Presently they came to another city. Not far away in wooded country was a lake and a temple on the bank. Rasalu Kuar thought, 'Let us stay here until she has grown up a little.' The temple was surrounded by trees and flowers. The small buds of the champa flower smelt sweet but there was no fruit on the orange trees. There was no well yet, but only a spring in the smooth sand and no grass growing by. The red rose had not yet blossomed, nor had any bee yet robbed the flowers of their honey.

Rasalu Kuar got a maina and a falcon and they lived together with the three birds. When the girl was twelve years old Rasalu Kuar saw her beauty and ripeness, but he said, 'Until I fight a tiger and kill it I will not go to her.' He left the girl with the three birds and went into the forest. He could not find a tiger but he met a great wild boar with long tusks. He fought it but neither won the battle.

In the temple garden, Rasalu Kuar had kept an antelope, young and free and beautiful. The antelope went one night to the city, spoilt someone's garden and came back to the temple garden. The Raja was angry with his servants and

dismissed them. He appointed a Pathan in their place. This Pathan slept by day and sat quietly watching by night. Next time the antelope came the Pathan followed its tracks back to the temple. Near the lake the tracks were lost in the long grass. The Pathan searched here and there amid the grass for the tracks. The girl watched him from the temple window. She was ripe now and was thinking constantly of Rasalu Kuar. But the Pathan too was young and when she saw him she loved him, and sang,

Why are you looking down?
Down in the grass are only dirty tracks
Lift up your eyes
What sweet flowers are growing in the woods!

The Pathan replied,

Who planted the mango grove
Who planted the pomegranates?
What Raja's daughter are you?
What Raja's wife?

The girl sang,

It was I who planted the mango grove
I planted the pomegranates
I am the daughter of Sirkatki Raja
The wife of Rasalu Kuar.

When he heard that the Pathan, pretending to be thirsty, came to the window of the temple and said, 'But bhauji, Rasalu Kuar is my elder brother; I was looking for you both. Give me some water to drink.'

She came to the window and gave him water through the window. He took a little in his mouth and secretly spat it out, then asked for more, and more, till she was tired.

The bhauji said, 'How can I quench your thirst?' At last she called him into the temple and let him sit on Rasalu Kuar's bed, for she believed that he really was her dewar. The Pathan lay down on the bed saying he was tired and the girl laughed. Clouds gathered overhead, and there was a little thunder and a warning of rain. They heard the peacock cry in the forest and the crackling of a fire on the distant hills.

That night the Pathan did not go home. As a long *kotri* the fish swam into the trap, then as a little *turu* escaped but six times returned to play with its delicious fate. At last the

crab pushed its way into its hole and the hare into its long-closed burrow; the koel stirred in its nest and the sweetest honey in the world was taken by the bees. That night the storm broke; great clouds swirled white about the temple; rain fell in torrents and the thunder was like the sound of a thousand marriage-drums.

That was the first night, but the Pathan stayed on and many days and nights went by. The two ate together and slept on Rasalu Kuar's bed. They ate *pān* and spat against the wall till it was all red.

Her pomegranate breasts grew soft and her body, which had been firm and fragrant as the keonra flower, grew tired and flabby. The parrot, falcon and maina saw what was happening and were very angry. One night as the two lay together, the maina spoke,

From its cage speaks the maina
From its perch cries the falcon
Do not lie together
Or we will tell our brother.

The parrot remained silent in its wisdom, for it knew it would be killed. The Pathan said to the girl, 'We had better kill these Satans or we will have no happiness.' He got up from the bed and twisted the maina's neck and killed it. The parrot laughed and said, 'That was a very great rascal; it was always stealing my food. I am glad you killed it. I will never tell what you are doing.'

The falcon cut its cord and flew away. The parrot begged to be let out. 'I am so tired of this cage.' The girl let it go and it flew away into the forest. It came to a stream; on the banks Rasalu Kuar was fighting the great boar. The parrot sat in a tree above and cried,

Salu, Salu, I said O Salu
O Salu, hear my word
There is a thief in your temple
That daily steals your honey.

When he heard this Rasalu Kuar said to the boar, 'I have work to do; let us make peace. I swear never to trouble you again.' The boar left him and Rasalu Kuar came back to the temple. He hid in the garden and watched until the

Pathan came out and went towards the city. Then he came near and sang,

Who has cut down my mango grove
Who has picked my pomegranates?
Who has been sleeping on my bed
Who has spat on my wall?

The girl answered,

It was I who cut down the mango grove
I picked your pomegranates
I have been sleeping on your bed
I spat on your wall.

Rasalu Kuar came into the temple, and the girl ran to wash his feet and give him food. But Rasalu Kuar refused to let her touch him and he would not eat. Next morning the antelope came and the boy followed it. After he had gone out, the Pathan came. The girl said, 'Eat your food quickly and go, or he will see you.'

The Pathan ate his food quickly and went away. Rasalu Kuar was hiding in the grass near the tracks of the antelope. When the Pathan reached the place, the boy came out and sang,

O thief, I call you a thief
Listen thief to my word
For a while stay on the hill
And I will make you understand.

The Pathan replied,

Have I stole your money or your grain?
Have I stolen the vessels from your kitchen?
It is your own flesh I have stolen
And I am going home.

When he heard this, Rasalu Kuar said, 'Very well. Now take this spear. If you can kill me, you may take my wife: if not, I will kill you.' The Pathan threw the spear, but it only hit the ground a yard from Rasalu Kuar's foot. Then the Pathan bared his chest and Rasalu Kuar threw the spear straight into his chest and he fell dead. The boy ran to him and pulled out the spear. He cut out some of the flesh and the liver and, tying it in his cloth, returned to his temple. As he went the crows and vultures swarmed down over the Pathan's body.

Rasalu Kuar gave the flesh to his wife and said, 'I have killed a fine sambhar today. Cook and eat the flesh.' He made the girl cook and eat it, but he himself refused. 'I

cannot eat, for my stomach is full already.' She ate her fill and then the parrot spoke from its cage:

From the cage speaks the parrot, from its perch the falcon
Man is so greedy that he eats the flesh of his friend
He eats the flesh of the Moghul.

The girl understood what the parrot said and asked Rasalu Kuar what had happened. He said, 'I have killed your lover.' She said, 'At least let me see the body.' He took her to the place. The crows and the vultures were busy eating the body. She cried,

O crow, crow, I said to the crow
O crow, hear my word
Leave the two eyes at least
One day I will see him again.

But the crows replied,

Your wisdom is burnt
Your knowledge is consumed
You betrayed Rasalu Kuar
And got entangled with a Moghul.

The girl answered,

The deer wanders in the forest
The jackal roams at will
Had I known he was a Moghul
I would have killed him with my sword.

But just then one of the vultures tore off and was about to carry away the thing of joy with which she had played so often. 'Let it not be devoured,' she cried. The vulture dropped the thing and it splashd into the water; at once it was seized by the watchful crab and hidden in its hole.

Then Rasalu Kuar declared that he would return home. The girl begged him to take her with him but he refused. She climbed to the top of the temple and watched him going slowly out of sight. Then she leapt down and died.

Rasalu Kuar went on through the forest till he came to the city of the sixth girl. In the evening he lay down to sleep and she went to bring his food from the palace kitchens. The rain poured down and he shut the door and slept. When she came she could not open the door, and she sang,

The sari is worth a lakh and a quarter
And its flowers can be seen
Why have you shut the cruel door?
O why have you forgotten me?

But Rasalu Kuar wanted to test her and he lay still. Presently the girl's lover came and she took the food to him. She fed him, and he enjoyed her body. Then Rasalu Kuar knew that this girl was faithless. He said in his mind, 'If any of these girls has always sat to eat in my name and has not been to other men, I will eat from her hands but from no others.'

He went secretly from the palace, mounted his horse and went on his way. Soon he came to where the fifth girl was waiting for him. The girl had had many lovers. He sent her too to fetch him food and when she was gone he shut the door. She took the food instead to her lover of the moment and when they had dined they lay together. Then said her lover, 'Go quickly or perhaps your husband will come and quarrel.' The girl dressed as a man and started home. But Rasalu Kuar caught her on the way and cried,

Whoever wears shoes makes a noise
She has taken the form of a man
What Rassia's *ras* has she taken
O why is she dressed as a man?

When he had said this, he killed the girl with his sword and rode away.

Now he came to the fourth girl, the girl who had loved him dearly. Many a young Raja had come to her claiming to be Rasalu Kuar, but she had always asked them to name the signs that had been left behind. Not one could do so correctly and her father had put them in prison. When Rasalu Kuar reached the palace, he found the girl looking old and sad with loneliness and worry. He sang,

Your body is the moon
Your eyes are young antelopes
Your hair hangs to the waist
But how has the keonra flower been soiled?

And she replied,

His koenra flower was burnt
His country was consumed
He who held the keonra flower
Went to a foreign land.

Then Rasalu Kuar examined each of the signs. The keonra tree was fresh and green, bearing sweet flowers; the milk had not turned sour; and the mangoes in the honey were like new. That night at last the great spear flashed as it

plunged into the well; the blue sambhar passed down the forest-path; the grain on the threshing-floor at last was beaten out and yielded a rich harvest. The single star shone bright below two moons, and for all the thundering clouds and torrential showers its beauty was not obscured.

The next day Rasalu Kuar took his wife and they went on together towards the Punjab.

The third girl was watching the road for him, but she had two lovers in the house. When he heard of it, he killed her and went on his way.

The second girl was pregnant with a child seven months, and Rasalu Kuar killed her also. At last he came to his own city. His first bride had long since run away with a Sardar in the Raja's army. Rasalu Kuar made his camp outside the city and sent a message to his father that he had come.

The Raja sent his army and all the people of the city came out to welcome home the young prince with his bride. As he had triumphed over Sirkatki Raja his father gave the government of the kingdom into his hand and Rasalu Kuar and his Rani ruled over the Punjab in peace for many years.

NOTE

The Game of Chaupur

This is played on a cloth board divided in the form of a cross, each arm of which has 24 squares in 3 rows of 8 each, 12 red and 12 black. There is a large black square in the centre. Two games can be played on the board: one is played with dice and is called Phansa, the other is played with cowries and is called Pachisi. Both games are popularly known as Chaupur. Temple gives a detailed account of them. Phansa, he says, is played with a dice and 16 men. The men are distributed 4 to each arm of the cross and are painted red, green, yellow and black. The game is played by two players who throw the dice and move the men accordingly until all of those on one side are moved into the large square in the centre of the board. 'This generally takes some time and requires considerable skill in adjusting the moves to the throws. Gambling can be carried on by betting on the various throws and on the result of the game'.[1]

Pachisi is played on the same principle, but four people are engaged and they use seven cowries: the throw is counted by the number of cowries that fall upside down. Obviously the game played by Rasalu and Sirkatki, since only two of them took part, was Phansa.

[1] Temple, i, 243 f.

THE SONG OF THE RAJA OF BAIRAGARH

THIS confused and inchoate account of a battle between the Raja of Bairagarh and the Raja of Chandagarh of southern Gondwana, was recorded from a Pardhan minstrel in the Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari. It is remarkable mainly for the manner in which it represents the gods as taking part in the war: indeed the divine armies are much more active and important than the rather timid Gond battalions.

This type of fighting, which is common in Gond and Pardhan tales, presents a variant of the widespread 'Magical Conflict', which was closely studied by Clouston.[1] In the Gond tales opposed warriors summon to their aid gods and spirits and use weapons of miraculous power: in the 'Magical Conflict' tales the foes are magicians and fight by constantly changing themselves into different shapes. In the *Alhkhand*, for example, Sema Bhagtin the witch casts a spell of silence over the Mahoba army, which Sunwa, Alha's wife, fights hard to protect. The witch rains fire on the warriors: Sunwa rains water. Sema raises a storm: Sunwa quells it. Both turn into kites and fight in the air.[2] In a Bengal ballad, the queen Mayanamati struggles against Yama, King of Death, who has robbed her of her husband. To avoid her, he turns himself into a carp: she becomes a waterfowl. He dodges her as a shrimp: she searches for him as a gander. He flies into the air as a dove: she chases him as a hawk.[3]

In a Santal story a Jogi tries to kill a boy who has offended him. He turns into a leopard, but the boy turns into a pigeon and flies into the air. The Jogi becomes a hawk; the boy a fly: the Jogi a paddy-bird, and so on.[4] Similar tales are known throughout the world.

The list of deities differs considerably from those given in the text-books. It is interesting to note the important position given to Bar Deo, presumably the god of the banyan tree; that Lingo Devi (here female) occurs; and that Budha Deo (who is probably to be identified with Bara Deo) per-

[1] W. A. Clouston, *Popular Tales and Fictions* (London, 1887), i, 413 ff.
[2] Waterfield, 194.
[3] Sen, 14 f.
[4] C. H. Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London, 1909), 425. There is a similar tale in Mills, *The Ao Nagas*, 318.

forms the unprecedented[1] feat of turning himself into a swarm of white ants which undermine the walls of Chanda and lead to its fall. Among the gods is the strange and (to me at least) awe-inspiring figure of The Urinator (Mutarra). Who he is or what he does I have been unable to discover.

Bir Maha Singh has appeared before.[2] In the Pardhan traditions of Mandla, however, the Raja of Chandagarh was Katsungha; his daughter was Machhal Rano; the Lamsena, as here, was Maha Singh; the rival ruler of Bairagarh was Mara Kshattri. There appears to be no means of reconciling these various accounts.

The lists of names are in the regular poetic tradition. 'There is a great magic', says Coleridge, 'in national names. What a damper to all interest is a list of native East Indian merchants. Unknown names are non-conductors; they stop all sympathy. No one of our poets has touched this string more exquisitely than Spenser; especially in his chronicle of the British Kings (*The Faerie Queene*, Book II, Canto 10), and the marriage of the Thames with the Medway (Book IV, Canto 11), in both which passages the mere names constitute half the pleasure we receive.

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TAYGARH, Toygarh, Amagarh!
In the father's time there were nine or ten roofs, in the son's time eighty thousand.
In the widow's houses were marriage-ornaments, fine horses were tethered there.
The Raja of Chanda was Jagat; he had his court and the noise of a Darbar.
They sat knee to knee, all the great Sardars.
The Pathans had great beards, their moustaches were very long.
The army of Sakasi sat there, they all had shaven heads.
The Raja of Chanda sat there, his glory cannot be told.
In every land he went to fight, to loot and bring cattle home.

[1] I find, however, that the feat is not so unprecedented as I had thought. In a Pardhan tale, recorded by Shamrao Hivale in Mandla, the Gond armies invest the fortress of a Kawar Raja. He has a great bow which fires an arrow capable of exterminating an entire army at a single shot. Bara Deo and the other Gond gods turn themselves into culm-borers and eat away the inside of the bow so that, the next time the Raja uses it, it breaks and the arrow falls short.

[2] *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, 70 ff.

Taking the names of their ancestors, the Gond army went out from Chanda.
The enemy's place was fenced about with thorns and spears.
Brother, whose time of death has come, who will die in the enemy's land?
Who will climb the hundred ladders, clutching their shields?
They took the six-faced gods, and the six-pointed spears cleaned with six measures of salt;
Like fish-bones appeared the swords; if you touched one your hand was cut.
With a waxen blade they could cut through khair wood at a single blow;
They could cut through a sarai tree broad as twelve buffaloes.
Fifty-two Rajas there were and the Zamindars of sixteen forts.
Eighty Patels lived near Chanda. O brother, you could not number them.
In Chanda there was a fort; there lived Bir Maha Singh, Lamsena to Ramu the maiden.
Now the Raja of Bhairamgarh's father, Podre the Naitam,
Had had his head cut off and tied to the Victory Gate at Chanda.
Whoever went for revenge was also killed with a spear.
Ramu the maiden sent a letter to the Raja of Bairagarh.
Bidding him come to Chanda. He mounted his blue mare.
Round his body he tied iron such as sixteen men could not lift;
He tied spears all over his body, at his hands and feet were swords;
Above him was a shelter of maina and peacock feathers; if you touched it your hand was pricked.
'Whoever drops his sword on the ground, him will Bhawani Mata devour.
O sword, if you want to break, break now and I'll get another made of wood.
If you break during the battle I'll cool you in the pit of the Under World'.
Folding its hands, the sword spoke, 'O Bairagarh Raja, listen;
Be not frightened or anxious in mind.
So long as I live, so long you need have no fear.
You sit on your horse, and I will strike in the battle.'
'O gods of the Gond army, Bar Deo, Budha Deo, Lingo Devi,

Patka Deo, Bhawani Mata, I remember you all.
Chittawar of Bandho Raj, Kulhariya of Barahargarh,
Brahmadeo of the banyan, Pretin of the mahua, Churelin of the fig tree
O twelve pairs of Jugti, eighty thousand Mohani, ancestors of Bara Deo.'
On all these the Raja called for aid.
'I have come,' he said, 'to Chanda to talk to my father-in-law.'
By the tank Chilachakardha at midnight,
The gods of his ancestors gave the Raja a dream:
'To a foreign land and on foreign soil, O Raja, why have you come?'
'O my fathers, listen,' he said, 'I have left my own ancestors' land.
Fowls die in the garden when the cats catch and eat them.
Man dies in battle and goes to Vaikunth.'
Then the horse of the Raja spoke, 'O my father, hear my word.
Give me kutki to eat in the evening and at midnight channa pulse
At cockcrow sweets made with ghee; my legs will soon be strong.
May treacherous servants die, may lazy bullocks collapse.
May the horse timid in battle die, for the Thakur will be destroyed.'
The horse said again, 'O Raja, hear my word.
We have left our homes and our friends
Forget all except the battle, for we have reached Chandagarh.
Jagat your father-in-law has summoned the Gond of fifty-two forts.
O Raja destroy them in revenge and your name will ever remain.'
When the Raja heard this, from his liver fire began to blaze.
Karakar he ground his teeth as if it was *channa* pulse
'Die, O Raja of Chanda, die for you eat pig's flesh.
You killed my father at Chanda. Now I will strike hard in the battle.
At the time of the midday rest I will strike the sleeping dogs.'
Then the gods of the Bairagarh Raja spoke to him by the lake.
Bar Deo and Budha Deo said, 'O Raja, hear our word.

Eight days go to a week and fifteen days to a fortnight.
In Chanda the half-month is ended, today there will be laughter everywhere.
If you are a man, tie on your iron armour and fight in Chandagarh.
Bir Maha Singh killed your father; cut off his head today.'
Bar Deo, Budha Deo, Bhawani Mata, Gosai, Pusai, Dulha Deo
Anka Devata, the Urinator, Phusal of Lohagarh,
The ancestors of the Gond army, the Raja remembered them all.
He said, 'For those gods who eat fowls I will give goats,
For those who eat sheep I will give buffaloes.
Help me a little today and I will touch your feet:
You are the gods of the Gond, go ahead and help me now.
The god Murpatka said, 'Gond Raja hear my word.
Without a man's strength how will you fight today?
Let me go now; I will go to the Chanda Raj.
I will send a message to Ramu the maiden and bring back an answer to you.
O Bairagarh Raja you are but a youth, your wisdom has left you.
The gods of Chanda will rise and will catch your head in a trap.
He who attacks Chanda falls into a trap.
He who attacks Bhati has his corpse soon carried out.
He who attacks Lanjigarh is sent to graze the Raja's horses.
He who attacks Garha falls immediately into the pit.'
The Raja took no notice; he began to tie his turban.
'The gods of Chanda are crooked; they will soon mix you in the dust.
You know not the gods of Chanda, your wisdom has turned to madness.
The six-faced gods, the six-pointed spears, you will have to face them today.'
The Raja replied, 'O gods, listen, I will make offerings whose savour will rise to the sky.
Whatever gods are in Bairagarh, sit on my head today.'
In the dead of night the Raja of Bairagarh went towards Chanda.
But he found the great sarai tree and wondered how to save his life.
The gods came to him and said, 'Listen Raja to our word.

Budha Deo has become a white ant; he is busy destroying the tree.'
When the tree fell down, the Raja went on to invade Chandagarh.
In the middle of the road he met his father-in-law Jagat and greeted him with Johar.
The Raja of Chandagarh said, 'O Bairagarh Raja hear.
First break down my fort and then you can have my Johar.'
When the Rajah of Bairagarh heard this, he at once got ready for battle.
The white ants dug under the walls, and the Raja soon conquered the fort.
When the Lamsena of Ramu the maiden, Bir Maha Singh heard this,
He was filled with anger and came to the battle.
His sword rang *karakar*, he fought and fell from his horse.
At once the Bairagarh Raja struck him from above with his sword.
He struck him all over the body, and gave him terrible wounds.
Yet Maha Singh did not die; in spite of the wounds, how many Gond he killed!
At last he fell senseless to the ground with his great wounds.
The horse of the Raja of Bairagarh was killed, but first how many foes it destroyed!
When he heard Maha Singh was senseless, the Raja ran to attack him.
But he met the Raja of Chanda and greeted him with Johar.
The Raja struck with his sword, but Bairagarh saved himself.
He struck back again in anger and knocked off Jagat's crown.
But Jagat struck once again and Bairagarh fell crackling like a tree.
The Bairagarh gods were angry; they drove Raja Jagat away;
The Bairagarh gods assembled and threw life-water on their army.
The Bairagarh soldiers rose to their feet and began to fight again.
The Chanda army scattered and ran to hide in the fort.
The Raja of Bairagarh at once prepared for his marriage;
He invited his friends and his army.
Ramu the maiden got ready, she put on her ornaments.
The booth was made of swords with a roof of shining shields.

The drums thundered for the *bhānwar*; there was no end to the sound.
Five times they went round the booth; at the sixth
The Raja of Chandagarh threw his spear at Bairagarh.
But Bairagarh saved himself and completed the seventh round.
Thus in terrible battle Bir Maha Singh was destroyed.
The Bairagarh army assembled and escorted Ramu home.

THE BALLAD OF GUJRI AHIRIN

THIS version of the widely-distributed tale of the milkmaid who sold curds to the Moghuls, was recorded from an Ahir in the Bilaspur District. The theme is a favourite one among the Dewar of Chhattisgarh.

One version of the story was recorded by Mrs Wadia. This was the celebrated Gujarati ballad of Gujari as known in Ahmedabad: there was a slightly different version in Surat. The ballad was sung as a Garba by women who circled round a ligtened lamp clapping their hands.

The course of the tale closely resembles that in the text. The girl is Mena of Gujari: her husband is Chanda: they live in Gokul. The girl goes to Delhi to sell curds: the Badshah attempts to seduce her. Mena, like Gujri, is swift in repartee. When the Badshah says, 'Be allured by my moustache', she replies, 'It is like the tuft of hair at the end of my goats' tails'. The Gujar go to the rescue and fall on the Moghal host 'like tigers on goats', and the girl is saved.[1]

Devendra Satyarti has a song from Bundelkhand which describes how a girl called Mano goes to sell curds in the Moghul camp. In this version the girl is not taken to the house.

> Mano opened her veil and ten Moghuls died,
> Fifty died when she showed her *bindia*
> A hundred died when they saw a little of her back.

Chandrawali comes to the rescue and grinds the Moghuls to dust.[2]

The courage of Ahir women is proverbial. There is a story about the birth of Dasraj (father of Alha and Udan) and Bachraj. One day when they were out hunting, they came on a fight between two wild buffalo-bulls. 'Seeing that their way was obstructed, two Ahir girls stepped up, and each taking a bull by the horns, thrust it aside. Con-

[1] Wadia, 242 ff.
[2] Varma Divya, 'Mr Devendra Satyarthi in Bundelkhand', vii, 43 f.

sidering that such strapping wenches would breed mighty sons, Dasraj and Bachraj there and then married them.'[1]

The song in the text ends with a referece to the god Chhanipitta, in whose honour the Rawat in Bilaspur District beat the roofs of their houses with their sticks. Gujri in our song speaks of the Ahir's stick as being of ebony wood. 'It eats ghee by the seer: on it sits an old Massan.' These sticks of the Ahir are famous. One story of their origin comes from Bilaspur:

'Formerly the Rawat used to take their cattle out to graze at night. In a fig tree lived a Massan: it had been born in the skull of a dead Teli. One day when the Rawat took his cattle there, the Massan cried, "Who are you?" The Rawat replied, "And who are *you*?" The Massan said, "If you don't know who I am, I will destroy you. But obey me and you will have great profit. I will always go in front of the cattle and you will never have anything to fear." When the Rawat continued on his away, the Massan got up and went in front of the cattle. The Rawat gave it a lot of milk and curds, and the Massan was so pleased that it promised to remain always with him. The Rawat had a stick of *pandri* wood and said to it, "Come and sit in my stick".'

In the Mungeli area, the Rawat say that in sticks of the Kauraie section of the caste there lives a Massan; in the Dasaha Rawat's stick lives a Gauha snake; and in the Jharia Rawat's stick lives the goddess Sati.

The Rawat decorate their sticks and take them to markets and festivals.

The custom of beating the roofs varies from place to place. In the Mungeli area, the Rawat do not worship Chhanipitta: but if at any time a spirit called Kachan 'rides' on a Gunia, they beat the roof with their sticks to drive him away. In Mandla the Rawat call Chhanipitta also by the name of Maldeo. They worship him and at Diwali, if he 'rides' on anyone, they beat the roofs to get rid of him. In Kenda Zamindari, when anyone is ill with small-pox, the Gunia goes round the village beating the roofs with a stick and pulling from each roof two bits of straw. The straw is tied to the stick which is ultimately carried outside the boundary and thrown away.

[1] Waterfield, 15.

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In Haldinagar she was born, in Bandhonagar was her husband's house.
In Magh the Ahir sang the song of betrothal, the marriage was in Phag.
When Chait began he brought his bride home to Bandho land.
The husband's name was Chanda, O Rawat, his wife was Gujariya.
His old father sat ruling Bandho, his name was Chamdaria.
Curds and milk flowed there in floods, the banks were made of butter.
The Ahirin came from the house and touched the feet of her mother-in-law
The Ahirin's face was pinched with desire. 'O mother, how I like selling curds. I want to go to Delhi.'
'Daughter-in-law, do not go to Delhi, for there is the Moghul Kingdom.
Mirja Pathan is an evil man; stay and eat your food in Bandho.
Whatever pretty daughter-in-law goes there, Mirja Pathan catches and keeps.
His camp is on the outskirts; beyond is the bazaar.'
'Mother, if my caste were Bania or Sonar, I would sit still and rule,
But I am an Ahirin and I must wander on the road.
How many days must I stay hiding here? Let me go to sell my curds.'
She took no heed of their advice, what her husband's mother and her husband's sister said.
Insistent, of her own free will, she went to the bazaar.
She brought out the bronze pot which cost so much silver.
She filled the pot with curds and went to the bazaar.
Gujri made her way to Delhi, calling by the way, 'Buy my curds.'
Mirja Pathan heard the cry and called the girl to him.
He asked, 'What kind of curd is this?' and tasted with a kadam leaf.
'O Rawatin your curds are thin but your buttermilk is sweet.
Tell me the price of your beauty. How much will your Rawat take?'
Hearing this the girl was angry. 'My price is that of your own wife and mother.

O Mirja how much money have you? I will get it from my Rewat.'
'O Rawatin, when your Rawat comes what can I say to him?
He is a cow-grazier; he gets his wage from house to house.'
'O Rawatin eat wheat-bread and chicken flesh with me; wear twelve-and-a-half seer of ornaments.
Cover your body with silken cloth and come to live in my purdah.'
When she heard this the girl's body flamed with anger.
'I will put fire on Allah's head: I do the work of an Ahir.
My Ahir's stave is of ebony; it eats ghee by the seer.
On it sits an old Massan and whoever that stick chastises
Will soon desert the name of Allah.
Now Raja let me go, for my Ahir will fight with you.'
The Raja stole the curds, he broke the pot, he dragged the girl into his house.
In her mind she was afraid. 'What will my mother-in-law and the women of my husband's house have to say?'
She was full of sorrow, all her mind was afraid. 'What eclipse has darkened me?'
The Rawatin sent a letter. 'O Rawat, if you are my lover, take your sword.
O Raja, if you are a man, bring your army and fight with your sword.
If you do not come, put on bangles in my name.'
The Rawatin tied the letter to a parrot's neck.
She sent the bird to Bandho land.
'O Ahir, your wife is captured. Listen to my tale.'
The Ahir told his mother. 'O mother, my wife is captured in Delhi
I am going to fight for her.'
'O son, do not worry, do not be sad.
For one girl do not go to Delhi.'
'O mother, were she dead, I would let the matter be,
But while she lives how can I desert her?'
When the Rawat heard the parrot's message he ground his teeth.
'O Mirja, how should I desert a living girl? My body is aflame with fire.'
The Rawat remembered the Devi. 'Deceitfully you ate my goat.
But no matter. Now help me in my trouble.'

The Rawat remembered the sixty-four generations of his ancestors
And called on his gods. The gods prepared themselves.
The Rawat brought out his *pharriphul*, his gun, his sword, his *jharadhal*.
His horse was tied, he mounted it and said,
'If I live I will see you again; if I die—in any case the world is hard.'
The Rawat fell at the feet of his caste and family and took the road to Delhi.
The Rawat travelled for eight days and reached the Delhi Raj.
He asked the Pathan who had taken the Ahirin,
'O Mirja Pathan, why have you kept my Rani?'
'Rawat, go die in your own house. Take your Rani's weight in rupees.
Go rule in Bandho Raj.'
The Rawat abused Mirja Pathan: 'Pig of a Khan,
Ill-tempered Khan, excreta-eating Khan, call out your soldiers.'
Thus the two fought. The bright shields flashed;
The swords danced like *kotri* fish.
The Jugti Mohini fought for the Rawat, the gods spread over Delhi.
Six score Pathans went to hide in the bungalow.
The Pathan soldiers drove the Rawat to and fro.
Then Maha Mai took the form of a red lizard;
She sat on the heads of the Pathan soldiers.
To this day when Pathans see this lizard they curse it.
Eight cubits of Mirja Khan's hair were caught in the ground.
The Rawat seized it and threw it away.
From that day the Pathans do not wear a tuft of hair.
Some dress it in bulbul style and some in the fashion.
Thus the Rawat brought his wife home alive and sounded drums of victory.
The Rawat grew jealous of her, so all the gods left him.
Only one god remained, his name was Chhanipitta Devata;
In his honour at Diwali the Rawat beat the roofs with sticks.

THE BALLAD OF THE BUFFALOES OF GAURA

THIS Bas-git ballad is sung by the Ahir during the rites performed on the tenth day after a death and sometimes at marriages.

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Tari nāna ke nāna sāthi tari na ke nāna ho
Tari na ke bāt la sangi nāna batāwe ho.
Gaura had twelve divisions; Ahir lived in them all.
O Ram, in every house a hundred cows were tethered.
O Ram, in every house was the sound of churning curd.
They worried about nothing, friend.
The Raja could get no Ahir to work for him.
The Raja of Mahar called for workmen, but they would not come.
'O Goindi, your father grazed my buffaloes all his life
But you, Goindi, have grown proud.'
O Ragi, Goindi has agreed to graze the Raja's buffaloes.
Goindi goes to ask his wife.
'Ahir, in your own house, what do you lack?
A hundred cows are tethered in your house.'
But for all her persuasion, Goindi told her,
'O Rawatin, for four months I go to Patan to graze the buffaloes.'
Goindi took no notice of his wife and children's words;
He took the Raja's buffaloes and went away to Patan.
O Ragi, let us leave the buffaloes taking their pleasure in Patan.
One month passed, twelve months passed;
O Rawat, in Kartik came Diwali.
'What shall we do, brothers, O my caste and family?'
O Ragi, there are six score and six Ahir in Patan.
'O brothers, what shall we do on the Diwali day?'
They sit in a field-hut discussing what to do.
'O master, tell us what you have in mind?'
'O brothers, tell me everything that is needed.'
'O Goindi, we want coconuts and fowls,
'O Goindi, we need a pair of drums.'
Goindi gave the money for the drums.

'When shall we have the feast?' Goindi counted the days.
O Ragi, on the Diwali day how did they observe it?
Goindi offered goats and sheep to his gods.
The Ahir milked the cows and everything was ready.
The Ahir cleaned their straight poles and their swords.
O Rawat, no one should come out of their houses.
O Ragi, the she-buffaloes sat there and watched.
'Go buffaloes, go by yourselves to graze.'
'This is the month of Kartik, Goindi,
From this side the sun has risen;
Give us at least one grazier with us.
This is the month of Kartik, do not send us out alone.'
As the buffaloes were thinking, the midday came.
'O Rawat, it is midday and it is very hot.'
The barren she-buffalo stood up and said to the leader of the herd,
'Let us go carefully and damage someone's field.'
In Patan land the Bhumia is Raja,
O Ragi, Chandal Raja was overlord.
O brother, do you see, the buffaloes are destroying the fields.
O brother, the buffaloes are watched by four men's eyes.
In the Raja's *barra* field the buffaloes are wandering.
'O watchman, call my servants and sepoys. Whose buffaloes are these?'
O Ragi, the drum is sounding, all the subjects are assembled.
O Ragi, the army formed in seven lines goes out to stop the buffaloes.
O brother, they bring the buffaloes they have caught.
'O buffaloes, where is your owner?'
Now the drums sound 'Catch and beat'.
On the river bank is the camp of the Ahir.
The cowherds are playing on their big and little flutes.
The six and six score Ahir each give Goindi a bottle of liquor.
Seven pairs of drums are sounding in the camp.
Goindi drinks one bottle of liquor.
The six and six score bottles are quickly emptied.
Goindi eats his share of the feast in a great pot.
Goindi gets very drunk, he can recognize no one.
O Malik, the Raja surrounds the Ahir.
The Raja draws his bow and shoots at Goindi.
Goindi's life is leaving him;
He rolls from side to side and gives up his life.
A cot has four legs and four poles at the side.

So long as life stays in the house, it says, 'It is mine, mine.'
The life of the house has left it and the people are afraid.
The wood-gatherers bring wood, those who sit by fan the corpse,
With their feet they break his girdle, they put fire in his mouth.
O brother, he who was due to die has died and those who weep are foolish.
O brother, no one lives for ever; a bazaar is not always open.
But death does not make an end. As a Mirchuk he sits on his buffalo's head;
That buffalo is possessed, no one can control it.
The buffaloes escape and come to Gaura.

DADARIA

Wash your cloth
And put on the yellow sari
O Rani, life does not obey
In the days of youth, because of love.

O buffaloes, no one knew you had come.
The she-buffaloes began to calve;
For each one there were soon one-and-twenty.
On all four sides the river circled the village.

SONG

O friend, what lamp burns by day?
And what lamp burns at night?
What lamp is lit before the god?
What lamp in the Darbar?

The sun is the lamp that burns by day
The moon is the lamp for the night
A lamp of ghee shines before the god
A son in the Darbar.

The buffaloes of the Raja of Mahar increased and did damage everywhere.
The Ahir thought, 'O Malik, we cannot stay in this village.'
In Bhadon the buffaloes pull thatch from the roof and eat it.
The rain comes in and fills the house with mud.
For four-and-eighty generations we have not seen this in Gaura.
O Ragi, all the village wants to run away.
So they decide; tomorrow they will go to the Raja.
How shall we tell the Raja this?

In our whole lives we have not seen the Raja.
Now the night is ended and the morning comes.
Listen brothers, let our leader listen.
Take four or eight annas as an offering.
They come to the Darbar and two chaprassis stop them.
'O Ahir, unless you give your names we will not let you in.'
At that moment the Raja comes to the Victory Gate.
'Brothers, tell me your names and where you live.'
'Brother, we are tenants of Gaura and have come to you on business.'
The Raja takes them in; as they deserve he honours each of them.
In nothing was there anything lacking.
O Ragi, to the *gānja*-eaters he gave *gānja*; to the tobacco-smokers tobacco.

DADARIA

The roof of the new house
Is open to the sky
The wandering boy wakes from a deep sleep
Let me sleep with you.

'Brothers, on what business have you come to my Darbar?'
'O Raja, hear the affairs of us poor men.'
O Ragi, the court is open, the examination has begun.
'O master, how shall we tell our misfortune?
We cannot live longer in your village.
We have endured evils in the field and garden,
But now in Bhadon the buffaloes pull down the thatch and eat it'.
When the Raja heard this he was astonished.
'Brothers, for what reason are you leaving my village?
I will be shamed in every land'.
The Raja thought, 'What shall I do, where shall I get wisdom?
O Rawat show me these buffaloes, come let us see these she-buffaloes.'
The Rawat went ahead to show the buffaloes.
The Raja put his turban round his neck and spoke to the buffaloes,
'O she-buffaloes, listen to my word.'
'O master, why have you come? Tell us quickly.'
'O buffaloes, I have come to tell you to go away from my village.'

When the buffaloes heard this they felt very sorry.
'O master, in Bhadon many of us are feeding our little calves.
We understand and we will find another home,
But hundreds of buffaloes have given birth to calves'.
The Raja spoke three times to the buffaloes.
The leader of the herd said, 'O master hear my word.
Send Chaura and Makunda,[1] sons of Goindi, to us for a time.
All round this village flows the river.
How can we take the little calves across?'
The Raja sends his sepoys to fetch Chaura and Makunda.
Gaura village spreads for twelve kos around.
The sepoys ask the way to the house of Chaura and Makunda.
Chaura and Makunda are drunk and babbling nonsense.
'O sepoys, what do you want? What work have you for us?'
'Come, come, Chaura and Makunda. The Raja summons you'.
Chaura and Makunda get ready to go to the Raja.
They arrive and do Johar to the Raja. 'O master, why did you call us?'
'Brothers, I did not call you, the leader of the buffaloes called you.'
O Ragi, they went to the buffaloes.
When they saw the boys, the she-buffaloes embraced them.
Weeping weeping, the she-buffaloes talked to them.
When they heard the story, Chaura and Makunda went to their mother.
They folded their hands and said to her, 'O mother,
The buffaloes our father grazed have come.
We will go to graze them now'.
'O sons, your father died while caring for them.
My sons, do not go, listen to your mother.'
O Ragi, the mother grew weary persuading them.
Chaura and Makunda went to care for the buffaloes.
The leader of the herd blessed Chaura and Makunda.
O Ragi, from that day the Mirchuk sits on cows and buffaloes.
Chaura and Makunda grew up daily.
The Raja of Mahar got very poor.
By the curse of the buffaloes the Raja lost his wealth.
Victory to Chaura and Makunda who made the Ahir race to flourish.

[1] The names may have been borrowed from the *Alkhand*. One of Prithiraj's champions was Chaura (but he was a Nagar Brahmin) and another was Makund.

THE SONG OF RAJA BIJRA

THIS strange story of the birth of Basmotin Kaniya and her marriage to Lakshman, which is celebrated in many different forms in the mythology of Middle India, was recorded from a Pardhan of Lopha in the Kenda Zamindari.

