

Born in 1898, Parasmani Pradhan began his long, steady, relentless struggle for the development, diffusion and due recognition of the Nepali language in India. From having Nepali recognised as a vernacular and medium of instruction in the Primary through Middle to the High Schools in the district of Darjeeling; as a subject of study at the College and University level; as the Official Language of the three Hill Sub-Divisions of Darjeeling district; its recognition by the Sahitya Akademi and ultimately to its recognition by the Government of India as one of the major languages of the Indian Union, he worked relentlessly for nearly 70 years till the very day of his death in 1986.

Apart from being an essayist, a grammarian, a lexicographer, linguist, poet, playwright, an editor and educationist, he was also a keen social reformer and directed all his efforts for progressive changes in our society.

INDRAMANI PRADHAN, the author of this monograph, is the sixth son of Sri Parasmani Pradhan. He is an M.A. in English from Visva Bharati University, an M.Ed. from Allahabad University, D.T.E.F.L. from London University and an ex-Professor of the Institute of English, Calcutta. In this monograph, Indramani Pradhan has recorded a short sketch of his father's life centred around his struggle for the development and recognition of the Nepali language in India, which was, in fact, the story of his life. The author has also touched briefly upon other facets of his father's life which bring out his strong character and personality, his versatile interests and his full and active life.



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# Parasmani Pradhan

Indramani Pradhan

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*Makers of  
Indian  
Literature*

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Parasmani Pradhan

The sculpture reproduced on the endpaper depicts a scene where three soothsayers are interpreting to King Suddhodana the dream of Queen Maya, mother of Lord Buddha. Below them is seated a scribe recording the interpretation. This is perhaps the earliest available pictorial record of the art of writing in India.

From : Nagarjunakonda, 2nd century A.D.

Courtesy : National Museum, New Delhi.

Makers of Indian Literature

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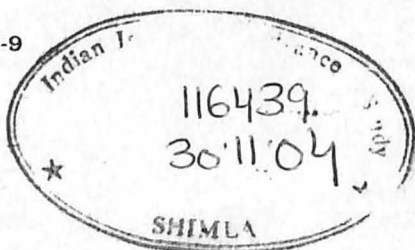
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## A Few Words

I had intended to write about the life and works of my father Parasmani Pradhan, a suggestion that had also been given to me by some persons who were aware of his relentless struggle for the recognition of the Nepali language in India. Time and circumstances, however, did not give me the opportunity till a severe attack of gout, a paternal legacy handed down to some of us, laid me in bed for two and a half months and proved a blessing in disguise. This gave me an opportunity to read *Dr Parasmaniko Jiwanyatra* written by my brother Sri Nagendramani Pradhan. I also read some of my father's works. I could readily understand his simple, easy-flowing Nepali and what I could not understand I discussed with my brother. It was an opportunity that I was given of getting to know my father, though late, and the stupendous amount of courage, determination and perseverance he had to press on with his mission in life. A great fighter and relentless worker. Many have written about his works in Nepali but for the non-Nepali readers an introductory book in English, I felt, would be of great benefit. My brother Sri Nagendramani and his wife encouraged me on to writing this short monograph of Buwa (father).

To do justice to the works of a great writer who wrote regularly for a long period of 70 years, in fact, to the last hours before his death at the ripe old age of 88 years, is no easy task. To write this within a short compass of about 100 pages makes it even more difficult. Much material about him and his works has been omitted here and many facets of his full and active life just touched upon in this short monograph.

I have taken most of my material from my brother's book *Dr. Parasmaniko Jiwanyatra*. I am grateful to him and to all those writers from whose works I have been able to cull material for this little monograph.



I am thankful to the Sahitya Akademi for entrusting me with the work of writing this monograph on Parasmani Pradhan.

Mani Bhawan, Siliguri  
21 November 1994

INDRAMANI PRADHAN

# Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <i>A Few Words</i>   | vii |
| 1. Parentage and Early life  | 1   |
| 2. School Days   | 5   |
| 3. At Kurseong   | 13  |
| 4. A Teacher in S.U.M.I. Kalimpong   | 18  |
| 5. As Sub-Inspector of Schools   | 22  |
| 6. Writing of Nepali Textbooks   | 24  |
| 7. Nepali Sahitya Sammelan   | 29  |
| 8. As a teacher in Darjeeling Government<br>High School                                  | 35  |
| 9. Controversy regarding Language Uniformity,<br>Grammar and Spelling                    | 45  |
| 10. Nepali as a Major Vernacular and a Medium of<br>Instruction at the High School level | 49  |
| 11. "Mani Printing House", Darjeeling, and "Bharati"                                     | 53  |
| 12. The Official Language Bill   | 60  |
| 13. Nepali at the University Level   | 62  |
| 14. Sahitya Akademi and the Eighth Schedule  | 63  |
| 15. The Nepali Language in Sikkim  | 67  |
| 16. A Brief Survey of Parasmani Pradhan's Works  | 69  |
| 17. Awards Conferred on Parasmani Pradhan  | 87  |
| 18. Some other Facets of Parasmani Pradhan's Life  | 89  |
| 19. The End  | 108 |
| 20. Postscript   | 111 |
| <i>References</i>  | 112 |
| <i>Pronunciation of Names of Books, periodicals etc.</i>                                 | 113 |
| <i>Pronunciation of Names of Persons, Places,<br/>Things etc.</i>                        | 117 |
| <i>Bibliography</i>  | 124 |



## *Parentage and Early Life*

Towards the end of the nineteenth century when he was just 14 years old, Bhagyamani Newar (Bhikshacharya), the son of Chintamani and the grandson of Jeethamani of the House of Surya Chandra Mahabihar in Patan, Nepal, left his ancestral home for Benaras in India. In 1892, bringing with him a backpack of poet Bhanubhakta's recently published *Ramayana*, and other Nepali books, Bhagyamani Newar came to this part of India now known as the Darjeeling district, and for the first time advertised and spread the awareness of the written form of the Nepali language. It was to this memorable Bhagyamani Newar and his venerable wife Laxmimaya that Parasmani Pradhan was born on the first day of January, 1898, in a little house at the crossroads of Kalimpong town.

In 1901 Queen Victoria of England died. The Government of India thought it fit to put up a statue of the benevolent Queen in Kalimpong as in many other towns and cities all over India. The spot where Bhagyamani Newar's house stood was chosen as the best site for the proposed statue. This could have been because of its prominent location. It is, however, believed that there were other reasons, too. Bhagyamani Newar used to sit cross-legged on a mat outside his house with his *Ramayan* and other Nepali books for sale spread around him. Swinging his shoulder length hair from side to side in accompaniment with his tambourine, he would recite verses from the *Ramayan* in his melodious voice and the people would throng around him and listen spellbound. Many would buy copies of the *Ramayan* and other Nepali books from him. There was so much vigour and devotion in his recitation of the *Ramayan* that many thought he was a Hindu missionary and those who wanted to have him removed from that vantage place saw a golden opportunity to do so. He was of a very gentle nature and so, without much

## 2 Parasmani Pradhan

ado, when Parasmani was just four years of age, Bhagyamani left his home in the heart of Kalimpong and with his wife and children shifted to a place about three miles east of the town in the village of Sindibong. There he bought some agricultural land and settled down. In the pure, fresh environment of the village, 'Prasman', as his father fondly called him, would romp and play about, following his elders who grazed the family cows and goats. In the evenings his father would recite verses from the *Ramayan* and *Bhaktamala*. While yet a child, encouraged by his father, Prasman had committed to memory the whole of *Bhaktamala*, a poem of eighty-eight lines. Thus, from the early age of five, the simple Nepali language of Bhanubhakta's *Ramayan* and *Bhaktamala* was embedded in his inner ear like a Vedic mantra through the teachings of his revered father.

Although he himself never went to school, Bhagyamani was of the opinion that one should read and acquire knowledge. With this in view he had his son Prasman admitted to the Pudung Primary School about two miles east of his home. This school was under the Church of Scotland Mission as were the majority of schools in the district at the time. Although most of the school goers spoke Nepali as their mother-tongue, they were taught in Hindi. The school opened with Christian hymns and the Lord's prayer. The children, whether Christians, Hindus, Muslims or Buddhists all had to sing these hymns and say these prayers in Hindi. But Prasman did not stay long at the Pudung Primary School. He had to cross three streams on the way to school. During the monsoons these hill streams turned turbulent bringing down with them big boulders and logs and often landslides so that it became very difficult for men to cross them, let alone children. Bhagyamani had him transferred to the Waugh Primary School in the village at the eleventh mile.

Prasman completed his primary education at the Waugh Primary School where the medium of instruction was Hindi, after which he was sent to the Upper Primary School of the same Mission. Here, too, the medium of instruction was Hindi, a language with which the children struggled and which the Nepali-speaking teachers themselves found difficult to master. On one occasion the history teacher, instead of explaining the

history lesson in the vernacular made the children commit their lessons to memory. When even a bright boy like Prasman could not repeat by rote a certain difficult text, the irresponsible teacher pulled his ear so hard that the gold earring that he wore tore through the lobe and fell off the bleeding ear. The heartless teacher instead of administering first aid, shouted at Prasman to go home. Picking up his books in one hand and holding the lobe of his torn ear with the fingers and thumb of the other to stem the flow of blood, Prasman ran home. He told his mother what had happened. At first his mother scolded him for not being able to repeat his history lesson; then she enquired about the gold earring; but when she saw the condition of his bleeding ear her maternal instincts surfaced and running to the backyard she plucked some fern leaves and squeezed the juice onto the bleeding ear to stop the blood. Now she was very angry indeed at the heartlessness of the teacher and said, "from tomorrow you will not go to the school of that heartless teacher who pulls your ears. Your father will teach you how to read. During the day you can herd the goats. There are also four kids and two mother hens with their broods to be looked after; if the chicks are left untended they will be eaten by the cat or swooped upon by kites. Your younger brother, too, needs to be taken care of."

For a few days young Prasman did as his mother had bid him do, but soon he missed going to school. He wanted to read and write and to acquire knowledge. He started dogging his father everywhere worrying him with his desire to go to school. At last his mother had to accept defeat and Prasman was sent to the night school of his uncle Sri Harkadhoj Pradhan. Later, his uncle started a day school and Prasman was admitted there. English and Hindi were taught in this school.

He did not, however, remain long here either. A cousin of his passed the middle school Examination in Kalimpong and won a scholarship for further education. For this he was to go to Darjeeling. About this event Parasmani writes:

"In March 1913 I had to accompany my youngest uncle's eldest son to Darjeeling as his cook and caretaker. Then the mission had only one middle school and no high school in Kalimpong. There was one Government High School in

Darjeeling. My cousin had passed the Middle School examination and had also obtained a government scholarship for further education and for this he had to go to Darjeeling. He needed a companion and my uncle chose me. 'Nephew', he said, 'I want you to go to Darjeeling with your cousin. Take care of him and study with him at home.' I willingly went.

"I went to Darjeeling but not to be admitted as a student in the school. There was also a teacher who had secured service at the Darjeeling Government High School, who went with us. The day after we reached Darjeeling I took my cousin to the school and had him admitted, but he would not remain in the class without me. The teacher seeing the situation said to me, "You get yourself admitted, too". I could not believe my ears and answered in a whisper 'alright'. I sat for the examination and passed and was admitted into the 4th. Class of the Darjeeling Government High School and studied side by side with him. It is true that when Fortune gives She gives in various ways."

## *School Days*

Prasman Pradhan, as he was still called in accordance with the name entered in the school register, did not have the opportunity to read or study Nepali in any school, as the medium of instruction in all the schools in the district of Darjeeling at the time was Hindi. He passed the Matriculation Examination with Hindi as a vernacular subject. He was very interested in the Hindi language, and also learnt Bengali from his friends; but his first love was his mother-tongue Nepali. Even during his school days he used to subscribe to and read and study Nepali magazines like *Chandra* and *Gorkhali* published from Benaras. He would also contribute articles to be published in these magazines. While just a student of Class IX two of his excellent essays were published from Benaras in the monthly *Chandra*. These were entitled "Adhyawasaya" (Perseverance) and "Bidhya" (Knowledge). With no formal education in the mother tongue except that laid for him by his revered father, and his own resolute efforts reading and studying Nepali magazines and papers, articles, poems and books, to be able to write essays like these at that early age gives us a glimpse of his unique talent.

In the essay "Adhyawasaya" Prasman writes: "A man of perseverance is one who concentrates deeply and single-mindedly to accomplish any task. With perseverance there is hardly any work in this world that cannot be accomplished. Although we all have this trait in us even before birth, we as human beings must try to do something worthwhile during our lifetime and without hard work this is not possible..."

No great work can be completed within a day or two; but just as a vessel can be filled with water drop by drop, so also can a great work be accomplished step by step, but a complete concentration of body and mind is necessary for this. In other words, while doing some work if we allow our mind to wander



elsewhere, will we be able to accomplish our work? Certainly not !...

At this time the English people are expert in exploiting this quality of perseverance as there are few lazy people amongst them. Whether big or small you will find them busily engaged in some enterprise or other. If we Indians, too, had this quality of perseverance, would we still be in the sorry state that we are in today? I don't think we would. So we should, according to our abilities, strive to improve our language and our country.

As the poet Longfellow writes:

The heights by great men reached and kept,  
Were not attained by sudden flight;  
But they while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upwards in the night.

My hope is that every student will learn a lesson from the above poem."

Prasman goes on to relate the story of how the five year old Dhurba went alone into the forest to do penance in accordance with his mother's instruction. Little Dhurba concentrated so fully on his penance that Lord Bishnu was pleased with him and fulfilled his wishes.

"So dear students", Prasman continues, "if a five year old child can perform such a difficult task through perseverance, can't we too, through perseverance do difficult task? There are many similar examples, as for instance in the life of Napoleon Bonaparte, Robert Bruce and others. These you must have already read. As some moralist has written, only by hard effort can one accomplish any difficult work, not by wishful thinking. A sleeping lion cannot expect a deer to walk into its mouth.

Just sitting at home without working we cannot accomplish anything great. God did not create us just to spend our lives in idleness. There is nothing impossible in this world. Some fool or lazy person might say that he wants to fly in the air just to argue against the statement that there is nothing impossible in this world. But with concentrated hard effort, with

perseverance, this too is possible. As Napoleon used to say, 'There is no such thing as impossible; this is a word to be found only in the dictionary of fools'. A Sanskrit poet writes likewise: 'For a person who has the will to do something, nothing is impossible'.

So a person who has the will to accomplish something will accomplish it come what may. But he who has no will to do anything, what will he accomplish? With perseverance any great enterprise can be done successfully. This requires concentrated effort. Just as one cannot go over a hill just in one leap, so also big works require a step by step effort. If we work steadily even God will help us. So keeping these examples in mind, I hope that our Gorkha brothers will not retreat from any difficult tasks that confront them, but march ahead doing their task to the best of their ability."

While yet a school boy Prasman contributed poems, articles and letters in Nepali to be printed in the weekly magazine *Gorkhali*. He also translated the great novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's short novel *Yugalanguriya* into Nepali under the title *Hiranyamaye Charitra* which was printed as a serial in the magazine *Gorkhali*. This is regarded as the first novel in print in Nepali from the district of Darjeeling.

Writing poetry was not very easy at that time. Apart from the language, thought, metre and rhythm there were many rules to be kept in mind. "Samashya Purti" was a form of poetry in which skilled poets took part in those days. A word or phrase was given and the competitor would have to compose a poem not only incorporating the word or phrase, but also seeing that the rhythm, metre, etc. used were in accordance with the rules. Prasman did not know anything about writing poetry then, but he made his first attempt. The editor of *Gorkhali* returned his poem with critical and caustic remarks, but Prasman was not to be daunted. He enquired about his mistakes and the editor advised him to study *Shrutabodhi* and *Chhandomanjari* in order to learn how to write poetry. Prasman studied these two books and his next Samashya Purti entitled "Ramko-nam" was accepted by the editor. When it came out in print, Prasman was

overwhelmed with joy. Here is a free translation of "Ram-ko-nam".

Look Gorkhalese, you are still in sleep,  
Other communities have left you far behind;  
Enough! Now abandon laziness and sleep,  
And take the name of Rama morn and eve.

The poets who took part in these Samashya Purti poetic competitions were famous poets like Pundit Lekhnath, Shikharnath, Sambhu Prasad, Krishna Chandra Arjyal, Thirthaprasad, Deenanath Sapkota and others. They were all from Nepal. From the district of Darjeeling Prasman Pradhan was the only one who, with his meagre knowledge and experience, attempted to enter these poetic competitions.

Even as a school boy Prasman was keenly aware of the degeneration of our society due to bad habits. He felt that there must be some reforms and wanted to shake up the sleeping Nepali community, and to stop their bad habits like drinking and gambling that would ultimately destroy their society. His poems written even around this time express his views on these subjects and he appeals to the Nepali community to enlighten and educate themselves so that they could uplift the mother-tongue Nepali, the Nepali community and hence our motherland, India. Rather didactic in nature even at this early age, his prose and poems contain a lot of sound advice for the students and the Gorkhali community and appeals and prayers for their upliftment.

During the First World War the brave Gorkha jawans were in great demand by the British to help them fight against their enemies. They fought far away from home, in Europe, in Egypt, in Tunisia and Mesopotamia. Their brave wives encouraged them to go and to return with honours or to die honourably on the battle-field. In Europe the battle raged on. Here at home, in the Darjeeling Government High School in 1916 preparations were afoot for the Annual School function. As in previous years there would be one-act plays, poems, songs and dances in Hindi, English, Bengali, Urdu and Tibetan. Nothing in Nepali! Though

the majority of students spoke Nepali as their mother-tongue. This injustice had been irritating students like Prasman. On behalf of the Nepali students under the leadership of Prasman Pradhan, an appeal was submitted to the Headmaster to allow them to do something in the Nepali language, too. Permission was granted. This was the first small courageous blow struck by these Nepali students for the recognition of our mother-tongue.

Dressed as a woman with a khukuri strapped to his waist, Prasman came on to the stage to recite Kadambini's "Bir Patniko Sahas" (Courage of a Brave Wife). The poem contained 72 lines in which a brave Gorkha wife encourages her husband and other menfolk to join the army of the British Emperor, George V, and as a friend, help to get rid of his enemies; to win laurels on the battle-field and either to return home proudly to proud India or to die bravely in battle. Prasman, it is said, recited this poem with so much verve and vigour, drawing out his sparkling khukuri and brandishing it in the air when he came to the lines in which the wife exhorts her husband and menfolk to take out their khukuris and to use them in the service of Emperor George, that the audience watching spellbound burst into loud applause. Prasman was awarded a special prize for his recitation.

It was not, however, by reciting this Nepali poem on the stage that the student Prasman Pradhan showed his courage and skill; it was rather by his ability to bring together the Nepali youth of that time and to show them the great need to struggle for the upliftment of the Nepali language and literature and to establish a Nepali literary association. He was thus a pioneer in leading the youth towards this end.

At that time there was a library at the Darjeeling Government High School that was run by the students. The name of the library was Hindi Sahitya Samaj. For some time Prasman was the Secretary of this library. Under the patronage of the Hindi Sahitya Samaj, meetings and get-togethers for literary discussions and poetic gatherings were organised. There were many books and periodicals in the library but all in Hindi. Prasman felt the need for Nepali books and periodicals, too, for

the use of the Nepali speaking students. In one of the meetings he suggested buying a few Nepali books for the library, but his suggestion was turned down by the members of the committee. This annoyed him so much that he withdrew his name from the Hindi Sahitya Samaj and immediately started a library and association called Gorkha Sahitya Samaj. This association led by Prasman Pradhan collected donations from well-wishers. Some gave bookcases, some gave books, others bought Nepali books and periodicals for the library. Thus, with their perseverance, led on by Prasman, the Nepali students established a library of their own in the Darjeeling Government High School. A second blow struck for the cause and promotion of the Nepali language.

Till the beginning of 1917 Nepali was not taught even as a vernacular in any of the schools in the district of Darjeeling, although it was the mother-tongue of the majority of school-going children. Seeing their non-Nepali classmates give their examinations in their own mother-tongue like Hindi, Bengali, Urdu and Tibetan, while they had to give their examinations in Hindi or any one of the other three languages, the Nepali students grew bitter.

One day the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University came to visit the Darjeeling Government High School. The Nepali students, under the leadership of Prasman Pradhan, using whatever little knowledge they had, drafted a memorandum to the Vice-Chancellor, appealing that they should, like the Hindi, Bengali, Urdu and Tibetan students, be allowed to study in Nepali and to give their examinations in Nepali. Six or seven of the Nepali students signed their names to the memorandum and when they saw the Vice-Chancellor along with the Headmaster and other personalities coming down the road, approached him and handed him their memorandum. They did not know that their memorandum should have been forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor through their Headmaster. They had made a mistake. There was a Bengali gentleman along with the Vice-Chancellor. When the Vice-Chancellor read the appeal, the Bengali gentleman insultingly remarked, "Is Nepali a language?" And passed some other derogatory remarks about the Nepali language. Because of his comments the Vice-Chancellor did not discuss this issue then and the students were very depressed.

Having the immature intelligence of school-boys and the hot-headedness of the Gorkhas, they were naturally very angry.

That same evening the Vice-Chancellor went to visit the Carmichael Hostel where these students lived. His Bengali friend was with him, too. The boys were still seething with anger and could not forget the insult to the Nepali language. Pretending to walk past him on a crowded staircase, one of the boys suddenly shouldered the Bengali gentleman and sent him sprawling. The result was disastrous. The gentleman was a lawyer and he vowed to have them all arrested. Luckily, the Hostel Superintendent, also a Bengali gentleman, was a very kind and considerate man. He pleaded with the Vice-Chancellor and the lawyer on behalf of the students, promising that such bad behaviour would not be repeated, and so the group of Nepali students were saved from the lock-up. This was the third "blow" struck for the sake of their mother-tongue. They could not, however, forget the insult to the Nepali language. The incident was published in the paper *Gorkhali* and it became a hot topic for discussion. Letters were written to the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and the Education Department of Bengal regarding the inclusion of the Nepali language in the schools in the district of Darjeeling. As a result of all this a notification was issued in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 24th, July, 1918, including Nepali in the list of vernacular languages for the subject of composition in the Matriculation, Intermediate and the B.A. Examinations of the Calcutta University. This third 'blow' struck for their mother-tongue resulted in this great victory for Prasman Pradhan and his handful of student friends and they were grateful to the Bengali lawyer who had taunted them with his sharp insult against the Nepali language. As Parasmani writes much later: "At times it is the taunt of our enemies or friends that often motivates us towards progress. This fact does not need to be further illustrated; but I feel that this little episode must have a place in some small corner in the history and development of the Nepali language."

