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Dattakavi

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DATTATRAYA KONDO GHATE "DATTAKAVI" (1875-1899) died at the young age of 24 and could write quantitatively very little. He is one of the pioneers of modern Marathi poetry. His poetic genius was lyrical and was saturated with a deep and inborn sense of beauty. This quality combined with the self-expression through images were born out of his inherent modern consciousness.

The writer of this monograph, Dr. Anuradha Potdar, is grand-daughter of the poet. She has taken great pains to depict the life story of her grandfather and assess his literary works in a balanced manner, which enable us to understand the poet through his life and his works.

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MAKERS OF INDIAN LITERATURE

DATTAKAVI

by
ANURADHA POTDAR

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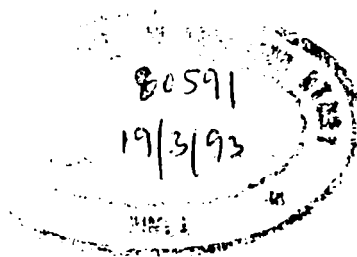


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*Dedicated
to
my Father*

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CHAPTER ONE

Life

"From the moment of birth I have skimmed
through twenty three pages so far.
Who can say how many more I shall see!
But today I have turned a page for certain
and opened a new one.
Who knows what good or evil
will be written there."

These poignant lines come naturally to my mind as I begin to write the life story of poet Dutta. The title of this poem is "A New Page Opened". It is included in the small collection of poems by Dattatraya Kondo Ghate. The poem was written at Indore, and carries the date 1st January, 1898. It was published on 6th January in the magazine—*Balbodh Mewa* (Children's Delight) which Rev. N. W. Tilak (1861-1919) had started for children. 1898 is way back in the past but even today, while reading this poem, a sense of sadness and waste fills the mind and Destiny's unsolved riddle of Life and Death makes one cast an introspective look at oneself. The poet who uttered these thoughtful and deeply felt sentiments in the very prime of his life could turn only one more page from the book of life before the book was closed for him for ever. "Even before the bud blossomed forth into a flower cruel hands plucked it." Dutta's short life reminds one of these lines written by the poet Vinayak in one of his long historical poems. The elegies of the poet Rev. Tilak and Chandra-

shekar—C. S. Gorhe (1871-1937) the Poet-laureate of Baroda bear witness to the deep sorrow, these senior poets felt at the loss of a dear and much loved friend. In the April 1899 issue of *Suvichar Samagam*, a leading literary magazine of the time, Rev. Tilak in the poem "Oh ye lovers of poetry, Dutta is gone away," gives expression to the deep sorrow felt at the untimely death of his young friend in touching words.

Dutta in his last days, had established a very warm and intimate friendship with poet Chandrashekhar. In fact, he found a resting place in Chandrashekhar, for his unfulfilled hopes and youthful aspirations.

"But let that be.

While I am living on this Earth

I will for ever enjoy the beauty of your poems,

And consider myself lucky that I could do so;

Oh dear Friend, In future I shall see you

In the glory of your poetic achievement."

Who will not feel deeply the touching pathos of this tribute paid by Chandrashekhar after the death of Dutta?

In an obituary notice in the April 1899 issue of *Suvichar Samagam*, the editor says: "Our poet friend Dattopant Ghate, whose poems pleased the hearts of our readers, has passed away, leaving all his friends in the deep sea of grief." Even after making allowances for the formality of the announcement, one cannot but conclude that the contemporary literary world took genuine notice of this poet who at the time of his death was just twenty-three years and a few months old.

When one surveys the short life of Dutta one thinks more of the cultural ethos which gave shape to his poetic genius than the practical events of his domestic and worldly life. The conditions of life at home and the social atmosphere in which the young poet grew, made a deep and lasting impression on him. Under the influence of these two, the highly sensitive genius of the poet blossomed.

Dutta was born on 26th June 1875 at Ahmednagar. Ghates originally came from Shrigonde, a small village in Ahmednagar

District of Maharashtra. But long before Dutta was born, the family had already settled down at Ahmednagar. Dutta was the only child of his parents. Born in poverty which cripples all human efforts, Dutta's father Kondo Ranoji migrated to Poona and there, with great difficulty, acquired enough education which would enable him to earn a livelihood. In 1870 he settled down at Ahmednagar and started practice as a "Mukhatyaar" Pleader. Kondo Ranoji was an able and ambitious man and he soon built up a flourishing practice. It was during this period of prosperity that a son was born to him. The son was later to become famous as "Dutta", the young poet of Maharashtra. Kondo Ranoji kept an open house where guests, relatives and poor students were equally welcome. (We find a reference to him in a humorous poem of the time about the more prominent citizens of Navi Peth in Ahmednagar. The poem pays him a handsome tribute and says that "everything which Kondo Ranoji did was on a grand scale"— and it was rightly so!) The house of Kondo Ranoji in Navi Peth was an institution in itself and thanks to his personal ability, he had acquired a prominent place in the social life of Ahmednagar. He, in his heart, did not believe in caste distinctions and the general atmosphere of the house, if not exactly modern, was very liberal. A man of few words, Dutta's father was a strict disciplinarian. His mother Balubai who naturally loved the only child dearly, was a remarkable woman fully alive to what was going on around her. The father, a self-made man, was strong and resolute and would not stand any opposition. As often happens with persons of such ability, the father and son could never establish a friendly rapport between themselves. The love which the father genuinely felt for the son could rarely find expression in visible terms. There was no free exchange of thoughts or ideas. This must have affected the young and sensitive mind of the poet and could have been responsible partly for his loss of interest in the home, and the waverings of his mind. This pattern of life for children caused by the generation gap was very common in those days. For a young poetic mind to open out into the full bloom of achievement there must be some driving force, some one to encourage and inspire. This initial inspiration Dutta received from his mother. The mother

had a melodious voice and was very fond of music. She knew by heart several poems from *Navaneeta* the first anthology of Marathi poetry edited by Shri Parshuram Shastri Godbole (1799-1874) who was the pioneer anthologist of Maharashtra. She was equally familiar with the 'Abhangas' of the saint poets Namdeo and Tukaram and also the devotional songs included in the 'Prarthana Sangeet' of the Prarthana Samaj. Young Dutta started listening to them while still in his cradle. There is no doubt that these must have had a considerable though unconscious impact, on the sensitive child. A very common form of amusement amongst his family members was 'Bhendi,' a game in which someone started reciting a verse and the other party had to follow with a verse beginning with the last letter of the verse of the opponent. This game lasted for hours and a few hundred verses were exchanged between the two groups. Each one came ready, prepared for the game and had to know numerous poems by heart. Sometime if one found oneself in a tight corner one took recourse to "Instant poetry". Dutta started participating in this game when he was just fourteen.

There were some other factors too which had considerable impact on the mind of Dutta. Contact with Christian Missionaries in his student days and the Prarthana Samaj movement, in the shadow of which he grew, both played an important part in giving shape to Dutta's budding personality. After finishing Marathi School and two or three standards of English, Dutta, at the loving insistence of Rev. J. J. Smith, the head of the Mission High School of Ahmednagar, was enrolled as a student in the Mission High School of Ahmednagar from which he passed his Matriculation and School Final examination in 1890. Both Rev. and Mrs. Smith strove hard to make the mission school an ideal educational institution. Both became very fond of Dutta, and Dutta's mind began to open up before this loving elderly couple and a relationship of great affection was soon established between them. Most children from the school avoided attending the Sunday Bible Class. Not so, Dutta. He attended it regularly and made a careful study of the scriptures with the result that we often hear echoes from it in some of his poems. The Smiths introduced Dutta to some American

families. After matriculating from the Mission School in 1890, Dutta, again at the instance of Rev. Smith, joined the Wilson College in Bombay. In the mission school and under the guiding influence of Rev. Smith, Dutta developed an interest in social reform and began to appreciate the beauty of English literature. During the same period he came to know the senior Marathi poet Rev. Tilak who was, at that time passing through a great crisis in his life. He had only just embraced Christianity and in doing so was separated for a few years from his wife. At this time, Rev. Tilak met Dutta and inspite of the difference in their age the two became close friends. The contact and the friendship was further cemented by the generous acceptance of Tilak as a family friend by Dutta's parents. Dutta was perhaps just beginning to feel the stirrings of poetic creation by then and the friendship with the older poet Tilak must have contributed not a little to these faint promptings of the heart.

About the time he matriculated, Dutta was married to Chandra-bhagabai, a girl from the Rajmane family of Ghospuri, a small village near Ahmednagar. She was totally illiterate at the time of her marriage and though arrangements were made after her marriage to teach her reading, writing and embroidery work, she did not take to her education very kindly. It was indeed a tragic stroke of irony that a young romantic poet whose budding mind was wide awake, seeking new horizons and dreaming poetic dreams should have acquired as his life's partner an unlettered village maiden! The contact with the missionaries had made Dutta familiar with the free and easy companionship of men and women; the familiarity with English literature, especially romantic poetry, was giving a new dimension to his mental processes. His sensitive mind was already deeply attracted to the concept of romantic love; and yet such were the two young persons brought together in the bond of marriage by Destiny! Against this vivid background of difference and discord, it was no wonder, they strayed away from each other in the course of time! The song of love remained unsung and the sound of music was hardly ever heard in their young lives joined by marriage. Many a sensitive person in those days wedded to an unresponsive partner had to swallow this bitter pill

of discord and frustration with patience and helplessness. The tragic fact was that the girl-wife was very often entirely blameless in this most trying situation. It was the sad consummation of a cruel predicament in which a happy mingling of minds was impossible. Dutta suffered this disappointment and frustration more keenly because of his intensely romantic nature.

The important thing which powerfully influenced Dutta at this time was the movement of Prarthana Samaj. Shri Keshab Chandra Sen was one of the founders of the Brahmo Samaj. With his encouragement and with a view to reform Hindu religion and society some educated persons from Bombay started the movement in Maharashtra on 31st March 1867. Since they believed that the only way to worship God was through prayer and service, they decided to call this new movement the 'Prarthana Samaj'. Dr. Atmaram Pandurang Tarkhadkar was the first President of the Samaj. The Samaj adopted a four point programme consisting of abolishing the age-old conventions of castes, education of women, striving for widow remarriage, and prohibition of child marriages. Since the founders did not believe in idol worship, they accepted unfailing devotion as the only road to salvation. Justice Ranade, Dr. Bhandarkar, Shri V. A. Modak, Shri V. R. Shinde, Shri Chandavarkar were the leaders of this movement in Maharashtra. Dutta was still a student when under the powerful stimulus of the wellknown social reformer, Raobahadur Shankar Pandurang Pandit, the movement made rapid strides in Ahmednagar. Round about 1870, Dutta's father joined the Samaj and was for some years its Executive Secretary. Both Kondo Ranoji and his wife Balubai, were very generous and hospitable. No wonder then, that social reformers and wellknown scholars from all castes and communities were constant visitors and guests at their house. Men like Justice Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar from Bombay and Poona and such stalwarts of the Brahmo Samaj from Calcutta as Pratapchandra Mujumdar and Shivnath Shastri, known alike for their devotion and oratory, came to Ahmednagar to participate in the annual celebrations of the Samaj. Many such persons were constant visitors at the Ghate home where family prayer meetings were often held. The sermons of these famous leaders

of the movement, their lectures and prayer meetings introduced a new and sustained vigour into the social life of Ahmednagar. During the most sensitive period of Dutta's life he was fortunate to watch and serve these personages from close quarters, absorb their thoughts and drink deep at the founts of devotional prayers which cascaded out of their sincere longing for God. Later in Bombay, Dutta regularly attended the lectures and prayer meetings of Ranade, Chandavarkar, Bhandarkar, Navrange and some other prominent members of the Samaj. These mental and spiritual contacts with some of the best men of the day gave him a formative experience which played a vital role in shaping his mind and developing his sensibility. His social conscience began to take shape and direction, even at that early age. He began to think on his own irrespective of what others said, due to this liberal atmosphere.

Dutta left his home for the first time when he went to Bombay and joined the Wilson College. His life which had so far grown in the shelter of his home and his parents, thereafter followed its natural bent and inclination. Dutta now followed every prompting of his liberated mind without restraint. His love of letters and the arts, the free flight of his poetic mind and his passions and eccentricities now predominated his life. He joined the Wilson College in 1891 but even four years later he was still marking time in the Intermediate class. The Bombay climate did not suit him and falling ill he often returned to Ahmednagar to recoupe. It is difficult at this distance of time, to make a proper and final assesment of his free, unfettered and restless life of this period. There was no companion of his age in his home, and the father's unspoken but vigilant eye was enough to keep in check if not totally suppress, his natural exuberance. It is possible that the pattern of his life in Bombay was an inevitable but natural reaction to his earlier sheltered life. Shri V. D. Ghate, his son and biographer says, "to explore Dutta's restlessness of this period is to explore the manifold promptings of the youthful and sensitive mind of a romantic poet". No one can today make a correct diagnosis of his restless discontent, of the aspirations of a mind brimming with unfulfilled desires. In Bombay, all these inclinations found a free play.