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THIS is the tale of Bauragarh, O master.
Raja Bijra's wife was the brown she-buffalo
Who had eight hundred koel-dark friends.
Among her koel-dark friends Raja Bijra lowed *boin-boin.*
In Nandanban by Koeli pool they went to graze;
On the dark rocks their hoofs sounded *satpat-satpat.*
One day the brown she-buffalo lagged behind.
Raja Bijra went with the koel-dark she-buffaloes
Into the pool of Koeli and the brown she-buffalo thought in her mind,
'Now I am old he leaves me and goes with the koel-dark she-buffaloes.'
The brown she-buffalo wandered on and found a clump of bamboos;
From the bamboo clump was born a maiden;
That maiden's name was Basmotin Kaniya.
When she saw this the brown she-buffalo laughed *khud-khud.*
She said in her mind, 'In my youth
Narayan gave me no child, but now I am old I get one.'
She wrapped the child in her own cord and put her on her back.
She went her way wandering through the groves of Nandanban.
Now let this matter be. In the deep pool of Koeli
There were eighty lakhs of she-buffaloes.
When Raja Bijra turned homeward,
They followed him *satpat-satpat* towards their home.
When she saw them coming the brown she-buffalo hid the child,
But Raja Bijra found her and abused his wife.
Then said the brown she-buffalo, 'Do not come near me.

Go with your koel-black friends who follow you.
Go and wallow in the deep sweet mud with them.
In my old age you have betrayed me.'
Raja Bijra thought in his mind, 'I will have to run away.'
When he recognized the girl he ran away.
But the brown she-buffalo followed him to Bhanwargarh.
Day by day Basmotin grew,
As the moon grows, as the sparks of the Holi fire fly upwards,
So she grew quickly.
As a carpenter carves wood, as a goldsmith prepares his ornaments,
So she looked lovely.
Narayan Bhagavan himself fashioned her;
He made her thighs like plantain stalks,
Her nose like a sprouting seed of channa,
Her waist so thin a tongs could hold it.
Her two-and-thirty teeth flashed like diamonds;
Her body shone *lak-lak*; her form blazed like fire.
Now she was a girl who had reached the age of ripening.
Like a cow she wandered naked;
Moon, sun and earth were shadowed.
Bara Deo came to Sumringarh; he saw her naked as a cow.
He thought, 'How is it that this girl is clad in leaves,
And wanders naked on the hills?'
He wondered where to find a husband for Basmotin Kaniya.
Her scent spread through the world; it reached Lakshmanjati.
He put on all his ornaments; he took his weapons.
He went one kos, he went two kos, he reached Sumringarh.
Below a kauha tree he pitched his tent; he wrote to Raja Bijra.
'Father-in-law, I have come to marry your daughter.'
Raja Bijra was wallowing in the mud; he read the letter.
He bent down his head and rose bellowing loudly.
He went to fight with Lakshmanjati; he fought with him and killed him.
But Lakshmanjati's Singhi Tumi took the news to Bhagavan.
'Your son has been killed in Sumringarh.'
Bhagavan thought and thought; he called his army.
Bara Deo brought all the gods of the Gondwana.
They went to Sumringarh and camped below the kauha tree.

Bara Deo put a magic staff and the water of life in Lakshmanjati's mouth.
As from deep sleep the boy sat up and greeted all the gods.
He wrote another letter to Raja Bijra.
'O father-in-law, I have come to take your daughter.'
Again Raja Bijra roused himself from his deep muddy pool;
Bellowing he came to fight with Lakshmanjati.
But the Singhi Tumi caught him, and were about to cut off his head,
When Raja Bijra said, 'O brother, do not kill me.
You may marry my daughter, only spare my life.'
So they let him be and at once arranged the wedding.
The koel-dark she-buffaloes came singing Dadaria.
Lakshmanjati took his bride home, but on the way she fled from him.
Basmotin Kaniya fled like the lightning up into the sky.
He took his bow and followed her, and the noise he makes is thunder.
The koel-dark she-buffaloes followed Raja Bijra,
Back to the dark pool of Koeli;
On the dark rocks their hoofs sounded *satpat-satpat.*

THE SONG OF SITARAM NAIK

THIS song was recorded from a Dewar minstrel at Tendubhata in the Raipur District. It is mainly concerned, however, with Banjara (Lamana) life and traditions and is sung by them at marriages and during the Dassera festival. The Banjara, whose leaders are given the honorific title of Naik, are the gypsies, wandering traders and drivers of pack-bullocks all over northern and middle India. The large number of bullocks belonging to Sitaram Naik in the song is not so great according to ancient Banjara standards. Bhangi and Jhangi, Charan Banjara who accompanied Asaf Khan to the Deccan in the seventeenth century are said to have had 180,000 pack-bullocks; another important Banjara had 52,000.

Hatadiya, to which reference is made in the song, was the traditional leader of the Banjara bullocks. 'On this animal', says Balfour, 'no burden is ever laid, but he is decorated with streamers of red-dyed silk, and tinkling bells with many brass chains and rings on neck and feet, and silken tassels hanging in all directions; he moves steadily at the head of the convoy, and at the place where he lies down when he is tired they pitch their camp for the day; at his feet they make their vows when difficulties overtake them; and in illness, they trust to his worship for a cure'.[1] The injunction by Mahadeo to the Banjara not to drink from flowing streams is still carefully observed and was first noticed by the Abbé Dubois. It is probably a wise custom for a people who are so continually on the move.

The song indeed reflects the restless and excitable character of the Banjara. The odious character of Sitaram is matched by the disgraceful conduct of his parrot; this is unusual, for the parrot is generally a wise and helpful bird. The intervention of Mahadeo and Parvati is one of the commonest clichés of the Middle Indian folk-tale.[2]

The songs and legends of the Indian gypsies are little known, but deserve fuller investigation. Fawcett recorded

[1] Balfour, 'Migratory Tribes of Central India', *J.A.S.B.*, xiii (N.S.).
[2] See, for example, *Folk-Tales of Mahakoshal*, 69.

the song of Titaraja, a Lambadi Mahatma, who goes to the forest to find his horses.

O Titaraja, buy horses in the forest
Buy them with the silver thread round your waist
Buy them with the gold necklace round your neck
Buy them, truth-speaking Raja, with the silver bangles on your arms
Buy them with that coral wreath round your neck.

But he is killed by a tiger near Aunigere in Mysore. His wife divines his fate, goes to the place and finds his bones. She collects wood for a pyre, lights it and singing a dirge burns herself to death.[1]

The figure of the lonely wife, whose gypsy husband is so often away, occurs also in the songs of the Maikal Hills.[2]

Nageshar's scorn of the omens that warned her not to go to the lake is paralleled by the conduct of the armies of old which were always splendidly indifferent to such things. In the *Alkhand*, when Prithiraj sends Tahar to Mahoba, a sneeze is heard as he sets out. His friends beg him not to start, but he makes the usual reply about omens being meant for shopkeepers, not for knights. In the battle that follows, he is decapitated.[3]

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SITARAM NAIK comes out of his house and speaks to his mother.

'Mother, there is a marriage in the village; all the houses are happily beating their drums.
I am an orphan and unmarried; find some place for me.
Mother, while you are alive arrange my marriage and I will always take your name.
Mother, I have made you a grand house, with an upper storey and a door below.
While you live do your duty; when you are dead, how dark will be the world'.
'O Naik brother,' says his mother, 'when you were but seven months old
We married you to a five months' Naikain girl.

[1] Fawcett, 547 ff.
[2] See *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, 281.
[3] Waterfield, 266.

In my lap I took you round the pole, in the cradle we gave you gifts.
Now you are twelve years old,[1] son; when you are thirteen I will bring your wife.
Go if you will to bring your wife from the Land of Malar.
Bring out your horse Kalgibachhera, son, and make it a necklace of rupees.
Tie the beads to its hairs one by one;
Send for ten pairs of drummers, let the trumpet sound sweetly.'
He takes his army of one lakh, the people of the marriage-party,
The Naik reaches Malar Land in seven stages.
He sets up his tents and removes the sacks from his bullocks.
For the little elephant they drive the pegs, for the camels they prepare tethering-ropes.
While the army cooks its food, the Naik boy plays with his pellet-bow on the banks of the lake.
Aho! On the very day that her lord has come to fetch her,
The maiden tells her mother that she must go to the lake for water.
'Send seven handmaids before me, mother, and seven maids behind;
I the maiden Nageshar would go to the lake to bathe.'
'Do not go, my daughter, to the lake to bathe; bathe here in the well inside the house.'
'May there be fire in the well and a thunderbolt fall on your head.
Let there be six and six score handmaids with me; I wish to bathe in the lake.
My own father dug that lake; my brother built the banks;
My father's elder brother planted the grove of trees around; in that lake is great pleasure.
There are kekti, keonra, mogra flowers planted on the banks;
The steps down to the water are of copper and bronze;
In the midst are two pillars, one of sarai, one of teak:
Above them are golden tridents from which fly silken flags.'
She calls her six and six score maidens; from the brass pot she takes ghee for her hair;

[1] That Sitaram is ready to be an epic hero at the age of twelve is in the regular tradition of the Indian ballad. Udan was only twelve when he captured Maro, and Indal, Alha's son, entered a battle, waged with all the skill of witchcraft and magic on both sides, at the same age.

She takes her comb of ivory and combs her long long hair;
She ties her ten times plaited hair, O brother, she puts in it fragrant marigolds.
She calls her companions, 'Come, my friends, and put on my ornaments.'
They bring her armlets, the snake-like bangles, the nose-stud like a fig-leaf,
The spangle on her forehead, pearls in the parting of her hair,
The eighty pairs of *palandar* rings, *dhar* from Vijayanagar,
Beautiful bracelets from Kawardha, sounding anklets from Jubbulpore,
From Piparia gay ribbons, from Deogarh *pachhela* bangles.
Aho! the scorpion-rings from Dhamda, the glorious sari of Rajjim.
In all these things the maid Nageshar dresses and adorns herself.
The maid calls her special friends, her *bhajli, kekti, keonra, sadaphul, jawāra*;
Some are hunchback, some temptresses, some makers of love-charms.
Nageshar has five brothers and she calls their wives,
'O bhauji come, Ugiya, Milapa, Lagni-Phagni, Hansa, Dukara.'
The six and six score maids assemble in the court.
Nageshar makes the seven Suasin sing.
'Today old women are to sing the Salho songs,
Women with children sing the Bhadauni,
Women who have left their husbands are to sing Dadaria.'
The old women go slowly, those with children *chatpat-chat-pat*, the young girls very fast.
Nageshar brings out the copper pot, the *gundri* is lovely as a peacock.
She leaves the first gate, in the second gate she sets her foot;
When she has passed the seven gates a cat crosses the road and sneezes.
'You crossed my path, O cat, and sneezed on my right side.
O cat, has my pot broken, or will I meet an enemy today?
O cat, I will cut you up and kill you; I will bury you below the Victory Gate,
And when I have walked over your body, only then will my anger cool.'
Cat: 'The munga flowers are white and yellow; the bamul flowers are white.

By the lake today you will meet your twelve-year-old husband.'
Nageshar: 'Listen, cat, who told you this?
Let me go first to the lake, then you can tell me everything.'
The maiden goes across the road, the long road to the lake.
As she goes, on her right hand, someone coughs in the bazaar;
A widow with a lamp in her hand looks at her;
A woman deserted by her husband bares her teeth;
There is a blind man supported on his staff;
A *pardāhin* looks at her above her curtain;
A *motiāri* watches to see what *tamāsha-khel* there is.
On the way the maid rests seven times; at last she reaches the lake.
Tortoises are ducking one another, a crocodile is splashing water,
A stork stands on the bank, but the fish play undisturbed.
On a stone sits the maiden; she takes off her ornaments and cleans them.
Her arms are stalks of ripe maize, her thighs are plantains,
Her calves are smooth cucumbers, her waist is an Ojha's *dahak*.[1]
Her back is a fashioned seat, her forehead a milky coconut, her teeth are like small rice.
Her face is a barber's mirror, her nose is like a parrot
Her lips are ripe chillies, her body is of kusum colour.
From the far side of the lake the Naik boy sees her sari and wonders who it is.
'I have seen sun and moon as they rise; when they go down it is dark.
This shining girl I see—what caste is she?
This girl, is she Telin or Kurmin, Gondin or Mararin or Brahmanin?
If she is my own caste I will laugh and talk with her.'
The Naik speaks to his army, 'Listen, O marriage-party,
I will abandon my bullocks, I will leave life itself;
One hundred thousand bullocks I will kill on the way,
But I will laugh and talk with this girl.'
'She is another's daughter, she is another's wife.
She has been sold to another's house.
If you pull at grass by the wayside your hand will be cut,
If you talk to another's wife your head will be cut off.'
The Naik laughs and says to his marriage-party,

[1] A delicate drum with a very narrow waist.

'What caste is this girl? Tell me that much at least.
If she is older than I am, she will be forbidden me;
If she is younger, she will be as my wife's little sister
And I can laugh and talk with the maiden.'
The Naik puts on his lotus-coloured dhoti, he ties a silk handkerchief about his throat,
Puts on his silken shirt, winds his turban like a mandil snake.
How fine he looks, with a shawl across his shoulders,
On his arms broad silver armlets, on his wrists are magic charms,
Round his throat the monkey necklace, on his left foot an anklet.
I have no words to describe his beauty.
The Naik ties fifty pellets in his cloth, he takes his bow Runaha in his hand.
The pigeon and the dove fly up; he shoots at them and hits them.
When they fall he pulls out their feathers.
As he goes he kills the birds and creates a disturbance in the lake.
[illegible]oes to the stone where Nageshar sits to bathe and calls
'I am a stranger in this land; I am playing with my bow in th[illegible]ke.'
[illegible]girl hears a man's voice she pulls her cloth over [illegible]l,
[illegible]ot with water and goes to the other side.
[illegible]s the Naik; he hits her pot with a pellet from
[illegible]rom your pot, maiden; I would eat and [illegible]wards lie down to rest.'
[illegible]Naik's word, Nageshar answers,
[illegible]ow you. How can I give you water to
[illegible]or were a friend of my brother's,
[illegible]a pot of water? I would give you
[illegible]l came as a guest to my house,
[illegible]bedding and greet you with great
[illegible]rink and go away remembering

Stranger, hear what kind of rice I would cook for you—
Budhiya bāko, kātha selha, kubri mohar, such rice, stranger, I would cook.
And hear what kinds of curry I would prepare for you—
Traveller, I would make it with oil from the Telin—
Akhuskundru, lām chachera, baigan bhāta[1]. I would have soup of *padina* fish.
The wriggling *bāmi*, the jumping *dema*, I would cook them willingly for you.
I would make *barri* big as your mouth, *bare barri* and *adauri barri*,
Boiled peas and *masri baphauri*.
I would give you *puri* to eat, traveller,
Laddu-sweets made with *mung* pulse and *jawa bhajia*[2].
Stranger, I would give you so much to eat that you would take my name from age to age.
In our house is a well and I would make you bathe there.
Stranger, tell me of what caste are you?'
When the Naik hears this, he answers the maiden.
'O maiden listen. From outside you look beautiful, but v
are all bitter within.
I asked you laughingly for water, but you answered l
Maiden, you are full of snares; you are accustomed
naked.
Maiden, I asked you for water and you spok
generations.
If I could only catch you I would at once carry
My horse Kalgibachera would dance before y
ing-party would go stamping their feet
I would go in seven stages and take you t
I would make you bring dung-cakes by
I would make you fetch water by night
And if you forgot a single thing I wo
your body.
I would soon teach you how to wor
My mother would abuse you; my p
I would smack you so hard that y
pride.

dance

[1] Popular vegetables.
[2] It would take pages to do justice t
reader to accept them as he would the

I would keep you as my servant and then I would be a Naik indeed.'
When the maiden hears the Naik's words, her rage burns her to ashes.
'Stranger, if ever I got a husband like you, I would keep him as my father's slave;
I would make you graze the cattle by day and sew sacks at night.
You would have to massage the feet of my five brothers; I would treat you like a Gharjiya.
Deceiver, if you forgot a single thing, I would soon teach you with my shoe.
I would skin you with the door-pole from the cattle-shed.
I will put you right, stranger, I am going home to tell my parents how you have abused me.
I am a mature girl; I came to bathe in the lake.
You are a mad traveller from somewhere or other and have made your camp near by.
You did not know me, yet you forced your presence on me.
I am going to tell my father. I will have your bullocks taken away.'
The maiden full of anger left Parameshara Lake and returned
'I am a Malar Land.
On the once on the way did she rest, she soon reached her home.
On the water-stand she put her pot, she threw the *gundri* on the roof.
When she remembered the lake she burst into tears and stamped her feet.
When her mother heard the sound of weeping she came to the girl.
'Why are you crying, daughter, tell me what has happened quickly.
Has your grain or wealth grown less, or have you lost an ornament?
Has some ghost or devil harmed you, or some Marri Massan?
Has someone abused you on the way or laughed at you and mocked you?'
'Mother, my grain and wealth has grown no less, nor have I lost an ornament,
A mad stranger has come from somewhere or other, and has camped with his sacks by the lake.

He gave me such abuse, mother, as would last seven generations.
He is of the man-caste, mother; I am of the woman-caste.
Call my brothers, mother, and let them fight this fellow.
I am the loved sister of five brothers, call them, my mother.
Beat the drums of Malar Land and the Kshattri warriors will get ready.'
When the brothers heard the tale, they had the drums of Malar sounded;
All the drums began to sound, the drums said, 'Catch and beat him.'
But when Nageshar's father heard them he told his sons to stop,
'Twelve years have passed, my sons, the thirteenth has begun.
This must be my young son-in-law who has come to fetch his bride.'
Brahma Naik arose and went to ask his daughter.
'Child, what were his bullocks like? What pattern had the cloth?'
'I only saw a twelve-year boy, a boy with a young moustache.
Father, he gave me such abuse as went to seven generations.
Father, he was so handsome, there are none like him in Malar.
I abused him, yet my eyes are always seeing him.'
'Girl, what did you say to your twelve-years' husband?'
When the girl heard the word 'husband' she began to weep *kud-kud*.
'O father, I said nothing to him. I picked up my water-pot and ran back to Malar.
Had I known it was my husband I would never have gone there.
On the banks I gave him abuse to last seven generations.
Father, do not send me to him this year, let me go next year in Magh.
Father, by then the Naik will have forgotten.'
'Once a son-in-law has come, daughter, how can we send him back?
To send him empty-handed is as bad as killing a hundred cows.
In my life I will do my duty or after death I will not see the world again.
When you were born you both looked beautiful, my daughter.

Stop those angry drums and make the drums of welcome sound.'
Now the drums of joy and welcome are sounding in Malar;
They prepare the army to go out to welcome the Naik.
Away in his camp the Naik dances for happiness and speaks to his marriage-party.
'At first the angry drums were sounding and my soul was frightened.
But now I hear the drums of welcome. Get ready, all of you.
Bring bullocks, tie the cloth, my horse will go dancing before us.'
Sitaram Naik and his six score servants go towards Malar;
The welcome party brings them in, there is joy everywhere.
Brahma Naik feasts the boy, he feasts him for eight days.
'As he feasts he surely will forget the quarrel.
Daughter, I must send you now. When a horse is sold the rider is not pleased.
If a guest goes, and has to come again, he is not honoured.'
The Naik brought with him seven salai birds, eleven maina and nine parrots which talked from morn till evening;
He fed the parrots in the morning on *ghee-londi*, at night on balls of *channa*.
He loved those parrots four times more than sons and taught them everything.
The parrot went to him and said, 'O uncle[1], I have had a dream.
Yesterday your mother died; today they are burning her body.
Quickly complete the ceremonies and take the girl home to Ratanpur.
This is the very girl who abused you by the lake.'
When he heard it, the Naik ground his teeth *karakar*.
He went to Brahma Naik. 'O father, let me go today; I am homesick for my home.'
They called the litter-bearers and the maid sat with the Naik.
The horse went dancing on ahead; they passed out of Malar.
They left Malar and camped beside the Karu River.
Some cooked their food, some grazed the cattle, some saw to the bullocks' hangings.

[1] The words used by the parrot are always *kaka* (uncle, father's brother) and *kaki* (aunt, father's sister).

The parrot whispered to the Naik, 'There sitting in the litter
Is the girl who by the lake abused you to seven generations.'
The Naik heard it and trembling with anger went to the litter;
He caught the girl by her plaited hair, he threw her to the ground;
He beat her till her hundred-rupee sari was in tatters.
She desperate beat her head against the ground.
The Naik called his bullocks and prepared to go on to Ratanpur.
He put the maid in the litter and took the road to Ratanpur.
The horse went dancing with them, the parrot flew ahead;
The parrot flew on to Ratanpur and talked to the Naik's mother:
'What shall I say, old mother? Uncle is bringing a very lovely girl.
Old mother, go out with the drums to welcome her and bring her in.'
When the old woman heard the parrot's word she abused it,
'Get out, you traitor parrot; you had my lovely daughter-in-law beaten on the way.'
The old mother welcomed the Naik and his bride with drums and brought them in.
The Naik feasted his family and neighbours; he gave away elephants and pearls and horses.
The old mother was pleased and brought the girl into the house and blessed her.
'Daughter-in-law, this is your house, your door; eat, drink and be happy here.
Daughter, let no kind of grief or sorrow enter your mind.
Do not worry about gossip. May you two rule the land from age to age.'
The parrot heard this and said in its mind,
'Today or tomorrow this maiden will put me in the fire to cool her temper.'
It thought again and now it went to the old woman to speak against the maid.
'Old mother, what shall I say? The matter concerns my aunt.
In the middle of the night the girl becomes demented
She lets down her hair and lights a lamp; she falls down in a trance.

Old mother, if you do not believe me, go and ask my uncle.'
The parrot's word and the Naik's word agreed.
'Mother, I have brought you home a witch; the villagers will bear me from the village.
Your daughter-in-law has made me a crane and turned herself into a goose.
For the crane there are shells to eat, for the goose rich pearls.
Tomorrow or the day after the lake will dry up and the crane will die sobbing *kalap-kalap*.
Mother, your daughter-in-law has cursed me and my soul is afraid.'
Thus the Naik spoke against his bride and prepared to go away to trade.
'Mother, I have made cords of hemp, but the insects have devoured them.
From the dung of seven lakhs of bullocks there is now a hill.
Mother, I would collect the trappings of the bullocks and go away to trade.
She has made me a crane, mother, I will rule in another land.
She has made herself a goose, mother, she will rule at home.'
When she heard this, the old mother answered Sitaram the Naik:
'Do not go out trading, son, but listen to my words.
You are but twelve years old, the shadow of the thirteenth year has fallen,
Do not listen to the parrot, the parrot is a traitor.'
'But if a Dani[1] comes what can I do, or if the rain comes early?
Twelve years have passed and I have never been to trade
And our wealth is finished, mother. What can I say
If a Dani comes and demands a lakh of rupees of grain?'
'Well go, my son, but listen to a mother's words.
Do not make love to anyone; for when you ask for love they give you poison.
When you are with your mate you have all the world can give;
When you serve the maid, there will be peace in your heart;

[1] A Dani is to the Lamana what the Pardhan Dasondi is to the Gond; he has the right to demand ceremonial gifts at certain seasons. In Chhattisgarh he is often a Dewar by caste.

When there is a son in your lap, he will enjoy your wealth.'
The Naik called his six score servants; they loaded the seven lakhs of bullocks.
Hatadiya went ahead; his bells sounded as he went.
They took the road to Pendra; they camped at the place of Jhagrakhan.
The cooks prepared the food, the graziers grazed the bullocks.
O brother, what is the Naik doing? He is wandering with his bow.
At home the maiden fed the parrot with pots of ghee and balls of *channa*.
'Why, parrot, since your uncle brought me here as bride
Has he not eaten or drunk with me or sat beside me thigh to thigh?'
'O aunt, take the form of a Dani and follow my uncle on the road.
For seven years he has given no gift; you go and get it from him.'

In a Dani's clothes the parrot clothed the maid and put her on a Dani's horse.
'O aunt, listen to my word. When you see him, tell my uncle:
For seven years you have given nothing; I have come to you today.
For each bullock I will take a hundred rupees. Now listen to my word.
Do not sit with him thigh to thigh; do not take his gift of betel,
Do not get down from your horse, but talk with him sitting there.
He will not recognize you: as you sit on the horse become his *mahaprasad*.'

The maid sat on her horse; in four stages she reached Pendra.
'Thief, may you die, you brought your bride, but you gave no gift to the Dani.
For every bullock I will take a hundred rupees; I will count them today.
O Naik, give me the gift due; then you may go to trade.
I have come to your camp; you and I must be *mahaprasad*.
In the place of love and friendship I will take fifty rupees for every bullock.'

So saying the maid forced the Naik to return to his home.
When they were four kos from Ratanpur, the maid went on ahead.
She reached the palace and quickly took the form of a girl again.
She hid the Dani's clothes among the rubbish and began to cook the food.
The parrot cried, '*Tabar tabar!* What has happened, tell me quickly.'
When it heard the Naik was coming, it flew to the Victory Gate.
When the Naik came it told him that his bride had been the Dani.
'Every night she calls two or four loafers; she eats betel with them.
She plays Chitti and Juwa; she is your home's betrayer.'
The Naik went to his mother. 'Listen to what the parrot has told me.'
'Do not heed the parrot's words, my son, it is trying to ruin my daughter.'
But the Naik listens to the parrot and flames up like a fire.
He can neither eat nor drink; he beats the maid and fells her to the ground;
He again gets his horse and goes away to trade.

The maid in anger abuses her enemy the parrot;
She prepares fire in an earthen pot, in it she heats a sickle.
Mother and daughter-in-law together catch the parrot, they burn all round its body.
The parrot escapes before it dies, but it bears the marks till now.
The parrot flew down the forest road and cried,
'O aunt, hear my word. I will tell my uncle such scandal that he will murder you.'
The parrot found the Naik and told him all its scandal.
The Naik crossed the Chura River and the Pairi; he made his camp by the Son.
The Naik ate and drank and traded by the Son River.
When he left the banks of the Son, he camped by the Dhol River.
Twelve years went by as the Naik traded there.

Twelve twelve twenty-four years old was the Naik, but he never thought of his home.

Then the parrot spoke to him; 'O uncle, hear my word.
You have been trading now for twelve years; take the road now for home.
The girl you brought when you were but twelve years old is still watching the road for you.'
The Naik listened to the parrot; he took the road and camped amidst seven streams.
The bullocks were loosed, the sacks piled up, the evening meal was cooked.
Jeth was finished, Asadh had begun, the rain came down in torrents.
'It is going to rain, O parrot, let us cross the river.'
'It will not rain today, uncle, nor will the river flood.
Tomorrow morning let us cross the river.'
The Naik listened to the parrot and lay down to sleep.
In the afternoon they saw black clouds, in the night the rain came down.
At first the rain fell in a drizzle, then as if it had been thrown from a winnowing-fan;
It was dark and the river came down, flooding on either side.
First the Naik's trappings were carried away, then the seven lakhs of bullocks.
The six score servants were swept away, but the parrot flew to Ratanpur.
The Naik crossed one stream, slowly slowly five streams more,
When he reached the seventh he fell into the stream.
All his wealth was swept away, only the parrot's life was saved.
The parrot sat on a tree and wept *kalap-kalap*.
It flew weeping home and sat on a bamboo pole to tell the story.

When the girl saw the parrot she thought her lord was coming home.
Quickly she ran for water; she made it hot and cold.
She cooked the food and dressed in all her ornaments,
But she watched the road in vain till she asked the parrot for news.
The parrot told the story, how the Naik had been carried away.
'O aunt listen, your lord desired you to be a Sati.'

When the maid heard this she wept, beating her head on the ground.
Weeping she went to the river and sought wood to make a pyre.

Down the stream Mahadeo and Parvati were bathing and they heard the sound of her weeping.
'Come, my lord,' said Parvati. 'Let us comfort the unhappy.'
They went together to the girl and asked her the cause of her sorrow.
'Are you a ghost or demon, girl, or are you a human life?'
When the girl saw them she told them what had happened.
At Mahadeo's word the rushing river stayed its course;
Grain, money, bullocks, servants—all were recovered;
They worshipped Hatadiya and vowed him gifts of gratitude.
The Naik's bones were covered with slime, but he too was restored.
Mahadeo made him a twelve-year-old boy and his life was very happy.
Then Parvati said to Mahadeo, 'You have made the boy twelve years old.
Make the girl young also, and marry them down by the river.'
Mahadeo did as she said and gave them his sacred blessing.
'Eat, drink and live in peace, and from age to age rule over your land.'

'O brother, kill that parrot; it has been the cause of all our sorrow.'
The maid caught the parrot and squeezed its life from its body.
Mahadeo spoke to the Naik, 'O Naik hear my word.
From today do not keep parrots.
Do not drink from flowing streams.
If you must drink for thirst, then strain the water through a cloth.
When your relatives come to see you, do not embrace them.'
This is the rule of the Satyug and the Naik observe it till now.
The two, the Naik and the Naikain, mated and lovers again,
Ate betel together and turned towards Ratanpur.
In seven stages they reached their kingdom.
They ate and drank and, happy, they ruled fr[illegible]

THE BALLAD OF THE FLOWER-MAID BAKAOLI

THIS curious song, which is full of folklore and puranic clichés yet achieves a unity and beauty of its own, comes from a Panka of the Lapha Zamindari, not far distant from the famous temples of Ratanpur and Pali. There are many sacred gardens, temples and lakes here in a setting of great natural beauty, with the forest all round. The atmosphere of the song, half Hindu, half primitive, is that of the countryside.

It is remarkable that the relations of Lahkiya and his bhauji Satwati are described without humour and there is no hint of a 'joking relationship' between the two.

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LAKHIYA said to his bhauji Satwati, 'Listen to my word.
I am the great Raja of the world, I am the first of great Rajas.
There is no Rishi greater than I;
As a pillar in a tank so stand I in the world.
My brother has forgotten family life and the whole world honours him.
Now I too have learnt wisdom. Listen, O Satwati,
Build for me a temple on the top of yonder hill;
I will go to live there and thus preserve my virtue.
When I have preserved my virtue I will give help to all the gods and goddesses.'
Then said Satwati, 'O Lakhiya, listen to my word.
Great Rajas and great Munis are followers of virtue,
But in this world their virtue does not last.
You cannot preserve your virtue, your life will be lost without fruit.'
Satwati thought in her mind and kept her words in her heart.
'O Lakhiya, listen, go to ask your brother,
Go and get his order for the building of the temple.'

Lakhiya went to his brother and bowed before him with ten fingers joined.

'My Lakhiya, sit, sit, why have you come, my Raja? Tell me.'
Lakhiya replied, 'Have a temple built for me where I can preserve my virtue.'
But his brother said, 'I do not know, my brother; go and take your orders from Satwati.'
'My brother would not listen to me when I asked him for the temple,
It is in your hands, you must get the temple made quickly;
Make it outside the village and I will see no one's face.'
Satwati thought and thought and from the sky spoke the gods.
'Have a temple made for the boy outside the village.'
So Satwati had it made and took the little brother to it.
Lakhiya began to live there and Satwati said,
'I have no order from my husband, but I obeyed your word;
Now save my honour or my name will be ruined in the world,
O Lakhiya, listen, do not stain our record.'
Lakhiya went to live in the temple with his four-and-sixty Jogan.
When the cock crowed in the early morning Satwati came.
While Lakhiya was worshipping the gods, she folded his bedding,
She cowdunged the temple and went back to the palace.
Satwati cooked the best of food, the thirty-one vegetables and the thirty-two kinds of curry.
She put the food in a golden basket;
Some was for her husband, some was for her dewar.
So she took the food to Lakhiya's temple.
She ran swiftly as a jackal, she went leaping like a tigress,
Trotting like a mare she came *sananana*.
Thus Satwati came to the temple and called to Lakhiya.
She brought water in a pot and gave it to him,
She put a seat of sandalwood and gave him food in a plate,
With her cloth she fanned him as he ate and then she returned home.
Thus one day passed and two days, on the third day she had a dream.

In the early morning at cockcrow, remembering her dream,
Satwati came to the temple to test Lakhiya's power.
'Brother, today cook good food for me and quickly bring it for me

I have had a dream; you must give me whatever I ate in my dream.'
Then Lakhiya astonished asked his bhauji, 'What food did I give you?'
Satwati said, 'Touch no dead thing and kill no living thing,
But without bringing meat, do not return home.'

Lakhiya pondered in his mind and picked up his quiver,
He took his bow and said, 'O Satwati, listen,
So long as life remains I will search for your food.'
He said to his Jogan, 'You are the gods of this temple,
I go to seek meat in the jungle, guard the temple well.'

One kos he went and two kos, at the third kos he stood still.
'Where can I get meat without taking life?'
Thinking, thinking, he went on through the midst of the jungle;
He saw a deer and drew out his bow and arrow,
He ran to kill the deer but there came to his mind
That Satwati had told him he was to take no life.
He put the arrow in the quiver and his bow on his shoulder,
The deer ran into the forest and Lakhiya went his way.
Now what did he see? There was a dead sambhar by the road.
He was about to pick it up when there came to his mind
That Satwati had said, 'Touch no dead thing.'

He went on his way and came to a forest-clearing.
Here was a cow, it had just given birth to a calf.
The placenta was lying nearby and Lakhiya picked it up.
He returned home and called his four-and-sixty Jogan;
He embraced them and sent word to Satwati that he had come.
At cockcrow next morning she came to the temple.
Lakhiya gave her the placenta tied up in a cloth.
Satwati said, 'Well done, there is no one like you in this world:
You have fulfilled my dream, your power is very great.'

So one day passed and two days and on the third day Satwati had another dream.
At midnight she saw a wondrous shrub:
There was one stem and thirty-two branches thick with flowers.

In her dream she saw Lakhiya bring this shrub and give it to her
And she opened her cloth and received it at his hands.
When she awoke in the morning the dream stayed in her mind.
She got up and sought for the flower, calling Lakhiya;
At midnight she got nothing, she could not sleep again.

At dawn she rose quickly and went to the temple;
She called, 'O my Lakhiya, get up quickly.'
He did not rise and Satwati called again, 'Come quickly,
Today you have forgotten the worship of the gods.'
Then Lakhiya rose up and opened the door of sandal.
He stood by the door and bade her enter in.
She said, 'I won't come in, I have come to find a flower.
Give me this flower quickly and then I will cross your threshold,
Otherwise I never will come into your temple.'
Lakhiya said, 'Where will I find this flower, why do you deceive me?
I thought you were Satwati, why tell useless lies?'
Then Satwati was angry. 'O brother, if you do not bring the flower,
I will never cross your threshold and my life will break in pieces.'
When Lakhiya heard Satwati's words he began to think,
'O Satwati, you are blaming me without cause.'
But she said, 'If you do not bring this flower,
On your head will be the killing of five cows.'

Lakhiya was so true a man that he never drank the water of a broken tank,
He never placed his foot upon a ploughed field,
As he went along the road he never plucked a blade of grass,
He never looked upon another's wife,
He never stood beneath a broken tree.
When he heard the five cows' oath he thought again and went into his temple.
His mind and body withered and he called upon his four-and-sixty Jogan.
'O my Jogan, listen, listen, I must go away,
To fetch the shrub with two-and-thirty flowering branches.
You must watch over my temple while I am away.'

Lakhiya's fair body turned dark with sorrow,
At night he could not sleep, there was no peace for him by day.
Then said the Jogan to their master,
'O Lakhiya, do not be anxious in this matter.
We will make for you a shrub with two-and-thirty flowering branches.'
Lakhiya said, 'Bring peace to my troubled heart.'
The Jogan wondered what to do and everyone went here and there.
She went to the garden, some went to the garden of flowers,
Some went to the mountains, some went to pick kekti and keonra flowers,
Some went to the field of coconuts;
Those who went to the hills brought bamboos,
Those who went to the garden brought flowers,
One went to the potter's house and brought a pitcher.
They cut the bamboo and made a shrub with two-and-thirty branches;
They stuck a flower on every branch;
They filled the pot with cowdung and planted the shrub in it.
When they had done they said to Lakhiya, 'Look, look our Lakhiya Raja,
Take this flower and give it untouched into the hands of Satwati,
And her dream will be fulfilled.'
The Lakhiya said to his four-and-sixty Jogan,
'Between a wooden cat and a real cat what a difference there is.'
In rage he broke the flowers and went away from his temple.
He bade farewell and took the path through the great forest.
He went *sananana*, he went one kos, he went two kos;
When he had completed the third kos he halted and wondered where to go.
'Shall I go to the right or left?' He stood at the cross-roads.
He took the right hand path and went along it quickly.

Soon he came to the bank of a great lake and saw that the water was very deep.

When he saw the dark water
Lakhiya was afraid
The monkeys in the forest
Were leaping to and fro.

Lakhiya stood on the bank and wondered how to cross the lake.
The crocodile ferryman was sleeping but he awoke at his word.
When he heard what Lakhiya said, he called, 'Who is there?'
Then Lakhiya said, 'O ferryman, take me across the lake,
What will you take as payment to take me over?'
The ferryman replied, 'When there are two travellers
I devour one and take the other over.
How many of you wish to go across today?'
Then Lakhiya said, 'I am all alone, but I must certainly cross the lake today,
You may eat half my body, but take half of me across.'
Then said the ferryman, 'O brother, what god are you?
What ascetic or what saint, that you offer your body?'
Then Lakhiya answered, 'I am no god or saint,
I am the dewar of Satwati, my name is Lakhiya.'

When the ferryman heard this, he came to the bank where Lakhiya was standing.
As the ferryman moved through the water, the waves sounded *chhal-chhal.*
He saw Lakhiya; the youth was wearing diamond-studded clogs,
In one hand he had a club, on his shoulders were precious jewels;
Each of his two-and-thirty teeth were studded with diamonds;
The hair grew matted on his head, his ears were beautiful with rings,
There was a *bajaitri* necklace round his neck.
He looked like a splendid image made by a skilled carpenter,
Which the goldsmith has covered with skilful adornings.
When the ferryman saw him he fell at his feet and said again to Lakhiya,
'Well done, well done, today there is good fortune for my family,
For seven generations we have carried men across the lake
Yet till today we have not seen anyone like you.
By this sight the sin of seven generations is destroyed.'

The ferryman washed Lakhiya's feet and drank the water;
He took him on his back and carried him across the lake;
He put him down beneath the sandal tree and began to d
him service.
For a whole year that poor crocodile served the Raja.
Then Lakhiya said, 'O brother, remain to do your work,
I must go on my way.' But the ferryman replied,
'At least on your return let me see you once again.'
So speaking he fainted but Lakhiya revived him.

Then Lakhiya hastened along by the bank of the lake.
Now he ran like a jackal, now as a tiger he leapt,
Now he scampered like a dog. He went one kos, he wen
two,
At the third kos he halted; on the banks of the Ganges h
saw a sadhu's hut.
When he saw it Lakhiya began to clear away the grass.
As he was clearing it away he approached the hut and there
he found an ant-hill.
Into that ant-hill he poured one and two pots of water,
And so for six long months Lakhiya served the ant-hill
Until at last from it there appeared a holy man.
He was the sadhu of the jungle and he was very angry.
'What villain, what scoundrel is this who disturbs my peace?
Lakhiya got behind him and gently made answer,
'I am no rascal, I am no scoundrel, I am Lakhiya Raja.'
When he heard that the sadhu was pleased and he replied,
'O Lakhiya, whatever you desire, tell me and I will give it
to you.'
So speaking the sadhu opened his eyes
And for four-and-sixty kos around the jungle was burnt.
Then he called to Lakhiya to stand before him and said
again,
'Tell me what you desire and I will give it to you.'
Three times the sadhu asked and each time Lakhiya refused;
But at last he was persuaded and he asked for his gift.
'O sadhu,' he said, 'give me a shrub with two-and-thirty
flowering branches.'
Then said the sadhu, 'O Lakhiya, ask for anything you want.
Ask for a kingdom and for happiness from age to age,
But what need have you for these flowering branches?'
But Lakhiya three times asked only for the flower.