Even as a schoolboy Prasman used to correspond with prominent writers, publishers, editors and officials concerned with the Nepali language and literature, so that he could learn more about the Nepali language and help to develop it and to

improve the condition of the Nepali people in India. People had been watching his growth and development, too. His leadership qualities, his powerful and thought-provoking articles, his ability to get things done, his poems against the use and abuse of drugs and intoxicants, his love for the mother-tongue and his appeal and effort towards the upliftment and progress of the Nepali community in the district; all very attractive qualities. Moreover, he was 19 years old, and according to the elders, of marriageable age. So when he went home to Kalimpong for the Dasehara holidays in 1916, he was confounded to find that his parents had already arranged his marriage. Prasman had a lot of respect for his parents and did not wish to disappoint them; but he had greater things in mind than marriage. He was to sit for the Matriculation Examination in March 1917 and had to prepare for it. He did not, however, disappoint his parents and in November, 1916, he was married. He had never seen the bride and she was older than him. He sat through the wedding ceremony and merry-making which lasted all night. But as soon as the light shadows of dawn touched his room, he changed his wedding clothes and telling his parents and elders that he was to sit for his Matriculation Examination and had to prepare for it, he left for Darjeeling. The bride waited at home for a month or so after which she left for her parent's home. She waited for a few more months for Prasman to come for her and when he did not, it was decided to arrange her marriage with another person. As Parasmani writes much later: "It was really a marriage of compulsion and so was unsuccessful."

As he grew older Prasman had never been happy with the name that his father had given him which had been recorded in the school register. It had no meaning and he wanted to change it. The family name was "Mani". He felt that "Parasmani" would be a more suitable name as it had a profound meaning, namely, "touchstone". With the permission of the Headmaster this name was recorded for the Matriculation Examination, and henceforth he was called "Parasmani", and he lived up to his name.

## *At Kurseong*

The Matriculation Examination of March 1917 had to be postponed after two days of its commencement as there was a leakage of the question papers in Calcutta. Parasmani left for Kurseong with a group of hostel friends. They were all keenly interested in the development of the Nepali language and literature. Moreover, Kurseong was where his revered father Bhagyamani Newar had arrived in 1893 with a backpack of Bhanubhakta's *Ramayan* and for the first time spread the awareness of the written form of the Nepali language. The Matriculation Examination was to be held in May. Parasmani did not want to go home to Kalimpong as the atmosphere at home was not congenial for his studies. Instead he accepted a job as a teacher in a primary school in Dowhill, Kurseong and received a monthly salary of seven rupees and eight annas. He was able to work and study.

Parasmani kept on writing articles concerned with the development and progress of the Nepali language. His article entitled "Gorkha Bhasha Prachar" published in 1917 in the *Gorkhali* shows his concern for the Nepali language and literature. It also shows his contact with experts and stalwarts of Benaras and Kathmandu on this subject. He was of the opinion that without a good grammar a language could not be developed properly. There were some grammars of the Nepali language written by English missionaries like J. A. Ayton, A. Turnbull, Rev. Kilgour and others, but these could not be considered as standard grammars of Nepali as these missionaries did not know enough of the language.

*Chandrika* written by Sri Gururaj Hemraj Pundit of Nepal is the best grammar at present, he opined. He was perturbed by the lethargy of the Gorkha Grantha Pracharak Mandali of Bombay, established in order to promote the Nepali language.



Parasmani points out, however, that the promotion of the Nepali language and literature could be done much faster with the help of papers and periodicals as they would reach a larger number of readers in a shorter period of time. But regarding the few magazines like *Sundari*, *Madavi* and *Chandra* that had appeared for a while from Benaras, he questions sorrowfully:

What were ye born to be  
An hour or half's delight  
And so to bid goodnight?

Parasmani Pradhan was not happy with the language used by Padri Ganga Prasad Pradhan, the editor of *Gorkhey Khabar Kagat*, a monthly paper begun in 1901 from Darjeeling. The language used, though it professed to be Nepali, was not the Nepali spoken or written by the Nepalese of the Darjeeling district. Although Padri Ganga Prasad was a relative, Parasmani in no uncertain terms criticised and condemned the language of this paper and said that it was doing more harm than good for the development of the Nepali language and literature. Looking at the written language used by Padri Ganga Prasad till *Gorkhey Khabar Kagat* closed down in June 1930, and the Nepali used by Parasmani then and today, it is quite obvious that there were grounds for his criticism of the language used by Padri Ganga Prasad.

At the time when Parasmani Pradhan was serving as a teacher in the Dowhill Primary School at Kurseong, the First World War was raging all over Europe and the Middle East. The Gorkha jawans were earning a name for themselves and for India by their courage and valour on the battlefield. The youth of Kurseong town talked about nothing but the war. Seeing this Parasmani and some of his friends felt the need to divert the people to do something more constructive than just listening to stories about the war. There was a small reading club in the house of Jombei Paul; this they renamed Gorkha Library and began to use mainly as a literary club for serious discussions about education, the upliftment of the Nepali Language and the community, social service programmes et cetera. In 1917 Parasmani was made the Honorary Assistant

Secretary of the Gorkha Library. Even before the Gorkha Library was officially established, Parasmani with some friends and educated residents of Kurseong had started a club known as The Himalayan Amateur Dramatic Association which was generally called Gorkha Amateur Club. Its main aim was to spread a pure and standardised form of the Nepali language, both written and spoken.

In order to reach the public, Parasmani had, between 1917 and 1919, written and dramatised some popular ancient Indian stories like "Sundar Kumar", "Sawitri Satyawati" and "Harishchandra" in an easy-flowing correct form of Nepali. These plays were staged with great success, for they were easily understood by all Nepali speaking people. For dramas staged then the language used was a mixture of Urdu and Hindusthani. The theatre, however, was regarded with suspicion at that time. The elders felt that it was not a place with which any respectable person should be associated. Parasmani's father had seen such theatres in Benaras and did not have anything good to say about them, so when he heard that his son was involved in the theatre, he thought that Parasmani was going astray and so ordered him to come home immediately. In the meantime he discussed the problem with his eldest daughter, her husband Bhimbahadur Pradhan and her father-in-law Gopal Singh Pradhan. They all felt that Parasmani should be re-married immediately as the first marriage had been a fiasco. Marriage they felt would help him to settle down to a steady, decent life. Gopal Singh Pradhan had a daughter, Kumari Jasmaya. It was decided that Parasmani should marry her. She was slightly built, docile, soft-spoken, hard working and younger than him. This time he agreed readily to the marriage. Parasmani and Jasmaya were married in the middle of the rainy season, the busiest time of the year for agriculturists like his parents. There was no big show as in the first marriage. As he was by then working in the Hari Printing Press at Kurseong he left his wife behind to help his parents; but this time with proper consent and arrangements and returned to Kurseong. He still had a lot to do in connection with the development and enhancement of the Nepali language.

It was while working at the Hari Printing Press that Parasmani strengthened his ambition in life, namely, service to the Nepali language and literature. This was a printing press begun by seven partners. Hari Singh Thapa was the man behind the project. Parasmani was still teaching in the primary school at Dowhill, but the management of the press gave him the opportunity to learn how to run a printing press and Hari Singh gave him all the help and encouragement needed. Some time later when the manager of the press did not return from leave, the Press Board decided to give Parasmani the managerial post. In fact, from September 1917, he was practically all in all as far as the running of Hari Printing Press was concerned. Writer, editor, compositor, printer, binder and publisher, he ran the press almost single-handed. He had his bed and kitchen in one small corner of the press room. This little room became his world. But he enjoyed it all for this was the break that he had been looking for in order to help develop the Nepali language. He discussed with Hari Singh and other partners of the printing press the possibility of starting a literary Nepali magazine. This proposal was approved. Parasmani put his heart and soul into his new work which had now become a full-time job for he had left his teaching job. There were not many writers and poets among the Nepalese of the district and he needed material for the Nepali magazine that was to be brought out. His earlier contacts with writers from Nepal and Benaras through correspondence and by reading their articles came into use. He requested them to contribute articles and poems for this new magazine and in January 1918 the first issue of *Chandrika*, the first literary magazine in Nepali from the district of Darjeeling, in fact, from this region of India, was published. The chief aim of *Chandrika* was to develop and enhance the Nepali language and its literature and to bring about uniformity in the written form of the Nepali language. Although at that time Parasmani admits that his knowledge of the Nepali language and its grammar was far from satisfactory, yet he had enough will-power to learn everything he could about the Nepali language, so that he could help in its progress. His editorials were written in a simple style and language so that anyone who

could read Nepali found no problem in understanding him; the contents, however, were always thought-provoking. His fight for the recognition of Nepali by the Calcutta University was carried on through the columns of *Chandrika*. He did not hesitate to criticise anyone working against the progress of the Nepali language or to appeal for help to anyone who could help in its progress. Apart from articles and poems, some Nepali books, novels and a Nepali grammar were printed in the Hari Printing Press.

The result of all this and previous efforts to have Nepali recognised as a vernacular by the Calcutta University, was the sanctioning of Nepali as a language for composition at the Matricualtion, I.A. and B.A. levels, vide the *Calcutta Gazette* dated 24 July, 1918. This was a great achievement, but Parasmani in his editorial in the September issue of *Chandrika* forewarned that unless textbooks in Nepali were written to be used in the schools, this hard-earned victory would mean nothing, and it would be a great shame for us.

## *A Teacher in S.U.M.I., Kalimpong*

Nepali having been recognised by the Calcutta University as a vernacular language, it had to be taught in the schools of the district. The Principal of the Scottish Universities Mission Institution (S.U.M.I.), Kalimpong, Dr. Sutherland, a dynamic person and a true educationist, was on the lookout for a good teacher of Nepali. Through K. D. Pradhari, a teacher at the S.U.M.I. he heard about Parasmani Pradhan who had by then passed the Matriculation Examination, and offered him a job as Nepali teacher at S.U.M.I. Parasmani felt that this teaching job at Kalimpong would be more convenient for him as he could be with the family. He joined the teaching staff of the S.U.M.I. on 16 February 1919, and became the first teacher to teach the Nepali language at the Matriculation standard in the district. He did not, however, give up being the editor of *Chandrika*. For about six months he did this job from his home in Kalimpong without accepting any honorarium. After about twenty issues, however, *Chandrika* was not able to pay its way through and regretfully had to be closed down. About seven months later, in March 1920, the Hari Printing Press was sold.

The warning that Parasmani had sounded in his editorial in the *Chandrika* of September 1918, now became a gigantic problem. There were no books in Nepali for the students and no one came forward to write them. While teaching Nepali, Parasmani felt that a grammar of the Nepali language was absolutely necessary for the students to begin with. He discussed this great necessity with his Principal Dr Sutherland who understood this need and promised to help him, so Parasmani sat down to write a Nepali grammar. Based on the reputed *Chandrika Gorkha Bhasa Vyakran* of Gururaj Hemraj Pundit of Kathmandu and the style of some books on English grammar, he wrote the *Nepali Vyakran* with students of Nepali in mind.

In 1920 he had it printed at the Hari Printing Press at Kurseong and published it himself. He was not a rich man and printing and publishing a book cost a lot of money, but he had enormous faith in his own ability and Dr Sutherland seeing this determination encouraged and helped him on. The *Nepali Vyakran* was approved by the Director of Public Instructions, Bengal and permission was granted for its use in the schools of the district of Darjeeling as a textbook. This grammar was later revised to suit the growth and development of the language and the author's own increased knowledge of the language. Apart from hundreds of Nepalese who used this grammar and who use it even today, it was praised by no less a person than Professor Balkrishna Pokhrel, a prominent writer of Nepal, who says that he learnt to write good, correct Nepali by studying Sri Parasmani's *Nepali Vyakran*.

As a teacher in the S.U.M.I. Parasmani was a driving force wherever the question of the accuracy and progress of the Nepali language and the community was concerned. He argued his case convincingly with the Principal and colleagues and put forward his views strongly. Dr Sutherland learnt to depend on Parasmani's judgement and in turn Parasmani found in Dr. Sutherland a selfless teacher, a true educationist. He had a lasting influence on Parasmani Pradhan.

On Armistice Day, the 11th of November, 1919, at the request of the Principal and the Sub-Divisional Officer of Kalimpong, Parasmani organised a programme for the Kalimpong public at the mela ground. In the evening his play *Sundar Kumar* in the Nepali language was staged at the S.U.M.I. hall. The hall was small and when a large portion of the public could not get seats to watch the play they pushed their way in breaking the panes of windows and doors. Ultimately, Dr Sutherland had to announce that the play would be staged for two more evenings so as to give those who could not get seats a chance to see it. It was a great success and Dr Sutherland was elated; he did not mind the broken panes. By popular demand the play was printed in 1920.

About this time the Honorable Mr. W.W. Hornel, Director of Public Instruction, Government of Bengal visited Kalimpong. He wished to see some places in this region, particularly the areas bordering the boundary of British India, Sikkim and Bhutan. He requested Dr Sutherland to provide him with a guide and companion, one who knew the region and who could explain things to him in fluent English. As no other teacher would come forward readily to accompany the English Sahib and Dr Sutherland felt that Parasmani would be the fittest person for this job, he was asked to accompany Mr. Hornel. With two porters who were familiar with the region, they left Kalimpong.

The tour was on foot through rough terrain, often through dense forests, the habitat of elephants, bears and many other wild animals. Mr. Hornel was a good walker but so was Parasmani. After climbing to a height of about 8,000 feet, they reached Tangta, the boundary of India, Sikkim and Bhutan. From this vantage point it was a beauteous sight. They could see the snow clad mountains of Tibet stretching far to the North; to the South stretched the endless plains of India through which meandered many wide rivers. The densely covered hills all around cut up by numerous sparkling little streams. The thick forests abounding with beautiful orchids, champ and rhododendrons. The beauty and grandeur of this region captivated the Honorable Mr. Hornel and he was very pleased. He asked Parasmani many question about the region, its people, its birds and animals and was not disappointed with the amount of information that he was able to gather. They returned to Kalimpong on the seventh day. Mr. Hornel considered his trip a great success. He had thoroughly enjoyed himself because of the company of Parasmani and his knowledge about the region, its flora and fauna, its people et cetera. He made this fact known to Dr Sutherland and said that he wanted to make Parasmani a Sub-Inspector of Schools for the Darjeeling Hills. When Dr Sutherland conveyed the Director's intention to Parasmani, he said that if this was the wish of the Director and if the school had no objection to releasing him, he would be quite willing to take up the new post. A few days later an official letter arrived

appointing Parasmani Pradhan Sub-Inspector of Schools for the Darjeeling Hill Region. He took the new post in his stride and fulfilled his duties efficiently and effectively although he was not even a graduate.



## *As Sub-Inspector of Schools*

Parasmani assumed this post of Sub-Inspector of Schools on 16th February, 1921. He was the first Nepali to be given this post. On his visits to the Primary Schools in the district, he saw that the children were still being taught in the Hindi medium just as he had been taught, and not in the mother-tongue of the majority, namely, Nepali. He began to take steps to rectify this error. There were many non-Nepali persons who tried to prevent him from his purpose and who put obstacles in his way, but he went ahead with astute single-mindedness.

On 16th November, 1920, the Government of Bengal, Department of Education under its Notification No. 1665 had invited Nepali text books for approval in the different subjects for the Primary Schools. But for quite some time nobody had even attempted to write books for the approval of the Education Department. Under the patronage of the Eastern Himalayan Mission Literature Committee, Miss Henderson had written a First Primer in Nepali and had begun using it in the Scotts Mission Primary Schools. The language, however, needed a lot of correction and Parasmani boldly pointed this out. It required some courage during those days to point out the errors of an Englishman or woman! He himself wrote a Nepali Primer *Nepali Pahilo Kitab* (1921) and sent the manuscript to the Committee to show them the correct form of the Nepali language. Since there were no Bible stories in the Primer, however, the missionaries did not approve of it, so Parasmani included a few stories from the Bible and the Mission accepted the book and had it printed by Longmans' Company. Now there was a lot of discussion amongst the missionaries regarding the Nepali language, its correct form etc. This was a good sign for it would help in the development of the language. Some Nepali friends, however, wrote nasty letters to Parasmani without

understanding the situation. He was accused of being a Hindu shamelessly gratifying the wishes of the Christians. This accusation flabbergasted him. He never had religion in mind when writing this book for the Nepali children. His aim was to write a book in simple and correct Nepali so that the Nepali children would be taught correct Nepali right from the beginning. He had to bear these insults, but he cared not as long as the Nepali language progressed.

## Writing of Nepali Textbooks

Since no one would come forward to write the much needed Nepali textbooks for children, Parasmani felt that he would have to do something about it otherwise his 'brain-child', namely, the recognition of Nepali as the medium of instruction in all the schools in the district in which there was a majority of Nepali speaking children, would die an early death. It was a very big challenge. Even if he wrote the manuscripts who would invest so much money in printing and publishing them? But a beginning had to be made. He wrote another Primer, *Nepali Sau Akshar* and posted the manuscript to the Macmillan Company of India in Calcutta with a humble request to have it printed. But the manuscript was returned to him with the reply that such books in Nepali would not have a good sale and so the Company regretted its inability to print the book. A few days later, however, he received another letter from Macmillan informing him that their manager, Mr. Parkhurst, would be visiting Darjeeling and would be pleased if they could meet.

Parasmani met Mr. Parkhurst and found him a very jovial and understanding man. Mr. Parkhurst expressed his desire to see a few of the beauty spots of Darjeeling and also to visit Sikkim, then a semi-independent state, if possible. Parasmani took Mr. Parkhurst and his friend sight-seeing and one day organized a trip to Melli a border town of Sikkim. They went by car, a Baby Austin. For some distance the scenic beauty of the hills captivated Mr. Parkhurst and he chatted gaily. But the road from Ghoom-Simkona meandered down to the Teesta valley. After a few bends Mr. Parkhurst stopped chatting. As they drove down to the Teesta valley it began to get hotter and Parasmani took off his pullover. Suddenly Mr. Parkhurst signalled with his hand to stop the car, but before he could put his head out of the window he threw up his breakfast. Parasmani

was quick. He had his pullover in his hands and quickly held it for Mr. Parkhurst to vomit on. A few more times and he hiccupped to a stop. There was spring water a little further down the road; there Mr. Parkhurst rinsed his mouth and washed his face and Parasmani washed his soiled pullover. Slowly they drove down to Melli and Mr. Parkhurst was happy setting his foot on Sikkim soil. The drive back to Darjeeling went without any further mishap. Next day Parasmani found Mr. Parkhurst as jovial as ever. He thanked Parasmani for enabling them to set foot on Sikkim soil for the first time. Parasmani replied jokingly, "Sahib, it must have been your first time being sick in a car, too", and they both laughed heartily at the incidence. Then Mr. Parkhurst said, "Mr. Pradhan, how can I be of use to you?" And Parasmani promptly replied, "Mr. Parkhurst, if you could arrange for the printing of Nepali textbooks for our schools, not only I but the whole Nepali community would be forever grateful to you."

"If you could write and use all the books that we print in Nepali for the Primary Schools, I shall put the matter before our Head Office in London", said Mr. Parkhurst.

Parasmani said "Thank you" and taking courage in both hands said that he would be able to have the manuscripts ready in all subjects for the Primary School level. After a month or so, a letter did arrive from London with the excellent news that the Macmillan Company would print the Nepali textbooks. He had taken the bull by the horns and now he would have to hold on.

Even till the end of 1921 no author came forward with any Nepali textbook for approval by the Bengal Education Department. The qualified, learned writers would not or could not write textbooks for primary schools and without these books Parasmani's "brain-child" would not survive. He was in a dilemma.

It is said that behind every great man there is a woman. Towards the end of 1922 Parasmani went to Kalimpong to visit some of the Primary Schools and then he took a few days leave

to be with his wife and the joint family. Usually, when he came home he was cheerful and full of life, talking about his new job as a Sub-Inspector of Schools and relating little anecdotes that would make everybody laugh. But this time he brooded silently all the time. Nobody had the courage to ask him what the trouble was. It was left to his wife Jasmaya to ask him the reason for his depression. Parasmani explained to his wife the problems that faced him about the writing of textbooks and the golden opportunity that the Macmillan Company had offered him, an opportunity that would give his 'brain-child' the nourishment that it required and the Nepali community a chance to progress.

"There is nobody in our Nepali society today who will come forward to write Nepali textbooks for primary schools and without books the Nepali language cannot be taught", Parasmani told his wife. In her gentle voice and her abiding faith in him she replied, "Can't you write these books yourself ? I know you can. Do write them. I will manage the home and children till you finish writing these books. Don't worry about this."

What stupendous courage and strength-giving assurance ! What fortifying encouragement to give her husband ! Although she had no formal education to speak of she understood fully her husband's pangs and knew what to do.

It took Parasmani years to write these Nepali textbooks. First for the primary school, then for the middle and later the high school level. Jasmaya carried on steadfastly fulfilling her promise to look after the home and bring up the children, without so much as a grumble. By the end of 1942 there were twelve children and she raised them more or less single-handed at least up to the age of five. She also managed the agricultural land at Kalimpong. It was to a great extent her encouragement and her efficient management of the house and children which enabled Parasmani to write all these textbooks. The brave and gentle little lady passed away in 1963 at the age of 63 of a sudden heart attack. She saw all her children do well and was proud of this fact; but regrettably she was not alive to see the honours and awards given to her husband by India and Nepal for his

life-long dedicated service and valuable contribution to the progress of the Nepali language and literature. How proud she would have been!

Writing these textbooks was no easy job. Stories, poems, essays, geography, history, arithmetic had to be written for the various classes. With unflinching zeal and perseverance Parasmani wrote and thought of nothing but material for these books and how to present them so as to make the text interesting for children. He also had to keep in mind the fact that the language should be simple and correct and the books in accordance with the syllabi required by the Bengal Education Department. He wrote these books all alone and thanks to Mr. Parkhurst they were all printed by the Macmillan Company. As Parasmani writes with a touch of humour, "It is said that Guru Goraknath by vomiting gave the great King Prithivinarayan Shah the boon of the Kingdom of Nepal. The manager of the Macmillan Company, Mr. Parkhurst, too, vomited and gave the Nepali community in the district of Darjeeling the boon of textbooks. Both these boons should be written in letters of gold when writing the history of the Nepalese people".