At this period Dutta was attracted to Music and to playing the sitar in which arts he achieved a fairly remarkable success. These passions of his had been noted earlier in Ahmednagar and had caused a certain amount of tension in the house. His mind must have been swinging like a pendulum between the domestic and religious atmosphere of his home and the independent free life in Bombay. Dutta had still to achieve balance and maturity in poetry when he went to Bombay. It was only in his independent life there that for the first time he felt the full force of his poetic talent which ran amok like a freshly delivered calf drunk with the joy of breathing the fresh air around it. His reading during this time was varied and considerable. He left Bombay and joined the Mission College at Indore in 1896 which was then affiliated to the Calcutta University. Here he could pay undivided attention to his studies and acquire a Bachelor's degree in 1898 at the age of twenty-two, eight years after he had joined the college! As against the restless life of Bombay, he found in Indore's quiet and serene atmosphere, mental peace and stability. It was during that period that Dutta pursued his quest of music with zest and vigour. His friends have acknowledged his mastery over this art in addition to his poetry. The musical quality of his poetry was also to a great extent influenced by his love of music itself. "Your Sitar, more eloquent than the Goddess of Music, will for ever remain silent now and hereafter". In these words his friends paid compliments to his musical skill while mourning his untimely death. Many of Dutta's best poems were written during his short stay at Indore. After his graduation, Datta did not stay long in Ahmednagar. He could no longer accept the humdrum life of this slow moving town. In those days, many promising young Maratha boys found employment in Baroda State which had a Maratha ruler. Dutta went to Baroda. The local office of Damodar Sheth Yande's *Sayaji Vijay*, the leading weekly of Baroda, was then an important intellectual centre of Baroda. Dutta started writing for the *Sayaji Vijay*. He was now in the full prime of his life, with all his faculties working at the fullest voltage and seeking fresh worlds to conquer. He started making plans to organise an Indian Orchestra and take it to Paris, to perform at the world exhibition which was

to be held there that year. The future now beckoned to him and to convert tomorrow's promises into today's reality became almost an obsession now. The free and forward looking atmosphere of Baroda stimulated him in all directions and he was getting ready to hold the world in the palm of his hand. He now started making a Marathi adaptation of "Uttara Ramacharita"—an eighth century Sanskrit masterpiece of the poet Bhavbhuti. (It is also said that during his stay in Indore, in response to an advertisement by Srimant Shivajirao Holkar, the Maharaja of Indore, he had rendered Kalidas's "Meghdoot" into a Marathi play. Unfortunately, this manuscript has been lost from the Indore State records and was never recovered.) While engaged in translating "Uttara Ramacharita" he was attracted by the modern Marathi poetry of the 19th century of which he himself was a faithful devotee. Parshuram Pant Tatya Godbole's "Navanita"—a collection of extracts from Marathi poets, ended with Ramjoshi, the famous Shahir of the 18th century. No one had bothered to take notice of the poets who came after Ramjoshi with the result that their poems lay buried in the scattered magazines and newspapers of the day. Dutta made the ambitious resolve to rescue them from this neglect and bring up-to-date the work of Parshuram Pant Tatya. He started a collection and critical survey of poets, past and present. For this he began a correspondence with leading contemporary poets.

It is on record that Rev. Tilak and Keshavsut (the father of modern Marathi poetry) did actually send their poems for inclusion in this collection. This was probably the first effort of its kind to bring together in one collection modern Marathi poetry of the 19th century and a young poet just out of his teens had applied himself to such an ambitious task! Even at this young age Dutta had understood the revolt in the contemporary Marathi poetry against tradition and convention and also its novel approach and its possible line of advance. He would not have otherwise undertaken to make a sizeable compilation out of it. Dutta's untimely death left many of his projects unfinished and dreams unfulfilled. His friend Chandrashekhar Shivram Gorhe later on finished the work started by his young friend and published it under the title "Arvachin Kavita" (Modern Poetry), on 23rd

December, 1903 and dedicated it to the memory of the departed poet. Strangely enough Chandrashekar's collection does not include the poems of Rev. Tilak and Keshavsut! That may be because Chandrashekar was a traditionalist, unable, like Dutta, to appreciate and welcome the beauty and vigour of modern Marathi poetry. But this attempt of Dutta shows how powerfully he was attracted towards modern Marathi poetry and how anxious he was to make people recognise its excellence.

In the year 1899 Baroda was in the grip of a severe epidemic of Bubonic Plague. Chandrashekar accompanied by his brother, had already left the city and taken shelter in a Dharmashala outside Baroda. But Dutta continued to stay with his friend Bapusaheb Dighe in the city. Dutta would walk the distance of a mile or a mile and a half night after cold night, to the Dharmashala which Chandrashekar had made his temporary home. There the two friends drank deep at the springs of poetry in each other's agreeable company. It was under these weird conditions, surrounded by the dance of Death and in company of a brother poet that Dutta visualized new horizons of his own poetry. It was during this period that "the charming breeze of spring began to blow", the night turned into "Prabhat" and "Mugdha Kalika" began to sway with "Bal Latika". The song of Cuckoo "Kokil Kujit" brought on the longings of love. It was also during this period that the adaptation of "Uttara Ramacharita" was taking shape.

The time was fast approaching when Dutta would have to say goodbye to life which he loved so dearly. But the poet immersed as he was in poetic bliss, in dreams of love and in making ambitious plans for the future was totally deaf to the cruel steps of death which were coming closer and closer day by day. It was at this period that he composed his two magnificent poems—one "On the Banks of Vishwamitri" and the solemn and serene lullaby of a poor loving mother. In the month of March 1899, Dutta was struck down with plague. Death itself must have faltered before putting an end to the young dreams of a promising young life because after a lapse of about four days, there were welcome signs of a recovery. Friends, who had gathered round his bed-side

breathed a sigh of relief and unexpectedly the coveted order of appointment in the State Service for which Dutta had earlier applied was also received. But so cruel was the play of destiny that his illness suddenly took a turn for the worse the very next day. There was a high fever and Dutta lost consciousness. The agony of pain and fever became unbearable. But Dutta never thought that he was going to die though the tears of friends around the sick bed gave a different impression. He continued to tell them not to despair, to assure them that he was not going to die. After a very trying night it became obvious to everyone that the tragic end was near! Nanasaheb, Chandrashekar's elder brother while on his way to the court dropped in to see the patient. Dutta implored him from his death bed: "Pardon me Nanasaheb, you have come and I am lying down like this..." Friends watching him were deeply moved by this touching humility of the dying youth! Dutta also realized by then that he was dying! What thoughts, what memories must have passed through the young mind at this last moment? But whatever he remembered never found expression in words. With a trembling hand he picked up the manuscript of his poems, his one and only treasure, and handing it over to Chandrashekhar said, "Take care of this". On 13th March 1899, Dutta bade adieu to the world leaving in the hands of his friend a slender volume of poems and thinking dimly perhaps of his unfulfilled dreams and desires. In mute silence his Muse and his Sitar watched him go. They were themselves dead now, for no one would ever play them again.

And so died, in his early youth, a poet, who was among the pioneers of Modern Marathi poetry. It was only in 1921, twenty two years after his death when his son V. D. Ghate (himself a scholar of repute) collected and edited all his work that the Marathi readers came to know of Dutta's real poetic talent.

Such is the outline,— a suddenly disrupted one—of the short life of poet Dutta. When today, one looks back on his short lived life, one realizes that Dutta hardly got five to seven full, active and creatively alive years in his life. Though his creative life was so short, he has left, as we shall see in the next chapters, a lasting impact on Marathi Poetry.

CHAPTER TWO

Poems of Nature

If we examine the literary output in any advanced language, either of the past or the present, we find that poems dealing with nature and poet's intimate relation with it, form an important part of all poetry. After love, nature has been the most productive subject on which the poet's fancy has lingered. Nature in its various manifestations and its impact on the human mind has always been a source of great poetic inspiration. Marathi poetry is no exception to this general rule and we see Marathi poets writing about nature from the earliest times and in various ways. Sometimes the poet's approach to nature is just conventional. It serves very little purpose, beyond embellishing and adorning the theme. At other times it becomes the reflection of the poet's mood or symbolic of the great emotional upsurge which is seeking expression in suitable words. Sometimes the poet captures in the written word a fascinating aspect of nature, and the image he creates is made beautiful by its form, its smell, its delicate velvety touch. At other times nature serves as a background to emphasise and heighten the emotional content of the poet's personal experience. We find in our Vedic literature the sublime invocations to Ushas (Dawn), Varun (the Rain God), Marut (the Wind God) and such elements of nature, wherein the Vedic seers see the visible symbols of an invisible God. Longer poems like 'Meghdoot' or 'Ritusamhar' in classical Sanskrit literature express the poet's love and admiration for Nature whose beauty he tries to capture in images as varied as the changing moods of Nature itself. Indeed, there is no end to the ideas and symbols man has discovered in Nature.

If Nature did have its share in the devotional poetry of the Marathi saints, it had a secondary importance. In the Abhangas of Dnyaneshwar, Namdeo and Tukaram and other saint poets from the 13th century onwards, we find a great upsurge of purely devotional feelings, an intense desire to seek God. But, here too, we come across many beautiful similes and symbols from Nature which are used to illustrate a metaphysical experience. Dnyan-deo's Dnyaneshwari is, first and foremost, a commentary on the Geeta. But Dnyaneshwar was also a genuine poet, a past master in describing the beauty of a deep mystical experience by reference to a phenomenon of beauty in Nature. Thus we come face to face in Dnyaneshwari, with the bee which descends upon the lotus so gently that it does no harm to the petals of the delicate flower and the flower itself, swaying in the calm windless atmosphere because of the bee confined in it! It is not surprising though that some of these images and similes from nature conform to the poetic canons of old Sanskrit literature. Samartha Ramdas, another saint poet has described in his forthright manner the deep reverberating sound of a waterfall coming down from a great height. But we come across really beautiful images and similes from nature in the works of Marathi ballad singers. Their songs of love constantly turn to nature for appropriate images and ideas. A heroine in a Marathi lyrical ballad, compares her lover to a fitful stormy cloud because both are equally unpredictable! All Nature poetry written by the Pandit poets of Marathi was rigidly bound by the laws of Sanskrit rhetorics and was mainly concerned with conventional and lengthy descriptions. Thus we have long descriptions of nature in the poetry of Waman Pandit, Samraj, Raghunath Pandit and other scholar poets. This poetry was so cluttered up with figures of speech and arresting phrases that it becomes difficult to penetrate them and see nature as it really is. The fact that nature has its own life cycle, irrespective of man, seems to have escaped them. Marathi poets of the early British period (1825-1874), like Agashe, Mogare, Kirtikar generally accepted the conventions of traditional Sanskrit poetry but they also realised and tried to express in their poems the pristine glory of nature as a superior, guiding power. This gave a didactic colouring to their Nature poetry.

The influence of Kalidas and of "Subhashit Ratna Bhandar" on these poets is quite unmistakable. But what strikes one most in this traditional poetry is an artificial and highly decorative use of Nature to adorn the poetic theme. Rarely do we see Nature in its true form, surging sweet music down a solitary stream.

The second generation of Marathi poets after 1885, who tried to break loose of the traditional fetish, was captivated by the lyrical poetry of Wordsworth, Keats and Tennyson and we see glimmerings of a new consciousness first in the Nature poems of Keshavsut and Rev. Tilak.

It was necessary to take this review of the past to put Dutta's contribution in its correct perspective, for his Nature poetry forms an important part of his overall poetic achievements. Dutta's poetic career synchronises with the dawn of modern Marathi poetry. The first contact with Western Civilization and particularly with the Romantic English poets, powerfully affected the writers of this transitory period when the old could not be totally forgotten nor the new unreservedly accepted.