'It was for this very flower that I served you for these six months.'
Then said the sadhu, 'O Lakhiya, this is a gift that can only be given once.
Seven daughters has Indra Raja and the youngest is Bakaoli.
She has blossomed in two-and-thirty flowering branches.
She lives in a lonely temple
For all seven daughters are preserving their virtue.
Go now to the Mangsai Lake,
For there the seven sisters go to bathe at the time of fetching water.
Sitting in the Raja's chariot they go to the lake;
They put the chariot by a sandal tree on the bank.'

Then Lakhiya set out hastily towards the Mangsai Lake
And the seven sisters came to their chariot to bathe.
They broke twigs from the sandal tree and began to clean their teeth,
They stood on the bank and removed their clothes.
They put the clothes down on the bank and went into the water,
But Lakhiya came secretly and took away their clothes.
He tied them in a bundle and ran away with them.
But when Lakhiya had gone one kos, the seven sisters came out of the water,
They sought for their clothes all along the bank.
One sister said to the others, 'Someone has taken our clothes
O sister, come quickly, let us find them.'
But there were no clothes for the seven sisters,
And finding themselves naked they felt ashamed.
Then said the youngest sister, 'O my elder sisters,
Naked, without clothes, how are we to go home?'
The seven sisters standing on the bank looked here and there.
As they looked along the bank they saw Lakhiya going.
'O girl, look, look, someone is going like a washerman with a bundle on his head.'
The seven sisters running, jumping, went chasing after him.
When they drew near they began to call to him;
But Lakhiya took no notice and went on his way.
He was going very quickly but soon they caught him up
And they said to him, 'O sadhu, what torn clothes have you stolen?'

But Lakhiya would not stop and did not answer them.
The seven sisters turned Lakhiya into one of their relations, wooing him with familiar titles.
'Listen, listen, my handsome husband, O my lord, give me my clothes,
O darling of my life, save me from my shame, my little dewar.'
When Lakhiya heard them talk like this, he began to think,
And he stood still, whereon the seven sisters took out black and yellow rice and threw their magic at him,
And Lakhiya at the cross-roads fell senseless and turned into a stone.
The seven sisters put on their clothes and went away.
They returned to their chariot by the lake and flew back to the sky.

The sadhu was thinking in his mind, 'Why is Lakhiya so long?'
He brought out his magic dish and tied it to his waist.
He went to search for Lakhiya Raja along the forest road.
When he reached the cross-roads there was the stone in the form of Lakhiya Raja.
The sadhu said, 'O Lakhiya, this is the fruit of not listening to my words.'
So saying he struck the stone a single blow with his fist.
Saying 'Ram-Ram' Lakhiya came to life and fell at the sadhu's feet.
'O sadhu, forgive my fault. I did not obey you and behold the fruit.'
Once again Lakhiya Raja begged a boon from the sadhu,
But the sadhu said, 'O Lakhiya, I cannot go on giving blessings.'
But Lakhiya said, 'At least once more give your blessing.'
Then the sadhu said, 'Well, I will give you the shrub with two-and-thirty branches, but you must now obey me.'
Once more before cock-crow the sadhu sent Lakhiya,
Once more he sent him to Mangsai Lake, and told the boy,
'No matter what the girls may say, you must not stay or answer.
Come straight back to me and stand before my hut.'
Lakhiya went to the lake and waited there.
He took the form of a frog and went into a hollow in the sandal tree.

Then at the time of fetching water, the seven sisters came,
They left their chariot underneath the sandal tree,
They made tooth-twigs of sandalwood and sat on stones beside the lake.
The seven sisters cleaned their teeth and opened their clothes,
They put them on the bank and plunged into the water.
In the water they began to play hide-and-seek.
At that time Lakhiya came from the hollow tree.
He gathered up the clothes and as a washerman he tied them in a bundle.
Taking the bundle he went towards the sadhu's hut.
The girls came from the tank and naked searched for their clothes,
They searched behind the trees, they searched in the grass,
But they could not find them; then little sister Bakaoli said,
'O elder sisters, it must be the thief of yesterday.'
The seven sisters once more looked down the road.
Bakaoli cried, 'Look, sisters, there goes Lakhiya whom we turned into a stone.
What can we make him today? Come quickly sisters and beg our clothes from him.'
The seven sisters, naked but forgetting their shame, pursued him,
Lakhiya went swiftly, but there was a long way to go.
When the seven sisters came near he went even faster.
He reached the sadhu's hut and the sadhu came out.
In his tongs he had some ash; he blew it over Lakhiya,
And the Raja became part of the fencing round the hut,
And the seven sisters' clothes were turned into stones.

Then the sadhu sat down silently, and the seven sisters came.
They sought for Lakhiya and the sadhu said, 'O virgin girls, why have you come here?'
The sisters said, 'Our clothes have been stolen, and the thief has come to your hut.'
'O girls, no thief of your clothes has come to me. Go away and look for him.'
The sisters went searching everywhere and could find no trace of Lakhiya.
They came back to the sadhu. 'O sadhu, with ten fingers joined we beg you.

Whatever you desire we will give you. But find our clothes and give them to us.'
When the girls said this, the sadhu began to think.
'O girls, what can I ask for? What can you give me that I need?
Whatever I ask of you, those things I could give you.'
When they heard what he said, the seven sisters said,
'O sadhu, whatever you may need we'll bring you.'
Then the sadhu said, 'From among you seven sisters,
I want one. Give me one sister and you will have your clothes.'
When the girls heard what he said, they were not displeased.
'O sadhu, take which girl you will, but give us back our clothes.'

Then the sadhu restored Lakhiya by his magic and turned the stones back into cloth.
The seven sisters snatched their clothes and each was quickly dressed.
But the six elder girls thought, 'Somehow we must save our little sister.'
They thought, 'Since we are the daughters of Indra, little sister Bakaoli is fit to marry a god.'
So they made the little sister ugly, so full of sores that the flies came *bhun-bhun*.
From her eyes flowed pus and the flies sat on it; her nose was a running sore and the flies sat on it.
The seven sisters stood in a line and said, 'Choose whom you will.'
The sadhu said, 'Listen to my word. I want one girl for my son.'
The girls said, 'Choose whom you will, choose, choose. We will be content.'
Then the sadhu called Lakhiya to him. Lakhiya was twelve years old.
He was like the full moon and the sun in its glory.
He was lovely as fire and clear as water.
When the seven sisters saw him each thought in her mind
'We have not even seen a holy image as beautiful as this.
They made Bakaoli stand apart from them, for the flies were singing *bhun-bhun* round her sores.
They stood in a row and said, 'O Raja, choose whom you will.'

But the sadhu spoke to Lakhiya. 'From a beautiful girl there is no profit, she never does any work.'

Lakhiya said, 'O Guru, I will do what you say. I cannot go against your wisdom.'

So saying, Lakhiya began to walk round and round the girls.

He saw the six lovely sisters and he saw Bakaoli.

But the sadhu spoke to him with his eyes. 'Do not be deceived by beauty.'

Lakhiya thought, 'What does the sadhu mean? I want a pretty girl, but he will not let he have one.

He wants me to take this child round whom the flies buzz and settle and rise and fly again.'

But then he remembered that when he disobeyed before he had been turned into a stone.

'Who knows what will happen if I disobey again?'

Lakhiya left the six lovely sisters and caught the girl who looked like a ghost or devil.

Then each of the six sisters began to spit on the ground.

When they began to spit Lakhiya loosed her hand and once more went round the sisters.

But he returned and again caught the little girl by the hand.

So he did three times and every time went to her and the sisters sang,

As the boy is
The girl is not
As the girl is
The boy is not.

They laughed at him, but he took no notice. He had got little girl Bakaoli

And the others said, 'We have no luck; she has got the splendid bridegroom.'

They clothed Bakaoli in her finest clothes and restored her form of beauty.

She stood in the little hut and the sadhu made her Lakhiya Raja's wife.

The two standing together looked like the sun and moon.

When the six sisters saw them they sang this Doha,

The crane looks beautiful in the forest
The goose looks lovely on the lake
The Pandit looks noble in the assembly
And children soon become a family.

Then the sadhu begged the six sisters to perform the marriage rites,
They got seven roots of haldi and made a booth of jamun branches,
They brought sesamum oil and built the wedding-booth.
They made Lakhiya sit on one side and Bakaoli on the other.
Three sisters put oil on the one, three sisters on the other.
They finished everything and led the two round the pole.
When all was done the six sisters took leave of the sadhu and went back to the lake;
They found their chariot and flew back to the sky.

Lakhiya and Bakaoli lived in the sadhu's hut.
Then Lakhiya said, 'O sadhu, I feel a longing for my home.
Give me leave to go, for I would see Amargarh again.'
The sadhu said, 'Then go my brother and take Bakaoli with you.
But carefully do what I tell you. As you take your bride,
Do nothing with her on the way; go straight home to Amargarh.
Take no side path, and do not embrace her on the way.'
Lakhiya took his leave and went towards his home.
But when he reached the cross-roads in the heart of the jungle
He stood still and wondered. The right-hand path led to Amargarh,
The left went back to the Mangsai Lake and Lakhiya took the left.
Ahead walked Lakhiya Raja, behind came the girl Bakaoli.
When they reached the Mangsai Lake, Bakaoli thought in her mind,
'Why has my husband left the road for Amargarh?'

They reached the sandal tree and stood together by it.
Then said Lakhiya Raja, 'Listen my wife, hear my word.
In the Mangsai Lake blossom with flowers and then I will take you home.
O Bakaoli, I have no lust for woman; it was for a flower I did my penance.
O my wife Bakaoli, quickly become a flower.'
Bakaoli answered, 'O my husband, lord of my life, hear me.
Let us go to Amargarh, there I will become a flower; I will not blossom here.
Many great Rajas, men of mighty power have come for me,

Since I was born in the sky many have come for me.
I have lived in my temple in the sky and kept my virtue.
O my beautiful lord, hear my word.'
But Lakhiya took no heed, and so she spoke again,
'If I blossom here, someone will steal me. O my lord, let no one take me away.'
When Lakhiya heard that he took arrows from his quiver;
He made a fence of arrows round the lake; he made it with such traps
That if even a fly should alight there it would lose its head.
So Lakhiya Raja fenced round the lake with snares.
There was only one small passage for going in and out.
In the middle of the path he himself sat sword in hand.
'O my wife Bakaoli, quickly blossom as a flower.'
When Bakaoli heard his order she went into the lake.
She went up to the knees and cried,
'O my beautiful lord, do not make me into a flower.
For as a bird flies from the hand, so I will fly away.'
But Lakhiya took no notice and the girl went to her waist.
Once again she cried to Lakhiya,
'O my beautiful lord, do not make me into a flower
For as a deer escapes the hunter, so I will leap away.'
But Lakhiya took no notice and the girl went to her breasts.
Once again she cried to Lakhiya,
'O my beautiful lord, do not make me into a flower
For as a fish swims from the net, so will I glide away.'
But Lakhiya took no notice and weeping weeping
The girl Bakaoli went under the clear water.
She took the ring from her finger and threw it to her husband.
She went under the water, with head down and feet above.
Her feet turned into water and her body disappeared,
But her long hair turned into the roots of a tree.
From her navel came a flower of one stem with two-and-thirty branches.
The tree grew up and appeared four fingers' breadth above the lake.
Its sweet scent came to Lakhiya Raja's nostrils.
When he smelt it he fell asleep and slept for six months.

The sweet smell of the Bakaoli flower spread round for twelve kos.
When even great gods smelt it they fell senseless to the ground.

Then said Bakaoli, 'Rise, rise up, my lord, and cut your flower.
O my husband, come take me to Amargarh.' But Lakhiya took no heed.
Bakaoli in the midst of the lake stayed weeping weeping.
From the lake twelve kos distant was the city Bhaoragarh:
There lived Bhaoragarh Dano the Raja, and he smelt the sweet scent.
When the Dano smelt the flower he hastened to the lake.
He sought the gate to enter; when he saw the fence of arrows he was afraid.
'O Bhagavan, by what means will I get into the lake?'
That Dano was so big that each arm was large as twelve elephants,
Yet he could not break the fence of arrows.
So the Dano made himself small and entered by the gate.
As a buffalo wallows in a pond so the Dano plunged into the lake.
He went to find the flower Bakaoli, but she fled from him *rabrib-rabrib*.
The Dano full of anger ground his teeth and said,
'O girl Bakaoli flower, where are you going?
From the day you were born in the sky I have given my life to you.
O my wife, today I have met you in the lake.'
The Dano ran to grasp the flower and caught it in his hands;
He tried to break it, but it would not break; he tried to cut it with his nails.
Bakaoli watched the gate for her lord Lakhiya to come and save her.
'O my lord, rise quickly and save me from this Dano.'
When he heard this the Dano was full of rage.
With his teeth he tried to pluck the flower, but he could do nothing.
Then Bakaoli said, 'O Dano, there is a sword in Lakhiya Raja's hand.
Go and bring that and if you can cut me with that, I will go with you.'
So the Dano left the flower and went to Lakhiya.
He took the sword out of his hand, but the Raja did not wake.
Now with the sword the Dano cut the flower and this time it was broken.

Bhaoragarh Dano took the flower and went to his city.
He made a seven-storied temple in the midst of the garden.
There he put Bakaoli and asked her, 'When may I put bangles on you?
I have seven Ranis, but you will be the chief.'
But Bakaoli said, 'O Dano, hear my word.
For six months I must give my lord water from the end of my cloth,
And after that I will wear your bangles.'
When he heard this the Dano was pleased and said,
'You have asked for six months, but I give you a month more.'
The Dano employed a Malin and a Rawatain to look after Bakaoli.
He made a well inside the house, so that the girl could bathe indoors.
The Rawatain used to bring water from the lake,
And Bakaoli would take it in her cloth and offer it in her husband's name,
And the Dano remained with his seven Ranis.
The old Malin daily made a flower-garland and put in on Bakaoli.
The Dano proclaimed in his city that if anyone entertained a stranger,
He would be imprisoned for six months, and the stranger himself would be buried alive.

Now let the affairs of the city be and hear what has happened at the Mangsai Lake.
For six months Raja Lakhiya lay sleeping by the lake.
When the six sisters came to bathe they found the water stinking,
And the lake surrounded by a fence of arrows.
They said to one another, 'Surely our little sister has been stolen.'
They sought everywhere and at last they found Lakhiya.
They tried to rouse him. 'Wake, wake, Lakhiya Raja.
Where is our little sister?' But Lakhiya took no notice.
They said to one another, 'How can we wake him? Not one of us can touch him.
He is our little sister's husband, so not one of us may touch him.'
At last they threw water at him, and it fell upon his face.

At last he awoke and looked out across the lake.
When he saw the flower had gone he fell senseless to the ground.
When he recovered he took the road to Bhaoragarh.
As he went he met a jackal; when it saw him it hid.
But Lakhiya called to the jackal, 'O brother, why are you hiding?'
The jackal said, 'O brother, whence have you come and where are you going?'
Lakhiya said, 'From Mangsai Lake the Dano has stolen my flower and taken it to Bhaoragarh.'
The jackal said, 'Brother, there is an order that no man can go inside.
There is a fence of arrows round the city, and if any man goes in
He will be buried alive. So do not go there to die uselessly.'
But Lakhiya said, 'O brother, at least tell me where he has kept my flower Bakaoli.'
The jackal told him everything. With great trouble Lakhiya persuaded it to show the way.

They reached the flower-garden where Bakaoli was. Lakhiya broke the fence of arrows
And went to the lake. There he sat below a mango tree.
At that time the Rawatain came to bring water for Bakaoli.
She told him who she was and warned him to flee away.
The Rawatain took her water to the temple and returned to the lake.
When she saw Lakhiya still sitting there she abused him.
'If you are not gone by the time I come again, I will report it to the Dano.'
So saying she picked up her pot and rested it upon her knee.
But Lakhiya sent his magic and the pot stuck to her knee.
The Rawatain tried with all her strength to lift the pot.
Then she said in her mind, 'O mother, what kind of man is this?'
Lakhiya Raja was sitting under the mango tree and the girl begged him to help her.
The Raja said, 'O Rawatain, how can I touch your water-pot?
For whom are you taking this water? If I touch it I will have sinned.'

'O brother, this water is not for cooking. This water Bakaoli will offer to her husband.'
When he heard this the Raja leapt up and lifted the pot onto the girl's head,
And into the pot he dropped his Flower's ring.

So carrying the pot the Rawatain took it to Bakaoli.
The Flower offered the water in her cloth in her husband's name,
And when it was done the ring fell from the pot.
When she saw the ring Bakaoli knew her lord had come and her mind was happy;
But she abused the Rawatain. 'Where did you get this ring?
This water is defiled and I have offered it to my husband.'
She called the old Malin and sent her to the Dano.
'I will report it all to him and he will bury you upside down.'
But when the woman had gone Bakaoli called the Rawatain.
'You have made a mistake, but don't do it again. Go and call the Malin back.'
When the old woman returned Bakaoli told her that the Rawatain was forgiven.
'Say nothing of the matter; we three will be always friends.'

In the evening Lakhiya went quietly to the house of the old Malin.
'O grandmother, give me some place to stay.' 'O my handsome Raja!
There is the Dano's order that whoever gives a stranger room
Will have six months in jail and he himself will be buried alive.'
But Lakhiya said, 'Give me but one night's rest and I will give you five gold pieces.'
The old woman laughed and said, 'I will give you one night's rest, but no more than that.'
Lakhiya stayed there one day, he stayed two days, every day he gave her five gold pieces.
The Malin daily rose at cockcrow and went out to bathe;
She picked her flowers and made a garland for Bakaoli.
One day Lakhiya said, 'O Malin, what do you do with these flowers?'
When he heard Lakhiya waited till the old woman went to bathe,

Then he himself made the garland and put it in the basket.
When the Malin returned she cried, 'O my handsome son,
I have never made such a garland. When Bakaoli sees it, what shall I tell her?'
'Say that your daughter has come from Pagpur and that it was she who made the garland today.'
The Malin took the garland to Bakaoli and put it round her neck.
She told her that her daughter's daughter had come from Pagpur
And that she had made the garland, and Bakaoli said,
'Tomorrow bring your grand-daughter here with you.'

The Malin went home and told Lakhiya what she had arranged.
He brought out a winnowing-fan full of gold pieces,
And send her to buy ornaments in the village from a merchant,
Who only yesterday had brought a daughter-in-law to his house.
The old woman gave the merchant the gold pieces
And brought the daughter-in-law's ornaments back to Lakhiya.
Lakhiya put on the ornaments and a haldi-coloured sari
And walked to and fro shining as the sun.
When the Malin returned with her arms full of flowers,
She saw him from afar and thought it was some bright daughter-in-law.
She was afraid to go in and stood outside the door.
But Lakhiya said, 'Old mother, do not be afraid.
Do you not recognize me? How do I look now?'
The Malin said, 'My son, there is no difference between you and Bakaoli.
You both look alike. You look pretty as an ornamented doll.
Has Bhagavan himself made such a lovely image?'
She quickly cooked food and they ate and drank; Lakhiya made a garland;
And they set out for the temple. Lakhiya went ahead and the Malin walked behind.
As they went through the city, people opened their windows
And looked out to gaze, calling to the old Malin,
'O Malin, old woman, whose daughter is that?'

Hearing this, the old woman got angry. 'Whoever it may be, what business is it of yours?'
When they reached the temple, Lakhiya stood by the door,
And the Malin took the garland in for Bakaoli and put it round her neck.
Bakaoli said, 'O Malin, I called for your grand-daughter. Has she not come today?'
'My grand-daughter is very shy. She has come but she is standing outside by the door.'

Bakaoli went out and caught Lakhiya by the hand;
She brought him in and made him sit with her on the bed.
'O Malin, go now to your house. Your grand-daughter will stay here today.
Today I must make with her a Giya friendship.' The Malin went away.
That night Bakaoli exclaimed, 'O my husband Lakhiya! If only you could eat from my hands today.'
They ate together and lay down to sleep. She brought oil from a golden pot
She began to anoint her friend and recognized her husband.
'O lord of my life, what a form have you taken for my sake.'
Lakhiya said, 'O Bakaoli, bring the golden pitcher here.'
He filled it with Ganges water and said to his beloved,
'In this golden pitcher, my Bakaoli, blossom as a flower.'
Bakaoli said, 'O my lord, you did this to me at the Mangsai Lake
And I was stolen by the Dano, and still you take no heed.'
But all Lakhiya said was, 'O my wife Bakaoli, quickly blossom as a flower.'
Poor Bakaoli put her head into the pitcher, and from her feet downwards
All turned to water and disappeared. From her navel came a flower
And Lakhiya cut it with his sword and put it in his pocket,
But the flower fell from the pocket to the ground and said,
'O Lakhiya Raja, I cannot stay in your pocket. Put me in the shoe beneath your foot.'
Lakhiya put the flower in his shoe and that very night
He crept out of the temple and took the road to Amarpur.
He went one kos, he went two kos, at the third kos came the morning.

Now let this be and hear what befell in Bhaoragarh.
That very day was the end of the seven months' waiting
The Dano collected his army and went to the temple to put bangles on his bride,
But when he reached the place he saw the temple empty.
He searched for Bakaoli everywhere, but she was not to be found.
He climbed to the roof and looked in every quarter, but saw nothing.
He said to himself, 'O my wife Bakaoli, you have deceived me. I brought my whole army here for you.'
So saying he looked towards Amarpur and saw Lakhiya on the way.
The Dano took his army and hurried in pursuit.
In the midst of twelve hills he caught Lakhiya and said,
'O thief, where are you going? Give me back my Bakaoli.'
The Dano took his bow and shot Lakhiya with an arrow.
But Lakhiya caught the arrow with his hand and hid Bakaoli in a sandal tree.
A hundred Dano fired at him but Lakhiya caught each arrow
And sent them back again, thus he killed a hundred Dano.
But Todiyamal Dano sprinkled the life-water on them
And they were restored to life. Now they fought so fiercely
That there were great holes in Lakhiya's body and he grew very weak.
He could no more pull out the arrows with his hands, he pulled them with his teeth.
Like a flag blown in the wind, Lakhiya shook to and fro.
Only his breath remained, there was no strength in his body.

In Amarpur, Satwati dreamt that Lakhiya's life was leaving him.
She said to her husband, 'Quickly take your army and go to rescue Lakhiya.'
Ramu took his army and went to save Lakhiya.
When he saw the army of the hundred Dano he was afraid.
'Surely my brother has been killed.' But Ramu's army fought
And beat the hundred Dano, but Todiyamal Dano brought them back to life.
Seeing this Ramu himself killed Todiyamal Dano first of all

And then he killed the others. Ramu caught his brother by the hand.
'Come, brother, come home to Amarpur.' Lakhiya said to the sandal tree,
'O sandal tree, give back my Bakaoli to me. For I am going to Amarpur.'
Then the sandal tree gave the flower that was Bakaoli, and they went to Amarpur.

One night passed, two nights passed, on the third day Lakhiya cleared a plain
Seven kos long and seven kos broad, outside the city, he cleared the plain.
He called great Rajas and great sages and saints to Amarpur.
In the midst of the plain he made a great platform and built a shelter round it.
He said to Satwati, 'O Satwati, come to see the flower.'
All gathered there. Lakhiya sat on the platform and said to them,
'I have brought my Satwati the flower for which she asked.'
He filled the golden pitcher with water and made Bakaoli blossom as a flower.
He opened the shelter and let the whole company see it.
There was one stem and two-and-thirty branches.
The platform turned to silver and every branch to gold. Each flower became a diamond.
Lakhiya said to Satwati, 'O my bhauji, was this the flower you wanted or another?'
Satwati said, 'O Lakhiya, in virtue there can be none like you.
You have fulfilled the vision of my dream.'
Satwati was very pleased and great Rajas and saints cried loudly in applause.
Ramu gave the kingdom into his brother's hands,
And Lakhiya and Bakaoli ruled over the land of Amarpur.

THE BALLAD OF LORIK AND CHANDAINI

IN our text the tale of Lorik and Chandaini, often called simply 'Chandaini' since this girl is the most appealing and lively character in it, begins with her coming to the house of her husband Bir Bawan at Gaura. In the same city lives the 'sporting hero' Lorik and his beautiful wife Manjaria. Chandaini's virtue is attempted by a Chamar bully called Bir Bhatua and Lorik comes to the rescue and defeats him. Chandaini watches the contest from a distance and falls in love with Lorik and the rest of the tale is an account of their passion and the tragedies to which it led.

In our variant, as in the classical Gaya version recorded in the Reports of the Archeological Survey,[1] Lorik is represented as an Ahir or Rawat. To the same caste belongs, of course, his wife Manjaria and also his lover Chandaini and her husband Bir Bawan. The major actors in the drama are thus persons of good social standing who are not incapable of being Rajas ruling over great estates. The debased Chhattisgarhi tale recorded by Kavyopadhyaya[2], however, gives the hero's name as Lori and says that he was a washerman (that is, an untouchable) by caste. This is incredible. It is possible in Indian tradition to fall in love with a washerwoman but hardly with a washerman.

Kavyopadhyaya's version of the story indeed misses all the finer shades of nobility and romance that give poetic dignity and beauty to the poem in the text. His is a vulgar tale of the prostitution of love with the help of pimps and pandars and of physical passion leading to infidelity. According to this version Chanda's husband Bir Bawan plays a more important part than is recorded in our text. He is a great hero, wise and stout-hearted. For six months he lies asleep devoid of sense and feeling, performing austerities, and so sound is his trance 'that no matter how much you beat him or struck him, he never even rose. His name people even mention as a saying:—"Bawan had a blister on his leg, and he did not notice that nine hundred scorpions hid in it"—for such a man indeed he was. His wife named Chanda was

[1] J. D. Beglar, *Reports of the Archeological Survey*, viii, 79 ff.
[2] Kavyopadhyaya, 149 ff.

very beautiful and used to live in a high palace well watched and guarded. Once on a time what should happen but Bawan Bir was lying in his trance and Chanda saw a washerman of the village named Lori, and fell in love with him. Subsequently, bringing into use pandars and bawds, they also had meetings, but it so happened that this never took place in anyone's house. Only out in the open, here and there, did they sometimes meet and communicate with each other by the aid of panders and bawds.'

One day, however, Chanda calls Lori to her place. As in our tale, he has to evade the guards in typical folk-lore fashion. When he reaches the palace Chanda lets down a rope but teases him by pulling it out of his reach whenever he tries to catch it. When at last he loses his temper, the girl allows him to climb up into her room. She then hides herself and Lori has to spend some time finding her. The two spend the night together and in the morning Lori forgets his turban and ties Chanda's silk veil on his head instead. A washerwoman goes into Lori's house and recognizes the veil and after some persuasion gets him to tell her where it came from. She becomes the go-between for the two lovers. Chanda now tries to persuade Lori to elope with him to another country, while Bir Bawan remains in his trance. Lori does not want to go away from his home and tries to rouse Bir Bawan, who is the one person who can save the situation, but he remains sunk in trance and Lori, made entirely helpless by Chanda's persuasions, agrees to run away. One day therefore the lovers get up at mid-night and prepare to leave the village. As they go they pass the cattle-yard of Chanda's uncle and he asks the couple to stay with him for three days and tries to dissuade them from their plan. But they go ahead and come to a great forest where they find a palace filled with food and servants. They go inside and lock the doors and begin to live happily together.

After six months Bir Bawan awakes from his trance and when he finds that Chanda has left him he pursues her. He finds the palace and tries to get in, but the doors are locked and he can do nothing. Lamenting, he returns home and begins to live alone in his own house.

The differences between this version of the story and that in the text are obvious. The character of Bir Bawan is more important. That of Manjaria does not appear at all. The many elaborate and detailed adventures of the two lovers are

omitted. In our story it is Lorik who tries to throw the rope into Chandaini's house and it is Lorik who hides once he gets inside. It is curious that in the older version the roles should be reversed. So also when the lovers are running away, it is Lorik's and not Chandaini's relatives who try to stop them. There is no reference in our story to Bir Bawan's trance, though that may have been omitted by accident.

The Lori Story given in the Reports of the Archeological Survey was recorded in Shahabad and this too shows many variants from the other versions. Chandaini's husband is here called Seodhar. This story resembles, however, the version in our text by laying stress on the adventures or Lori and his lover after their elopement. The story as summarized does not sound very attractive and J. D. Beglar said that it exhibited a 'morbid delicacy in the conduct of females coupled with shameless indecency.' 'Seodhar marries Chandain and is cursed by Parvati with the loss of all passion. Chandain forms an attachment for a neighbour named Lori, and elopes with him. The husband pursues, fails to induce her to return, fights Lori, and is beaten. The pair go on and meet Mahapatia, a Dosad, chief of the gamblers. He and Lori play till the latter loses everything including the girl. She stands opposite Mahapatia and distracts his attention by giving him a glimpse of her person. Finally, Lori wins everything back. The girl then tells Lori how she had been insulted, and Lori with his two-maund sword cuts off the gambler's head, when it and his body are turned into stone. Lori had been betrothed to a girl named Satmanain, who was not of age, and had not joined her husband. She had a sister named Lurki. Lori had a brother named Semru, who had been adopted by his father. Lori and Chandain then went on, and Lori attacked and defeated a king at Hardui, near Mongir, and conquered his country. The Raja got assistance from the Raja of Kalinga, and Lori was seized and chained in a dungeon, but by the intercession of Durga he was released. He again conquered the Raja, recovered Chandain, had a son born to him, and recovered considerable wealth. So they determined to return to Pali, their native country. Meanwhile Semru, his brother by adoption, had been killed by the Kols and his cattle and the property plundered. Lori's real wife Satmanain

had grown up a handsome woman, but still lived in her father's house. Lori was anxious to test her fidelity, so when she came to sell milk in the camp, not knowing her husband, he laid a loin-cloth across the entrance. All the other women stepped over it, Satmanain's delicacy was so great that she refused to do so. Lori was pleased and filled her basket secretly with jewels which he covered over with rice. When she returned, her sister found the jewels and taxed her with obtaining them by dishonour. This she indignantly denied, and her nephew, Semru's son, prepared to fight Lori to avenge the insult to his aunt. Next day the matter was cleared up to the satisfaction of all the parties. Lori then reigned with justice, but the god Indra determined to destroy him, so Durga took the form of Chandain his mistress and visited him. He attempted to do violence to her so she gave him a slap which turned his face completely round. Overcome by grief and shame he went to Kasi (Benares), and there he and his relatives sleep the sleep of magic at Manikarnika Ghat, having all been turned into stone.'[1]

Yet another version of the legend was recorded by Crooke in Mirzapur, which is not a very great distance from the Bilaspur District where my version was discovered. The Mirzapur story gives Lorik's wife as Manjani, but there does not appear to be any reference at all to Chandaini. Instead, the story is simply an account of how Lorik won the love and the person of his own wife Manjani. Crooke summarizes it as follows:—'There was once a barbarian king who reigned at the fort of Agori, the frontier fortress on the Son. Among his dependents was a cowherd maiden, named Manjani, who was loved by her clansman Lorik. He, with his brother Sanwar, came to claim her as his bride. The Raja insisted on enforcing the *jus primae noctis*. The heroic brethren, in order to escape this infamy, carried off the maiden. The Raja pursued on his famous wild elephant, which Lorik decapitated with a single blow.

'When they reached in their flight the Markundi Pass, the wise Manjani advised Lorik to use her father's sword, which, with admirable forethought, she brought with her. He preferred his own weapon, but she warned him to test both. His own sword broke to pieces against the huge boulder of the

[1] Beglar, viii, 79.

Pass, but Manjaini's weapon clave it in twain. So Lorik and his brother, with the aid of the magic brand, defeated the infidel hosts with enormous slaughter, and carried off the maiden in triumph.'

Crooke draws attention to the association of the Mirzapur legend with fetishism. There is a large isolated boulder split into two parts standing in the descent of the Markundi Pass into the valley of the Son and further in the bed of the river is a curious water-worn rock which looks rather like a headless elephant. The cloven boulder is the very rock that Manjani's weapon broke and the petrified elephant is that of the wicked Raja.'

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THE brave Bir Bawan milked the two-and-fifty cows and drank the milk,
But his friend, the Rawat, came and told him of Chandaini.
'Come, come, my brave warrior, for the day to fetch your bride has come.'
'But my head is splitting with pain, my brother, I cannot go for her.
Take my horse Katar and go yourself to fetch my bride.'
The Rawat takes the great horse Katar and brings the bride home;
He stands outside the house and calls to Bir Bawan.
Bir Bawan gulps down his dish of rice and belches loudly,
The noise of his belch goes for twelve kos round,
Patting his belly he comes out and prepares to milk the cows.
His bride Chandaini watches him astonished.
His bride has come and he takes no notice of her.
She goes to him and suddenly embraces his body.
Her eyes at first are on his feet,
Then she raises them towards his face and quickly looks into his eyes.
She goes into the house and makes hot water,
She brings it to him so that he can wash his feet.
Bir Bawan dips his feet into the water and they are burnt.
'May you die Chandaini, you and your hot water!
May your brothers Mahant and Mahantari and your father Raja Mahari die, you orphan girl.'

For Bir Bawan's feet are burning as if twelve scorpions have stung him.
'If I let my matted hair spread on the ground,
Tigers and bears will make their homes beneath it.'
Now the lamp Chandaini brings out cold water and Bir Bawan washes his feet.

O Chandaini, what should I tell of you,
For you are cooking food in many different ways?
She cooks long vegetables and short,
The living *bāmi* fish which jumps out of the pot,
The very big *dema* fish with pulse of green *mung*,
The finest curd and cheese of dun buffaloes,
Ghee of old cows, rice that is white and beautiful.
The pot in which she cooks water is covered with flowers of gold.
So Chandaini brings water for her lord.
'Come, O my master, the food is getting cold.'
He washes his feet again; as he bends down she tickles his back,
She makes him sit and serves him with rice,
She gives him the food cooked in many ways, boiled, roasted and fried.
'May your brothers Mahant and Mahantari live long,
May your father Mahari live for ever.'
Bir Bawan ate the food, munching it this way and that.
He went to milk the cows, but he suddenly spread his bed
And the great warrior lay down and went to sleep.

But the girl Chandaini went on working and when she had finished,
She prepared perfumed oil of flowers in a golden plate.
She went to her lord and took his hand,
She massaged it with the perfumed oil, but he awoke and slapped her.
As if the lightning had struck her, fire came into her eyes.
This moon-girl went from him and thought in her mind,
'My lord was lost in sleep, it was by accident he struck me.'
She goes and takes his legs, but he kicks her away.
The moon-girl falls on her face and the golden plate goes to the ground.
There she lies and sleeps and does not realize it is dawn.

She says to her sister-in-law, 'O little sister, listen to my tale,
My brother Mahant is ill, I must go and see him.
Sister-in-law, let me go, bring my sari secretly in your arms.'
She takes her cloth, the girl Chandaini, and runs from the house.
As she goes through the thick jungle she meets Bir Bathua.
He is wandering with his axe to cut wood in the jungle.
He says, 'O my bhauji, whither are you going?'
In her mind the moon-girl thinks, 'He never called me this before.
I have always been *bhai-bahu*, but today he calls me *bhauji*.
How am I to save my honour in this dark jungle?'
She looks above and sees abundant plums in the jamun trees.
'O dewar, what can I say to you? I long to eat that fruit.
Bring me some down and, as my dewar, you may laugh and joke with me.'
As the lightning climbs the sky Bir Bathua climbs the tree.
He throws down the plums to her, but Chandaini is full of wisdom.
'I will not eat the fruit that grows so near the ground,
For these are taken by the little cowherds who wander with their cows.'
Bir Bathua climbs higher and throws the best fruit down.
Then the moon-girl speaks again, 'O my darling dewar,
Drop down the knife that hangs at your waist and I will cut the fruit.'
The boy drops down his knife and the moon-girl ties her clothes tightly round her body,
With the knife she cuts thorny bushes and ties them round the tree.
Then she runs and runs and runs till she has crossed the great fields of red earth.
Bir Bathua looks down from the tree upon the thorns and is afraid.
He strains his eyes to see her, but she runs on out of sight.
'Very well, my girl Chandaini, today you have deceived me,
But one day I will meet you by the river and I will take your honour;
Even if I meet you in the open path, I will take your honour,
Till not a dog would sniff at your torn and broken organ.'
While he is trying to climb from one branch to another the girl has run two kos.

By the time he reaches the ground, the girl is near her village.
He chases her and when she is almost home, she throws his knife into a tank,
And he goes after it: he half sinks into the mud
And by the time he has escaped, the girl is safely in her house.

Up and down the lane Bir Bathua goes in anger,
Through fear of his angry looks not a girl goes out for water,
Not an Ahir boy dares to go to graze the cows.
The cows begin to die lying in the sheds,
The buffaloes pull grass from the roofs and eat it,
The people sit indoors and all are very hungry.
Those who have wells inside the house can make some bread and eat,
But those who have no water are thirsty like the cattle in their sheds.
The old mother says to Chandaini, 'Little girl, I have never seen a man who could beat Bir Bathua,
In this three-cornered world there is no one who can do that.
There is only one and he is the sporting Lorik.
He alone can kill Bir Bathua, he the sporting hero Lorik.'
So saying the old woman took a stick and hobbled slowly to Lorik's house.
As she went she crossed small lanes and great streets full of people.
She went through small bazaars and big bazaars to where Lorik lay asleep.
'What can I tell you, clever child, this man is a Chamar,
This long-lipped servant of a whore,
He has attacked my darling and no one can save her virtue.'
Lorik sprang from his bed and took a Rawat stick.

As he walked down the street all the hidden longing eyes from inside the houses watched him.
He began to run towards the Chamar but his wife came to meet him.
'Do not go, my master and my god, I beg you,
That Chamar is very cunning, you will not defeat him.'
'Go away, girl Manjaria, may they soon carry out your bier.
He is but a Chamar, how will I let him defeat me?
If I do not roast him like a fish I will cut off my moustache.'
But Manjaria said, 'This is the way to conquer the Chamar:

Take him with you to where the ground is hard;
Make two pits five cubits apart and dig each pit deep as the waist.
Let the Chamar's wife bury you in one pit and I will bury Bhatua in the other.
The one who can get out first and beat the other will win.'
'Come, come, Manjaria, get ready quickly.'