Although these textbooks had been sent to the Department of Education, Calcutta, their approval took time. In the interim period with the help of the Eastern Himalayan Church of Scotland Mission the books were introduced into the primary schools under its control. The District Education Authority and his immediate boss Priyanath Hore, however, seeing that Parasmani had introduced Nepali in the Primary Schools without the previous sanction of the D.P.I., Bengal, sent a report against him to the senior officer of the department in Rajsahi Division. On the 26th of October, 1926, however, the Director of Public Instructions, Bengal, Mr. E. F. Oaten sent a Notification No. 4TB approving the use in all classes of Primary schools and in the primary stages of the Middle Vernacular Schools in the Presidency, a list of books written in Nepali. These included all the books written and submitted by Parasmani Pradhan.

Mr. Hore's malicious report against Parasmani, however, and letters from some non-Nepali communities to the

Government of Bengal against the introduction of Nepali as a vernacular and medium of instruction in the schools of the district, resulted in the Governor having to set up an enquiry commission to study and examine the case for the Nepali language. A textbook committee to examine the Nepali books written for the primary schools was set up, too, and Parasmani was asked to submit a copy of each of his books to the committee members. The committee after going through his books carefully, approved them all with just a few correction. Mr. P.J. Griffiths, I.C.S., S.D.O., who had a good knowledge of the Nepali language, was the President of the Textbook Committee. On the basis of his report permission was granted to use these books in primary schools. Moreover, the committee recommended that Nepali should be the medium of instruction in the primary schools of the district and that the children sitting for the Primary School Scholarship Examination should be allowed to write their papers in Nepali instead of in Hindi if they wanted to.

These books written by Parasmani for the Primary Schools were in use for over fifty years. Not only were they used in the district of Darjeeling, but also in Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, Dehradun, Bhakshu, Dharamsala and Benaras in India and Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, Malaysia and Hongkong outside India. These books were appreciated by one and all.

## *Nepali Sahitya Sammelan*

As a Sub-Inspector of Schools Parasmani Pradhan was popular in the district. The educated Nepalese were aware of his single-minded devotion to the betterment of the Nepali language. At the Darjeeling Government High School, two teachers, good friends of his, namely, Pundit Dharnidhar Sharma and Sri Surya Bikram Gewali, joined the Darjeeling Govt. High School in 1919 and 1923 respectively. They, like Parasmani, were interested in the progress of the Nepali language and literature. Together these three are known as "Su-Dha-Pa", that is, Surya Bikram-Dharnidhar-Parasmani, in the Nepali literary world. The three of them spent a lot of time together discussing the development and progress of Nepali, and felt that it was necessary to have a forum from which to air their views about the Nepali language, its future and also to develop the language and its literature. They decided to form a Nepali Sahitya Sammelan. Parasmani had already had some experience in running a magazine *Chandrika* which had done a fair amount of spade-work in the field of cultivating the Nepali language. Moreover, he was the Assistant Secretary of the Gorkha Library and also associated with the Gorkha Amateur Club, a social dramatic organization to promote correct and chaste Nepali. He was well known in Darjeeling and often organised the youth for various difficult projects. Since both Surya Bikram Gewali and Pundit Dharnidhar Sharma were newcomers to Darjeeling, it was decided that Parasmani should organise a meeting of those interested in the Nepali language and literature. He wrote to many such persons in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Sikkim, Assam, etc. and about 250 lovers of the Nepali language assembled in the Hindu Public Hall on 25th. May, 1924.

Parasmani had composed a poem for the opening ceremony entitled "Matribhasha" (Mother-tongue) and in his speech he briefly projected to the audience the present state of the Nepali



people in the District; people who were quite happy and content to be porters and road labourers. They did not think about the difficult future that they would have to face when there would be a scramble even for manual labour. "But the Almighty has given human beings brains and with the help of their brains wondrous works were being done in the world which could not be done by using brawn alone. This brain could be developed only by acquiring knowledge", he said; "and the Nepalese must turn their attention seriously towards the acquisition of knowledge. In order to speed up the learning process, their children like the children of other states and countries must be taught through the medium of their mother-tongue and not through the medium of another language. Very few of our children reach the University stage", he said, "even to complete the High School examination is difficult for them because of the language barrier and so they drop out as half-baked products. Every Nepali must be made aware of this problem and the need for education in the mother-tongue, otherwise we will have to live a hand-to-mouth existence. The future is bleak and we must prepare ourselves for the times ahead. How can this be done?" He goes on to explain; "Education and knowledge must be spread to every corner of the Nepali community. The illiterate must be taught to read and write. Those who can read must be given good books to read so that they could increase their knowledge. Adult education and education to those who are busy working during the day is at present provided for in 48 night schools in the district. But good books must be written for them. There are 109 primary schools in the district but in order to speed up the learning process of the children they must be taught in the mother-tongue, Nepali, and suitable books must be written for them. After the primary stage we must encourage them to go further. At present there are two high schools and seven middle schools in the district. Here, too, our children must be allowed to study all subjects in the mother-tongue. For this, too, suitable books are necessary. Our people must gather knowledge about everything. In the field of agriculture, in the field of business, we must learn from the rest of the world. For this one must study and write books in Nepali so that our people

may read them and learn from them. We are Nepalese made up of many denominations; Chhetri, Bahun, Newar, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Bhutia, Lepcha, Tharu, Sunwar and so on. We all have our own languages, but since Nepali is the only common language that we all speak, we must develop Nepali first. This does not mean that we must neglect our own languages. We must develop them too, and write about them."

"To do all this work that is before us we must get together and work together. No community can progress without its language being developed. This is why I propose that for the development of the Nepali language and its literature we establish a 'Nepali Sahitya Sammelan'. Please consider this proposal and do the needful. Thank you."

This proposal was heartily seconded by Padri Kalusingh Peters and the motion was unanimously approved. Thus the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan was born on the 25th. May, 1924, and it still exists. Parasmani was made the first secretary of the Sammelan along with Sri S.B. Gewali. Rai Sahib Hari Prasad Pradhan was its first President.

Although Parasmani and his two friends Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Pundit Dharnidhar Sharma had to restrict their activities vis-a-vis the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan because they were in government service, a fair amount of progress was made by the association. During Parasmani's tenure of seven years as secretary of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, this association printed and published more than half-a-dozen books in Nepali and made about a dozen life members among whom were some eminent men like Dr. J. A. Graham, founder of the Dr. Graham's Homes at Kalimpong, Brigadier General Bruce of Everest fame and Professor Ralph L. Turner, a great scholar of the Nepali language and author of *A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language*.

In spite of the many obstacles in his way, Parasmani continued the struggle for making Nepali the medium of instruction upto the high school level. He kept writing the necessary textbooks. In order to propagate a simple, pure and

correct form of Nepali to the people at large he had staged a few play when he was the secretary of the Gorkha Amateur Club at Kurseong. But because his parents were averse to his being connected with the theatre, he stopped coming onto the stage. He, however, continued writing plays for the stage from behind the curtains as it were. He was the secretary of the Himalayan and the Children Amusement Association of Darjeeling and wrote nine plays to be staged for the public. These plays might not have been original works, but they were not direct translations either. The playwright added his own imagination wherever he found it necessary in order to make the play more interesting for the audience. There might have been a few anachronisms but even a great playwright like Shakespeare is guilty of such "mistakes" if mistakes they be. All these plays were written in simple and correct Nepali so that the audience, educated or otherwise, would be able to understand and enjoy them. This is how Parasmani kept up the fight for the progress and development of the Nepali language and literature.

In the preface to the play *Buddha Charitra Natak* published in August 1925, Sri Surya Bikram Cewali wrote a short introduction of Parasmani Pradhan which reads: "There are few educated men and women in Darjeeling who do not know my worthy friend Sri Parasmani Pradhan. Apart from being in the Education Service, he is recognised as the person who is responsible for propagating a simple and pure form of the Nepali language that we are using today in Darjeeling and enhancing the cause of the mother-tongue. In 1918, with great endeavour, he published the monthly magazine *Chandrika* from Kurseong and as its editor spread to the people of Darjeeling a pure and correct form of the Nepali language. At that time there were many people here who ridiculed him, but he did not bother about them and carried on writing books in the mother-tongue with steadfast zeal and perseverance. As a result these same persons who once laughed at him are now taking his advice.

Due to his resolute and selfless effort, we are fortunate to see books in the mother-tongue written in correct Nepali being used in our primary schools today. Since he joined The

Himalayan and Children Amusement Association, we see more and more plays being staged in a simple and lucid Nepali language. It is hoped that such plays will help to spread and create a greater love for the Nepali language. The present play *Buddha Charitra Natak* has been written by him.

He is the life-giving secretary of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan. When the question of service to the Nepali language and literature arises, he thinks of nothing else. Time, wealth, labour, physical comforts do not bother him then. His only aim is service to the Nepali language. This sort of love and devotion for the mother-tongue is worthy of respect. Sri Parasmani Pradhan will do much more for the mother-tongue; but even what he has done within this short period of time in the district will earn for him a place in the history of the development of the Nepali language".

Such praise from one who was later thought of as being his bitter rival speaks for itself. They may have been rivals in certain fields like grammar, spelling and uniformity of the Nepali language where they did not see eye-to-eye, but it was never anything more than that.

On 7th May, 1928. Parasmani Pradhan was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London (F.R.G.S.), and later on the 28th. of February, 1929, a Member of the Royal Asiatic Society of London (M.R.A.S.). He was the first Nepali to be honoured with these titles.

When Parasmani Pradhan was Sub-Inspector of Schools, his immediate boss was Sri Priyanath Hore. He was a man who could not tolerate arguments from his subordinates. To be in his good books one had to be his "yes man". Parasmani, though he had a lot of respect for Sri Hore and did not hesitate to help him even outside his departmental duties, was not afraid of fighting for a just cause even if it meant displeasing his boss. His steadfast struggle towards making Nepali the medium of instruction in the schools in the district of Darjeeling irritated Sri Priyanath Babu who put many obstacles in the way and so delayed its progress. But ultimately there were people of

consequence who studied the case carefully and found that Parasmani was fully justified in what he was doing and support and sanctions came from the public, from the concerned government departments and most of all from the Department of Education, Bengal. But because of Mr. Hore's adverse reports against Parasmani Pradhan, he was summoned by the Inspector of Schools, Mr. Ahmed, to face charges against him. His unhesitating replies to all the charges made against him made it clear to the Inspector of Schools that the reports were prejudiced and Mr. Priyanath Hore's motives became quite clear. Mr. Ahmed, however, saw that Mr. Hore and Sri Pradhan would not be able to get along in the same department. Parasmani Pradhan was transferred to serve as a teacher at Mainaguri; a little later, on account of ill-health he was transferred to Jalpaiguri and finally to the Darjeeling Government High School. Mr. Hore was himself transferred from Darjeeling to Rangpur.

## *As a Teacher in Darjeeling Government High School*

From 1931 to 1953 Parasmani Pradhan served as a teacher in Darjeeling Government High School, the school where he had been a student, and where as a student he and some of his friends had taken the first bold steps to seek recognition for the Nepali language in the schools of the Darjeeling district. As a teacher he was respected by his students and even today his ex-students remember him with fondness and gratitude. He was strict but understanding and went out of his way to educate the children and to build up their character, whether in the classroom or outside, and to teach them how to speak and write correct Nepali.

An ex-student, Sri Indra Sundas, WBCS, a retired magistrate and a winner of the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award, now over 75 years of age, writes: "In 1932 Sri Parasmani Pradhan was our class teacher. Tall, fair, with a befitting black moustache and heavy lensed glasses which he always wore. His dress, too, was always immaculate. A navy blue double breasted coat when he wore a warm Nepali national dress and a single-breasted coat when he wore a dress of lighter material, with suitable shoes and a Nepali cap. He would always have three or four fountain pens lined up in a row in his top coat pocket. He would step into the classroom with the ringing of the bell. He was always punctual. The students who were still busy chatting would stand up immediately. He would then make the students close their eyes for a while in order to calm them and to make them concentrate before starting his lesson. He taught well and was never angry, never used harsh language and the cane he never touched. He was healthy and active and never was he absent during our days. He used to take part in all the school activities.

He never smoked or drank and even till his death he had no such vice that I know of."

Another ex-student, Professor Babulal Pradhan writes: "Our respected teacher Sri Parasmani Pradhan was not only a good classroom teacher, but tried to develop the total character of the students which he said was the real crown of our lives. He used to visit the homes of his students early in the morning to see what they were doing, what vices they indulged in if any, what problems they had and would try to help them in spite of his very busy life."

In order to develop the literary and poetic abilities of the students, he suggested that a school magazine be published. The Darjeeling Government High School Magazine was started in 1931 and he was the secretary for 11 years. The students wrote articles and poems in Nepali, English, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Roman Tibetan. He was also the secretary of the school Common Room Committee, the Magazine Committee and Poor Fund Committee. Three watch words that he always made the students keep in mind and observe were: "Discipline", "The Value of Time" and to be "Dutiful". At an early age he had learnt that through perseverance and by utilising every second, great things could be achieved; and this is what he taught and practised.

Since the days of the Hari Printing Press at Kurseong, Parasmani knew how powerful and important a printing press could be in helping him to fulfil his aim of spreading and enhancing the Nepali language and its literature. Now he felt its acute need and in 1928, along with his brothers Seshmani, Sankhamani and Pushpamani he established the Mani Press at Kalimpong. The main aim of this press was to print books, papers and periodicals in chaste Nepali and to thus spread and promote the language and its literature. The press has done monumental work in this field and still exists. It is now run by the third generation of the Mani family. It has added a D.T.P. Computer section, and an offset machine and though commercialised in keeping with the present day's needs, it still

keeps a wary eye on the purity and correctness of the Nepali language.

There were many who tried to hamper the progress of Parasmani's aim to make Nepali a major vernacular and to establish it as a medium of instruction in the high schools of the district. He had to fight against the malicious attacks of Dr. George Ogg, the Principal of S.U.M.I. Kalimpong and Sri Priyanath Hore who practically instigated the other communities of the district, namely, the Bengalees, Biharis, Tibetans and Lepchas against his brain-child. They wrote letters and reports to the Government of Bengal and the Education Department against the movement to make Nepali a medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling. Dr. Ogg argued that Nepali was not the mother-tongue of the majority of students, that most of them preferred Hindi and that there was no one capable of writing suitable textbooks in Nepali for the children or teacher's guide books; that the only "so-called" author Parasmani Pradhan, was not qualified to write these books etc. Parasmani took all these obstacles and charges as a challenge and swept through them with single-minded determination and some help from Goddess Saraswati.

Earlier Parasmani had written an historical article in the Darjeeling Government High School Magazine regarding the bravery of General Satrajit Lepcha who fought the Nepal army and defeated the enemies seventeen times. On reading this article the school drill master, a heavily built Lepcha, was so elated that he carried Parasmani on his back and ran around the playfield twice with a crowd of students running behind them cheering all the way. The leaders of the Lepcha Association learnt of this episode and some of them came to Parasmani to understand more fully his struggle to make Nepali the medium of instruction. After he had explained things carefully to them and they saw that their own language would not be harmed in any way, they promised not to put any obstacles in his path. Actually, much earlier Parasmani had expressed his opinion clearly that all minority languages of the Nepalese should be cultivated and developed. Many years later it was he who



initiated and helped to revive and develop the modern Lepcha type script and many books were printed in the Lepcha language at the Mani Printing Works in Kalimpong. He helped in the development of the Jonkha script too, and many books for Bhutan were printed at the same press. Books in Tibetan were also printed there.

There were some communities at that time that did not want the progress of the Nepali language in the district of Darjeeling as they felt that this would have an adverse effect on the progress of their own languages. This attitude towards the progress of the Nepali language naturally perturbed Parasmani. He saw that the Nepali community, except for a few educated persons, were not greatly bothered about Nepali being made the medium of instruction, for they did not understand its implication for the future of the Nepali community. Many of them who did understand were in government service and dared not voice their opinions. In July 1934, however, Parasmani saw a golden opportunity to bring home to the Nepali people the seriousness of the situation. The annual function of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan on 15th July 1934, was presided over by Major A.V.A. Mercer and attended by some prominent local people among whom was Sardar Bahadur S. W. Laden La, Deputy Superintendent of Police and President of the Tibetan Association. Parasmani took advantage of this opportunity. His earlier talks about the development and enhancement of the Nepali language and literature was not having the desired effect on the Nepalese. He felt that he would have to be a little more explicit about the obstacles in their path; but at the same time he could not point to any particular person or community and charge them of trying to hamper the movement without getting himself into trouble. Couched in the form of an allegory wherein he represented the mother-tongue Nepali as our Mother who was very ill, and he himself as the witch-doctor trying to diagnose the reason for her illness, and those who opposed the progress of Nepali as evil-spirits and sorcerers, he was able to convey to the audience, who were quite familiar with and believers in the diagnosis and premonitions of witch-doctors, the reason for the illness of their Mother. As if in a trance he chanted

that the Mother was very ill because her sons nearest her were not giving her the nourishment she needed. Some of her sons from distant Nepal, Benaras and other parts of India were helping to nourish her, but none of her sons in the nearby district cared to come forward to help her in this weakened condition. As a result there were many sorcerers and evil spirits who seeing her weakened condition kept attacking her with the intention of destroying her.

After this allegory, Parasmani returning to normal from his trance, informed the audience about the progress being made in Nepal and other parts of India with regard to the development and enhancement of the Nepali language and its literature, and stirred them up to do their bit for their sick mother-tongue here in the district. Most of the audience got the message of the allegory and so did Sardar Bahadur S.W. Laden La; though he was not quite definite as to whether he was being called a sorcerer and an evil spirit or not, both allegations of a very serious nature.

The function over, Parasmani had just reached his home at Shyam Cottage a few miles out of town, when a police constable arrived with a message that the Deputy Superintendent of Police wanted to see him immediately. He was very tired but had to obey the summons. He had often been to Sardar Bahadur Laden La's home where he was always given a warm welcome by the Sardar Bahadur who treated him like a younger brother. This time, however, he was surprised when a police inspector asked him to wait outside. After a while he was asked to go in. Sardar Bahadur Laden La and the Governor's steno Mr. Bose were in the office. The atmosphere was somewhat grave. Parasmani was not offered a seat. Sardar Bahadur Laden La asked Mr. Bose to begin the interrogations. Parasmani was questioned for quite some time regarding his speech at the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan function. He was asked to explain who he meant by the sorcerers and evil spirits in his allegory, whom did they represent, whether or not he was accusing Sardar Bahadur Laden La and so on. Parasmani replied that it was the witch-doctor speaking and not himself; he was only a medium.

The witch-doctor was accusing all those persons and associations that were putting obstacles in the path of the movement for the recognition of Nepali as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district in which the majority of students spoke Nepali as their mother-tongue. Sardar Bahadur was very angry and said, "I am opposing the movement so you must be calling me a sorcerer". Parasmani replied calmly, "If you yourself insist that you are one of those opposing our movement, then what can I do." For a while Sardar Bahadur did not know what to say. Then he asked, "Are you definite that you are not calling me a sorcerer or an evil spirit?" Parasmani replied, "I am definite that I have accused no one in particular of being an evil spirit or sorcerer, but all those who are trying to oppose the progress of the Nepali language; now if you yourself admit that you are so strongly opposed to the progress of the Nepali language, then the accusation of the witch-doctor might fall upon your shoulders". The Sardar Bahadur and Mr. Bose looked at each other for a while. There was nothing in Parasmani's statement that could justify locking him up under police custody, so they sent him home. He wished both of them goodnight and left the office. It was only when he reached home that he realised the gravity of the situation. While diagnosing the illness of the mother-tongue and looking into the future of the Nepali language, he had narrowly escaped arrest and had, in fact, been locked up in the office of the Deputy Superintendent of Police for an hour's interrogation.

Lt. Gobardhan Gurung had retired from military service and settled in Darjeeling. As soon as he came to Darjeeling, he was made the aide-de-camp to the Governor of Bengal. Parasmani and Lt. Gurung were good friends and met often. Parasmani had told Lt. Gurung all about his speech at the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan Annual function and the episode with Sardar Bahadur Laden La. He had also told Lt. Gurung about the struggle and the need for the recognition of the Nepali language as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling. Lt. Gurung was willing to help in this struggle for the benefit of the Nepali community.

One day while the two of them were chatting at Lt. Gurung's house, D.S.P. Laden La came to meet Lt. Gurung to seek his help regarding the forthcoming Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Emperor George V at Darjeeling. Lt. Gurung saw his opportunity. He promised the Sardar Bahadur all possible help and mentioned that Parasmani Pradhan was also a member of the Silver Jubilee Committee. Over a cup of tea he casually brought up the question about the recognition of Nepali as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district and Sri Parasmani's decade-long struggle in this connection. He requested Sardar Bahadur Laden La not to put any obstacles in the way of the poor Nepali people and said that if he withdrew his objection and wrote in favour of the movement, the Nepalese community would be forever indebted to him.

Sardar Bahadur Laden La had known Parasmani Pradhan to be a fearless worker for the cause of the Nepali language and for the upliftment of the Nepali community. Not only was he fearless, but his acute sense of justice and his perseverance made him a man worthy of respect. Moreover, as the President of The Himalayan and Children Amusement Association, he had worked alongside Parasmani who was the secretary of the Association. Parasmani at the request of Sardar Bahadur Laden La had also written the play *Buddha Charitra Natak* which was published by the Tibetan Association and staged with great success. The Tibetan community, who were Buddhists, had appreciated the play, but they were naturally worried about the Nepali language movement. They feared that if Nepali was granted recognition and became the medium of instruction in the schools of the district, their own language and children might suffer. Parasmani, however, explained that no minority language would suffer and that in his opinion every minority language should also be developed. The Sardar Bahadur was somewhat appeased and with a little more coaxing from Lt. Gobardhan Gurung, he promised not to put any obstacle in the way of the progress of the Nepali language and to withdraw his objection to making Nepali the medium of instruction in the schools in the district of Darjeeling, provided minority languages like

Tibetan were not harmed. All three shook hands to seal this promise.

With renewed vigour Parasmani intensified the struggle. He wrote to many lovers of the Nepali language who were in favour of the movement. Except for one or two that opposed the movement, all others wrote to the Education Department of Bengal withdrawing their objections. As a result the Director of Public Instructions, Bengal sent his recommendation to Mr. O.M. Martin, Secretary to the Government of Bengal on 28th January 1934, requesting him for permission and instructions regarding this case. In reply, on 4th January, 1935, Mr. O.M. Martin sent an official letter No. 93 Ex to the Director of Public Instructions which stated that by order of the Government: "That Nepali should be recognised as one of the vernaculars for teaching and examination in all primary schools (both lower primary and upper primary) in the district of Darjeeling, provided that the majority of pupils in the schools concerned are Nepalese; that non-Nepalese should not be compelled to learn Nepalese; that primary examinations should be conducted both in Nepali and Hindi. As regards the proposal for the adoption of Nepali as the medium of instruction in Middle Schools, the question should be taken up after three years."