—Hence much of the poetry of this period is fairly modern but experimental, cautiously exploring the new horizons that were dimly discernible. The 'new' poetry of Rev. Tilak (1861-1919), Keshavsut (1866-1905), and Vinayak (1871-1919) began to appear in contemporary magazines like 'Manoranjan', 'Kavyaratnavali', 'Suvichar Samagam' etc. Most of these poets were deeply influenced by the 'Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics', and by the 'One Thousand and One Gems of English Poetry'. Dutta too was familiar with the works of Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats and others. Dutta was a graduate of the Calcutta University but his study of the old Sanskrit poets and the Western Romantic Poets of the 19th century was not just a matter of reading a few text books. His reading was wide and deep and consequently he received from the Western poetry new thoughts and emotion and old traditional discipline from the Sanskrit classics which became a part and parcel of his poetic personality. Writing to the editor of 'Kavyaratnavali' he says, "poetry must keep pace with the pace of progress and the changing times. The old mythological themes are no longer attractive. Today poetic themes such as

great historical events, beauty of Nature and lively presentation of human emotions are all readily accepted and recognised by the Modern Marathi poetry and one must make maximum use of them. Poetry should not merely aim at entertaining the reader. It is the duty of a truly modern poet to inspire noble thoughts among the people in a charming style and elevate their minds and emotions". (KAVYARATNAVALI: VOLUME II: 1899). These words of the poet, written seventy-five years ago, give rise to mixed feelings. It is obvious that Dutta was no longer enamoured of the classical style of the old scholarly poets. He had realised that poetry must not be only didactic and descriptive but it must reveal and picturise human emotions. But he was not yet fully aware of the vital importance of selfexpression in lyrical poetry. He knew that poetry must not merely seek to give pleasure but he was not as yet free of the misconception that it must also morally elevate. One must not forget that it was during this stage of ambivalence that Dutta's poetry was taking shape. His young mind must have been affected by the early contact with the American Missionaries, and through them with the Western Literature. During the years of study at the University this contact became more and more intimate. He had collected many editions of his favourite Western poets for his private collection and we often see him echoing their thoughts and sentiments in his own poetry. While at the Wilson College, Dutta wrote some poems in English in the manner of Pope. "Liberty", "Love", "A Stormy Day", are some of the titles of these poems. These poems are obviously written to try his hand at versification in English. They have hardly any poetic merit. All that one should note here is that his command of the English language was good enough to prompt him to write poetry in it. Unfortunately his English poem "Shelley" written in honour of his favourite poet is not to be found today.

Dutta was not alone in taking his poetic inspiration from English poets and imitating their style and subject to a certain extent. In fact, Keshavsut made straightforward translations of more than half a dozen English poems; for this he selected poems from Shakespeare, Drummond, Dryden, Scott, Elizabeth Browning and the American poets Poe, Longfellow and Emerson. Sanskrit

classics which greatly influenced his style at the initial stage were gradually replaced by the Western poets and their works. He and his contemporaries were also attracted to the prose of Emerson and Whitman who sought to rid poetry of all artificial restraints and conventional rules. The lyric now became the most accepted form of poetic expression. It was considered to be a genuinely poetic form and an honest mode of communication. The new form also transformed the subject matter. Poetry now became more personal, more self-revealing. This new poetic spirit was naturally discernible in poems devoted to nature. The new poets began to fly heavenward in company of Shelley's "Skylark" and heard the sweet music of Keats' "Nightingale". But Keshavsut (1866-1905) the father of modern Marathi poetry was more influenced by Wordsworth and Emerson, the poet-philosophers, than the Romanticists, Shelley or Keats. Hence we find in Keshavasut the realisation that nature is not just a convenient and sometimes a flamboyant background for emotions but has its own life and rhythm which are as varied as they are ageless too. It is capable of giving a sense of fulfilment to man's life which is both incomplete and transitory. This new awareness of nature, that it has a life of its own and is greater than man, is a constant refrain in the work of poets coming after Keshavsut. Who can forget Balkavi who merged himself completely in nature, and saw in it a reflection of himself? Both Keshavsut and Dutta were contemporaries. Their poems appeared in 'Manoranjan', a literary magazine simultaneously. But Keshavsut does not seem to have influenced Dutta in any way. Dutta probably looked upon him as a noteworthy contemporary poet but there was no personal contact between them. The only two poets with whom Dutta came in intimate contact were Rev. Tilak and Chandrashekhar. Tilak may, to some extent, have inspired Dutta's poems for children but of Tilak's philosophical and didactic vein, we find no trace in Dutta. This probably was due to a fundamental difference in their temperaments and attitudes. Chandrashekhar was the foremost representative of the scholarly poets of the time. He was steeped in classical tradition and his poetry went its majestic way, displaying the ornaments and finery of a bygone era. But Dutta as we saw was greatly influenced

both by the East and the West. He was as fond of Sanskrit literature as he was of English. Kalidas and Bhavbhuti were his favourite poets whose works he had read often enough to know them almost by heart. We see the impact of both, reflected in his love poems as well as his nature poems.

Dutta's nature poems are a touching and genuine reflection of his life and heart. We see in them all his loving dreams and unfulfilled desires taking shape in words. We also notice in them the decorative and figurative influence of Sanskrit literature which he loved so much. Today only forty eight poems of Dutta are available to us. The manuscript which he handed over to his friend Chandra-shekhara from his death bed contained about a hundred poems. Twenty two years afterwards, in 1921, Dutta's son, V. D. Ghate brought out an edition of his father's selected poems. He made a careful scrutiny of all available poems of Dutta and selected forty eight out of them for inclusion in his volume. Those he left out were either too immature and epigrammatic or erotic and other-worldly. Their interest for us lies in their simple diction rather than the flight of imagination or ideas. They carry the impress of Waman, Shridhar, Ramjoshi, the old Marathi poets he had read in his boyhood and of Parshurampant Godbole's worthy collection the 'Navaneet'.

Dutta wrote his most important poems during the last four or five years of his life at Indore and Baroda. Among these, those that can be described as nature poems proper, are about fourteen. Among them are "To my beloved the Garland", "Tender Bud", "The Fond Flower", "To my friend the spring breeze", "The song of the Cuckoo", "Dear Creeper", and "On the banks of the Vishwamitri".

Before looking closely at these nature poems for their distinctive quality it would be better to get acquainted with their themes and content. Some of them like "To my beloved the Garland", "Dear Creeper", or "My friend the Bird" are addressed to a specific beautiful form in nature. The poet's love for these is poetically expressed through loving and endearing words like my dear friend etc. But these poems are not merely descriptive or narrative. In them the poet has given a free expression to his personal

emotions and while doing so humanised and personified nature. In the two poems about the "Garland" and "The Spring Breeze" the poet has with great skill expressed his sense of loneliness and pangs of separation which are heightened by the gentle touch of flowers and the breeze of spring. They reveal the skilful poetic use of nature to illustrate the pain of separation in a lover as depicted in Sanskrit classics. Addressing a garland of flowers he says: "I would have left you happy in the beautiful hair of the beloved but you have come to one, burning with the grief of separation, so now you have to suffer what I suffer. Your touch heightens the fever, the smell starts a headache. Look at the strange vagaries of fortune, things which should please, give pain"! He finds the cool breeze of spring equally unbearable. "How can the breeze be cool and soothing? It has touched one who is burning with the fever of separation. Her hot breath has made the breeze also hot. Contact is always infectious".

In the highly sentimental poem about the garland, he sees the creeper in the form of an attractive woman and carries the illusion right through. Because of the overflowing and intense feelings of love, the language of this poem is totally unadorned. It is natural and intimate as between two friends or lovers. But, side by side, it does make use of all the accepted canons of classical Sanskrit and does not forego to preach a moral too!

The central theme of "The song of the Cuckoo" is very original. The Cuckoo is here presented as the harbinger of Spring. She goes about announcing his arrival to the entire natural creation and inviting it to get ready to receive him with majesty. In this poem also the poet has presented Nature in a human form.

The poem "Tender Bud" is a fascinating display of the poet's fancy. All the well known figures of speech, metaphor, simile, etc. run riot all over the poem. The poet's imagination excited by the tender bud, transfers to it all ideas which come to his mind and in the process gives it numerous human characteristics. Dutta always saw in Nature reflection of human activity in one form or another. In this he resembles the Sanskrit poets more than any other, but with an originality and spontaneity of his own. 'On the banks of Vishwamitri' is perhaps the best of Dutta's nature

poems. Its music, its wonderful presentation, its extraordinary beauty and emotionally charged atmosphere have made it one of his best. To read it once is to remember it for ever.

As Dutta's elderly friend Chandrashekhar has said, Dutta was a single-minded devotee of Nature who would get lost in observing Nature's changing moods. But do we not know that all poets are attracted by Nature and enjoy its company? Was Dutta's love of Nature of this common stamp or is it distinguished by a special quality of its own? Are these poems merely descriptive? In trying to find an answer to these questions, we become aware of the distinctive and original quality of Dutta's Nature poems.

Every artist seeks his own point of contact with the beauty he hopes to project in his art. All art forms do not inspire all artists equally. Each has his special field of vision through which he gets emotionally excited and imaginatively roused. His poetic consciousness too reaches its heights here. The expression of this emotional upsurge in a beautiful piece of art is the final outcome of a long creative process like a full blown flower which is the culminating point in a plant's growth. Dutta found his own contact point with beauty in Nature. He found in Nature the most endearing and intimate outlet for his emotional upsurge. From early youth he had seen in Nature a true reflection of his dreams and desires. But it must be marked that one does not find in his Nature poems a valid and realistic presentation of natural phenomenon. In his hands, Nature does not come to life, revealing all its varied and subtle manifestations. The fact is that in all of Dutta's Nature poems, we see very little of Nature itself because what we see is the poet's mind reflected in Nature. Hence his Nature poems are charged with a feeling which was the direct outcome of his own personality.

Dutta's personality was a mixture of old and new, influenced alike by Sanskrit and English and by the contrary pulls of tradition and reform. One has to understand and appreciate the distinctive quality of his Nature poems against this general background. There are not many places in Dutta's poetry as a whole where we can find the poet revealing himself with abandon and exposing to the

gaze of the readers the quality of his soul and the longings of his heart. But there is a very pleasing revelation of personal feelings in these poems about Nature. In the dream world of the poet, Nature no doubt had a lovable existence. "Dear Creeper", "Tender Bud" and other poems remind one of the Sanskrit classics but one also sees in them the emotions and musings which arise in the poet's mind on viewing Nature. Sometimes the poet looks upon Nature as a vehicle for his emotions, to describe the state of his mind. At other times, Nature becomes a transparent screen across which is dimly visible a whole world of sweet memories and also of unfulfilled dreams. The poem then becomes an exact replica of the poet's ardent desires and his emotional moods. Sometimes the distinction between the two disappears and the poem naturally becomes a living image of the poet, and the Nature poems are turned to lyrics revealing his innermost feelings. But when this does not happen, Nature loses its spontaneity and naturalness and the poet's feelings also lose their lifelike quality. What then remains is a collection of figures of speech, an artificial reproduction of the hyperbole one comes across in abundance in Sanskrit poetry and drama.

How did the poet's emotions and feelings get so intimately mixed up with his poems of Nature? Why was it that Nature provided him with an outlet for his most personal and intimate feelings? The answer to these questions can be found in the formative influence on his personality and also in the peculiar domestic and social framework in which the poet grew along with the other sensitive minds of his own generation. The free and unfettered mind of the poet was searching for an escape from the rigid bonds of prevailing customs and traditions. Unfortunately he could not find it. Hence the sense of unfulfilment and frustration in his heart! What the poet could not realise in his actual personal life was sought to be realised and vicariously enjoyed in and through Nature. In reality he sought a "beloved" but instead he got only the "spring breeze" and so his Muse also appeared to him in the form of a beloved! The tragedy of Dutta and his contemporaries was that they were by thought and feeling far ahead of the times in which they lived, where their dreams of romantic love and of

an ideal womanhood and harmonised life together were bound to remain unfulfilled. So they made love instead to their Muse, displaying in the process the entire gamut of the love play between man and woman. When the most delicate and personal part of the intimate relationship between man and woman had to be expressed vicariously through the medium of poetic words a certain amount of artificiality and symbolism was inevitable. We find both to a certain extent in Dutta's Nature poems. But this sting of artificiality vanishes when one understands the emotional truth which prompted the poet and the constraints of the social background against which he had to write. And so, when the poet recreates his world of imagination in his poems and starts an intimate dialogue with "Spring Breeze" or "Dear Creeper", or "Dear Garland" we naturally become more receptive and appreciate both its significance and its inevitability. We see this artificial mode of expressing personal feelings within the confines of a rigid social frame of reference not only in the poetry of Dutta but in that of many of his contemporaries. Each poet's response to these unusual conditions is of course different. In the Nature poems of Keshavsut we see that the flower or the bee or the butterfly recede into the background and their place is taken by the sorrow and travails of human existence. Tilak's Nature poems take on a philosophical content. Thus, climbing a mountainside reminds him of the ups and downs of human existence. A quirk of destiny had forced these poets to face and revolt against rigid social conventions or surrender to them. But they had to find adequate expression for their emotional upsurge somehow. This they did in their poetry.

