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THE
LADY OF THE LOTUS
RUP MATI QUEEN OF MANDU
A Strange Tale of Faithfulness

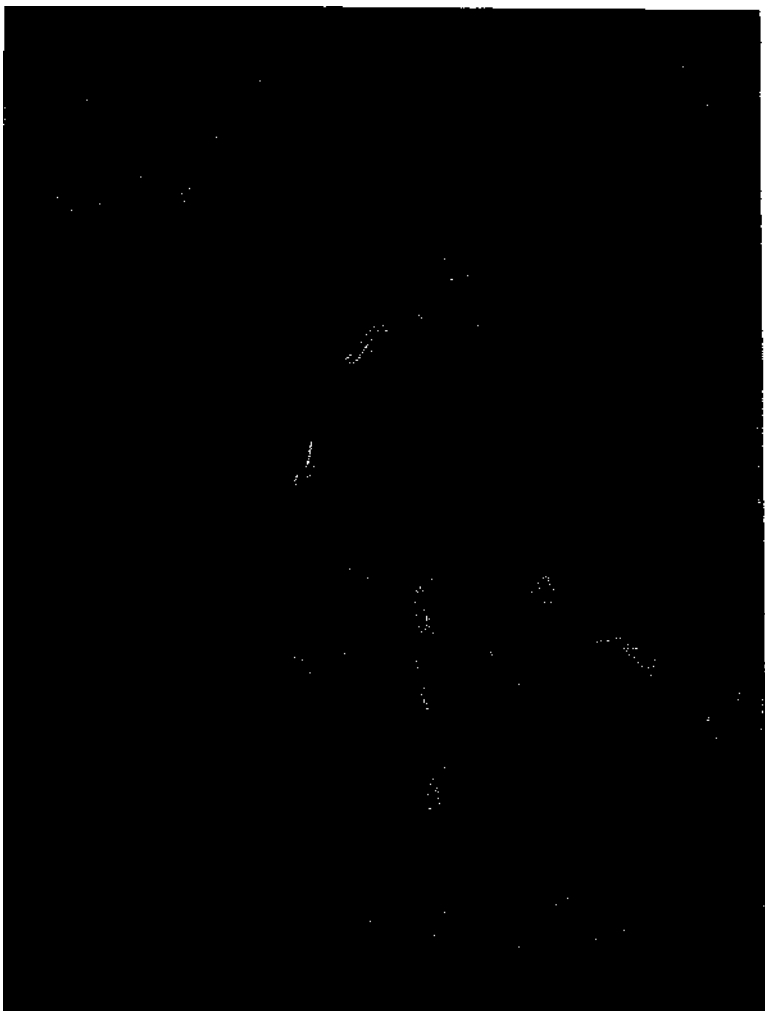
Oxford University Press

London Edinburgh Glasgow Copenhagen

New york Toronto Melbourne Cape Town

Bombay Calcutta Madras Shanghai

Humphrey Milford Publisher to the UNIVERSITY



Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati in seclusion at Mandu indulging in the delights of love.' Marked the work of Govardhnn.

THE
LADY OF THE LOTUS
RUP MATI QUEEN OF MANDU

A Strange Tale of Faithfulness

BY AHMAD-UL-UMRI
Turkoman

TRANSLATED
WITH INTRODUCTION & NOTES
TOGETHER WITH TWENTY-SIX
POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO
QUEEN RUP MATI

Done into Verse by
L. M. CRUMP, C.I.E.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD

1926

Dedicated

to

My one-time charge.

My oft-time host,

My all-time friend,

Major His Highness Sir Udaji Rao Pudr,

K.C.S.I.,K.C.V.O.,K.B.E.,

Maharaja of Dhdr,

Who as a Mdhrratta Prince,

now worthily holds

the ancient throne and capital of

his illustrious Paramara ancestors.

PREFACE

ONE page of this book is, alas ! already obsolete. My dear friend H. H. Sir Udaji Rao Puar died while it was in the press, and to him no thanks can now be offered. The dedication must therefore be read as written in his memory. This will long be cherished by his people for his many noble qualities, and by me for the friendship and affection where-with he honoured me for over sixteen years, during which I was often his guest at Mandu.

I desire, however, to express my indebtedness and to offer my sincerest thanks to the following gentlemen :

M. Bashir-ud-din, B.A., LL.B., of Bhopal, who found page by page and put together the Persian Manuscript and checked the translation : L. S. Balbhadra Sinha of Senore, who collected and gave much aid in the translation of Rup Mati's songs : Pandit Gulab Shankar Dixit, for the spadework of the translation of the Persian and assistance with that of the Hindi text: Colonel C. E. Luard, CLE., for much general assistance, especially in finding, extracting,

and translating passages from the Persian Chroniclers: Sir John Marshall, CLE., for permission to make use of photographs taken under his instructions for the Archaeological Department of the Government of India : Mr. Lawrence Binyon for assistance with and criticism of the five pictures belonging to the Persian Manuscript : and the late Rai Bahadur D. B. Parasnis for finding me the pictures reproduced as illustrations III and VIII. No. V I I is from a photograph obtained from the Agra Museum.

The five pictures belonging to the Persian Manuscript and referred to in the Introduction as Nos. I, 2, 3, 4, 5 correspond to illustrations Nos. IV, I, V, VI, and VII respectively.

L. M. C.

THE RESIDENCY,
GWALIOR.

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To the Lady of the Lotus

FLOWER of perfection, thou, and perfect flower !
Thou did'st not bring strange far-off Gods to birth !

Thy stem beneath the lake in human earth
Deep-rooted ! yet God—given thy rich dower
Of poesy unfolding—sun or shower—

Blooms of pure passion, constancy, grief, mirth,
And truth that lives for what it knows love-worth
And dies ere yield its soul to alien power.

Long after thy pavilions crumble down,
When age-forgotten Mandu's dying fame,
When Rewa's godhead, desecrate, departs,
Still shall thy songs be sung by sage and clown,
And green, as Malwa's monsoon hills, thy name
Live on her children's tongues and in their hearts.

INTRODUCTION

Of Ladies of the Lotus.

IN Himalay of world-wide fame, Mahadeo, the great protector of the universe, gazing in loving wise at his wife Parbati, the fair daughter of Naga, spake golden words of wisdom regarding the race of women, and into classes four divided he them—Padmini, Chitrini, Sankhini, and Hastini. From the elephant doth the Hastini take her name, and in her ways and looks is she like unto an elephant, and her lust is unto other men than her husband. And after the Sankh, or conch, is the Sankhini named, in that loud and shrill is her voice, and in the front of her plump neck are three circling lines like the hollows of the ribbing of a conch. And the Chitrini men so call, because on the bright surface of her excellences are dark marks, like stripes on a white cloth. Foremost of all is the Padmini, and after the lotus, the flower of perfection, which springing from the slime of ocean and thrusting through the waters to the light of the sun, bore Brahma, the first of the gods, is she hight. Such are chaste, devoutly attached to their lords, having eyes like a gazelle's, of fair complexion, their sweat with scent like a lotus, sweet of voice, with fascinating glances which enchant the whole world, walking like swans, smiling faintly with an exalted look of tenderness and affection, blessed with all the signs of good fortune, having small openings to their nostrils, flowing hair of the sheen of black velvet, of slender figure, loving music, and inclined to fasting rather than to feasting.¹

In the golden days of yore many were the Ladies of the Lotus—Draupadi,² Sita,³ Savitri,⁴ and others—but in this evil age few : yet among them not the least fair, nor the least mmous, was Rup Mati, queen of Mandu, in that her chaste devotion to Baz Bahadur, the last king of that doomed city, through life and unto death, hath marked her out as one who, despite all trials and temptations, lived and died faithful to husband and ideal. Her fame hath set Mandu for all time among the high places of romance, and her memory and her verse are yet green in the heart of Malwa. Famed is she in the East even as Lucretia the chaste in the West, and the loves of Rup Mati and Baz Bahadur are yet on the tongues of men of Hindustan even as those of Laila and Majnun and Shirin and Farhad⁵ in the mouths of the Persians. Worthily, therefore, is she written down as a Lady of the Lotus.

Of Malwa and Mandu and the coming of Baz Bahadur.

Many are the stories told of Rup Mati's birth and of her meeting with Baz Bahadur, yet of her beauty, her chastity, her skill in music and in poetry, and of her death, all say but the one word. Albeit the tale, as Ahmad-ul-Umri wrote it, is set forth in full hereafter, that which to this day the folk of Mandu tell of her meeting and union with Baz Bahadur is also worth the telling, nay more, it is such as hath made hot the hearts even of men of the West, so that it hath aforetime been told by them in prose and in verse.⁶

For them, who know not Malwa nor yet Mandu, be it here set down that Malwa lieth in the central parts of the country of Hindustan lifted high upon a tableland behind

the mountains, high Vindhya. A fair land is it, rich in soil and well-watered, bearing wheat and cotton and oil-seeds and the poppy, that giveth sleep. Therein is neither exceeding heat nor exceeding cold, and the nights of the land of Malwa are they not famous from ancient days? Even as men say : ' The dawn of Benaras, the evening of Oudh, the night of Malwa.'

Therein of old were three great cities—Ujjain, wherein Vikramaditya⁷ made his capital before the birth of our Lord,^a Dhar, wherein also he dwelt and wherein the Paramaras,^{b 8} who came after him, took delight, and Mandu the great fortress, jutting out like a bastion from the tableland into the valley of Rewa, the river which men of these times called Narbada. From Vikramaditya was its foundation, and thereafter the Paramaras dwelt therein, even Raja Bhoj,^{c 9} 'chief of the kings of olden time,' and Munja Raja,^{d 10} whose name abideth to this day. Fair and spacious was the city, and forty miles was the circuit of the walls, which looked—aye, and still look—down into the sheer ravines that encircle it, like arms of the sea, embracing it from the broad valley of Rewa : and in it were many temples of the gods of the Hindus and of the Jains, curiously wrought with images and other devices.

Upon the peace of the land broke the storm from the north, and it was laid waste by the barbarians, who utterly destroyed the temples and images of the gods of old, bidding all men under pain of death or slavery to bow the knee to the one God, Allah, whose Prophet is Muhammad, on whom be peace. Altamash,^e Ala-ud-din,^f and Firoz

^a 56 B.C.

^b A. D. 800-1310.

^c A. D. 1010-55.

^d A. D. 973-95.

^e A. D. 1226.

^f A. D. 1300.

Shah Tughlak,^g whose grandsire built the city of Tughlakabad by Delhi and himself the fort of Dhar, laid waste the land, nor did it know any peace or settled rule until Timur^h the Lame destroyed the empire of Delhi, and Dilawar Khan Ghorīⁱ threw off the yoke thereof and assumed royal state and titles, even ' the white canopy and the scarlet pavilion and the coining of money After him ruled Hoshang,^k a great and mighty prince, of whom many stories are told —of his battles, of his defeats, and of his adventures.¹¹ Thereon followed Mahmud Ghorī,^l who, abandoning the name of Mandu, gave order that it be called Shadiabad —the city of joy. Him did his brother-in-law Mahmud^m of the Khiljī¹² line poison and made himself king and a mighty one. After him ruled Ghias-ud-din,^{n 13} who gave himself utterly to women/abiding withfifteen thousand in the inner city, and Nasir-ud-din,^{o 14} a monster of cruelty, who was drowned in a tank at KaliadeK,"and Mahmud II,^p whom Bahadur Shah of Guzerat deposed and annexed his kingdom. Thereafter the kings of Guzerat^q bore sway till the coming of Humayun the Mogul, who took Mandu and held it, until Sher Shah, Sur,^r drove him from Hindustan and gave the governorship of Malwa to Shuja'at Khan of his own clan.

Now Shuja'at Khan was a great prince and wise and ambitious. In Malwa he ruled with wisdom and justice and made himself strong and built the city of Shujawalpur, that he might keep watch on Delhi, if haply he might seize the imperial throne. In the days of Salim Shah³ he

^g A. D. 1344.

^k A.D. 1405-35.

ⁿ A.D. 1469-1501.

^q A.D. 1534.

^h A. D. 1398.

^l A.D. 1435.

^o A.D. 1501-II.

^r A.D. 1540

ⁱ A. D. 1401-5.

^m A. D. 1435-69-

^p A.D. 1511.

^s A.D. 1554.

made attempt, yet was he restored to his governorship. But when Muhammad Shah Adil^t seized the throne and troubles befell the land of Hindustan by the return of Humayun from the north, Shuja'at Khan^u took on the imperial purple.

But in no short time he died, in his bed, as most say, but others, in seeking by force the fair daughter of Surat Singh of Chauti, and Malwa he left to his sons—Bazid Khan, whom men called Baz Bahadur, Daulat Khan, and Mustafa Khan. But with the speed of his name-bird, the falcon, did Baz Bahadur destroy his brethren. Daulat Khan he slew by treachery and Mustafa Khan he defeated in battle and drove to flight, and crowned himself sole king of Malwa. Thereafter he fought with the Mianas of Raisen and took that great fort, but in battle against the Gonds was he himself defeated by Durgawati, their queen.

Thenceforth he quitted the field of battle and abandoning Shujawalpur, his father's capital, whence watch and even advance on Delhi were possible, retired to Mandu, wellnigh impregnable if stoutly defended, but set on Malwa's extremest southern bastion. 'Of all men of his day was he the most accomplished in the science of music and of Hindi Song'¹⁵ and himself was 'a singer without rival'.¹⁶ He passed his days in the company of singers and musicians and from the north, the south, the east, and the west collected he them, both men and women, singers and chanters and players upon all instruments, on the 'bin' and the 'rabab', on the 'nai' and the 'sarnai', on the 'sarangi' and the 'tambura'.¹⁷ In his Court the voice of music was never silent, and his company was as a bevy of nightingales in a garden of roses. Among them he dwelt,

^t A. D. 1556.

^u A. D. 1556.

and little he recked of the return of Humayun and the establishment of the kingdom of Akbar.^a

Besides women and music and song, his delight lay in chase of the lion and the tiger, the deer and the buck, and to his hunting he wandered far and wide with his choice companions over the high land of Malwa and in the ravines that lead down to the river of Rewa.

Of the Legend of the Goddess of the River, and of her dealings with Rup Mati and Bdz Bahadur.

Now in the valley of the river Rewa by a fair reach of water lieth the town of Dharmपुरi, and the lord thereof was a Rajput of the Rathor clan, whose name, some say, was T'han Singh.¹⁸ On an island in the midst of the river was his fort, and therein he abode. From the days of the coming of the Ghoris to Mandu, and during the rule of the Khiljis, he and his fathers bowed before the kings of Mandu and faithfully had they served them. In the days when a Rajput named Medini Rai won the favour of Mahmud the second of the Khilji line, his father held high command under him, and when Mandu fell into the hands of Bahadur Shah,^b king of Guzerat, he and all other Rajputs in the fortress made 'Jauhar' of their women, and, donning robes of saffron, went to the death for the sake of their lord.¹⁹

Yet had the kings of Mandu not won the service of the proud Rathor or any other Rajput clan, if they had not on their part respected their honour nor demanded their daughters in marriage. For the giving of daughters to the Mussulman, nay even to any save a true-born Rajput of another clan, is an abomination to them—for to the Rathor

^a A. D. 1556-1605.

^b A. D. 1526.

all Rathornis are sisters. Even to this day is the Maharana of Udaipur honoured above all Rajputs, and the daughters of his household hold pre-eminence in all the royal houses of Rajasthan, for that he alone defied to the uttermost the demands of the proud Moguls for a daughter of the sun.²⁰ Nor in these days had the Rathors, of the race of the moon, given daughters to the Mogul.

Now T'han Singh had a daughter of the age of fourteen years, and she was beautiful exceedingly and of great accomplishment. By the holy river of Rewa she was born and dwelt—nay in the midst of the sacred stream—and the music of the waters thereof had passed into her soul, and on her the Goddess of the river showed great favour so that her skill in playing upon the 'bin' and in song was beyond all praise. For her the Thakur sought a bridegroom among the noble houses of Rajasthan and thither the coco-nut²¹ had been sent, that in the coming month of marriages she might be wedded.