This was a momentous victory for the Nepalese people and especially for Parasmani Pradhan who had spearheaded this movement and worked towards this end through numerous obstacles for over fifteen years. There was, however, no time for inactive complacency and rest. Within the next three years textbooks had to be written for the middle and high schools, for the aim was to make Nepali the medium of instruction upto the high school level in the district of Darjeeling.

Since Sri Krishna Bahadur Gurung, a local Nepalese gentleman, was the Inspector of Schools for the district of Darjeeling at the time, the question of implementing the order of the Government regarding the recognition of Nepali as one of the vernaculars in all Primary schools in the district, did not pose much of a problem. Moreover, the path for recognition of Nepali in the middle and high schools in the district was made

easier, but textbooks in Nepali had to be written for these stages. There was still not a single person who would come forward to write these much needed text-books. In fact, a deterrent and cynical note had even crept into the voice of Parasmani's friend, Sri Surya Bikram Gewali. He opined that it was impossible for a single person or a businessman to write these textbooks. Since these Nepali textbooks had to be written for all subjects, it was not possible for a single person to be competent enough to write on all the subjects; and as a businessman looked only for profits and there was little hope of profits in writing, printing and publishing textbooks in Nepali, no businessman would take up this venture. Both these barbs were aimed at Parasmani who took them gracefully and for whom this became a challenge, although it was true that for a single person to write all these books in the different subjects was going to be a Herculean task. Another challenge that he had never forgotten was the statement of Dr. Ogg that Parasmani Pradhan was not competent to write textbooks for the Nepali children and that there was no hope of anyone writing a Teachers' Manual in Nepali.

Parasmani once again prepared himself with pen in hand to fight diligently for the cause of the Nepali language and Nepali children. Upto the upper primary standard he wrote original textbooks in Nepali in accordance with the syllabus prescribed by the D.P.I., Bengal, in subjects like Nepali Language and Literature, Arithmetic, Geography, History, Science, Hygiene, Hastalekh etc. For the middle school standards a few books were translated into Nepali from Bengali and English. The books that he selected for translation from Bengali were of the best Bengali authors of the time and those that had been approved by the D.P.I., Bengal for schools. After taking permission from the authors or publishers, these books were very carefully translated in simple and correct Nepali for the schools of the district. He even translated Mr. J.A. Ritchie's "A Teachers' Manual" as a guide for primary school teachers. Thus he overcame the challenge thrown him by both Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Dr. Ogg. These textbooks written by Parasmani were widely used not only in the district of Darjeeling, but also in

other parts of India and places outside India, wherever there were schools catering to Nepali children.

In this way, practically single-handed, Parasmani provided the best books possible for Nepali children and had them approved by the Director of Public Instructions, Bengal, for use in the primary and middle schools in the district. They were written in simple, clear and correct Nepali. Thus he rendered to the Nepali students and the Nepali community at large a service that can never be forgotten.

The Government had promised to take up the matter of recognition of Nepali as the medium of instruction for the Middle Schools after a period of three years and the necessary textbooks in the Nepali language were ready. A reminder was sent to the Department of Education, Bengal. As Sri Krishna Bahadur Gurung was Inspector of Schools at the time, the case was taken up immediately and with little trouble permission was granted. From 1939 Nepali became the medium of instruction upto the middle school level in the district of Darjeeling.

## *Controversy over Language Uniformity, Grammar and Spelling*

In 1931 Parasmani was transferred to the Darjeeling Government High School as a teacher. He was now in closer touch with his friends Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Pundit Dharnidhar Sharma. They had frequent serious discussions about the Nepali language and its literature and there were often clashes between Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Parasmani Pradhan. Parasmani was in favour of uniformity and standardisation of the Nepali language. This he said would enhance its growth and was a process through which any language of worth went through. Infact, he had been harping on this point right from 1918, from the very first issue of the Nepali monthly magazine *Chandrika* which he had edited and he followed this opinion both in theory and practice till the day of his death.

Sri Surya Bikram Gewali on the other hand, was in favour of freedom for the Nepali language, which he felt should not be bound down by rigorous rules of grammar and spelling. He made his point clear by spelling many words in Nepali with a long /i:/ when the accepted rules of grammar spelt these with a short /i/. There were many other rules of grammar and the question of uniformity and standardisation of Nepali, too, that he did not accept. As a result, for many years this controversy between these two stalwarts of the language resulted in problems for teachers and students alike. The teachers were not definite as to which form of spelling should be taught and some would humorously advise their students to flip a coin to select the form of spelling if they were in doubt. For the students, however, there was little humour in this method as they had been warned that marks would be deducted for spelling mistakes.



During the annual function of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan in 1935, Parasmani presented a long article on the present condition of the Nepali language and the need for uniformity and standardisation of the language. He pointed out that reports had been sent to the Government Departments concerned that the "Nepali language was in a state of flux." This report was detrimental to their aim of making Nepali the medium of instruction in the schools of the district and would hamper the progress of the language. Because of the differences in opinions about grammar, spelling and the uniformity of the language both teachers and students had to suffer. He requested the learned members of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan to quickly come to a decision about these differences. Nepal had already gone through this stage and had now brought about uniformity and standardisation of the Nepali language that they wrote. Too many differences in the written form of Nepali would only hinder the progress of the language. His suggestion was to follow the rules of grammar and spelling set down by the Nepali Bhasha Prakashini Samity; rules laid down after a lot of thought and discussions and accepted by Nepali writers, and not to waste precious time in futile, unending quarrels about the spelling but rather to utilise this valuable time in writing and publishing books in Nepali. He said that in this lay the future progress of the Nepali language.

This article should have been printed in the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan magazine for record as was the custom, but it was omitted and in its place an article on the freedom of the written form of Nepali by Sri Surya Bikram Gewali was published. Later, Parasmani had his article printed in the *Sarda*, a magazine of Nepal.

Sri Surya Bikram Gewali might have had a strong point regarding the use of the long /i:/ or the short /i/ in the spelling of certain words in Nepali. He pointed out that in such words whether a short /i/ or long/i:/ was used, there was no confusion of meaning. This would be true when considering some of these words in sentences, and if there were no other words in the language in which the use of a long /i:/ instead

of a short /i/ or vice-versa would not result in a change in the meaning of the word; as for instance the words 'दीन' (poor) and 'दिन' (day) or 'फेरि' (again) and 'फेरी' (to circle). There are not many words of this nature in the Nepali language, but it would be for phoneticians, linguists and experts in the Nepali language to verify this point.

Parasmani's point, however, was simple; namely, that since there was an accepted form of spelling in use, why not make use of it and so allay the confusion of both teachers and students and bring about uniformity in the Nepali language.

The Nepali Bhasha Prakashini Samity had laid down certain rules regarding the writing of the Nepali language in its booklet "Nepali Kasari Suddha Lekhne?" In accordance with these rules Parasmani made the necessary corrections and published the third edition of his *Nepali Vyakran* in 1938. In the preface to this edition he once again stressed the fact that uniformity was essential for the progress of the Nepali language and that anyone who stubbornly opposed uniformity just because he did not wish to conform, would be doing more harm than good for the development of the Nepali language. After reading this preface, Sri Surya Bikram Gewali who knew that this barb was aimed at him, had a lot of malicious things to say against Parasmani, even implying that Nepali was not Sri Pradhan's mother-tongue and so his love for and knowledge of the language could not possibly be greater than that of the Chhetris, Brahmins, Kamis, Damais and Sarkis who claimed Nepali as their mother-tongue and birthright. This personal attack which had nothing to do with the correctness or incorrectness of Nepali spelling and grammar, boomeranged for Sri Surya Bikram Gewali. Many learned Nepalese when they read Sri Surya Bikram's article in the magazine *Gorkha Sewak* published from Assam defended Parasmani and as one critic summed it up: "It is our misfortune that there are fools even among the learned; but I think that it is we who have been fooled till now by respecting such a person as a learned man".

In 1940 Sri Surya Bikram Gewali tried to defend his point of view regarding spelling, uniformity and grammatical issues

in the Nepali language before the learned members of the Nepali Bhasha Prakashini Samity, Nepal; but he could not convince them with his arguments. Although he stubbornly adhered to his own form of spelling in his own writings, he had to grudgingly allow his spelling to be rectified in accordance with the approved and accepted grammar books for the school textbooks.

After their retirement Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Parasmani met time and again in Darjeeling and Kathmandu. Both of them had mellowed with age. They had put to rest their differences about the spelling, grammar and uniformity of the Nepali language and were on the best of terms once more. Parasmani was very sad when his friend passed away in December, 1985. Parasmani passed away about two months later.

## *Nepali as a Major Vernacular and a Medium of Instruction at the High School Level*

The movement for having Nepali recognised as a medium of instruction at the high School level was begun soon after 1939. The aim was to have Nepali recognised as a major vernacular so that the Nepali students could write their Matricualtion Examinations in the medium of Nepali.

Parasmani began correspondence with the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University Syndicate. Once again there was none to really help him in the difficult spadework of correspondence, contacting important persons concerned and pushing the issue. He had, however, by now made many friends in the higher circle and he made use of their position and rank to help him in convincing the Calcutta University Syndicate that they should give a favourable hearing to this cause. With the help of persons like Sri Damber Singh Gurung, the first Nepali M. L. A., The Maharaj Kumar of Burdwan, Sir U. C. Mehtab, M. L. A., Mr. C. A. Parkhurst, Mr. D. N. Biswas and Mr. D. A. Ford of the Macmillan Company, Dr. Yen Singh, His Grace Archbishop F. Perier, Rev. Father A. Verstracken, rector of St. Xavier College, Calcutta, Sri K. D. Pradhan and a signature campaign contributed to by various Associations and Communities of the district of Darjeeling, he was able to make headway in achieving his goal. It was not an easy matter in spite of the recommendations of all these high ranking persons. The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and members of the Senate like Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Sri C. C. Biswas, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, Rev. Fr. A. Verstracken spoke favourably for the issue, but there were still hurdles to be crossed.

For the second time, towards the end of 1940, Parasmani and Sri Damber Singh Gurung went to meet the members of the Calcutta University Syndicate with their case for the Nepali language. After meeting Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, they were sent to meet the Registrar and Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee. The Registrar was a tough man and would not swerve from the rules and regulations laid down by the Syndicate. He questioned them rigorously about books in the Nepali language, the state of their literature etc. They had a trunk full of books to show but the Registrar's intense questioning and counter arguments rendered most of the books unacceptable because they were not written by Indian Nepalese. What he wanted to see were a Grammar and a Dictionary of the Nepali language written by an Indian Nepalese and a good Nepali literary magazine published from the Darjeeling district. They were able to produce the Nepali Grammar written by Parasmani Pradhan himself and approved by the D. P. I., Bengal and in use in the schools of the district. This was acceptable. Now there was the question of a Dictionary and a literary magazine in Nepali. After this 'ragging' by the Registrar, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee on a gentler note suggested that they should through the pages of a good literary magazine in Nepali, arouse the minds of the Nepali people to the appreciation and development of Nepali literature; that they should compile a Nepali dictionary and publish as many literary books in Nepali as possible. In this way the position and prestige of the Nepali language would be elevated and the Calcutta University would then definitely give it the recognition of a major vernacular language.

Somewhat appeased by Dr. Chatterjee's assurance, the two of them left dejectedly with their trunk full of rejected books. But Parasmani had enough self-confidence. He was definite that the good suggestions given by Dr. Chatterjee could be accomplished and that the hopes and assurance that he had given would be fulfilled. Eagerly he met a few publishers in Calcutta regarding the printing and publishing of these Nepali books and then returned to Darjeeling to prepare himself for the next phase of the struggle.

A person for whom "Time" was a very precious commodity not to be wasted; a person for whom single-minded "Perseverance" was the key to success, Parasmani once again took up the challenge, determined to have Nepali recognised as a Major Vernacular and to enable the Nepali students to submit their Matriculation Examinations in their mother-tongue; an advantage that he and his friends had been deprived of during their school days.

He began by writing and translating books for Classes VII and VIII in all subjects. Again it was the Macmillan Company of India who came to the forefront to help with the printing and publishing of these Nepali textbooks. But the question of a Dictionary and a literary magazine in Nepali gave Parasmani sleepless nights.

In 1941 Parasmani instructed his second son Nagendra Mani Pradhan to begin compiling the much needed Nepali dictionary. Every evening, after his teaching day was over, he checked his son's work and with a few additions and corrections the Dictionary was on its way. As compiling a dictionary is a slow and difficult process, it was not till 1947 that the final manuscript was ready for the press. Parasmani had this English-Nepali Dictionary printed and published by Sanyal and Company of Calcutta, in 1948. Now remained the literary magazine in Nepali that the Calcutta University Syndicate had asked for. Parasmani had a fair amount of experience while editing and publishing Nepali magazines like *Chandrika* and *Adarsha*. The Mani Press at Kalimpong was being run by his younger brothers. He himself was in service at the Darjeeling Government High School and did not have time to go to Kalimpong frequently. He felt that a printing press at Darjeeling would be of great help in his continued fight for the progress of the Nepali language and its literature. This press would also enable him to publish the most essential literary magazine in Nepali that had been one of the three stipulations set by the Calcutta University Syndicate before Nepali could be recognised as a major vernacular. By now Nagendramani Pradhan had returned home from service and was assisting his father in revising and writing new lessons in

acordance with the new syllabus for all textbooks in Nepali. Moreover, most of Parasmani's sons had completed their schooling and he felt that they could go to college at Darjeeling and at the same time help him to run the printing press that he had in mind.

## *Mani Printing House and "Bharati"*

It was no easy job to start a printing press at Darjeeling. There were financial problems, for Parasmani was not a rich man. But he had courage and determination and sons and daughters who could help him run the press. He was keenly aware of and admired greatly the system of cottage industries run in Japan, where the members of a family formed the nucleus of these small but effective industries. His theory, too, that we should not waste time but keep ourselves employed in some enterprise or other, earn money and so help in the progress of our community, could be put into practice. He took a small loan, and come what may, began the printing press on a very modest scale. With great difficulty the press at Shyam Cottage in Darjeeling was set up. His house was way down in the valley nearly half a mile from the main motorable road. There was just a narrow bridle-path from the main road to the house. Heavy printing machinery and press material had to be carried down on the back of porters or by pushing and pulling them down on wooden beams, guiding their descent down the steep path with the help of strong ropes. One slip - and man and machine would fall into the ravine below or down the steep cut-side. It was difficult and dangerous work, but Parasmani, once he had set his heart on doing something, gave of his best to make it a success. In December, 1947, Mani Printing Press (later called Mani Printing House), was established by him and his sons; and in the month of June, 1949, the first issue of *Bharati* a Nepali literary magazine was published. Parasmani was the editor and Nagendramani the publisher. As chief editor Sri Rup Narayan Sinha, who was also interested in the progress and development of the Nepali language and its literature, as also in the Nepali community, wrote 22 thought-provoking editorials in the early issues.

The aims and objectives of *Bharati* were: to help to improve the economic, ethical and social standards of the Nepali



community by publishing stories, poems, essays and other articles of an elevated nature in simple, correct, chaste Nepali for the reading public. Parasmani was a teacher par excellence. He was of the opinion that people who really wanted to, could improve themselves by reading about and following good examples and advice. Thus he wanted the articles for *Bharati* to be of a good standard both in contents and language so that the readers could learn something from them.

Parasmani asked for contributions of articles and poems for *Bharati* from anyone who could write in Nepali. After a somewhat shy beginning, writers from India and Nepal began to send in their articles, poems, short-stories, essays, etc. Every writer was eager to see his or her work in print and Parasmani encouraged them and gave them an added incentive by having their photographs made into blocks and printed alongside their articles, all free of charge. As time went by there was quite a rush of articles for *Bharati* and Parasmani had to select them carefully. He and his son Nagendramani would go through each article painstakingly and correct the errors and beautify the language wherever possible before printing them for the magazine. Parasmani would often write to the authors or invite them over to discuss their articles over a cup of tea and home-made snacks. He would show them their errors and suggest how their language could be improved upon and most of them were grateful for the guidance given. The house at Shyam Cottage used to hum with literary activity, and many a literary celebrity would come to visit him there though it was a long way out from town, and would have long discussions with him about the Nepali language and literature. Many a good Nepali writer was given a chance to develop his or her writing ability by writing for *Bharati*, and many new writers and poets were seen in the literary firmament during the nine years of its existence. According to Sri L. Kanta, Parasmani, through the medium of *Bharati*, was able to cultivate and bring out the best in Nepali writers and poets like M. M. Gurung, G. Tshering, Bhaichand Pradhan, Tulsi Bahadur Chhetri, Kaziman Kondongwa, Birendra Subba, Pasang Goparma, Sanumati Rai, Deokumari Sinha, Hari Prasad 'Gorkha' Rai, Parsuram Roka,

Agam Singh Giri, Harkajung Singh Chhetri and a host of others. The relationship between the Nepali and Indian Nepali writers and poets was strengthened as never before. Irrespective of caste or creed, whether Lepcha, Gurung, Limbu, Tamang, Rai, Magar, Chhetri or Newar, all had had a taste of the sweetness of the Nepali language and expressed themselves in Nepali thus declaring their unity as Nepalese. Sri L. Kanta goes on to say that this period of *Bharati* could justly be called the "Age of Parasmani", and this age, he says, will always hold an important place in the history of Nepali literature.

After 108 issues, however, *Bharati* which was published regularly every month, was stopped for various reasons, one of them being that it was not paying its way and was, in fact, running at a loss. Although *Bharati* had subscribers from India, Nepal, Hongkong and Malaya, a total print run of 1000 copies a month of which about 20% were complimentary and for free distribution to those who could not afford to buy the magazine but were interested in Nepali literature; another 20% or so remained unsold stock, and with a low subscription rate of only Rs. 6 per annum, was not much of a business venture. The number 108 had significance for Parasmani as it does for all Hindus with a religious temperament. He writes about the significance and meaning of the number 108 in the Preface to his collection of poems *Japmala*. It is an auspicious number that brings us closer to our Creator, Brahma, and hence to salvation. The total of the letters of the alphabet which makes up the name "Brahma", namely, Ba+Ra+Ha+Ma, when each is counted from the first letter of the alphabet Ka, comes to 108. So Ka to Ba=23, Ka to Ra=27, Ka to Ha=33 and Ka to Ma=25. Thus  $23+27+33+25=108$ . But more significant than the arithmetic of this number, what Parasmani might have had in mind was the salvation of the Nepali community through the acquisition of knowledge in the spreading of which *Bharati* played an important role. His aim had been to try to improve the economic, ethical and social standard of the Nepali community through the pages of *Bharati* and there must have been many Nepalese who benefited in one way or the other by contributing articles to or by reading this Nepali monthly magazine.

Parasmani felt great satisfaction at having very successfully helped to develop the writing ability of many a Nepali writer, critic, poet and playwright through the medium of the magazine *Bharati*. The magazine had also performed its initial duty of satisfying the Calcutta University Syndicate and helping to gain for the Nepali language the coveted status of a major vernacular in the district schools of Darjeeling and Sikkim. Today, *Bharati* is still regarded as one of the best literary magazines in the Nepali language.

Because of the quality and correctness of the language and printing of *Bharati*, many an author and institution had their books and magazines etc. in Nepali printed at the Mani Printing House. The customers were always sure of receiving their printed material in time and to their entire satisfaction. Within a period of 30 years or so this small press, operating as a cottage industry, printed over 800 books and magazines of a good standard in Nepali, thus helping to spread to the Nepali community a pure, correct and standardised form of the Nepali language.

Mani Printing House at Darjeeling still exists though now in a more easily approachable location. It is being run by the third generation of the Mani family and is modernised a bit with the addition of a D.T.P. computer unit and offset machine. It is still regarded as the press in the district that considers the purity and correctness of the Nepali language of paramount importance.

Two other printing presses, namely, Mani Printing Works at Kalimpong and Mani Printing Service at Siliguri were established later. These family printing presses performed yeoman service in helping Parasmani Pradhan with his main mission in life, namely, to spread a pure and correct form of the Nepali language and to enhance its literature. Also to have Nepali recognised by the Government of Bengal as a major vernacular and as a medium of instruction upto the high school level in the schools of the district of Darjeeling.

In 1947 India attained her Independence. In keeping with the spirit of democracy, it was decided to introduce the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction in schools wherever possible. In 1948 a meeting was held in Darjeeling presided over by the Director of Public Instructions, West Bengal in this connection, after which a letter was sent to the Calcutta University Syndicate requesting that Nepali be made the medium of instruction in the High Schools in the district of Darjeeling. The Syndicate, however, kept silent on this issue, maybe because they still had their regulations in mind, namely, the three stipulations that had to be met before the language could be given this recognition. On 2nd July, 1949, however, the Commissioner, Presidency Division, issued a Government circular stating that ".....in pursuance of the policy of the National Government, the Government of West Bengal have decided that in the predominantly Nepali speaking areas in the district of Darjeeling, the medium of instruction in all Primary, Middle and High Schools will be Nepali.....". Between the meeting in 1948 and the issue of this Government notice in July 1949, Parasmani was busy writing high school textbooks and publishing the Nepali literary magazine *Bharati*.

In December, 1950, Parasmani went to Calcutta once again to meet the Registrar and members of the Calcutta University Syndicate. He took with him twelve issues of the Nepali literary magazine *Bharati*, an English-Nepali Dictionary and some other literary books in Nepali, written by Indian Nepalese. This time the Registrar and other members of the Syndicate were quite satisfied, for the three stipulations of a grammar, a dictionary written by an Indian Nepalese and a Nepali literary magazine from the Darjeeling district that was needed before they could consider giving Nepali the status of a major vernacular and allowing it to be used as a medium of instruction at the high school level in the district of Darjeeling, had been fulfilled. On the 20th of April, 1953, the Calcutta University Syndicate circulated a notice through the *Calcutta Gazette*, stating that the School Final (Matriculation) Examination under the Calcutta University, could also be written in the Nepali language. This was a great victory for the Nepalese of the district, and especially

for Parasmani Pradhan, who was satisfied to see his "brain-child" growing in strength and stature.