She puts oil on her head and takes her great mirror.
With an ivory comb she combs her lovely hair;
She ties it in a braid that hangs down to her hips.
Gathering it she ties it in a great bun behind the head.
She smears the parting with vermilion and puts lamp-black in her eyes.
She puts rings on all ten fingers. What sweet music comes from her toe-rings!
She takes a plate full of gold pieces on her head and leaves the house.
Lorik goes ahead, behind him is the old woman and Manjaria last of all.
In the lane before the house Bhatua is still marching up and down.
'Bhatua, get out of my way,' cries Lorik, 'or I will hit you with my stick.
And I will knock the two-and-thirty teeth out of your head.'
'Get out of my way, Lorik, or I will beat you so hard that you will swallow all your two-and-thirty teeth.'
Then Lorik says, 'Perhaps I cannot kill you, and you cannot kill me,
But come and let us have a test where the ground is hard.'
He tells him what they propose and Bhatua sends for his Chamarin.
'Come, my Dhumo, come and bury this Rawat
So hard in the ground that he will never escape.'
'I will so bury him that he will never escape to hit you
And you will come and kill him. My lord will be called the Bir.'
The Chamarin brings an iron stick, a full cubit long,
She digs the pit and begins to bury Lorik.
But while she is doing so, Manjaria throws the gold pieces all around;
The greedy Chamarin leaves her work and goes to pick them up,

And while she does this, Lorik loosens his legs inside.
But Manjaria is burying Bhatua very firmly.
She takes his legs in her hands and tries to shake them,
But they are fixed firmly. Manjaria loosens her cloth and moves back a few paces.
'Now my lord and master, beat this fellow strongly,
For he has been buried by your love, Manjaria.'
Bhatua struggles to get free, but though he struggles and struggles,
He cannot move so much as a grain of sesamum.
But when Lorik tries to jump out he escapes at once.
He jumps with such vigour that he goes five cubits above ground.
He approaches Bhatua and beats him with his heavy Rawat stick;
It breaks in two and he takes another stick to beat him.
'Don't beat, don't beat, dear brother Rawat,
Let me live even as a lame man or a hunch-back.
I will live in your Gauragarh and repair your broken sandals.'
Then speaks the girl Manjaria, 'Do not kill him, my master.
O Dhumo Chamarin, take away your husband and with castor-leaves foment his wounds.'

Back home now goes Lorik, behind him Manjaria.
From her hiding-place Chandaini sees them go.
She says, 'O Lorik, my master and my god,
I have not seen a man in this three-cornered world who can compare with you.
When will I run away with you as a girl runs with her lover?
O Lorik, there is no life for me until I am with you.'
Then she says to her brother, Mahantari,
'O brother, make a swing for me on the way by which Lorik goes to and fro,
Let all the elders—Nengi, Jogi, Pande Pardhan—be there to watch me
While I go to swing with my girl friends of equal age.'
Her brother built the swing but Lorik stopped going that way.
Chandaini counted the days till her fingers were worn out.
She looked so often down the path that her eyes began to hurt her.
Her eyes began to tire and she saw nothing but stars.

Now she called on the nine gods, the Mohini, the Jogini,
There was not a god that she forgot.
Even the Paretin, even the Raksa who lives in the semur tree, she called on them.
'Come, come, my bee of love and bring my Rawat to me.'
The bee went buzzing *ghan-ghan* and found Lorik deep in slumber.
I hit against his cheek and Lorik thought someone had slapped him.
He sat up and cried, 'Who is this that bothers me?
Is it some god from my own house or a cow from my own cowshed?
Or is it a god from my playground? Come, O four-and-sixty gods, come to help me.'

He puts on his decorated shirt and covers up his ears.
He ties the shirt-strings across his chest and puts a tuft of feathers,
A tuft of peacock feathers which cost thirteen rupees, in his turban upright on his head.
He looks very angry as ten or twenty bulls that fight together, he looks like a furious tiger.
Now he is ready to jump into the burning fire, for he is not afraid of death.
He has shoes as soft as muslin,
He covers himself with cloth thin as mosquito-wings.
He takes a stick of heavy wood and goes towards his playground,
He goes there and displays the prowess of a wrestler.
He looks like a snake as he wriggles on the ground;
He holds his arm with his hand and twists it so strongly
That seeing it a cobra trembles with fear.

Chandaini stands looking with hope down the road.
The sun and the moon are shining but she still has not lost hope.
In the city are many girls carrying water home.
'Why should I make friends with these carefree girls?
If I send a message with them, they may laugh at me or repeat it to others.
What use are these nine hundred Jogini, what use are the Mohini,
If they will not go on one little errand for me?

O Jogini and Mohini, will you not run and catch my Rawat for me?'
Now the Rawat finishes his exercise and turns towards his house.
Chandaini sees him coming and sits on the swing.
'O Rawat, will you not swing me, pushing me to and fro?'
'No my Chandaini, I cannot, for my comrades are watching me,
And in every country my name will be ruined.'
'If you do not swing me, O Rawat, I swear by your mother and sister,
You can marry them both, I swear by your sister.'
When Lakhiya heard the oath he was filled with rage.
He swung the girl so violently that she was thrown halfway to the sky.
She came down with the fury of a shooting star.
Her clothes were flying all about and her girdle's knot was loosened.
Her ornaments came off and were scattered on the ground.
Lorik gazed hungrily at her half-naked body,
And now he thought, this girl is going to fall, who will gather up the pieces?
On his stick he caught her and put her on the ground.

Chandaini stands up and begins to abuse him,
'Have you never heard of my brother, Mahantari?
I will get him to cut off your head and throw it away.'
'Who cares for your brothers, Mahant and Mahantari?
Even if you rouse from the dead your grandfather, the Raja, who will care for him?
Did I not swing you because you asked me to?'
So saying Lorik starts for his house and Chandaini too goes home.
There everyone is sorry and tries to make her happy,
They give her hot food to eat and she says in her mind,
'I have fasted for twelve months until this Ekadasi day
And now on the very first day I eat and enjoy myself.
Today I will offer washed rice and leaves of bel
On the head of Siva and ask him about my fate,
Whether he has written there that I am to find a husband.
I am glad I abused him and I hope he is angry with me.'
So thinking she begins to eat, but soon sadness overwhelms her.

She beats her breast and says, 'May the morsel I have swallowed come out.'
Her sister-in-law watches her and tells her to go on eating.
'O my bhauji, what can I do, for I have a splitting headache?'
'But do eat just a little more.' So her sister-in-law tries to please her.
Chandaini picks out another morsel but again remembers Lorik.
The food remains in her hand and she vomits all the rest.

She washes her hands and climbs up to the attic.
'How can I console my heart, how can I forget him and be happy?
If only I could see him just for a moment,
If only I could live as a servant in his house,
Staying in the cooking-room and preparing his food!
Then I would pretend that I was in need of fire,
I would go to ask him for it and at least I could look at his face.'

Then she speaks to the bhauji, 'Today let me kindle the fire.'
'Why, so, little girl, why do you want to light the fire?'
Chandaini takes a pot of water and pours it on the hearth;
She puts out the fire and rushes back to her attic.
She puts oil on her head and with her ivory comb
She prepares her lovely hair in front of the mirror.
Soon she is as beautiful as the bull Benia
Whose head looks as if every hair was specially parted.
Chandaini's hair is long as any other ten heads can carry.
She ties up the bun which is as big as her own head.
How beautiful in her face appears the nose-ring!
Her necklace sparkles round her neck and her parting is red as fire.
She puts lampblack in her eyes.
Every finger is beautiful as the crowned head of a Raja.
Her toe-rings give sweet music as she goes along.
Her sari wriggles behind her like the hood of a cobra.

As she came out half the sky was lit up by her beauty.
She looked pretty as the rising sun at the dawn,
But in her mind she said, 'I have lit up the dawn
And somehow the day will pass, but how will I endure the night?'

Evening came and Chandaini took a dung-cake in her hand
And went to the neighbour's house to beg for fire.
As she went out she looked as bewitching as the rich shop of a Bania,
On the way she met her master and all her anger left her.
'O my lord, my dewar, why are you angry with me?
I was only joking, don't you know where my house is?'
'What shall I say, my bhauji, today the chance is gone,
But tomorrow I will certainly come and see your house.'
'Do not come, my dewar, for there are guards before my house.
First there is an elephant watching the road;
Then there is a tiger and then a Surhi cow;
After that is a bear, so do not risk your life and come.
You will not be safe even if you hide in water'.
Lorik returned to his house and said to Manjaria,
'Make me some rice quickly, for there is a great meeting
In the streets of Gauragarh and I have got to go there'.
He ate his food in a great hurry and dressed in his best clothes.
He went to the Ganda's house and got a spotted goat.
Then he went to the Ghasia's house for a bundle of grass.
Then he got some sugarcane and from the Kewat's house
He brought sweets and tied them in a bundle.

Then he went towards the house of Chandaini.
When he saw the elephant he gave it the sugarcane,
'Eat my elephant, eat until you are satisfied,
May the work for which I go succeed in the end'.
To the tiger he gave the goat, to the cow the grass,
But when Lorik gave the sweets to the angry bear,
It tried to bite him, growling *bhak-bhik bhak-bhik*.
At this Lorik was angry and abused the bear,
'May you die soon and may the lightning break your head'.
When the bear heard this it was frightened and hid behind the wall.

Now the Rawat has conquered every obstacle and has entered Chandaini's room.
She is sleeping with her face and feet completely covered;
Through her nose she makes the noise of heavy breathing.
Lorik stands in the door and watches her for a time.
She knows that he is there but her face she does not uncover

'Who are you? Are you a witch or are you from the graveyard?
I will shout for my brother Mahantari to cut off your head',
'Fie on you Chandaini, I came because you begged me,
Now you threaten to cut off my head and throw it away'.
So saying he kicked the light out and climbed on the cross-beam.
'O dewar, I was only laughing', said the girl, 'Why are you angry?'
She got out of bed and began to search for him in the dark.
'Tell me the story of your life while I sit on the beam'.

Chandaini quickly wiped the tears from her eyes.
'O dewar, my master, I was first born from the womb of a deer;
As a deer I wandered from one jungle to another,
But one day a Raja cursed me because he could not shoot me.
I was burnt by his curse and died in the jungle.
My next birth was as a peahen and I used to sing in the forest.
There again a Raja cursed me and I was burnt and died.
Next I was born from the womb of a bitch,
And I barked as I wandered from one street to another.
Yet again a Raja cursed me and destroyed my life.
At last I was born in Raja Goindi's household,
And was married to Bir Bawan,
But in all my births never once have I been happy.'

Hearing this Lorik came down from the beam.
The girl anointed him with perfumed oil that gave him sweet slumber.
Early next morning there was a great to-do, 'Where is Lorik, where is Lorik?'
He awoke from his sleep and jumped out of the bed.
He put on Chandaini's sari and ran out of the house.
In the court an old Dhobnin was sweeping and she said,
'O son, O son of Nanda, where have you been?
Why are your cheeks soiled with lampblack and vermilion?'
'Die, you old woman, I was looking for the cows,
May a whole bazaar enjoy your black and bony organ.
I was playing with the red earth and it got on my face.'

'Keep quiet, you wretched wanton, for where is your dhoti?
And why are you dressed in Chandaini's sari,'
Lorik looked at his own body, 'You are clever, old mother,
But I will give you two winnowing-fans of grain if you will tell nobody.
You are clever, my old mother, I will give you two fans of wheat,
But tell no one and take this sari back to Chandaini's house.'
The old woman hid the sari under her arm and went to Chandaini.
'My queen, my queen, have you been away in exile?
Are you awake or sleeping? Give me your old clothes to wash.
Am I not your Dhobnin who has washed your clothes from childhood?
Now this sari must be washed, for it is very dirty.'
'Fie on you, old mother, why come so early in the morning?
May a dog enjoy you! May worms eat your wrinkled organ.
I have had to see your face first of all and it is unlucky.'
The old woman replied, 'Fie on you, Chandaini,
Why did you keep the boy with you all night and hide his clothes?'
In fright Chandaini jumps from her bed, she promises the old woman wheat and grain;
With her she sends a message to her lover Lorik.
'Go to the river and wash away the *kājal* and vermilion.'
He takes his clothes to the river and washes them.

When he got home he found Manjaria sweeping the house.
'I told you not to go to this meeting in the street,
I have never before heard of such a meeting.
Now why are your eyes and ears so sunk?
I could put a handful of kodon in each eye.'
So saying she took her pot and went to bring water.
As she went to the lake she was muttering curses
As if parched rice was breaking in a heating-pan.
At the lake she found Chandaini washing her clothes.
'Whom are you cursing, my sister?' asked Chandaini.
Manjaria told her how her lord's eyes were sunken.
Then Chandaini told the girl about his visit.
'He climbed the cross-beam of the house and did not let me sleep a moment.'
She laughed happily and Manjaria was filled with suspicion.

'May you die, Chandaini, for you kept my lord awake all night.'
Manjaria went home quickly and cooked the finest food;
She brought seven pots of cold water and seven pots of hot;
She bathed her master Lorik and massaged his limbs.

Lorik's waist was so slender that you could catch it in your hand,
But his chest was broad as the wheel of a cart.
His thighs were big and smooth as the stem of a plantain.
His arms were hard as iron but he had often twisted them.
His hair was long and was tied hanging on one shoulder.
Manjaria gave him water in a golden pot and served his food.
As he ate she sat beside him, fanning him with her cloth.
As he was eating she made his bed for him.
When he lay down on the bed she lit a *bidi* for him.
In the evening he awoke and now he longed for Chandaini,
As the buffalo longs for the cool river mud in summer.
He went out pretending that he must milk the village cows,
But under his arm he had hidden his best clothes.
As he went towards the house he met the old Dhobnin.
'Do not come this way every day, my son,
For you will be caught and your name ruined throughout the world.
Make a rope and tie it to her window and go with no one knowing.'

Lorik gives sweets to the young boys of the village.
He takes them to the jungle and they help him make the rope,
But Manjaria comes and when she sees the rope,
She knows what it is for and hides it in the grain-bin.
The boys tell Lorik, 'We do not know who took the rope,
But Manjaria came here for fire, she may have taken it.'
Lorik goes to the girl and tells her to return it.
'My elder brother has sent for a rope, for our big bull has maggots,
They want to tie it up and put some medicine in the wound.'
'Let them use charms,' says Manjaria, 'I have not taken your rope,
What matter if the bull should die, for in the rains it cannot carry loads.'
Lorik says no more, but tells her that the milk is burning.

When she runs to see it, he kicks a hole in the grain-bin.
He takes out the rope and runs away into the night.
When Manjaria sees what has happened, her face grows small with sorrow.

Lorik throws the rope into Chandaini's window.
She throws it back and he throws it up again.
Three times they throw it to and fro and the fourth time he cries,
'If it does not catch this time, I will cut off my own head.
Throughout the world I will be known as the headless Lorik.'
The girl quickly moves aside and lets the rope stick there.
It sticks like a monkey on the thin branch of a tree.
At once he climbs up to the window, he enters secretly.
'O my love,' says Chandaini, 'What shall I do for you?
For you I have fasted for twelve months and have offered rice to Siva.'
Thus saying she catches him and kisses him again and again.
'O my master, my lord, when shall we run away as young lovers do?'
'O Chandaini, these are the months of rain;
In these days to whose door could we go and stand on the threshold?
Let the dry days come and we will run away together.
We will go to the thick forest and none in the town will know.'
'What does it matter if the world knows of our love?
If the young and wise and old and stupid know of our going together?
What do the rains matter, for they will only cool us?'
No matter, lord, let us run away as young lovers do
'But my servants who depend on me will search for me everywhere.
Without me they will starve, for it is now that we earn our money for the year.
We cannot go now even if you find a lakh of reasons,
For if we run away now we will be called thieves and our lives will be ruined.'
'But we are truly thieves and if my father knows of this,
I do not know what he will do and that is why I am afraid.
Now sleep in my palace and I will go and ask the Brahmin
For a lucky day on which we can run away together.'

She stands before the mirror with her ivory comb,
She puts on her ornaments and dress.
He holds her slender waist between his ten fingers.
Then she goes to the Brahmin who is frightened when he sees her,
For she goes to him at midnight and asks him her question.
'I am going on a long journey, tell me the auspicious day to start.'
The Brahmin brings out his small books and examines them.
'Tell me,' says Chandaini, 'in what direction I can go.'
'You may go towards Ada-Gada. But there is Bawan's great palace.'
'Then I will not go to that country, tell me some other.'
'Will you go to Udha-Gudha? But there live Bawan and his father.'
'No, I will not go to that country either, tell me of another.'
'Will you go to Eni-Theni, but there men have to comb women's hair,
Or will you go to Atar-Katar, but there women sleep on the beds and men lie on the floor,
Or will you go to Eli-Sili, but there the children shout and cry continuously.'
'Fie on your Brahmin gods. Can you not tell me any happy land where I am to go?'
When the Brahmin heard this, he brought out his big books and looked again.
'Fie on you, girl Chandaini, go deceiver to Garh Hardi.
However much you search you will not find a single relation there.'
At this Chandaini giggled *khul-khul.*
Smiling on her left cheek, she gave the Brahmin a piece of gold.
'Tell me what day I should go, for my brother will not tell me.'
'Either on Friday, Saturday or Tuesday night, these are the days that you should go.'
'Where should we come together? Tell me this, O Pandit.'
'Meet near the fig tree which is bare of leaves;
You must be there first; if you go first then smear the trunk with vermilion.
But if the Rawat goes ahead then let him cut a branch, so you will know he has already gone.'

With quick movements she went back to the palace and found her lover sleeping.
He was snoring loudly but she took his hand and woke him
With red red eyes he sat up, his eyebrows had grown crooked.
'Your braid has fallen down, now tie it up. Why did you wake me?
I would like to hit you with my sword on the back,' so said Lorik.
'Listen to me, my master, why are you so angry?'
At that he pulled her to him and made her sit in his lap.
He bent low above her body and kissed her roughly on both cheeks.
'On Tuesday night we will run away together. This is what the Brahmin told me.'
'I must go home, Chandaini, or Manjaria will awake.
She will wonder where I am and ruin my name throughout the world.'
'Do not go yet, for there are still four hours before the night is ended.
I will wake you up at dawn and then you may go home.'
Thus they slept together holding each other by the neck.
But they did not wake until everyone was searching for Lorik.
He heard his name being called and jumped out of the bed.
Once again he forgot his dhoti and put on Chandaini's sari;
Once again the Dhobnin saw him and saved him from disgrace.

Chandaini goes to the fig tree and smears it with vermilion;
Her eyes strain along the road but Lorik does not come.
'I will never talk to him again,' so saying she goes home.
There she finds him in her bed lying sound asleep.
'I was drunk with *gānja* and I did not wake in time.
But tomorrow I won't cheat you, O my Chandaini of impatient mind.'
The lamp Chandaini laughed with pleasure, 'My master, do not cheat me.
If you do not come tomorrow I will never forgive you.
'But now you must go or Manjaria will put water in the rice.'
But the next night also when the lamp Chandaini went to the fig tree,
She put vermilion on the trunk and waited there for hours,
Lorik cheated her again and his Chandaini was disappointed.

Every day the poor girl thought that she would run away with him.
She would prepare her little basket with the things for the road.
She would tie up her ornaments and her best sari,
But there was not a word from Lorik and she was like a madman.
At last she tied a bell round her neck and wandered through the village;
As the people heard the bell they thought it was a cow going by.
She stood outside the house and pulled at the creeper.
When Manjaria heard the bell she cried, 'Go away, O widow's cow,
Go away or I will hit you so hard that your bones will be broken.
If I come out you will not escape even if you hide in water.'
When she heard this Chandaini held the bell to stop it ringing.
'Why don't you die, you bitch, that wakes up so quickly?
As a woman you are always awake and watching in the house while he lies sound asleep.'
Then she again pulled the creeper and began to make the noise,
Hoping that Manjaria in her anger would wake Lorik.
But when the bell rang *thanan-thanan* Manjaria got up and put on her clothes.
She came out with a stick and began to hit Chandaini;
She chased her to the stony field and then came back.
Poor girl Chandaini wept, 'May her bier soon be carried out.
May Bhadon's lightning strike her head and her ashes fly in the air.
If she had caught me she might have struck my Lorik and made him lame for ever.
Now nothing will stop me from taking him away from her.
I will never leave him for her. O Ratmai, I will give you a young sow,
O Narayan, I will offer you a pig if you will help me.
O lightning that ever flickers in the sky, show me my Lorik.
Lightning be my guide and I will follow you.
Now I can see him. There his head is on her arm and she too is asleep.'
She quickly pulled his hand and Lorik awoke.

'Come, come my girl, my Chandaini, I will run away with you today.'

Quietly he took a blanket from his wife and picked up his stick.
But now Chandaini says, 'No, I will not go with you.
You may push me in a stream or take me to the cows' resting-place.
You may give me to a Rawat boy. I will not go with you.
I know that I am beautiful and you will sell me for money.
You will sell me in a foreign land, I will only go
If you put on all your clothes and go away with me for ever '
'My clothes are locked in a basket which hangs above Manjaria's head.
She will wake if I remove it.' 'Show me where there is a ladder.
I will throw magic rice on Manjaria and then nothing will wake her.'
Chandaini threw her rice on the people in the house and they slept soundly,
And she took a ladder and climbed up and brought the basket.
The bells on Lorik's chest began to tinkle loudly.
But all the people stayed asleep.
The old mother cried '*Chhure-chhure*, O cat, are you eating the curds?
My Lorik's stick is heavy and if it falls on your back, you will break in two'.
Then the old mother slept again and Chandaini brought the basket.

Lorik dressed in his best clothes, he tied his white turban,
He fixed the tuft of peacock feathers and put a garland round his neck.
'Come, come, my Chandaini, let us run away to Garh Hardi.'
'No, I will not go, my master, until I see the strength of your arm.'
The Rawat took his sword and hit the branch of a tree,
With a single blow he cut it and it fell at his feet.
But Chandaini was not satisfied.
'O you eater of vegetables, drinker of gruel at the time of famine,
It is a poor arm that can only cut a branch.
It did not even shake a single hair on your chest'.

When he heard this Lorik was full of rage.
There stood a cotton tree planted by his ancestors.
It was so big that the tethering-rope of twelve bullocks could not go round it,
He went back a few paces and shook his loins till the bells around it rang.
The biggest bell Budhawa sounded so loudly that Nanhuwa awoke.
Nanhuwa spoke quietly to his brother Sawant.
'Outside a man appears to have a log of wood about his leg,
Or perhaps some thieves are coming, or is it Lorik fighting?
For I hear Lorik's bell sounding very loudly.
It sounds as though he is sharpening his great sword on his thigh,
But something ties me to my bed and I cannot move.'
Outside Lorik sharpens his sword against his thigh,
He wipes it on his turban and prepares to hit the tree.
He strikes a mighty blow and like lightning the blade goes to the other side.
But the tree still stands erect and Chandaini laughs at Lorik.
'Keep quiet, keep quiet, Chandaini, go and touch it with your little finger,
Go and see what your mad lover has been able to do.'
Chandaini touches it with her little finger and with a mighty crash the tree goes down.
Without a word more she says, 'Come my master and my lord,
Come, let us run away.' But now Lorik replies,
'No, I will not go, Chandaini, for if I eat stolen food,
My life will be ruined. I must let your father know.'
'No, do not tell him, my master and my lord.
It will ruin his name for ever. We must do this without his knowledge.'

But the Rawat took no notice, he walked in front and the girl followed him.
He reached the house and called loudly from outside,
'O Raja Mahari, are you asleep or awake?
I am going on a four days' journey, I leave Manjaria in your charge.'
'Why not take my wife with you, for she longs to see her parents?'
'No, I cannot, in her old age she may die as she climbs the mountains,

But I will take your young calf with me,
For she will jump and dance across the mountains.'
'No, do take my wife, it will be daylight soon,
You can get some cart to take her and she will reach her parents' house.'
But Lorik took no notice and said quietly to Chandaini,
'Come, come my love, let us now run away together.'
In front walked Lorik, Chandaini followed him.

When they reached the jungle they found a cow that had just calved.
'Here is your cow, O Rawat, how unfortunate she is
That she has no one to care for her in the heart of the jungle'
'This is the daughter of our cow Ganga and her name is Mudouri.
Manjaria's parents gave her mother to me when we were married.
Let us drive her home, the poor unfortunate.'
'No, my lord, let us save our own lives, do not take her home.'
But Lorik took the calf in his arms and Chandaini drove the cow.
In their house the two brothers hear the bells of Lorik drawing near.
Nanhuwa climbs a tree to see what is happening,
For he fears that a tiger may be chasing the cows.
From the tree he sees afar and tells his brother Sawant.
'It is Lorik coming with a calf and Chandaini with a cow.'
'Come down, come down, you liar, she is our aunt's daughter.
She is Lorik's bhauji, how can he be so foolish?'
So Nanhuwa gets down and Sawant climbs instead.
He too sees them coming and says to his brother,
'You are right and because you have spoken truly, I will sell a calf,
I will bring the goldsmith from Narodh Garh and get golden earrings for you.'
When they come near the cow's resting-place, the Rawat puts the calf down.
Sawant goes to him and says, 'Come home, my little brother.
If any one would beat you I will pay for your safety.
All men go to Raja Mahari for justice and what would he do with you?'
'I must go,' said Lorik, 'for but a few days since my clothes were yellow.

Let them get a little dirtied, but now let me go.'
'Then go, my little brother, but remember Bir Bawan.'
And now Chandaini is suddenly afraid for her lover.
'You are no match for Bir Bawan, let us run very far away.'

They quickly started on their journey and reached the Geru River.
There was such a flood that the waters seemed to be standing upright.
Sur-sur-sur blew the wind, *khir-khira* fell the leaves.
'What shall we do, my master, how shall we cross the river?'
'What can I say my girl, I have played every game.
But never yet have I learnt to cross a flooded river.
If I try to get across, the crocodile will eat my flesh.'
'Go to the mountains, my master, with your axe.'
He goes and cuts down a dry cotton tree and ties the wood in a bundle;
He puts it in the river and they climb upon it.
As they go into the river Lorik sees two rats being carried down.
He tries to catch them but Chandaini says,
'Don't try to save them for they may bring death to us.'
'May you die, O lamp Chandaini. How can we enjoy our lives
While in our very presence these two living things are dying?'
He catches the two rats and puts them on the wood.
They go across the river and soon their hair is dry.
On the bank are women bathing and Chandaini throws the she-rat to them,
But the male-rat is angry and nibbles through the rope
That was tied round the bundle and they fall into the water.

Now they both are drowning and Chandaini's hair is spread upon the waves.
Swimming, swimming, swimming, swimming she makes her way to the bank.
Lorik climbs upon a log and also comes to the bank.
The lamp Chandaini says, 'Come, sit on my back;
Catch hold of my hair and we will go down the stream.
Perhaps the Kewat will take us across in their little boat.'
So they float down the stream and when they see the Kewat,
The girl stops and sends Lorik into the jungle.
'If the Kewat sees you he will not take us over.

Hide among the leaves and I will go alone.'
Thus she hides him under leaves and goes to the Kewat.
'O brother Kewat, bring your boat quickly.'
The man is snared by her beauty and gazes hungrily at her.
'Why do you call me brother, since when I was your brother?
If you call me master, I will get my boat.'
'If I call him master, will he not try to make me his wife?'
Thus thinking Chandaini says, 'O my master, master, bring your boat quickly.'
The greedy Kewat brings his boat, but Chandaini pretends to be afraid.
'Bring it nearer and give me the rope to hold.'
He throws the rope towards her and she cuts it in two.
'O my Raja hiding in the leaves, come out and come quickly.'
The Rawat suddenly comes out and the disappointed Kewat sees him.
When he sees him his mouth gets dry with fear,
But he is a clever man and quickly says to Lorik,
'My boat can't hold three people, I will take one at a time.'
At this the simple Rawat gets out, but Chandaini says in her wisdom,
'No my Lord, do not get out, let him go and I will take you over.'
Then Lorik understands, he catches the Kewat by the hair and beats him.
'What mark shall I leave with you, O Kewat?
When you are dead, may your widow have to beg her food.'
He brings out his knife and cuts off one of the man's ears.
'From now onwards you will be known as the earless Kewat.'
But when they reach the other side Chandaini gives him her own sari.
'Let your wife wear this and she will look as beautiful as me.'

Now Chandaini has really run away with her lover.
Soon her husband Bir Bawan hears the story.
He takes his bow and a great handful of arrows.
He shouts, 'Where is my enemy?' and prepares to go to find him.
Nanhuwa sees him going and runs to his brother Sawant.
'There goes Bir Bawan and perhaps they have not yet crossed the river.'
Sawant runs after him and cries, 'Where are you going, Bir Bawan?'

'From my herd the little calf of the best cow has gone astray,
And I am going to find it. Where is my joy-giving maid?'
'But before you go, my brother, come to my house and eat milk and *khichri*.
I too have lost a calf with two teeth and I will go to find it.'

They prepare a pipe of strong tobacco and get ready food,
But they put poison in the pipe and when Bir Bawan faints they break his arrows.
When he recovers he asks them to go to find his calf.
Now Bir Bawan starts out again with one broken arrow.
He reaches the river and Lorik sees him from afar.
He calls to Chandaini to hide herself and he goes into a temple.
Bir Bawan throws his broken arrow, but it misses Lorik.
It cuts down twelve nim trees and falls by the temple.
Then Lorik leaves the temple and Bawan crosses the river.
He breaks down the temple but his enemy is gone.
Now Chandaini is anxious and says in her mind,
'I wish I had not crossed the river, for if I could have made them fight,
I would have let one be defeated and go down the flood,
And I would have taken the victor in my lap'.

When Lorik knows what she is thinking, his eyes grow red with anger.
'Die, O lamp Chandaini, for you have roused hatred between two brothers.'
He slaps her and her eyes are filled with fire, and she curses him.
'Like dirty rubbish I will throw away your moustache.
May a black cobra bite your hands of adamant.'
Now they halt and the girl lights a fire to cook.
He lies down beside her sleeping.
A spark of fire from the hearth becomes a black cobra.
It falls on Lorik and bites him in the hand.
When the food is ready and the girl tries to rouse him,
She finds he is a corpse and she begins to weep loudly.
But Mahadeo and Parvati are passing through the jungle.
When they hear the cry Mahadeo washes his ring in water.
He puts it in the dead man's mouth and Lorik lives again.

They travel on and soon, weary, sit to rest beneath an aonla tree.
Chandaini looks up and sees the thickly-laden branches.
'Look! What a wondrous thing, where there is no room on the branches
The fruit is even growing on the leaves themselves.'
'But I have not seen a greater miracle
Than a girl leaving her own husband to run away with her lover.'
Chandaini says, 'O master, pick some fruit for I am hungry.'
He takes his weapon to cut down the tree but she prevents him.
'No don't cut it down, for when we go to Hardigarh
We may scatter as the fruit will scatter,
And we will remember the days when we drank our mother's milk together.'
Now they go on together till they come to Kotiagarh.

While they are cooking their food on the banks of the lake,
A Dania seeing the smoke comes to see what is happening.
He runs towards them shouting, 'Pay my fee and I will let you cook.'
But when he sees Chandaini's beauty, he grows greedy.
He will not take Lorik's money, 'I will take one of you.'
Lorik says, 'Take her for she is yours.'
But when he comes to get her, he catches the Dania and shaves his head in three lines;
He picks up a bunch of bel fruit and hits him till he is mad.
He ties three fruits on the three locks of his hair and drives him away.
When they see him coming the people shut their doors
Only one old Ganda woman stands outside with a pestle;
Her slipper-breasts swing to and fro, they are for ever dry.
He goes to her house and shouts, 'I am no more that mad Dania;
I am now a sage for I have been to a place of pilgrimage.
Look at my knotted hair and the bel fruit hanging from it.'
Then the Ganda woman helps him to remove the fruit,
And he talks of the great beauty of the stranger by the lake.
'Before her the Rani of our city looks a servant;
Her foot is delicate and pink as the Rani's tongue.
As fire itself she is lovely and her beauty burns.
Go, tell the Raja to kill Lorik and take the girl for his wife.'

The old woman tells the Raja and he says to her,
'Go and call my two bullies who eat five seers of wheat an
a goat every day.
Let them kill this man and bring the woman to me.'
When Chandaini sees them coming, she is afraid and says
'They have come to break my bangles, how can we escape?
'O Chandaini, for you they may be terrible, but for me the
are no more than a blade of grass.
Then he shouts to the two bullies, 'Come along my friends
How shall we fight together? We must not wrestle lik
children.
We will not fight with sticks, for that is how a man beats
woman.
Let us push each other by the chest fixing our toes into th
ground.
This is a true test and it is fitting for men of dignity.'
So the two bullies begin to push him hard,
But they slip and fall flat on their faces. He picks them u
by their heads.
He strikes one on the neck so that his eyes shoot out like
dead goat's.
Like a frightened dog the other runs and he hits him o
the heel.

When the old Ganda woman sees this her mouth dries wit
fear.
She runs to the Raja and tells him what has happened.
Now his eyes are red with anger, 'I will surround them wit
my army.
I will take them in the lake and crush them like a worm i
a shell.
O Kotwar, proclaim in the city that every one must come
Anyone who fails to fight will have his skin removed,
And I will stuff his skin with straw and hang it by the gate!
But one old woman says to her only son,
'Do not go my child, for you are everything to me,
And he will blow you out as a man blows out a lamp.'
Another man had just brought his wife to his house;
She begins to weep and begs him not to go.
'I shall be a widow in my childhood, I beg you not to go.
But soon the seventeen hundred drums are sounding an
everyone is ready.
The elephants lead the army and surround the lake.

Then Karingha Raja shouts, 'From what strange country have you come?
O girl, wake up your husband for your bangles will be broken.'
'My master, wake, rise, do you not see this army?'
'For you Chandaini, it is an army, for me it is a blade of grass.'

Lorik gets up and sharpens his sword upon his thigh,
He wipes it on his turban and jumps upon his heels.
He jumps into the air and strikes with his sword.
At the first blow he kills ten and goes a few paces back.
At the second blow he kills a hundred, there is a great heap of heads and a river of blood.
Lorik reaps the army as a farmer cuts the rice.
As Lorik is cutting down the army the Raja watches from his elephant.
In fear he makes it run towards his city.
Lorik sees him and pursues him, he catches the elephant by the trunk.
He climbs up the trunk and takes the Raja by his hair.
'Now die, Raja Karingha, for you have eaten the wealth of my country.
You have not once paid my taxes, that is why I have come here.
And instead of paying taxes you come out to fight me.'
'But master, I did not know who you were, forgive me.'
Lorik lets the Raja go and they bring a decorated palanquin.
They put Chandaini in it and take her to the palace.
They stay together for four days, then go on to Hardigarh.

Now Chandaini travels in the decorated palanquin.
They reach Hardigarh and take a great palace on rent.
In this kingdom the Gond Raja had eighty lakhs of children and forty-two lakhs of grandchildren.
The court was open day and night and Lorik went there often.
He would cross the great wall twelve cubits high,
Jumping over it with his feet held close together.
The Raja had a cross-eyed son who told this to the Raja,
And the Raja said to Lorik, 'Will you kill the enemy who killed my father?'

'What will you give me?' said Lorik. 'I will give a thousand rupees.'
'That is the price of the toe-rings that my wife wears on her feet.'
'I will give my great Ganga-Jamna grain-bins
But do help me to revenge myself upon my enemy.
Here lies my father's body, but his head is gone to Patangarh.
There every day my enemy strikes it with his shoe,
Five times in the morning and five times when the sun goes down.'

Lorik agrees to go, but he asks for a good horse.
'Go Ghasia and show him the horse that he should ride.
It is such a horse that anyone who goes before it,
It breaks open his liver and eats it raw.
From behind its kick is violent as a thunderbolt.'
The Ghasia goes in front and Lorik walks behind.
But the Ghasia is afraid so Lorik goes into the stable,
He takes the horse by the neck and brings it out.
He has its hair shaven, then for eight days he is drunk.
For eight days he wanders drunken through the streets of the city.
The old women who see him mutter below their breath,
'Look, look at him, good neighbour, good neighbour,
O if only I had a husband like him I would dig a well in the courtyard,
And bathe him now in cold and now in hot water.
Thrice a day I would feed him with pure food and milk.
I would keep my mouth glued to his and my eyes glued to his eyes.'
The young girls could hardly speak or laugh as they saw him ride the horse,
For they could only say, 'Look at him, look at him.'

Lorik sets out and quickly reaches Patangarh.
There is the Raja sitting in his court.
In the evening the head is taken out and the Raja prepares to beat it,
But Lorik seizes it and gallops back to Hardigarh.

Now Manjaria sends a message with the Lamana gypsies.
'Tell him fire has burnt our seven-storied house.
Under it his pigeons are buried.

His great instruments of music have been split to pieces.
I myself have been burnt all over,
For he has run away with another's wife.
He gives presents every day to another man's wife,
While his own wife has to husk the grain of other people.
Even when she searches for work she cannot get it.
In his city his own mother is driving crows from the fields.
His great herd of cows is taken and his brothers have died fighting.
Tell this sad story to my lord, O Naik.
If you do not tell the story you will have the sin of killing twelve cows.'
'We will tell your story even before we take the loads from our bullocks.'

When the Naik reaches Hardigarh they ask where Lorik lives.
Chandaini hears them asking and is greatly afraid.
She quietly calls the Naik and strikes him on the nose.
'Devourer of women, horse-faced pimp, who has killed sixteen wives,
So you have come with some sad story from Manjaria.'
She hits him so hard that his nose is broken.
Then she takes curds from the pot and smears it on her body.
Nine or ten cats come to lick her and quarrel for her body.
They scratch it all over and make the blood flow.
When Lorik comes at midday and the girl does not come out to greet him,
He is frightened and asks her what has happened.
She says that a Naik has come and tried to rape her.
Full of rage he takes his stick and goes out to find the Naik.
All the boys of the village follow him in his search.
He comes to the camp and sees the wife of the Naik.
Lorik says, 'Get away, let me see where your Naik is.'
'Peace be with you my son, Manjaria has sent a message.
My Naik went to tell her but she broke his nose.'
When Lorik saw it he was very angry.
He takes sugar in a castor leaf and foments the Naik's nose,
Then the Naik gives the message and Lorik helps him to sell his goods quickly,
And begs him to take him back with him to his country.

Thus Lorik turns with the Naik to his home Gauragarh.
When he reaches his city he sees his wife selling curds from house to house.

'Buy my curds, O Rawat', she says not recognizing him.
He is so sad he cannot speak and goes away.
Outside his tent he has left his Rawat's stick;
His younger sister passes by the place and sees it.
'This is our brother's stick', she cries,
'This is that famous stick with which he hit my bhauji,
And knocked her sprawling into the fire-pot.'
Then she asks the Naik how he had got the stick.
When Manjaria hears of it she runs to the stick and throws her arms around it.
Chandaini comes out of the tent and when Manjaria sees her,
She drops the stick and catches her by the hair.
She throws her on the ground and picks her up and throws her down again.
She bangs her up and down as a washerman bangs his clothes.
The Naik came to help her but from inside Lorik said,
'Do not interfere with them but let them have their quarrel.
One is my married wife and the other is my lover.'
Manjaria washed Chandaini like clothes till she was satisfied.
Then Lorik came outside and spoke to Manjaria;
He asked her how she fared and how were the people in her house.
'Every thing is ruined, as if fire had destroyed us.
We have no home to live in and all your cows have scattered.
I sell curds from house to house and husk grain for the neighbours.
Your brothers have died and you were not here to mourn for them.'

Then Lorik sends his sister to go and fetch her husband,
Asking him to shave his head and beard in mourning for his brothers.
'After I am purified, I will go as a beggar
Wandering from land to land until I find my cows.'
So Lorik goes to find his cows and brings them back again.
But when he returns triumphant and Manjaria comes to greet him,
Coming with a pot of water with which to wash his feet,
By mistake she brings dirty water and when Lorik sees it,
His heart is filled with sorrow and he bids her farewell.
The sportive Lorik disappears and is never seen again.