While we see the deep impress of Sanskrit literature on Dutta's poetry we also see in it the first glimmerings of the simple beauty which later on was to characterise Balkavi's verse. Dutta and Balkavi, both died early, in the very prime of their youth and poetic activity. In both we see different strains of feelings running parallel to each other as also similar responses to outward stimuli. Both had come in intimate contact with the Christian missionaries at Ahmednagar and both knew Rev. Tilak well. Balkavi's study of English and Sanskrit literature was not as deep and profound as Dutta's, with the result that we see in his poetry a tender fresh-

ness, a natural overflow of beauty which we miss in Dutta's poetry. Dutta's familiarity with Sanskrit gave his poems the mature dignity of language and an easy flow but they missed the simple, natural, unadorned beauty of Balkavi. Balkavi was a generation younger than Dutta and therefore was further removed from the social compulsions of the time. His innate poetic sensibility also accounts for the difference between the two poets. Unlike Dutta, Balkavi's poems grew naturally as flowers grow on a tree. But both shared in equal measure the disappointments of personal life and the fate of a candle burning itself out in lovely splendour. Their Nature poems also became poems that mirrored their emotions and feelings. Balkavi saw Nature as something pulsating with life in which he found an outlet for his lyrical passion and unfulfilled dreams. We get the same impression when we read Dutta's Nature poems. In fact Dutta is a pioneer in the attempt to see reflected in Nature the dreams and desires of a poet's mind. And this itself has remained the most distinctive quality of his Nature poems. One has only to look at the opening lines of the beautiful poem 'On the Banks of Vishwamitri'. They express, simply and directly his sense of fulfilment. "My mind is full, my eyes have served their purpose—at the sight of this beauty". And yet the poet can give no reason for this sense of fulfilment, for the sight and sounds that beguile the mind. "I fail to understand this maddening effect on my mind" he says. And then with great humility expresses his deep gratitude that he, the humble one, has been allowed a place in the company of the great around him! The poem thus ends with a deep sense of peace and gratitude with the words, "Oh Memory, arise, see all that is so rarely seen". From the point of construction, emotions and ideas this is Dutta's most memorable poem. But even in the excess of joy which tastes like wine, there is a note of sadness, both illustrating the two poignant and unmistakable aspects of Dutta's personality. In this poem "The Bird of Genius", we see the depth of love and passion with which Dutta adorned Nature. He says emphatically, "In Nature you see heaven on Earth, the one and only source of poetic inspiration, the abode of Gods in whose company all the pleasures of the three worlds are nothing! Nature is heaven and heavenly abode for me! She is

the ultimate "Mokhsa", she is all poetry to me. While playing in the lap of my mother Nature I am full of joy. All the three worlds are nothing to me. Oh. ...show me Nature, I only want to fill myself with her beauty"!

Dutta's Nature poems have at their core this abiding love for Nature. This and his love of poetry are the two main outlets to his hunger for love and life. He saw all his dreams mirrored in the Nature around him and this identification was neither temporary nor artificial. All the aspects of his poetic sensibility mingled together and in the process took a new shape and form and became the recurrent theme of his poems. This identity of the human and the Nature which was a matter of indestructible faith and which seeks expression in his poems of Nature is the most distinctive quality of Dutta's Nature poetry.

CHAPTER THREE

Poems For Children

There is one area in Dutta's poetry which has received unstinted and unanimous praise from all discerning Marathi writers and critics. Indeed, the natural beauty of his poems for children is self-evident and requires no justification. But before pinpointing their excellence it would be worth-while to find out what exactly is the distinctive quality of children's poems. It no doubt forms a separate and independent branch of poetry in general but, to be worthy of the name, it has to be as natural, fresh and spontaneous as the natural responses of the child to persons and things around him. Songs for children must reflect the ingenious, curious, highly imaginative (and sometimes equally obstinate) quality of a child's heart. In other words, it must be able to project through the medium of words and sound the natural tendencies of the child's mind and while doing so, reveal its perennial quest for the unknown. A child is bursting with life, ever ready to grasp and understand everything it sees. With the inborn gift of imagination it is able to create a world of its own. This world may have nothing to do with the world of the adult but it is this immature, innocent and inconsequential world of the child, governed by its own laws and logic, that all songs for children must try to bring to life. Such songs should not imitate only superficially the familiar and ungrammatical modes of a child's speech but they must also touch the heart of things which a child loves and likes, its sense of drama which lifts the ordinary events of our humdrum life into the magic land of high romance, its natural attraction for the mysterious, the unfettered play of its pictorial imagination both in appre-

hension and action. These indeed are the distinctive marks of childhood. The acid test of all poetry for children is the extent to which the adult mind is able to enter into and become one with this world of make-believe and fancy in which the child moves and lives. Only a genuine love for children or an equally genuine desire to "amuse" them are not enough to give birth to genuine children's poetry. It is born only out of the capacity of the poet to become a child himself and experience once again the magic appeal of the children's world. The child transplants its own joys and sorrows, its inner longings, its likes and dislikes, to its favourite toys which come to life in their own small world. While doing so, the child also loves to imitate its elders. All this creates, shall we say, "a world out of this world", shot through with a light that never was on sea or land. They have to be genuinely children's poems and not poems on children!

We come across a number of children's songs in old Marathi literature from 13th century onwards. They imitate the language of children and try to express their emotions and feelings. All children's songs written during this period by our saintly and scholarly poets have only one theme—Lord Krishna, his lovely child-image and his childhood pranks. While giving a visible and lovable form to an otherwise invisible God, these poets automatically enter into the spirit of childhood and compose endearing songs on the child Krishna in his home in Gokul, his excursions to woods and to the river, his impish thefts of milk and butter from the households of the Gopis. Though some of these songs have a double layer of meaning—the real and the symbolic, in many of them we see the typical play of a child's mind. We notice this characteristic, prominently in the songs of Namdeo (1270-1350) and Eknath (1433-1509). Their songs "Kisna-thamal re thamal apulya gai" (Krishna, do look after your cows) and "Asa kasa devacha dev bai thakada" (How is it that this God of Gods has turned out to be a sly one!) carry a special charm and appeal because they so naturally reveal the working of a child's mind through its babbling tongue. Tukaram's abhanga's on the other hand, are not songs for children. What one notes in such lines as, "Payi Ghagaria Sari/Katadora Waki/Mukh Pahe Mata/Sukha Na Samaye Chitta/" (The mother's joy knows no

bounds when she watches the face of her child wearing beautiful ornaments on his feet, his waist, on his arms and round his neck) is the love and affection of a doting mother. In "Venusudha" and "Vanasudha", the scholarly poet Waman Pandit, writes of the childhood pranks of Lord Krishna but these also fail as a true projection of the child mind. At heart, all these poems express the inner spiritual and devotional longing of the poets themselves. The great Pandit Kavi, Moropant also in addition to the "Seeta-Geeta" written specifically for young girls, had written other poems for children like "Bahu Ladaka Bhajak Shishu Pathi Lagoni Ovala Shivato" (The little darling though unwashed and unclean, follows me about and touches me). But none of these can be considered as children's songs in their true sense. We meet the genuine child only in the old "folk song" of the Marathi language. The lullabies that a mother sings, the most common metre of ancient Marathi poetry, the "Ovi" which describes the fond family relationships and the songs which our girls sing when at play, these and other activities of a purely domestic nature have given rise to some of the finest children's songs in the old Marathi language. But surprising as it is the makers of this superb children's poetry are unknown to us! Who does not know the simple non-sensical verse "Apadi thapadi gulcahi paapdi" or "Chandoba Chandoba bhaglas ka, nimbolichya zadamage laplas ka"? These rhymes have been sung in the Marathi homes for ages and will continue to be sung for many more. They are intimately associated with our homes, our family life and though they are old for us, they are for ever new! Age cannot wither nor custom stale their simple, homely style nor their action-oriented children's prattle. But in spite of this rich and colourful background, children's poetry, in the real sense of the term, never took root in the Marathi language. We rarely come across in Marathi literature songs which project the sensitive and inquisitive mind of the child, its imitative faculty, its spontaneous and playful imagination, its sense of drama and rhythm. The fact of the matter is that most of our children's songs were not really meant for them, and were never the spontaneous outpouring of a child's mind. They were, and have remained, songs "about" children written by adults. They express

the love and affection which the grown ups feel for the children and in consequence make the mistake of planting their own sophisticated ideas in the simple and innocent mind of the child. Among the modern Marathi poets, Rev. Tilak has always been considered as the poet of flowers and children. He refers to them again and again both in his shorter poems and in his longer poem "Vanvasi Phool" (A flower in Exile). Tilak's love for children acquires an added beauty because of the simple charm and ease of his style. Even so, we do not often come across truly natural and genuine children's songs in his voluminous output. "Tai tu phool gade maze", "Tai tu ratna gade maze" (Oh sister dear, you are my flower, you are my precious jewel) is a well known poem of Rev. Tilak. Filled with deep affection and love as the poem is what one sees in it is really the feelings of the adult mind towards a child. It can by no means be called a children's poem. Even Keshavsut and Govindagraj of the next generation have composed some poems about children. But they are poems 'about children, not "of children or for children". There are of course exceptions like Tilak's beautiful poem "Bahulyache Vaidyaraaj" (The Doll's Doctor). One sees a clear reflection of the innocent mind of a small girl. In poems like "Mazi Navalachi Bahuli" (My wonderful Doll), "Bahulyachi Sahaj" (The outing of a Doll), "Bari Hovoon Ali" (She has returned fully recovered). In some of these poems one comes across some very engaging pen pictures of children, their meaningless prattle, their typical lingo, their private and personal dialogue with their pet animals and toys. Some like "Hun, hun, hun (Hm, hm, hm) and "Chiu, chiu, chiu" acquire a special charm because they imitate the untutored and natural language of the children. But by and large, in his poems for children, Tilak is unable to give up his philosophic attitude and himself become a child.

While talking of Tilak as a children's poet one is inevitably reminded of Balkavi. Almost throughout his life Balkavi never lost the simple innocence of the child. His poems, "Chimaniche Gharate Choris Gele" (The sparrow's nest is stolen), "Ragoba Ala" (Anger has made its appearance), "Angai Geete" (Lullabies), "Maza Bhau" (My Brother) express in beautiful musical language

the innocent mind of the child, play acting in its own small and exclusive world. About the same time, Tambe, the doyen of Marathi poetry wrote some poems which bring out some charming facets of the child's mind. Even today, many know by heart his dramatic poem "Tar Mag Gatti Konashi"? (Who then is your friend?) His two other poems "He kon ge Aii"? (Who is this, mother) and "Chiv, chiv, chimani chhatat" (The sparrow chirping in the roof) which imitate the language of children are equally and well deservedly famous.

In this world of children's poetry, Dutta holds a unique and abiding place. He indeed was one of the few pioneers of genuine children's poetry in Marathi. These poems are few in number but they make up for the quantity by their naturalness, their spontaneity and grace as fresh and genuine as that of a child. Alongwith his famous lullaby (sleep, baby mine, sleep). The simple unadorned diction of poems like "Motya sheek re A, AA, II) Motya, do learn the alphabets A,B,C). "Shahani Bahuli" (The wise Doll), "Andolan" (The swing), by Dutta have become a treasure of Marathi language. To remember them is to remember the poet.

His poems for children, about children and those which appear to be sung by children can never be forgotten. They capture the mood and mind of the child, are full of dramatic content and possess the spontaneity of the child's mind. One feels like reading them again and again for in their company we become children and enjoy for a few brief moments, all the thrills of the "never never land" again. The three poems "Shahani Bahuli" (The wise Doll), "Motiya sheek re sheek A, AA, II" (Motya do learn the alphabets A, B, C), "Bolat Ka Nahis" (Why don't you speak) are so simple, so natural, that one is tempted to believe that they are actually written by a child. Their language, thoughts and ideas too are theirs and this total identification is both unlaboured and complete. The music of lines like "Dole firvite, tulu, tulu kashi mazi soni Baghate" (Look how my darling casts her eyes all around her) or "Mala watate Hila bai sare kahi sare kalate" (I think she knows everything but everything) defies all attempts at translation. One must read or hear them in the original to savour the music of the shortened "r" in "Firvite", the onomatopoeia of

words like "tulu, tulu", "gulu, gulu" and the repetitive charm of "sare kahi sarē kalate", we find the same effortless charm in the first line of "Andolan" (The Swing). The whole poem in fact is an outpouring of love, between a brother and sister, both kids, and their fanciful imagination.