On 3rd and 31st of May, 1953 the Siksha Pracharini Samity, Darjeeling, organised mammoth meetings to celebrate the recognition of Nepali as a major vernacular. But now there were political parties trying to get a seat on the bandwagon. There was a lot of speechifying, but the most important issue essential to back up the recognition of Nepali as a major vernacular and as a medium of instruction, namely, the writing of suitable textbooks in Nepali for use in the High Schools of the district was not even mentioned. In June of the same year when a meeting was organised to welcome and felicitate Sri Shiva Kumar Rai, the first Nepali Deputy Minister of Labour for West Bengal, Parasmani spoke about the present position and future prospects of Nepali textbooks. He said that publishers were chary of printing and publishing Nepali textbooks because of their low sale. In spite of these problems text books for classes VII and VIII were already printed for subjects like Nepali Language and Literature, Grammar, Geometry, Algebra, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Science and Hygiene. He said that according to the needs and changes in the syllabus new books would be written in Nepali. The necessary books for the School Final, except for Science and Geography had also been published. The manuscripts for these two were ready but needed the approval after perusal by qualified persons in these two subject; arrangements would be made for having them printed as soon as such approval was obtained. Parasmani had written or translated most of these books himself, and had arranged for their printing and publishing.

"This is a transition period", said Parasmani, "and Nepali has only recently been given the status of a major vernacular and has been granted permission to be used as a medium of instruction in the schools in the district of Darjeeling. We must use Nepali as a medium of instruction in our High Schools, too, and then the demand for Nepali textbooks will result in more and more books being written. The educated Nepalese, of which there is now no dearth, will have to come forward to write these

books. Whatever Nepali books there are at present could be made use of till better quality books are written and printed. The Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal, has also given this suggestion. In short, if the Headmasters of High Schools in the district take the initiative, they could introduce Nepali as the medium of instruction in their schools with immediate effect as has been done by the Darjeeling Government High School." But his was a lone voice crying in the wilderness. Only a few high schools took courage and adopted Nepali as their medium of instruction.

## *The Official Language Bill*

Between 1955 and 1961 the movement for making Nepali the official language for administration in the three sub-divisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong took various political hues. Apart from political parties like the C.P.I. and A.I.G.L. who fought for the issue on the floor of the West Bengal Assembly, there were also non-political organisations that helped to bring pressure on the West Bengal Government. Ultimately, the West Bengal Official Language Bill was passed in 1961, stating that the Bengali and Nepali languages would be used for official purposes of the State in the three sub-divisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong.

To use Nepali as the Official language for administration was not an easy job, but a beginning had to be made somewhere. Again it was Parasmani Pradhan who came forward immediately to help the Nepali community in implementing the Nepali language in the government offices. The second edition of his Standard Dictionary (English-Nepali) was in the press at that time. He quickly added an appendix of technical terminology in Nepali of words used in Government administration, so as to make it a little easier for government officers using Nepali for their day to day correspondence and official business. But he soon saw that this list of technical terms had a very limited use, for it was not very easy to conduct government correspondence of various types, notices, circular, D.O's, legal transactions and the everyday business of the Kutchery in Nepali. He sat down once again to write a more detailed book entitled *Sarkari Kam Kaj Garne Bidi*. This was not a book written by an expert on the subject of the needs of the government administrative offices, but as he says in his preface, just something to begin with so that the Language Bill that had been passed in 1961 could be put into actual practice. He realised

the difficulty of running a government machinery in the Nepali language, but at the same time he felt that it was not impossible if everyone concerned really got down to it with a will.



## *Nepali at the University Level*

Once the Nepali language had been recognised as a major vernacular and sanction had been given for its use as a medium of instruction up to the High School level in the schools in the district of Darjeeling, the next step was to have it as a subject of study at the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. levels. Once again Parasmani Pradhan sat to work and with the help of his contacts, through letters to persons who mattered in this field, by encouraging the Nepali college boys and girls towards this end, he was largely instrumental in helping achieve this coveted status for the Nepali language. Today, there are many degree holders with an M.A. in Nepali and some Ph.D. Degree holders, too.

## *Sahitya Akademi and the Eighth Schedule*

Apart from the recognition of the Nepali language from the Primary to the Ph.D. level by the Government of West Bengal, there was an important aspect of the language which had to be considered in order to strengthen and consolidate these achievements attained through a selfless, single-minded, struggle over a period of more than forty years. This was the recognition of the Indian Nepali language by the Government of India as one of the major Indian languages and its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

No less a person than the great national Professor of India, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, had already considered Nepali as one of the 15 major languages of India; but it had sadly been left out of the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution for reasons best known to the political pundits in power at the centre. There were many political and non-political approaches made to persons in power both at the Centre and State levels, and though many an assurance was given, they were political assurances rather than assurances based on the genuine love and respect for one of the major languages of India and its development.

Parasmani Pradhan was no politician. He was an educationist and wanted to resolve this issue in a non-political way. In 1961 he wrote a very important book to further this cause, namely, *Nepali Bhasha ko Utpati ra Bikas*. In October, 1969, when Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee was in Darjeeling for a short holiday, Parasmani went to meet him and presented him with a copy of this book and some others pertaining to the Nepali language and its literature. He also refreshed Dr. Chatterjee's memory about their meeting in Calcutta in 1940, and the fact

that it was largely due to the hopes and assurances given him by Dr Chatterjee at this meeting that he was able to fulfil the stipulations set by the Calcutta University Syndicate while fighting for the recognition of Nepali as a major vernacular. The two had a long talk about the Nepali language and its development and Parasmani expressed his hopes and the desires of the Nepali community in India to have their language included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Chatterjee was fully sympathetic towards this issue, for he was a true lover of all the Indian languages and wanted their development. He explained, however, that first the language would have to be recognised by the Sahitya Akademi for which there were certain conditions to be fulfilled, such as the development of its literature, books, papers and periodicals in the language in question, and so on.

In 1970, the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling, organised a committee consisting of 25 members and selected Parasmani Pradhan and Sri Tulsi Bahadur Chhetri to head the committee. On 29th March, 1970 this committee met and it was decided to send a select committee under the leadership of Parasmani to Delhi to meet the President, Prime Minister, Home Minister and others of import in order to place their demand and to put forward their arguments for the inclusion of Nepali in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. In keeping with Dr Chatterjee's suggestion and in order to strengthen their arguments in favour of this demand, Parasmani wrote a few pertinent books on the subject. He wrote: *A Short History of the Nepali Language and Literature*; *Nepali Bhasha ra Sahitya ko Vivaran*; *Nepali Bhashako Utpati ra Bikas* (second edition); *Atau Anusuchi na Nepali Bhasha*; *Composition of the Nepali Language in India* etc. But due to political and human frailties, this committee, to be headed by Parasmani Pradhan, did not go to Delhi. Parasmani, however, was not daunted by this setback. Once he set his heart upon doing something, he always did it to the best of his ability. He sent copies of the books that he had written and published recently on the Nepali language to Dr Chatterjee who appreciated their contents and wrote: "It is only a matter of time before the Nepali language is admitted by the Government as

one of the languages of the Indian Union, and this time I hope it is not long in coming - thanks largely to your single-minded support for the cause".

On 20th December, 1973, an expert committee of the Sahitya Akademi met in Bombay to judge a few of the Indian languages for recognition by the Sahitya Akademi. These languages were Bhojpuri, Konkani, Khasi and Nepali. Parasmani Pradhan had been nominated by the Akademi to represent the Nepali language and to speak on its behalf. The expert committee had already made a study of the Nepali language and saw fit to give it recognition an essential step towards its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. But a note of warning had been sounded by Sri S.A.S. Rajan, a representative of the Government of India, and the attention of the members of the expert committee was drawn to it by Dr. P.B. Pundit, vis-a-vis the Nepali language. The warning was: "The unfortunate fact that language enthusiasm often turns out to be the first step to territorial chauvinism, and the fillip given to any language outside the list of languages given in the Constitution causes a setback to the emotional integration and consolidation of the country. Recognition of a language is not confined to literary or academic aspects, but has political implications that may have far reaching effects."

Since, however, some Indian languages like Maithili, Dogri, Manipuri and Rajasthani which are not mentioned in the Constitution of India had been given recognition by the Sahitya Akademi, it was understood that the experts had given thought to Sri Rajan's warning. Parasmani was asked by Dr. P.B. Pundit to give his opinion on the matter vis-a-vis the Nepali language.

Parasmani Pradhan opined that since the Nepali speaking population in India was scattered throughout the length and breadth of India from Bombay, Calcutta, Benaras, Bangalore, Dehradun to Shillong, Imphal, Arunachal and again Lucknow, Madras and Darjeeling, they were not living in just one area of India, therefore the question of asking for a separate territory on linguistic basis could not arise. He felt that where Nepali was concerned, Rajanji's suspicions were unfounded. That the

recognition of the Nepali language by the Sahitya Akademi was sought for, not for political reasons but for the development of the language and its literature.

Hearing Parasmani's reply, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee who was presiding over the meeting said, "What Pradhanji says is correct. The Akademi has no objection to granting Nepali the recognition sought for."

And so the recognition of Nepali by the Sahitya Akademi as one of the major languages of India was attained.

Parasmani Pradhan was a member of the General Council of the Sahitya Akademi and the first Convener of the Advisory Board for the Nepali Language. During his tenure of office cut short by his death, valuable contributions were made to Indian Literature in Nepali. The Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi selected Dr. Parasmani Pradhan as one of the twenty representatives of the Indian Universities from 1978 till his death in 1986. He was also an important member of the Governing Body of the Nepali Academy of the North Bengal University. In 1980 the Government of West Bengal established the Nepali Academy of Darjeeling for the promotion of Art, Literature, Music and Drama. Parasmani was an important member of this Academy, too. Parasmani Pradhan was well known as an educationist and an active promoter of the Nepali language not only in the Darjeeling district, but further afield in Sikkim, Bhutan, the Dooars, Assam and different parts of India and still further in Malaya, Hongkong, Singapore and Nepal, wherever Nepali was spoken or taught.

## *The Nepali Language in Sikkim*

During one of his visits to Gangtok there was a lot of controversy going on about the choice of the state language of Sikkim. The youth who placed this difficult question before him argued for Sikkimese, Lepcha, Limbu and even Newari, but no one suggested Nepali. Parasmani questioned them in Lepcha and Newari but their supporters could not give him a reply in their own languages. With his Socratic questioning he made it clear to these youth of Sikkim that the State language should be the language which the majority of the people of Sikkim spoke and understood and this was Nepali. This was a very strong and reasonable argument. Ultimately, Nepali was chosen as the State Language of Sikkim, along with which were included Sikkimese and Lepcha and later Limbu. Parasmani had always been an active advocate for the development of all minority languages. This is evident by his active participation in publishing the magazine *Nebula* (Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha), in 1935, and in his article "Bholilane" (Bhutia, Limbu, Lepcha, Nepali). He readily helped those working for the development of these languages. His help given in the development of the Lepcha script and the printing of books in this language in his press in Kalimpong, is worthy of note.

The "Apatan Sahitya Parishad" founded in Gangtok on 15th April, 1947 used *Bharati*, the favorite Nepali monthly magazine edited by Parasmani, as its mouthpiece to propagate and promote the development of Nepali literature. The Parishad set a high literary standard for itself and Sri Pradhan, whose first love was the Nepali language and its literature, spared himself no pains to help the Parishad achieve its goal. Books like *Indrakeel Pushpanjali*, a collection of poems, and *Bapu Bandana* in praise of Gandhiji, published by the Parishad, were printed by Parasmani at his press at Darjeeling. *Kanchenjunga*, a Nepali magazine from Gangtok, was also printed at his press in

Kalimpong and had a long run of over thirteen years. Its editor, Sri Kashiraj Pradhan, was grateful for the correct and regular printing of this magazine. In fact, after *Bharati* closed in 1957, it was *Kanchenjunga* that filled the vacuum for the poets and writers of Sikkim.

On 13th July, 1981 the 167th birth anniversary of Adikavi Bhanubhakta Acharya was celebrated with pomp and grandeur in Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim. On that day the Bhanu Salig Nirman Samiti of Gangtok unveiled a life-size bronze statue of the great poet and father of the modern Nepali language. Along with many an illustrious Nepali literati invited from all over India and Nepal, Parasmani Pradhan, too, had been invited to this great occasion. He was requested by the Samiti to open the ceremony by garlanding the great poet. It was a very happy and proud moment for him as he garlanded the statue with various emotions running through his mind; for it was around 1892 that his revered father Sri Bhagyamani Newar, had for the first time introduced and spread the knowledge of the written form of the Nepali language in this area in the small village of Rangpo in Sikkim through Kavi Bhanubhakta's *Ramayana*. Now, nearly 89 years later, Parasmani had the proud and honoured privilege of being the first to garland the statue of the great poet in the capital of Sikkim. It was a grand culmination to the work begun by his revered father almost a century ago.

From the very beginning Parasmani's books were used in the primary and middle schools of Sikkim to teach Nepali. But when Sikkim became a State under India, the Education Department of Sikkim wanted to have their own books for teaching Nepali. Even while preparing these books, however, Parasmani's valuable help and advice was sought and he gave it readily and freely. Parasmani was also a life-patron of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan of Sikkim. The Nepali literary magazine *Nau Jyoti* published from Gangtok which had a fairly long run of eight years was, with the exception of a few issues, printed in his presses in Darjeeling and Kalimpong. His help in the development of the Nepali language and its literature in Sikkim was substantial and appreciated by most of the people of Sikkim.

## *A Brief Survey of Parasmani Pradhan's Works*

To trace the works of a voracious writer who wrote for over 70 years of his life is no easy task; a man who wrote to develop a growing language and its literature with the zeal of an ardent lover. For Parasmani, writing was as essential as eating right up to the very last day of his life. Just a look at the 200 or so books and periodicals written, translated or edited by him, shows that he was writing not merely as a form of sublimation or with a view to earning a livelihood, but with the higher motives of a true lover of the mother-tongue, namely, to develop the language and its literature and hence bring about progress in the Nepali community. The very fact that he tried his hand at various literary genre like poetry, prose, essays, drama, memoirs, novel, stories, humour, satire, biography, translation, apart from children's literature, grammar, lexicography and editorials, shows that he wanted to introduce these literary forms in the Nepali language. His first difficult steps in these directions were of immense help to those who followed in his foot steps later. But with his main aim of developing the Nepali language and having it recognised as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling in which the majority of the students used Nepali as their mother-tongue, he did not have the time to do justice to these various literary forms, the perfection of each one of which would take a lifetime. His modus operandi which he followed later in fields other than writing, too, was to show how something could be done and should be done by doing it and then leaving it for those who understood the value of the exercise to continue, and he would keep on helping them and encouraging them.

In writing he devoted less time to the novel, drama and poetry and more to the writing of text books for schools,



children's literature, essays, editorials, grammar and the development of the Nepali language in general, its correctness and uniformity.

There are critics who hinted that Parasmani was only a textbook writer and therefore his contribution to Nepali literature was not worth considering. Such criticism is vindictive, lacks knowledge and is far from the truth. It is true that he devoted many years to the writing of textbooks in Nepali for the school children in the district out of necessity. He was writing at a time when the present form of the Nepali language in the district, both spoken and written was in its embryo stage. To help develop the language he had to start at the very first rung of the ladder, at the primary level. It took him many years to climb to the top of this ladder, but he did it step by step. He had hardly anyone to help him in this arduous task of writing the much needed textbooks in Nepali for children. The stories, essays, plays and poems that he wrote for the children naturally had to suit both their interest and their age. High flown poetry would not have been suitable nor would any form of erudite language. He had to use simple language, that the children would be able to understand easily. Years of discipline in writing in this simple, lucid language moulded him into a writer who was much appreciated by the common reader of Nepali. In fact, his lucid, simple, direct language that went straight to the head and heart of the reader became the hallmark by which he was recognised; a simple, straightforward man who did not mince his words. This discipline must have required a lot of painstaking effort in the initial stages, for writing for children is not easy, and writing text-books with a controlled vocabulary and structure is even more difficult. Looking at his earlier writings when he was just a schoolboy, one finds his language more erudite and complicated. It was erroneous of such critics to write off Parasmani as a mere writer of textbooks. There is a lot of good literature even in these textbooks which the critics have not cared to observe. The demarcation line between good language and literature is difficult to determine. Moreover, he did not write only textbooks; looking at his numerous writings apart from the textbooks, many great literary figures in the

Nepali language have ranked him as one amongst themselves. They could not all be wrong.

## NOVEL

Parasmani tried his hand at writing a novel even while yet a schoolboy in the year 1916. It was a translation into Nepali of the great novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Yugalanguriya* under the Nepali title *Hiranyamaye Charitra*. It is a short novel, more like a short story. The age old theme of true love and the difficult paths through which the lovers have to tread before they could reach a blissful union, is well told. The belief in horoscopes, in our stars, in destiny which is part of our cultural heritage is brought out vividly. It is a typical Indian story. The characters of both *Hiranyamaye* and *Purnandar* have been sketched clearly. The language, however, is not the Nepali language of today. We must remember, however, that Parasmani was writing this novel when the written form of Nepali was just developing. Many of the words used are Sanskrit or Hindusthani. Some sentences, too, are rather complex. As the author himself writes about this novel of his: "This was only an attempt at writing a novel during my schoolboy days; it is not even a piece of literature".

In 1919 Parasmani wrote *Bilayat Yatra* which was a translation. *Bilayat Yatra* was written in Hindi by Sri Gajadhar Singh for the *Stree Darpan* magazine which was edited by Smt. Rameshwari Nehru and managed by Smt. Kamala Nehru. Parasmani sought permission before translating this story. The story was typical of the day. The fear of crossing the Seven Seas that is, going abroad to foreign countries (usually Britain at that time) for further studies etc. The question of defilement and hence the loss of caste. The fear of sons going abroad for studies being influenced by Western culture and adopting bad habits or returning with English wives. The problems created at home both for the husband and the foreign wife and the larger family because of this form of interclass, caste, religious, cultural and social union. The difficult problem of acceptance, and so on. All this has been brought out strongly in this little novel. The character of Sohanlal has been sketched boldly. The typical

strong-willed, educated son, who wants things his way. The language used is much closer to the Nepali used today when compared with that used in the novel *Hiranyamaye Charitra*.

Novel writing, however, took up too much time and imagination and Parasmani was a practical man who had a lot of more important work to do for the development and recognition of the Nepali language and the upliftment of the Nepali community. He could not spare time for the writing of novels. His *Hiranyamaye Charitra*, however, is regarded as one of the first novels in the Nepali language written and published by an author from this part of India.

## DRAMA

Between 1918 and 1924 Parasmani Pradhan wrote nine plays. They were: *Savitri Satyawati*, *Sundar Kumar*, *Harischandra*, *Ratnawali*, *Bidhya Sundar*, *Chandra Gupta*, *Sita Banabas*, *Buddha Charitra Natak* and *Mahabharat Natak*. Most of these plays were written to be staged for The Himalayan Amateur Dramatic Association commonly known as the Gorkha Amateur Club of Kurseong or The Himalayan and Children Amusement Association of Darjeeling. Some of them might have been translations, or the story or idea may have been taken from plays written in other languages, though the stories are familiar Indian stories. The fact, however, is that these plays in Nepali were written by Parasmani; and though there seems to be only three of these plays of which printed copies or extracts are available today, namely, *Sundar Kumar*, *Mahabharat Natak* and *Buddha Charitra Natak*, we see from them that he was writing for a Nepali audience. He was keenly aware of the fact that the majority of the Nepali audience at the time was not very educated and so he had to use the simple, spoken language of everyday use instead of the high-flown dramatic language using a lot of Sanskrit, Urdu and Hindi words as was the style then. His aim was not only to amuse the audience, but step by step to educate them and make them familiar with the simple spoken and written form of the Nepali language through these plays.

In the play *Sundar Kumar*, from the extract available we see that his aim is to amuse the audience. The language used by

the chowkidar is typical of that used by uneducated men slangy and abusive. Sundar Kumar, too, has to take recourse to using this sort of coarse language with the chowkidar because he is irritated by the chowkidar's refusal to try to understand him; maybe he felt that this rough language was the only kind that the chowkidar would understand, and he is right.

In what is available of *Mahabharat Natak* taken from the famous Indian Epic *Mahabharat*, the characters of the scheming Sakuni, vengeful Duryodhan, the god-fearing and goodly Yudhistir, the ambivalent Dritarastra and the brave warrior Karna are well brought out. The language used is more literary than that used in Sundar Kumar. It is the language of the court, but the playwright has still kept the simplicity of language in mind and there is little difficulty in understanding each speaker.

Parasmani wrote *Buddha Charitra Natak* in 1925 for the Himalayan and Children Amusement Association of Darjeeling. There was and is a large Buddhist population in the district of Darjeeling. Parasmani felt that the teachings of Lord Buddha had been largely forgotten by the people, may be due to ignorance and lack of education and the growing influence of many superstitious beliefs. He felt that by staging the life of Lord Buddha, he might be able to bring his teachings closer to the hearts of the people.

The play begins with Daya (Sympathy personified), praying to the Almighty Creator to do something about the random slaughter of animals by man; these animals which he had created along with man and which man in his great ignorance and in the name of religion slaughtered to please the Gods. The Creator tells Daya not to worry, as he would himself descend to Earth and take birth in the home of King Sudhodhana and teach man that the greatest religion was the religion of non-violence (ahinsa) "Thou shalt not kill", and that he would spread the light of this religion. The story of the birth of Siddhartha, his early boyhood, his growing love and sympathy for all creatures, man, bird or beast; later, once he has learnt about old-age, sickness and death his renunciation of worldly life and search for the reason for the miseries of this worldly life and for knowledge

and enlightenment in order to mitigate these miseries, is brought out vividly as the acts unfurl scene by scene. After many a trial and tribulation Siddhartha does attain Nirvana, that is Enlightenment, and finds that peace and happiness comes not from accumulation of wealth and by satisfying one's desires, nor by the accumulation of power, but in the renunciation of this world of illusion, the control of one's desires and in the preaching and practice of the gospel of non-violence. He is called "Buddha"—the Enlightened One. The story has been told briefly, but the salient features have been dramatised well. The message of Lord Buddha is clear. Those who follow the path of righteousness, those who are not attached to the illusionary world of wealth and desires, will find eternal bliss. For them there will be no sickness, no sorrow, no fear, no death; for them there will be nothing but eternal bliss.

Act IV Scene II, in which Siddhartha meets King Bimbisar who is about to slaughter many goats as a sacrifice to please Goddess Kali, is emotionally exciting. Will Siddhartha be able to change the King's way of thinking and save the poor innocent animals? After we have heard what the goatherd has to say to Siddhartha about the King will he be successful. He explains to the King that it is wrong to take life if you cannot give it; that you cannot please God by shedding the blood of innocent animals; that the greatest of all religions is non-violence (ahinsa). When all this fails to convert the King, Siddhartha says, "If you feel that the sacrifice of some innocent life is the only way to show your religious devotion to God, then sacrifice me and spare these innocent animals." King Bimbisar is made aware of his great error by these words of Siddhartha and he asks for forgiveness. From that day he stops all animal sacrifice in the name of religion in his kingdom and orders the promulgation and spread of the gospel of "Ahinsa Parmo Dharma"—the greatest of religions is non-violence, the sympathy and love for all creatures great and small.