THE STORY OF DHOLA

THE story of Dhola is very popular in Chhattisgarh and may be heard in any village where there is a professional bard who knows his business. So far as I know, it has twice been recorded in English, on both the occasions at about the same time near 1890 but in widely differing forms. The Reports of the Archeological Survey[1] associate Dhola with the famous tale of Nala and Damayanti. Raja Nala of Narwar loses his wealth and goes with his wife to Garh Pingala where he earns his living as a grass-cutter. After twelve years a son is born to them and on the same day a daughter is born to the Raja of Garh Pingala. The boy is named Dulhan and the girl Marwan. A Brahmin predicts that the Raja's daughter must marry the grass-cutter's son. Raja Nala is then recognized and the children are married. Raja Nala returns with his son to his own kingdom and when the boy comes of age the Brahmins are consulted to fix an auspicious day on which he can claim his bride Marwan. They declare that unless Dulhan can ride in one day to Garh Pingala he will die if he consummates his marriage with Rani Marwan. The father, dreading the oracle, forbids the name of Marwan to be mentioned, and marries Dulhan to two celestial nymphs. Meanwhile Rani Marwan is told of her marriage, and builds a palace near a tank. She induces her father to order that all foreigners should stay there, but that neither they nor their cattle should be allowed to use the water of the tank. Finally, a merchant arrives, who says he has come from Garh Narwar, seven hundred kos away. Rani Marwan induces him to take a letter to Dulhan, but Raja Nala learns of this, destroys the letter, and expels the messenger from the city on pain of death. Rani Marwan then sends her favourite parrot with a letter to her husband: but his celestial wives destroy the bird with the letter. Finally Rani Marwan offers half the kingdom to any one who will take a letter to Dulhan. A poor wretch undertakes the dangerous mission. He goes to Garh Pingala and takes up his quarters with an old woman who makes

[1] *Reports of the Archeological Survey*, vii, 95 ff. There are other references to the Dhola legend in Temple, ii, x, xvi.

garlands. Here he plays before Raja Dulhan and contrives to deliver the letter. Dulhan determines to claim his wife, and informs his father of his intention. His father explains the oracle to him and tries to dissuade him. Dulhan goes to the stables and asks the camels if any one will undertake to convey him in one day to Garh Pingala. All refuse except one old blind camel which had been a native of Garh Pingala, and even now goes there daily to drink water out of its tanks. She undertakes to convey him there in half a day. The suspicions of his nymph wives are excited, and while sleeping each puts into her mouth one of Dulhan's fingers, so that he cannot escape without awaking them. He deceives them by making for his fingers sheaths of bark, the colour of skin, and when his wives sleep he withdraws his fingers from their mouths and escapes. He starts on the blind camel. His wives pursue, and overtaking him at the Chumbal river, hold on behind to the camel's tail. The camel advises Dulhan to cut off its tail, so that his pursuers may be thrown into the river. This he does and arrives at Garh Pingala, where he re-claims his bride, and they live happily ever afterwards.

Kavyopadhyaya[1] gives a version which is substantially the same though there is less preliminary matter and much more stress is laid on the love between Dhola and the girls who seduce his attention from his wife. His version of the story opens with Dhola and Maru living together happily in Naraul Garh. Raja Nal gives his kingdom to Dhola and tells him he may go anywhere except to the land of Garh Pingala where Rewa Malin lives with her sister Parewa. Dhola naturally at once goes to Garh Pingala and after various adventures finds himself in the seven-storied palace of Rewa and Parewa. He sits down and the two lovely sisters come out and talk to him. They give him tobacco and betel and while he is eating they throw yellow rice upon him and charm him, for they have become entranced with his beauty. 'Then they held sweet converse with him and charmingly did they question and answer and they applied ointment and sandal to him, bathed and washed him and gave him fine food to eat.' Dhola remains with Rewa and Parewa for twelve years. At the end of this time he begins to feel homesick. His wife Maru also begins to miss her husband. Counting the days her fingers are worn away and her eyes

[1] Kavyopadhyaya, 108 ff.

become hollow. She calls her parrot and sends it with a message to her husband. The parrot flies to Garh Pingala and sits on a turret of the palace and cries, 'Hath a flash of lightning destroyed thee, O Dhola, or the frost, or do Rewa and Parewa compel thee that thou hast forgotten thy wedded wife?' When Dhola hears this he talks to the parrot and promises to return. Rewa and Parewa are very anxious about this and Parewa tries to burn the parrot alive. However it escapes and Dhola is able to write a letter to Maru which it carries back to Naraul.

Dhola now begins to plan his escape. He plays at dice with Rewa and gives her a roll of drugged betel to eat. She loses her memory and Dhola gets on a camel and escapes. But Rewa recovers and the two girls pursue Dhola. They come to a river and the sisters follow and seize the camel by the tail. Dhola cuts off the tail and escapes. The two girls fall into the water but manage to reach the bank and return sorrowfully to their home. But Dhola continues until he reaches Naraul and finds his wife Maru who receives him with joy and they spend the rest of their lives happily together.

The new version in the text, which was recorded in the Bilaspur District, follows the main lines of the already printed tales; there are differences but not of very great importance. Raja Ben is the ruler of Garh Pingala, Raja Nala of Narurgarh. Raja Nala falls on evil days and leaves his kingdom, finding himself at last in Pingala where he obtains work in the house of a Teli. Both Rajas have a passion for gambling and Raja Nala's skill finally betrays him. Raja Ben builds a palace for the royal exile, and when his wife gives birth to a daughter on the very same day as Raja Nala's wife Ratan Dewantin gives birth to a son, pays a gambling debt by marrying the little girl, whose name is Maru, to the boy Dhola. On the day of Dhola's birth gold and silver rains down on his father's palace, and with the new-found wealth Raja Nala returns to his own land and recovers his throne.

In the palace gardens at Garh Pingala is a gardener Madhumali with a couple of uncommonly pretty daughters. In the Bilaspur version Rewa and Parewa are not celestial nymphs or anything of the kind; they are thoroughly human but possessed of great magic powers. Rewa sees the little Dhola and falls in love with him. She serves Siva for twelve

years and earns the boon that she may win and enjoy Dhola for a similar period. When Raja Nala returns to Narurgarh she persuades her father to follow him. The whole family goes to Narurgarh and obtain work in the palace gardens. Maru, of course, still a child, remains in her father's house at Garh Pingala: after a time, a younger sister, the ill-fated Tariwan, is born.

The introductory stanzas of the Bilaspur version, in which these events are described, are of wearisome length and I have omitted them. My version begins with Rewa deciding that the time has come to claim her reward. She makes a charmed garland and when Dhola touches it he is enchanted and leaves his palace and goes to live with Rewa in the gardener's hut. It is curious that the royal household appear to make no objection to this remarkable arrangement.

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REWA MALIN sits in the garden; her little basket is before her;
She does her hair, to each lock she ties a diamond.
Rings sparkle on her toes, there is sweet music from her anklets;
Under her calves the golden hoops embrace her flesh;
Her slender neck gives beauty to her diamond necklace.
She lifts her flower-basket and puts it on her head.
As she stands up her jacket can be seen
Of finest cloth and tied with seven knots;
The breasts strain at it, she is afraid the knots may part.
How can a man describe her beauty? She shines like very gold.
She walks towards the palace, lovely as the flashing lightning.
Ratan Dewantin sees her; her sighs fill her withered body
'Little girl, come tell me, whose little bride are you?'
'I am no one's little bride, nor am I a little girl.
I am Madhumali's grown-up daughter; my name is Rewa Malin.'
'Fie on you widow-girl; may lightning strike your head.
My son has gone down to the lake to bathe.
Remove your treacherous beauty from this place.'

Before the palace was a tulsi tree;
A twelve-cornered platform had been raised about it.

Below the tree Rewa put down her magic garland.
The flowers were full of charms, irresistible and strong:
Chilkan that gives the agony of love,
Chatan that wakes a longing for the bite of love,
Phulwan that preserves beauty ravishing as a flower.
When Ratan Dewantin saw what the girl did, her eyes grew red as fire;
Her crimson eye-brows were like a stringed bow prepared for use.
She seized the girl and beat her; I cannot describe the blows.
Rewa escaped from her and ran back to her hut.
With shoes of sandal, a brass pitcher in his hand,
Dhola returned. He went to give water to the tulsi.
But when he saw the garland he stood still and cried,
'In all the world I have not seen flowers so beautiful.'
'May you die and your widow go to beg her food!
May the lightning strike you if you dare to touch those flowers.
They are the flowers of State and Siva will curse you if you touch them.'
'I fold my hands, I beg you, mother, listen to my word.
I must wear these flowers, for they shine before me as a lamp.'

But when he bent to touch it, the strong charms of the garland
Possessed his eight parts and drove him out of his mind.
Like a mad deer he started up, ran like the blind wind to and fro.
He found a broken Ghasia's cot and took it to the stables.
He lay down in his madness and turned his face to the wall.
'Go and find who made the garland; till then I will not eat or drink.'
He stretched his legs and sank into the sleep of happiness,
Fed by the memory of love. He had one thin cloth above him,
But he did not feel the cold for the fiery charms were in him.
'When I see the garland-maker, all my sins will be done away.'
For two days Dhola fasted and when the shadow of the third day fell,
His father came to comfort him, but there was no rest from the love-agony.

'My son, my son, you are the support of my life.
When I, the great Nal Raja, worked as a weary bullock
Pressing the oil-seeds for Bhojawa Teli,
You were born to bring joy into my sad unhappy life.
Now how can I let you pine away and die?'
To comfort Dhola, Indra comes and the black cobra of the Under World;
Of gods and goddesses there is no account.
At last Dhola rises; he puts on his creaking shoes,
He presses his sword beneath his arm and wanders as a madman.
'O women who husk grain with the strength of the pestle,
Tell this poor madman Dhola the way to his Rewa's palace.'
'Why not ask the children, brother, who are playing in the path?'
'O carefree children, tell me the way to Rewa's palace.'
'O master, you who live in the Manas Lake are paddling in a pond,
You who feed on pearls and diamonds are looking for a shell.'
He slaps the children and abuses them. They take him for some madman.
They rush at him from every side. The sweet prince Dhola wearies;
His fair body droops like a faded flower;
His face seems withered, not a word comes from his lips.
He staggers on through the bazaar in search of his love's palace.
At last he comes to the lime tree that grows before the palace;
He casts his longing eyes on his Rewa's little hut.

Rewa knew that he would come; she was watching the path for him.
When she sees him, from her young breasts she rubs dirt:
She makes a parrot with it and puts life into its body.
It flutters in the lime tree calling '*Karan-karan*'.
The noise arouses Dhola who is lost in longing,
Thinking of his flower-maid Rewa, his heart filled with desire.
Angry he strings his bow and brings down the parrot *phad-phad*.
When she sees what has happened, Rewa rushes from the house.
She bends above her parrot, never looking at the prince.

'Where is that cruel person who has killed my pretty bird?
Had he no nuts or betel that he must destroy my pet?
Or were his grain-bins empty, his money stolen?
Bring it to life again and go back whence you came.
This parrot was my lover and today I have lost him.
If you cannot restore his life, you must sleep with me instead.
You must lie in my bed with me to keep me company.'
Suddenly the girl lifts her eyes to Dhola's face.
She smiles into his eyes and offers him a five-leaved *bida*.
His passion flows about her, the flood of love pours down.

Now let us leave them to their love and consider Maru.
At this very moment the child-bride Maru sighs.
'Why is it, father, are you of low-caste?
Are you so poor that this grown daughter of Raja Ben
Should be laughed at by her friends for being without a husband?'
'No, no, my daughter, we are not low of caste,
Nor are we poor in fortune. You were married in the cradle.
Your lord the prince is handsome. He is godlike to the eyes.'
So saying her father left her and the girl sat thinking.
Suddenly there is sweet music. There are dancers and musicians;
The whole city is enchanted as they go through the streets.
Maru cries, 'Go, go, my friends, and call these strangers here.
Their music has roused me strangely; perhaps there is a message.
Maybe my young lord has sent them. They have come from Narurgarh.'
The young girls accost the singers. 'From what strange and lovely land
Have you brought your precious songs? Where do you go from here?'
'We belong to Dhola's country; we have heard of Garh Pingala,
The meritorious city, and we have come to see it.'
'Come then with us, brothers, for the princess Maru calls you.'
The musicians turn at once towards the golden palace;
They pass through the orchards and are lost in the mango groves.
They reach the open garden of oranges and limes,
And at last through the cool shade of the kadam trees they see the palace.

'Receive our greetings, O princess, may you live from age to age,
And soon may you meet your young lord.'
'Sit down, sit down, brothers, eat these delicate leaves
And cool yourself beneath the shade of the kadam trees.'
Her handmaids take the rest aside and Maru speaks to their leader, Dhadi.
'What can I give him?' she says in her mind.
'He is very poor; I will give him a basket of gold pieces.'
When her servant brings the gold, the poor man looks anxious,
For he has nothing to tie it up with, his loin-cloth is so small.
Maru feels very sorry. 'Go, go my girls and bring father's silk *dhoti*.
He will take his money in it.' She gives him the precious cloth;
He promises to return alone and goes back to his camp.

When his children saw him they did not recognise him in the silken *dhoti*,
But his wife's joy knew no bounds. 'This will last for three generations.
But I am afraid my lord, let us hurry away,
Let us go back to Narurgarh before they make trouble for us.
But let me wear that silken cloth and wander in the bazaar.'
The good wife dressed in the Raja's silken cloth.
She went to the bazaar, leading her children by the hand.
There was nothing she did not buy; she returned heavy with ornaments.
Then she pestered him to start, but Dhadi did not forget his promise.
Early next day he came to the deep shade of the kadam trees.
Maru had not slept; wide-eyed she was walking to and fro.
Her handmaids did not know him, for now he looked like a prince.
He had a sword at his side, but he stood on one leg and folded his hands.
'Princess, I am here to serve you. Tell me what I can do for you.'
'Of what can I make paper and what shall I use for ink?
What pen can I use to write a word or two of love?'
'For paper tear your *sari*, take the lampblack from your eyes:
For a pen use your little finger to write a word or two of love.'

Maru tears her precious *sari,* she takes lampblack from her eyes,
With her little finger she writes a word or two of love.

'Your Maru is no more a doll. She is a woman now,
She bathes her head and wears all a woman's ornaments.
She can stretch her limbs across her bed and if her lord was near,
She would not hesitate to give him his due pleasure.
But she lies on a lonely bed in a dark house.
She is a Bairagi and her young body is smeared with ashes.
May her holy beads be transformed into her lord:
Then she will carry him round her neck and have him always with her.
Your Maru has grown into a young and splendid elephant
With golden trappings. She waits for her lord to ride her.
If he were here he could ride his young she-elephant
And use his goad upon her in any way he liked.
Your Maru has grown into a young swift antelope;
Alone she wanders through the forest eating the green leaves.
If her lord were here he could use his strong arrow,
Like a Pardhi, to conquer her.
Your Maru has grown into a young fish with shining scales,
Sporting and leaping in the clear water.
If her lord were here he would fling his net
And catch her for his supper in the lonely house.
Your Maru's youth is budding; it tries to burst out into freedom,
But it is held by her jacket with its four-and-sixty knots.
None but her lord can untie them and meet the joy within.
When the koel calls on the mango branch or the peacock in the forest,
When the crane complains by the river, your Maru thinks it is her lord,
She thinks it is his voice and runs like a deer to greet him.
Your Maru is like a full lake that tries to break its banks.
Come quickly, my lord, lest the little streams break the walls
And the water pours out to waste itself among the fields.
If you are my lord, if you are a man, you will come to Garh Pingala.
But if you are soft like a woman you will spend your days grinding kodon.

You who should dwell in the rapture of the Manas Lake
Have made your home in a muddy ditch.
Do not waste our quickly-passing youth, my lord.
My life is yours; forgive my quick-tempered words.
The bel fruit has ripened on the branch
But it is protected by sharp thorns for you alone.
Only my lord will pluck that fruit, but if he neglects it
The tree with fruit and roots will wither and decay.'

The poor musician stood with folded hands in front of Maru.
'I will take this letter on its silken paper,
Written with all the signs of love, to Dhola.
I go alone, leaving my wife and children in your care.
Fill this drum with gold pieces, for the journey is long.
Gold and your blessing will guard me in the forest.
Plant a tulsi tree and water it daily in my name.
So long as it keeps fresh, know that I am well,
And struggling to reach your lord with your message.
But if it withers it will mean that he is in danger,
Or I have perished in your cause.'
He returned to his camp and told his wife about the journey.
She wept for him, but he spoke consoling words.
'So long as the limes on this tree are fresh, know I am well,
If they wither know that I am dead and take another husband.'
She gave him food for the journey and adorned his young horse.
With his hair oiled and sword in hand he set out for Narurgarh.
Dhadi went to a Malin's house, but it was not Rewa's mother.
He heard how she was surrounded with soldiers and many servants.
The Malin told him to get *gānja*. 'For these Mussalman servants—
Once they drink the precious drug they care for nothing in the world.
You can make fun of their women, you can insult their Allah
And all they do is laugh and ask you for some more.
They think it brings more joy than all the women in the world.'
So Dhadi reaches Dhola's palace and gives *gānja* to the servants.
The tall and bearded Mussalmans forget their creed and honour;

They take the precious *gānja* and are drunk with joy.
Dhadi beats his drum and dances, swinging on his rope.
His music enchants them all and even Parewa hears it.
She comes to watch the singer and by magic discovers
That he has come with a message from Maru.
She tells her sister Rewa and she comes out to threaten Dhadi.
Dhola too is drunk and full of magic, he is enchanted by the music.
He follows Rewa shouting and says he will watch the dance.
The two sisters try to drag him in, but he is too strong for them.
Rewa by her magic swings poor Dhadi so violently
That he flies into the sky and comes down senseless on the ground.
As he falls he cries feebly, 'Save me, Maru, I die.'
Rewa is on fire with rage, her teeth chatter like the thunder.
She screams at her chaprasis, 'You impotent *gānja*-smokers,
Where is your honour, your loyalty to the salt you've eaten?
You cry "Allah Allah" every dawn, yet now you cannot even say
"*Toha toha*" in despair. For now you must prepare for death.'
Meanwhile Dhadi met the sweet prince Dhola;
He gave him Maru's letter and Dhola wrote his answer.
He sent Dhadi away secretly to the house of Lakha Naik.
'O Lakha my friend; see how I am nearly dead.
But somehow take this letter from Dhola to his Maru.'
'No, no, my Dhadi, you are not going to die.
Eat bread of red wheat with a chicken curry.
Drink some cold water from my well and you will soon recover.
You must see to my house, and I will go to Maru,
Taking my lakh of bullocks laden with bales of cotton.'
The Naik set out with his long train of bullocks.
When they came to the river the bullocks rushed to drink.
The first drank the clear water; the next must be content with mud,
The third had nothing but urine,
And the rest only raised the dust which settled in scum on the water.
As the hundred thousand bullocks crossed,
The water seemed muddy like a flood in the rains.

When he reached Garh Pingala the Naik piled his sacks;
They looked grand as a palace reaching to the sky.
He climbed to the top and looked towards the city.
Maru was sitting on a golden seat.
So bright were her ornaments that the Naik fell to the ground.
He wept in pity for his friend.
'O Dhola, this is the girl you have left for the Malin's daughter.
No one can describe her beauty and she is sitting there for you.
On her golden seat she sits and thinks of her Dhola.'
Now let us leave him for a while and attend to Maru.

When she heard the crash of the Naik's fall and his loud weeping,
She was roused from her dream of Dhola and called for her friends.
'Go and see what has happened. It sounds like a Naik falling.'
One of the girls tied her *sari* tightly round her body.
She ran to the Naik's camp; when she saw Lakha's beauty,
She felt giddy and was about to fall. But when the Naik saw her,
He collapsed on the ground and his wife abused the girl.
'Why don't you hide your lustful breasts from his hungry eyes?
Why are you here? May they soon carry out your bier.'
'Do not distress yourself, good woman. You may be old as a ghost,
But when they saw my young beauty even great trees have fallen,
Great trees whose roots have broken the tusks of elephants
Rooting to dig them up—they have crashed down before me.
It is your good fortune, old hag with bony organ
That your husband is still breathing, for many men have died.'
The girl went back to Maru, panting a little from the quarrel.
'Never have I seen so handsome a Naik tethered to a dry and withered peg.'
The next day while the Naik was swaggering through the bazaar
With his shoes of sandal and his golden stick in hand,
His wife came with pomp and gave Maru Dhola's letter.

Maru took the Naik's little son in her lap as she read it.
The child pissed in her *sari* and so robbed her of her virginity
Maru gave the Naik two turbans, one for himself and one for Dhola;
The next day he took his bullocks back to Narurgarh.
Now let us leave Maru, while you listen with attentive ear
To what has happened to Dhola and his enchantress Rewa.

The time of Dassera has come and there is music in the streets.
'What is that drumming in my ears, my Rani?'
'It is only a few beggars going round for alms.'
'But is it not Dassera? I am the son of a royal tiger.
How long will you keep me locked in a little room with you
Treating me like a child? Today I must play my royal part.'
At last Rewa had to let him go, for he gave her no rest,
But she sent him on a horse that she had filled with her magic.
'O horse, if you take him further than twelve miles,
I will kill you and fill your skin with straw.'
Before the magic girl the horse trembled *kalap-kalap*.
'You say twelve miles, my mistress, but I will not go more than ten.'
Seven men had to hold the reins, sixteen pulled on the rope.
They left the house as if they were escorting a girl to her husband.
From forty-two cubits away Dhola leapt into the saddle.
He rode towards his father Raja Nal who was on his mad elephant,
For a moment the youth bent to touch his father's feet,
But the horse leapt forward and does not let them talk.
Dhola, the sweet prince, rode on to find his childhood's friend,
The Naik who had returned from Garh Pingala with a message from his Maru.
When he met him he did not speak a word,
For he saw the turban and his mind was filled with Maru.
'Save me, my friend, but what can I do? I am wholly in her power.
I have tried every way of escape, but I can find no refuge.'
'Listen to me. I will tell you what to do.

On the happy day of Phag make her drunk with *bhang* and *gānja*;
When she lies stupid as a sow, tie her to her bed'.

Dhola rode home and Rewa welcomed him with the lamp of Arati.
She went secretly to ask the horse whom her lord had met
It said, 'He spoke to no one' and in anger she struck it;
In its pain its dung fell to the stable floor.
She went back to the sweet prince Dhola and asked him also
'I spoke with no one' he said, and she began to quarrel.
'Why do you lie to me? I saw you talking to your friend the Naik.
Why do you deceive me, your flower-maiden Rewa?'
'For twelve years I have lived with you,
But now I must return to rule on the throne of Narurgarh.
Phag has come and I will enjoy it as I desire.
Bring me a drum and we two will sing and dance together.'
After long argument Rewa did what he desired.
She threw coloured water at him; he mixed a pot of *bhang*.
She drank it unaware; she was soon drunk as a sow.
Her eyes were red as blood; she smiled *much-much*.
As a potter's wheel goes round, she staggered round in circles.
She offered him the pot, but he refused to take her leavings.
'They may see it and laugh at us.' Thus he saved himself.
At last the girl fell down and he put her on the bed.
He filled her mouth with *bhang* and tied her hand and foot;
He tied her as men tie grass on the roof to prevent it flying away.
She looked like a wooden branch lying silent on the bed.
He put a piece of khair wood by her so that when she awoke,
She might think it was her lord and not miss the sweet prince Dhola.
Dhola hastened to the stable and patted the horse's back.
It did not see its lord and pulled out its peg in anger.
'Do you not know your master?' The horse lowered its head in shame.
'Now take me to my married wife and I will adorn you like a Raja.'
'I dare not, for my mistress will kill me and stuff my skin with straw.'
'A servant who is disloyal to his salt dies hungry;

The bullock unfaithful to the plough dies on the bank of the field;
The horse that does not carry its master into battle
Is neglected by the vultures; it is the prey of worms.'

Dhola left the horse in rage and pity and went to the elephant.
'Now take me to my married wife and I will adorn you like a Raja.'
'I dare not, for my mistress will kill me and stuff my skin with straw.'
'How great and brave you look, but when you see your little mistress,
You drop your dung in bucketsful for fright.
O elephant, your ears are winnowing-fans and your body is a mountain,
But your eyes are weak and tiny; there is no true courage in you.'
Dhola left the elephant and went to find the camel.
When it saw its master coming the camel pretended to be dead.
'Camel, my trust was in you and now you are dead.
No one else will help me. But what can I do?
Here I bury you with this little earth for you were always faithful.
It was my mother-in-law who gave you as a gift to my married wife.'
So saying the sweet prince Dhola threw a little earth on the body
And was going away in tears, when the camel struggled to its feet.
'Do not fear, my master, I will take you to Garh Pingala.
But I will only take you if you bind your eyes and ears,
For the two magic sisters will try to charm you back.'

Sweet prince Dhola was happy; he sprang on the camel's back.
With the wind it ran a race; it cried to its master,
'Beat me, beat me with force, before they know we are going.'
In the space of a single meeting of the eye-lashes
The wind-quick camel has gone thirty miles.
But Rewa Malin's magic creates ripe bhoir berries by the way.

Their smell enchants the hungry Dhola and he pulls at the reins.
'No, those are poisonous berries; do not touch them.'
'But I must eat them even if I die.'
'Then catch a branch and break it off as we go quickly along.'
'But people will laugh at me if they see me with a branch of berries.'
'Then I will crush you against the tree and so destroy your kingdom.'
Dhola caught at a branch as they went by, he tore it from the tree;
He sat and ate the berries as the camel went like the wind.
But as he broke the branch he released the Jugti of the tree;
He cut the Jugti's nose and that noseless evil spirit
In anger went to Rewa and freed her from the bed.
Rewa called Parewa and the girls turned into eagles.
Their wings were six miles in span; they set out in pursuit of Dhola.
With great sweep of wings they followed him.
Their bodies shone lovely as the firefly,
Seductive were their voices as a thousand koel singing.
But Dhola saw and heard them not, for his eyes and ears were tied.

Ahead the camel saw the great river that bounded Rewa's power.
Beyond its shining waters her magic could do nothing.
It rushed towards the river with the two sisters close behind.
As it put its two front legs into the water, the girls caught it by the tail.
'Where are you going, you faithless pimp? Now we have you in your power.'
The earth trembled, the great cobra was afraid,
Even the gods in heaven were anxious at the fight.
'Draw your sword and kill them,' cried the camel to its master.
'How can I kill the girl that I loved once? I will not.'
'Then I will throw you in the river and so end your line of kings.'
'No. I can never kill the girl in whose delicate arms I slept.'
'Then at least cut my tail and I will take you beyond the river.'
'But people will laugh at us if they see me on a tailless camel.'
'Then let us both die and perish in this river.'

The sweet prince Dhola drew his sword and cut the camel's tail.
The two sisters fell with a great splash into the river.
'We are saved,' cried the camel. 'Now I will take you dancing to Garh Pingala.'
Then the camel sang to the two unhappy sisters,
'Take my tail and marry that. But never more will you see Dhola.
My sweet prince Dhola will lie stretching his limbs in Maru's lawful bed.'

Poor Rewa's heart is broken. Weeping she sings;
Weeping she takes her ornaments and throws them one by one into the river.
'Why should I any longer decorate my youthful body?
What is the use now of my dark and lonely bed?'
And the camel calls mockingly. 'Why throw away these ornaments?
Why not decorate my tail and marry that instead?'

They crossed the great river and entered the forest beyond.
As they went the camel trod upon a hidden sadhu.
He was covered by an ant-hill; nobody could see him.
But the camel kicked him and he cursed—that Dhola should be impotent.
The sweet prince Dhola got down from the camel to try to please the sadhu.
'O camel, go and feed in the blue mountains for six months.
I will serve the sadhu here and so remove the curse.'
When the sadhu heard him speak he was filled with pity,
For he thought of the little bride watching the road for her lover.
He opened one eye and the forest burst into flame.
'My son, you may go. My curse will only be for the *pitambar sari.*'

Dhola fell at his feet and they continued on their way.
As they approached Garh Pingala, the world burst into song.
A dried and barren cotton tree broke into green foliage.
An empty well by the roadside was suddenly full of water.
The people had been warned of the signs. Now they knew the prince had come.

Dhola stopped by the well to take his food. The camel slept among the flowers.
In a dream Maru was sleeping with her lord.
She waked; the bed was empty; and her eyes were full of tears.
'Do not weep my Maru, for I have seen the dry tree green;
I have seen the dry well brim with water.
We have no fuel, for the whole land is green. The sweet prince is somewhere near.'
Next day as the dew was falling on the fresh green leaves,
The young girls went to bathe. Maru sits on her lotus.
She rubs her thighs and body; she unbares her tender breasts.
The fragrant water falls still more fragrant from her body.
One of her handmaids wandered into the garden for some flowers.
There she saw an ugly camel lying among the jasmine.
Its legs destroyed the marigolds, its hump broke the sweet-smelling cassia.
Red red with anger the young girl approached unafraid.
She beat the sleeping camel and drove it from the place.
'May your ashes fly in the air and your widow beg for food.'
The sweet prince Dhola heard her and came running like a deer.
The camel called the girl his wife. 'Come I will show you what to do.'
She struck him on the ear with a green castor stick.
'Why do you beat my camel?' The girl trembled with temper.
'Is this your father's garden that you bring your camel here
To spoil the sweet-smelling cassia, to trample down the jasmine?
You stretch your legs and sleep, impotent, horse-faced fool that lives by pimping.'
The camel said, 'Go master, dip your whip in the well and beat her.'
Dhola dipped his whip in the water and struck her youthful body.
'In these flowers I'll bury you, for you have hit my camel.'
But the girl laughed with joy beneath the scented blows.
'Hit me again, hit harder. How sweet the blows taste?
Hit me again, how sweet your angry face is near me.
Your red red eyes are passionate with love,
And as you come near my heart jumps within my youthful body.

Bury me among the flowers, for if I die from such sweet blows,
I will go happy to the heaven of happiness.'

The sweet prince Dhola let her be and she ran back to Maru.
'There is a prince in the garden, whose very blows enchanted me.'
Maru told the girl to take food to the stranger.
'I will not go unless you send me in a decorated palanquin
And lend me your clothes and ornaments.'
The girl dressed in Maru's clothes and ornaments;
She sat in a palanquin of sandalwood; she went escorted by a great company
Of lovely maidens moving to the rhythm of the drums.
Dhola saw them coming and excited called to his camel,
'O camel, there comes my Rani with food and drink for me.'
'O master, you are as ignorant as the ghost of the jungle.
When it sees a necklace it supposes there is a god within it,
Yet the beads may be made of any wood and be full of poison.'
'What do you know, O eater of dirty grass and filth?
This is my Rani. Let us go to meet her.'
'She is no more your wife than the girl who beat me.
Do not eat the food she brings. I will go to graze
While you receive them and hear their news.'
When the girl came it was like the Madan Bazaar,
The bazaar to which the god of love used to come
Attended by the loveliest girls in all the world.
'O my lord, I am your Rani married to you in childhood.
Come eat from my hands.' But Dhola remembered the camel's warning.
He began to beat the girl and the camel hurried back.
'O master, have you taken the food of famine that she does not even cry?'
Dhola was angry now and held her by the hair;
He struck her on the nose and she fell senseless to the ground.

When she recovered the girl returned to Maru and said nothing.
'He will not eat from the hands of any other. He says it must be his own wedded wife.'
Maru's young body thrilled from head to delicate feet;

She laughed *much-much* with pleasure. 'My lord of love has come,
For my ancestors were full of merit and this has availed me.'
She sent her handmaids to fetch her younger sister Tariwan.

Tariwan came running, excited and eager little girl.
She had entered the state of womanhood but a year ago.
Her young face was shy and modest and she had covered her breasts,
But they were not full and the *sari* often slipped down.
She had heard about her brother-in-law day and night from her sister.
She was afraid to go to him. 'He may laugh at me.
He will be angry because you have not gone yourself.'
But Maru would not excuse her. 'How can I see him publicly
At our first meeting? No, you must go for me.'
So Tariwan surrounded by her handmaidens,
Seated in a palanquin of gold, with peacock feathers waved above,
Came to the garden and when Dhola saw her, he said,
'This time it must be my true Rani, camel.
This time I will certainly take food from her delicate hands.'
'No, no, you fool, this is not your Rani. It is her younger sister.
Do not accept food from her hands.' Thus spoke the camel.
'But what can I say to my wife's younger sister?
I will have to eat from her hands. How can I refuse?'
'Tell her that she smells like a goat and so you cannot eat.
For if you accept her food, your Maru will be hurt.'
From the golden palanquin dismounted the lovely Tariwan;
On plates of gold and silver dishes she brought the precious food.
'I may eat from your delicate hands, my lovely sister-in-law,
But alas, you smell like a goat and I cannot take the food.'
When the beautiful Tariwan heard these cruel words she ground her teeth in anger.
'Wait, Maru, I will beat you till every bone in your young body cracks.'
Like an angry tigress with red red eyes the girl returned;
She threw the food at Maru and cast the golden plates on the ground.

She wept in fury. 'That loose-lipped pimp has insulted me.
This monkey-faced, devourer of sixteen women—I will never give him food again.
Come and smell my young body. He must be a goat himself
To say my fragrance as of cassia smells rank like a goat.'
'Little sister, I am sorry. Go tell my father and he will punish him.'
The girl ran to her father and Maru chuckled *much-much-much.*
'My lord must love me, for he will only eat from my hands.'
Tariwan ran weeping to her father who was in his darbar.
'O my father, smell my body. Brother-in-law says it stinks like a goat.'
'No, no, my child, he is only teasing you.
He knows that in your babyhood there was no milk in your mother's breasts
And we had to feed you on the milk of goats. Do not be angry.'

Now the lovely princess Maru prepared to meet her lord.
She sent her chaprassis to call every woman in the town,
Every dancing drummer, every breathless trumpeter.
'If any girl remains behind, hiding inside her door,
I will skin her young body and stuff it with straw.
I will hang it on a mango branch and I will sell her flesh,
Weighing it bit by bit in the Sunday bazaar.'
Maru sent for every *sari* in the palace.
'I will wear this—no, perhaps, this one is better.
No, I will have the green one, or this with golden border.'
She cannot decide what to wear until one of her handmaidens
Reminds her of the *pitambar sari*, costly and beautiful,
So fine that rolled up it is kept in the hollow of a bamboo.
When it is taken out half the kingdom is alight with its lustre.
At last Maru is ready, shining in her *pitambar sari*,
Her hair oiled and bound tightly with gay-coloured ribbons.
In a golden plate she carries the articles of worship,
In another rich and costly food. Thus she starts to greet her husband.
She is going on foot in her eagerness, forgetful of weariness,
But her women stop her. 'Child, you have never walked out of the palace gate,

And now you must go a mile or more. Come, sit in the golden palanquin.'
But she refused. 'I must approach my lord on foot.'
As she came from the palace the women of the town were charmed.
'We have heard "Maru, Maru" with our ears since childhood
But we never saw her true loveliness before. Here is a goddess.
O our sweetest Maru, the sight of you has cleansed us of our sins.'
From afar the camel saw them coming. 'Rouse yourself, Dhola,
Your true wife is coming. Send for a new earthen pot.
Bid her draw water with a single thread and bathe you.'
When Maru came before him, she stood on one leg,
She took grass in her mouth like any low-caste beggar.
She worshipped him and fell at her lord's feet.
'Take this earthen pot, O Maru, and draw water with a single thread.'
Maru took the pot and lowered it, but the thread broke as she drew it up.
The girl laughed joyously, but when her master heard it,
He was beside himself with doubt and fear. 'My darling has betrayed me.
Were she a true virgin, the thread would never break. Yet she is not ashamed.'
Maru ran to him laughing and told him of the little boy,
Son of the Naik his friend, who watered in her lap,
Who stained her priceless *sari* and robbed her of her virtue.
She joined the broken thread and this time she could draw the water.
She bathed her lord, the sweet prince Dhola, with the clear water.

Now Dhola came to take his food, the priceless dishes Maru had prepared.
'No, no, my master, now it is your turn to be tested.
This is not the cheap food of chaprassis from the Sunday bazaar.
How do I know you are my lord? How do I know your heart is pure as mine?
Such food is not bought with cowries. It must be weighed in a Sonar's balance.

From this well flow one-and-twenty streams of water; turn them into one.'
Dhola took his bow and arrow; he shot at the streams,
From every side he sped his arrows to bring the streams together.
His hands were sore and swollen, but the streams flowed on divided.
'If I cannot join them I will cut off my arm.'
From afar the camel watched and chuckled *khad-khad*.
'O my sweet prince Dhola, are you in truth the son of Nala?
Will Raja Nala be proud when he hears this sorry tale?'
In despair Dhola ran to his camel and implored him,
'I swear that save for Rewa I have been to no other woman.'
'Go go and tell your Maru, confess your sin to her
And then the streams will join and your honour be saved.'
Poor Maru stood weeping. 'Why cannot my lord fulfil the test?
He has been wanton in Narurgarh, wanton above my suspicions.
Swear by your virtuous mother and your brave father
That you have been faithful and then the streams will join.'

Dhola tells his Maru of his enchantment by the flower-girl Rewa;
He tells her of his passion and the wise girl forgives him.
As he speaks the one-and-twenty streams unite in one.
When Dhola sees the rippling water he smiles
He shows his two-and-thirty teeth in white and sparkling joy.
He sits to take his food and after five mouthfuls,
He pushes his plate towards his Maru and she eats his leavings.

Maru went back to the palace; she ran like a young deer.
She found her father in his court and told him the happy news.
But the Raja was not ready to receive his son-in-law easily.
He must try him sternly before he admits him to the family.
Raja Ben sent his five bullies to bring Dhola's liver on a golden plate,
As if it were a lotus flower to be offered in worship.
But the Raja's heart was heavy; he went restlessly to and fro;

His eyes wandered round the palace as he wondered what would happen.
When the camel saw the bullies approach it too was afraid.
'I have never seen such fierce-looking villains in my life.'
It said to Dhola, 'Rouse yourself and fire your arrows at them.'
But at the first shot the arrow pierced all the five;
It went through two great mango trees and pierced the Victory Gate,
And fell at last at the feet of Raja Ben.
'This is my Dhola's arrow, for who else could send it there?
Now I will go and welcome my son-in-law to the house.'
So saying the Raja called his army and prepared the elephants and horses.
'If a single youth or old man stays indoors he will be hanged.
Let everyone come out to greet my sweet prince Dhola.
Let the guns be fired and the fireworks sparkle in the sky.'

When it saw the army coming the camel fell to the ground.
It was time for it to do its Neng and obtain its reward.
'Why are you in distress, my camel, my true friend?
Without you I would never have seen Maru my lawful love.'
'For twelve years the animals in your stables have eaten ghee and channa,
But you have not once cut grass for me or fed me fondly with your hand.
But now I must lead the happy procession to the palace.
Tie round my neck a silken cord and sounding bells on my feet,
Then I will go dancing dancing and lead you to the palace.'
But sweet prince Dhola's face grew small with anxiety.
'I am a stranger here. Where can I find such things?'
'I know where these ornaments are hidden. Mount me and I will take you.
When your father fell into adversity he hid his wealth
In a great grain-bin where it might remain for you.'
The camel took Dhola in search of the grain-bin.
And when they found it the camel told Dhola to put it in his hand.
But there was a black cobra there guarding the great treasure
And when it saw the hand come creeping in, it bit it.
'Fall quickly at its feet, for all these years

It has served you guarding the treasure. Worship the cobra and you will be well.'
The sweet prince Dhola worshipped the black cobra and took no harm.
They took out the treasure and rode back to the camp.