Here again it is impossible to convey except in the original, the sense of quick movement by joining the 'r' (2) in "Parakar" (the skirt) with the following consonant "k". By reducing the word to three, or three and a half letters, the poet, with consummate skill, conveys the swift and uncontrolled movement of the skirt matching the movement of the swing. This phonetic short-circuiting of a sound in a word is, as we all know, a natural diction of a child. We see the same poetic effect achieved by the letter "re" in "Motya sheek re a, aa, ii" (Motya do learn the alphabet A,B,C). The child is persuading her pet dog Motya to learn the first letters of the Marathi alphabet. The word 're' conveys the child's sense of fond urgency, insisting that Motya attends to his lesson and learn it. As in a child's world, there is, in all Dutta's songs a quality of drama which very easily turns these songs into action songs which could be sung with the appropriate facial and physical movements. The poem, "Bolat ka Nahis, Zale kay tula bai" (Why don't you speak, what has happened to you), by its subtle humour introduces us to a new world of poetic experience and make-believe. After asking the doll why she is silent, the little girl herself provides the answer.

"Only today I have selected Venu's male doll as your husband. That is why you are tonguetied. No, no, don't tell me anything, I have found out the secret of your silence!"

(Incidentally the poem throws a revealing light on the prevailing custom of child marriages when the girl pays the following compliment to her doll.)

(How very wise is she, keeps her sari and her blouse with such care that you would think they were brand new!)

One almost feels that the girl is speaking about herself through the medium of the child!

"Sandhyakal" (An Evening) is one of Dutta's lullabies. Though

not a children's song, it is an absorbing pen picture of the sun, imagined as a tiny tot crawling under the canopy of the sky, drawn with the delicate artistry of a gifted pen. "My sweet little darling has been crawling on all fours so long! Its red eyes are now heavy with sleep. Sleep my child, sleep happily".

With what perception the poet reveals in the above lines a mother's love for her child, when he compares the motion of the sun to a crawling child. Defying all rules of grammar, the poet uses the long "ee" in "Deesati" and suggests the never ending love of the mother for the child.

As stated earlier Dutta's songs for children are not many but each one of them deserves special attention because of its individual mood and movement. The little girl in the poem "A, AA, II" is pressing her dog Motya to learn the alphabet. The central idea is what occurs naturally to a child at play with its pet. We come across the following lines while reading the poem:

(Brother, mother say that the alphabet is very difficult. You will never be able to learn it.)

One hears in these lines the girl's own reaction to the rather difficult job of learning the alphabet! One almost sees her labouring away with slate and pencil and the mother watching the effort with an amused smile. The girl must have watched her elder brother doing it and remembers what the mother and brother said when she wanted to do it herself. But if Motya could be somehow persuaded to learn the alphabet then all her problems would be over because what Motya could do, she too could do a little better! That accounts for her urging Motya to learn the letters. This is the significance of the 're' in the line "sheek re a, aa, ii".

"Shahani Bahuli" (The Wise Doll) is another typical creation of Dutta. It holds its special place even today when the output of children's poetry is considerable. The music of this beautiful song, its pen pictures, its power of observation all reflect and echo the innocent heart and words of a small girl. In the poem the girl assumes the role of the mother and begins to sing the praise of the doll who inevitably becomes her daughter. The relationship between a mother and daughter is faithfully presented—a very happy

mixture of praise and blame, a perfect blending of the real and the imaginary.

Here the poet reveals his intimate observation of the child at play, unwittingly planting on the doll, qualities she would like to possess. "Bolai Ka Nahī"? (Why don't you speak?) is another poem charged with great emotion. After making an effortless entry into the heart of the child and its magic world, the poet sets it to beautiful music. It is an inspired song, a clear and faultless presentation of the child's own intimate world. The whole poem acquires a peculiar lovable quality by the urgent efforts of the girl to placate its doll. In this doll also, the girl sees her own image reflecting her likes and dislikes, her emotions and the tiny world in which she moves, so much so that in the end the girl and the doll become one: "Did mother scold you or brother tease you? Why has my darling got into a buff? Oh what shall I do, why don't you talk sweet-heart?"

In these beautiful lines we see the innate love and affection of the child, touching in its profound simplicity. Dutta had mastered the rare faculty of absorbing and making his own, the experience of others, of getting completely lost in the personality of another. This enabled him not only to understand the agony of a woman's and a mother's mind crushed under the dead weight of misfortune and poverty but also to walk softly into the innocent and sensitive world of a little girl with the help of his song.

All these songs are written in the language really used by children. Its ungrammatical forms, its faulty punctuations, its repetition of the same words and phrases are all the hallmarks of a child's speech and reveal the poet's uncanny knowledge of the child's mind. The success of all poems for children depends ultimately on the capacity of the poet to enter into the mind of the child and become one with its unique world. Dutta's poems are clear image of this world. All that the child feels and understands, all that makes it happy or sad. His language too is the language which children use because the poet is fully conscious that his language must reflect the natural untutored responses of the child to the world of events around him. The poet instinctively under-

stands the things which a child loves, the spontaneous outpourings of a child's imagination, its curiosity, eagerness to explore every experience and its unconscious and therefore very amusing imitative faculty; and what the poet understands finds clear and beautiful expression in the songs he wrote for children. One appreciates this more, when one realises that Dutta's normal poetic diction is scholarly, Sanskritised and highly sophisticated.

The Indore Mission College from which Dutta took his degree was then affiliated to the Calcutta University. It is not improbable that in choosing his own pen name, Dutta had in mind the great, Bengali poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Bengali literature could even in those days, boast of a sizeable quantity of poems for children and these could well have become partly a source of Dutta's inspiration; and the hymn books of the Prarthana Samaj which were recited every Sunday contained several devotional songs in Bengali language. It seems Dutta was the first Marathi poet to introduce Rabindranath Tagore to Marathi readers when he translated Tagore's exquisite national song, "Ayi Bhuvan Manmohini".

The fact however remains that whatever inspiration a budding poet receives from his predecessors or his contemporaries, however great they may be, has to be looked upon as only the immediate cause for a creative talent to explode into song. The real and lasting source of inspiration has to be in the mind of the poet himself; it is his inalienable and personal treasure on which he draws freely. Dutta possessed the inborn faculty of nursing the thoughts, images and emotions which sprouted out of his young unspoilt and really, childlike mind. It is possible that like Balkavi, Dutta might have looked at the world with the eyes of a child. Heaven knows he was young enough to do so even at the time of his death. Could it be that Dutta established this intimate relationship with the children's universe because, even as a young man, there was within his personality a hidden corner where the child still lived in a world of its own, a magic world where the fantastic and the unreal became so easily the real?

One tragic consequence of the social milieu in which Dutta lived was that the young became old before their time! They were

burdened with duties and responsibilities while still in their teens, and the short spring time of youth was overshadowed by the grey hues of autumn and winter. It may be that through his songs for children Dutta tried to recapture the magic and mystery of those "trailing clouds of glory" with which a child makes its first entry on the world's stage. He talks of them with blissful abandon and his words then become songs: free, unfettered and bursting with joy.

Dutta was a born poet and artist, a devotee of everything that was beautiful. Equally anxious was he to savour life in all its manifestations. His poetry, his mastery of instrumental music, his expertise in nail drawings all bear witness to his desire to explore beauty in every form. His eagerness to know, to touch, to absorb enabled him to enter into and unfathom the deepest resources of a woman's or a child's mind. His songs for children are the quintessence of this experience made visible and audible in imperishable verse. One cannot but endorse the opinion of "Madhao Julian," who was one of the great poets of 1920-40, when he said, "Dutta holds a unique place in the field of modern Marathi poetry because to the main stream of that poetry, he added the limpid waters of his poems for children".

CHAPTER FOUR

Poems : Social and National

While reviewing the life of Dutta we examined his emotional responses to the social conditions in which he lived. His personal life had also certain social context which we have already seen and his poems dealing with national and social problems are closely allied to this part of his personality. He was deeply involved with the movement for social reform due to his earlier contacts with the humanism of Christianity and the sublime teachings of the Prarthana Samaj. The period around 1894-95 was so charged with an upsurge for national and social regeneration that it was impossible for a sensitive young poet like Dutta to confine himself to his literary activity within the four corners of lyrical and subjective poetry. Lokmanya Tilak, the Father of Indian Unrest, had set in motion waves of thought and action which had powerful effects on our national and social consciousness. The whole of Maharashtra was bursting with this new awakening which sought expression in national festivals like "Shivaji Utsava" and "Ganesh Utsava". The inspiration which generated from Poona, the home-town of Tilak, rapidly spread to the district towns of Maharashtra. Young men like Dutta, in the small town of Ahmednagar were powerfully influenced by it. These young persons were aware and proud of their country's past glory and painfully conscious of her present degradation into slavery.

This awakening of the social and national consciousness among the young, had a worthy tradition to support it. From 1870 onwards, Maharashtra was in the process of experiencing a new social, political and economic awakening. In fact, thanks to the

unwavering efforts of Jyotiba Phule, Balshastrī Jambhekar, Dr. Bhau Daji Laad, Dadoba Pandurang, Dr. Atmaro Pandurang and many other known and unknown reformers, this process of social awakening had started long before 1870. Jyotiba Phule was foremost among these early pioneers. For nearly forty years he was the stormy petrel of the reform movement in Maharashtra. One could disapprove or attack his movement but one could not ignore it. Jyotiba Phule received the able and wise support of justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade in all his activities. Justice Ranade was, because of his vast learning and sympathetic temperament, an institution by himself. In 1872, with the help of G. V. Joshi, popularly known as "Sarvajanik Kaka", he founded the Sarvajanik Sabha which at one time started a "no-tax" campaign and made the farmers conscious of their rights. It had thus forced the Government to take notice of their grievances. This and similar movements after 1870, shook the middle class of Maharashtra out of its lethargy and forced it to take notice of the tiller of the soil. In this movement of national awakening Lokmanya Tilak held a unique position. He carried the National movement deep into rural areas through his dailies "Kesari" and "Maratha", which spoke to the people in a language they understood. He was fearless and forthright in his criticism of Government policies. To give a sound foundation to his movement and to bring about national awakening through methods which the people understood, Tilak turned to our past history and mythology and touched the devotional core of the minds of the people. The result was the "Shivaji" and "Ganesh" festivals, which sought to create a sense of unity and social identity in the otherwise highly individualistic and conventional Hindu society. Singing troupes consisting of young boys went round singing patriotic songs during these festivals. Tilak himself and his redoubtable colleagues like Shivaram Mahadeo Paranjape and Narsinha Chintaman Kelkar went round Maharashtra addressing people and stirring their social and national conscience. The movement inspired the whole of Maharashtra with a new sense of self-confidence, gave a new direction to the energy of the masses. Sensitive young persons like Dutta could not escape the impact of this great awakening.

Dutta saw that the 'Ganapati' and 'Shivaji' festivals were started not just as a part of religious revival but they had deep social and moral undercurrents. One must understand Dutta's whole-hearted participation in these popular movements to appreciate the background of poems like—"A Call to the Mavalas". (Enough now of food and drinks. Hear the beat of the war drums. Don't waste time, it is getting late. The enemy awaits on the battlefield. Come at once, you Mavalas, Shivaji is calling you to fight!)

It is not surprising that Dutta's poetry also was deeply affected by the social and political upheaval he saw taking shape around him. The fact of living under a foreign rule had a much stronger and deeper impact on the poetry of Keshavsut. Once an clearly sense his feeling of frustration suffered under bondage, when he says with an anguished heart that "In Slavery we have no eyes to see, no ears to hear!" About the same time (towards the end of 19th century) Vinayak, another Marathi poet of the time, in his poem "Hatabhagini" (The Unfortunate Woman) was casting a nostalgic look at our glorious past and lamenting our deplorable present state as a slave nation. Keshavsut expressed his patriotic fervour in poems like "The Utterance of an Indian", "Jayajirao Shinde and Tukojirao Holkar" etc. But Keshavsut's poetry is better known for its social consciousness and revolt against tradition than for its national fervour. One sees his penetrating awareness of our social evils in several of his poems. Rev. Tilak, too has given expression to his patriotic feelings in poems like "The Name of my Motherland" and "Dear Hindisthan". Dutta was equally conscious of the degraded conditions of his people which finds expression in the many poems he wrote at the time. The very titles of some of these poems— "To Liberty", "The Saffron Flag", "A Call to the Mavalas", "Shri Shivchhatrapati" are enough to get a clear idea of their content. The tragic mood was nearer to Dutta's temperament than the heroic, with the result that in those poems he is more concerned with the pitiable effects of present slavery than the heroic moments of past glory. The magazine 'Manoranjan' in 1898 invited a poem from Dutta for its Diwali Issue. With an agonising appraisal of the present, Dutta wrote, "When the mind is full of darkness, what is the sense in lighting

a lamp? Our country is deep in sorrow, how can I then participate in any festivities? I shall celebrate Diwali—yes, but only when my country is once again great and prosperous”.