Act IV Scene III, the scene in the dense jungle where Mara and his evil spirits attempt to break the meditation of Siddhartha who is in deep thought in search for the knowledge of what

brings about the miseries and evils of this world; the evils of pain, sorrow, unhappiness and death, is portrayed effectively. The way in which the evil spirits try to frighten Siddhartha with their blood-curdling descriptions of what they would do to him if he did not give up his meditation, is chilling. Ultimately, Siddhartha overcomes all attempts of Mara to tempt him to give up his search for the reasons of the ills of this world and the way to eternal bliss, and is rewarded. Bandevi bestows upon him the title of "Buddha", the Enlightened One.

Act V Scene I is an extremely interesting and touching scene. The confrontation of Siddhartha with a murderous robber in the dense jungle, a man who did not hesitate to rob and kill people to satisfy his desires. He already has a terrified trader in his clutches when Siddhartha comes along. Siddhartha is also bound by the robber who wants his possessions. Siddhartha says that he has a very precious possession and was quite ready to give it to the robber. The robber thinks it is some material item and demands it immediately. Siddhartha, however, explains to the robber that it is knowledge that he has to give; knowledge that will relieve him of his miseries and make him a happy man. He goes on to tell this dangerous man that killing and robbing people will not make him a happy man, that it is only by following the path of ahinsa that he could attain happiness. The robber is converted by Siddhartha's words and wants to know what ahinsa is. Siddhartha explains that it is love and sympathy for all creatures great and small, which results in not hurting them in deed or thought; telling the truth at all times; not coveting others property; regarding all women with respect; not thinking ill of others—all this is ahinsa. "As you sow, so you will reap". Bad deeds will result in misery and good deeds in happiness. The trader, too, has been listening spellbound to Siddhartha. He, too, has till now been amassing money just to satisfy his desires. He realises that this is evil and will not give him happiness. Both the robber and the trader fall at Siddhartha's feet and ask for forgiveness. They give up their trade and follow Siddhartha to spread the great gospel of Ahinsa Parmo Dharma; the gospel of Buddha the Enlightened One.

This play *Buddha Charitra Natak* was a great success. The Nepali language used is simple and easily understood. Some of the scenes are rather short and must have caused some problems on the stage while changing scenes. A little more comic interlude than that provided by the frightened trader in Act V Scene I and the language of the goatherd in Act IV Scene II might have given the audience a break from the seriousness of the play. But whatever its faults, Parasmani's aim to bring the life and teachings of Lord Buddha, which had been neglected, closer to the hearts of the people through this play was laudable.

The plays that Parasmani wrote helped him to take one more step towards the development and propagation of a correct form of the Nepali language. Had he concentrated on becoming only a playwright, he would have been successful, for he had the inherent qualities that go to make a successful dramatist. But the theatre was frowned upon by the elders of the time, even by his revered father. Moreover, he had more important aims for the development of the Nepali language in mind, so he did not continue to write plays. But the few plays that he did write and stage were well received by the public. Considering the fact that there were hardly any plays written in Nepali in the district of Darjeling at the time, and drama was in its infancy, they are considered to be well-written plays.

## POETRY

Parasmani has written many poems. Some say that his poems are mediocre; but there are many who are of the opinion that they have good rhythm and metre, imagery, and that the language is simple. The poem lingers in the mind long after the book has been closed and put down. Critics are no infallible machines for measuring the quality of a poem. In his collections containing some 108 poems, some are good, some mediocre and repetitive. Most of his poems were written for school children and these were appreciated. As a teacher his didactic nature is seen clearly in his poems, too. He felt, it seems, that everything he wrote must carry with it a lesson for the reader. This often spoilt the poetic effect. But in so far as one of the aims of poetry is "to delight and to instruct", he was successful. Another point

that one must keep in mind while judging Parasmani's poetry, is that he belongs to the old school of poets, the classicists, whose poems were restrained and written with a conscious effort at maintaining metre and rhythm etc. Having studied books like *Shrutabodh* and *Chhandomanjari* while learning how to write poetry, he naturally concentrated on the rhythm and metre rather than on feelings and emotions which the new order of poets relied upon. The variety of metres that he uses in his poems, and that too with perfect command, shows that he knew about how poetry should be written, the correct form, the mathematics of poetry as it were; but the sublimity of thought and emotion which makes for great poetry is missing in most of his poems. He hardly had the time to indulge in poetic fantasies, to soar into the ethereal heavens with Shelley's skylark, or to follow Wordsworth's definition of poetry as being "emotion recollected in tranquillity." He was a down to earth man, always in a hurry to get things done, and his poems show this. His description of Nature in poems like "Kholo" and "Barsa" are good; but it is in his narratives like "Biru Driver", "Ajib Sathi", "Chakrabyu", "Jayadrath Badh" that we see his real poetic talent. His devotional poems, too, like "Prabhu Prasansa" and "Iswarlai Dhog" are noteworthy. He was not in favour of the modern trend of writing poetry in blank verse with little regard for diction, grammar, rhythm and metre. In his poem "Sikaru Kavi Prati", he pleads with the budding Nepali poets and poetesses to dive deep into the ocean of poesy in order to discover and show to the world the real gems of poetry; poetry expressing deep emotion, noble sentiment couched in beautiful, simple language and so to communicate one's experiences to the people at large. He notes many qualities that make for good poetry and ends with the famous and oft quoted lines:

।

कवि कविता होस्, कविता कवि होस्

कविता तब पो हुन्छ ।

शब्द थुपारीकन के हुन्छ ?

भाव भए पो हुन्छ ॥



The gist of which is:

Let the poet and the poem be united as one,  
Then only will great poetry be born;  
Just a collection of words is of no account,  
Poetry needs sublime emotion and thought.

The relationship between the poet and his poem is in such harmony that a single entity is born out of the union.

Parasmani's poem "Sikaru Kavi Prati" shows that although he might not have been a great poet like Pundit Lekhnath or Asu Kavi Laxmi Prasad Deokota, he definitely knew the ingredients of which great poetry is made and pleaded with the young Nepali poets and poetesses to make full use of these ingredients and to search deeply in order to write great poetry. Like Wordsworth, he felt that the language of poetry should be simple and easy to understand. He was against the ambiguity and poetic licence taken by many a modern poet in writing poetry which only they themselves understood and the ultra-modern poetry which even the poet himself hardly understood. He knew his own limitations as a poet and has often expressed his inability to please and satisfy the Muses and felt forsaken by them. Some of his earlier poems written while still in school such as "Safalta Prapta Garne Upai", "Sardastak Stotra", "Manis" have greater poetic qualities in them.

In the poem "Sardastak Stotra" in praise of Goddess Saraswati the dispenser of all knowledge, Prasman prays for knowledge. In "Prarthna" (A Prayer), he expresses his unhappiness at the backwardness of his Gorkhali brethren. He feels that their degeneration is due to ignorance, to lack of education and bad habits like drinking. He appeals to those even with a little ability, to strive to write about how we as a community could make progress and so prosper. In the poem "Safalta Prapta Garne Upai" (The Way to Achieve Success), in twenty stanzas written in a simple and lucid diction, with many examples and maxims, Prasman points out the "do's and don'ts" for achieving success on this earth and the satisfaction of leaving behind a good name. Even at that early age, he seems to have

been keenly aware of the fact that he, as a human being, had to leave a good name behind on this earth after his death. A free translation of some of the stanzas of this poem are given below. Translation of literature of any form is difficult because in translating the various nuances of meaning of words of the original is often lost. In poetry it is even more difficult. These translations try to give just a gist of the original.

Who has not the desire a lot of wealth to earn,  
To add to his good qualities and the more to learn;  
Apart from this, his good name spread to see,  
And by all his neighbours loved and cherished be.

But even while such thoughts are in our mind,  
Death comes along to push out Life we find;  
Thus man's desires are never ever fulfilled,  
So do at once whatever your mind has willed.

As a jewel in the crown of the serpent lies,  
So do beautiful roses in the midst of thorns;  
Again the lovely lotus blooms from out the mud,  
So success is in the midst of difficulties found.

Those who respect and waste not precious time,  
And come forward difficult works to do;  
They alone solutions to the problems of Life do find,  
And dying in this unreal world a name do leave behind.

Human beings their love should always show,  
And never ever hesitate the truth to speak;  
Those who boast that they alone are great,  
Beset by sorrows will suffer a miserable fate.

Those who envy the success of other men,  
God Almighty will surely punish them;  
To be jealous of others is not commendable,  
Such persons will never ever be successful.

A human being must never show his anger,  
In a state of anger no work should be begun;

As anger will upset the judgement of a man,  
So brother, keep anger as distant as you can.

To follow these percepts one must knowledge gain,  
For without knowledge what will such people attain?  
They understand nothing nor do work of any worth,  
Like beasts they will live and die leaving no name on  
earth.

Prasman Pradhan goes on to write that the duty of imparting education to the child is that of the father; that all children must be given education so that we can all help to uplift our Nepali language. For he who does not respect his mother-tongue will never be of value to the world. His plea for unity among the Gorkhalese, that they should shun all bad habits that will result in the degradation of the Nepali community is apparent in the following stanzas.

A strand of straw will not a cricket hold,  
But a rope of that same straw will a cow with-hold;  
Knowing this why don't we Gorkha brethren unite?  
With my little knowledge how can I myself enlight?

Why use agents that will intoxicate?  
Why advance such bad habits to inculcate?  
Why let the God of Death you untimely hold?  
Why die without doing some good in this world?

Prasman catalogues the intoxicating agents that are the foremost enemies of man, and even at that early age warns against the abuse of drugs.

Ganja, Opium and all alcoholic liquors,  
Cigarettes, Charas, Tobacco and Bhang;  
All such intoxicants should renounced be,  
And seeing them one should always flee.

In the poem "Udhyam" (Enterprise), he arouses his Gorkha brothers to shake off their sleep and to be enterprising, to do something worthwhile so that they could leave behind a good name on this earth and at the same time help their community to progress and prosper.

Other poems written during his school-days like "Matri Bhasha" (Mother-tongue), "Janma Bhumi" (Motherland) and "Gazal" show his love for his motherland India and his mother-tongue Nepali. There is depth of thought and feeling in his poem "Manis" (Humanity). He describes the human race as one that is difficult to fathom because of the inexplicable nature of man. We see man at one time lavishing his love and sympathy on a corpse by decorating it as if it were alive, and at another making a corpse of a living being by killing him. He elevates his fellow creatures by giving them education and the same man often degrades them by not letting them live like human beings. Some men are masters and others servants; some consider themselves to be of high caste and treat others as men of low caste. Man cannot live without other men and yet there is little steadfast love and understanding among them. All these differences and anomalies in the nature of man are inexplicable. The last stanza is a profound warning to mankind; that until we break through the net of all our differences (भेदभाव) in which we are entangled, a net created by ourselves, differences of caste, colour, creed or whatever, and become One, till then we in this world of human beings will never become humane.

All these poems and many more show that even at that early age Prasman's heart was set on helping to educate the backward Nepali community in India and to fight for the progress of the Nepali language and its literature. Had he carried on writing poetry in this strain and taken pains to cultivate his poetic faculties alone, he could have written poems that were more sublime.

## PROSE

Parasmani Pradhan's literary forte was prose. This included his essays, short stories, life-sketches, letters, articles, anecdotes, memoirs, diary, humour as a literary form, satire and so on. In his book *Nepali Sahityako Sau Akshar* he records for the student of literature the qualities and ingredients needed for the successful writing of various literary forms. It is a student's guide book on a complicated and learned subject and yet dealt with in a simple, clear and straight-forward language which is easily

understood. This was his hallmark. His simple and easy flowing language to explain anything even complicated, as though he was speaking to a group of pupils in a classroom, endeared him to most of the Nepali readers.

Sri Ashit Ranjan Dasgupta in his review of Parasmani's book *Kwati* opines that Sri Parasmani Pradhan is recognised in the field of Nepali literature by his essays; he is a first class essayist. In this easy flowing, clear, simple language which hardly requires the help of a dictionary to understand, he has written many an essay most of which have something to teach, some knowledge to impart to the reader; but many of which are just amusing anecdotes filled with wit and humour, a literary form that one would hardly expect from a grammarian and such a strict teacher. *Tipan Tapan*, for which he was awarded the Madan Puruskar, is a collection of his more serious essays which were written for various magazines. According to Sri Kamal Dikshit, Secretary of the Madan Puruskar Guthi, Nepal, the book is a valuable storehouse of Nepali literature conveniently collected in one book for the student of Nepali literature and for the general reader. His editorials in many a Nepali literary magazine and especially in *Bharati* are literary gems. His little book entitled *Sampadak-ko-Bichar* contains a collection of these editorials. They are thought-provoking, informative, instructive, encouraging, progressive, and give sound advice. He was fully aware of the fact that the progress of a community was reflected in the progress of its language and literature.

Professor Ramlal Adhikari says, "The qualities of a good editor were inherent in Sri Parasmani as is evidenced by the quality of his literary magazine *Bharati*. His editorials were always progressive and to the point and full of thought-provoking material." He, however, was not a mere dreamer, a speaker, a writer—he was a "doer", and if there was nobody to help him with what he was trying to get the readers to do, he followed the advice of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and walked the difficult path alone. He was forever trying to shake up the sleeping Nepali writers and the public to strive to give of their best whether it be in literature or in the field

of business and industry. For Nepali writers *Bharati* played an important role, giving them a taste of the sweetness and satisfaction of good literature. Many a good Nepali writer and poet was nourished on *Bharati* under the ever watchful and helpful guidance of its editor Parasmani Pradhan.

Memoirs as a literary form was more or less new to Nepali literature. Parasmani tried his hand at this form, too. His *Rochak Sansmaran* was a great success. In this book and in *Kathe Jhakri* and *Sare Satko Katha* we find many hilarious anecdotes. In these Parasmani has succeeded splendidly in sharing the lighter side of his nature with the readers, while enriching Nepali literature with this literary form. That he had a lighter side to his nature, a side that we as his children hardly ever saw, is apparent in his ghost stories and anecdotes like "Pipe Master", "Ajib Sikar", "Hamro Gundruk Company", "Pagalman" and many others.

Parasmani was an excellent translator. Through his translations of some stories written by famous writers like Tagore, Bankim Chandra, Premchand, Chandradhar Sharma Gulari, Guy de Maupassant, Chekov and others, while entertaining the Nepali readers he enriched Nepali literature with his superb translations. In his *108 Amiar Jiwani* he has sketched the life of many a great Indian hero and heroine and while giving the Nepali reader a glimpse into their lives and works, he has attempted to make the Indian Nepali conscious of our rich heritage. Other life sketches of his are *Panch Paurakhii*, *Purusratna* and *Aphnobar*.

In the field of childrens' literature Sri Jiwan Namdung opines that there is still nobody to compare with Sri Parasmani Pradhan. Professor Nilam Pradhan says that it was Sri Parasmani Pradhan who laid the strong foundation stone for the development of Nepali literature. With his numerous textbooks for Nepali children and youth right from the primary level to the high school level and beyond, he gave to the Nepali language and its literature an upward thrust that no other single person was able to give and this, too, for a long period of over 70 years. As a textbook writer like a colossus he bestrode this field for over five decades; and it was not only textbooks on Nepali

grammar, language and literature that he wrote, but on varied subjects like science, hygiene, mathematics, history, geography, education, etc. This great contribution of his during a time when it was most needed was a boon that the Nepali community cannot and should not forget. We are inclined to forget the difficult steps that our ancestors trod in order to make our path easier for us.

That Parasmani Pradhan was an expert in the Nepali language is seen from his numerous books not only in the language but also about the language. His *Nepali Bhasako Utpati ra Bikas* though a small book, contains material of paramount importance to the Nepali language as it traces its history and development. Speaking about his book *The Origin and Development of the Nepali Language*, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee writes, "Your book on the origin and development of the Nepali language which I read in the first edition I think, is unquestionably most authoritative, and the best written book on the subject."

Parasmani, along with his second son Sri Nagendramani, also fulfilled the long standing need for a good dictionary of the Nepali language, namely, *The Students' Standard Dictionary* (English-Nepali). About this dictionary Swami Prabuddhananda, a prominent educationist of the district writes: ".....it will be of immense benefit to our Nepali students of the English language. Every student, nay, every teacher should possess a copy of it. It has removed a long felt want." Later pocket editions and enlarged editions were published as also the *Nepali-Nepali-Angreji Kos*. These dictionaries are still in good demand.

Parasmani Pradhan's books in Nepali are many. A list is given at the end of this short monograph. They are not only books which trace and enhance the development of the Nepali language and its literature, but which also give guidelines for its future development and a lot of material for the research worker. He was very interested in research on the Nepali language. In fact, as far back as 1932 and 1933 he had published some articles in this connection in the Nepali Sahitya Samelan magazine; articles like "Darjeeling Jila ma Nepali Bhasako Bikas"

and "Nepalka Bhinna Bhinna Bhasa tatha Sahityako Adhyayan." A prominent Nepali literator, Sri Indra Bahadur Rai, has mentioned the fact that we must really appreciate what Sri Parasmani Pradhan has had time to do in this field of research, all alone. The books he wrote cater to the needs of the Nepali students or the student of the Nepali language, right from the primary level up to the M.A. level and beyond.

Parasmani wrote well in English, too. His four monographs of Adikavi Bhanubhakta Acharya, Kavishiromani Lekhnath Paudyal, Balkrishan Sama and Mahakavi Laxmi Prasad Deokota have been given a good review by Hon'ble Mr. Justice R.K. Sharma, Calcutta High Court, in the Indian Literature Series, Volume XXIV-No.2 (1981). Other eminent persons from various fields apart from literature, like Sri Surya Bikram Gewali, Chancellor, Nepal Rajakiya Prajna Pratisthan, Kathmandu, Sri Asit Ranjan Dasgupta, a distinguished writer, Dr. Prabhakar Machwe, Ex-Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, Sri Maniklal Bajracharya, Cultural Attache, Royal Nepalese Embassy, New Delhi, Sri Bhaichand Pradhan, an eminent Nepali writer and Dr. Edgar R. Miller, United Mission to Nepal, Pennsylvania, have all regarded these monographs in English as well written within a short space and of great value to the non-Nepali reading public, in making them aware of the richness of Nepali literature and its oneness with other Indian literatures.

Parasmani's other articles in English like "Development of the Hill Areas of Darjeeling District", "The Hill People of Darjeeling", "Indian Literature Abroad—NEPAL", "The Holy Bible in Nepali", "Linguistic and Communal Harmony" and "Modern Nepali Literature and India" are well written and thought-provoking. They were well received by the reading public. He was also well-versed in Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit.

Parasmani Pradhan had always been an advocate for the development of the minority languages in the district like Tibetan, Lepcha, Limbu, etc. Apart from initiating the revival of the Lepcha and Jongkha scripts and printing books in these languages in his press at Kalimpong, he also wrote primers like



the Anglo-Nepali-Tibetan-Lepcha Primer, Tibetan Self-Taught (Part I and II) and Tibetan-English Teacher, in collaboration with experts in Tibetan and Lepcha and had them printed in his press.

Parasmani had always wanted to bring out a daily newspaper in Nepali; but he was aware of the amount of labour, manpower and finance that would be necessary in order to produce anything worthwhile. He did, however, get the opportunity of becoming the honorary Editor-in-Chief of the Nepali daily *Himalchuli* for sometime. At the age of 80 plus, the way he used to devote himself daily to the bringing out of this paper was both praiseworthy and pathetic. He would sit at the Himalchuli office in Siliguri the whole day and often till past 8 p.m. correcting the proofs of this paper, including the grammar and spelling, not considering the fact that it was a daily newspaper and not a literary paper or magazine. His argument, however, was that no matter what type of paper it was, there should be no compromise regarding the correctness of the grammar and spelling of the Nepali language. Later, he realised that it was a losing battle that he was fighting. Because of this, coupled with the fact that at his age the hot weather of Siliguri did not suit him, he had his name removed from the paper as the Editor-in-Chief. But he was happy that he had initially been deeply involved in the bringing out of a daily newspaper in Nepali.

## *Awards Conferred on Parasmani Pradhan*

Although Parasmani Pradhan devoted more than 70 years of his life to the service of the Nepali language, he, like a true Karmayogi, never worked with the hope of winning any awards for his works. The only reward that he worked for was the recognition of the Nepali language as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling and the enhancement of Nepali literature and hence the state of the Nepali community in India. But labour has its own rewards and towards the end of his long life of dedicated service to the Nepali language, his valuable contributions to the development of the Nepali language and its literature in India and the quality of his literary works which was recognised, he was honoured with awards one after the other.

The first award given to him was the coveted "Tribhuwan Puruskar" awarded to him by the Royal Nepal Academy, Kathmandu in 1968, for his long and dedicated service to Nepali language and literature. The next year he was awarded the "Madan Puruskar" for his book *Tipan Tapan* by the Madan Puruskar Guthi, Kathmandu, Nepal. In June 1975 was conferred upon him the Degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) by the Tribhuwan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. This was followed in April, 1981 by the Degree of Doctor of Literature (Honoris Causa) conferred upon him by the University of North Bengal. In 1983, he was awarded the "Ratna Shree Subarna Padak" by Ratna Shree Patrika, Kathmandu, Nepal, for his article "Maile Chineko Samji". Apart from these prestigious awards he received many a eulogy from Associations and Societies like the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling; Ne-Bho-La Sanskritik Parishad, Darjeeling; Bhanu Sanskritik Samiti, Kurseong, congratulating him on his grand achievements and praising his

works. Apart from these eulogies given him by various literary and cultural associations, Parasmani was honoured by the Sahitik Patrakar Sangha of Kathmandu on its eleventh anniversary by being taken on a ceremonial Sova Yatra along the streets of Kathmandu along with some other eminent personalities, thus showing the respect and regard that they had for him and his works. Another Sova Yatra was organised by the Ne-Bho-La Sanskritik Parishad, Darjeeling, in which Parasmani Pradhan and Sri Tenzing Norgay of Mount Everest fame were taken around the streets of Darjeeling in a grand procession. Mr. Arthur Foning, who was to represent the Lepcha community, was absent because he was ill. A third Sova Yatra was organized to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling on the 18th of October, 1974. Parasmani Pradhan, along with his two literary friends Sri Surya Bikram Gewali and Pandit Dharnidhar Sharma, the three who had initiated the foundation of the Nepali Sahitya Sammelan of Darjeeling in 1924, were taken on a colourful procession in a flower-bedecked vehicle along the main streets of Darjeeling town. The vehicle was preceded by Nepali musicians and dancers exhibiting cultural tradition and followed by a huge cosmopolitan crowd cheering "SU-DHA-PA may they live forever!"