Dhola tied round the camel's neck a silken thread.
He put bells about its feet; its dancing cannot be described.
Dancing dancing the camel led the way back to the palace.
When evening came the handmaidens gathered round the princess Maru.
They made her ready to go to the chamber of her lord.
They had hung a score of lamps whose light filled the room with lustre;
The bed was made of scented flowers of every kind.
'Tonight you will not even think of us as you lie in his arms.
Do let us watch you secretly. For when those delicate hands
Press his tired and longing limbs we would see how he responds.
If we watch we will at least get joy through our eyes.
Do not look down so shyly, for you will but lie passively.
It is he who must work upon you; he will not know we are watching.'

When Maru entered her lord's chamber with scented oils
And all the articles of love, she found him
Like a hungry tiger pacing up and down.
Alas, to please him she had put on the cursed *pitambar sari*.
He lay down on the bed of flowers, alas the sweet prince Dhola!
With scented oil she smeared his tired and longing limbs.
With delicate hands she pressed them, with tender fondling.
Alas the sweet prince Dhola had no strength and lay still.
'Are you angry, my lord, that you will not say a word to me?
Has not your Maru proved to you her purity?
Has she not waited twelve years for the rapture of your embrace?
Then why, my lord, do you lie so quiet and do not approach me?'
Ashamed and anxious the poor Dhola lay still and quiet.
'How can I tell my woe? What magic has befallen me?
How can I explain to her the despair of heart and body?'
'My lord, the bed is of true sandalwood.

The diamonds blazing at each corner are also true.
The scented flowers are from my own palace garden.
There is no fault or stain, my prince,
Yet all is mud and darkness if you cannot make love to me.'
Day after day she soothed his limbs with scented oil.
Day after day she whispered to him her sweet koel-words.
For a long week she tried to rouse him, but her prince lay still.
Then in a rage she went to her father Raja Ben.
'My father, send this son-in-law of yours to work in the fields;
Work him so hard that he will be dry as a spider.'
'My daughter, where can I find a better son-in-law in all the world?'
'If you will not send him away I will take poison and die.'
The Raja thought in his mind and sent for the camel.
'Take away Dhola and put him to work in the channa field.
I love him more than I can say, but my daughter will not have him.
I have no son and I know not who will fill my throne after my death.'
'Do not distress yourself, my Raja. I know what is the trouble.
I will soon remove the cause of Maru's unhappiness.'
The camel went to the sad unhappy Dhola.
'Do as the Raja says. Take food with you for a fortnight.
Take your bow and arrow and guard the channa field.'
He fights with bears and tigers and the Dano of the field.
The ghosts and spirits try to kill him, but he conquers every one.
After eight days the Raja comes to see if Dhola is alive.
He comes riding on his elephant to bring him to the palace.
But the camel has covered itself in a great tiger's skin;
It hides behind a bush and the elephant runs away for fear.
Raja Ben is afraid, 'Surely my son-in-law is dead.'
But the camel throws away the skin and takes Dhola on its back.
It takes him to the palace and the handmaidens bathe it
With hot and cold water and feed it on ghee and channa.
The camel laughs *much-much* with pleasure and says in its mind,
'Now while I am happy and enjoy great honour, let me go to the Upper World.'

Maru's heart was touched with pity; her life was tethered to her prince.
She called him again to her and lay with him on a bed of flowers.
But she wore the cursed *sari* and her prince lay still and passive.
She jumped up in a rage and sent the poisonous cobra to him.
But he killed the deadly creature, yet he could not kill his fate.
Now for four-and-twenty days their young bodies have been tortured.
Their strong desiring limbs have been stretched apart.
On every side is water and yet they die of thirst.
So now at last Maru in her frenzy decides to kill her lord.
She sends for the court butcher and tells him to bring Dhola's eyes and liver.
But the camel hears of it and tells the craven butcher
To bring the eyes and liver of a goat and give them to Maru.
When she sees them Maru laughs. 'Now I am free of this corpse.
Who would live with an impotent husband? Now he is a corpse indeed.'

But the camel took Dhola to the grain-bin where his father's wealth was stored.
Here they hid for four days among the dirt and dust.
In her scented bed of flowers Maru stretched her limbs and slept.
But a pihu bird awoke her and her mind was filled with Dhola.
She wept aloud and when the dawn came she went to kill the butcher.
Then he told her the truth, that her lord was not dead.
At midnight Maru went, on a night of storm and rain
With a few handmaidens through the dark on foot in the storm.
She had a lamp in an earthen pot with seven holes,
But that was all their light and the rain drenched their bodies.
The camel saw them coming in the flickering light.
Their *saris* clung about their bodies and their youthful beauty shone.
'Now at last your Rani comes and tonight you will be happy.'
But Dhola did not want to meet her and climbed onto the cross-beam.

The camel greeted the princess Maru. 'Now remove your *pitambar sari*.
It is the cause of all your woe. Put on a plain white cloth.
Take sandal oil and with your delicate hands massage your husband.'

They lie down together on the ground behind the grain-bin.
There is no bed of scented flowers, there are no shining diamonds.
With the sweet oil Maru massages Dhola's weary longing limbs.
All the love denied to them comes surging in their bodies.
He loves her breathlessly, and panting on her heart
Lies as if lost in a new world of joy and blessing.
But first as with her delicate hands she presses his aching limbs,
He strikes her suddenly with a sharp blow of passion.
With anxious eyes she looks with longing at him, and forgets the blow.
He too forgets at once and stretches out his hand to pick the lemons of her tree.
He eats them both and his mouth is full of nectar.
He passes through the mango grove to the little secret well;
Parting the grasses by the mouth he lets down his silver bucket.
O never was a sweeter bucket, never purer water!
How short the night was, and their enemy the dawn drew near.
'O master, I am tired. You have pounded me till I am soft as a seedless mango.
There is no juice left in me. Now let me sleep a little.'

When the cock crew they were slumbering side by side,
Exhausted and unconcerned, not caring for the world.
The handmaidens walked up and down, not knowing what to do.
'Should we wake them or let them be? If we disturb them they may be angry.'
But at last one went behind the bin and shook the sleeping Maru.
'The sun has risen a bamboo's length above the sky,
And we are miles away from home. Our people will be anxious.

As we go home there is not one who will not laugh at us.'
Maru sprang up, but her legs trembled and she could not stand,
Like an old woman whose legs have toiled long in the fields.
Sister, what has happened? Why do you look so tired?'
'Die, you girl, I will slap your flower-face. I will not have you mock me.'
But the girl laughed and ran to tell the others what had happened.
The sun came up and Maru went down to the lake to bathe.
She washed the *pitambar sari* and spread it out to dry.
The camel came behind and ate it to remove the curse.
With joy Maru went to Raja Ben and said,
'O father now bring back your son-in-law with pomp,
For I misjudged him and troubled him without cause.'

That day there was a festival such as only the greatest cities know.
The guns roared so continuously that it was like the early days of June.
Most honoured and flattered of all was the camel which had helped everyone.
It danced as joyfully as a girl before her lover,
Like the long-tailed peacocks in the moonlight.
But Tariwan was burnt with the flame of jealousy.
She knew the arts of witchcraft; she had many Jugti Mohini.
'I will turn his love from Maru and if he does not come to me,
I will kill them and take their lives from their bodies.'
That night she went to her father and said to him with tears,
'If you do not marry me to him I will kill myself before dawn.
I will take poison and will fall dead in your palace.'

Raja Ben called for Dhola and told him how the young girl desired him.
'Let me ask the faithful camel. How can I marry her?
In a single sheath who can put a double sword?'
But the camel laughed at him. 'Why do you deceive yourself?
You long to have the girl. And how can you refuse the Raja?'

So that very night they were married and Dhola took the girl to his bed.
The lamps burnt brightly round them, they lay on a couch of flowers.
The rain came down in torrents, it thundered overhead.
The storm burst about the girl, she bent before the wind.
At midnight Maru came, creeping softly into the room.
Tariwan lay sleeping in exhausted slumber.
'Come my Raja come, for I have learnt my sister's secret.
She is a witch learned in all the arts of magic, and she desires to separate us.
Come let us run away to my father-in-law's kingdom,
Across the shining river where we will be safe.'

When Dhola heard her word he rose from the bed.
He left the sleeping Tariwan without a backward glance.
His heart was full of fear for he had possessed a witch's body.
Maru and sweet prince Dhola mounted the camel and escaped.
But Tariwan awoke and pursued them as an eagle.
She found them by the river, but they crossed the shining water.
On the far side was Rewa, dark with anger and revenge.
But when she saw Tariwan she too became an eagle.
She forgot Dhola and Maru; she flew to attack Tariwan.
The eagles flew into the air, midway across the river.
They wheeled and swerved with beating wings, with their claws they tore each other.
Breathless Maru and Dhola watched them, but the camel said,
'One of them will kill the other and then she will destroy us.
Come kill them both and they can do us no further harm.'
Dhola fired his arrow and cut off their heads,
But bodies and heads wheeled round and round and soon joined up again.
'No, shoot them through their bodies so they will fall in the river.'
Dhola listened to the camel, and the two eagles fell into the river.
There was no more life for them; the stream carried them away.

'There is no joy like the joy of remaining in one's caste,
The joy of keeping all the laws, of being faithful to the ancestors.
The moon is beautiful by night, by day it is unseen.'

So said the virtuous camel, as it saw the death of its enemies.
Maru gazed with passionate love on the sweet prince Dhola.
'O master, at this very spot let the drums of victory sound.
Let us go on to your kingdom, for in all the four corners of the world
We have nothing now to fear; there is nothing now but love.'

Now for eight days and nine nights the two lovers travelled on,
Borne by their faithful camel. They knew hunger, thirst and heat,
But in the joy of their love they forgot all earthly things.
Like clear water from the stream in the early dawn,
Before a breeze has ruffled it or a bird flies overhead
Was the love of Maru and the sweet prince Dhola.

Old Raja Nala, withered as a ghost, was beside himself with joy;
And Dhola's mother gave away every ornament she had.
There was not a widow without a gold neckband round her throat.
There was not a poor peasant in whose court a horse was not tied,
Or in whose shed there were not bullocks.
The rich came on their decorated elephants, the poor
Came out with scented garlands to welcome Dhola home.
Raja Nala came to greet him, 'My son, my only son,
My very life, now I put you on the throne.
From today my one delight will be to watch you rule,
And your mother's one delight will be to watch her daughter-in-law,
To see how well she keeps the palace and plays with our grandchildren.'

Victory to Raja Nala!
Victory to the household gods of Narurgarh!
Victory to the sweet prince Dhola!
Victory to his fair Rani Maru!
May they live and rule from age to age!

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX ONE

A GLOSS
ON THE ORIGIN AND TECHNIQUE OF THE SONGS

THESE notes give in each case the place of origin of the song, the caste or tribe of its narrator and its classification. In a few cases I have added notes, additional to those in the next, which illustrate the metrical or rhyme technique. It is necessary to emphasize that because a song is attributed to a certain caste in a certain area, it does not mean that it is confined to that caste or that area. Many of the songs are the common property of different peoples in widely scattered places.

I have generally referred to Tahsils and Zamindaris rather than to Districts, since this gives a more exact geographical reference. The three main Districts of Chhattisgarh are divided as follows:—

DISTRICT	TAHSIL
Raipur	Baloda Bazaar Dhamtari Mahasamund Raipur
Bilaspur	Bilaspur Janjgir Katghora Mungeli
Drug	Bemetara Drug Sanjari-Balod

But there is a further sub-division of some of the Tahsils into Zamindaris. In the Raipur District the following are the more important estates:

In the Mahasamund Tahsil,
Bindra-Nawagarh
Fingeshwar
Kauria
Khariar (now transferred to Orissa)
Narra
Phuljhar
Saurmar

In the Baloda Bazaar Tahsil,
Bhatgaon-Katgi
Bilaigarh
Deori.

In the Bilaspur District, there are the Satgarh Zamindaris (all Partially Excluded):

In the Bilaspur Tahsil,
Kenda
Pendra

In the Katghora Tahsil,
Chhuri
Korba
Lapha
Matin
Uprora

And the Zamindaris of the open country:

In the Bilaspur Tahsil,
Champa

In the Mungeli Tahsil,
Kanteli
Pandaria.

In the Drug District are the Zamindaris classed as Partially Excluded: all these are in the Sanjari-Balod Tahsil.
Ambagarh-Chauki
Aundhi
Korach
Panabaras

And the even more aboriginal Zamindari which was not 'Excluded':
Dondi-Lohara.

It was obviously impossible, and there was no particular point, in trying to make this book geographically complete and, as a glance at the following list will show, a number of areas are unrepresented. The area most fully exploited is the Bilaspur District, and there are songs from each of the Satgarh Zamindaris. The Drug District has been laid under lighter contribution than the other Districts, but Raipur is well represented and in particular

the wild Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari has been explored and from it have come some interesting additions to Indian folk-poetry.

The Beginning of Life

Pregnancy Songs

1. Panka song, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil.

2. Satnami 'lucky birth' song, from Rajpalpur, Mungeli Tahsil.

Line 7. *Sat ke nāh sabad kirawariya surta ke bās.* These words have a mysterious import, especially to persons who cannot read or write. *Sat* is 'truth': *sabad* is 'word': *surta* is 'memory'.

Line 14. *Sat ma diwāl rangāy.* 'With truth she coloured the walls (the mother's body)'; in other words, she was a true wife and the child was her own husband's.

Some Maratha Lavani songs give 'graphic descriptions of the life of the Maratha lady during pregnancy and the various ceremonies performed during pregnancy'—Dinanath Rao, 486.

Delivery Songs

3. Gond song, from Kotmarra, Matin Zamindari.

4. Baiga song, from Lamni, Bilaspur District.

5. Gond song, from Kharenadih, Lapha Zamindari.

6. Panka Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. The references to Suin, Nai and Dhobi in these songs are typical of the Chhattisgarh plain. The true aboriginals do not generally employ either midwife, barber or washerman; they do the work themselves and even penalize anyone who calls in a midwife.

7. Kawar Sohar song used 'to cheer up the mother after delivery', from Dumarkachhar, Lapha Zamindari.

8. Satnami Chhohar Mangal song, from Rajpalpur, Mungeli Tahsil.

Cradle Songs

9. Gond cradle song, from Khaloli, Khariar Zamindari.

Line 5. *Sughar sughar ānkhi kān sughar tor dānt*—a pretty line.

10. Ganda song, from Mangli, Mungeli Tahsil. This song is rhymed throughout.

Thunug munug dhāri
Ghutku banjāri
Phua gay bhāta bāri
Le gay phekāri
Daudo re kāka bāri
Phua re gohāri
Digi digi digi digi.

11. Halba song, from Khartuli, Drug District.

Line 11. The word translated 'yoke-mate' is *jāwār-jora.* See note in *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills,* 240.

12. Pardhan song, from Sarbahara, Pendra Zamindari.

Tattooing Songs

13. Panka Dadaria, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil. Here is the old joke about *godna* and *chodna*.

14. Panka Dadaria, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil.

15-16. Gond songs, from Chatari, Mungeli Tahsil.

17. Binjhwar song, from Phuljhar Zamindari.

Songs of the Menarche

18. Kahar song, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil.

19. Halba song, from Khaira, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari.

20. Gond song, from Bharatpur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

21. Dhanwar song, from Barbhata, Uprora Zamindari.

Love and the Approach to Marriage

The Nature of Love

22. Gond Lahaki Karma, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. *Māya kathin hāwe tola nahi bisarāwe*: this refrain,

> Love is a hard thing
> You cannot forget it,

comes after every line.

23. Panka Lahaki Karma, from Barbhata, Bilaspur Tahsil.

Line 4. *Kusum sāri* is a sari of a beautiful colour.

Line 5. *Chhit* is cloth stamped or woven with coloured patterns.

24. Kurmi Dadaria, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

25. Ahir Dadaria, from Belha, Bilaspur Tahsil. A rhyming Dadaria:

> *Sāja ke khura sarai patiya*
> *Ghungarāhin tor khatiya bajāhu ratiya.*

Note the internal rhyme in the second line. The references to saja and sarai wood, the strongest used by the people, suggest that however roughly the bed is used it will not break. Moreover saja and sarai are often regarded as husband and wife and are thus doubly appropriate here.

26. Ganda Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. The song has a pretty refrain—

> *Eh he hay ga sejariya māre*
> *Hogay andiyariya sejariya māre.*

27. Gond Dadaria, from Pandritalao, Mungeli Tahsil. I have translated the original *ras* as nectar: see note on p. 257.

28. Gond Dadaria, from Pandritalao, Mungeli Tahsil. Chiknimuhi village: the village where the youths have handsome (*chikni*) faces.

29. Ahir Bas-Git (Flute song), from Dodki, Bilaspur Tahsil.

30. Halba song, from Bastar State. With the 'little nut-tree' compare the Bengali saying:

'There is a tree which has no branches and no leaves. It bears the treasure of one solitary flower. It is the tree of love.'—Sen, ii, 12.

31. Ahir Karma, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.

32. Pardhan Lahaki Karma, from Sarbahara, Pendra Zamindari.

33. Gond Karma, from Majhwani, Kenda Zamindari. Lines 4-7:

Agu janmis dharti māta pāchhu manukh chola
Thaor thaor ma khila mare hai samajh nahi hai tola.

The reference is to the nails which held the world in place at the beginning, and those which even now are driven to protect the village boundaries.

34. Gond Karma, from Majhwani, Kenda Zamindari.

35. Gond Karma, from Dhaurabhata, Pendra Zamindari.

36. Satnami Sua song, from Singarpur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The keonra is the sweet-smelling *pandanus odoratissimus*.

37. Gond Karma, from Pehanda, Kenda Zamindari.

38. Gond Karma, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil. And, far cry as it is from the Gond peasant to Thomas Hardy, we may also compare:

The grey gaunt days dividing us in twain
Seemed hopeless hills my strength must faint to climb,
But they are gone; and now I would detain
The few clock-beats that part us; reign back Time.

39. Satnami Karma, from Nawagaon, Mungeli Tahsil.

40. Kamar 'Bride's Mourning' song, from Bilaijor, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

41. Panka Karma, from Pandritalao, Mungeli Tahsil. C. Day Lewis uses the arrow simile effectively in his poem 'The Hunter's Game'; the first stanza is:

I am an arrow, I am a bow—
The bow sings fierce and deep,
The arrow's tipped with cruel flame,
Feathered with passionate sleep.
When you play the hunter's game,
I am your arrow and your bow.

The meaning of lines 3-6 seems to be that when haldi (turmeric) is put in a dish of curry and cooked with garlic, the food is very tasty, but too much chilly spoils it. So the two lovers mix like haldi and garlic so long as no tale-bearer or scandal-monger comes to spoil their union.

42. Panka Karma, from Tehka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

43. Kurmi Dadaria, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

44. Gond Karma, from Bhaskura, Bilaspur Tahsil. The rough 'dry' rhythm of the Karma refrains, often in sharp contrast to the meretricious smoothness of the Dadaria, is well illustrated here—

Nim tari aisa tiriya khare naina dono dhāra lage.

45. Pardhan Lahaki Karma, from Sarbahara, Pendra Zamindari. The opening line is—

Ghola re ghola chândi ke ghol ghola.

46. Binjhwar Karma, from Phuljhar Zamindari.

Assignation

47. Gond Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

48. Kewat song, from Tendubhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

49. Gond Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari. Parts of this song go with a fine swing.

Mola sang debe ga mahua binela bai sang debe re
Amli phare koki koki jāmun phare kariya
Kera phare ghan ghera mola sang debe ga
Mahua binela bai sang debe re.

The technique of this little poem, which is typical of the Karma songs, will repay careful study.

50. Panka Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. *Pāpi rāt*, 'night of sin'; *rangmahal*, 'coloured palace'.

51-2. Teli Dadaria, from Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

53. Panka Dadaria, from Bhaskura, Bilaspur Tahsil.

54. Gond Dadaria, from Daonjara, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

55. Gond Dadaria, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil.

56. Gond song, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

57. Kamar Marriage song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

58. Teli Dadaria, from Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

59. Ganda Dadaria, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. The original is:

Lāli hoke āja gulāli hoke ao
Mor baiha ke palang ma chiraiya hoke ao
Mor baiha ke palang ma re dos.

60. Ahir Bas-Git (Flute Song), from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari. The opening lines—

Tilli baran tor tilli dikhtai
Gungchi baran tor daiha hai—

refer presumably to the lighter kind of sesamum seed. The *gungchi*, the 'red seed', is a bright red seed with a black tip used as a weight by blacksmiths. This pretty seed, which is weighed against gold and with which it is impossible to cheat, is a useful symbol for the true lover. Compare the Ao Naga theme: 'My lover is like the finest bead on the necks of all the men of all the world.'

61. Gond Dadaria, from Mohka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

62. Teli Dadaria, from Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. Original—

Sone katorala phordāre
Tor masti jawānila kaha todāre
Masti re dos.

A literal translation would be 'smashed' or 'broke your youth to pieces'. *Masti* is used of the careless freedom of exuberant childhood, but also of the periodic rut of elephants. *Masti jawāni*, which has given me a lot of trouble, appears therefore in this poem as 'lusty youth'. Compare Keats' 'lusty flower in June's caress'.

63. Gond Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

Dreams

64. Panka Karma, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

65. Dhanwar Dadaria song, from Barbhata, Uprora Zamindari. Original—

Sone singhuliya ke rupe ke dhakna
Chhin ābe chhin jābe de debe sapna.

The *singhuliya* is a small casket used in a wedding to hold vermilion. The half-rhyme *dhakna* and *sapna* is characteristic.

66. Panka Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. The bed here is *dasna*, meaning bedding that is spread on the ground, and the word emphasizes the picture of desolation—the neglected lonely bed on the floor and the glorious unsubstantial dream hovering above it.

67. Panka Dadaria, from Karar, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

68. Panka Karma, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

69. Panka Lahaki Karma, from Meduka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

70. Panka Karma, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil.

Beauty

71. Ahir Karma, from Kharenadih, Lapha Zamindari.

72. Panka Karma, from Dullupur, Mungeli Tahsil.

73. Gond Lahaki Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari. The description in the text may have a literary origin. The account of the Nag Patana in her human form given by the fifteenth-century Oriya poem, *Rasakallola*, which itself probably uses conventional forms, is suspiciously parallel.

Her black wavy hair knotting in a knot
A garland of lovely flowers she has mingled in it;
On her brow a round mark of vermilion,
With her glance she is ravishing Siva;
In her ear the *tataka*, *bhramari* and flowers shine;
On her neck the necklace fascinates the mind;
Dyeing her lip with betelnut juice . . .

And so on through a long catalogue of physical and ornamental charms. See J. Beames, 'Notes on the Rasakallola', *The Indian Antiquary*, i, 294.

74. Pardhan Karma, from Bilaspur District.
75. Teli Dadaria, from Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
76. Dewar Karma, from Semra, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The first line runs:

Naina jognin ghunghru bālam tola khule rahe re.

77. Mahali Asur Karma, from Lapha Zamindari.
78. Panka Karma, from Nawagaon, Bilaspur Tahsil. There is a curious and striking reference to the breasts in a Bhojpuri song recorded by Devendra Satyarthi (*New Review*, xv, 475).

In one forest an ant moves about,
In one forest a cow moves about,
In one forest moves about the daughter of an Ahir woman
With bells fastened on her breasts.

Hair

79. Gond Karma, from Kukribahara, Uprora Zamindari.
80. Halba song, from Khaira, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari.
81. Pardhan Karma, from Bilaspur District. Compare lines by the early Italian poet Fazio Degli Uberti, translated by D. G. Rossetti.

I look at the crisp golden-threaded hair
Whereof, to thrall my heart, Love twists a net:
Using at times a string of pearls for bait,
And sometimes with a single rose therein.

The Diamond

82. Ganda Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil. I have not been able to reproduce the charm of the original opening lines:

Hālai dolai ho hālai dolai ga
Bich gali ma mor hira
Hālai dolai re.

The Hunchback

83. Gond Saila, from Dhaurabhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

The Dancing Horse

84. Pardhan Karma, from Marmara, Mungeli Tahsil.
85. Kamar song, used at a betrothal, from Bodachhapar, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

The Kite

86. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

The Cloud

87. Ahir Bas-Git, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.
88. Gond Karma, from Dondki, Bilaspur Tahsil. With this use

of the wind-imagery, compare Ezra Pound's 'Speech for Psyche in the Golden Book of Apuleius' in his *Personae*—

> All night and as the wind lieth among
> The cypress trees, he lay,
> Nor held me save as air that brusheth by one
> Close, and as the petals of flowers in falling
> Waver and seem not drawn to earth, so he
> Seemed over me to hover light as leaves
> And closer me than air . . .
> O winds, what wind can match the weight of him.

89. Gond Karma, from Dondki, Bilaspur Tahsil.

90. Gond Dadaria, from Parsatola, Mungeli Tahsil. The original runs:

> *Sarag ma garjay kāri baduliya*
> *Bhoru ma garjay nāg*
> *Daso anguriya joban ma to garjay*
> *Chara ma to garjay bāgh*
> *Daso anguriya joban ma to garjay re dos.*

91. Panka Dadaria, from Tehaka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The original is:

> *Ugti unoray dakhin barse*
> *Tor chadti jamāni dosdāri agtn barse*
> *Tor chadti re dos.*

The Bee

92. Gond song, from Chatari, Mungeli Tahsil.

93. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

94. Satnami song, from Nawagaon, Mungeli Tahsil.

95. Kamar song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

96. Binjhwar song, from Phuljhar Zamindari. The picture of bees in the *Panchatantra* is curiously different.

> 'The bees pursue the quick-flowing liquid on the borders of the cheeks of rutting elephants, eager to taste the fresh sweet juice; but when they fall to the ground with limbs crushed by the tossing gusts of wind from the fan-like ears of the elephants, then they remember how they played in the cups of the lotuses.'
> —F. E. EDGERTON, *The Panchatantra Reconstructed* (New Haven, 1924), ii, 307.

The Spider

97. Kahar Karma, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil.

The Earth

98. Kahar Karma, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil.

99. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

The Lamp

100. Gond Dadaria, from Dhamtari Tahsil. The lamp symbol

was never more beautifully used than by Milton, writing of the marriage bed:

> Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
> His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
> Reigns here and revels.

Compare also lines from a Mussalman marriage song (Crooke, *The Indian Antiquary*, lv, 196)—

> Hear O earthen lamp: hear my prayer.
> Tonight I meet my husband: do thou burn
> all night.
> I have become the devotee of my love.

101. Gond Karma, from Chhuri Zamindari.
102. Baiga Karma, from Kamti, Pandaria Zamindari.

Golden Love

103. Bhaina Karma, from Talaidabra, Bilaspur District.
104. Baiga Karma, from Kamti, Pandaria Zamindari. According to Temple (*Panjab Notes and Queries*, 1883), the Lalbegi sweepers had peculiar initiatory rites called Kursi, with verses celebrating the different ages of the world. The Kursi of the Golden Age was as follows:

> Golden pitcher: golden pot:
> Golden horse: golden dress:
> Golden key: golden lock:
> Golden door: put in the key: open the door!
> See the figure of the Dada Pir.

MARRIAGE

Kamar Marriage Songs

105-108. Kamar marriage songs, from villages in the Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.
109-10. Kamar marriage songs, from Bilaijor, Khariar Zamindari.
111-12. Kamar marriage songs, from Dharamsagar, Khariar Zamindari.
113-14. Kamar marriage songs, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.
115-19. Kamar marriage songs, from Belsodha, Khariar Zamindari.
120-55. Kamar marriage songs, from villages in the Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

Bhunjia Marriage Songs

156-7. From Kathiya, Khariar Zamindari.
158-9. From Gharodh, Khariar Zamindari.
160. From Belsodha, Khariar Zamindari.

161. From Kathiya, Khariar Zamindari. The opening words are *Sāwan ma sāwa phule bhadon ma kāsi,* a phrase which constantly recurs in Dadaria, partly because *kāsi* makes such a convenient rhyme for *bāsi,* the food left over from the evening meal and taken the next morning. The punning association *Sāwan ma sāwa phule,* which another style would avoid (as if one would write 'In June blooms the juniper'), delights these rural singers, who are still in the stage, which we ourselves have not long outgrown, where is a thing capable of giving artistic pleasure.

Panka Biraha

162-3. From Parsatola, Mungeli Tahsil.

Gond Biraha

164-9. From Raipur District.

Gawan

170. Gond Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

Husband and Wife

The New Bride

171. Gond Dadaria, from Parsatola, Mungeli Tahsil. The 'new bride' in the original is *gaunāhi daiki,* the girl who has been brought to her husband's house for the consummation of her marriage: the actual wedding ceremony may have been performed long before.

172. Gond Dadaria, from Parsatola, Mungeli Tahsil.

173. Kamar marriage song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

174. Pardhan Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

175. Pardhan Dadaria, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

176. Kamar marriage song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari. The original is:

Tor nān chhāti ka bhoki bhoka mohariya
Gajab bhoki bhoka
Duno jāngha bich gute ānkho riso boti.

177. Kamar marriage song, from Bamhni, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

178. Satnami Tamasha song, from Taurbahara, Mahasamund Tahsil.

179. Gond Sajani song, from Loharakot, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Riddles

180. Binjhwar riddle, from Phuljhar Zamindari.

181. Pardhan riddle, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

The Barren Wife

182-4. Panka Dadaria, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil.

In No. 183 the expression is *'karam hai gandiya'—gandu* being

the common word for a eunuch; in No. 184 the word is '*abhāgi*', unlucky—and Fate is hostile.

The Impotent Husband

185-90. Panka Dadaria, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil.

191. Gond Dadaria, from Parsatola, Mungeli Tahsil. A short Dadaria of typical form:

Man hai chanchal dil hai udās
Jal bhitar ma khara hoke marathu pyās.

192. The wild cucumber is the *indravan* (*cucumis colocynthis*), an obvious male symbol, which looks attractive enough but tastes so bitter that people avoid it.

193-4. Satnami Dadaria, from Taurbahara, Mahasamund Tahsil.

The Jealous Husband

195. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

196. Kurmi song, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

197. Gond Lahaki Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

198. Gond Karma, from Harratola, Kenda Zamindari.

Polygamy

199. Panka Dadaria, from Dhaurabhata, Bilaspur Tahsil. But another interpretation is possible. It needs a man strong as an elephant to embark on that dance with two or more partners which we call polygamy. To the Western reader the elephant is hardly a romantic symbol. Yet in ancient India 'it is the association of a male and female elephant which seems to typify all romantic associations. Ravana surrounded by his wives looked like a male elephant surrounded by female ones in a forest. On hearing of Dasaratha's death, his wives screamed like female elephants in a forest when the leader of the herd has gone astray. Sita separated from Rama was like a female elephant separated from its male. This idea persists throughout the history of Sanskrit literature'.—K. A. S. Aiyar, *The Journal of Oriental Research*, 1929, 344.

200. Gond Dadaria, from Mangli, Mungeli Tahsil.

201. Gond Dadaria, from Mangli, Mungeli Tahsil. The original is as concise as a proverb:

Bāre bihāti apan manke
Ab hogay re sautiya aur jhan ke
Ab hogay re sautiya re dos.

202. A common saying or catch known in many parts of the country. The original is neat:

Tai rāni mai rāni
Kon bharai pāni?

202. Dhanwar Dadaria, from Baira, Matin Zamindari.

203. Panka Dadaria, from Mangli, Mungeli Tahsil. The word 'widow' is here used abusively and is not to be taken literally.

204. Panka Dadaria, from Mangli, Mungeli Tahsil.

205. Kurmi Dadaria, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

206. Gond Dadaria, from Phuljhar Zamindari.

207. Gond Dadaria, from Phuljhar Zamindari.

208. Agaria Karma, from Pendra Road, Pendra Zamindari.

Dewar and Bhauji

209. Kurmi Sua song, from Bharatpur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. 'Sleep will come swaying': *jhumari jhumari āway nind re.*

210. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

211. Panka Ghor-Git (Joking song), from Semra, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. Line 3. *Bhauji ke nao mor aisan taisan bhaiya ke nao khorbahara.* The expression *aisan taisan* is generally used to cover some obscene word that must not be used in the presence, say, of a tabooed relative. Khorbahara means a sweeper.

212. Panka Karma, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

213. Dhanwar Karma, from Baira, Matin Zamindari. This song describes the feelings of a young bride recently come to her husband's house and feeling rather overwhelmed by her relations and the laws of jesting and avoidance that must be observed. 'It is better to have a flat nose than be youngest in a family'—for you have to avoid everyone and listen to everyone's conversation.

214. A Dewar song from Bilaspur Tahsil. It is quoted from Shamrao Hivale's article 'The Dewar-Bhauji Relationship', *Man in India,* xxiii, 159.

Life in the Farm

Songs about Grain

215. Pardhan Laru Girgitwa song, from Bahabal, Kenda Zamindari. This song makes fun of the Hindu ascetic who must be vegetarian. He is offered *phiphli dāl,* which is a fine pulse so called because its lentils are thin as the wings of butterflies. But *phiphli dāl* can also mean a concoction of butterflies, which would be neither vegetarian nor eatable and is thus, in Pardhan humour, fit to be offered to the ascetic.

216. Gond Karma, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

217. Gond Karma, from Kansari, Mungeli Tahsil.

218. Ahir Bas-Git, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.

219. Ahir Bas-Git, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil. The irregular form characteristic of the Bas-Git is here exemplified:

Dhān kahe mai bahra ma upjao
Ke kodon kahe awal kanhār ho
Kutki kahe mola bharra ma bode dāda
Mai nahi khojan panihār ho.

220. Ahir Bas-Git, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.

221. Panka song, from Deori, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The opening line is '*Anno ke gati nyāri nyāri ji, tore charan ke balihāri*', which suggests mankind touching the feet of the different grains, but may also be translated, 'We are prostrate beneath your feet.' In contrast to the humility of human beings, we have kodon smiling with self-satisfaction and kutki swaggering about. The Gond only becomes proud or insolent (*garrāna*, perhaps, 'to show off') when he eats maize gruel with gram shoots.

222. Satnami song, from Pandritalao, Mungeli Tahsil.

223. Gond Karma, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The meaning of this rather obscure song is that nothing (except rice) will grow in a water-logged hollow, but that when this is filled in all sorts of wild vegetable spring up for the farmer's benefit.

A Padki Weeding Song

224. Gond 'Padki' Weeding song, from Bahabal, Kenda Zamindari.

A Halba Weeding Song

225. Halba Weeding Song, from Bhedi, Drug District. The Jugti-Mohani, who play so important a part in the narrative, are invisible beings of considerable power. The word Jugti seems to be *yukti*, a trick, and Mohani is commonly used of a love-charm which enchants its victim. Jugti-Mohani, therefore, are enchanters who can do conjuring tricks. In the old days, when gods lived like men on the earth, and died like men, the Jugti-Mohani had the power of reviving them and restoring them to life. Hence they are sometimes called 'gods of the gods'.

A Reaping Song

226. Halba Reaping song, from Drug District. 'Wanton boy': *chhaila*.

Songs of the Threshing-Floor

227. Gond song, from Dhamtari Tahsil.

228. Dhanwar song, from Rawa, Uprora Zamindari.

229-30. Gond songs, from Kansari, Mungeli Tahsil.

231. Gond song, from Kansari, Mungeli Tahsil. The weakest and slowest bullock is tied near the pole; the strongest of the team is on the outside and has the farthest to go.

232. Gond Karma, from Kodna, Drug District. This is a taunt song exchanged between the Kalariha, the thresher who forks up the sheaves and directs operations, and the Daihaya who drives the bullocks.

Songs of the Husker, Broom and Fan

233. Gond Lahaki Karma, from Manjhani, Kenda Zamindari.

234. Panka Husking song, from Akhrar, Mungeli Tahsil. The last two lines are:

Chaur ke bhāt rāndhay kanki ke roti
Dauka la dethai pātar pātar apan khātai moti.

Kanki, which I have translated 'bits' for want of a better word, refers to the broken scraps and bits left in the fan after the rice has been husked and cleaned. To give anyone thin rice-bread is not regarded as a compliment in a Chhattisgarh village home: thick slabs fill the belly quicker and are preferred.

235. Kamar song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

236. Gond Danda (stick) song, from Taurabahara, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

237. Panka Husking song, from Akhrar, Mungeli Tahsil.

Songs of the Grindstone

238. Gond Grinding song, from Jhadri, Mungeli Tahsil.

239. Gond Grinding song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

240. Gond Grinding song, from Jhadri, Mungeli Tahsil.

A Song of Selling Vegetables

241. Gond song used on the way to a bazaar, from Bhoring, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

A Churning Song

242. Ahir Bas-Git, from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.

A Weaving Song

243. Panka Weaving Song, from Kodna, Drug District.

Seasonal Songs

244. Gond song, from Mopka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

245. Gond Karma, from Manjhani, Kenda Zamindari.

246. Gond Danda (Stick) song, from Ganodh, Khariar Zamindari. The refrain of this song is:

Tāna rina mori nāna rina bhai he nāna hari nāna jo-ay.

247. Gond Danda (Stick) song, from Lawai, Raipur District.

In addition to those mentioned in the text, Crooke recorded from the Agra District a number of 'Baramashi' in what he calls a 'rustic calender', which includes a Malar song used in Sawan, a Godhani for Kartik, a Hindola for Bhadon, a Holi for Phagun

(*The Indian Antiquary*, xxxix, 332). A curious judgement on this type of song has been passed by Edward Thompson ('Some Vernacular Characteristics of Bengali Literature', *Indian Art and Letters*, i, 7). 'The traditional leisure and laziness associated with the Indian Rains is a "vernacular" feature that is only too faithfully expressed in the vast mass of Vaishnava poetry. Only a people very happily half-asleep would be content to listen endlessly to a lulling monotony about lowing cows, dark-blue raiment clad love-sick maidens, a lover alternately infatuated and careless and skies clogged with cloud'.

Life in the Woods

Hunting Songs

248. Ahir Karma, from Singarpur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

249. Pardhan song, used when skinning a tiger, from Maliya, Pendra Zamindari.

250. Gond song, from Daonjara, Pendra Zamindari. *Singhagh* is sometimes used for a lion, but in Chhattisgarh probably refers to a fabulous tiger, of great size and horned.

251. Gond Khelni song, from Rajgamar, Korba Zamindari.

252. Ahir song, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

253. Gond Bhuihari Karma, from Thakurkheta, Korba Zamindari. The reference to the cat and the pet maina occurs in many songs; there is a natural parallel between the small and the great cat, of course, but the reference is probably to the relations between the dewar (the cat) and his elder brother's wife (the maina).

254. Kamar song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

255. Pardhi song, from Kenda Zamindari.

Songs about Birds

256. Gond song, from Amri, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

257. Ahir Bas-Git from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.

258. Kawar Karma, from Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari. A bird-symbolism is used with great power and beauty throughout Sidney Keyes' *The Wilderness*, the desert of love where all must 'see the burning of the metal bird'.

> O sing, small ancient bird, for I am going
> Into the Sun's garden, the red rock desert
> I have dreamt of and desired more than the
> lilac's promise.