Now it befell that on the day of the coming of spring, whereon all the land of Hind rejoices and pays honour to the Gods, who bless the earth with fresh leaves and flowers and promise of harvest, Rup Mati was moved by the Goddess to take her beloved 'bin' and go with her chosen handmaidens to a pool in the forest and chant the songs of spring. There they bathed their golden limbs in the pool and, twining their hair with garlands of the jasmine, took seat on the grass beneath the thick shade of a banyan tree and listened to Rup Mati who, 'bin' in hand, sang the sweetest songs of spring.

Upon this very day it befell also by the hand of fate, which was to bring love and doom to Rup Mati the fair, **that** Baz Bahadur, king of Mandu, rode forth with his

gallant array to hunt in the vale of Rewa. Some say that he followed a deer, which he had wounded and which went to drink of the pool, whereby the maidens sat, but others, that in the silence of the forest he heard a voice, whereof the beauty and sweetness pierced him to the soul. Thereon he halted his company and, taking but three with him, he stalked with jungle cunning the fair mistress of that voice too fair. Nearer they crept to the pool and then through the leaves they espied the face of Rup Mati, excelling in beauty even the voice, which yet rang high and clear. Baz Bahadur's companions looked to him for an order, but beheld him in open amaze, staring at the maid as if he had never before seen woman.

'Shadow of God,' said one, 'twere easy to seize her and carry her off: give but the order and she shall be thine to-night.'

'Still thy impious tongue,' was all the answer the young king vouchsafed, and the next moment he burst through the bushes and showed himself to the maidens in all his youth and beauty, still unspoiled. Shrieking, they gathered round Rup Mati, but she faced the intruder with all the spirit of a true Rajputni, forgetful in her wish to save her companions of her duty, as a maid ripe for wedlock, to hide her face from the alien.

In words of fire the young king made protest of the love which had sprung into flame in his heart, vowing that, whether she would or no, she must with him to Mandu to be his bride and queen.

Rup Mati answered never a word but gazed, enrapt, on the face of the king, and thus for a while they stayed, the eyes of each feeding on the other's face and form.

Overcome with passion, the king stepped forward as if

to grasp the maid. She shrank back, and now the sense of her danger awoke her to a sense of her duty—to herself, to her lineage, and to the Goddess of her worship.

'Never,' she cried, pointing to the towering ramparts of Mandu, 'never will I marry thee until the waters of Rewa, the Goddess of my worship, flow through thy royal city there on high.'

For a brief moment the king gazed on her, and then swiftly turning vanished back into the jungle, silently as he had come.

Rup Mati gazed after him, as if scarce knowing whether she had not indeed been vouchsafed a vision of some beautiful god of the forest, but quickly her maids called her to herself, and hurriedly and in lingering fear they made their way back to the fort of the Thakur.

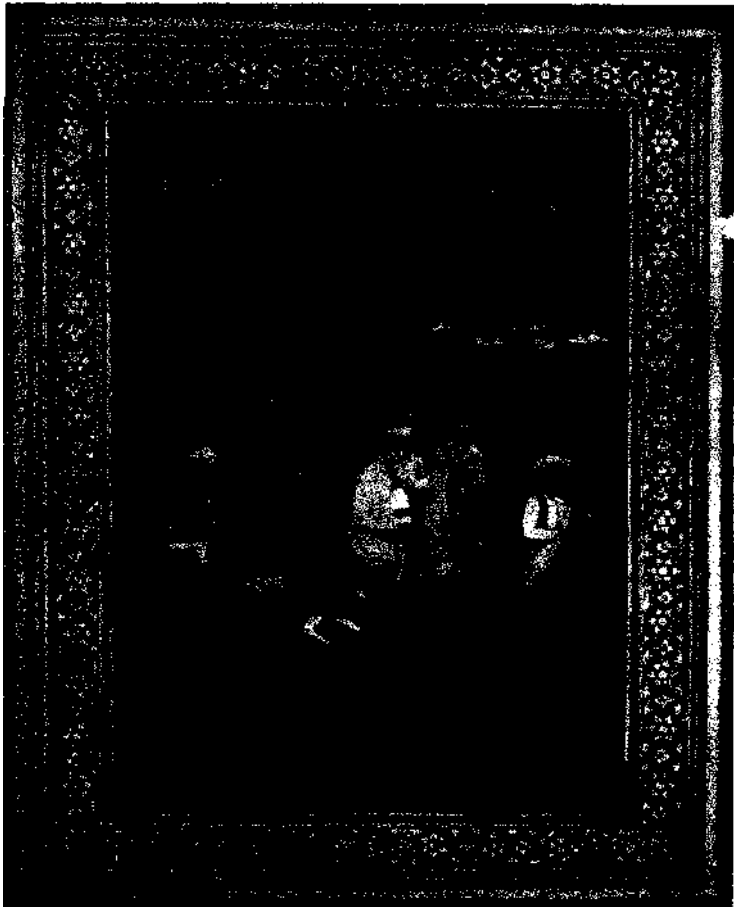
Rup Mati herself held her peace, pondering in her heart the beauty and the fiery words of her sudden lover, but her maids showed not such wisdom. Babbling, they told their story to their fellows in the Zanana, and soon the Thakurani was ware that her daughter had shown her face to a man—and him the alien king of Mandu. In distress and perturbation she bade her women summon the Thakur to the female apartments. Soon he came, in spotless white save for his head-dress of five colours, which crowned a face of regular feature, and his parted beard was white as his clothes. Wailing, the Thakurani told him of the disgrace to his beloved daughter, of the shame that had fallen, and of that which of a surety would fall upon their house, if the king demanded possession of the girl. Swift and relentless was the Thakur's answer, and conceived in the spirit of the appeal by the lady of Rupnagarh to Rana Raj Singh of Udaipur when Aurangzeb demanded her hand in

marriage, ' Shall the swan mate with the stork, a Rajputni pure in blood be the bride of a monkey-faced barbarian?'²² Then he gave the order for which honour called. Much his love for his daughter, but for Rajput honour more. Death was the only defence against dishonour, and he bade the fatal draught of opium²³ be prepared for her drinking. Weeping, wailing, and lamentation filled the Zanana, and the aged Thakurani and her women fell at his feet, beseeching him to relent. Sternly he refused, and despite all their entreaties he remained obdurate. The family priest was summoned, yet could he win naught from the fierce fury of honour outraged. Only to religion did the Thakur bow, when the priest forbade defilement of the festival of spring by sacrifice of its fairest flower. Then with reluctance he gave consent to the postponement of the drinking until morning broke, and, ordering Rup Mati to be held prisoner, strode out to drown his sorrow in opium.²⁴

Shut in her little room the tender maid awaited the terrors of the dawn. Slumber fell not on her eyelids, and her thoughts strayed hither and thither, now to the fate that awaited her by her father's command, and now to the lover, who had come and spoken and vanished like a dream. Yet anon, worn out by weeping, she dozed fitfully and then of a sudden awoke in terror, for the room was lit with a great light and before her was a shining figure of stature far exceeding that of mortal man or woman.

Terror-stricken she hid her eyes and cowered before it, but a soft hand was laid gently on her shoulder and a loving voice spake compassionately in her ear :

' Fear not, maiden mine, for I am Rewa, the Goddess of thy worship : in thine hour of trial thou didst remember me nor am I unmindful: behold, in the city of Mandu from



RIDING BY NIGHT

Rap Mati on a spirited horse with her chosen knight riding beside her'

Rajput School

under a tamarisk tree shall a spring break forth, which shall be called by my name and which shall mingle with my water in one divinity.'

The vision faded and the little maid laid herself down again, pondering on all that the rede of the Goddess might portend. This way and that way ran her interpreting, and from all ways comfort flowed into her heart.

The night passed and the vague light of false dawn began to illumine the valley. Her hour was drawing nigh but the Goddess was mindful of her worshipper. Haply she had also visited Baz Bahadur in a vision of the night. Be that as it may, as the first cock crew there was an outcry, the clash of arms, the rush of feet. Baz Bahadur had hastily collected his men and escalated the little fort at dawn.

Stoutly fought the Thakur and his men, yet was the unequal struggle quickly over and soon, instead of the deadly opiate of Durga, Rup Mati was drinking the living Wine her lover's lips.

And now must Rajput pride bow to barbarian might. Coldly and sternly the Thakur stood by as his daughter and her maids made ready for the journey.

'Go we by the Jahangirpura gate?' asked his companions of the young king.

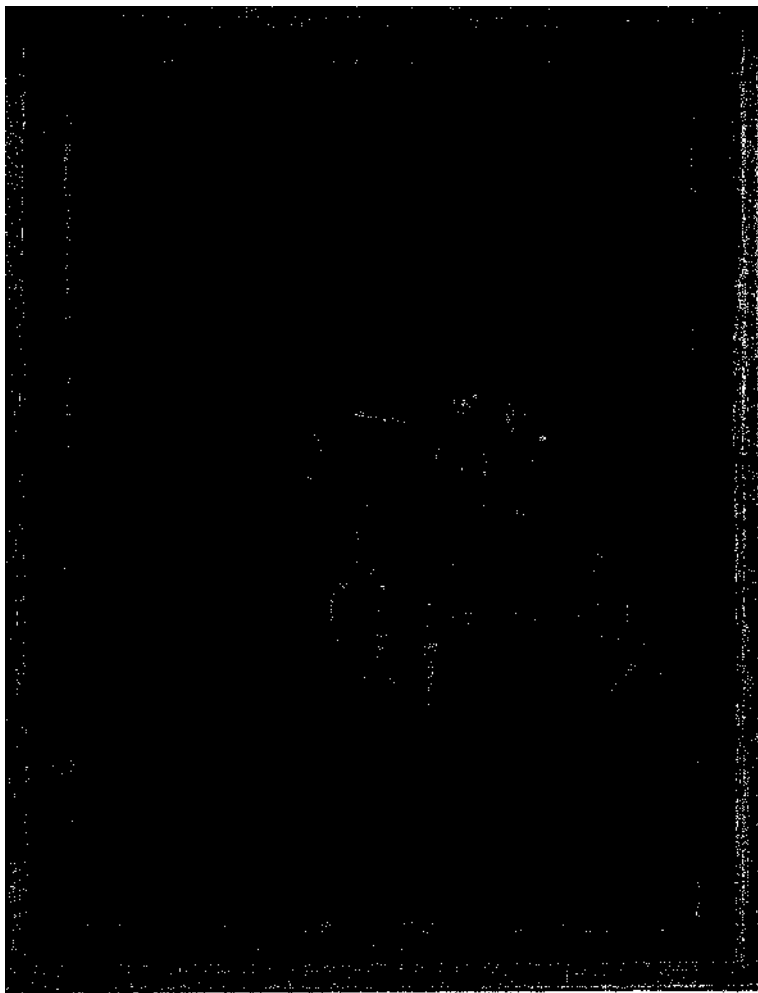
'Nay, for the way is rough and hard, moreover must this dainty fair enter Mandu by the royal road for there shall she reign queen of the city, as of my heart. Send swift word to the governor to prepare for our royal advent on the morrow, and march we now to Nalcha.'

Thither they set out, Rup Mati on a spirited horse with her chosen knight riding beside her, and at eve they halted at the palace at Nalcha—and 'of the beauty of Nalcha,' as saith Jahangir,²⁵ what shall be written?' In the morn

they made the short march over the plateau, ever nearing the edge of the world, by the hill of Gangli Teli²⁶ of whom the proverb says: 'Where now is Raja Bhoj and Gangli Teli where?' By hill and vale they went, past mosque and tomb and caravanserai, until, on the last height, the governor of the city awaited their coming with all his array. Thence mounted on elephants, with trappings of gold and howdahs of silver, they passed on down the steep descent to the narrow isthmus between the sheer ravines. Onward up the great ramp, where the seven hundred elephants of Hoshang Shah or Mahmud Khilji, bedizened even as theirs and painted with indigo and turmeric and lac, had borne their masters, fresh from triumphs over Guzerat or Chitor, or, divested of their gorgeous panoplies, had toiled with Cyclopean blocks of red freestone or blue slate, to build the palaces and tombs of kings, the baths of the veiled queens, and the mosques of the one God, whose prophet is Muhammad—peace be on him and all the faithful.

Then through the great gate whose triple arches still look serenely to Delhi, and through the elephant gate that guards the inner city, past the massive sloping walls of the Hindola Mahal²⁷ and to the ramp within it, that leads to the female apartments, did the royal elephants bear their burden. There they knelt to let their riders dismount, and Rup Mati passed in behind the curtain to be arrayed for her bridal.

Bright and happy were the days that followed for Rup Mati, sole queen of Baz Bahadur's heart. When after a long night of love he left her, she would call her women at will and bathe in the Turkish baths or in the open-air baths of the Jahaz Mahal,²⁸ or spend long days by the cool waters of the Champa Baori,²⁹ deep below the level of the ground.



'They rode, as oft depicted by artists of Hindustan,'
Rajput School.

On Baz Bahadur's return, more often soon than late, for he neglected all things for her company, they would sing to each other the songs of love which they had composed, or, calling the musicians and the singing and dancing girls, listen to their songs of love and war. Fair was life to them evening after evening on the roof of the Ship Palace, in the heart of their dear city impregnable, looking out over mosque and tomb, dome and cupola of blue and green and yellow and of marble white, and beyond, to lake and wood, to hill and vale—fair indeed, and all the fairer for the music in their ears and the love within their hearts.

Yet was not Rup Mati slow to perceive that herein lay danger for Baz Bahadur. His nobles delighted to gather round him and ply him with wine, till he knew not night from day. And from the women, from his former queen, from the concubines and dancing girls, there was danger to her love. That from the queen ceased indeed, when she 'rasped through her life with the file of jealousy' Yet the others remained, but such was Rup Mati's wisdom that even in their presence found she field for pretty compliment to Baz Bahadur.

'We are thy bees and thou our lotus flower,
For thee we pray, that thou ne'er cease to bloom :
Open thy petals to us and we live :
Withhold thy bounty and we read our doom.'

Yet the fear was always in her heart, and she sought to lead Baz Bahadur away to some place of retirement where love might have fuller and more constant scope, untroubled by temptation. To this end she led him forth and they rode, as oft depicted by artists of Hindustan, over the plateau and up and down its hills and vales seeking for the

it with an instant and undying love, and then she found another spring of joy. Away to the west shone a long stretch of silver, and by it Dharpuri, her old home, e'er love and fate and the River Goddess bore her away to joy and sorrow and doom. Here she bade Baz Bahadur build her two chattris on the roof, that she might come at will to gaze and dream. Many a day they sat there and sang together. Anon, when Baz Bahadur neglected her for the delights of wine or of some new beauty, she would steal away at night with her ' bin ' to this place of wide prospect, and gazing at the lamp, nightly lit by the priest in the temple of the Goddess at Dharpuri, sing out her soul to the moon and the moon-bathed valley.

' Dead is the day when thou wast one with me,
 As I with thee :
 Now, I am I and thou art thou again,
 Not one but twain :
 What cause gave we for thy malignity,
 O Destiny ? '

Then when all seemed saddest, Baz Bahadur, tearing himself away from the singing girls and wine, would climb to the roof of his palace and answer her couplet by couplet : and at last, yearning for his soul's mate, would scale the height and the stars and the woods be witnesses of their love revived.

If question be made of the truth of this story, let this suffice that here it hath been written, as they tell it in Mandu, where from a small seed of fact it has grown like a pipal tree out of the ruins of its palaces, fitting itself to probabilities and localities. They who write histories tell it otherwise, and even so doth Ahmad-ul-Umri, whose relation followeth hereafter, but of the capture and the death

in the fifteenth year of his reign Akbar sent Hassan Khan Khazanchi to bring him to court. Thereon he ' hastened to the summit of fortune and paid his homage to the Emperor ' and became a noble of his court, ' where he was encompassed with princely favours '.³⁵

In these his later years, of a surety, Baz Bahadur knew, and, in a manner, loved many women, such above all as added to beauty the charm of song. Yet was his heart ever true to his perfect Lady of the Lotus, who had died to keep herself pure, chaste, and loyal. When he came to die,³⁶; his last wish was to be laid by her side on the island at Sarangpur, where she had awaited his coming for many long and lonely years. There each by other they yet sleep], those two great lovers once more united, the Lady of the Lotus and her Lord, in the middle of the lotus-spread waters.

II

Of the Finding of the Persian Manuscript, the Pictures, and the Verses.