In his poem “The Beautiful Bird” Dutta says: “For you I shall build a lovely cage and feed you well.” But noticing how unhappy and distressed the bird is, he releases him and says: “Go my friend, go in freedom. I, who know the travails of bondage, how can I keep you confined in a cage?”

On the new year’s day, he is reminded of the great king Vikramaditya, the founder of an era and says, “Don’t be angry, Vikram. Why have you closed your eyes when the country is sunk so low? It will be a great day when you will rise again to defend the country. That will be the real new year’s day, a great festival in this land of gold”.

In his powerful poem, “Shri Shiv Chhatrapati” he compares Shivaji to Narasinha, the Lion God and the fourth incarnation of Vishnu. In the peculiar conditions existing at the time it was not possible to write directly anything that preached sedition and which the rulers would find objectionable. It was then the usual and accepted practice to depict the present indirectly as a contrast with the glory of the past. The highly satirical writings of Shivaram Mahadeo Paranjape, a great patriot-journalist of the day, were born out of this limitation. In his poem, “Bhagava Zenda” (The Saffron Flag) Dutta gets so lost in the passion of the poem that he does not hesitate to censure himself in the following lines. “Bajirao though a Brahmin, became a warrior under this flag. But I who belong to the warrior class, why do I live when the flag is in the dust!”

There is no doubt that in these poems Dutta is giving expression to a deeply felt sense of anguish which was the natural reaction of the poet’s sensitive mind to the conditions around him. We find similar expressions of mental anguish in the poems of contemporary poets like Vinayak, Keshavsut, Rev. Tilak. But basically, Dutta’s poetic genius was lyrical, saturated with a deep and inborn sense of beauty. Love and Nature were the two major sources of its inspiration. It was therefore more in tune with the infinite

pathos at the heart of human condition of slavery than the urge to fight against it. We thus do not find in Dutta's national and social poems the rage, the fire, the fighting spirit of Keshavsut. Dutta's patriotic poems are full of self-criticism, a sense of despair, and memories of bygone days. But they are devoid of the sheer outburst of passion, which stirs people to action and the revealing insight which is capable of taking a peep into the future. Neither do we see in them a strong protest against social evils like inequality and untouchability. A sensitive mind responds to the call of patriotism as to other emotional stimuli and the patriotic feeling is naturally more intense in youth. Moreover, it has a special appeal when conditions around are adverse. But it would be wrong to conclude that such poems reveal the true personality of the poet, the innermost core of his being. One must accept this limiting condition of all Dutta's patriotic verse. Among all these verses, the one highly emotional and thought-provoking is the poem "To Liberty". In the last two lines of this poem Dutta has poured contempt and ridicule on the alien rulers who extol freedom at home but suppress it abroad.

Dutta was a genuine lover of freedom and the exciting times in which he lived deeply affected his sensitive mind as is evident from the fact that his concern was as much expressed through his poems as by his actions. His patriotism and discontent compelled him to take an active part in movements of national and social resurgence like the 'Shivaji' and 'Ganapati' festivals and the Swadeshi movement launched by Lokmanya Tilak. This involvement of Dutta in the contemporary social and political movements did not end with the 'Ganapati' and 'Shivaji' festivals. He attended the session of the Indian National Congress in 1895 as a volunteer. A photograph of him taken on the occasion in the uniform of a congress volunteer is still available.

With great energy and untiring effort Dutta impressed upon the minds of his young friends in Ahmednagar the social and national significance of these movements and took a leading role in organising the first public 'Ganapati' festival in Ahmednagar. More than a hundred singing troupes consisting of young school boys participated in the festival and Dutta provided them with

suitable inspiring songs. He afterwards collected these songs in a small booklet under the authorship of "A resident of Ahmednagar". These songs, topical in content, achieved instant popularity. In those days there was enmity between Hindu and Muslim communities. Dutta refers to this in sorrowful lines. "Oh ye residents of Bharat, listen to my request. Forget your jealousies and promote the country's good. We shall all lose if we rake up old feuds. Oh Hindus and Muslims, come together in love like brothers and buy Swadeshi Goods".

How could Dutta who did not believe in idol worship and who was brought up in the traditions of the Prarthana Samaj, come to participate so actively in the 'Ganapati' festival? For one thing, Dutta was not concerned with the religious aspect of the festival. He had realised that it was a powerful instrument in rousing the social conscience of the people and bringing home to them the truth of the adage that unity is strength. In fact it was this social and national aspect of the movement that received prominence during the festivals. At his request many distinguished persons visited Nagar during the festival and addressed the local people. Dutta was also busy at this time in contributing historical and religious articles to the local daily 'Tukaram'.

The inferiority complex which plagued our writers while talking about our country, received the first rude shock at the hands of writers like Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, the author of "Nibandhamala" and poets like Keshavsut. At the time when Dutta, a sensitive poet, was in the prime of his youth, "the shapeless cold mass of this country" as Lokmanya Tilak rightly described it, was slowly but surely showing signs of life. In this period of transition Dutta takes his modest place alongwith the other patriotically motivated poets. He was no doubt influenced by events and movements around him but his response to these events was so genuine, so deeply felt that it could express itself only through the medium he loved and understood, i.e. poetry. These poems, apart from their individual merit, bring out an aspect of his personality which needs to be understood and recorded.

CHAPTER FIVE

Love Poems and Lyrics

Love poems and lyrics form the essential core of every poetry and this core is often intimately linked with the emotional make up of the poet. The making of Dutta's emotional world was as much due to his familiarity with the works of Byron, Shelley and other English poets, as to the influence of Sanskrit Classical poets like Kalidas and Bhavabhuti. His love poetry naturally shows the impact of both. But it is remarkable that some of his poems reveal a distinctly bold, unorthodox and uninhibited approach to the subject of conjugal love. Indeed they make one notice and appreciate his fascination for the rich tradition of our folk poetry mainly revealed by our "Shahirs" or "Ballad Singers". It is difficult indeed to find another Marathi poet who took inspiration from so many varied sources; therein lies the secret of the colour and texture of Dutta's poetry. We feel it most in his love poems which reflect directly or by inference his innermost thoughts and emotions.

Addressing the Muse as one's beloved was an accepted mannerism of poetry in Marathi written after 1885. Marathi poetry had borrowed this convention from its English counterpart. English poetry seems to have followed this mode of expression right from the time of Shakespeare. Keats' famous lyric 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' is a well known example of this particular symbolism. We find poems written in this vein in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries like Sidney, Marlow, Surrey all the way up to Tennyson. Keshavsut, his contemporaries and followers have also expressed their anguish and longing of love in this manner. Keshavsut's poem "Complaint against one who has made me mad" is a

well known example of this mode of expression. We find this distinctive trait in Dutta's poetry too, wherein he addresses the Goddess of Muse as if she herself was his beloved in flesh. This is obvious in his poems, "How long darling will you try my patience?" and "Beloved Muse". But one must understand that Dutta's poems written in this vein are not just conventional or imitative. We see in them a clear reflection of his heart. His restless mind found a haven of peace in his poems; poetry came to him spontaneously, and he wooed and embraced her with single-minded devotion. His poems addressed to the Muse convince us of the genuineness and depth of his feelings and go far beyond merely following a convention. The first of these reminds us of Shelley's poem "Love's Philosophy". Here Dutta sings of the glory and greatness of love, when he says to the Muse, "You know that without love life is meaningless, then why do you torture me so"? Here the poet is almost out of his mind due to the pangs of separation and asks with tragic longing, "Where are you? Where can I search for you? I am distraught without you, and my lonely life flows on meaninglessly like a stream". Thus does Dutta describe the desperate state of his mind, and further says, "She for whom I was born in this world, she with whom I lived, alas, she has left me now, and I have nothing more to live for". In the poem "Kusum Lalan" (My fond flower) the poet lovingly invites all the flowers scattered in Nature just to come and meet his beloved, namely, the Muse. She will take them in her lap, and sing them songs in her sweet voice, he says. Poetry indeed was his first love, the solace of his troubled soul. Hence, he reveals his passion and love more completely in these few poems addressed to his Muse than in those which could aptly be called his love poems.

We have already seen in an earlier chapter how Dutta's Nature poems express the sentiment of love. His emotions and longings found their natural outlet through the medium of Nature. His other poems "Beloved", "Go away from my sight", "A dream meeting", "Wherever there are women, with eyes like a doe, we see the exploits of Cupid", "A supplication" can be broadly considered as his love poems. Here, too, we see the love motif taking different forms. "Go away from my sight" takes the form of a

poignant personal lyric, while in "Beloved" and "The dream meeting" we see the classical Sanskrit style of "Vipralambh Shringar". "Wherever there are women, with eyes like a doe, we see the exploits of Cupid" brings to mind the full-blooded love play of a Shahir's Lavani, and in "Supplication" we see the clever exposition of a woman's longing. The diction of each is in tune with the theme.

But "The unhappy husband" is a poem which does not fit into any of these broad classifications, because it is too personal, laying bare the intense agony of the poet's heart. To understand the real significance of this poem we shall have to look back at the early life of the poet, and the surrounding social atmosphere which influenced him. Dutta grew up in the company of American Missionaries and in a liberal and progressive atmosphere. While at the Wilson College, he drank deep at the twin fountains of English and Sanskrit literature. These factors influenced him deeply in the most formative period of his life. His ideas of womanhood, of love between man and woman, of their life enriched by mutual understanding and communion all acquired a new dimension in his young mind, and increased his aspirations to live up to them. But the real was so devastatingly different from the ideal, so hemmed in by prevailing customs and circumstances that the gap between his ideal and the reality in which he found himself, was too large to overcome. It was well nigh impossible to overcome both on account of constraints of circumstances as well as the limitations of his own personality. Shri V. D. Ghate has made a telling analysis of the strange predicament of his parents. He says in his autobiography, "My mother, a village maiden, with her limited resources of understanding was unable to satisfy the growing intellectual hunger and poetic aspirations of Dutta, my father. Because of this basic difference between their personalities, Dutta's mind took a flight from the actual to the imaginary. Dutta was a poet highly sensitive, deeply immersed in Kalidas and Bhavabhuti; lived in the company of "Golden Treasury", very young, inexperienced, impatient, and aspiring. He was always running ahead while Nani, my mother trotted behind at her own slow pace, tired and lonely! But Dutta was too young and impatient to look back

and help her and by the time he realised this it was already too late". These words written with emotion, clearly sum up the discord between husband and wife. "To whom shall I show my art? Before whom shall I sing my poetry? To whom shall I reveal my love, which pervades my body and soul?" These sorrowful words from his poem are not only an outburst of a personal tragedy but are the true expression of a whole generation of educated youths of the time tied in wedlock too early, to unresponsive wives! The poem indeed speaks of their unrequited emotional urges. This despairing situation drove Dutta to a point wherein he laments that "not a drop of love is my lot, I am tired of life"! So complete was this sense of frustration and despair that barring a few exceptions we seldom come across in Dutta's poems any expression of the ecstasies of fulfilled love. Only in a few poems this feeling of love pervading his being comes out, truly, directly and intensely discarding all the props of conventionally poetic expression, and goes directly to the heart. "Beloved" for instance, is a fine word picture of the intense grief of separation from the loved one. The poem echoes the classical Sanskrit style of Pandit Jagannathrai. This poem indeed is a rare combination of pathos and supplication, the heartrending agony of a lonely soul in darkness, imploring the beloved to come to him.