Fishing Songs

259. Kewat song, from Amaldiha, Mungeli Tahsil.

260. Kewat song, from Tilakpur, Mungeli Tahsil.

261. Gond Lahaki Karma, from Manjhwani, Kenda Zamindari.

262. Binjhwar song, from Dhaurabhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

263. Dewar song, from Singapur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. The song is, in fact, an inferior version of the *Kevatinagita* which was recorded by Hiralal in an article 'Why Kewat Women are Black', *The Indian Antiquary,* lx (1931), 35 ff. The full song describes how Bilasa, a Kewat woman, burnt herself at Bilaspur; she was beautiful and rich and used to expose her fish on a silver tray, while she herself sat on a golden chair, in the bazaar. The story describes how the Raja of Ratanpur saw her and enquired the price of her fish. 'Clever as she was, she gave the prices in equivocal terms; for instance, she said that the price of the *aichha* fish was equal to that of a Teli oilman, and the price of a crab equal to that of a barber, thus subtly alluding to the qualities of the fish she vended, the *aichha* being an oily fish, and the crab being noted for its tight grip, which she compared with that of a barber who holds a man's head firmly while shaving him.' The Raja's servants attempted to abduct the woman and she fled. As she went, she held up her garment to the sun, praying that he would save her honour, whereupon her dress caught fire and she was burnt to ashes.

The fish, even in my version, are well-chosen, and are fully described in Hiralal's article, from which I take some of the following particulars.

Line 22. The *dandwa* is a fish which jumps about in shallow water. The Ganda, to whom it is allotted, is a low-caste weaver who, in popular legend, amuses everyone by jumping about, waggling his buttocks (see p. 124) and posturing obscenely. The classical example of this is Maradlangha the Kotwar who is described in Hivale, *The Pardhans,* 76.

Line 24. The *khokhsi* is said to be 'ugly and shapeless' as a Gond, a libel on an often strikingly handsome race.

Line 25. The *aind* is prolific of oil and its eyes are so small that they are appropriately compared to the blindfolded eyes of an oilman's bullock.

Line 26. The word *soriya* is derived by Hiralal from *sunda,* an elephant's trunk: the fish 'has a long trunk-like snout, resembling the tongs of a Sonar. It swallows other fish as the Sonar consumes other's gold'.

The *medho* is covered with thick scales as the Gadaria shepherd's sheep are covered with wool.

Line 27. The *bāmi* is an eel-like fish which wriggles and twists like the sacred thread of a Brahmin.

Line 29. The *padina* is said to be a delicate fish which dies if its water is made muddy: it is therefore assigned to the supposedly delicate Pande.

Line 33. The *kotri* is a small fish, which the Kewat like to roast and sell dry and stale in the bazaars.

Line 35. The *sarangi* or *salagi* is here connected with the musical instrument of the Dewar, who are fond of catching this fish.

Line 36. Maradaniya is a name given to a barber who shampoos: the crab grips as tightly with its claws as he does with his hands.

264. Dhimar song, from Pendra Zamindari.

265. Dewar song, from Singapur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

266. Gond song, from Daonjara, Pendra Zamindari.

267. Dhimar song, from Kenda Zamindari.

268. Baiga song, from Lamni, Bilaspur District.

269. Bhaina song, from Tilaidabra, Bilaspur District.

270. Gond song, from Kokribahara, Uprora Zamindari.

271. Kawar song, from Godma, Korba Zamindari.

272. Kawar song, from Godma, Korba Zamindari. The *bod* fish is also known as *ghasara*: *bod* means sluggish and in Hiralal's version of No. 263 this fish is compared to a Kalar, generally supposed to be a drunkard.

Line 4: *The Humour of Animals*

273. Panka Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahil. *Jhingra tal milaya hai*: the tal is the single note which one of a party of singers plays or sings, on which the others base the variations of a tune.

274. Gond Saila, from Daonjara, Pendra Zamindari.

275. Dhanwar Karma, from Rawa, Uprora Zamindari.

276. Satnami Karma, from Rajpalpur, Mungeli Tahsil. 'What did you say?' The use of *boli marna* here may mean that the girl has made the singer a promise which he expects her to fulfil, or that she has taunted him and he will take his revenge.

277. Gond Karma, from Kenda Zamindari.

278. Gond Karma, from Sikosa, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari.

279. Bharewa Danda (Stick) song, from Semra, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Politics and Society

Political Songs

280. Panka Karma, from Bilaspur District.

281-6. Bharewa Dadaria, from Raipur District.

281. In this and the next song the theme turns on false rhymes:

Gori ke achra bhuiya man lure
Gandhi bāba ke jhandi duniya ma phire.

282. Original—

Nan mun tura pahire la pāgi
Gandhi bāba ke kahe le pahiran khādi.

Lure and *phire*, *pāgi* and *khādi* are typical Dadaria 'rhymes'.

283. The original shows a true rhyme:

Nawa re ghar ma garāwe thuniya
Nehru bāba ke kahe ma chalat hai duniya.

This is clever: Nehru is also the pillar supporting the new house of a free India.

The War of 1939-45

287. Ganda Karma, from Bilaspur District.
288-91. Panka Dadaria, from Bilaspur District.
292. Panka Karma, from Bilaspur District.

The Soldier on Leave

293. Panka Karma, from Raipur District.

The Land

294. Gond Karma, from Kenda Zamindari.
295-6. Gond Karma, from Bilaspur District.

Similar comments on Government orders may be found in a Kanarese ballad on an income tax imposed in 1860, the chorus of which runs—

How shall I describe the distress of our lives?
The oppression of the English has become very great.
Poor people are weeping, so that the tears stream down their cheeks
And are in great anxiety.

The song was recorded and translated by J. F. Fleet, a member of the Bombay Civil Service and a C.I.E. (*The Indian Antiquary*, xv, 349).

The Inspector

297. Kamar song, from Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari.

Famine Songs

298. Khuntia Chokh song, from Dumarkachhar, Lapha Zamindari.
299. Gond Karma, from Godma, Korba Zamindari.
300. Panka Karma, from Manki, Mungeli Tahsil.
301. Kurmi song, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
302. Gond Karma, from Raipur District. Similar famine songs were recorded by Crooke on the Saharanpur famine of 1877 (*The Indian Antiquary*, xl, 122) and by Luard on the 1899-1900 famine in western Malwa (ibid., xxxvii, 329 ff.).

Songs about Each Other

303. Gond Danda (Stick) song, from Khariar Zamindari.
304-5. Gond songs, from Kenda Zamindari.
306. Satnami proverb, from Nawagaon, Mungeli Tahsil.
307-9. Kahar proverbs, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil.
310-11. Ahir proverbs, from Amaldiha, Mungeli Tahsil.
312. Panka proverb, from Daonjara, Kenda Zamindari.
313. Satnami proverb, from Nawagaon, Mungeli Tahsil.
314. Gond Biraha, from Menduka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

The Dance

Karma Songs

315. Gond Karma, from Kotmarra, Matin Zamindari.
316. Ganda Karma, from Akhrar, Mungeli Tahsil.
317. Dhanwar Karma, from Barbhata, Uprora Zamindari.
318. Kahar Karma, from Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil. Line 3. The original is:

Sur sur sur sur pawan chale dagmag rukh dolay
Khir khir khira pān giray lepatike kharikha dānd.

To the singers the words *kharikha dānd*, the place where the cows rest in the heat of the day, convey delightful and homely sensations.

319. Gond Karma, from Kenda Zamindari.
320. Kawar Karma, from Rajgamar, Korba Zamindari.
321. Gond Karma, from Sikosa, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari.
322. Gond Karma, from Dhaurabhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Sua Songs (recorded from women)

323. Gondin Sua song, from Kokribahara, Uprora Zamindari.
324. Kurmin Sua song, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
325. Pankin Sua song, from Daonjara, Kenda Zamindari. As an example of the Sua form, I give this song in original:

Pake pake āma la katri mor sua ho
Pake la kholi kholi bin khāy sua ho.
Pake la kholi kholi bin khāy
Pake pake nimua la katri girāway mor sua ho
Pāka ras chuhi jāy mor sua ho
Pāka ras chuhi jāy
Waha le suāna udi udi jay
Ja baithe bihi ke dār sua ho
Ja baithe bihi ke dār
Amli ke pān ma dhān shukhwāyaon mor sua ho
Garlaiya rāja phukeli bin khāy mor sua ho
Garlaiya rāja phukeli bin khāy.

326. Gondin Sua song, from Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari. Moon-Pearl King: Chanda-Moti Raja.

327. Pankin Sua song, from Menduka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
328. Ahirin Sua song, from Nawagaon, Kenda Zamindari.
329. Halba Sua song, from Kharthuli, Drug District.
330. Gondin Sua song, from Pendra Zamindari.

Recreation

Dadaria Songs

Ahir Dadaria

331-6. From Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
337-41. From Tahaka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
341-2. From Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.
343-5. From Bhaisbor, Bilaspur Tahsil. No. 343 is a typical Dadaria in the sounds of its consonants and its rhyme:

Phatar phatar bāja baje bāja ma pargay por
Bāja sune awe parosin tor laika la le gay chor re dos.

The ending *re dos* occurs in almost every song: it means 'O friend' and its only function is to allow the music to die away slowly.
346. From Bhaskura, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
347-52. From Semra, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Binjhwar Dadaria

353-6. From Raïpur District.

Gond Dadaria

357. From Phuljhar Zamindari.
358-9. From Baridih, Kenda Zamindari.
360. From Katmarra, Matin Zamindari.
361. From Kokribahara, Uprora Zamindari.
362. From Bhotidi, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
363. From Katmarra, Matin Zamindari.
364. From Sikosa, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari. In this Dadaria, the freshly-sprouting mushrooms and the young bamboo-shoots are symbols of youth.

Sāwan ke pihari bhādon ke karil
Din kaise mor kate kāncha hai saril
Dosdāri re dos.

365. From Sikosa, Dondi-Lohara Zamindari. For the long-legged lapwing to go lame is as ruinous as hesitation to a lover.
366. From Kansari, Mungeli Tahsil. 'The word Nymphe in Greeke', says Spenser in a Gloss on *The Shepheards Calender* (April), 'signifieth well water, or otherwise, a Spouse or Bryde'.
367-73. From Kokribahara, Uprora Zamindari.

368. The original is:

Nawa taraiya phule hai kawala
Chehara ma jhen bhulāwe pare hai phokla
Chehara ma re dos.

There is a lot of bitterness concentrated in this poem. *Phokla* is the useless peel of a fruit which remains to be thrown away after the heart is eaten. It reminds me—though the French poet is more diffuse—of the savage hatred of Baudelaire's *Causerie*:

Ta main se glisse en vain sur mon sein qui se pâme:
Ce qu'elle cherche, amie, est un lieu saccagé
Par la griffe et la dent féroce de la femme.

374-9. From Manjhwani, Kenda Zamindari.

Kurmi Dadaria

380-1. From Raipur District.

381. This Dadaria proceeds with extraordinary art to remove all the inconvenient relatives out of the way—'*Sās gaye khetki sasur gaye gaon, saiyya gaye loharāni*'—and then, with the coming of the lover, to show joy breaking in a cloud of spray—'*Udāway dhua dhār*', in the strength, the glory of the waterfall. Compare No. 398.

Panka Dadaria

382-6. From Tehka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

382. Why a Bhumia? Partly in order to make some sort of rhyme with Gunia; partly because the man of the soil is believed to be the best physician.

Bās ke bhira basela bhumia
Tor uthe ang pira lagāle gunia
Tor uthe re dos.

385. Pigs like sleeping in mud churned up by the cows, for it is cool and soft, but cows themselves never rest in mud. Woman is a cow and shares this feeling.

386. The original is:

Sirpar gundri gundri par ghailna
Chhatiya ma samjhāwo rātike bolna
Mor chiraiya re dos.

387-90. From Mangwai, Matin Zamindari.

389. The word 'long for' translates *sād*, an intense, almost excessive, longing for something. So as the oilman's blindfold bullocks long to be released from their tedious round, so the *motiāri*, who has experienced her full circle of pleasure, now longs for a son.

391-5. From villages in Raipur District.

391. 'Come hungry'—*lahakat āna*, to come quick, excited, desirous, properly used of the tryst of lovers. The meaning of the song

depends on an understanding of 'new pot'. Food cooked in a new pot is not desirable, for it smells of the clay. So the madman hurries to a new lover, only to find her empty of love.

393. The original is:

Sona nangina resham ghari
Dam lāge hai baihi hājaro khari.

396-9. From villages in Pendra Zamindari.

398. The original is:

Manguni ke chura ṭairi ṭhir manguni ke dhār
Manguni ke ga rāja turi ke jobna udāle dhunna dhār
Manguni ke ga rāja turi ke jobna re dos.

The *dhunna dhār* is a tumbling, rushing, cascading waterfall, here and in No. 381 (where the emphasis is rather on the cloud of spray above the falls) used as a symbol of love.

Satnami

400-5. From Dondki, Bilaspur Tahsil.

402. The Kaser (worker in bell-metal) and his anklets are necessary to provide a rhyme for *kāwa ke baser*, 'settlement of crows'.

403. The *bohar* tree suggests the *Lohar* blacksmith.

406-10. From villages in Raipur District.

407. This may mean that a girl has been deserted by her lover and now wanders as a crane which has lost its mate. The 'arrow' of her love was as easily bent as a tamarind twig and he was sour as its fruit.

410. The 'ring between glass-bangles' is the *ṭāta*, a brass band or loop worn on the arm to prevent the glass bangles clashing against each other. So the lover, by coming between wife and husband, keeps them from clashing.

411-14. From Rajpalpur, Mungeli Tahsil.

Teli Dadaria

415-17. From villages in Bilaspur District.

417. This most undeserved slur on the *Pathān*, the most loyal of friends, was necessary in order to give a rhyme to *athān*, 'pickle'.

418-21. From Murghusri, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Danda Songs

422. Gond Joharni Danda, from Ganodh, Khariar Zamindari.

423. Gond song, from Menduka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Tamasha songs

424. Teli song, from Kodwa, Drug District.
425. Gond song, from Singapur, Drug District.

Kawar Songs

426. From Pondi, Lapha Zamindari.
427. From Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari.
428. From Godma, Korba Zamindari.
429. From Kerajhiriya, Lapha Zamindari. The woman has loved many men; in one affair she forgot her necklace which she had placed in a niche in the wall; in another she lost the spangle from her forehead. But in the end, even though it had grown late, she realized that true happiness was only found with her own husband. Compare the Pardhan song—

> A man draws water from twelve wells
> He is a bee which sucks honey from twelve flowers
> But always returns to one.

430. From Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari.
431. From Pondi, Lapha Zamindari.
432-5. From Baghakhar, Lapha Zamindari.
436-40. Prem-Danda songs, from Pondi, Lapha Zamindari.
438. For the magical treatment of itch, see N. Chaudhuri, 'Some Cure Deities', *Indian Culture,* vii (1940-41), 427.

Bhattra Songs

441-52. From Bhattra villages in the Jagdalpur Tahsil, Bastar State.

Dewar Songs

453-4. From Tendubhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

Ahir Songs

Bas-Git

455. From Dondki, Bilaspur Tahsil.
456. From Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari.
457. From Katmarra, Matin Zamindari.
458. From Khuria, Mungeli Tahsil. The heron, often miscalled a crane, has always been known for its cunning. A famous story, which appears in the *Jataka, Panchatantra, Hitopadesa* and *Katha Sarit Sagara* (see Penzer, v, 48 for all references) and is repeated in a dozen collections of folk-tales, describes a heron tricking the fish out of a pond but coming to a bad end at last. Local tradition says that the birds work as Ahir graziers for a time, then turn into Pandits and go to the river. 'The heron does its penance

is a grazier, then it goes to the river and stands there lonely s a Brahmin. The fish say, "A great Pandit has come" and hey run to touch its feet and so it catches them. Those who scape say, "This is a strange Pandit: it looks as if it was deep n thought and very holy, but it swallows its own devotees."' There is a song: 'The heron stands on the bank of the stream; ne by one it eats the fish alive.'

Yet this family of birds—whether it be the sarus crane, the beautiful and savoury' demoiselle, the stork, the paddy bird, the egret, the heron—has inspired much poetry by something strange and lonely which requires the setting of white sheets of water and a wild sky. The perfect little Uraon song, translated by W. G. Archer, never fails to move me.

The storks come down
In a long chain
In a long rope they come
On the banks of the Sankh and the Koel
In a long chain
In a long chain
In a long rope the storks come
On the banks of the Ganges and Jamna
In a long chain
In a long rope they come.

Here the stress is on the birds in company: a stanza by John Clare emphasizes their loneliness.

Far above, the solitary crane
Wings lonely to unfrozen dykes again,
Cranking a jarring, melancholy cry,
Through the wild journey of the cheerless sky.

Very Indian in character is the poem by the eighth century A.D. Chinese poet, Li Po, translated by G. L. Joerissen:

That great flake of snow which has just floated
Over the lake was a white heron.
Motionless, at the end of a sand bank,
The white heron watches the winter.

459. From Menduka, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.
460. From Godma, Korba Zamindari.
461. From Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil.
462-5. From Sukhenna, Kenda Zamindari.

Ahir Doha

466-8. From Kolcherra, Kenda Zamindari.
469. From Manjhwani, Kenda Zamindari.

Thorak thorak tor thorki bājay
Mai jānaw harahi gāy ho
Bāra baras ke kaĩna pātaw laye
Bhawar ras khāy ho.

The picture here is similar to that in the 'Ballad of Lorik' where Chandaini ties a cow-bell to her neck and goes to find her lover. In 'The Song of Hirakhan Kshattri', Hiro ties a bell to her neck and wanders through the town listening outside the houses to get news of Hirakhan (*Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, 391).

470. From Manjhwani, Kenda Zamindari. The white grass is the beautiful but destructive *kāsi* (*saccharum spontaneum*).

Magic

471. Gond mantra-song, from Bardih, Bilaspur Tahsil.

472. Ahir mantra, from Rigaruja, Kenda Zamindari.

473. Pardhan love-charm (*mohani*), from Kenda Zamindari. The mysterious opening of—

Hardi mardi gānth ke thaili
Ankh bai diya bāre
Kāri gori hāth pasāri—

suggests the turmeric used in the marriage ceremony and the lamp that burns by the marriage pole and is always a symbol of love, and thus sets the tone for the whole love-charm.

474. Kawar love-charm, from Rainpur, Chhuri Zamindari.

475. Pardhan love-charm, from Kenda Zamindari.

476-82. Baiga charms, from Lamni, Bilaspur District.

483. Lamana charm from Bilaspur District.

The End of Life

484. Bhakhyari Karma, from Dumarkachhar, Lapha Zamindari. The country round Pendra is known as Bhakhar. In the original:

Sāt khanda bhitar bandhe hansa ghora
Mai nahi jānau diya barat hai
Jāgat lay gay chora
Bāhar se āwe tāwa aur tabela
Ghar se nikare murda
Chār jhana milan lāge sāgar par gay dera
Jam rāj ke dut pahunch gay
Kardhan tor ke jāna.
Ya chola ban ke karai basera
Hai re.

485. Kurmi song, from Nipaniya, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil. Life-servant: *prān-dās*. The wood of the pyre is called *panch lakadiya*, wood of the panchayat, provided by the whole community.

486-88. Satnami songs, from Amaldiha, Mungeli Tahsil.

486. 'Dumb corpse', *kāya baura*.

488. 'The net of love . . .', *māya jāl sagal basari*.

Ballads and Tales

489. *The Story of Rasalu Kuar.* From an Ahir of Ghuturkundi, Mungeli Tahsil. This story is recited in a rhythmic 'prose', but much of the dialogue is in rhymed couplets of the Dadaria type.

490. *The Song of the Raja of Bairagarh.* From a Pardhan of Beharabudha, Bindra-Nawagarh Zamindari. This, like other Pardhan songs, has no regular form, but many of its lines end in an *-ay* sound and there is a fairly frequent rhyme of *rāj* and *āj*. But there is no rule about this, and other lines are entirely irregular.

491. *The Ballad of Gujri Ahirin.* From a Dewar of Singapur, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil.

492. *The Ballad of the Buffaloes of Gaura.* An Ahir Bas-Git song from Panderwa, Bilaspur Tahsil. It is sung at marriages and at the ceremonies on the tenth day after a death. The lines are irregular, shorter than usual, and each ends with a shout *Ho*! Many of them halt in the middle and insert a term of address—*sangi* (friend), *rāgi* (companion), *mālik* (master), *dādi* (brother), *gawat* (cowherd) or *bhai* (brother).

493. *The Song of Bijra Raja.* From a Pardhan of Lopha, Kenda Zamindari. There is nothing special to note about the form of this song. Like all the Pardhan Bana-Git, it is the fruit of inspiration rather than tradition. The lines composed in the delight and excitement of the moment, are not stretched on a fixed frame and change from day to day.

494. *The Song of Sitaram Naik.* From a Dewar of Tendubhata, Baloda Bazaar Tahsil: it is sung at Dassera and during Lamana marriages. It is told in long lines, without rhyme or metre. There seem to be no rules except that each line should end with the word *ji*, 'sir'.

495. *The Ballad of the Flower-Maid Bakaoli.* From a Panka of Tannapur, Lapha Zamindari. The ballad consists of long lines, each divided into two parts. Neither parts nor lines rhyme and there is no fixed rhythm and no regular number of syllables. Each half-line and line, however, normally ends with the word *bhai*, brother' which has a sort of hypnotic effect on the hearers. The incident by the lake when Lakhiya steals the clothes and brings the seven girls naked in his pursuit is, of course, an echo of a similar event in the life of Krishna. Since that romantic moment Indian literature and art has abounded in descriptions of nakedness surprised by the eye of love, often very beautifully done, though seldom so exquisite as the account of the bathing nymph in *The Faerie Queene*. Leigh Hunt said this was 'the loveliest thing of the kind, mixing the sensual with the graceful, that ever was painted' and required the brush of Guido to do it justice.

Her fair locks which formerly were bound
Up in one knot, she low adown did loose,
Which flowing long and thick, her cloth'd around,
And the ivory in golden mantle gown'd;
So that fair spectacle was from him reft,
Yet that which reft it, no less fair was found:
So hid in locks and waves from looker's theft,
Nought but her lovely face she for his looking left.
Withal she laughed, and she blushed withal,
That blushing to her laughter gave more grace,
And laughter to her blushing.

A laughable contrast to these eager eyes and ardent hearts of India and Elizabethan England is afforded by the conduct of young Damon in Thomson's *Seasons*. As he sits pensive and 'pierced with love's delightful pangs' by a hoarse-murmuring stream, his love comes to the very place to bathe.

For lo! conducted by the laughing Loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought:
Warm in her cheek the sultry season glowed;
And, robed in loose array, she came to bathe
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do? In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutterings, he a while remained.
A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement, known to few,
Perplexed his breast and urged him to retire:
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done?

What Damon did was to see all he could—'the alternate breast with youth wild-throbbing', the limbs of glowing white—and when the maddening draughts of beauty were checked by 'love's respectful modesty', to hurry from the spot.

496. *The Ballad of Lorik and Chandaini.* From an Ahir of Nunera, Chhuri Zamindari. The form of this long ballad, itself only an episode in a greater epic, is almost unbearably tedious. It is recited in a sing-song manner which is forced on the narrator by the form of the verse. Each line is in two parts and each part ends with the word *mor*, 'mine', which is, however, unrelated to the sense. Each half-line normally consists of eight syllables; but neither the half nor the whole lines rhyme.

497. *The Story of Dhola.* Recorded from a Panka at Manki in the Mungeli Tahsil, Bilaspur District.

APPENDIX TWO

THE HINDU MONTHS

I HAVE resisted the temptation of giving the Hindu months their approximate English equivalents, because of the very different associations which the words are likely to rouse in the mind of the Western reader. August, which in India is a month of constant rain, will be to him a time of holiday and picnic. April in England is cool, fresh and green; in Chhattisgarh, the great plain is parched and dusty and the heat is unbearable.

The reactions of the poets of Chhattisgarh and the Maikal Hills and those of Europe to the different months thus make an interesting contrast. Let us take first an English spring month, May, and then midsummer August, for comparison. To the Indian village poets, May—Baisakh with part of Jeth—is a time of heat and toil. In the hills the blazing forest fires add to the burden of the sun; in the plains water is scarce and the parched ground burns the bare feet of the peasant.

> The heat rains down
> Our bodies have grown hot as iron . . .
> The wind comes
> As though heat itself were blowing.

In another song, the body's suffering intensifies the heart's longing for a lover.

> O Baisakh come and with your heat
> Bring out my sweat and quench
> The burning of my body.
> In Jeth I send my message
> My pihu, my pihu
> I am thirsty, I am thirsty.

These are songs of the Maikal Hills; in Chhattisgarh, there is even more stress on the heat.

> The wind blew, the fire whirled in the sky
> There was dust on every side, fire shadowed all the sky.

But in Europe, the merry month of May fills the poet's heart with delight. Folgore da San Geminiano, the thirteenth century Italian poet, wrote a series of twelve sonnets on the months, which were translated by D. G. Rossetti. He finds this month the ideal time for games and outdoor sports,

> And tender damsels with young men and youths
> Shall kiss together on the cheeks and mouths;
> And every day be glad with joyful love.

To Spenser, 'fair May' is 'the fairest maid on ground',

> Deckt all with dainties of her season's pride,
> And throwing flowers out of her lap around.

But his account of the month in *The Shepheards Calender* is among his least felicitous descriptions, being largely devoted to a discussion of the rival claims of the Protestant and Catholic Churches. Buchanan, however, makes up for this neglect; Wordsworth spoke of the *Calendae Maiae* as 'equal in sentiment, if not in elegance, to anything in Horace', and referred again to it in his *Guide through the District of the Lakes*: 'It has been said that in human life there are moments worth ages. In a more subdued tone of sympathy may we affirm, that in the climate of England there are, for the lover of Nature, days which are worth whole months,—I might say—even years. One of these favoured days sometimes occurs in springtime, when that soft air is breathing over the blossoms and new-born verdure, which inspired Buchanan with his beautiful Ode to the first of May; the air, which, in the luxuriance of his fancy, he likens to that of the golden age,—to that which gives motion to the funeral cypresses on the banks of Lethe;—to the air which is to salute beatified spirits when expiatory fires shall have consumed the earth with all her habitations.'

But in Chhattisgarh, the expiatory fires are already burning; the hot breath of May there would but parch the cypresses. And could anything be further from our picture of Baisakh than Clare's 'Home Pictures in May'?

> The sunshine bathes in clouds of many hues
> And morning's feet are gemmed with early dews,
> Warm daffodils about the garden beds
> Peep through their pale slim leaves their golden heads,
> Sweet earthly nuns of spring; the gosling broods
> In coats of sunny green about the road
> Waddle in ecstasy.

Ecstasy and delight is the keynote of the later poets. Keats writes of

> All delights of summer weather
> All the buds and bells of May.

Robert Bridges, who wrote his *Eros and Psyche* in the form of a Baramashi, composed his first Eclogue on the months. Of May he says,

> But if you have seen a village all red and old
> In cherry-orchards a-sprinkle with white and gold,
> By a hawthorn seated, or a witch-elm flowering high,
> A gay breeze making riot in the waving rye.

This is not a little anthology of poems about months, so I will content myself with one more quotation, from A. E. Housman.

> Delight it is in youth and May
> To see the morn arise,
> And more delight to look all day
> A lover in the eyes.

Delight, which is the characteristic of May, is perhaps the element most conspicuously absent from Baisakh.

August is the Hindu Sawan-Bhadon and falls in the middle of the rains, a period which, as W. G. Archer points out, is generally associated with sexual frustration, for the gloom of the season 'turns loneliness into an active fear and intensifies the need of a wife for her husband' and the common symbolism of rain and storm evokes sexual longing. This is illustrated in one of Archer's own translations of the Patna Chaumasa songs—

Happy is that woman's lot
Whose husband is at home
Wretched is my fate
Whose husband has gone away
Absence with its flame
Tortures me each day
And my lotus heart is on fire . . .
His heart is hard
How my breasts tingle
And burst at their slips.

A Hindola cradle-song recorded by Crooke (*The Indian Antiquary*, xxxix, 333) from Agra District, which is specially associated with Bhadon, lays more emphasis on the excitement and grandeur of the rains.

The Great King is swinging in the cradle.
The black gathering of clouds begins to thunder and it begins to rain and pour.
The cradle is studded with gems and the seat is made of sandal wood.
The ropes are silken and the eastern wind is blowing.
The King of the Mountains is singing.

Among the Maikal Hills songs, there is less stress on the frustration, little on the grandeur, more on the gloom; the nights are terrible. During a break in the rains,

He promised he would come
In the nights of the spotless moon
But the moon's light
Only tortures me like fire.

In another poem we read,

Next comes Bhadon when it is always midnight
And the darkness is greater for the flashing lightning
No one is sure whether her husband will return by evening
Tell me, will my love come or no?

In this book also there are many references to the darkness and gloom of the Indian August. An eager girl 'strips her green body' and remembers her lover day and night. Seeing the flash of the lightning, she thinks her love has come. Another girl exclaims, 'In Sawan, wind and water! My body sways, but not with him'. In Bhadon, 'every day is dark' and the singer wonders when her love will come. Darkness and storm, torrential rain, loneliness and longing—these are the marks of August in Chhattisgarh.

And in the West—the 'high midsummer pomps', a blaze of flowers, a time of family holidays. August, not so convenient for the poet's rhythm and rhyme, is less popular than May, but the Western

writers of Baramashi do not ignore it. In *The Faerie Queene*, August, the representative of 'jolly summer', attends the masque of the seasons 'rich arrayed, in garment all of gold down to the ground' and leads by the hand a lovely maid crowned with ears of corn, the personification of wealth and prosperity. Thomson's *Seasons* gives a similar impression of warmth, a smiling nature, a general jollity.

> Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead—
> The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
> Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
> Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
> Half naked, swelling on the sight . . .

And so on for 1,800 lines.

Bridges' picture is pleasant and characteristic—

> A reaper with dusty shoon and hat of straw
> On the yellow field, his scythe in his arms braw:
> Beneath the tall grey trees resting at noon
> From sweat and swink with scythe and dusty shoon.

These contrasts will, I think, make it clear why the English words would improperly translate the names of the Hindu months. For the convenience of my readers I will reproduce here the table given in *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*.

PART OF JANUARY	MAGH
FEBRUARY	PHAGUN
MARCH	CHAIT
APRIL	BAISAKH
MAY	JETH
JUNE	ASADH
JULY	SAWAN
AUGUST	BHADON
SEPTEMBER	KUAR
OCTOBER	KARTIK
NOVEMBER	AGHAN
DECEMBER	PUS
PART OF JANUARY	

APPENDIX THREE

BOOK-LIST

THE following list attempts to illustrate the work done on the Indian folk-song in the English language during the past hundred years. It is reasonably complete, though I have probably missed a number of references: to any neglected author I tender my apologies. I have had to confine the list to works in English, but a similar bibliography of collections of songs and articles on their symbolism and technique in the different Indian languages is greatly needed: it should be given us by a multilingual Indian scholar. References to this list throughout the book are made by using the author's name for the first or only book listed and by name and short title for his other works where there are more than one. The following abbreviations are used in the text:—

J. Anth. Soc. Bom.—Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay.

J.B.B.R.A.S.—Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

J.B.O.R.S.—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

J.G.R.S.—Journal of the Gujerat Research Society.

J.R.A.S.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

J.(R.)A.S.B.—Journal of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal.

J.U.B.—Journal of the University of Bombay.

Mem.(R.)A.S.B.—Memoirs of the (Royal) Asiatic Society of Bengal.

N.I.N.&Q.—North Indian Notes and Queries.

ABBOTT, J. 'On the Ballads and Legends of the Punjab. Rifacimento of the Legend of Russalo', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xxiii (1854), pp. 59-91 and 123-63. Gives in several 'fyttes' the legend of Russalo in rhymed heroic couplets with full and interesting notes.

ABBOTT, J. E. 'The Katkari Language', *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, Centenary volume, 1905, pp. 104-9. Gives 14 songs in original.

ANDERSON, J. D. *Collection of Kachari Folk-Tales and Rhymes* (Shillong, 1895).

'Accent and Prosody' in Bengali, *J.R.A.S.*, 1913, pp. 857-65.

'Mr Rabindranath Tagore on Bengali Prosody', *J.R.A.S.*, 1914, pp. 1038-53.

ARCHER, W. G. *The Blue Grove* (London, 1940). A collection of Uraon songs exquisitely translated and interpreted with reference to their symbolic and cultural background. The publication of this book set an entirely new standard for work on Indian folk-poetry.

'The Women's Hunt', *Essays in Anthropology presented to S. C. Roy* (Calcutta, 1942), pp. 187-93.

'Seasonal Songs of Patna District', *Man in India*, vol. xxii (1942), pp. 233-7.

'A Short Anthology of Indian Folk-Poetry: Comment', ibid., vol. xxiii, pp. 1-3.

'Baiga Poetry', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1943), pp. 47-60.

'Santal Poetry', ibid., vol. xxiii, pp. 98-105.

'An Indian Riddle Book', ibid., vol. xxiii, pp. 265-315.

'Festival Songs', ibid., vol. xxiv (1944), pp. 70-74.

'More Santal Songs', ibid., vol. xxiv, pp. 141-4.

'The Illegitimate Child in Santal Society', ibid., vol. xxiv, pp. 154-69. The status of the illegitimate child is illustrated by a number of Santal songs.

'The Forcible Marriage', ibid., vol. xxv (1945), pp. 29-42. An ethnographic study illustrated by 8 songs.

'Bhojpuri Songs', *J.B.O.R.S.*, vol. xxviii (1942), Part III, Appendix, pp. 1-92.

'The Heron will not Twirl his Moustache', *J.B.O.R.S.*, vol. xxix (1943), pp. 1-19.

Perhaps even more meritorious than these essays in translation and ethnography are W. G. Archer's publications of original texts, in each of which he was assisted by educated tribesmen: *An Uraon Riddle Book* (Ranchi, 1940); *Lil Khora Khekhel* (Laheriasarai, 1940-41)—a collection of 2,600 Uraon songs and 440 Uraon riddles in Uraon and Ganwari; *Ho Durang* (Patna, 1942)—935 Ho songs and 400 Ho riddles; *Kharia Along* (Ranchi, 1942)—1528 songs and 446 riddles in Kharia; *Munda Durang* (Patna, 1942)—1641 songs and 380 riddles in Mundari; *Bhojpuri Gram Git* (Patna, 1943)—377 Kayasth songs in Bhojpuri from Shahabad District; *Hor Seren* (Dumka, 1943)—1676 songs in Santali; *Don Seren* (Dumka, 1944)—1954 marriage and cultivation songs in Santali; *A Santal Riddle Book* (Dumka, 1944).

BAHUGUNA, S. D. 'Some Songs and Dances of Rawain', *Man in India*, vol. xvii (1937), p. 81.

BAILEY, T. G. 'The Secret Words of the Cuhras', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lxxi (1902), Part I, pp. 14-20. Gives 3 songs, 2 of which celebrate 'the delights of carrion eating.'

BAKE, A. A. 'A Talk on Folk-Music', *The Visva-bharati Quarterly*, vol. v (1927), pp. 144-8.

'Indian Folk-Music', *Publications of the Musical Association*, vol. lxiii (1937), pp. 65-77.

'Some Aspects of Religious Music', *Triveni*, vol. xi (N.S., 1938), pp. 9-13.

'Some Folk-Dances in South India', *The Asiatic Review*, July, 1939.

'Dr A. Bake's Researches in Indian Music and Folk-lore', with a note by A. C. French, *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. vii (1933), No. I, pp. 10-13.

The bulk of the work of this distinguished scholar, who has investigated Indian folk-songs in their musical aspect, is still unpublished.

BASU, M. N. *The Bunas of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1939). Gives 3 songs in an Appendix.

BEAMES, J. 'Folklore of Orissa', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. i (1872), pp. 168-70 and 211-12. A few Oriya charms are translated with considerable spirit.

BEGLAR, J. D. *Reports of the Archeological Survey of India*, vol. viii (1878), pp. 79-83. Gives the legend of Lori and Chandain.

BHADURI, M. B. 'Hindu Influence on Munda Songs', *Essays in Anthropology presented to S. C. Roy* (Calcutta, 1942), pp. 256-60.

BHAGWAT, D. N. 'Folk-Songs from the Satpura Valleys', *J.U.B.*, vol. viii (N. S., 1940), Part IV, pp. 1-63.

'The Riddles of Death', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1943), pp. 342-6.

'A Pig Festival in the Central Provinces', ibid., vol. xxiv (1944), pp. 89-99. An ethnographic account illustrated by songs used during the festival.

BHAGWAT, A. R. 'Maharashtrian Folk-Songs on the Grind-Mill', *J.U.B.*, vol. x (N.S., 1942), Part I, pp. 134-86 and Part IV, pp. 137-74. Gives 507 short songs in original with a translation in free verse.

BHAUMIK, G. 'A Bengali Folk-Song', *Triveni*, vol. xi (1939), No. 12, p. 59.

BHAGWAN DAS. 'Pearl Problem in Hindi Rhyme', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. iii (1893), pp. 81-2. Gives 5 interesting problem poems.

BODDING, P. O. *Studies in Santal Medicine and Connected Folklore* (*Mem. A.S.B.*, vol. x, 1925). At Part I, pp. 80-99, the author gives a number of Dasae songs and at pp. 99-122 Mantar and Jharni near-poems.

BOYLE, J. A. 'Telugu Ballad Poetry', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. iii (1874), pp. 1-6. 'These specimens are undoubtedly the composition of rural bards. They have been gathered by the

roadside, from rude men that could neither read nor write'. The manner of translation will be seen from the following—

The forest-hen with bosom fair
Came down to gather water clear;
The Boya saw and that bright breast
With amorous touch the youth caressed.

CALDWELL, R. C. 'Tamil Popular Poetry', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. i (1872), pp. 97-103 and 197-204. Presents versions of Sivavakkiyer and Pattanattu Pillai's poems in English verse.

CENSUS OF INDIA, 1931. 'Women's Life as pictured in Karnatak Folk-Songs', vol. xxv (Mysore), Part I, Appendix III, p. 340.

CHAINA MALL, 'Prayer of the Drinkers of Hemp-Juice', *Panjab Notes and Queries*, 1883.

CHAKRAVARTI, B. 'A Bengali Folk-Song', *Triveni*, vol. ix (1937).

'The Understanding Mind', ibid., vol. ix, No. 9, p. 8. Said to be a translation from a Bengali folk-song.

CHAND, M. 'A Favourite Song among the Gaddis of Kangra', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. ii (1892), pp. 71-2.

CHAUBE, R. G. 'N. W. P.—Children's Games', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. iii (1893), p. 42. Gives 3 songs.

'A Song to the Cuckoo,' ibid., vol. iii, p. 215.

'Pachara Song—Chuhar Mal the Dusadh Hero marrying a Brahmin girl', ibid., vol. iv (1894), pp. 62-3.

'The Legend of Narsi Bhagat', ibid., vol. v (1895), pp. 130-32.

'The Legend of Hardaul', ibid., vol. v, pp. 163-5.

'Local Songs of Saharanpur', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxix (1910), p. 32.