Parasmani Pradhan had come a long way from those early days when he was struggling for the recognition of the Nepali language as a medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling in which the majority of the students spoke Nepali as their mother-tongue; those days when other communities and associations had put obstacles in his way and had tried to upset his apple-cart because they did not understand what he was doing; but step by step he explained to them that their languages would not be interfered with, and that he was always in favour of the development of all minority languages in the district. He wanted all the people in the district irrespective of community, caste or creed, to work in communal harmony for the development of the district of Darjeeling. Ultimately, the people did understand his message and came forward one and all to felicitate him on his grand achievements.

## *Some Other Facets of Parasmani Pradhan's Life*

### PARASMANI AS AN EDUCATIONIST

Parasmani Pradhan did not write any learned books or treatise on the theory of education. But he was a born educationist; a teacher whose practical aspects of teaching was never confined to textbooks or the classroom. Whether he was at home, at school, or anywhere else, if he saw an opportunity for imparting education to anyone, he did it, for he felt that this was the key to progress. He was a bit didactic and not everyone appreciated or understood his brusque methods; but his intentions were always for the betterment of the individual and hence the community. Even with his own children he was always strict, in fact, more so than with others. A disciplinarian par excellence, he practiced what he preached. The whole of his life, after the age of about 18 years, was devoted to the education and upliftment of the Nepali community in the district of Darjeeling. He was a voracious reader and would read books and articles in Nepali, Hindi, Bengali and English and utilize what he learnt from them to enhance the Nepali language and its literature. As a school teacher for over 25 years, he was respected by his pupils and even today his ex-students speak fondly and with respect about him.

A true educationist, he put education above everything else, for he felt it was the only way to dissipate ignorance and enhance progress. He was practical, however, and was of the firm opinion that education should not be only academic. It had to be practical and should enable a person to earn a decent livelihood, to bring up his family respectably, to be a good and upright citizen, to be self-reliant and to be self-disciplined, thus avoiding or controlling bad habits which would ultimately harm the

individual and hence society. In short, his idea of education was the total education of the individual, not merely the acquisition of knowledge. What he wanted to see was the total development of the children and youth which would make for good, responsible, successful citizens and an all round development of home first, then the community and so the country. He was born at a time when Nepali girls were not encouraged to go to school; but later he himself encouraged the Nepali girls to go in for higher studies and to compete in every field alongside the boys. At home, he got the ladies to take part in all the family projects of which there were many, and thus taught them to be self-reliant.

Parasmani was an advocate of adult education, too. His book *Mero Pahilo Kitab* was both a first book for primary school children and a primer for illiterate adults.

## THE INDUSTRIOUS AND ENTERPRISING PARASMANI

Parasmani Pradhan is known to most people as a writer of books, an educationist and one who devoted his life to the development and enhancement of the Nepali language and its literature in India. His idea of being industrious and enterprising, however, did not stop with the development of the Nepali language alone. Even as a schoolboy he was aware of the fact that in order to uplift the community, writing poems and plays would not be enough. He felt that we should all endeavour to busy ourselves with some sort of enterprise so as to increase our income. His poems and essays even then pointed this out as is seen in "Safalta Prapta Garne Upai", "Udhyam" and "Adhyawasaya". He was aware of the fact that money was essential for the progress of the individual and hence society, and for him the only way to earn money was by being enterprising and industrious, whether by writing books or by tilling the soil. He was influenced a great deal in this respect by his Principal, Dr. Sutherland, who used to actually show them how cloth could be made at home by growing cotton and rearing silk worms; how one could supplement one's income by rearing rabbits, by growing spices and processing them as condiments

and so on. He was a practical man and Parasmani's young mind was captivated by these practical demonstrations.

Parasmani was a great admirer of the Japanese system of cottage industries. Since his family was basically an agricultural one, experiments in vegetable growing, dairy, poultry and piggery were started. All the children, and there were twelve of them, were engrossed in the running of the home farm and agricultural land in Kalimpong at one time or the other. But Parasmani, himself a teacher and an educationist, wanted his children to go in for further studies, too. He wanted those who had the ability, to become teachers and engineers. But he never forced any of his children to go for further studies if he saw that they did not want to but instead kept them busy with enterprises at home. It was with the establishment of the printing press at Darjeeling that he saw an opportunity of putting into practice his ideal of a cottage industry. The printing presses at Darjeeling and Kalimpong were run by himself and his family of children, daughters-in-law and grandchildren and are still running efficiently; their efficiency lying mainly in the fact that they have never been fully dependent on outside workers. He, however, was against the earning of money for money's sake. The money was to be employed for the fruitful progress of family and society. A lot of money was spent on experimental projects of cottage industries with a view of showing the Nepali community what could be done at home in order to supplement one's income.

Once he had achieved his aim of having Nepali recognised as the medium of instruction in the schools of the district of Darjeeling, and also included as a subject of study in the colleges and Universities of West Bengal, although he had many other matters of import concerning the progress and recognition of the Nepali language on the anvil and continued to work in this direction, he spent a little more time in showing the common man how money could be earned at home. His modus operandi was to take up a project and to get members of his family to begin work on it. Once they were successful, he would write about the project, speak about it to people who came to meet

him, show them the success and work out the income that could be derived from such projects; then he would try to get others to start these projects in their homes.

Some of the projects taken up by the family were: vegetable gardening, including seed production, fruit juice, jam and tomato sauce making, floriculture, wheat growing (which was a new winter crop for Kalimpong), agriculture with better yielding varieties of seeds and more scientific methods, sericulture, mushroom growing, noodle making, atta chakhi, poultry, piggery, dairy, rabbit and goat rearing, bee-keeping, pisciculture, oil crushing and rice husking with modern machinery, doll making, bamboo work, knitting centre, handmade paper making, printing press and book binding, type casting, writing and publishing, making cement flower pots and hollow blocks for low-cost housing, gobar gas plants, etc. Most of these cottage industries were successful, and many in the community who saw their success took them up seriously as a means of livelihood or to supplement their income.

Parasmani always believed that man was capable of doing almost anything that he set his mind to. Any project, if thought out carefully and worked out with single-minded purpose, would be successful and he proved this again and again. The paper *Yojna*, published from Delhi printed an article on "The Pradhans of Kalimpong" in August, 1967. Here is an extract:

"The five storied house was a veritable beehive of human activity; on the ground floor was a flour mill, on the first floor the printing press rattled rather leisurely, the second floor was occupied for residential purpose, on the third floor we came across a modest noodle factory and an experimental workshop manufacturing artistic articles from bamboo and on the fourth floor there was the hum of modern knitting machines. In between on the residential floor a young lady was making artistic dolls which had an unusual charm about them; on the floor occupied by the noodle factory were a few bee boxes, a newly devised honey extractor and a few cement flower pots growing some lovely hill flowers in them.

The house, in the heart of charming Kalimpong, is presided over by the father figure of Mr. Parasmani Pradhan, 68, President of the local Anchal Panchayat and a prominent social figure who has been putting in his 'humble' efforts to help the hill people learn crafts as well as new agricultural techniques. Practice is better than precept; acting on this maxim Mr. Pradhan has made a beginning—and a good beginning at that—from his home, inculcating the love for small industries among the members of his own family."

Parasmani was of the opinion that if there was some sort of cottage industry in each home, be it agriculture or otherwise, the people would be kept out of mischief and earn while they learnt. Learning for him was a life-long process and every little experience in life which added to one's knowledge was education. He himself was a student right to the day of his death; always reading and studying books to further his own knowledge so that he could become a better teacher. He was not interested in starting very big projects which would involve a lot of capital and labour. He was always for starting small and expanding gradually. This, he felt, would make more people self-reliant and independent and not servile. This, he felt, was the key to social progress.

#### PARASMANI'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELIGION

Parasmani Pradhan was taught the basis of religion at a very early age by his revered father Sri Bhagyamani Newar, a man who devotedly set aside time for prayers both morning and evening. The basic rules of how to be a good man were taught him rather than how to be a religious pundit. Even as a student his poems like "Sardastak Stotra", "Prabhu Prasansa", "Iswarlai Dhog", show his belief in and devotion to a Supreme Being. As he grew older, however, what he did not appreciate was the casteism in the Hindu religion. He himself is said to have lost his caste twice for things that he did which were according to the then society against the Hindu religion. By paying the Brahmin some money, however, his caste was restored to him. He was confounded, for he never upheld such beliefs. As a result, he was never in favour of bringing Brahmin pundits into



the house to perform pujas. In fact, he hardly ever wasted time on pujas. He was a karmayogi rather than a bhaktiyogi and believed that "work was worship". He was no religious fanatic and because of his association with Christians he was often in trouble. But education for him was more important than religion. When he saw that a golden opportunity was being missed by the Nepali Christian community in Kalimpong by their refusal to send five local boys to the Christian school founded by Rev. Graham, he sent three of his own sons, I being one of them, and convinced two of his friends to send their sons. All of us did very well in that school. Of course we had to abide by the school regulations; we had to go to Church and Sunday school classes, we had to eat what they ate though against the Hindu religion, but this did not bother my father. Tongues did wag but he did not bother about what other people said. It was because of his first bold steps that hundreds of non-Christians were subsequently admitted into that once famous school in Kalimpong. Parasmani had many friends among the Christians, Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus and always felt that the golden rules of all these religions were basically the same humanitarian ones. He felt that problems arose in their misinterpretation and in the policies and politics of religious fanatics.

When we were children he would tell us stories from the *Ramayan*. He himself was an ardent follower of the instructions of the *Geeta* and wrote, translated, compiled and edited some religious books, the *Geeta* being one of them. Late in life he enjoyed listening to the bhajans of Sri Satya Sai Baba in the very early hours of the morning. He wrote a bhajan, "Baba Prati" which is published in the book *The Golden Book of Sri Sathya Sai Lyrics*. Being a practical man he seemed to have more faith in a living god-man like Sai Baba, a person who existed during his lifetime and who taught people how to be good men and women, good citizens; a person who did some miracle healing when necessary; a person who involved himself in practical projects for the education and progress of the people by building schools, colleges and hospitals.

Parasmani's religious beliefs however was not that of a castebound Hindu; he rose above this. At the same time he was

not in favour of those who depended solely on religion and prayers for their success. He believed that God helps those who helped themselves. Work for him was worship. He did not teach his children religion as such, but he did teach them how to be hard-working, good disciplined men and women and so assets to the society.

#### PARASMANI PRADHAN—A PATRIOT

Parasmani Pradhan had in him a patriotic zeal that was clear right from his school days. His recital of the poem "Bir Patniko Sahas" at the Annual School function in 1916, wherein the brave Gorkhas were aroused to come forward and fight for king and country against the enemies and so to bring fame and honour to India our motherland, was only a small beginning. This was during the First World War. During the Second World War, (the 1939-45 emergency), once again he came forward to help the motherland by taking on duties as an Honorary member of the recruiting organisation. The Adjutant General in India certified his services in this connection as follows: ". . . I wish to place on record my deep appreciation of the services you have rendered to the common cause in supplying men for the R.I.N., the Indian Army—the largest voluntary Army ever raised—and for the RIAF.

I know only too well the onerous nature of the task you set yourself and the fact that you have served your country in an Honorary capacity makes your action increasingly commendable".

The first issue of the Nepali monthly literary magazine *Bharati* was published in 1949. Apart from it being a magazine which kept in mind the development and correctness of the Nepali language, Parasmani being a teacher both by profession and by temperament, and a true lover of "Bharat" our motherland, which he calls the land of our birth, work and worship, tried to instil this love for Bharat in the hearts of the Nepali readers through the magazine *Bharati*. Not only is the name of the magazine significant, but the opening lines dedicated to Bharat and *Bharati*, too, express his love and devotion for India and show clearly that he was a patriot.

*Nepali Bharati hami, Bharatiko picha parau,  
Bharatiko garau puja, Bharati-bhakta bhai marau.*

That is, "We are Indian Nepalese. Let us follow Bharat. Let us worship her and die as her loyal devotees".

Parasmani was ever an exponent of unity. He considered the whole of Bharat from Kashmir in the North to Kanya Kumari in the South; from Gujarat in the West to Arunachal in the East as a garland strung together on a single string. He tried to represent this thought graphically in the cover design of many an issue of *Bharati* by illustrating the map of India girdled with a single rope which is coiled to form the word "भारती", thus uniting India as one. This magazine contains many a poem and article about the greatness of our motherland written by him and many others. He always encouraged the Nepali community in India to work for the progress of our motherland.

Parasmani tried to introduce the lives of our great heroes and heroines, the illustrious sons and daughters of Mother India, to the Nepali reader in his Nepali school textbooks, in his *108 Amar Jiwani* series and in the magazine *Bharati*. He wrote and published articles about great Indian personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, Dr. C. Rajagopalachari, Sister Nivedita, Mrs. Vijaya Laxmi Pundit, Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Subhas Chandra Bose, Rani Laxmibai, Jamshedji Tata and many others, in most cases along with their photographs. Reading these articles and biographical sketches, the Nepali readers were made aware of the difficult path that these great sons and daughters of Bharat had trod in order to give us freedom and to thus make our lives more meaningful. Parasmani was always of the opinion that by reading about the lives of great people, one could learn to follow in their footsteps and so try to achieve greatness and make life meaningful for oneself and for others. By bringing the message of these great Indian personalities to the common Nepali reader, he tried to bring them into the mainstream of our motherland, Bharat.

In 1962 the peace of our motherland was shattered rudely by the unprovoked aggression of China. The whole of India rose up as one to defend our home against the Chinese; every citizen whether soldier or civilian doing what they could. Parasmani, then 65 years of age, and in whom the spirit of patriotism was ever alive, wrote patriotic poems at this time to encourage the sons and daughters of Bharat to come forward and to fight courageously against the enemy and to drive them out of our territory. Some of his poems like: "Bharat Hamro" (India is Ours), "Bharatiya Nepaliko Bandana" (Adoration of an Indian Nepali), "Swadesako Bachauka Nimti" (To Save our Motherland), "Swadesako Pukar" (Call of our Motherland), show his patriotic fervour and love for Mother India. A few lines in free translation from some of these poems show that he was a true son of Bharat.

भारत हाम्रो देश छ राम्रो  
मुकुट हिमालय यसको ।  
यस्तो राम्रो भारतमाथि  
भक्ति नहोला कसको ? ॥

नेफा हाम्रो लद्दाख हाम्रो  
अरूको हुँदै हुँदैन ।  
सीमा हो मक्मोहन रेखा  
संशय यसमा छैन ॥

टिस्टा हाम्रो रंगीत हाम्रो  
अरूको हुँदै हुँदैन ।  
लाभा हाम्रो पेदोङ हाम्रो  
यसमा संशय छैन ॥

जबतक रहला रक्त नसामा  
भक्त-देहमा प्राण ।  
तबतक गरूँला स्वदेश-रक्षा  
गरूँला दिएर ज्यान ॥

Bharat hamro desa cha ramro  
Mukut Himalaya yesko,  
Yesto ramro Bharat mathi  
Bhakti nahola kasko?

Nefa hamro, Laddhak hamro,  
Aruko hundai hundaina;  
Sima ho Makmohan Rekha  
Snsaya yesma chaina.

Tista hamro, Rangit hamro,  
Aruko hundai hundaina;  
Labha hamro, Pedong hamro,  
Yesma snsaya chaina.

Jabataka rahala rakta nasama,  
Bhakta-dehama prana,  
Tabataka garula swadesa-rakcha,  
Garula diera jyan.

Our country Bharat is a beautiful land,  
The Himalayas form a crown on her head;  
Towards such a beautiful Bharat  
Who would not be devoted ?

Nefa is ours and so is Laddhak,  
They will never belong to no other;  
MacMohan line is the boundary determined  
About this there is no doubt !

The Teesta is ours and so is the Rangeet,  
These, too, will belong to no other;  
Lava is ours and so is Pedong,  
About this there is no doubt !

So long as the blood runs in our veins,  
And life in our devoted body;  
Our Motherland we shall protect,  
To die for her we are ready.

In "Bharatiya Nepaliko Bandana" he writes:

भारत हाम्रो जन्मभूमि हो, आमा हुन् यी हाम्री ।  
भारत हाम्रो कर्मभूमि हो, आमा यी कति राम्री ।  
भारत हाम्रो पुण्यभूमि हो, यिनका सपुत हामी ।  
शस्य श्यामला उज्ज्वलवदना, भारत यो कति नामी ।  
जय, जय भारत माता .....

योटे धयेय र योटे तनमन, योटे पथका गामी ।  
भारतका सब भारतवासी योटे जहान हामी ।।  
भारतका सब सेवक हामी, भारतमै छन् नाता ।  
जन्मभूमिको आरति गर्छौं, जय जय भारत माता ।।  
जय, जय भारत माता .....

Bharat is the land of our Birth, she is our Mother dear,  
Bharat is the land where we Work, she is our Mother fair;  
Bharat is the land that we Worship, we are her children  
devoted,

A radiant land so richly cropped, Bharat is celebrated.

Glory be to Bharat our Motherland !

We forge ahead with one mind and aim, like a single body,  
All the citizens of Bharat belong to a single family;  
We are all devotees of Bharat, in Bharat live our relation,  
We all worship our Motherland, to her our adoration.

Glory be to Bharat our Motherland !

In the poem "Swadesako Bachauka Nimti", Parasmani calls upon all the citizens of Mother India whether rich or poor, farmers or businessmen, children, youth and the aged, soldiers and civilians to come forward to fight the enemy, China. His message is, "let us all do something" to help our motherland in whatever capacity we can and fight the aggression of the poisonous serpent China. Let us help our motherland by producing more food, by earning more money and helping to fill the coffers of the Indian government, by helping at home, by going to fight the enemy on the mountains, on the plains, across rivers and in the air; each citizen according to his ability. His refrain "Swadesako bachauka nimiti kai na kai garau" is to encourage the citizens of India to help defend the honour, name and fame of the motherland. In the poem "Swadesako Pukar" too, he calls upon the youth of India to come forward and join in the war against China. To fight the enemy, to defeat and destroy them and to return home with pride and honour.

These patriotic poems written by Parasmani have found a place in the collections "Desbhaktika Geetharu" and "Rastriya Bhawanaka Nepali Kawitaharu" compiled by Sri R. P. Lama.

Although there is ample evidence to show that there was no doubt about Parasmani Pradhan's love and patriotism towards his motherland Bharat, because of his literary links with Nepal and because he was given many awards by Nepal for his service to the Nepali language, there were some who even doubted his allegiance to India. These suspicions, however, were not based on facts. Definitely, he was in close touch with the literati of Nepal and had many friends among the best of them, for his life's mission was to promote the development of the Nepali language and its literature; but he shied away from politics.

Parasmani was born in Bharat, he lived in Bharat, worked throughout his life for the welfare of the Nepali language and the Bharatiya Nepalese till the ripe old age of 88 years, died in Bharat and his sacred ashes lie in Bharat. His allegiance was to Bharat and Bharat alone. A true son of Bharat Mata, his life and works substantiate this fact without any doubt.

## PARASMANI PRADHAN AS A FATHER

Once, a few years before the end, when Parasmani was engulfed in some unsavoury issues, among them family problems, he said to me, "I often feel that I have been a failure as a father." I was taken aback. But later I have often sat down to consider this statement of his and have tried to analyse it to see whether it was a true assessment of himself or not.

What do children look for in a father? A loving and caring man, a man who has time for them; to play with them, to instruct them and educate them, one who looks after them in their illness, a good provider and one who guides them through the various stages of their growth till they reach the age when they can manage for themselves; and even after that one who is ready to help them should they require help. A man who is respected and loved because he is a good man. A good father must be approachable, he should never be feared by his children. They must always feel at ease to go to him with their problems no matter what their age and he must be able to give them his time to help sort out these problems. Of course, with such a rigorous yardstick, most men would be failures as fathers.

During our childhood and even up to our college days, we were in a way afraid of Buwa (father), mainly because he was a strict disciplinarian and did not brook any action that ran contrary to his stiff standards of family discipline. Things like the cinema, clubs, smoking, drinking, playing cards, chewing pan or tobacco, listening to film songs, laziness and wasting time in useless gossip were taboo in the house. These habits, he felt, were not beneficial to the healthy development of mind and body and to progress in general. "Time" for him was a most precious commodity and not to be wasted, for once it slipped away it could never be caught again. Every minute was to be used usefully to augment one's knowledge or income. He himself practiced what he preached. An early riser, he expected the whole household to rise early. If he found any of us in bed after 5.00 a.m. the one who was at fault would be given such a long and severe lecture and made to feel so guilty, that we would leave our warm beds early, even on a cold Darjeeling

winter morning, rather than face his lectures. The result is even today at the age of 60 years I feel guilty if I oversleep and rise late. But it was not a question of just rising early; we had to get down to work immediately. Those running the press to press work, those studying, to their studies, those on kitchen duty to that. It was a very difficult time for growing children who needed love and affection, who needed a bit of freedom. Rest, for him, did not mean relaxing in bed or a sofa doing nothing. He would say, "change of subject is my rest" and expected us to follow this maxim. At times our inner spirits rebelled at the continuous austerity of our existence, but to voice our rebellion was met with a simple solution by him. He would say, "if you don't want to do as I say, you are free to leave the house and go your own way." Of course, those were the days when parents were in general very strict, an essential element for keeping the large joint families together. Moreover, with a large family of twelve children to control and bring up, he had to be strict, sometimes to the point of being harsh. He was strict with every member of the family be it son, daughter, sons or daughters-in-law. He had no favourites, except maybe the eldest in the beginning and the two youngest towards the end, which seems natural in most large families. The daughters-in-law were also "put into harness" immediately after marriage. They were taught to manage the kitchen, he wanted them to be self-reliant and not dependent on their husbands for running the family. He was strictly against their visiting their parental home (maita) often. Once during the Dashera festival for a day or two was enough. He felt that if they kept too close a contact with their parental home, they would never be able to settle down and regard their husband's home as their own, more so if the family was a joint family. This reluctance of the womenfolk to break away from their parental home or to fit in into their husband's home after marriage, has in a way, been at the root of the disintegration of the Hindu joint family. This strictness against the daughters-in-law and his general severity and discipline at home could not be appreciated by us then. Only today we understand the efficacy of what he was doing and although the



large joint family does not exist now, every member of the family is doing fairly well and running his or her own family efficiently.