IT had long been in my mind to make inquiries into the true history of Rup Mati of Mandu, of whom the historians of the period make mention indeed but tell no consecutive story, nor was there any great reason to believe in the literal truth of the legends told in Mandu.

When I returned to Malwa in 1923 the most obvious method of beginning the quest was to search for songs attributed to Rup Mati, which were alleged to be still extant among the peasantry. The only two, of which I was at the time aware, were that translated by Sir A. Cunning-

ham and printed in Col. Luard's brochure on *Dhar and Mndu* (No. xxvi), and that quoted in the notes to the *History of Mndoo* by 'A Bombay Subaltern' (No. xii). As soon as I began my inquiries I found, resident almost at my door, my chief agent in the search, Pandit Balbhadra Sinha of Sehore, who had for long taken an interest in Rup Mati's history and songs, and in the course of a few months he found the eight songs translated in Nos. ii-ix. Then the search halted and success seemed likely to end, when unexpected but very welcome assistance arrived in the person of Munshi Bashiruddin, B. A., LL. B., of Bhopal. He came to see me in quest of an opening in life, and in the course of my interview with him I found out that he had been making independent research into the reign of the Emperor Sher Shah and had studied many unpublished Persian manuscripts of his era.

As Sher Shah had appointed Shuja'at Khan, Baz Bahadur's father, to be Governor of Malwa, it appeared not unlikely that among these there might have been manuscripts dealing with the history of Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati. I questioned him accordingly. At first he could not recollect any manuscript of the sort, but on reflection added that at one house in Bhopal, where he had found several manuscripts referring to Sher Shah's times, he thought he remembered seeing a few pages in which the names of Rup Mati and Baz Bahadur were mentioned.

This was highly interesting news and I at once sent him off to search, and the first finds were some eight pages in Persian of the beginning of 'A strange tale of faithfulness' and one or two later leaves. One of the first-fruits of this discovery was that the birthplace of Rup Mati was definitely set down as Sarangpur, as Sir John Malcolm had

stated (though mis-spelling the name Saharanpur), and, as I was already aware, in Sarangpur there existed a tomb which had from time immemorial been pointed out as that of Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati. The further statement that Rup Mati was of Brahman birth led to inquiries, not only in Sarangpur but from the Brahmans of that place, whether among them were preserved, orally or otherwise, any verses and songs attributed to her. The result was the production, mainly in manuscripts of at least one hundred years old, of the remaining songs, including the beautiful love-letter in verse, which now figures as No. i in the translations.

While this search was going on, Munshi Bashiruddin had been busy in Bhopal, hunting for further portions of the Persian manuscript, and in the course of two or three months these were found page by page and pieced together. Each gap in the text became the starting-point of a new search, and eventually the whole story was complete and appeared to end, appropriately enough to its title, on the words ' If Nizami had occasion to read this strange tale, he would have learnt that women, too, may be faithful unto death '.

Reflection, however, upon the author's style and predilections rendered it almost impossible to my mind that he could have checked his natural instinct and ended so abruptly, and I soon persuaded Bashiruddin of this. He returned once more to the search, and after a period of ten days returned in triumph with the long and interesting disquisition on woman which forms the last part of the manuscript, the impressive peroration and the final note of the copyist, Mir Ja'afar Ali.

This, with its statement that ' the original was embellished with pictures and of these three came into my hand ',

became the immediate starting-point of a new trail. The son of Inayat Ali, who had purchased and brought the manuscript to Bhopal and inscribed on it the last couplet, was unable to throw any light on the subject, and it was only after consulting his mother that he found that some pictures had been sold by his father to one Aziz-ur-rahman of Tonk in Rajputana—two hundred miles to the north-west. Inquiries after him had then to be made in Tonk, and in time it was discovered that he had removed to Hyderabad, Deccan, six hundred miles to the south. There the search had to be restarted, but eventually the quarry was found. Inquiry was naturally made about three pictures only, of which Aziz-ur-rahman admitted possession and gave the subjects as 'The adornment of the bride', 'Rup Mati and Baz Bahadur in seclusion at Mandu', and 'The last scene'. Offers of purchase were made but were uncompromisingly refused. The fish, however, was biting, and at last Aziz-ur-rahman turned up in Bhopal, but unfortunately a day or two after I had been transferred to Gwalior. After long bargaining Bashiruddin Succeeded in getting from him three pictures which he forwarded to me. They were :

1. 'Rup Mati in the lap of the tiler of the bride, even as the cup at the lip and the mirror in the hand', marked 'the work of Sanwlah'.
2. 'Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati in seclusion at Mandu indulging in the delights of love', marked 'the work of Govardhan'.
3. A picture bearing no title but a variant of No. 2, apparently by the same artist.

There was thus no picture to which the title of 'The last scene' could be assigned, and hence further inquiry was made. This led to the production of two more pictures :

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4. ' This is the miserable end of this story, which began in love and faithfulness ', without any attribution.
5. ' A martyr to faithfulness ', marked the work of Chitarman.

Some comment will be made on the pictures at a later stage, but here I only remark on the extreme good fortune which attended me in my quest, in finding almost at the same time two such enthusiasts as Pandit Balbhadra Sinha and Munshi Bashiruddin, and in discovering in the Persian manuscript such an admirable pointer in the search for Rup Mati's verses.

Of the Author of the Manuscript and its History.

Little is known of Ahmad-ul-Umri, the author of the story told in the manuscript, beyond what is stated in the note appended to it by Mir Ja'afar Ali, the copyist. From that it appears that he was in the service of Sharaf-ud-din Hussain Mirza, who was a commander of five thousand at Akbar's Court and was on his mother's side himself a descendant of Timun. He rebelled in A. D. 1563 and died of poison in A. D. 1581. Ahmad-ul-Umri does not appear to have been involved in his ruin, and he lived until the early years of Jahangir's reign. He seems to have taken a particular interest in the Emperor Sher Shah, and was responsible for a collection of his firmans, but beyond this nothing is known of him. It will be evident, however, that he was gifted with a poetic, if, to the Western mind, a somewhat turgid imagination, and that at times he strikes out phrases of great originality and beauty. Though a Muhammadan, he had studied Hindu thought, and, though an Oriental, he had views on women almost European in their liberality.

It is impossible not to regret that there is little or no chance of further acquaintance with this prose poet, this romantic historian, this Oriental feminist.

' This woeful history was written down in the forty-third year of the reign of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Akbar Shah—may God preserve his kingdom for ever.' So Ahmad-ul-Umri records in the beginning of the manuscript, thus giving the date of writing as A. D. 1599. The original manuscript passed to his grandson, Fulad Khan, who had a friend, Mir Ja'afar Ali. He found the story so interesting that, after reading it at Agra in the year A. D. 1653, he made a copy of it and secured three of the pictures, with which the original was embellished, and apparently had others painted for his own copy. He inserted in the text certain verses of Sa'ib, a well-known Persian poet of Jahangir's reign.

At the end of Mir Ja'afar Ali's copy are various seals, seemingly those of later owners of the manuscript. None of these is, however, decipherable, but there is one legible signature and one legible note. The signature is that of Mahbub Ali, a well-known Muhammadan divine of Delhi, who died in 1831. He was a man of great learning, and his possession of the manuscript shows that he must have attached considerable value to it. On his death it passed to a lady of his family, with whom the family of Jemadar Inayat Ali of the Bhopal State was connected, and from whom Inayat Ali bought it in Agra. He added to it very appropriately the final couplet

' Seek not on earth my grave when life depart :
My sepulchre is every faithful heart.'

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Of the Pictures.

The specific dating of the original manuscript and of Mir Ja'afar Ali's copy, and the clear later history of it have some bearing on any estimate that may be formed of the date and genuineness of the pictures. The subjects of these have been enumerated above, and three of them are marked with attributions to Sanwlah,³⁷ a well-known painter of Akbar's time, to Govardhan,³⁸ and to Chitarman,³⁹ both well-known painters of Jahangir's and Shah-jahan's times. This does not mean that, as in the case of European artists, the pictures are signed, but the legend 'the work of Sanwlah' (or Govardhan or Chitarman) is an attribution, presumably by the owner of the manuscript. So far as I have been able to secure any opinions of value regarding the attribution of the pictures the results are, it must frankly be confessed, not very favourable. The picture in the Persian style attributed to Chitarman (No. 5) is unlike that artist's known work, and the same remark applies to the picture (No. 2) attributed to Govardhan. The artist of No. 3, however, is held to be the same as of No. 2, and of this there can be little doubt. The attribution of picture No. 1 to Sanwlah is held to be more probable, as it is in real Mogul style, though doubts are expressed as to its being of Akbar's time. The picture No. 4 is held to be quite clearly of the early time of Akbar, done for a manuscript, but not the same manuscript as that for which Nos. 2, 3, and 5 were done.

I cannot set any artistic opinion of mine against these views, but, as already stated, weight should be given to the apparently trustworthy statements of the manuscript and to its connected history. There are also some other points

to be taken into consideration before, if not the attributions, at any rate the dating of the pictures as contemporary with Mir Ja'afar Ali's copy of the manuscript, can be set aside.

The legend on picture No. 1, whose attribution to Sanwlah is held more probable, is from Na'ui, a poet of Akbar's time, who, though mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, was not widely known nor much read afterwards.

The legend of No. 4, which is held to be of Akbar's early time, is a quotation, if not quite accurate, from the manuscript. The variation is in the use for 'ulfat', i. e. affection, of 'wafa', i.e. faithfulness, which is the key-word of the whole manuscript, and the inscription is undoubtedly in the hand of Mir Ja'afar Ali, the copyist. It may be assumed, then, with safety that he inserted the picture in the manuscript and wrote on it the legend.

Picture No. 5 seems to have been cut out of its original setting and placed in a new one. The legend, again, is in Mir Ja'afar Ali's hand and is a phrase, the key-phrase indeed, of the manuscript, and both the legend and the artist's name are on the picture itself. Here, again, it may be assumed that Mir Ja'afar Ali inserted this picture in his copy and further believed in the attribution to Chitarman.

These considerations should, I submit, be weighed before the attribution and the dating of the pictures are disregarded.

Which three pictures Mir Ja'afar Ali secured from the original manuscript cannot, of course, be stated, but there is some probability that he would try to secure those attributed to known artists, and as already pointed out No. 5 seems to have been cut out of another manuscript, inserted in this, and ascribed with the legend in Mir Ja'afar

Ali's hand. The third picture is a variant of the second, probably by the same artist. The fourth has no attribution, but its date is unquestioned and it also has the legend in Mir Ja'afar Ali's hand.

Of the Historical Value of the Manuscript.

There is no reason to doubt the genuineness of the manuscript or its correct dating. It was found in a place which held earlier manuscripts of Sher Shah's reign. The script is of the period. The author is known, and the history of the manuscript is clear. It is a copy made in A. D. 1653 of an original written in A. D. 1599. The author was thus almost contemporary with the events he relates, and states who his informant was. He was one ' Suliman Khan, who had seen the happenings with his own eyes and was one of the followers of Shuja'at Khan, who was appointed to the throne of the governorship of Malwa by Sher Shah '. He was ' groom of the bed-chamber in the court of Bazid Khan ', and is expressly stated to have been present at Rup Mati's last singing before him and at the final pleasure party given by Adham Khan in Baz Bahadur's palace, when he believed that Rup Mati had surrendered to his importunate lust.

To knowledge of the history of the times the manuscript makes no great or valuable addition, though it may possibly throw a few welcome sidelights. Be that as it may, the only points which call for discussion by me here are those which concern Rup Mati herself, her birthplace, her caste, and the place of her death and burial.

It is true that the local Mandu legend puts down Rup Mati's birthplace at Dharpuri on the Narbada and the

'Bombay Subaltern' at Tandapuri on the same river. The latter place I have been unable to identify. The choice of Dharmपुरi is, however, merely one of local fancy. Rup Mati's chattris look down by day on the silver stretch of river by that town and by night on the lights of the temple on the island opposite to it. If her birthplace were not known, Dharmपुरi is the obvious choice of invention, and, once made, all subsequent visitors to the chattris would willingly believe it true. Sir John Malcolm, who had the earliest opportunity in recent years, on his entry into Malwa in 1818, records Rup Mati's place of birth as Saharanpur, an obvious mis-spelling for Sarangpur, and this, apart from the present manuscript, is the best evidence available. The manuscript gives the additional and valuable detail that Sarangpur was Baz Bahadur's 'Jagir' before his father's death, and this fact makes possible his acquaintance with a maiden of that place. The other legends which have grown up round Rup Mati's name are natural growths. As already stated, the site of the chattris in itself suggests Dharmपुरi, and the legend of the Goddess of the Rewa river is merely an attempt to explain the name of Rewa Kund, which attaches to the spring and pool below Baz Bahadur's palace.

A more difficult question is that of Rup Mati's origin. On the one side, it has to be at once admitted that Ahmad-ul-Umri's main interest lies in the romance of his story, and this may have led him to improve on fact in regard to her origin. On the other hand, it is improbable that any of the various historians who mention her death made any real inquiry into the place of her birth or her origin. Their natural assumption would be that she was merely a dancing girl.

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It must be confessed, too, that the author of the manuscript uses certain expressions which raise doubts of the accuracy of his description of Rup Mati as a Brahman girl. Had that been so, her mother could not, as stated, have made a second marriage, and certainly not with her husband's brother. Nor, again, could she have become Baz Bahadur's queen without formal conversion to Islam and the assumption of a Muhammadan name. Yet nothing is heard of either, and the author admits that though her father himself gave his daughter to Baz Bahadur 'no marriage ceremony was performed'. The use too by Rup Mati of the word 'union' to describe her connexion with Baz Bahadur, her coming out from behind the 'pardah' to exhort him to action, the phrase in her message to Adham Khan, 'I have sung in his assemblies', all suggest that the story of dancing-girl origin was the true one but that the writer felt her genius, her chastity, and the interest of his story demanded nobler birth.

The evidence of the historians is, however, inconclusive. Farishta calls Rup Mati unequivocally 'a courtesan'; the author of the *Ma'asir-ul-Umra* 'a songstress', a word corresponding with the Hindi word 'patur' used by Ahmad-ul-Umri, which has been translated 'mistress'. The *Akbar-nama* does not make it clear whether she is to be included among the ladies of Baz Bahadur's seraglio or among his singing and dancing women, though the reference to her 'honour' appears to imply the honour of a wife. The *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, however, speaks of her expressly as 'the favourite wife'.

This conflict of evidence may perhaps be taken to show that the version of the text, which is to some extent a reconciliation of discrepancies, is correct. Further, if the

attribution to Rup Mati of the songs and verses, hereinafter translated, be held correct, it cannot be denied that their matter and form are more in accord with the authorship of an educated Brahman lady than of a dancing-girl. The version of Ahmad-ul-Umri, also, derives new and unexpected support from the discovery among the Brahmans of Sarangpur of so many of her songs and verses.

The question of Rup Mati's origin must, then, still be left undecided, but all sympathetic readers will surely side with the version of the manuscript.

As regards the place of Rup Mati's death, there is no need to doubt the version of the manuscript that it took place at Mandu. The *Akbarndma*, indeed, implies that it took place at Sarangpur after the battle, but the account is brief and the exact place of death was of no importance to the historian. That her tomb is at Sarangpur there would have been no doubt, but for Blochmann's statement in his edition of the *Ain-i-Akbari* that 'Baz Bahadur and his Rup Mati lie buried together. Their tomb stands in the middle of a tank at Ujjain.' Beveridge rightly doubts this. There is no trace or legend of any tomb at Ujjain. Nor is there a tomb at Mandu, though local tradition says Rup Mati died there. This, however, would be no bar to her corpse being taken to Sarangpur to the tomb which Baz Bahadur had long prepared in his own 'Jagir' for himself and her. There—in the middle of a tank—is a tomb, now ruined, obviously that of a man and woman of rank, which steady local tradition points out as the tomb of Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati. The tomb is about a mile north of the town, which lies in Dewas (S.B.) State on the picturesque banks of the Kali Sindh river. In a note to the *Legend of Mndoo* Capt. Abbott writes: 'At Saharangpur in Malwa, her tomb

is preserved. We ourselves have made the pilgrimage (A. D. 1835). Senseless to female loveliness as are generally the natives of India, her matchless beauty, constancy and grace are treasured in their traditions. They fondly believe that if any one call at that tomb "Roop-Mati", the echo renders not a repetition of her name but the name of the chosen of her heart, Baz Bahadur.'