These pangs of emotions we feel, even more strongly in the poem "Go away from my sight", which becomes doubly effective because of its simple, unadorned diction and spontaneity of expression. It eloquently expresses how for a good lyric, every external conventional prop is totally redundant if its emotional core is true and intense. It also convincingly indicates how, in the efforts to realize himself truly and to achieve a closer identity between the content and the expression, Dutta's poetry was slowly moving onwards to the true mould of the lyric. There is also an evidence that his poetic diction was throwing away the earlier impact of Sanskrit poetry and was coming closer to its true "Marathi" core. As in all good lyrics, in this poem too, content and expression support each other harmoniously, both together heightening the effect of the whole. Look at the very arresting and spontaneous opening lines of his lovely lyric "Go away from my sight you wicked

girl! I want to drive you out and make my heart blank again; that smile, that love play, that look which strikes like an arrow these soft words—take all these and go away! Even your name I want to forget for ever.” No figures of speech here, no decorative adjuncts; just a plain simple outpouring of the heart’s anguish! Some other lines from this poem are so intense, so true to the sense of indignation and despair, that they impress us as the only true forerunners of the heartrending agony expressed so poignantly later in the love poems of Govindagraja (Ram Ganesh Gadkari), a poet belonging to the next generation. “Wherever there are women, with eyes like a doe we see the exploits of Cupid”. This in original Sanskrit is a title of one of Dutta’s poems. It is not known, whether it is a quotation or the poet’s own composition. This lyric which is a dialogue between a man and a woman, reveals its lineage with the traditional Marathi “Lavani”. Normally, Dutta looks upon his poetry as his beloved and showers all his caresses upon her, but here, in this poem, Dutta gives free reign to his sentiment of sensual love which was a natural part of the total make up of his personality. The poem begins in the true “Lavani” style, “As I was casually walking down the road, you suddenly appeared before me! It then became difficult for me to control myself, my mind was all asunder!” It is really essential, to see the music, the rhythm, the delicacy of expression of this poem, in the original. A translation is a poor substitute. The lover gives a few significant details about the woman, her swan-like gait, her full breasts like bouquets of flowers and the bewitching turn of the head to have a sly look at him. What lovely inner rhythm, what artistic skill in covering the last letter of each line into a half articulated sound, giving audible expression to the wonderful confusion caused by the sudden appearance of the beloved! None of Dutta’s contemporaries has this subtlety of expression mingled with this abandon of feeling. But this poem which is a song of sensual love and begins as a romantic lavani towards the end assumes a note of sadness, and of the tragic turn of destiny—a sentiment which is the most poignant element in Dutta’s poetry. The utter simplicity of the words convey the intensity of the woman’s feelings in so touching a manner that one is convinced of the remarkable ability which Dutta had

of projecting himself into the mind of another being—a sign of the true artist.

This abiding sense of the tragic, of the sadness at the heart of things of human pathos is present in all of Dutta's writings. No wonder he preferred Bhavabhuti to Kalidas, Bhavabhuti—who excelled in the tragic than the romantic. It is also significant to note here that Dutta was engaged in adapting Bhavabhuti's "Uttaramcharita" in Marathi, before he died suddenly.

Why was Dutta haunted by the sense of tragic at such an early age? Frustration? Loneliness? The tragic sense of life? "I am like a lamp burning without oil" he says. An artist's heart has its own hidden springs. Who can explore all the hidden recesses of a creative mind? But the fact remains that even in the music of sensual love that Dutta created can be heard a note of profound sorrow. In words full of anguish, the woman tells her lover her inability to express in words her utter helplessness. One is struck by the sheer simplicity, ease and spontaneity of the woman's diction, revealing a deep sadness. As pointed out earlier, in his lyrics, Dutta, effortlessly casts aside his classical training and turns to the fresh, native springs of his own inspiration.

The same unadorned simplicity of diction full of intense feelings, one sees in a poem addressed to a friend, "To my friend Narayan". Though not a love poem its pure lyrical strain is unmistakable. It is indeed interesting and also pertinent to look at this changing pattern of Dutta's diction, from the classical to the simple, from the conventional and the literary to the lyrical.

In the poem "The Unhappy Husband" Dutta uses short sentences, each followed by a question mark. The overall effect of this artistic use of the same punctuation mark is indeed remarkable! The ordinary sign, indicating a question here, becomes extremely pregnant with meaning. The repetitive use of the question mark reminds one of the last lines of Keshavsut's famous poem "The Music of the Sitar". "The winds are peaceful, the stars are at peace and there is peace in my heart". What the repetition of the word 'peace' achieves in Keshavsut's poem is achieved by a similar repetitive use of question marks in this poem. Economy of expres-

sion, poignancy of feeling is one of the main characteristics of a lyric. In all of Dutta's lyrical poems, one finds words used with great economy. It is evident even in a simple poem like "The Railway Train". It is not the range of subject matter nor the newness of experience, but the capacity to understand and articulate the most subtle nuances of any experience that is the touch-stone of a true lyric. In this particular poem, a poet's eagerness to meet his loved ones, is so great that he is requesting the train to hurry up!

"To the Lamp" is another highly lyrical poem, free of all artificial poetic devices. Here the poet laments in his utter frustration, "I get no drop of love, I am fed up with life!" But immediately sees that this is not fair and says, "What did I say? that I am bereft of all sympathy and love and burning in my own solitary state?" In this highly emotional state, he now remembers his mother, his friends, his wife, and says at last, "Neither my mother, nor my wife and friend will understand the utter loneliness of my heart and they will no doubt get hurt, but let them. The fact of my loneliness remains. Let them say whatever they like." Once again the poet makes use of a simple punctuation, the dash, after "say whatever you like" to heighten the poetic impact. He wistfully thinks of what his dear ones will say, and goes back to his deep, inner sense of loneliness on which note of finality the poem ends.

In the poem "On the banks of Vishwamitri" the poet enchantingly describes the ethereal beauty of the scene in various ways and sums up his sense of complete fulfilment in this simple line. "This beauty is so rare; how can one see it again and again"? Dutta is indeed a past master in combining sound with meaning to create an image. He thus compares his life to a gently flowing stream. The flow may be gentle but it is continuous. This continuity of the flow, of both the stream and his life, is vividly brought out in the poem and suggests that life is as if slowly slipping away from his hands and he just can't do anything but watch it helplessly. Here the second line is shorter than the first, indicating with subtle feeling, the short duration of his life (which indeed proved to be such a poignant truth) and the touching helplessness of the poet, as against the perennial flow of the stream.

It will be significant at this stage to look at Dutta's love poetry

as a part of the total picture of Marathi love poetry of that time and in this case too, a major point of perspective would be to see his poetry in juxtaposition to some of the poetry of his leading contemporaries and finally with the acknowledged leader of the movement—Keshavsut. The love poems of Rev. Tilak, one of the intimate and senior friends of Dutta, reflect his religious and devotional bent of mind. His language of love is charged with spiritual overtones and idealism. His love poems also make a distinction between physical love and platonic love and leaned towards the latter. "Bee" another noteworthy poet of the times, in his mystical vein talks of the pure spiritual quality of love. Tambe, one of the most eminent love poets of the time, had the unique capacity to project himself fully into somebody else's mind which gave his poetry its distinctive quality. He could thus write extensively about various experiences of love along with his own intimate experience of fulfilment in love. Rendalkar, Nagesh and Sumant, other renowned poets who came after Keshavsut, have also emphasised the spiritual quality of love. Keshavsut amongst these was the first Marathi poet who wrote about love in a lyrical and truly subjective vein. We see in his poems intimate pictures of mature love at various stages of life. He also enunciates the abiding quality of love. Occasionally we also hear a definite note of defiance against prevailing custom in the love poems of Keshavsut. He too is not totally free from the impact of Sanskrit classics as can be easily seen from the depiction of sensual love in his poetry. But after having said all this the fact remains that Govindagraja was really the first great Marathi poet of love. His love poems touch the deepest recesses of the heart, and the intensity of the wounded heart depicted in them moves us profoundly. This is indeed a rare quality even today. But Govindagraja himself a lover of Dutta's poetry, was a generation younger than Dutta and we meet in Dutta's love poems the same intensity and pathos as we later see in Govindagraja. As seen against the background of the love poetry of his time Dutta's love poetry suffers from some serious limitations. We seldom find Dutta reaching the heights of subtle emotional love divested of physical passion. But it is not quite fair to expect a full maturity in the poetry of one who died so

young. We find that the early poetry of many a poet often takes recourse to Nature or the myth of Radha-Krishna to express their own feelings of love and sometimes is concerned with the concept of love more than love itself. Dutta was no exception to it. At the same time there were several constraints of circumstances like early marriages, lack of education of women and the resulting alienation between husband and wife; there were also certain accepted norms of expression in the poetry of the time, all of which imposed very strong limitations on the expression of genuine love in poetry. Dutta was just at that stage when he was becoming aware of his own ethos when he left the world, but whatever he contributed does show that he really could have been a true lyricist and could have explored the new dimensions of lyrical poetry through a truly modern consciousness.

The new consciousness had arrived but each poet was in tune with it according to his own capacities. One notices the impact of classical Sanskrit as also of English poetry but one also becomes aware that there was a genuine effort at self-expression in a lyrical vein in Dutta's poetry. It is this awareness that is most significant and even inspite of the limitations of his poetry makes him one of the pioneers of modern consciousness as well as of expression. Some of his poems like "To the lamp", "To my friend Narayan" give indication that he was departing from the conventional, decorative and artificial modes of expression and was reaching towards a direct, simple and true poetic diction. Perhaps had he lived, he would have gone much further in this direction. There is yet another factor which gives an indirect evidence. We have pointed out repeatedly the influence of Sanskrit diction on Dutta's poems but it is worth noting that his acquaintance with the Sanskrit idiom does not make his own diction heavy as happened in the case of some of his contemporaries. It retains its natural simplicity and ease. This is indeed unusual and with Dutta it took place because he was true to his own self. One is also aware of the close identity of the word and the sound, the relation between the patterns of auditory effects and the meaning in Dutta's verse. This may perhaps be accounted by the fact that Dutta was the first among the modern Marathi poets who sang his lyrical poems in a group

of friends and they were appreciated for their inherent musical quality. His lyrical poems are thus entirely free from the artificiality of language and an unnecessary display of scholarship and imagery. The Sanskrit influence too was so thoroughly assimilated with his own style that he handles the Sanskrit idiom in his Marathi verse with the greatest ease and competence. Many of his poems are full of Sanskrit words but in Dutta's hands they acquire the natural rhythm, effortless ease and wonderful lucidity of a natural expression. While adapting Tagore's famous poem, "My Motherland" he captures the same unmistakable beauty and dignity of language and thought. Dutta found his poetic inspiration in many distinct and different sources but like all true artists he put them all through the crucible of his own genius from which they took new life and appeared in a totally new form which was indeed Dutta's own!

Thus the love poems and lyrics of Dutta by their economy of words, freshness and flexibility of language and sheer spontaneity of expression give us some indication of the new modes of subjective expression which our Marathi poets were striving to seek, against the old conventional and extrovert ways of expression, of the earlier generation of poets. This was not altogether due to any conscious revolt against past tradition on the part of Dutta. The intensity of his emotion simplified his language with the result that these lyrics, in their style, construction and self-revelation became fine examples of the new lyrical trend in Marathi poetry.

It is rightly accepted that Keshavsut started the movement towards modernism in Marathi poetry. He made a major contribution to the movement; his poetic personality was also many-sided and dynamic. Hence the presence of the new consciousness is decidedly more pronounced and deliberately aggressive in Keshavsut, while in Dutta, it comes easily, naturally. Both were indeed going in the same direction though Keshavsut's range of subjects was far greater and the modernity of his consciousness definitely more acute. It is really tragic that Dutta wrote so little and died so young, but one must acknowledge, that his place is truly among the pioneers of modern Marathi poetry.

CHAPTER SIX

An Assessment

ONE must always look at the work of an artist in its totality, as a whole; the division made here into various broad groups of Dutta's poetic output, is purely a matter of convenience. While looking at these broad groups we tried to point out the assets and limitations of Dutta's poetry. We also saw how his poetic creations were the result of an inborn impulse and also subject to the influence of the cultural milieu in which he grew up. Here in this concluding chapter we shall try to see in what exactly lay Dutta's peculiar distinction as a poet, and give him his rightful place among the contemporary poets of his time.

Dutta's birth coincided with what may broadly be referred to as the period of Indian Renaissance, under British rule. It was a period of transition in which the old and the new forces were equally predominant. Our British rulers, who were the undisputed masters of the country for more than half a century, had brought to this ancient land a stream of new ideas which served as a catalyst for the total transformation of our social, political and religious systems. This contact with a young and vigorous modern civilisation acted as a stimulus to our educated young men who now started looking for new horizons of thoughts and action in every field of human activity.

The change in the old order was slow but inevitable. A new generation of young men, ready to revolt against age-old constraints and traditions, was fast growing up. The signs of this new consciousness and this modern spirit of revolt were visible in all walks of life including our social institutions, our educational methods

and our forms of literature. One sees the first visible expression of this new consciousness in Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar's 'Nibandhamala', a series of provocative essays, started in 1874. They constitute a landmark in the history of Marathi literature.