'Popular Singers in Saharanpur', ibid., p. 64. Brief notes only.

COLDSTREAM, W. 'Labour Songs in India', *J.R.A.S.*, 1919, pp. 43-6. 21 doggerel couplets called *hungara* (from *hungna*, to moan) used by palki-bearers carrying travellers to the hills.

COLE, F. T. 'The Rajmahal Hillmen's Songs', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. v (1876), pp. 221-2.

CROOKE, W. *The Popular Religion and Folk-Lore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896).

'hort Songs mainly from Mirzapur', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. i (1891), pp. 107, 125, 144, 161; vol. ii (1892), pp. 53, 74, 75, 76, 89, 90, 91, 109, 111, 125, 126, 129, 143; vol. iii (1893), pp. 53, 143; vol. iv (1894), p. 160; vol. v (1895), p. 198.

'Karama Jhumata. A Hunting Song of the Korwas on the Chota Nagpur Border', ibid., vol. i, pp. 159-60.

'The Song of the Fight between the Gond Raja and the Mussalmans', ibid., vol. ii, pp. 64-5, 66 and 82. Recorded from a Pathari priest of the Kharwar.

'The Kol Song of Rama Chandra and Lachhmana', ibid., vol. ii, pp. 92 and 128.

'Songs sung by the Kols during the Sacred Dance of the Karama', ibid., vol. ii, pp. 92 and 130.
'Cradle Songs of Hindustan', ibid., vol. iii, p. 34.
'Marwari Weather Proverbs', ibid., vol. iv, pp. 178-9.
'The Song of the Flute', ibid., vol. v, p. 143.
'Religious Songs from Northern India', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxix (1910), pp. 268-87, 321-45. An important collection of 56 songs in original with a translation.
'Mendicants' Cries in Northern India', ibid., vol. xxxix, pp. 346-50. 11 songs of which the following is typical—

Earth to eat; earth to sleep on; earth for the pillow;
Earth mixed with earth and the beetle flew away heeding nobody.

'Songs from Northern India relating to the English', ibid., vol. xl (1911), pp. 89-92. Songs about such things as the Battle of Waterloo, the Agra Waterworks, a Railway Train and In Praise of the English.
'Songs from Northern India: Echoes of Modern History', ibid., vol. xl, pp. 115-22. These 5 songs include a Ballad of Bharatpur, and ballads of the Taking of Lahore and a Rising in Saharanpur.
'Songs of the Mutiny', ibid., vol. xl, pp. 123-4 and 165-9. 7 songs.
'Songs and Sayings about the Great in Northern India', ibid., vol. liv (1925), pp. 113 and 125.
'Marriage Songs in Northern India', ibid., vol. lv (1926), pp. 81-8, 104-07, 129-33, 153-8, 196-9. Includes a complete set of 8 Hindu marriage songs from Mirzapur District; two incomplete sets, one Chaube Brahmin and one Khattri, from Itawa District; two sets of songs for use at a nail-paring ceremony; 7 separate Hindu marriage songs from various places and 5 Mussalman songs. Originals are given and there are excellent translations in free verse.

DALTON, E. T. *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1872). Gives one Bhuiya song in ribald rhymed verse at pp. 143-4.
DAMES, W. L. *Popular Poetry of the Baloches* (London, 1907). *Text-Book of the Balochi Language* (Lahore, 1913).
'A Baker's Dozen of Catches from the Jhang District, Panjab', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxvii (1908), pp. 174-6. 13 songs.
'A Ballad of the Sikh Wars', ibid., vol. xxxviii (1909), pp. 171-6.
DINANATH RAO, V. 'Bardic Literature as Source of Light on the Social Life of the Marathas', *The Modern Review*, vol. lxxi, pp. 486-7.

D'PENHA, G. F. 'A Cumulative Rhyme on the Tiger', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxiii (1894), p. 167.

DUBE, S. C. 'Chhattisgarhi Folk-Songs', *The Modern Review*, vol. lxxii (1942), pp. 351-2. A brief account; refers to the Nachouri songs which are unrepresented in my collection.

DUTT, G. S. 'The Living Traditions of the Folk Arts in Bengal', *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. x (N.S., 1936), pp. 22-34.

EDWARDES, S. M. 'A Koli Ballad', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. lii (1923), pp. 127 ff. A Marathi ballad commemorating the chance meeting of a former Governor of Bombay, the Parsi millionaire Sir J. Jijibhai and the headman of the Kolis of Mandvi. Translated with notes.

ELWIN, VERRIER. *The Baiga* (London, 1939). Includes a large number of songs illustrating every aspect of Baiga life.

The Agaria (Bombay, 1942). Gives 17 iron-workers' songs.

ELWIN, VERRIER AND HIVALE, SHAMRAO. *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* (Bombay, 1944). Gives 619 songs translated with full comment.

EMENEAU, M. B. 'The Songs of the Todas', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. lxxvii, pp. 543-60.

FAWCETT, F. 'A Popular Mopla Song', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxviii (1899), pp. 64-7.

'War Songs of the Mappilas of Malabar', ibid., vol. xxx (1901), pp. 499 and 528.

'Songs sung by the Lambadis', ibid., vol. xxx, pp. 547-9.

FLEET, J. F. 'A Selection of Kanarese Ballads', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xiv, pp. 293-303 ('The Insurrection of Rayanna of Sangolli'); vol. xv, pp. 349-53 ('The Income Tax'); vol. xvi, pp. 356-61 ('The Bedas of Halagali'); vol. xviii, pp. 353-62 ('The Crime and Death of Sangya'); vol. xix, pp. 413-23 ('The Daughter-in-law of Channavva of Kittur'). The translations are in prose.

FORSYTH, J. *The Highlands of Central India* (London, 1871). At pp. 182-98 there is a version of the Lingo legend in the metre of 'Hiawatha'.

FRANCKE, A. H. 'Ladakhi Songs', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxi (1902), pp. 87-106 and 304-11. See also an article by the same author on Ladakhi popular poetry in *Globus*, vol. lxxv, No. 15.

FRASER, H. 'Folklore from Eastern Gorakhpur', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lii (1883), Part I, pp. 1-32. 12 songs, with originals in Devanagiri script, translation, melody and elaborate notes by F. H. Fisher, G. A. Grierson and Fraser himself.

FRIEND-PEREIRA. 'Some Khond Songs', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lxviii (1899), pp. 1-13.

FULLER, MARY. 'Marathi Grinding Songs', *The New Review*, vol. xiv (May-June, 1940).

'Maher', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1943), pp. 111-22. Pregnancy and grinding songs.

'Nag Panchami', ibid., vol. xxiv (1944), pp. 75-81. An ethnographic study illustrated by songs used during the cobra festival of Western India.

FÜRER-HAIMENDORF, C. von. *The Reddis of the Bison Hills* (Macmillan, 1945). Gives a number of songs illustrating various aspects of Reddi life.

'The Role of Songs in Konyak Culture', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1942), pp. 69-80.

GARIOLA, T. D. 'Folk-Lore of Garhwal', *The Visva-bharati Quarterly*, vol. iv (1926), pp. 29-43. Gives some account of Garhwal folk-songs which are translated in prose.

GAUSDAL, J. *Contributions to Santal Hymnology* (Bergen, 1935).

GOPALAKRISHNA, A. 'The Ballad in Telugu', *Triveni*, vol. ix (1936), No. 4, pp. 62-4. A slight essay.

GOSWAMI, P. 'Assamese Ballads', *Triveni*, vol. xv (1943), pp. 164-9.

GOVER, C. E. *Folk-Songs of Southern India* (London, 1871).

GRIERSON, G. A. 'The Song of Manik Chandra', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xlvii (1878), pp. 135-238. The epic of Rangpur 'containing here and there a tiny pearl of interest hidden among the rubbish.'

An Introduction to the Maithili Language (Calcutta, 1882). The Chrestomathy (pp. 1-124 of Part II) contains many specimens of prose and poetry which are translated. Some of these—like 'The Song of King Salhes', which was taken down from the mouth of a Dom, the four Marsia songs taken from village boys and the four Nag songs recorded from women—are obvious folk-songs; others by Vidyapati and Harkh Nath, are of a literary character.

'Some Bihari Folk-Songs', *J.R.A.S.*, vol. xvi (1884), pp. 196-222. Among these specimens are 7 simple Seasonal songs.

'Some Bhojpuri Folk-Songs', *J.R.A.S.*, vol. xviii (1886), pp. 207 ff.

'The Versions of the Song of Gopi Chand', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. liv (1885), Part I, pp. 35-55. 'There is no legend more popular throughout the whole of Northern India than those of Bharthari and his nephew Gopi Chand.' Two versions, here given in parallel columns, were taken down from the mouths of singers in different parts of Bihar.

'The Song of Alha's Marriage', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xiv (1885), pp. 209 ff.

'Selected Specimens of the Bihari Language. Part 1. The Maithili Dialect. The Git Dina Bhadrik and the Git Nebarak', *Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, vol. xxxix (1885), pp. 617-73. The two songs were taken down from the mouths of itinerant singers in the Nepal Tarai. 'Although poems they are not in metre. They are sung rather than recited and the lines in which they are printed represent the pauses in the melody.'

'Selected Specimens of the Bihari Language. Part I. The Bhojpuri Dialect. The Git Naika Banjarwa', ibid., vol. xliii (1889), pp. 468-524. Original translation and notes of a song about Banjara life not unlike 'The Song of Sitaram Naik' printed in this volume, for its main theme concerns the relations of a man and his bride when he goes to fetch her to his house.

The Linguistic Survey of India (Calcutta, 1903-07). Vol. v, Part I. pp. 114-5 (Hindu folk-song in south-western Bengali from Midnapore District); pp. 185-7 (folk-song in the Rajbangsi dialect from Jalpaiguri District); pp. 198-200 (extract from a song sung by children of the Darjeeling District at the Kali Puja); pp. 265-72 (a popular Mussalman song from Backergunge District); pp. 306-08 (a popular song from Noakhali District); pp. 317-9 (another popular song from Noakhali District). Vol. v, Part II, pp. 389-92 (an Oriya folk-song, 'The Kesabo-Koili', from the Cuttack District). Vol. vii, pp. 275-9 (a popular song about the golden-haired king Gopichanda from Ellichpur District). Vol. ix, Part III, pp. 269-71 (two Labhani songs from Berar).

'The Popular Literature of Northern India', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, vol. i, Part III.

'The Lay of Brahma's Marriage: an Episode of the Alh-Khand', ibid., vol. ii, Part IV, pp. 573-608.

GRIGNARD, A. *Hahn's Oraon Folk-lore* (Patna, 1931).

GRIGSON, W. V. *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* (Oxford, 1938). Gives 3 songs and 4 riddles, original and translation, in an Appendix.

'Chait-Parab Song', *New Verse*, Sept. 1936.

'Muria Leja or Love Song', ibid., Feb-March, 1937.

HAHN, F. *Kurukh Folk-lore in the Original* (Calcutta, 1905). Some 200 Uraon folk-songs.

'A Primer of the Asur Dukma', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lxix (1900), Part I, p. 172. Gives a song which is said to be 'one of the very few songs of the Asurs' and which for its rarity may be quoted here—

The grass is burning: grass knack! crack!
Well is the grass burning: in splendid beauty.

HENDLEY, T. H. 'An Account of the Maiwar Bhils', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lxiv (1875), Part I, pp. 376-88. 5 specimens of Bhil songs.

HIRALAL. 'Why Kewat Women are Black', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. lx (1931), pp. 35-8.

HISLOP, S. *Papers Relating to the Aboriginal Tribes of the Central Provinces* (Nagpur, 1866). Contains the Legend of Lingo in the original Gondi with a translation.

HIVALE, SHAMRAO. 'The Dewar-Bhauji Relationship', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1943), pp. 157-67. An anthropological account illustrated by songs.

'The Laru Kaj', ibid., vol. xxiv, pp. 100-16. Gives a number of songs used during the pig-sacrifice.

The Pardhans of the Upper Narbada Valley (Bombay, 1946). Gives a selection of the long ballad-like Gondwani and Pandawani songs and some shorter dance-lyrics.

HIVALE, SHAMRAO and ELWIN, VERRIER. *Songs of the Forest: the Folk Poetry of the Gonds* (London, 1935). 290 songs and 30 riddles with an introduction and notes.

HOFFMANN, J. *Mundari Poetry, Music and Dances* (*Mem. A.S.B.*, vol. ii, 1907), pp. 85-120. A most interesting account.

HOWELL, E. B. 'Some Songs of Chitral', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. iv (N.S., 1908), pp. 381-9. 4 songs in the Khowar language with translation and notes.

HUSAIN, Q. H. 'The bear dance song as sung by the jungle people in Mirzapur', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. v, p. 179.

HUTTON, J. H. *The Angami Nagas* (London, 1922). Gives, at pp. 174 and 282-7, 6 Angami songs and at p. 369 a Lhota Naga song.

The Sema Nagas (London, 1922). There is a general account of Sema songs at pp. 114-16 and at pp. 362-70 the originals and translations of 5 songs and the music of 3 of them.

JHAVERI, K. M. *Milestones in Gujarati Literature* (Bombay, 1938). At pp. 355-76 gives some account of folk-literature in Gujarat and of studies in the Gujarati folk-song.

JOGENDRA NATH RAE. 'Baiswari Folk-Songs', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. liii (1884), p. 232.

JOSEPH, E. 'Jatu Glossary', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. vi (N.S., 1910), pp. 693-874. Contains many short songs and proverbial verses illustrating the language of the Rohtak Jat.

JOSHI, J. 'Kumaun—The Charming and Exorcism of Disease', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. iii (1893), pp. 74-5. Gives 5 charms.

JOSHI, T. R. 'Notes on the Ethnography of the Bashahr State', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. vii (N.S., 1911), pp. 525-613. Gives 223

riddles and proverbs and a number of songs in original with a translation.

JUNGBLUT, L. 'Magic Songs of the Bhils', *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie,* vol. xliii (1943). With introduction and additional notes by W. Koppers.

KANGRA DISTRICT GAZETTEER. At pp. xxi-xxvii of Appendix II gives a number of folk-songs dealing with love and marriage, original, translation and linguistic notes.

KAUFMANN, W. 'Folk-Songs of the Gond and the Baiga', *The Musical Quarterly,* vol. xxvii, pp. 280-88.

KAVYOPADHYAYA, H. 'A Grammar of the Dialect of Chhattisgarh', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lix. Translated and edited by G. A. Grierson. Gives a number of short songs and the longer stories of Dhola and Chanda. Revised and enlarged edition by L. P. Kavya-Vinod (Calcutta, 1921).

LAFRENNAIS, R. M. 'Some Songs of the Portuguese Indians', *The Indian Antiquary,* vol. xxx (1899), pp. 400-06. The songs are in a mixed Malayalam-Portuguese dialect.

LORIMER, D. L. R. 'Oral Version of the Kesar Saga from Hunza', *Folk-Lore,* vol. xlii, pp. 105-39.

LUARD, C. E. 'Gazetteer Gleanings in Central India', *The Indian Antiquary,* vol. xxxvii (1908), pp. 329-31 (a famine song); vol. xxxix, pp. 178-80 (3 Bundeli songs); vol. xliv, pp. 1-3 (women's songs from the country round Gwalior); vol. xliv, pp. 181-8 ('The Lay of Prince Chain Singh'); vol. xlv, pp. 47-53 ('The Revolt of Kwaja Naik'—a ballad from Barwani State).

MAJUMDAR, D. N. *A Tribe in Transition* (London, 1937). Ho songs are quoted in illustration of social conditions at pp. 10, 97, 148, 177, 196.

'Some of the Characteristics of Kolarian Songs', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xx (N.S., 1924), pp. 181-92.

'A Few Types of Ho Songs composed by a Ho Teacher', ibid., vol. xxiii (N.S., 1927), pp. 27-36.

MAJUMDAR, S. C. 'Some Santal Songs', *The Visva-bharati Quarterly,* vol. iii (1925), pp. 67-9. 13 well-translated songs.

MALL, L. K. B. *Sudhabund* (Bankipur, 1884). Said to be a collection of 60 Kajali songs. An unverified reference.

MANKAD, B. L. 'A Sociological Study of the Kolis in Kathiawar', *J.U.B.*, vol. ix (1940-41), Part I, pp. 224-69. Includes 18 songs in original with translation.

MEGHANI, J. K. 'Marriage Songs of Kathiawar', *J.G.R.S.*, vol. vi (1944), pp. 127-37 and 197-203.

'The Folk-Literature of Gujarat', *The Visva-bharati Quarterly*, Nov. 1943-Jan. 1944. An account of the *garba* and other songs.

MEHTA, S. S. 'Marriage Songs: What light can they throw on Ancient Custom?', *J. Anth. Soc. Bom.*, vol. xiv (1927), pp. 32-46.

MILLS, J. P. *The Lhota Nagas* (London, 1922). At pp. 200-06 there are 4 songs in original with translation and the music of one.

The Ao Nagas (London, 1926). At pp. 328-31 there are 6 beautiful songs.

The Rengma Nagas (London, 1937). At pp. 278-84 there are 3 songs connected with folk-tales.

MITCHELL, J. M. 'Munda-Kolh Wedding Songs', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. iv (1875), pp. 51-4. 14 songs, originally in Mundari, translated from the German of the Rev. T. H. Jellinghaus.

'Santali Songs', ibid., vol. iv, pp. 342-4. A mediocre collection of song fragments, with text, translation and notes, originally made by the missionary A. Campbell.

MITRA, K. 'Marriage Customs in Bihar', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xxiii (N.S., 1927), pp. 419-48. Gives 48 songs, text and translation in free verse, from the Kayastha of Bihar.

MITRA, S. C. 'Some Bihari Mantrams or Incantations', *J. Anth. Soc. Bom.*, vol. ix (1912), pp. 500-23. Gives 12 charms which are full of poetic feeling.

'On Three Folk-Songs from the District of Pabna in Eastern Bengal', ibid., vol. xi (1918), pp. 485-93.

'On Some Archaic Folk-Songs from the District of Chittagong in Eastern Bengal', ibid., vol. xi, pp. 811-43.

'On Some Hindi Folk-Songs from the District of Saran', ibid., vol. xii (1920), pp. 7-31.

'On Some Nursery-Rhymes from the District of Chittagong', ibid., vol. xii, pp. 564-93.

'Santali Life in a Santali Folk-Song', ibid., vol. xiii (1926), pp. 48-51.

'On Four Mussalmani Folk-Songs from the District of Chittagong', ibid., vol. xiii, pp. 639-48.

'Three Folk-Songs from Eastern Bengal', *The Hindustan Review* (Allahabad, 1917), pp. 115-19.

'On the Siralis or Hiralis of Eastern Bengal', *Journal of the Department of Letters, University of Calcutta*, vol. xv (1927), pp. 1-23. Includes what appears to be a folk-poem on life in a Bengal village during the month of Phagun.

'On Four Mussalmani Folk-Songs from the District of Chittagong', *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes*

(Calcutta, 1927), vol. iii, Part III, pp. 437-46. Text in Devanagiri script and translation. Of interest on account of Hindu elements in the Mussalman songs.

MUKHERJEE, K. 'The Baul Singers of Bengal', *The New Review*, vol. xvi (1942), pp. 296-310.

MUKHERJEE, M. M. 'The Vaishnava Poetry of Bengal', *Triveni*, vol. ix (1936), No. 5, pp. 17-25. An interesting account of popular village songs.

MUNRO, A. C. 'S'Ora (Savara) Folk-Lore', *Man in India*, vol. x (1930), pp. 1-9. 5 songs in original with a translation.

NATESA SASTRI, S. M. 'Some Specimens of South Indian Popular Erotic Poetry', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xvii (1888), pp. 253-9. Badly translated from good originals.

O'BRIEN, E. 'Kulu Couplets', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. i (1891), p. 197. Gives a number of Dadaria-like couplets.

Multani Grammar. Gives a few lyrics.

'Notes on the Dialect of the Kangra Valley', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. lxxi (1902), Part I, pp. 71-98. 17 songs, text and a rather literal translation.

PARRY, N. E. *The Lakhers* (London, 1932). Contains an excellent account (pp. 173-82) of Lakher poetry with 25 songs translated into English prose.

POONA GAZETTEER (Bombay, 1885). At p. 136 quotes an interesting exchange of rhymes at the marriage of a Chitpavan Brahmin.

PORTMAN, M. V. 'Andamanese Music, with Notes on Oriental Music and Musical Instruments', *J.R.A.S.*, 1888, pp. 181-218. Gives 10 Andamanese songs with the music and dance rhythms. An elaborate study.

PRIDEAUX, E. T. 'Mother Kosi Songs', *Man in India*, vol. xxiii (1943), pp. 61-8.

'River Songs of Bhagalpur', ibid., vol. xxv (1945), pp. 17-23.

PRADHAN, G. R. 'Folk-Songs from Malwa', *J.U.B.*, vol. vii (N. S., 1939), Part IV, pp. 8-30.

'Folk-Songs from Mewar', ibid., vol. viii (N.S., 1940), Part IV, pp. 124-30.

'Folk-Songs from Marwar', ibid., vol. ix (N.S. 1941), Part IV, pp. 137-57. Important collections of Marwar songs in original are J. Galgot's *Marwar ke Gram-Geet* (Jodhpur, 1930) and R. N. Tripathi's *Marwar ke Manohar Geet* (Allahabad, 1936).

QANUNGO, K. R. 'Fragment of a Bhao-Ballad in Hindi', *Sardesai Commemoration Volume* (Bombay, 1938), pp. 113-27. Original text, translation, and notes.

RAGHAVAN, M. D. 'A Ballad of Kerala', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. lxi (1932), pp. 9, 72, 112, 150, 205.

RAGHUNATHJI, K. 'Bombay Beggars and Criers', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xi (1882), p. 24.

RAHMAN, FAZLUR. Review of 'Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills', *Man in India*, vol. xxv (1945), pp. 69-72.

RIGBY, C. P. 'On the Sathpoora Mountains', *Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society*, vol. ix (1840), p. 78. Gives 2 Pauria marriage songs, text and translation. They are reproduced in the *Khandesh Gazetteer* (Bombay, 1880), p. 98.

ROBINSON, E. J. *Tales and Poems of South India* (London, 1885).

ROSE, H. A. 'Two Panjabi Love Songs in the Dialect of the Lahnda or Western Panjab', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxxv (1906), pp. 333 ff. Original text and translation by Rose with notes by G. A. Grierson.

'Hinduism in the Himalayas: the Legend of Mahasu Deota', ibid., vol. xxxvi (1907), pp. 253 ff. Contains many *doh* couplets.

'A Ballad of the Haklas of Gujarat', ibid., vol. xxxvii (1908), pp. 209-10.

'Mohiye ki Har', ibid., vol. xxxvii, pp. 299-308 and vol. xxxviii (1909), pp. 40-48, 69-73. Keonthali text and translation.

'A Triplet of Panjab Songs', ibid., vol. xxxviii, pp. 33-8.

'Three Songs from the Panjab', ibid., vol. xxxviii, pp. 39-40.

'The Troubles of Love', ibid., vol. xxxviii, pp. 149-50. A Punjabi song.

'The Song of Sindhu Bir', ibid., vol. xxxviii, pp. 295-6. A song of Gaddi women, shepherds of the outer Himalayas.

'Subdi ki Nati', ibid., vol. xxxviii, p. 328.

'A Version of Hir and Ranjha', ibid., vol. liv (1925), pp. 176-210.

'The Sequel to Hir and Ranjha', ibid., vol. lv (1926), pp. 14-19, 36-9.

'The Ganer Ceremony in Kulu', *N.I.N.&Q.*, vol. iv (1894), pp. 1-2. Gives songs used during the ceremony.

ROY, S. C. *The Mundas and their Country* (Calcutta, 1912). Has a section on songs, pp. 508-46.

The Birhors (Ranchi, 1925). At pp. 503-7 gives 6 songs.

Oraon Religion and Customs (Ranchi, 1928). At p. 159 a marriage song; at p. 220 two drinking songs; at pp. 286-92 an invocation, 2 Rasani, 4 Kumari songs; at pp. 348-50 and 371-93 there are 14 Tana Bhagat songs.

The Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa (Ranchi, 1935). At pp. 154-7 there are 2 dance songs and at pp. 292-4 2 other songs.

ROY, S. C. and R. C. *The Kharias* (Ranchi, 1937). At pp. 448-56 there are 55 riddles and at pp. 482-511 there are 37 songs with comment.

RUSSELL, R. V. and HIRALAL. *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India* (London, 1916). Vol. ii, pp. 268-70, 2 Bhat songs; p. 323, a Bhunjia song; p. 436, 4 Chitari cradle songs; p. 493, a Dhanwar song. Vol. iii, pp. 49-62, extracts from Hislop's and Forsyth's versions of the Gond legend of Lingo; pp. 137-8, 7 other Gond songs. Vol. iv, pp. 256-7, a lengthy song said to be used by women working on the roads. This is probably incorrectly printed as a single song, for each of Russell's lines consists of two parts which sometimes rhyme, though *Man in India* (vol. xxiii, pp. 23 & 39) had insufficient warrant for describing the verses as Dadaria; p. 375, a Parja song.

SAKSENA, B. 'Lakhmipuri—A Dialect of Modern Awadhi', *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xviii (1922), pp. 305-47. Gives a folk-song in praise of Bhawani.

SALETORE, B. A. 'Folk-Songs of the Tuluvas', *The Indian Antiquary*, vol. lvi (1927), pp. 13, 74 and vol. lvii, pp. 21 ff.

SAMBAMOORTHY, P. 'South Indian Folk-Music', *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. vi (N.S., 1932), No. 1, pp. 32-4.

SARKAR, B. K. *The Folk-Element in Hindu Culture* (London, 1917). A useful background for the study of the Bengali folk-song: there is one chapter on 'The Bengali Folk-Poesy of Shaivaism'.

SATYARTHI, DEVENDRA. 'Rural India, the Nest of Singing Birds', *The Modern Review*, Sept. 1934, pp. 265-72.

'Glimpses of Indian Folk-Songs', ibid., June 1934, pp. 30-32.

'Sweet Nepal, a Land of Folk-Songs', ibid., Nov. 1934, pp. 508-17.

'The Revival of India's Folk-Songs', ibid., June 1935, pp. 634-43.

'Song-Harvest from Pathan Country', ibid., Oct.-Dec. 1945, pp. 402-10, 515-23, 659-65.

'Thus Sing the Countrywomen in the Punjab', ibid., Jan-Feb. 1936, pp. 47-55, 140-47.

'Indian Children's Rhymes and Chants', ibid., Oct-Nov. 1936, pp. 394-6, 532-4.

'Rajput Songs of War', ibid., Jan. 1939, pp. 65-72, 171-9.

'The Singing People of Simla Hills', ibid., Dec. 1939.

'Urmila's Sleep (an Andhra folk-song)', ibid., April 1940.

'Andhra Folk-Songs', ibid., 1942, pp. 442 ff.

'Punjabi Songs of Soldiers' Wives', ibid., 1943, pp. 41-5.

'Folk-Songs of Bengal', *Triveni*, vol. xiii (1940), No. I, pp. 34-46.

'A Wandering Minstrel', *The New Review*, vol. xv (1942), pp. 325-32.

'Bhojpuri Ahir Folk-Songs', ibid., vol. xv, pp. 467-83.
'Indian Folk-Songs as India's National Literature', *The Rural India*, vol. iii (1940), pp. 15-23.
'Twice I went to Kashmir', ibid., vol. iii, pp. 161-9.
'Rilo, Chait-Parab and other Folk-Songs from Bastar State', ibid., vol. iii, pp. 305-14.
'As I think of the Baloch Folk-Songs', ibid., vol. iii, pp. 362-79.
'Come to my Village', ibid., vol. iii, pp. 483-88.
'The Rhythm of the Spinning-Wheel', ibid., vol. iv, pp. 640-6.
'Folk-Songs of Rajputana', ibid , vol. v (1942), pp. 18-20.
'Folk-Songs of Nepal', ibid., vol. v, pp. 127-30.
'Dogra Folk-Songs', ibid., vol. v, pp. 181-5.
'From One End of India to the Other', ibid., vol. v, pp. 267-70.
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VENKATASWAMI, M. N. 'Some Telugu Folksongs', *The Indian Antiquary,* vol. xxxiv (1905), pp. 186 ff. Gives a Mill Song and 2 Nursery Songs. Original text and competent translation.

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Pearl rice
Broomstick water
Ankle bell
Morning star
Pat of butter
Mango bud
Jasmine water.

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APPENDIX FOUR

WORD-LIST

AMARBEL—*Cuscuta reflexa,* Roxb., a parasite with long golden thread-like stems usually found on the boir tree.

AONLA—*Phyllanthus emblica,* Linn. The smooth round yellowish fruits, which Chandaini admired, ripen from November to February. The tree is worshipped by Hindus to promote fertility in women and cattle.

ARHAR—See 'RAHAR'.

BAHERA—*Terminalia belerica,* Roxb. A cousin of the sacred saja, which belongs to the same order. It is tall, straight, with grey bark, and the fruit can be used for tanning. The fruits and nuts are eagerly eaten by monkeys and squirrels.

BAHUNTA—A large decorated silver armlet.

BAJANTRI—A fine necklace of carved wooden beads, now rarely seen.

BANIA—A Hindu merchant.

BASI—Food left over from a previous meal and served again.

BEL—*Aegle marmelos,* Correa. A tree sacred to Siva on account of its aromatic trifoliate leaves. The fruit, which is believed to have come from the milk of Sri, is a remedy for dysentery. The greenish-white flowers are very fragrant and attract large numbers of bees.

BHANG—An infusion of the leaves and seed-capsules of Indian hemp (*Cannabis sativa*).

BHAUJI—Elder brother's wife.

BHUT—A ghost, or demon.

BIDI—An exiguous country cigarette.

BOHAR—*Cordia myxa,* Linn. A small deciduous tree which in August is covered with yellow fruit eagerly eaten by birds.

BOIR—*Zizyphus jujuba,* Lam. The wild plum, commonly found in Raipur District in the villages and along the embankment of tanks. 'When found in the forest it always indicates an old village site' (*Raipur Gazetteer*).

BRINJAL—*Solanum melangena,* the egg plant.

CHACHERA—A vegetable.

CHAMAR—An untouchable caste of workers in leather. In Chhattisgarh the majority call themselves Satnami and many have given up leather-work in order to raise their social status.

CHANNA—*Cicer arietinum,* gram. Parched or roasted, it is eaten

as a snack between meals and at bazaars the channa stalls do a big trade. It is used as the basis of many Indian sweets.

CHAPRASSI—A messenger or guard, usually in uniform.

CHATNI—A tasty condiment taken with other food.

CHUNCHUNIYA—A vegetable.

DAHI—A method of cultivation, now generally forbidden, by which tracts of forest were felled and burnt, seed being sown in the ashes. This is the general use of the word; more particularly it implies a special kind of axe-cultivation, whereby branches of trees are cut and laid on the surface of a permanent field and then fired to manure it.

DANDWA—The fish, *rasbora daniconius*.

DANO—An ogre.

DASSARA—The royal festival generally falling in October.

DARBAR—The hall where a Raja sits in judgment; the people assembled there.

DEO—A god or godling.

DEWAR—Husband's younger brother.

DHAMIN—*Grewia tilliaefolia*, Vahl. The tough elastic wood is used for carrying-poles and bows.

DHAR—Large silver shields, with 'cheek-kissing' chains attached, worn over the ears.

DHICHUA—The king crow.

DHOBNIN—A washerwoman. A widowed washerwoman seen in the early morning is of ill omen.

DHOTI—Man's loin-cloth.

DUMAR—*Ficus glomerata*, Roxb. A fig tree readily distinguished by its light blue-green leaves and clusters of pear-shaped fruit. It was called by classical writers *kshira-vriksha*, 'milk-tree' or *hemadugha* 'golden-juiced' (Crooke, ii, 97). The milky sap is regarded as having magical and medicinal properties.

GANDA—An untouchable caste of weavers.

GANJA—A preparation of Indian hemp.

GHARIHAR—The Jerdon's Carp, *barbus jerdoni*.

GHASIA—A low caste of syces and workers in brass.

GHI—Clarified butter.

GODHARIN—A woman employed as a tattooer.

GURU—A religious preceptor.

HALDI—Turmeric (*curcuma longa*). The powdered root is used to colour water at the Holi festival, as a demon-scarer and at weddings.

HAWEL—A necklace made by stringing old rupees round the neck.

INDRAVAN—The bitter cucumber, *cucumis colocynthis*.

JAMUN—*Eugenia jambolana,* Lam. The black plum.

JOGAN—An invisible creature, hardly to be ranked as a godling or demon, said to be light and delicate as a firefly. Jogan usually move in swarms and may be of great help to human beings.

JOGILATTI—*Asparagus racemosus,* Willd.

JUGTI—An invisible being adept at playing conjuring tricks, *yukti,* on people. In 'The Story of Dhola' a Jugti is shown living in a tree as its indwelling genius; it was offended when Dhola broke one of its branches. Generally a swarm of Jugti live together; they are shown helping Raja Indal by many convenient tricks.

KADAM—*Anthocephalus cadamba,* Miq. A large deciduous tree, amidst whose spreading branches and shining leaves Krishna once played.

KAJAL—Lamp-black, often used to underline the beauty of a girl's eyes.

KARELA—The bitter vegetable, *momordica charantia.*

KARHARI—Probably the mahseer, *barbus tor.*

KASI—The grass, *saccharum spontaneum,* whose beautiful feathery head diverts attention from the mischief of its roots.

KATIYA—Probably the wallago, *wallago attu.*

KEKTI—A beautiful and fragrant wild flower.

KEONRA—The sweet-smelling *pandanus odoratissimus.*

KEWAT—A caste of fishermen.

KHAIR—*Acacia catechu,* Willd. The mimosa, used in classical Hinduism for the production of sacred fire by means of a drill, of which it serves as the bed, the upright being a stick of *ficus religiosa.* See Crooke, ii, 106 ff. for an interesting account.

KHENDA—A wild vegetable.

KHONTI—A wild vegetable.

KOCHAI—A wild vegetable.

KODAI—The husked and cleaned grain of the kodon millet.

KODON—The popular and revered small millet, *paspalum scrobiculatum.*

KOEL—The Indian cuckoo.

KOS—A measure of distance, two or three miles.

KOTRI—The fish, *barbus parrah.*

KUNDRU—*Coccinia indica.*

KUSUM—*Schleichera trijuga,* Willd. A large deciduous tree, commonly found on the banks of streams in Raipur. Its foliage, which is valued for the shade it gives in the hot weather, is first red, then changes to light and dark green.

KUTKI—*Panicum psilipodium* or *miliaceum,* a very small millet.

LAC—The dark-red resinous incrustation produced on certain trees by the puncture of an insect, *coccus lacca* (*O.E.D.*). The most

valuable lac in Chhattisgarh is obtained on the kusum tree, and its cultivation is carried on by Gond, Binjhwar and Kamar.

LAKH—100,000.

LAMSENA—A youth who serves for his wife, either because he cannot afford the bride-price or because his father-in-law has no son and wishes to keep his daughter's husband in the house to inherit his property and perform filial duties.

LILA-THOTHA—Copper sulphate, a caustic used to reduce the exuberant granulations of advanced forms of itch; it is obtainable in the bazaars.

MAHAPRASAD—The highest of the various grades of covenanted friendship. The reference of the word is to the blest food distributed at the great pilgrim centre Jagganath Puri.

MAHUA—*Bassia latifolia,* Roxb. The precious tree which provides the aboriginals with oil, food and ardent spirits.

MAINA—The Indian starling.

MALIN—A woman of the Mali caste of gardeners; these women are famous for their wit and charm.

MASSALA—A mixture of turmeric and various spices used in the preparation of curry.

MASUR—The pulse, *cicer lens.*

MOHANI—A love-charm. In the compound Jugti-Mohani it means a living but invisible creature which can give powerful aid to human beings.

MOHUR—A gold coin, formerly current, and still used as an ornament.

MOTIARI—An unmarried girl; in Bastar specially applied to girl members of the ghotul dormitory of the Muria.

MUNG—The pulse, *phaseolus mungo.*

MUNGA—*Moringa olcifera,* Lam. The horse-radish tree; the leaves, flowers and fruit are eaten; the bark is used medicinally.

NAIK—A title of Banjara or Lamana headmen.

NANAND—A husband's younger sister.

NIM—*Azadirachta indica,* A. Juss. Godlings of disease are supposed to reside in this tree and it is worshipped when they have to be appeased. Its leaves repel snakes and are used in snake-worship; they are also useful as a general demon-scarer. An acrid oil is expressed from the fruit and used for medicine and lighting.

PADINA—The Indian trout *barilius bola,* somewhat inaccurately described in the text.

PAN SUPARI—A delicacy of areca nut, lime and the leaf of the *Pipar betle,* Linn., wrapped up together.

PARETIN—A female ghost.

PARSA—*Butea frondosa,* Roxb. The *palās* or *dhāk.* Its large trifoliate leaves represent the Hindu trinity and are used in worship. They are also used, more practically, to wrap Chhattisgarh cheeroots. This is the Flame of the Forest; 'in March and April the tree is one of the most gorgeous sights of the plains with its brilliant orange blossoms on a background of velvety olive-green sepals' (*Mandla Gazetteer*).

PEJ—A thin gruel, the staple food of the aboriginals.

PIPAR—*Ficus religiosa,* Linn. A sacred tree, the abode of the Hindu Brahma.

PITAMBAR—A royal cloth of silk and gold.

RAHAR—The pulse, *cajanus indicus.*

RAWAT—The cowherd caste, also known as Ahir.

SADHU—A Hindu ascetic.

SAJA—*Terminalia tomentosa,* W. & A. The sacred tree of the Gond, the traditional abode of Bara Pen.

SAL—*Shorea robusta,* Gaertn. A tree at once sacred and useful. Troup calls it one of the most important timber trees of India. The beauty of a sal forest has often been described; it is 'a delightful sight early in March at the commencement of the hot weather, when the trees come into leaf and flower, the deep red of the young leaves being very striking in conjunction with the bright cool green of their neighbours' (*Raipur Gazetteer*). The white resin of the sal is used by the aboriginals as incense.

SARAI—The word is sometimes used as a synonym for sal, otherwise it means the *Boswellia serrata,* Roxb. A useful tree which grows in the poorest and dryest soil.

SARI—A woman's cloth.

SAUR—Possibly the murral, *ophiocephalus striatus,* is meant.

SAWA—A wild millet.

SEMUR—*Bombax malabaricum,* D. C. The cotton tree, sacred to the Hindus and used in many aboriginal ceremonies. It is a large tree, easily distinguished by the tall straight stem covered with a light grey bark and unpleasant conical prickles; the flowers are a bright scarlet and very showy.

SENDUR—Vermilion powder, used in Hindu marriages.

SUTWA—A silver neck-ring.

TELI—Member of the caste of oilmen. Regarded as ill-omened because he blindfolds the sacred bullock and forces it to turn an oilpress.

TULSI—*Ocymum sanctum,* the basil, sacred to Vishnu and the infant Krishna.

URID—The pulse, *phaseolus radiatus*. The oil expressed from this is offered by Chhattisgarh Hindus to Saturn, an inauspicious planet, and for this reason the pulse is regarded as vaguely unlucky.

ZOOLUM—Any kind of oppression or force, here the oppression of love.

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