Alas ! to-day the dome has fallen and echo there is none.

III

Of the Songs and Verses attributed to Rup Matt.

THERE remains the third portion of this book on which a few comments are necessary. It is composed of 'Dohas', 'Kabittas', and 'Sawaiyas' still sung by the musicians of Malwa and attributed to Rup Mati. In view of the steady continuity of Indian tradition some are in all probability hers, and the majority of them have been taken from manuscripts which at the least are one hundred years old, and, according to their owners and judging from their condition and the script, at least two hundred. Doubters may be reminded that to-day His Highness the Maharaja of Dhar has in his employ musicians who can trace their descent from those of his Paramara ancestors, and who are still playing as their masterpieces the same harmonies which delighted the court at Ujjain. The probabilities of correct ascription of verse of A. D. 1560 to Rup Mati are obviously much increased by such knowledge, and it may not unreasonably be thought that most of the simpler and more passionate poems may well be genuine ; and simplicity and

passion are the only criteria to be applied to the verses of one, who loved with all her heart, who was wedded at fifteen and died ere she was twenty-one. It may perhaps be taken as some corroboration of the genuineness of them and of the story of the Persian manuscript that sixteen of them were obtained from Brahmans in and round Sarangpur. Doubts will, however, be felt and rightly over the pieces attributed to her in her resistance to Adham Khan. Some, nay most, of these appear to be the production of later bards who saw the strength of the situation but were not inspired by its passionate despair. Such bards, however, ordinarily imitate a model, and Rup Mati, as tradition states, may in fact have left one. Readers may take their choice ; mine is made. Though Rup Mati's chaplet be not entirely of her own weaving, though later bards may have mingled in it flowers of lesser fragrance, its beauty is not doubtful nor is it altogether unworthy of so fair a head.

Two songs were obtained from books in English—No. xii, which is printed in note xxxvi, page 109, of the Bombay Subaltern's *History of Mandoo*, and No. xxv, which is printed on pages 22 and 23 of Colonel Luard's *Dhdr and Mdndu*.

The pieces have been arranged according to metre. First come the Dohas, i. e. couplets, often a single couplet, though there is no bar to any number. This is the commonest and simplest of Hindi metres and is composed of two lines, of 24 instants, each divided into two ' Charans ' 6-4-3, 6-4-1. The last foot in the first Charan must be a Tribach and the last syllable of each line short. The Dohas, as will be seen, on the whole contain expression of simpler and more passionate feeling than the other metres. Secondly, the Kabittas—four-line poems—each line of 32

letters with a break after each 8 letters. The measure is used by the ' Bhats ' or bards for heroic tales, and hence the heroic couplet is not inappropriate as the ordinary medium of translation. Rup Mati uses the Kabittas for expressions of different emotions from the Dohas. Sawaiyas have four lines each of 16 plus 15, i.e. 31 instants, the last foot being a trochee. They are used by Rup Mati much as the Kabittas, though also for the proverbial philosophy of the countryside.

Last have been placed the verses translated by Sir A. Cunningham—partly to separate his version, partly because no Hindi text was obtainable, and from the Romanized Hindi reprinted by Colonel Luard from Cunningham's text it was not possible to decide on the metre or interpret the exact sense of some parts. Probably the piece is composed of two Dohas.

Conclusion.

For all faults of translation indulgence is craved by one who is neither a Persian nor a Hindi scholar, and who trusts to the romance of the tale, and to the inherent beauty of some, at least, of the songs and verses, of which he hopes a little ray shines through the dull vesture of their new Western garb.

A STRANGE TALE OF
FAITHFULNESS



Rup Mati seated before the lap of the tiner of the bride, even as the cup at the lip and the mirror in the hand.' Marked the work of Sanwlah.

A STRANGE TALE OF FAITHFULNESS

IN the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

In the outset of this book let the name of God be taken, who created light and darkness, by whose command eighteen thousand worlds were shapen : who is without body or attributes : who exalted man by the gift of love : who set this divine affection in his heart : who placed the torch of instruction in the hand of his unlettered Prophet, bidding him show to all people a lighted road : may the blessings of God be on the lofty soul of him, even Muhammad the Prophet, and on his family and on the companions be blessing and peace.

Thereafter:

I, Ahmad-ul-Umri, Turkoman, chanced to visit the parts of Malwa, to see other marvellous cites of Hindustan and to hear tales of wonder therein. Of these tales of astounding one is that of Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati which befell in Malwa. He who told me the story was Suliman Khan, who had seen the happenings with his own eyes. He was one of the followers of Shuja'at Khan, who was appointed to the throne of the governorship of Malwa by Sher Shah. The tale of my unfolding is a tale of grief and sorrow, yet therefrom the eye of intelligence may draw instruction. This woeful history was written down in the forty-third year of the reign of Sultan Jalal-ud-din Akbar Shah—may God preserve his kingdom for ever.

I. *Introduction.*

It is not a hidden matter that Shuja'at Khan was one of the dependants of the kingdom of Sher Shah. Who would seek knowledge of the deeds of that renowned hero, let him search the memories of men ; for the tales of that time are yet in the mouths of men. Be this much, however, here set down that Shuja'at Khan was a general of the victorious armies of Sher Shah, and when his cause triumphed he bestowed Malwa on Shuja'at Khan, whose son was Bazid Khan, known by the name of Baz Bahadur.

II. *The Tale of the Beginning of the Love of Baz Bahadur.*

Lo, the nights of the land of Malwa, be they dark or light, are such as to incline the heart of man to the madness or that love which exalteth the son of Adam and hath made him to be adored of the angels of God.

It is the glory of India, that Vikram of Ujjain first laid in Malwa the foundations of settled government, and that therein Raja Bhoj was born and flourished, who was chief of the kings of olden time.

In this province is a city of singular beauty, called Sarangpur, which Shuja'at Khan gave in Jagir to his son, Bazid Khan. In that city was a Brahman, with whom Bazid Khan was joined in friendship, and his name was Jadu Rai. Even to this day a village is known by the name of him, the village of Jadu,⁴⁰ and far and wide among men hath spread the fame of the wealth of the city of Sarangpur.

One day it befell that Jadu Rai made a great feast and did honour to Bazid Khan, who went to his house and was takenjcaptive in the aet of beauty. At the feast his eyes

first fell upon the face of her whose beauty and goodness crowned her queen of the world of charm, wherein she rivalled the houris of Paradise, and thence he returned in distress and perturbation. Suliman Khan related that such was his anguish and despair, that the tale thereof was borne to his father. Shuja'at Khan, thereon, summoned his son to his capital city and desired him to abandon his madness.

And now it is laid upon me to make discourse of the praise of the loveliness of that moon-faced daughter of beauty, and the foundation of my tale is in the saying of a villager—yet a villager such as he who gave the frame of many stories to Firdausi of Tus,⁴¹ and as he who bestowed on the cup of Jamshed the attraction of light and gave courage to Afrasiab and Rustam.

The beauty of the tresses of the moon-faced maiden was like unto the dark coils of a chain, falling to the ground as gently as God's message of compassion descended from heaven to earth.

' Tresses ! am I to call these coils of night
Or lustrous gospel of the heart's delight ? ⁴²

The nest of the bird of the heart or the tangled tale of a lover's complainings ? buttress of the day of resurrection, tar on camphor, swift-pinioned bat of beauty or threads of everlasting life ? a world without end or an expounding of the text of ' the dark night when it over-spreadeth the earth ' ?⁴³ posy of sweet basil or of scented lotus ? ropes of beauty's tent, smoke of the flame of her cheeks, a pagoda of China, black snakes writhing in a pool of sunlight ? flowing locks or flowing handwriting of a skilful penman ? home of the water-lilies of tenderness or page from the book of the battle of love ? a tangled dream or the royal standard

of darkness ? a negro child or the sling that smiteth the victim of love ?

'Curls, chains, or locks ? as musk from far Cathay
As amber, jasmine, hyacinth fragrant they !
Once in their meshes thought cannot escape :
The rope of madness strengthens day by day.'⁴⁴

The tender curls of her hair—are they eyes of deer or meshes of the outspread net of misery ? nooses for necks of lovers or whirlpools to drown lovers' madness ? The knot of her tresses is as the heart of the infidel or as the navel of the musk deer, which driveth lovers to cut short their days.

And of the comb of her hair what shall be spoken ? it is a fish in the water of life, or a bat would'st thou call it that flieth proudly in the black palaces of the night ? or a table made for the torture of lovers ? or a mirror, in whose reflection the heart of man is made visible ?

And the plait of her hair, whereunto shall it be likened ? to a night of winter or to the desert of China ? to violets, to a bunch of lotus blooms, or to a sliver of the tree of insanity ?

The beauty of her stature was in the height thereof. Her head was as the tent of Laila, as the great Ka'aba of Mecca,⁴⁵ as a haven of beauty, wherein the king of the country of beauty had set a bunch of blue lilies ?

And of the dividing line of her hair what shall be written ? It was as the river Ganges in the land of Ind. Strange outshone the parting of the hair of her head, even as a flash of lightning that cleaveth the midmost hour of night.

The parting of her hair was a ray of sunlight or a strand from the rosary of Suliman,⁴⁶ or the dividing of night in twain. The line of it is the light of false dawn or a night

that has fallen a-smiling, a highway of Khizr⁴⁷ leading through blackest darkness to the fountain of life or a rivulet of gold.

Whereto shall I liken her forehead ? To a facet of the diamond or to the mirror of the heart ? To morning in a garden or the blazing sun of doomsday ? to an open glade in immortal Eden, to the light of Sinai, to the white hand of Moses,⁴⁸ or to a wave of silver ?

The line of thought on her forehead in time of perplexity is as the ' Sin'⁴⁹ in Bismillah or as a waterfall of pearls. I know nor whereto to liken it. To the verse that announceth decisive victory⁵⁰ or the flash of a warrior's sword ? to the gospel of hearts or the gathering of the Pleiades ? to waves of a river of fire or a miracle of Chinese artistry ?

The caste mark on her forehead is a bow⁵¹ marking the curves of the highway of beauty.

Her eyebrows are like unto the curves of the letter ' Nun'⁵² or unto rainbows in the heavens : to twin black fishes in the fountain of the sun, to the sword of Ali⁵³ that for the terror of infidels was sent down on earth : horns of the deer of sight are they or the sacred book of a temple of the idolaters : feathers of the wings of the falcon of vision or the invocation of the name of God.

The painting of her eyebrows is as two crescent moons set each on other or twin daggers over twin swords : green⁵¹ sheaths are they of the sharp falchions of her brows or two green leaves of the tree of Paradise.

The tail of her eyebrow is the sting of the scorpion or the point of the sword of the executioner.

The line of her knitted brows is a gleaming blade or a ripple in the wine-cup of her charms.

The beauty of her eyes cometh not within the compass

of description. Her eye is a fairy imprisoned in a bowl of crystal⁵⁵ or an infidel robber that lurketh on the highway of the heart : a sky of fearless pride or the blaze of blossoms of the lotus, narcissus of the garden of Paradise, a Pharaoh of infidel circumstance yet veiled in modesty, Christ the doer of miracles : a wave of the fountain of life, the litter on the camel of Laila or the reflection of the tumult of doomsday.

The moving of her eyes is like a whirlpool that begetteth the whirlwind : the heart of night that shineth from out the navel of full day : the exemplar of the revolutions of day and night.

When that clear witness to beauty with her own hand putteth antimony on her eyes, her modesty is increased and the vein of insanity is made visible.

Her glance is like unto a magic thread and unto the guardian of a tavern of wine.

Is that but her eyelash in beauty or a bright leaf folded for the holding of wine ? Is it the key of love's tavern or the point of the sword ? an eyelash or a torture ?

What shall be the comparison of her eyelashes ? feathers of Gabriel's wings or knives of the surgeon ? hedges of the garden of beauty or onset of the falcon of death ?

The nose of this queen of beauty is like the line of the equator, set with diamonds in circles of silver, a halo round the moon or a noose for a lover's neck.

Did I take in hand to tell the beauty of her cheeks, the fire that descended upon Moses would drive me from the world of consciousness, even as Moses fell down senseless.⁵⁶ Her cheek is a tulip flower without spot or blemish, yea, lightning that burneth the granary of the heart's peace. It is a red pearl or a torch of light, fire without smoke, the

palm of the hand of Suliman,⁵⁷ the red planet of war or the glow of the morning.

The dew on her cheeks in the melting time of passion is as raindrops on the sun, as lamps of the mosque of Mecca, as quicksilver, whereunder lurketh a living flame.

The lips of the moon-faced one are lines of diamonds, shining and pure : flashes of lightning, lumps of sugar, coveted sweetmeats, made without fire, and waves of dew.

When she putteth powder on her teeth it is like unto smoke from the heart of a lover, to an expanse of water-lilies or to smoke from a fire of rubies.

Her mouth is a bag of sugar, a love-night just begun, an eye of flame, the picture of a rosebud, the treasury of secrets, a point of fancy, a whisper of annihilation.

The conserve of the wine of her lips is the essence of sugar-candy. Therein can be read the interpretation of the text ' Thou canst not see me'.⁵⁸

Her silvery teeth are a clear dawn, a string of pearls, or two lines of silver inlaid on a sword blade.

Her tongue it was that bestowed life on Baz Bahadur, verily it is as a red ember, a cutting from a diamond, a fish in the water of life.

Of the laughter of her mouth what shall be written ? A key it is to open the lock of the heart or the essence of the tears of tortured lovers incarnate in her flesh : a pinch from the salt-cellar of doomsday.

The sweetness of the speech of this idol of Hindustan is as a pomegranate-seed made of sugar-candy : and at times her words halted on her lips.

The chin of the moon-faced one is the measuring-glass of the wine of Paradise, and the dimple thereof is the spring of the water of life, and her throat is as the gushing thereof.

The ear of that moon-browed one, what am I to say of it ? It is a pool of quicksilver, a white tip to the flame of her cheeks, a cup of milk, or a boat on a river of red wine ?

The lobes thereof are as rubies of Yeman and as the break of day.

The pearls that hang therein are like the conjunction of moons or dewy gleams of light in the heart of a rose.

The face of the dainty fair is the preface to the book of beauty. Its splendour was as the earthly seed of light divine or as the dazzle of lightning.

On her right cheek was a mole which made double the beauty thereof, even as the dot below the ' B ' ⁵⁹ of Bismillah or as the centre of the compass.

Her neck was as a torch in the desert.

Her arms were rays of the sun, and the palm of her hand the face of a mirror.

The fingers of that dainty fair were as shoots of narcissus or as the white flames of candles.

The bracelets of her wrists, whereto shall I liken them ? To serpents entwining the branches of a rose or to a tree of sandal-wood ? Like were they to the groans of a lover blackened in the fire, that tortureth his heart, or to haloes round the waning moon.

Her bosom was a fountain, white as the hand of Moses, and unto the capital city of beauty would soaring fancy liken it. It was like a silvery page or the spring of the water of Khizr or the tent of the king of beauty.

Were I to seek to tell the beauty of her breasts, it were meet for me to dip my pen in the water of Paradise. I know not what to say. As an apple cut in twain were they or as bubbles arising in a fountain of camphor. They were as two domes of light, as rubies of Badakhshan, as pearls of

purest ray laid on a table of crystal. Like unto two suns in one heaven were they, and to two cups filled with jewels, shedding lustre on her bosom. A sea of fresh water is her bosom, wherein are set two fair islands.

The nipples, that are on the height of her breasts, are serpents set to guard the treasure of kings. To two suns arising in one dawn might they be likened or to two jars of wine set on the bank of a river by God for man's delight.

Fifteen were the years of that dainty fair, when at the altar of her eyebrows the throne of sovereignty was offered in sacrifice.

Bazid learnt of her beauty from one of his companions, and his heart was entangled in the net of love. One day by a secret channel he heard news of her and his distress was the more increased. Moreover, he inquired with care whether beyond her gift of beauty she was endowed with sweet temper and intelligence. Yet the turmoil of his heart availed him not, for at this time Shuja'at Khan held the reins of government firmly in his hands, and when one of Bazid Khan's attendants told to his father the story of his passion he made answer, ' we should keep watch upon this his love, set obstacles in the path of their union, and cast stones of stumbling in the way thereof ; and watch withal that the end be right and the trouble rightly concluded '.