The contact with the western civilisation coincided with our young men's revolt against existing social institutions which restricted individual freedom and sought to confine the human mind within the bonds of customs. Alongwith this revolt against prevailing customs, there was a genuine search for a new way of life in keeping with the new desires and aspirations. Vishnushastri, Keshav-sut and others like him, not only gave expression to this urge by their writings but successfully strove to bring about a number of social reforms which brought back a sense of confidence to a people labouring under the degradation of a foreign rule and orthodox culture.

Thanks, mainly to the influence of the English poets, Marathi poetry took a new spurt after 1885, and revealed the blossoming of a new awareness. All the signs of this poetic awareness which came up in the last quarter of the 19th century are visible to some extent in the works of these contemporary poets: a lyrical exposition of personal feelings, a firm faith in the freedom of the individual; a new insight into the beauty of Nature and a free uninhibited style of expression were some of the most outstanding marks of this new poetic consciousness. We met all these aspects of new awareness in Dutta's poetry of the later years. Indeed his approach to poetry was changing as he was becoming more mature. While expressing his views on poetry Dutta had said openly that poetry must march with the times and the social progress; he had also pointed out certain specific qualities which Marathi poetry must absorb and make its own. Most important among these is the realistic exposition of human emotions. It is possible that his untimely death prevented him from developing at length his views about poetry but he was no doubt conscious of the fact that lyric is a true mode of poetic expression and it must be the expression of a uniquely personal experience, either your own or somebody else's. Thus we often come across in Dutta's poetry signs of uninhibited self-revelation as also of self-realisation.

Dutta was indeed born with a truly modern consciousness in life as well as in poetry. He accepted the joys and sorrows of life without any reserve, realised its agonies and ecstasies as an inevitable part of human existence. He possessed the rare gift of making experiences of other people his own, and express them in images of poignant beauty. He accepted what life had to offer but this acceptance was neither negative, nor purely stoic. Every experience was intensely lived and this lived intensity of experience is clearly expressed in his poems. His words, ideas and emotions were so closely intermingled that the resulting work of art acquired the form and dimensions of pictorial reality. Intensity of experience and a search for a fearless exposition of that experience were the outstanding qualities of his personality. The English lyric had introduced Marathi poets to themes dealing with human love, nature and also patriotic fervour. Most of Dutta's themes are relevant to the times in which he lived and he transformed them into deep personal and emotional experiences. All that he saw, touched and heard, was transformed in the alchemy of his mind into pictorial images of various intensity, shapes and colours. He used the language of images through which he sought to reach the core of every experience. This very language of images has been regarded today as the most distinctive mark of new poetry. In the poetry of Dutta this language of images was not confined only to personal experiences but was also used to express the experience of others which the poet had made his own. These qualities of Dutta's work namely the lyrical trait of his poetry and his self-expression through images were indeed born out of his inherent modern consciousness which could not keep him chained to old conventions and traditions in life as well as in poetry.

The direct straightforward expression of a personal experience is also capable of imparting strength to a lyrical poem but the use of symbols and images at once heightens the quality of this personal experience and gives new dimensions to the content. While others only describe a personal experience Dutta etches it deep on our mind. In Dutta's poems symbols or images spring naturally out of his experience like flowers on a tree effortless and inseparable from the

personal experience of the poet. This image-making faculty of the poet has a dramatic quality which unfailingly picks up the dramatic core of every experience. This image-making faculty of a poet has become a very important milestone in the later development of Marathi poetry. Dutta with his modern consciousness realised its potential and used it with natural skill.

In the poem "Sleep my child, sleep" Dutta's capacity to enter into and absorb the personality of another is seen at its peak. This poem of Dutta, full of pathos has received unanimous praise from old and new readers alike. The poem is the outpouring of a loving mother sunk in poverty, a mother whose faith and pride, even poverty is unable to crush. Her suffering is not the heartrending cry of a weak and defeated person, but has the inevitable finality of Death. And in spite of all sorrows and all obstacles there is faith in human values to rise above everything, a faith that truth in the end will triumph. All that she says heightens the quality of the total effect. When she tells her child that even mice depart from a house without provisions, she aptly compares them to her selfish relatives who have left them in their poverty. There is such a captivating unity in this poem of mood and motion of metaphysics and metaphor that the sensitive reader cannot but raise his hand in humble salute to a true artist and his great work.

Towards the end of his life Dutta had decided to make a rendering of Bhavabhuti's "Uttararamcharita". He was fond of the drama as a literary form. In fact, a sense of the dramatic was an important ingredient in his personality. It was this instinct which enabled him to make an alien personality his own and of which we find the best illustration in his famous lullaby "Sleep my child, sleep" and his songs for children. This pathetic lullaby has now become a part and parcel of our literary heritage. The highest compliment that time and people can pay to a poet is when his work of art becomes a valuable part of the heritage of a language, even though the name of the poet is forgotten. Then his work lives on, anonymously though he lives no more.

Dutta's poems for children started a new trend in Marathi poetry. Today Marathi poetry, so rich in this field, has to look for

her original source^{*} in these few but charming songs written by Dutta.

His Nature poems inspite of their limitations evince a genuine love of Nature, a fresh and novel insight into its many coloured moods. He made nature the vehicle of his thoughts and emotions. Here too we see the first signs of the poetic approach portrayed by his noted successor and poet of nature, Balkavi. Dutta's lyrics are distinguished by a quality of their own. The art of expressing a single emotion in a lyrical form seems to be inborn with him, owing to his intrinsic modern consciousness.

When today one looks back at his short life, one realises that Dutta hardly got five to seven full, active and creatively alive years in his life. What must have happened in these few years? He had just put behind him his adolescence; as he lived through the early period of his youth, he must have slowly begun to be conscious of his own personality, his inner urges and aspirations; his senses must have become enriched and throbbingly alive and he must have begun to dream of a full rich and creative life dawning before his eyes. But even in these green years of his life one becomes aware that Dutta knew himself well. He was aware of his inner emotional world, to such an extent that he could give expression to it with innate self-confidence; in this alone can one trace the source of his being, as a poet. Even in this short life, there stands a poet of high sensibility with a deep love for artistic creation and a readiness to sacrifice anything for his ideals, a strong personality indeed! It had already broken the bonds of accepted normal life and was deeply immersed with an abandon in the pursuit of his inner and deeper urges. In fact that was his real life. This life was expanding in all directions, it was seeking in its naturalness, its own ways of pushing ahead in new pastures. But let us also realise that in all these varied manifestations of an upsurging life, his first, last and true passion was poetry! "I have passed the great test, have become conversant with knowledge and the Arts but oh, darling mine... I am lost without you". These words with which this poet addresses his beloved, poetry, are not a passing fancy of immature youth, it was a deep passion of life itself.

AN ASSESSMENT

It was a natural expression of his innate conviction that his birth in this world is only for the pursuit of poetry. And it is remarkable and unique that he knew this one clear sign of his life even when he was so very young!

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The Unhappy Husband

To whom shall I show my knowledge, my skill
and my accomplishments?

To whom shall I read my poem and show
its subtle charm?

This zest for life which makes every pore of my body, throb with joy,
with whom shall I share it?

Oh cruel God, why did you give such meaningless
life to me?

Who will out of love censure me, get angry
for my mischievous follies?

Who will end my fatigue and make me happy?
Whose lovely face will bring peace to a distracted mind?

Oh cruel God, why did you give such meaningless life to me?
In whose happiness shall I be happy, to whom shall

I bring peace, and rebuke in jest? Whom shall I love
and implore?

I am tired of this meaningless and empty life
Oh cruel God, why did you give such meaningless life to me?

The old man marries a young bride, an ugly
man a beauty. The fool marries a clever one

DATTAKAVI

And the practical one marries a vivacious maid.

You bring together these unmatched pairs, is this
what you planned?

Oh cruel God, why did you give such meaningless life to me?

If, instead of this, you had made me a blind
fool and given me a good wife it would have been better.

But even that hope is now forlorn.

You have burdened me with a wife I don't want

Oh cruel God, why did you give such meaningless life to me?

Light

You burn because you are immersed in the oil of love;
and in it you can burn for ever.

You know that without it you won't kindle
even for a moment.

This very love I vainly look for.
Tired of life I burn myself out

Oh! What a thing to say!
What will you think, mother, when you hear these words?

How will you believe these crazy words, my beloved?
Dear Friend, will you say that I have lost my head?

Say what you like, all of you!
I have said what I feel —

And there is now no going back on it!

Opened a New Page

“Where was earth then or light or darkness! Time too was non-existent.

Only God lived. Out of this nothingness, He, with the power of his inspiration wrote a great book.

On the totally blank pages which became the sky
He put down innumerable stars,
And on earth he planted birds and trees and men. Let this be”, “He said, and it was there.

This book is what we call the world and God sat
down to read it page after page.

He alone knows how many pages are already turned
and how many more are to come.

From the moment of birth I have skimmed
through twenty three pages so far.

Who can say how many more I shall see!

But today I have turned a page for certain and opened a new one.

Who knows what good or evil will be written there.

Sleep My Child, Sleep

Sleep, my child, sleep
sleep my darling baby.

Like wealth leaving the unfortunate
the sun has left the sky

DATTAKAVI

There is darkness all around as in the life of a poor!
See how the tired mortal world has gone to sleep
Like most of my desires and hopes.

The mice are running around for crumbs of food
Nothing but disappointment awaits them.

They will soon abandon the house, like
our relatives who have left us.

The old dilapidated walls are full of gaping
holes through which the world can see our poverty,

This old, bamboo door creaks all the time.

In sorrow it tells the world how poor we are,
my darling.

The wind blows through these holes and dries my tears.

He keeps time with my song and
asks you to sleep.

Sleep, my darling, sleep.

In vain did I give you birth for there is nothing
I can give you. The sky is the roof over your head
and your poverty your only possession.

All the ten directions are your garments and your home is now
deserted.

Ignorance is your only knowledge and begging, the only profession.
Even so, don't leave the path of truth.

That is the one and only treasure of the Heart.

Worship God for he is kind and will protect you.

Now sleep, my darling, sleep my child.

On The Banks Of The Vishwamitri

I have seen something which is rarely to be seen, and
mine eyes have found bliss.

Is it the snow coming down like showers of rain
Or a silver cloud melting
Or is it the water oozing out of "Chandrakant"
It is like the embrace of my beloved's cool body.

I feel as if I am covered with sandalwood paste
Or plunged in a sea of nectar
I really don't know for my mind has lost
its hearing.

The whole firmament is reflected in the water
The stars look like rishis come to have a
bath or sit in peace, lost in eternal
meditation in the water.
The moon too has descended into the water and
started swimming like a swan
The river is holding him close like a
woman embracing her lover in seclusion.

And a poor mortal like me finds
himself in the company of the great.

But I doubt very much my dear, whether
I am on solid ground or really under water.

Awake my memory and treasure this beauty rarely
to be seen. Never forget what you now
Behold for such beauty is rarely to be seen. .

A Call To The Mavalas

Come Mavalas, come this minute
Shivaji calls you to battle!
Leave everything else, come and fight
Show your valour on the battlefield
come, get ready, arm yourselves with
victorious weapons.

Come young, come old, come all
Leave your cattle to feed in the forest
Your master says this, not me.
Leave your plough where it is in the field
Come and serve your master today
Stop cutting trees, take up the battle axe
To kill the enemy in the field.

Leave your food on your plates
Get up, get ready, listen to the war drums
Don't waste time, the enemy awaits on the battlefield.

Gird up your loins, it is already late
Pick your shield, your weapon, your spear
Your slings and your arrows and your swords
Strike terror in the enemy ranks.

Come like waves on a stormy sea
It is time to seek the secret passages
Gather at the appointed place, advance like the wind
Don't be lazy, put your heart in the fray.

Come, you Mavalas, at this very moment
Shivaji is calling you to battle
Forget all else, come and fight
Let the enemy see your valour on the battlefield.

Why Don't You Speak, My Pet ?

Oh, why don't you speak darling

what has come over you, dolly?

I have made pretty clothes for you
and beautified you with all the finery
brought all your toys near you.

Still why do you keep silent my love?

Has mummy scolded you my pet?

or brother played pranks with you?

and so my little love has turned morose?

Oh, what shall I do, dear, to break your silence?

Are you hungry, my dear?

shall I give some cookies to you?

oh, don't be fidgety, here it's ready!

Eat, darling eat, and speak to me love!

oh, yes, I have chosen my friend's

doll as a husband for you

and so you are mute with shyness !

Oh, I have guessed your secret at last!

No, do not tell me anything! I know! I know!

Dutta.

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