This saying of Shuja'at Khan filled the heart of Bazid Khan with despair ; and further he gave order that the door of exhortation be opened before his son, and this pearl of advice be stitched in the skirts of his madness, that the subjects of a king are like unto his own children. This principle of sovereignty Shuja'at Khan on his part had derived from Sultan Sher Shah—may the light of heaven shine upon his tomb—and on his heart he had engraved it,

inasmuch as justice and purity of heart are the foundation-stones of government, and the rock of its establishment is the confidence of the subjects. On the loss of it follow decline and misery, and the masters of truth know it for the basis of stability. To kings with the greatest force doth the rule apply, that their personal desires be not barriers to justice. Herein lie the stability of kings and the prosperity of their subjects. Than this is there no more necessary maxim of sovereignty, and this is the probability, that lust and luxury will hurl travellers on the high road of fortune into the abyss of degradation. This course of action and this advice were of much avail, yet were the distress and perplexity of Bazid Khan increased the more. Of himself he well knew that the might of love and the fury of passion would cast him in the gulf of misery, even as it is written :
' At first love seemed easy but after hard.'⁶⁰

Considering that control of sorrow was his wisest helper he held back the sighing of his heart and made Sarangpur his place of dwelling and of recreation.

Yet have the hearts of lovers a secret sympathy which for lack of preciser word may be called the soul of the universe. Six months passed by and Shuja'at Khan took his way to the world of non-existence, and Bazid Khan became the jewel of the throne of Malwa. His first act was to summon Jadu Rai to his court at Mandu, which was the capital city of Malwa. To him he gave land and much gold : and Sarangpur, which he had himself got from his father, he bestowed upon him in Jagir, on condition that he should cause Rup Mati to enter his harem. Her father himself gave his daughter in marriage to Bazid Khan, and this much is certain that she entered the harem, but as no marriage ceremony was performed, she was looked upon as



'Baz Bahadur and Rup Mati.' Painter unknown, probably by .Govardhan.

a mistress and not as a legitimate wife. When she arrived in the harem, the magic of her love held Bazid Khan in such enchantment that he passed his days in her company, made over the affairs of his kingdom to his ministers, and plunged deep in pleasure and luxury. Rup Mati, who was herself a poet and an expert in the art, won great benefit also from the masters of the art of music.⁶¹ Her perfection in this art so ravished Bazid Khan that he permitted the government of his kingdom to dance at her finger tips. His ministers had no fear of his correction, and to them it was soon plain that his reign had no prospect of fair outcome.

Owing to the loss of his love, Khula Jani,⁶² who was queen of the world, rasped through her life with the file of jealousy.

Now the affairs of the kingdom, which in the days of the rule of the Afghans had prospered, were beset with difficulties on every side in that the Moguls had taken firm hold upon Hindustan, and their ambitions had expanded to the conquest of the fragments of the Afghan Empire, which still existed in parts of the country, that they might bring them under their sway for the adornment of the throne of Humayun.

III. *Evil Omens.*

Such is the story of the beginning of the love whereby the union of Rup Mati and Baz Bahadur was brought to pass. But the overcast sky did not grant love a long reign beneath its roof. One day when the two were enjoying themselves in seclusion, a tiger of the forest slew and devoured the ambassador who had been sent to the Mogul Court. On the same day the royal crown fell in the dust.

The manner of these happenings was on this wise.

When the news of the victories of Akbar reached Mandu, the Afghans were perforce cast into perplexity, and Rup Mati herself, coming out from behind the curtain, advised her lover to sacrifice pleasure and luxury for a season and to bestir himself to set the affairs of his kingdom in order. The Darbar was being held with full ceremony, and when the bearer of the crown bore it forth to set it on the head of the king it fell to the ground. All present whose eyes had power to see into the future recognized that the end and conclusion of the reign would be evil, in that at the outset this ill omen befell.

The omen, however, passed and naught came of it ; but unmeasured terror was born in all hearts when on a night a voice was heard in the royal palace saying, ' The dainty fair was laid low and none lifted her from the dust '.⁶³ Bazid Khan sent a slave to fetch him who had made utterance. The slave returned, saying that the voice was the voice of a beggar, who had fled away.

Thereafter a party of pleasure was held, and Bazid Khan gave order to a girl to dance before him. She sang in the language of Hindustan and this was the burden of her song : ' Where now is that Yudeshtira,⁶⁴ who was exalted in dignity and splendour ? Naught did these avail him and in tears and woe and sorrow ended his love.' Bazid Khan gave order that she should shut her lips on this song, and sending for Rup Mati bade her sing to him. She began with words of parting and separation, and overcome by the thought thereof fell a-weeping. This story I had from Suliman Khan, who was groom of the bedchamber in the court of Bazid Khan, and he said that a miracle was wrought. For the violence of her passion was written upon her face and her agony was plain to all.

Be it known that the poets of Hindustan have a liking for tales of parting and separation, for the telling whereof the Persians, who address their poetry to boys, have no taste. Among the Arabs a man is in despair at the thought of separation from his woman, but among the Hindus the manner of love is otherwise, in that its beginning is from the woman to the man.

In this case we ourselves see how a fair lady began to sing verses of separation and was whelmed beneath her despair ; and though for a space Rup Mati held in check the passion born of the verses, yet Bazid Khan burst into tears.

And in this wise the party ended.

A time passed and the spies of the kingdom presented themselves before the throne of the exalted one, telling the news of a great happening, even that a large army, under the leading of Adham Khan, Mogul, was marching on the capital.

Be it not concealed that Baz Bahadur, when he became master of throne and crown, desired to exalt the splendour of his kingdom to equality with the glories of the imperial city. But he ignored the need for firm foundation to his kingdom and recked naught of the enmity between regal sway and lust and luxury.

He had, indeed, kept the habit of entering the Darbar in the morning, when he woke from sweet sleep, and devoting himself to the justice of Naushirwan.⁶⁶ Yet was there a block of stumbling, in that his courtiers did not desire that others should have access to the king, and from this malignant influence commenced the decline of his fortunes.

Thereafter Bazid Khan used to enter the harem, and after his meal to occupy himself with singing and music.

Then came his courtiers kindling with their wit and pleasantry the flame of mirth and laughter. After a while he was wont to take a short sleep and on waking would take up affairs of state. On occasion he would devote some time to the army and military affairs. Most of the night he spent in pleasure and enjoyment. Yet for all that the administration of the empire was well conducted, as the methods of Shuja'at Khan were still practised. Baz Bahadur did not give himself time for the work of strengthening his kingdom, and the faithful of the empire, who had been exalted by the orders of Shuja'at Khan, strayed from the path of loyalty and the way of devotion. The corruption of the court was reflected in the manners of the nobles. Not that Bazid Khan was unversed in the art of war or unendowed with a goodly portion of his father's spirit. The proof thereof will be manifest in the bloody battles which followed and ended in the defeat of Mulla Pir Muhammad, Nasir-ul-Mulk.⁶⁷ To the stability of empire there is no greater danger than the negligence of kings.

'Whoso draws sword to make a bid for fame,
Shall stamp upon the coins his royal name.'

IV. *The Beginning of the End.*

The exaltation of love findeth a limit and term in what men call the union of the lovers. The burden of describing this we will cast from our shoulders in that it has been already set down in Chapter II. Chapter III tells of the height of love and the emotions which are its attendants. Now the revolutions of day and night, which from old are at feud with lovers, bring the story to a tragic end.

Adham Khan came, and he came like a storm of wind and rain. There was no time to set the affairs of the kingdom in order nor to keep its frontiers inviolate from the assaults of the enemy. Bazid Khan, however, collected his following, small though it was, and drew up his army in battle array. The battle which followed laid waste the beautiful land, wherein the kings of Malwa revelled in pleasure and luxury. The tale of oppression and outrage, practised by the Moguls, is a long story and full of grief. Such was the severity thereof, that it was as antimony to the eyes of them who would be instructed thereby.

' Oh ! Ye who have eyes, behold and be warned.'⁶⁸

The first attack which the Moguls made on Malwa was led by Bahadur Khan,⁶⁹ brother of the Khan-i-Zaman and head of the Amirs of the Empire. Akbar was at that time hemmed in by desperate foes on every side. Hence Bahadur Khan was recalled and Malwa was left in the hands of the Afghans. The Moguls, however, shaking off their formidable foes, firmly resolved to bring this beautiful land into subjection. A firman was issued that Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad, Nasir-ul-Mulk should lead a large army to conquer the country.

Adham Khan was the son of Maham Anagah,⁷⁰ who was the foster-mother of Akbar, and she thought that, when the sky was clear and Bairam Khan⁷¹ had been effectually dealt with, it would be possible to raise her son to exalted rank, in that she had great influence in the royal harem, which penetrated to the very marrow of the empire.

Mulla Pir Muhammad was a native of Shirwan, who owing to Bairam Khan's confidence in him had risen to high rank. The first service entrusted to him was the care of the library, which was placed under his management.

Three years after he became the deputy of the Khan-i-khanan⁷² and rose to high place and dignity, and his influence ranged over all things high and low. The fall of the Khan-i-Zaman raised Pir Muhammad to a still higher position. It should not be hidden that between these two nobles, Adham Khan, Koka, and Pir Muhammad, Nasir-ul-Mulk, the foundations of friendship, strong and stable, had long been laid.

Baz Bahadur drew up his army in battle array at Sarangpur. The result is known, and there is no need to waste words thereon. It was the first battle in which Baz Bahadur drew his sword. Camps, tents, and treasure became the booty of the conquerors. The brutalities practised on the vanquished by the Moguls are beyond words of mine, and Mulla Pir Muhammad himself ordered that no quarter should be given. Neither women nor children were safe. To this Mulla pity, mercy, and chivalry were words of no meaning, wherewith he had no acquaintance. Yet fate had its revenge in that this very Mulla came to a disastrous end at the hands of Baz Bahadur. And of the army, which had fallen to plundering the countryside, what shall be written ? Baz Bahadur took the field against them, and the Mulla fell into the Narbada and found his way to hell. And the saying of the merciful one, which in Mandu was held an omen, was proved true :

' The sons of Pharaoh were drowned and ye were the onlookers.'⁷³

When Adham Khan reached Mandu he became master of the untold treasure which Baz Bahadur had left, and his pride passed all bounds. From the riches which the fugitive king had abandoned, his fancy turned to the possession of noble ladies in the harem of the king, and he asked Rup Mati herself to transfer her love to the conqueror of

her country. That chaste lady opened her lips to advise him, and plainly said that it did not become the glory of the conqueror thus to seek to disgrace the name and fame of the broken Afghans : for in the day of recompense heaven might bring down that very shame on the head of the conqueror. Adham Khan, however, was so intoxicated with the wine of success that he lost all sense and foresight. He turned to force and violence saying, ' If my end be not attained peaceably, by force can a way be made '. When this saying came to Rup Mati's ears, she showed neither meekness nor submission. Nay, rather, she was the more confirmed in her resolve not to yield up her life, if by any chance a way of escape could be found. She laid her plans, and on the first day, thereafter, she fled from the capital. It is said that she disguised herself as a flower-seller. Three days passed and, full of lust, Adham Khan entered the harem only to find that the mate of the falcon⁷⁴ had taken wing and flown away. A hard task lay before him. He gave orders to fifteen of his best cavalry to capture her and bring her back. The result of this pursuit is given in the fifth chapter.

V. *The Escape.*

The unsuccess of that dainty fair tears the heart into shreds. Despite a thousand difficulties Rup Mati made her way across the intervening country, and was but twenty miles from Sarangpur when the pursuit party of Adham Khan came up with her. The horsemen learnt that a woman had taken refuge in a village and had called her brothers to rescue her from oppression. Now the father of Rup Mati was already dead and her mother had become the wife of her husband's brother. When the news came to his

ears he had sent for Rup Mati's brothers. They hastened to the village and came into conflict with the horsemen. An angry altercation followed upon their interference, and Rup Mati's brothers were killed.

Thus for the second time the dainty fair fell into the hands of the tyrant. When Mandu was reached, she was carefully guarded and so strict a watch was kept over her that escape was impossible. The intent of Adham Khan was to take revenge on the pretence that Rup Mati herself had resisted his horsemen. She was brought before him, but, when he renewed his overtures of love, that faithful lady spoke and said: ' My heart is wearied of these thy proffers. There is no hope that, what I gave to Baz Bahadur, the same I should give unto thee, to thee, above all, who dost commence thy wooing by the murder of my brothers.'

When she found escape was beyond hope, she promised to receive him after three days and entered the harem. Adham Khan, on his part, held to the belief that the stream of time would wash away her sorrow and grief and that he would bring his intent to the goal of achievement of union. He turned to hunting and sport and spent some time in this way.

' In love who braver than a Hindu wife ?
Her lamp extinguished, death is one with life:
And like a moth she seeks the burning flame,
And faithful ever, quits this world of strife.'⁷⁵

Behold, now, to what doom the torturing heavens brought the fortunes of the helpless lady.

Well she knew that Adham Khan had killed her brothers. This weighed heavily upon her, and she had firmly resolved to make choice of the doom of death before converse of love. For to her thinking not only had Adham Khan slain her

beloved, but carried away by lust he had not stayed his hand from killing her brothers. With no intent of fulfilment she made promise and sent a message to Adham Khan:

' O victor mine, the conquered have no resource save to obey the orders of the conqueror. They whom fate has broken need no fresh enemies. Modesty and repute, honour and respect are transient things. Yet is it the custom that the conquerors show generosity to the conquered. My glory is my union with Bazid Khan. Through love of him I have sung in his assemblies and to the doing of love be it set down that Baz Bahadur sought from me such proofs of affection. Now I pray thee, the master, to show mercy on me, the slave. None knoweth what the morning will bring forth from out the night. Behold the end of this empire and the fall of our fortune, how my state is like unto them as a reflection in a mirror. Thou dost say in thy heart, " I have attained unto the heaven of power ", yet fear thou the grinding of the revolving millstone.

' 'Twere but just that thou shouldst send to tell the tale of us poor wretches in the ear of the Emperor Akbar, for of a surety on hearing of our misery he will not refrain from tears. Abandon then this thy evil purpose.

' O Adham Khan, beauty and grace thou say est are mine, yet of what avail will these be to thee ? for with me they will turn to dust. My brothers are dead, nor is it for me to crave for this life of a day. The imperial throne whence sprang our content has fallen in the dust, and all my brothers have perished to preserve my wretched life. I pray that therefrom thy noble heart may learn a lesson and that thou wilt leave us miserable creatures in peace.'

When this message was borne to Adham Khan, he sent a letter in answer saying: ' These matters will not prevail to

stay me from my course. If thou dost make estimate of my love and look to the flood of passion, which is rising in my heart like a wave, thou wouldst not consider me deserving to be tortured thus. Thou dubbest me conqueror, but 'tis thou who hast conquered me. Though the four quarters of the world unite to rob me of union with thee, yet will I make sacrifice of all my earthly bliss, of all my hopes of Paradise and of all that therein is, for one minute of thy love.'

In a moment the links of the chain of hope were broken. Welcome to thee, despair, who putteth end to grief. The last of hope is the beginning of despair, and therein the beloved findeth a secret path to the heart of the lover, wherefrom others shrink. The dainty fair knew that matters had passed all bounds and that the tyrant could scarce endure till the passing of the three appointed days. She sent word and said that within those days her sorrow would minish and thereafter he might make his way to her private apartments.

' O tyrant! fear the groans of the oppressed!
For to the door of God are they addressed,
And at the hour of prayer the doorway parts,
For his acceptance to refresh their hearts.'⁷⁶

VI. *A Martyr to Faithfulness.*

Two nights passed. Adham Khan was beside himself with love for her. He believed that he would set on his desire the crown of fulfilment.

He ordered a feast to be held, although his true well-wishers desired him to refrain from making a public spectacle of his infatuation. But Adham Khan, passion blind, had forgotten that heaven holds the power of vengeance. This alone he knew that between him and Akbar

there flowed such a river of milk that it was to him a guarantee and a safeguard everlasting. Hence he girded his loins to the attainment of his desire upon the lady.

Order went forth that the palace of Shuja'at Khan be adorned, and he summoned the Amirs to a feast of pleasure. The night was made bright as day and he held a party for song and dance. The singers of the court of Baz Bahadur came into the presence. Every one of them was perfect in their art. Adham Khan gave them rich largesse, for the treasury of King Baz Bahadur was full of gold. The cup-bearer bore round the cup of red wine unmixed. Half the night passed and to Rai Chand was order given to sing in the pavilion of joy. For be it known that Rai Chand was the chief of the singers of the court of Baz Bahadur and in the art of music was of perfection unmastered.

The sweet-tongued teller of this story, who opened my path thereto, was present at this feast. He said that the eyes of thought and the tongue of description attain not to this matter and the inwardness of it is beyond the scope of telling and imagining.

The very colour of the sky had changed and the sweet breeze of morning was stirring. Yet was the world a mirror of desolation. The deep silence was but the herald of amazement. The city was a city of silence and the company as a company of the dead, who draw not breath. Whereof was this silence a portent ? The music began to put forth its power and the singers began their songs unbidden. The songs of sorrow which flowed from the singers, from the 'rababs' and from the soft and loud notes of the drum,⁷⁷ trampled the hearts of the company under their feet. The singers raised their voices so high that the dome of the revolving heavens gave answer unto them.

The songs were in the language of Malwa, and this was their meaning.

' How long wilt thou, O mortal man, continue to bring disaster on thy fellows in this fleeting world ? Thou dost so act, as if Heaven had naught with thee ? Where is Arjun⁷⁸ of the strong arm ? Where Bhoj,⁷⁹ who conquered monsters ? What charm binds thee to this life ? " Oh, tyrant, oppressor of the weak,"⁸⁰ beware for the day of judgement is at hand. I pray thee turn the eye of intelligence upon the end. For the end of this sweet life is bitter and the day is not far off when thy deeds will end in disaster. Why then be proud ? '

None knew where the inner meaning lay nor from what hidden source these strange words had sprung into being. The chiefs of the army were enchanted by the magic of the song. When the singing came to an end and Adham Khan perceived its secret purpose, he laid blame on Rai Chand and threatened him with vengeance. And the party of joy ended in the shivering of fear.

Now the rays of false dawn⁸¹ pitched their tent on the proclamation of the death of night. Light appeared in the sky, and Adham Khan resolved that in the morning he would bid Rup Mati consent to admit his passion and his embrace, recking naught of the juggling skill, which tyrant fate numbers among its arts, to stay the accomplishment of desire.

It is now laid upon me to bring some small account of her, who had learnt the sorrows of love, within the circle of description, and that a knot be tied in the story of that dainty fair for the adornment of the pages of this strange tale.

Be it known that the lady, sorrow-stricken with separation from her beloved, had her own heart torn in twain. She

saw no chance of reunion with Baz Bahadur and had washed her hands of hope of saving her honour. She knew that there was no possible way of escape and that the hard-handed tyrant had firmly resolved to force her to his embrace, whether she would or no. She now looked into the hearts of the women of the harem and saw that all were willing to give up their old dignity and fortune to win new.

Fate and the hour alike counselled her to cast herself upon the mercy of God. Seeing that for a second time she had fallen into the clutch of the oppressor and help there was none, she gave promise. The other women desired her to come in the end to Adham's embrace that they might regain some portion of their past splendour.

Be it not concealed, that when Rup Mati knew that none of the old order kept faith with her and all friends had become foes, she bowed her head in acceptance, as already set forth.

The very night that Adham Khan celebrated his feast, he caused the royal palace to be garnished for the entry of the new king of love. Rup Mati, having finished her bathing, gave order for her body to be adorned with the very bridal dress which Baz Bahadur had given her. After this was done, she took her 'bin' in her hand and sang songs to melt the heart—yea, the very same songs which Rai Chand had sung—until she was beside herself. Then retiring to her bedchamber she took poison of powdered diamond.

When the king of the east left the chamber of the dawn and took his seat upon his royal throne, Adham Khan, tingling from head to foot with desire for the beauty and grace of that dainty fair, showed his face at the door of the palace and desired permission to enter. When he reached the bridal chamber, he found the fair lady asleep. He

made signs to all to go, and himself took her hand and sought to awaken her from sweet slumber.

When he perceived that the bird of the soul had taken flight from the cage of mortality, he summoned others and sought for the secret history of this her mysterious end. The women of the palace told the tale of the night, and the tyrant found no other way open than to return with his desire unattained. He seized a chance damsel and went back to the Mogul camp.

Such is the miserable end of this strange story, which began in love and happiness and ended in sorrow and grief.

Rup Mati died, but she died a martyr to faithfulness and an ensample to the sect of lovers. Verily women hold a rank in love whereto men cannot attain.

Nizami, may the mercy of God be on him, says :

' Did every woman's life such virtue show,
Woman were then man's joy and not his woe.'⁸²

If Nizami had occasion to read this strange tale he would have learnt that women too may be faithful unto death.

Other poets of Persia have said that woman is an evil thing, yet is this error absolute. Truth is, that the creator of earth and sky has dowered women with virtues, which fall not in the lot of men. Nay, God has given her qualities, whereby she attains pre-eminence over man.

Woman is the mother of man and the centre of all life. Wouldst thou know the truth of mankind ? Go, read the history of the world. It is full of their follies. Wouldst thou know the truth of womankind and what place she holdeth in the creation of the world ? Behold her in her household that it may be plain to thy eyes that the word ' woman ' spelleth comfort of heart and faithfulness withal. Among the gifts which God, the glorious, the exalted, hath

in his grace bestowed on her, is love, which is her own special attribute. If woman has a fault, she has a virtue to balance her defect. If we look into the condition of man, wide is the gulf revealed. Not that men are destitute of goodness or faithfulness; but if we look on the mass of mankind, this is possible that a man may be evil incarnate, but in women such utter wickedness is never or but rarely found. It may be that a man have no care for his children, but not so a woman. Consider, too, the Hindu wife, who burns herself alive on her husband's pyre, like a moth in a flame. Amir Khusru saith :

' Khusru, in love rival the Hindu wife :

For the dead's sake she burns herself in life.'⁸³

In this strange tale take heed to the doings of Adham Khan that they may be to thine eye as the antimony of instruction. On reaching the palace of Rup Mati he sought to awaken that dainty fair from sleep, but found that of her naught remained save a handful of dust. Adham seized a maid-servant by the hand and took his way back to camp. If a woman had been in his place, the end of this story had been far otherwise.⁸⁴

Oh ! life inconstant ! Oh ! passing bubble ! is all faithfulness of no avail ? Short is the term of life and frail the term of existence ! What then keeps thee bound to this fleeting life ?

' Ah, what is gold that thou ador'st it so ?

What a fair face that thou dost frenzied grow ?

Thy house, thy gardens but a prison house !

Thy riches to thy soul destruction slow !⁸⁵

If thou hast sense, free thyself from the illusion of existence. This life, of which thou art so proud, is brief as the twinkling of an eye when compared with the wide

stretches of eternity and the insignificant moment, which sends a bubble into existence, sets a term to life. Annihilation and eternal life are mysteries veiled from our eyes. Khwaja Hafiz saith :

' Drink wine and sing and let the world revolve:
Its secret thinking solved not nor will solve.'⁸⁶

The Hindus say that the solution of the riddle is that the soul is indestructible and the body perishable, that the soul of man is subject to cycles of change, and according to his acts he suffers transmigration from one form to another. Acts are thus the basis of all. The difficulty is that in the second life there is no memory of the former.

Consider a tree which thrusteth through the darkness of the earth and entereth a new world. It passeth through stages of nourishment and growth and entereth on the time of youth and thereafter marcheth under the houses of decline. In infancy some trees are weak, yet in this despite they set their foot on the ladder of improvement. This weakness is an evil and a defect, yet is it no barrier to advance. We see no tree by defect reverting to its seedling state. How, then, can the rule of the world of souls be different ? If this our unstable life be touched by defect, why should it be born again ? It is essential that the purification of the soul should take place in the world of the soul and not in this playground of form. If a fault be committed and punishment thereof be essential, why should there be no consciousness of it in the second life, so that the oppressor might receive a profitable lesson ? for the object of punishment is discipline of the soul, not wanton tyranny. Suppose, for example, that some one by defect and wickedness took the form of a dog. So long as the disease of his soul be not remedied, he remaineth in the same

state of misery. This theory would necessarily entail the assignment of moral responsibility to the lower creation **and** the wise approve not this. The holders of it consider acts of supreme importance. Yet if salvation be the right reward of good acts and punishment of sins, what need is there for the merciful God to look with eyes of compassion on his creatures ? The Hindus, rejecting God, set ' action ' in his place, a word devoid of meaning.

Islam has explained this mystery otherwise. Man has been given the rank of the noblest of creation and he is adored by the angels. Despite this, he is compounded of two opposing qualities—good and evil. Thus compounded, he has been given the power of choice and selection in his acts and has further been guided of God in the right way by revelation. If, despite the admixture of evil in his blood, he quit not the straight path, there is no doubt of his superior excellence. The whole nature of the angels is to do good, and it is not possible for them to make choice of evil, like men. They must of necessity do that which is good and have not, like us, the power to do evil. This is the supreme trust referred to in the blessed Koran. Saith Khwaja Hafiz :

' The sky refused the burden of the trust ;
The lot fell on us creatures of the dust.'⁸⁷

The God of glory and dignity saith :

' Unto the earth we have revealed its piety and impiety. He, who is guided thereby, attaineth unto salvation and he, who rejecteth it, bringeth himself into misery.'⁸⁸

Nor if we commit evil is this a matter of astonishment
As the sinful creature cries aloud to the Creator :

' There is no God but thee. Thou art holy.
Verily I was one of the sinners.'^{8D}

Thereby is God moved to compassion and he forgiveth all sins. If man repent and break out and again repent and again break his repentance, God Almighty saith :

' Oh ! my creatures ! ye who have violated your own souls ! despair ye not of God's mercy. Verily God is the forgiver of all sins. In truth He is the Forgiver and the Merciful.'⁹⁰

Blessed is he, whom this alluring world leadeth not astray from the straight path. The pleasures of this world are a road that leadeth to destruction, but to the pains and pleasures of the soul there is no end. Oh ! wise one, turn thy eye on thyself and look to the conditions of thy birth. Then put thy head under the skirt of reflection and know the pleasures of this world, that they are not worth thy coveting. Where is that life of thine, whereof the angels are envious ? He, who holdeth a trust, should not carry back to his Creator the burden of breach of his trust. Look thou to the issue of this book, how the fortunes of Rup Mati, that dainty fair, finished in sorrow, how Adham Khan, who was her murderer, ended his life in failure and his mother Maham Anagah quitted the world unsuccessful and broken-hearted ! how Baz Bahadur, child of pleasure and luxury, died after an undistinguished life ! But Rup Mati gave her life to be faithful, and this very faithfulness hath crowned her with immortality.

Lady, fear not thou the sorrows of this world. Thy trials are over. The song of thy faithfulness will warm the hearts of men till doomsday, and on the story of thy end the eyes of all lovers will ever drop a tribute of tears. O vision sublime ! thy charm shall hold its lasting place to all eternity. Love is the inspirer of fidelity : it is the thread of life and the spring of comfort to the heart : it is this

very love which is the name of God and is the foundation of love divine.

' Break thou thy bonds ! cast off the silver chain !
How long wilt thou in earthly bonds remain ?
Pour boundless ocean in thy little cup I
It will but hold enough for thee to sup.
Unsated aye the eyes of lustful vice !
Only contentment grows the pearl of price.
He, who can show love's wounds, is surely freed
From every form of lust and vice and greed.
Rejoice love, thou my pleasant madness art,
And cure of all diseases of my heart,
Remede of all ambition and all pride,
Plato and Galen, soul and body's guide!
Love raised up this dust to heaven's height:
The very mountain danced, quick with delight.
O lovers : come the tale of Sinai tell!
Its heart was broken, when great Moses fell.'⁹¹

Life issueth from love and on love is founded the rule of the world. Though we die, yet will our love abide to all eternity.

But O Mandu, queen of cities, the sun of thy good fortune hath set. The day of thy splendour is over. To-day empty are thy palaces and dead they that dwelt therein. On the domes thereof the owl now beats his drum⁹² and joy and song have yielded place to silence everlasting. Baz Bahadur is dead ! Rup Mati is no more ! but, O Mogul, the day of thy destruction is not far off!

I the humble sinner, Mir Ja'afar Ali, the scribe, had the chance of reading this book at Agra, Akbarabad, in the year 1060 A.H.⁹³ during the reign of Hazrat Sahib-Qiran-i-Sani,⁹⁴ and I copied it. In the part wherein the tale of the beauty of Rup Mati is set forth, I copied certain verses of Sa'ib,⁹⁵ which were not in the original, and in another place the phrase ' In love who braver than a Hindu wife ? ' which was not in the original copy, has been added by me, and the subsequent lines beginning ' Her lamp extinguished ' have also been inserted in the text. Besides these verses and lines I have introduced nothing of my own, but otherwise the original has been faithfully transcribed and followed.

Be it known that the author of this strange tale was among those attached to the service of Sharaf-ud-din Hussain Mirza,⁹⁶ who was one of the great nobles of the court of Akbar. After a period of good fortune he rebelled against the Mogul empire and gave up his life in 988 A.H.⁹⁷ Ahmad-ul-Umri died in the early years of the reign of Jahangir. His grandson Fulad Khan is an acquaintance and friend of the writer of these characters. The original was embellished with pictures and of these three came into my hand.

And now with praise of God, the preserver of the world, I bring this book to an end.

Mahbub Ali⁹⁸
Delhi.

This book was bought in the city of Akbarabad by Inayat Ali, Jemadar in the Infantry of the Bhopal State.⁹⁹

* Seek not on earth my grave when life depart:
My sepulchre is every faithful heart.'

SONGS AND VERSES
ATTRIBUTED TO RUP MATI

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

1. My paper is awash with tears Doha.
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16. The loved one's breasts by singers are extolled . Kabitta.
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21. Time tests the right liver Kabitta.
22. Some men are liars Kabitta.
23. Sajni, my dear, such evil now is wrought Sawaiya.
24. Man's mind may fly across the sea . Sawaiya.
25. To give, unwilling, is to pay a fine . Sawaiya.
26. Friend, let others boast their treasure.

1

1

My paper is awash with tears,
And blotted by the shaken ink,
And my pain-tortured mind forbids
Me write or think.

2

I knew not once what I know now,
How better far to end this life
At one fell blow, than pine away
A lonely wife.

3

Beloved ! then I did not know :
Do thou forgive my fault confessed !
Oh ! love ! return and never more
Quit thou this breast !

4

Too fierce for my faint heart to bear
The flames of this dividing fire !
Oh ! for the cool the Sati finds
On her lord's pyre !

5

On heels of one unwanted grief
Griefs uninvited tread amain :
The tavern, the high road my heart,
The bridge of pain !

6

On sorrow's rack my mind is stretched.
My heart recoined in misery's mint :
Pain is crowned king and he doth know
Nor ruth nor stint.

7

To truth revealing night awakes
Hearts cheated by deceiving day :
Sleepless to death I then appeal,
Come thou and stay.

8

Hour after hour I turn and toss.
Sleep cometh not to me forlorn,
Lacking the opiate of thy kiss
At night, at morn.

9

With thee thou tookest all my joy,
Leaving me only care and grief:
Day now to me no pleasure brings,
Night no relief.

(70)

10

Thou art the whole of life to me,
And separation from thee death :
Only the memory of thy face
Keeps me in breath.

11

The message, that I fain would send,
No letters, known to man, can spell :
Thy loving heart alone can read
What mine would tell.

12

Unto the wise man all is known,
Before the fool has told him aught :
But fools e'en by the wisest sage
Can ne'er be taught.

13

My heart ne'er bade me take my pen
A fond love letter to indite :
While thou dost live within my breast,
Why should I write ?

14

Let lovers unto lovers write,
Who in far-distant countries roam :
Why should I write to thee who mak'st
My heart thy home ?

15

And when I sought to write to thee
A letter, where my love was shown,
Upon my page was naught set down
 But one long moan.

16

Despite a continent's expanse,
Despite the ocean's severing space,
Thy soul and mine defiant hold
 Their close embrace.

My heart for thy heart ever longs,
My lips to thy lips ever yearn,
My ears for thy sweet word of wife
 On thy return.

18

My desperate soul leapt to my lips
To follow thee upon thy way.
Deign now to give it thy command
 To cross or stay !

From Jeth's¹⁰⁰ clear blue down streamed the rain.
Now Sawan's¹⁰¹ lowering clouds are dry :
Thy absence hath confused the rule
 Of year and sky.

20

To-night I go to greet the moon
And welcome her new shining face :
Ah ! double joy ! thy eyes and mine
Fixed on one place !¹⁰²

21

This letter is a spirit kiss
Of secret charm to banish pain
And quicken hope my lips will soon
Press thine again.

22

My paper all too little is,
And all too soon I fill it up :
Fool ! can love's ocean be contained
Within a cup ?

Worldlings, who yearn for wealth and fame,
Stray quickly from Love's path aside
And to their wandering footsteps then
Take self for guide.

24

Though such remonstrate and advise,
They bring no ease to my poor eyes :
'Mid streaming floods they're thirsty still !
Explain, ye wise !

25

Below the surface oft I dived
Yet won no pearl from out the sea :
The ocean I do not reproach
 But fate and me.

26

Thy twin reflections once abode
In these delighted eyes of mine,
That now, bereft of all they love,
 Unpeopled pine.

27

In bodies twain our soul is one :
Were mine ablaze upon the pyre,
Soul is the Monarch, though my flesh
 Melt in the fire.

28

And e'en though soul and body both
Sink 'neath the wind-swept seas of pain,
At the mast-head love's flag defies
 The hurricane.

29

Dry thou the petals of the rose !
More fragrant blows their scented breath !
So bloweth love, that made life sweet,
 More sweet in death.

(74)

II

The partridge pines for the sailing moon :
The quail for the cloud in the sky :¹⁰³
And heart for heart by a mystic law,
That knows not low nor high.

III

Nor time nor space depress nor minish love :
It does not die although the lovers part:
Though sunk the flint beneath the lake for years,
It cherishes the same fire in its heart.

IV

We are thy bees and thou our lotus flower :
For thee we pray, that thou ne'er cease to bloom :
Open thy petals to us and we live :
Withhold thy bounty and we read our doom.

V

The heights of love are hard to climb,
As the palm tree's branchless round :
The lucky reach the luscious fruit,
The luckless crash to the ground.

VI

Wasted my flesh at love's fire !
Shrunk veins to my ' bin's ' tautened strings !
Yet every hair, like each wire,
With the name of the master still rings.¹⁰⁴

VII

Had I but known what pain with love would come !
Had I but known !
I would have banished him by beat of drum,
Had I but known !

VIII

The sun sees many a lotus flower,
The flowers—one sun they see ;
And many we thy handmaidens,
Whose only sun is thee.

IX

They who are wise
Avoid love's lure :
Yet tempted once
There is no cure,
Save to press on
With banners high,
Resolved to win
Or fighting die.

X

To the lioness one cub :
To the true man one word :
To the plaintain one fruit time ;¹⁰⁵
To my bosom one lord.

XI

Dead is the day when thou wast one with me,
As I with thee :
Now, I am I and thou art thou again,
Not one but twain :
What cause gave we for thy malignity,
O Destiny ?

XII

The loved one gives the heart the peace it craves :
But, lacking thee, Rup Mati knows no peace :
For thou art fled ! and life holds naught for her
But swift surcease.

XIII

The sin, that stamped on Indra stigmas vile,
The sin, that sought Draupadi to defile,
The sin, that stained the moon's once stainless face,
The sin, that left no scion of Rawan's race,
The sin, that set at Keechuk fierce Arjun,
The sin, that blighted Shishpal's marriage moon,
The sin, that burnt Bhasmasur's life away,
Is now a toy, wherewith men lightly play.¹⁰⁶

XIV

Whose hands may touch a pure wife's bosom chaste,
Save husband or save child her milk to taste ?
What fool would dare lay hand on lion's claws ?
Clear as my glass-seen face shine wisdom's laws.
What strength can snatch away the warrior's brand
Ere life has ceased to inform his nervous hand ?
What power can reach the poet's inner sense,
The miser's avarice, God's omnipotence ?

XV

The tongue of malice is in slander versed :
The Raja's heart in politics immersed :
The lust of war inflames the warrior's head :
The poor man's dream is of a loaf of bread :
In thoughts of God the saint attains his bliss :
Each is wrapt up in that thing or in this :
The architect in palaces that rise,
The lover in his loved one's fawn-soft eyes.

XVI

The loved one's breasts by singers are extolled,
Who liken lumps of flesh to cups of gold :
Her sickly face they to the moon compare :
Her teeth—mere bits of bone—to jewels rare :
Her arms to slender lotus stems, her lips—
Poor reddened flesh—to the bow that Cupid grips:
To tapering plaintain stem, the smooth round thigh,
That like all other flesh is doomed to die.
Lies ! Lies ! of men who poet's name abuse,
Yet dare to boast the favour of the Muse.

XVII

Raindrops form pearls and thirst of quails they slake,
Camphor in tree, poison in serpent make :
Tadpoles and swans are two contrasted breeds,
Whose virtue shows in that on which each feeds.
Vile son of man, respect thy neighbour's wife
Lest she a dagger prove to end thy life—
Beauty and sense the twin strings of her lyre
Vibrating ever 'neath the master wire !

XVIII

The ocean her father :
 To Brahma a mother,
The sun and the moon to her,
 Each a full brother :
For sisters, fair Lakshmi
 And Rambha, who gave her
For brothers, great Indra,
 And Vishnu the saviour,
All friends of the lotus,
 In her day of pride.
But frost's finger touched her,
 She shrivelled and died.
No help from the water
 O'er which she bore sway !
The friends of good fortune
 All pass with its day !¹⁰⁸

XIX

Some men good fortune turns to evil ways :
Other retain the good of simpler days.
Some give, and win more than the gift has cost :
To others gifts are so much money lost.
Some use their wealth for ends both wise and just;
And others only to indulge their lust.
Wealth may thus praises earn beyond all words
Or be less worth than yesterday's stale curds.

XX

Enter the lion's den :
 Plunge in the roaring flood :
Set foot on the centipede ;¹⁰⁹
 Let scorpions sting you to blood :
Thrust head in the cobra's mouth,
 Trusting that all will be well :
Drink of the poison cup :
 Leap in the flames of hell :
Follow your whim, if you wish
 To learn in a bitter school :
All that I ask you is this,
 Never make friend of a fool.

XXI

Time tests the right liver :
Distress, the alms-giver :
The pandit, the Vedas he's reading :
The diamond, a blow :
The bowstring, the bow :
And the course, if a horse has got breeding
The gymnast, the bar :
And true courage, war :
And the craftsman, the works of his art :
 So of friendship's true breed,
The touchstone is need :
And of man, the intent of the heart.

XXII

Some men are liars :
Some men are true :
Some pay their just debts :
Some never do :
Some wives don the ' dhoti ' : ¹¹⁰
Some husbands skirts wear :
Some twirl their moustaches,
And some never dare.

XXIII

Sajni, my dear, such evil now is wrought,
My heavy heart with pain and fear is fraught.
The vicious eat and drink the livelong day
And with their harlots revel night away.
Honour is swallowed up in jaws of earth :
Each day brings some new wickedness to birth.
The Goddess sits unhonoured in her shrine,
Nor to her suppliants shows her power divine.

XXIV

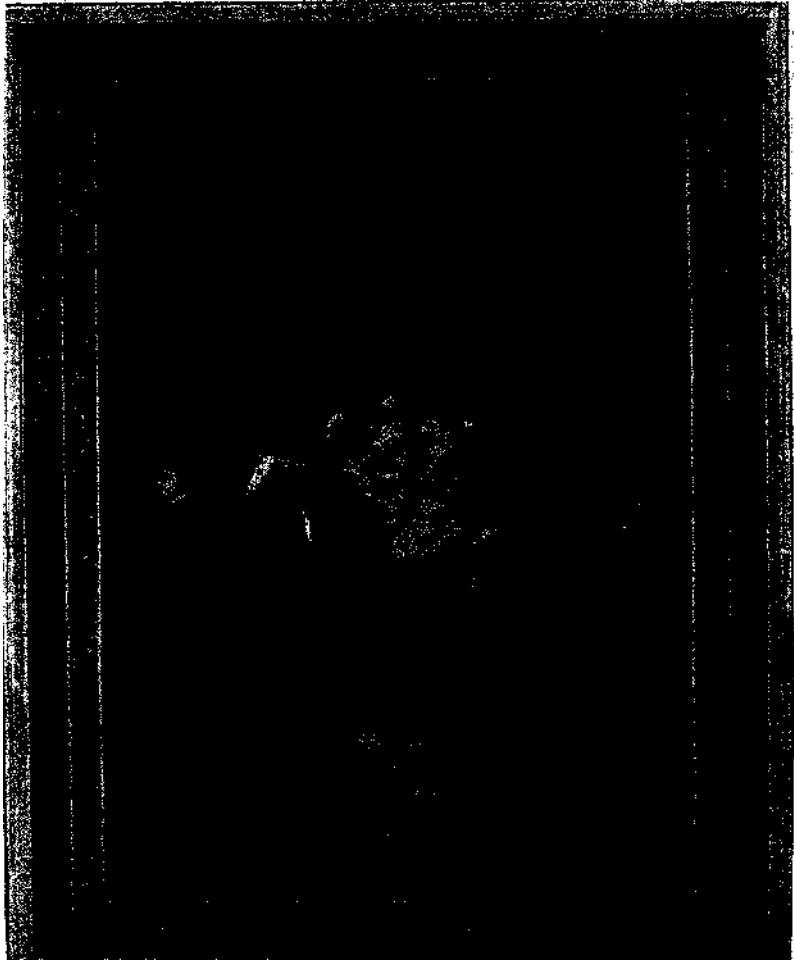
Man's mind may fly across the sea,
Or linger in a woodland glade,
Now revel in thought's liberty,
Now in enslavement to a maid,
Be rapt by joy, be mad with fear,
Seek now the moon and now the sun.
How can this fickle bounding deer
Be one with the unchanging One ?

XXV

To give, unwilling, is to pay a fine :
Nor is it alms to stop the beggar's whine.
What use a priest to him, who cannot pray ?
Or life's elixir, when life 's passed away ?
What worth a shameless woman, howso fair ?
Or her embraces, if no love be there ?
What use to live, nay rather why be born
To live the target of a dull world's scorn ?

XXVI

Friend, let others boast their treasure,
Mine 's a stock of pure love's pleasure,
Safely cared for every part
'Neath that trusty lock my heart,
Safe from other women's peeping,
For the key's in my own keeping.
Day by day it grows a little,
Never loses e'en a tittle,
But through life will ever go
With Baz Bahadur, weal or woe.



But through life will ever go
With Biz Bahadur, weal or woe'
Rajpul School

**NOTES AND
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

NOTES

1. This is an abridgement from the *Kama Shastra*, an early Sanskrit work on women.

2. Draupadi, wife of the Pandawa brothers in the *Mahabharat*.

3. Sita, wife of Rama in the *Ramayfina*.

4. Savitri, heroine of an episode in the *Mahabharat*. Like the Greek Alkestis she won her husband, Satyavan, back from death.

5. Laila and Majnun, the well-known lovers of Oriental legend. The classic version is *Laila-o-Majnun* by Nizami Ganjavi (translated in verse by James Atkinson and published by the Oriental Translation Fund). Shirin and Farhad, famous lovers of Persian legend. Shirin is said by the Persians to have been a daughter of the Emperor Maurice and wife of Khusro Parwiz who came to the throne of Persia in A.D. 591. Shirin had a humble lover Farhad, and Khusro promised to give her to him on certain impossible conditions. These Farhad almost accomplished, and hearing this Khusro sent word of Shirin's death. Thereon Farhad threw himself from the rock and perished. Khusro was put to death by his son, who was in love with Shirin. When he pressed her to marriage, she stabbed herself over Khusro's corpse.

6. The story has been told in prose in Lt.-Col. William Stirling's *Rivers of Paradise*, Captain Harris's *Ruins of Mandoo*, and Major Barnes's *Dhar and Mandu*; in verse by Captain James Abbott of the Bengal Artillery in *The Thakoorine* (James Madden & Co., 1841), republished as revised under the title of *The Legend of Mdndoo* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1893).

7. Farishta states that Mandu was founded by Vikramaditya whom he calls Bikramajit. Vikramaditya founded an era beginning 56 B.C.

8. The Paramaras, now called Puars, are a branch of the Rajput clan. They held Chitor till A.D. 714 and had a large kingdom in Central India from the ninth century onwards. The present Rajas of Rajgarh and Narsingarh are their descendants. The Maharaja of Dhar, Sir Udaji Rao, is also a Puar on the male side. His family were driven from Dhar on the Mussulman invasion, but have now returned as Mahrattas to the capital of their ancestors.

9. Raja Bhoj is a great legendary figure in Central India. Much is attributed to him : the so-called school at Dhar, now a mosque, the embankment of the big lake at Bhopal, i. e. Bhojpal, the embankment at Bhojpur, &c. Historically there were two Rajas of this name, one A.D. 1010-55 and the other A.D. 1280-1310.

10. Munja Raja reigned A.D. 973-95. His name still clings to the fine tank in front of the Jahaz Mahal at Mandu—the Munja Talao.

11. Hoshang Shah was a romantic figure, almost always fighting, though * on him the face of victory never smiled', and, if not fighting, engaged in adventures such as his horse-dealing journey to Jajnagar, *vide* Briggs, *Farishta*. He was a great builder and was largely responsible for the walls and many of the main buildings at Mandu—large works, for the walls are 37^{1/2} miles round, palaces cover over 450 acres, and baths over 250.

12. Mahmud I, of the Khilji line, was a son of Malik Mughis, minister and father-in-law of Mahmud Ghori, whose house and tomb still exist in Mandu and who built the beautiful mosque close by in A.D. 1432. Mahmud's fame extended beyond India, and he received embassies from the Sultan of Egypt and the king of Bokhara.

13. Of Ghias-ud-din Farishta writes: 'He accordingly established within his seraglio all the separate officers of a court and had at one time fifteen thousand women in the palace. Five hundred beautiful young Toorkey females in men's clothes and uniformly clad, armed with bows and quivers, stood on his right hand and were called the Toorkey guard. On his left were five hundred Abyssinian females also uniformly dressed, armed with fire-arms. Each individual within the seraglio was allowed daily two seers of grain and two tunkas of copper. One day, having observed a mouse in the royal apartment, he ordered it to receive the daily allowance of rice and money, &c.', Briggs, *Farishta*, vol. iv, p. 236.

14. Nasir-ud-din was very fond of the water palace at Kaliadeh on the Sipri river, recently rebuilt by the Maharaja Scindia. There he fell into a tank and was pulled out by women. On his regaining sobriety they told him what they had done and he, taking their words for reproaches, put them to the sword. According to one story he did the same again and was left to drown. For his parricide Sher Shah had his grave whipped and Jahangir had his remains disinterred and flung into the Narbada.

15. From the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*.

16. Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 612, Calcutta, 1873.

17. 'bin', an instrument with five, sometimes six, main wires, stretched over two gourds, which give a peculiar resonant note; 'rabab', a stringed instrument played with a plectrum; 'nai', the flute; 'sarnai', the Pathan pipe resembling the chanter of the bagpipes; 'sarangi', a stringed instrument; 'tambura', a stringed instrument.

18. T'han Singh. The name is taken from the note at the end of *The Legend of Mandoo* (*vide* note 6 *supra*). This gives Dharmपुरi as Rup Mati's birthplace, as tradition does to-day, though placing the tomb rightly at 'Saharangpur', i.e. Sarangpur. 'The Bombay Subaltern' says Tandapuri

on the Narbada (note, p. 108). Sarangpur has, however, the right to the honour of her birth as well as burial (*vide* also Sir John Malcolm's *History of Central India* (vol. i, pp. 32-3 and note), though Sarangpur is misprinted Saharanpur. The Rathor clan is the head of the lunar branch of Rajputs, and many of their descendants are found in the Dhar State and round Mandu.

19. When the Rajputs were driven to extremity, they either stabbed or burnt their females, and throwing yellow powder on their clothes and loosening their hair hurled themselves on their foes, and won the death they sought. The known occasions are many, including 3^{1/2} times at Chitor, *vide* Tod's *Rajasthan*, passim. The rite was known as 'Jauhar'.

20. The Maharana of Udaipur is the head of the Solar line of the Rajputs and a lineal descendant of the sun. His clan is Sesodia, and they had Chitor as their capital and made the most gallant resistance to the Mussulmans. To the Moguls, despite the strongest pressure, they firmly refused to give their daughters, and to this day an Udaipur princess married in any royal house of Rajasthan takes precedence over all other wives and her son, whenever born, is the heir to the throne.

21. The coco-nut is an emblem of fertility and is carried by the party seeking a marriage among the Rajputs.

22. *Vide* Tod's *Rajasthan*, vol. i, p. 321, 2nd edition, Madras, Iligginbotham & Co. The appeal was not made in vain. Rana Raj Singh of Udaipur burst into Rupnagarh and carried off the lady as his bride.

23. The fatal draught on such occasion was brewed from opium. Such was the draught given to Krishna Kumari, the Iphigenia of Rajputana, *vide* Tod's *Rajasthan* (vol. i, pp. 395-401). It is called after Durga, the goddess of destruction and death.

24. The Rajputs' vice is his daily indulgence in opium which, however, he drinks in a form known as Kasumbha.

25. Jahangir's Diary.

26. Gangli Teli is an unknown heroine. A hill on the road to Mandu from Nalcha is called Gangli Tekri, i.e. hill. The name is possibly connected with a Telingana invasion from the south.

27. Hindola Mahal, or cradle palace, so called from a fancied resemblance to the cradle of the swings common at Indian fairs. With its massive sloping buttresses and arches almost Gothic it is a very impressive building. Behind the great Darbar hall in an upper story are the ladies' quarters whence they could look down through a grille into the hall. Inside this portion a solid ramp was built so that even elephants could go up to the door of the harem.

28. Jahaz Mahal Ship-Palace, so called from its situation between two beautiful tanks. In the midst of that to the west is the palace occupied by

Nur Jahan during Jahangir's visit to Mandu in A.D. 1617, when she killed four tigers with six bullets. ' In acknowledgement of this capital marksmanship I ordered a thousand ashrafis to be scattered over Nurjahan and granted her a pair of wristlets worth a lakh of rupees ' (Jahangir's Diary). A lion was shot during the same trip.

29. Champa Baori, a deep bathing-place surrounded by Taikhanas or underground rooms made for coolness in the hot weather.

30. The red palace or Lal Bungalow is a country residence about a mile east of Jama Masjid. It was occupied by Sir Thomas Roe, James I's ambassador in 1616, and thence, as his chaplain records, a lion carried off Sir Thomas's ' little white neat shock ', which ran out barking at him.

Blue Jay, i.e. Nilkanth, a Hindu name now given to a dell in the cliffs towards Songarh and occupied by a Hindu ascetic. In a building here Akbar stayed in A.D. 1592 and in 1600. Hill of Gold, i.e. Songarh, the highest portion of Mandu cut off by an inner wall and crowned with a redoubt. By it Bahadur Shah of Guzerat (1526) and Ilumayun (1534) took Mandu.

31. Mahmud I set up a Tower of Victory to celebrate his victory over Rana Khumba of Chitor in A.D. 1443. This has fallen down and lies in huge masses at the corner of the college which was also his tomb, opposite the Jama Masjid, to which the inscription quoted refers. In A.D. 1453 Rana Khumba defeated Mahmud and erected the tower of Victory, still standing, at Chitor.

32. Baz Bahadur may have used the palace called by his name, but it was at any rate begun by Nasir-ud-din Khilji, as an inscription of 1509 proves. The power of Rup Mati's name has largely built up the tradition. The name Rewa Kund is probably the origin of the story of the intervention of the Goddess of the River with which it was natural to connect the spring. The chattris were hard by, and some explanation was desirable for such adornments being placed on a plain caravanserai or barrack. Once get the chattris connected with Rup Mati's name and the obvious reason to give for them is to gaze on Dharmपुरi, which therefore had to be made her birthplace.

33. Beveridge, *Akbarnama*, vol. ii, pp. 210-15, gives the best historical account of Rup Mati's death, though Mogul prejudice is obvious.

34. Al-badaoni, also the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ' By way of water, he went to fire and the sighs of orphans and captives settled his affairs '.

35. Beveridge, *Akbarnama*, vol. ii, p. 518.

36. The date of Baz Bahadur's death is not known. Blochmann (*Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 612) says he had been dead some time in A.D. 1594.

37. Sanwlah, *vide* Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 108. The name of Sanwlah is included in the list of Court painters of Akbar or of his period on p. 129 of the *Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India and Turkey*,

vol. i, text, by F. R. Martin, and references to specimens of his painting are given on the same page thus :

Sanwlah

Three Miniatures in the *Nizami* of Mr. Dyson Perrins.

British Museum (Or. 3714 and 4615), Razm Namah, No. 4.

Akbarnama, Indian Museum, London.

The picture reproduced is marked ' The work of Sanwlah '. The couplet inscribed on the picture and translated as its title is from Na'ui, a little-known poet of Akbar's time, *vide* Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 606. His name was Mulla Muhammad Riza. He was born near Meshed and died at Burhanpur in A.D. 1612.

38. Govardhan was one of the court painters of the time of Jahangir and Shahjahan. His name is given in the list of court painters of Jahangir and Shahjahan on p. 133 of the work quoted in the last note and a specimen of painting by Govardhan of Mir Mohammad Said Mir Jumla is given in the second volume of the same book as plate 195. Specimens of painting by this painter can also be seen in the British Museum, Add. 1880, i, pp. 3, 31. The second picture reproduced is marked ' The work of Govardhan '.

The third appears to be a variant on the theme of the second and probably also by the same hand. The fourth picture has no attribution and is of different quality, but the legend is in the hand of the copyist of the MSS.

39. The fifth is attributed to Chitarman, *vide* Martin's work, vol. i, p. 132, also plate No. 187 giving a portrait by him of Ala-ul-Mulk Tusi on which Lawrence Binyon (*Court Painters of the Great Moguls*) comments for its ' delicate expressiveness '. The picture represents Rup Mati's women wailing round her tomb.

40. i.e. Jadunagar. No village of the name is now known, but many villages disappeared in the time of Maharatta and Pindara raids.

41. Firdausi of Tus, the Persian poet, pretends to draw the story of the *Shahnama* from a villager's tale. ' Dehkan ' has, however, a secondary meaning of rustic bard or village minstrel. Jamshed's cup, *vide* notes on Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, p. 62, Golden Treasury edition. Afrasiab, King of Persia, defeated by Rustam ' by the yellow Oxus '.

42. Inserted by the copyist from Sa'ib, *vide* his postscript and note 95 thereon.

43. Koran, chapter xcii, Sale, p. 448 (Frederick Warne & Co.).

44. *Vide* note 42.

45. i.e. the great mosque of Mecca, though the Ka'aba is really the stone cube supposed to have been erected by Abraham and Ishmael, but it is probably a relic of an older faith than Islam. Let into the south-east corner of it is the black stone kissed by all pilgrims.

46. A particular kind of rosary, of which the beads are cut from a stone naturally lined with red and black, is known as ' the rosary of Suliman ', i.e. Solomon.

47. Khizr or Al Khidr, ' the green one ', is a prophet who secured immortality by drinking of the fountain of the water of the life in the Land of Darkness. He is identified variously or successively with Phineas, Elias, and St. George. He became a patron saint of rivers and roads. *Vide* Sale's Koran, p. 223, and notes thereon.

48. *Vide* notes on Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, Golden Treasury edition, p. 62, also Exodus iv. 6, and Koran, chap, xxvi, Sale, p. 277.

49. The letter ' Sin ' as a medial is written ' '

50. Koran—opening words of chap, xlvi, Sale, p. 377.

51. This comparison of the mark to a bow would show Rup Mati to have been a worshipper of Shiva.

52. The letter ' Nun ' is written ' '

53. The son-in-law of the prophet. Zu'lfiqar was the name of his sword.

54. Dark green and dark blue are often confused by Orientals. Indigo was and is much used by women for painting their eyebrows. The ' crescent moons set each on other ' are the painted and the natural eyebrows.

55. A punishment traditionally inflicted by Solomon on disobedient fairies or Djinns.

56. Koran, chap, vii, Sale, pp. 108-9. The passage in the Koran runs : * and when Moses came at the appointed hour and his Lord spoke unto him he said, " O Lord, show me thy glory that I may behold thee " ; God answered, " Thou shalt in no wise behold me but look towards the mountain and if it stand firm in its place then shalt thou see me ". But, when his Lord appeared with glory in the mount, he reduced it to dust. And Moses fell down in a swoon.'

57. The hand of Suliman was possessed of magic powers through the ring which gave him control over the genii and the winds, *vide* Koran, Sale, pp. 247, 341-2, and notes.

58. *Vide* note 50 *supra*. The meaning apparently is that the sight of the beauty of her lips would make a lover swoon.

59. The letter ' B ' has a dot beneath it in Arabic. In the East, moles are considered great adjuncts to beauty and also lucky.

60. Hafiz, *Ode*, i. 12. Hafiz is, of course, the greatest Persian lyricist. His name was Shams-ud-din Muhammad, born and died at Shiraz, A.D. 1389, vol. i, p. I of Lieut.-Col. Wilberforce Clarke's edition of his *Diwan*.

61. Rup Mati is still remembered as a poetess and musician and is credited with the invention of the Bhup Kalyan Ragini, a subordinate mode of Hindu music.

62. This lady—presumably Baz Bahadur's queen—is not otherwise known.

63. The copyist here inserted in the text a note against the word ' Khak ' (i.e. dust) that some read ' Khwab ' (i.e. sleep). If the latter be correct the translation should run ' none roused her from her sleep '.

64. The eldest of the Pandawa brothers in the *Mahabharat*.

65. Adham Khan, Blochmann (*Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, notes, pp. 323-4) and Beveridge (*Akbarnama*, vol. ii, pp. 268-72) should be read for a full account. Adham Khan, the son of Maham Anagah, Akbar's foster-mother and probably a royal bastard, was advanced by her influence and that of Bairam Khan. The riches he acquired by Baz Bahadur's defeat made him proud and insolent and he eventually stabbed Atgah Khan at court and went towards Akbar's room. The latter came out and after a few words ' struck him such a blow on the face that that wicked monster turned a summersault and fell down insensible '. He was then ' flung headlong from the top of the terrace. These short-sighted men out of consideration (for Adham) than which inconsideration would have been ten thousand times better, did not throw him down properly and he remained half alive.' He was then dragged up by the hair and flung down ' properly '. His mother died of grief in forty days and was buried with her son at Delhi in a tomb built for them by Akbar.

66. The Persian king famous for justice.

67. Pir Muhammad Khan of Shirwan, Nasir-ul-Mulk, *vide* Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 328.

68. Koran, chap, lix, Sale, p. 405.

69. Bahadur Khan-i-Sharbani, younger brother of the Khan-i-Zaman, *vide* Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, p. 328. The reason of his recall from Malwa was Bairam Khan's rebellion against Akbar.

70. *Vide* note 65 on Adham Khan.

71. Bairam Khan Akbar's famous general, *vide* Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. i, pp. 315-17.

72. i.e. ' Lord of Lords ', one of the titles of Bairam Khan.

73. Before leaving Mandu on his last expedition Pir Muhammad had consulted a holy man about the fate of his expedition. The Koran was opened in the manner of ' Sortes Vergilianae ' and the text quoted was found. Hence it was taken as an omen. It is from the Koran, chap, ii, Sale, p. 6.

74. ' Baz ' means ' falcon '.

75. Inserted by the copyist from Sa'ib, *vide* his postscript. The extinguished lamp is obviously the dead husband and the flame is that of his funeral pyre, but the phrasing is awkward and obscure.

76. From the *Anwar-i-Suhaili* of Mulla Husain bin Ali, better known as Alwaiz-i-Kashifl, written in the sixteenth century A.D.

77. The high notes are produced by taps with the finger-tips and the low notes by the palm of the hand.

78. One of the Pandawas in the *Mahabharat*.

79. There are many traditions about Raja Bhoj of the Paramara line of Ujjain, but this cannot be traced.

80. Sadi's *Gulistdn*.

81. *Vide* note on Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, Golden Treasury Series, p. 61.

82. Nizami Gunjavi, a Persian poet, author of the *Sikandamama*, died about A.D. 1200.

83. Amir Khusru of Delhi, died A.D. 1325, buried at Delhi ; wrote both in Persian and Hindi. His father came from Balkh, but he was born near Patiala in A.D. 1253.

84. The manuscript has an obvious error here, perhaps a double one. An alternative version would run ' If the woman (of this story) had been merely a woman (in Nizami's sense) the end would have been far otherwise \

85. *Masnavi* of Jalal-ud-din Al Rumi, a native of Konia in Asia Minor, born in 1195 and died A.D. 1295.

86. Hafiz, Clarke's edition, vol. i, p. 42.

87. Hafiz, Clarke's edition, vol. i, p. 407.

88. Koran, chap, xci, Sale, p. 447.

89. Koran, chap, xxi, Sale, p. 248.

90. Koran, chap, xxxix, Sale, p. 348.

91. *Masnavi* of Jalal-ud-din Al Rumi.

92. With this may be compared an inscription on the Nilkanth at Mandu dated about A.D. 1600.

' At dawn and eve I watched the owls that come

To perch on pinnacles of Shirwan's tomb,

And in their plaintive hooting this I heard,

Here pomp and wealth and majesty are dumb.'

93. A.D. 1653.

94. ' The second lord of the Qiran ' was Shah Jahan, his ancestor Timur being the first. ' Qiran ' is an astronomical term for the conjunction of Venus and Jupiter which is held to confer the power of conquest and dominion on those born under it.

95. Sa'ib, i.e. Mirza Muhammad Ali of Tabriz and Ispahan who visited India in Jahangir's reign, a well-known Persian poet.

96. *Vide* Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, pp. 322-3.

97. A.D. 1561.

98. *Vide* Sir Sayyid Ahmad's list of Delhi notables in his *Asar-us-Sunadid*.

Mahbub Ali was a well-known Muhammadan divine of Delhi, who died in 1831. A mosque called after his name is not far from the Jama Masjid at Delhi.

99. M. Bashir-ud-din obtained the manuscript from Jamadar Inayat Ali's son, whose mother was able to tell him to whom his father had sold the three pictures mentioned, and this led to their recovery with two others.

100. Jeth, a hot weather month usually devoid of rain.

101. Sawan, a month of the rains and always cloudy.

102. Refers to the custom of going out to see the new moon.

103. The superstition refers to the ' Chikor ' or hill partridge which is supposed to love the moon, as the quail the cloud of the rains.

104. There is a pun in the Hindi. The name of course is Baz Bahadur and the predominant string of the ' bin ' is known as ' Baz '.

105. An unfounded superstition.

106. This somewhat frigid ' Kabitta ' is full of allusions to adultery in Hindu mythology and legend. Indra, God of the sky, was punished for lust after Aholya, the wife of Gautam, by obscene emblems appearing all over his body. Draupadi, wife of the Pandawas in the *Mahabharat*, was coveted by Dushashan and Keechuk. The moon was punished for assisting Indra's treacherous attempt on Gautam's wife. Rawan carried off Sita, wife of Rama, *vide Ramayana*. Krishna took Rukmini, who was plighted to Shishpal. Arjun killed Keechuk over Draupadi. Bhasmasur, a demon king, got from Mahadeo the power that his hand should burn any one on which he placed it. He then demanded Parbati, Mahadeo's wife, but was induced by Vishnu to put his hand on his own head and was burnt to ash.

107. There is a myth that the origin of pearls is the fall of raindrops into the open oyster. Swans are also supposed to feed on pearls. The end of this ' Kabitta ' contains a string of frigid puns on Adam (son of man), Rup (beauty), Mati (sense), and Baz (the master wire).

108. The ocean bore the lotus and the lotus Brahma ; Lakshmi the sister became wife of Vishnu, and the other Rambha the favourite dancing-girl of Indra.

109. Another pun in the original : literally ' put the Kankhajura ', i.e. * centipede ', in your ' Kan ', i.e. ' ear '. The version gives it to the sense, if not to the sound.

n o. The loin-cloth of the male. ' Some wives wear the breeches' as we should say.

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