Buwa was interested in our education and for those who had the ability to go on for further academic studies he was always there to help. This was true not only for his own children, but also for relatives and many other Nepali students who came to him for help. Many of us went in for service after obtaining postgraduate degrees in various fields of study, but we found later that Buwa was not in favour of us becoming "naukars"-servants in service. He himself had been in service for a long period of over thirty years and knew well the problems and mental degradation one had to face especially with an egocentric, unsympathetic boss. He saw that in business one could be independent, earn more and could be of greater social service. I, too, was in service and after returning from a teachers' training course in England, joined as a Professor at the Institute of English, Calcutta and was there for about six years. It was a prestigious job and to my liking. Buwa, too, was proud of my achievement; but his repeated comments in favour of setting up an independent business along with the usual problems faced in service prompted me to resign and start a printing press at Siliguri. After a few difficult years the press did quite well. Of course, I had to put in many more hours of hard physical and mental work; but the joy of being independent to make my own decisions, to execute them, to employ workers and so help the progress of society while helping myself, made up for all the hardships faced. This is the difference that my father was aware of between service and an independent business. He wanted all of us to have the best of academic education, maybe a few years of experience in service, but he did not want us to be service-minded; he preferred us to be independent businessmen. This was his message to the Nepali community at large. Even for those in the teaching profession, he would have had those who could, begin small schools of their own rather than just be teachers serving in a school, college or university. The youngest daughter, Lalita, is running a school of her own in Kalimpong. She began modestly with six children. It is now a

reputed High school with around 1400 pupils. Buwa was proud of her success.

Buwa was never soft with the children. He was against pampering them and we always had to be alert and on our best behaviour when he was around. He himself was strong both physically and mentally and did not appreciate weakness in his children whether physical or mental. I remember when an elder brother of mine, Amar, now no more, was sent to Santiniketan to do his B.T. in 1954. The B.T. campus at Vinaya Bhawan was far from modern and the students had to live in Spartan simplicity. The place was very hot. No fans were allowed in the hostel rooms so for students from the cool hills it was quite a problem. The hostel food was not palatable; the water to be drawn from a well, tasteless; the mosquitoes and bed bugs most irritating and their bites most painful. After a month or so my brother had had enough! He wrote home to us a woeful letter describing the place as if it were Dante's Inferno. Naturally, when Ma heard about this, with tears in her eyes, she asked us to call Amar home. An elder brother drafted a telegram to call him home and was about to send it. Buwa asked what it was and reading the draft enquired as to why it was being sent. The situation was explained. All he did was to tear up the draft telegram and throw the pieces into the waste paper basket. He said that if Amar came back without completing his B.T. his younger brothers and sisters and other relatives would never go to Santiniketan for their further studies. "There are hundreds of students studying at Rabindranath Tagore's world famous Visva Bharati University at Santiniketan", he said. "People come from foreign countries to study there. If they can manage, why can't your brother?" That was all! The question of calling Amar home was dropped like a hot brick and instead we wrote him a long letter glorifying the beauty and fame of Santiniketan and encouraging him to complete the course. Net result—although Amar nearly died of malaria there, he passed the B.T. Examination brilliantly. I followed him and more than a dozen relatives went to study various disciplines at Santiniketan subsequently; all of us did very well. The Pradhans left their image at Santiniketan as good, hardworking students. Had Buwa

been a weak father influenced by wife and children, he would have recalled Amar and maybe spoilt his future career. Amar went on to become the first M.Sc. in Education in the district of Darjeeling; later he served as the Bursar of the Dr. Grahams Homes, at Kalimpong, the famous school where we were taken in as the first Indian students, and was one of the best Bursars that it ever had. His untimely death at the age of 35 was a great loss to the family, the school and most of all to Buwa; for Buwa saw in Amar a strong spirit like his own; a spirit with the urge for progress, the urge to do something, to be somebody and to leave behind a name in this world after death.

Buwa believed strongly in the dignity of labour. He did not want "sahibs" and "memsahibs" in the house, and he did not want us to be dependent on domestic help. Once when I was doing my graduate course, as I was leaving for college all dressed up as a collegian in suit and tie, he looked me up and down and said, "Indramani, I want you to bring me a nice bunch of *rayako sag* (leaves of a plant related to the mustard family relished by the Nepalese as a leafy vegetable). In the kitchen garden there was a plot full of tender, healthy *rayako sag* of which he was fully aware, but I did not have the courage to tell him so. I always carried a big sling-bag of college textbooks when going to college. After college I walked back with my friends upto the bazaar and then telling them that I had important work to do, took a sidelane to the place where this *rayako sag* was available. With bag over one shoulder and a bunch of *rayako sag* under the other arm, I hurried home, all the time looking around surreptitiously lest I should meet any of my college friends. Me fully dressed in suit and tie, with a bunch of *rayako sag* under my arm would have been a great joke for them. When I reached home, seeing the big bunch of *sag* under my arm all Buwa said was, "Good, this *sag* is going to taste delicious. There is a lot of *sag* in the kitchen garden but I wanted to see whether by wearing a tie and suit you had become a pucca sahib and had forgotten the dignity of labour." We were taught to carry or help to carry our coal, timber, building material, press material and everything from the main road to our home at Shyam Cottage which was way down in the valley. He would always

say "don't be servant-minded" and seems to have foreseen a time when it would be difficult to get servants, a problem which racked the West and is now at our door. But we are well prepared and can manage efficiently without the help of servants, thanks to his strict training.

To us, his children, Buwa always looked serious. He seldom had a smile on his face when we were about. It was always serious talk with him and no matter how long the lecture, for it was mostly one-sided, we never sat down in his presence. Even if what he said riled us, and it often did, to answer back was a step that we rarely took in his presence, for he would not stand backchat from anyone in the house and the consequence of giving him backchat was not every pleasant. Often he said things to make us angry and to hurt our pride in order to shake us up to do something, for he believed that often an irritant was necessary to get the human machinery to move forward, and make a success of life. In our presence he was always like a drill sergeant in the presence of his troop and the troop would always be alert and at attention in his presence. He did, however, have a lighter side to his serious nature. When he was with his literary friends the sitting room would be filled with laughter and he could be heard relating anecdotes which caused this laughter. The lighter side to his nature is seen again and again in some of his works. He might have felt, as we all do at times, that the children would take advantage of him if he showed this lighter side of his nature and that he would lose control over them. It was only towards the last 15 to 20 years of his life that we were able to approach him with some ease and comfort. One reason being that by then all of us were working independently and successfully and he was quite happy with our progress, though he seldom ever said so to our faces. He was never demonstrative in his love and affection, but little gestures at times and a few words expressing his satisfaction at something well done by us was all we got, but it meant the world to us; it meant that he cared.

It is said that parents are fonder of their grandchildren than of their own children; "that the interest is more dear to them

than the principal". This fact was often seen in Buwa. He hardly ever played with his own children, but with the grandchildren he would spend a lot of time, carrying the smallest in his arms, letting them play around him in his sitting room and bedroom or romp around him on the playground; feeding them with titbits from his plate, singing to them and telling them stories. He watched them growing and even accepted with grace some of their bold and unexpected answers to his questions and their often confusing questions. He did not however, like spoilt and pampered children, who always cried and clung onto their mothers' sarees. He liked them to be bold and independent. It was when they were disobedient, unmannerly and unruly or had some bad habits that he was strict with them and with their parents. He was fond of the grown up grandchildren and spent much more time with them than he ever did with his own children. Of course, he had much more time for these leisures then. But those grandchildren too, had to be on their best behaviour in his presence as also in their daily lives, for Buwa was well informed about the activities of every member of the family and nothing escaped his notice. He would always say, "I am watching", and this kept everyone alert.

I think that in the ultimate analysis we feared and respected rather than loved Buwa for a longer period of his life; for love is a human emotion that must be reciprocal between human beings in order to be effective, and must be demonstrative at times. Buwa, having been brought up in a big joint family in which demonstrative love was lacking and life meant hard work with little time for its finer aspects, carried this life-style over to his own family. He felt that to spare the rod would mean spoiling the child, though he hardly had occasion to use the rod - one rebuke and it had the effect of a whiplash. But we all respected him as we would a great teacher; and he was respected by all relatives and there were many, by the Nepali public at large and by many a great Indian and European who came in contact with him. We, as his children, often yearned for a demonstration of his fatherly affection, but they came rarely. He did, however, bring up his twelve children well and taught us to be disciplined, hard workers and to stand-up independently

in society. He helped us when he saw that we really needed help and watched our progress. He was respected by the society and this in turn brought respect for the whole family. With all his little human failings as a father, he was a great success in performing the essential patriarchal duties namely, the effective bringing up of his children to become assets to both family and society; a father of whom every child was proud, for he did nothing that would make us ashamed of him, but rather everything to elevate the name of the family. Towards the end he was much softer with the members of the family. He would tell us to sit down when we were in his presence and he would chat with us. The affection as children that we were hardly able to give him earlier was beginning to bud and bloom; but Death came suddenly and snatched him away from us.

## *The End*

The end came suddenly—too sudden! Parasmani had always been healthy both physically and mentally, except for his gout from which he suffered up to the age of about 70 years. A slight cough at times is all that troubled him towards the end. Parasmani was an honest and straightforward man. He spent the major part of his life working for the development and upliftment of the Nepali language and community in the district of Darjeeling. Because of the jealousies and frailties of human nature, however, a nasty event occurred towards the end of his honourable life which shattered his mental health. He was restless and came down to Siliguri for a change at the end of January 1986. His son Nagendramani Pradhan who had been with him and helped him most in his long struggle for the recognition of the Nepali language was at Siliguri. The two of them talked about their favourite subject, namely, the Nepali language and its literature. Nagendramani saw that his father was mentally upset and tried to lead him down memory lane to pleasanter thoughts and experiences; questioning him about the great events of his life, his meetings with great personalities, the proud moments of his honours and other subjects close to his heart. Parasmani had brought with him some work which he had to complete soon for the Sahitya Akademi and even on the day he arrived at Siliguri, after a few hours with his second son and a little rest, he sat down to work.

Parasmani was quite a gourmet, as some of his anecdotes prove. He enjoyed his food and the three lady members of the house who were with him at the time were glad to fulfil his gastronomic wishes. The next day he rose early as was his wont. A light breakfast, some writing work; a chat with his second son, a walk on the terrace and then lunch. He had put in a request for a special Bengali dish called “murighanta”, a stew of fish head cooked with mung dal (a lentil) and vegetables. He

said that the murighanta was good but that lauka should have been used instead of cauliflower to give the murighanta a better taste. Ever a strict teacher, he never gave full marks to anybody, for he always saw room for improvement. Towards the evening the ladies were sitting on the verandah, knitting. They had a pattern book open at a picture of a little child. Seeing the picture he asked whether the children were coming from Darjeeling. In his voice was the clear note of expectation and excitement. He was disappointed when he was told that it was just a photo of a knitting pattern. Later he asked me about the welfare of his youngest son's children. It appeared that he wanted to have the innocent little grandchildren and great-grandchildren around him and we decided to call them down the next day. At about 7.30 p.m. after a light meal he retired to bed. His granddaughter Anita made him comfortable, tucked in his mosquito net, put on the night light and quietly left the room. We were in the next room. Suddenly my sister, Bada, got up and went to Buwa's room as she had heard him coughing. She found him sitting on the sofa. He wanted the fan and lights on. Bada put them on, saw the situation and hurried to call us and we all rushed into his room. He was having breathing trouble. While the others got him to lie down and did what they could to ease his breathing, I ran to telephone for a doctor. It being a Sunday I could not contact a doctor and went out to fetch one. I also rang my brother at Kalimpong. By the time I returned with a doctor, however, it was too late. Buwa was no more. The doctor pronounced him dead - a severe heart attack. Two brothers from Kalimpong arrived with a doctor but it was much too late. And so on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 1986, at about 8 p.m. ended the life of a great fighter, a great man. A man who had worked with selfless devotion for the upliftment of the Nepali language and the Nepali community in the district of Darjeeling for a long period of over 70 years.

Next morning, mournfully we took his body to Kalimpong where it lay in state. Thousands of his relatives, friends, well-wishers and those who had great respect for him and considered him their "guru" came from Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Kurseong, Gangtok and other parts of the district to pay their last respects to him. On the 4th of February, 1986 his body was



taken to the mighty Teesta river in a great procession. There on its banks it was given up to the purifying flames of the crematory fire and his ashes to the bosom of the mighty Teesta river—the Teesta which in his patriotic poems he had forcefully declared was ours.

Parasmani Pradhan lived a full and meaningful life, practising what he preached, namely to work hard and so to leave behind a name in this world. An extract from his obituary published in the "Sumite" Centenary Souvenir aptly sums up his life:

"His dazzling brilliance is exhibited in the immense variety of his subjects written in impeccable and lucid language free from obscurity and verbosity. He heralded the dawn of a new social awareness amongst his people by writing innumerable books for schools, colleges and research scholars and his stupendous task in this field remains unexcelled.

A legend in his own lifetime, he is the embodiment of the well known maxim "Work is Worship". Apart from being an essayist, a grammarian, a lexicographer, linguist, poet, playwright, an editor, educationist and a father of seven sons and five daughters, he was also a keen social reformer and directed all his efforts to progressive changes in our society. A staunch votary of "self-reliance" and "self-culture", he exhorted the restless youth of today to strive harder to live a more meaningful life. He was deeply concerned with the economic well-being of the people and made his residence and fields a veritable mine of agricultural and industrial models.

In appreciation of his outstanding contribution he was awarded, conferred, elected and nominated to, honoured and felicitated by innumerable awards, degrees, distinctions, fellowships and memberships, chariot rides, publication of approbatory volumes and above all sheer respect, hero-worship and filial piety.

A "karmayogi" to the tips of his fingers, life to him was synonymous with duty - the philosophy which he relentlessly preached and practised with resolute determination, literally till the very last hour of his life."

*Postscript*

On the 20th of August, 1992, a red-letter day for all lovers of the Nepali language, Nepali was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution thus establishing its recognition as one of the major Indian languages. Dr. Parasmani Pradhan had worked for its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule for over thirty years. As he once said, "The day the first sentences are uttered in the Indian Parliament in Nepali, my mission in life would be fulfilled. That is the day I would like to leave this world - a satisfied man." He was not able to see this great day, but his intense struggle did not go in vain. May his soul rest in peace!

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## Appendix A

### Key to Pronunciation of Nouns

| <i>(Devanagari-Nepali)</i>    | <i>(Roman - English)</i>         | <i>(Roman with standard international diacritical marks)</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| आदर्श                         | Adarsha                          | Ādarśa   |
| अध्यवसाय                      | Adhyawasaya                      | Adhyawasāya  |
| अजीब साथी                     | Ajib Sathi                       | Ajīb Sathī   |
| अपतन साहित्य<br>परिषद         | Apatan Sahitya<br>Parishad       | Apatan Sāhityā<br>Parīṣad                                    |
| आफ्नो बारे                    | Aphnobarē                        | Āphnobarē  |
| आठौं अनुसूचीमा<br>नेपाली भाषा | Atau Anusuchima<br>Nepali Bhasha | Ātau Anusūcimā<br>Nepālī Bhāṣā                               |
| १०८ अमर जीवनी                 | 108 Amar Jiwani                  | 108 Amar Jīvanī  |
| बापू-बन्दना                   | Bapu Bandana                     | Bapū Bandanā   |
| भक्तमाला                      | Bhaktamala                       | Bhaktamālā   |
| भानुभक्त रामायण               | Bhanubhakta<br>Ramayān           | Bhānubhakta<br>Rāmāyan                                       |
| भानु सालिग<br>निर्माण समिति   | Bhanu Salig<br>Nirman Samiti     | Bhānu Sālig<br>Nirmān Samiti                                 |
| भारत हाम्रो                   | Bharat Hamro                     | Bhārat Hāmro   |
| भारतीय नेपालीको<br>बन्दना     | Bharatiya Nepaliko<br>Bandana    | Bhāratīya Nepālīko<br>Bandanā                                |
| भारती                         | Bharati                          | Bhāratī  |
| बिद्या                        | Bidhya                           | Bidhyā   |
| बिद्या सुन्दर                 | Bidhya Sundar                    | Bidhyā Sundar  |
| बिलायत यात्रा                 | Bilayat Yatra                    | Bilāyat Yātrā  |
| बीर पत्नीको साहस              | Bir Patniko Sahas                | Bīr Patnīko Sāhas  |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| बीरू ड्राइवर                                 | Biru Driver                                   | Bīrū Drivar                                 |
| बुद्ध चरित्र नाटक                            | Buddha Charitra<br>Natak                      | Buddha Caritra<br>Nāṭak                     |
| चक्रव्यूह                                    | Chakrabyuh                                    | Cakrabyuh                                   |
| चन्द्र                                       | Chandra                                       | Candra                                      |
| चन्द्रगुप्त                                  | Chandra Gupta                                 | Candra Gupta                                |
| चन्द्रिका                                    | Chandrika                                     | Candrikā                                    |
| छन्दोमञ्जरी                                  | Chhandomanjari                                | Chandomanjari                               |
| दार्जीलिङ जिल्लामा<br>नेपाली भाषाको<br>विकास | Darjeeling Jilama<br>Nepali Bhashako<br>Bikas | Darjīlīng Jilāmā<br>Nepālī Bhāṣāko<br>Bikās |
| देशभक्तिका गीतहरू                            | Deshbhaktika<br>Geetharu                      | Deśbhaktikā<br>Gītharū                      |
| गीता   | Geeta   | Gīta  |
| गोर्खा भाषा प्रचार                           | Gorkha Bhasha<br>Prachar                      | Gorkhā Bhāṣā<br>Pracār                      |
| गोर्खा ग्रन्थ प्रचारक<br>मण्डली              | Gorkha grantha<br>Pracharak<br>Mandali        | Gorkha Grantha<br>Pracārak<br>Mandalī       |
| गोर्खा सेवक                                  | Gorkha Sewak                                  | Gorkhā Sewak                                |
| गोर्खाली                                     | Gorkhali                                      | Gorkhālī                                    |
| गोर्खे खबर कागत्                             | Gorkhey Khabar<br>Kagat                       | Gorkhe Khabar<br>Kāgat                      |
| हाम्रो गुन्द्रुक कम्पनी                      | Hamro Gundruk<br>Company                      | Hāmro Gundruk<br>Kampanī                    |
| हरिश्चन्द्र                                  | Harischandra                                  | Hariścandra                                 |
| हिमालचुली                                    | Himalchuli                                    | Himālculī                                   |
| हिन्दी साहित्य समाज                          | Hindi Sahitya<br>Samaj                        | Hindī Sāhitya<br>Samāj                      |
| हिरण्यमयी चरित्र                             | Hiranyamaye<br>Charitra                       | Hiraṇyamayī<br>Caritra                      |

|                                   |                                       |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| इन्द्रकील पुष्पञ्जलि              | Indrakeel<br>Pushpanjali              | Indrakīl<br>Puṣpānjali               |
| ईश्वरलाई ढोग                      | Iswarlai Dhog                         | Iswarlāi Ḍhog                        |
| जयद्रथ बध                         | Jayadrath Badh                        | Jayādrath Badh                       |
| जन्मभूमि                          | Janma Bhumi                           | Janma Bhūmi                          |
| जपमाला                            | Japmala                               | Japmālā                              |
| कञ्चनजङ्गा                        | Kanchenjunga                          | Kaṅcanjuṅgā                          |
| काठे झाँकी                        | Kate Zakri                            | Kāṭhe Jhānkri                        |
| खोलो                              | Kholo                                 | Kholo                                |
| क्वाँटी                           | Kwati                                 | Kwānti                               |
| मदन पुरस्कार गुठी                 | Madan Puruskar<br>Guthi               | Madan Puraskār<br>Gūṭhī              |
| माधवी                             | Madhavi                               | Mādhavī                              |
| महाभारत नाटक                      | Mahabharat Natak                      | Mahābhārat Nāṭak                     |
| मैले चिनेको समजी                  | Maile Chineko<br>Samji                | Maile Cineko<br>Samjī                |
| मानिस                             | Manis                                 | Mānis                                |
| मातृभाषा                          | Matribhasha                           | Matribhāṣā                           |
| नव-ज्योति                         | Nau-Jyoti                             | Nav Jyoti                            |
| नेपाली भाषाको<br>उत्पत्ति र विकास | Nepali Bhāshako<br>Utpati ra Bikas    | Nepālī Bhasako<br>Utpati ra Bikās    |
| नेपाली भाषा र<br>साहित्यको विवरण  | Nepali Bhasha ra<br>Sahityako Vivaran | Nepālī Bhāṣā ra<br>Sāhityako Vivaraṇ |
| नेपाली हस्तलेख                    | Nepali Hasatlekh                      | Nepālī Hasatlekh                     |
| नेपाली साहित्य<br>सम्मेलन         | Nepali Sahitya<br>Sammelan            | Nepālī Sāhitya<br>Samelan            |
| नेपाली व्याकरण                    | Nepali Vyakran                        | Nepālī Vyākran                       |
| नेपाली भाषा<br>प्रकाशनी समिति     | Nepali Bhasha<br>Prakashini Samiti    | Nepālī Bhāṣa<br>Prakāsinī Samiti     |
| पागलमान                           | Pagalman                              | Pāgalmyan                            |

|                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| पाँच पौरखी पुरूष रत्न                | Panch Paurakhi<br>Purush Ratna              | Pañc Paurakhī<br>Purūṣh Ratna                |
| पाइप मास्टर                          | Pipe Master                                 | Paip Māṣṭar                                  |
| प्रभु प्रशंसा                        | Prabhu Prasansa                             | Prabhu Prasāmsā                              |
| प्रार्थना                            | Prathna                                     | Prāthnā                                      |
| रामको नाम                            | Ramko Nam                                   | Rāmko Nām                                    |
| राष्ट्रीय भावनाका<br>नेपाली कविताहरू | Rashtriya Bhawanaka<br>Nepali<br>Kawitaharu | Rāṣṭrīya Bhāwanāka<br>Nepālī<br>Kawitalāhārū |
| रत्नवाली                             | Ratnawali                                   | Ratnāwālī                                    |
| रत्नश्री सुवर्ण पदक                  | Ratna Shree<br>Suvarna Padak                | Ratna Śrī<br>Suvarṇa Padak                   |
| रोचक संस्मरण                         | Rochak<br>Sansmaran                         | Rochak<br>Saṁsmaraṇ                          |
| सफलता प्राप्त गर्ने<br>उपाय          | Safalta Prapta<br>Garne Upai                | Safaltā Prāpta<br>Garne Upai                 |
| समस्या पूर्ति                        | Samashya Purti                              | Samashyā Pūrti                               |
| सम्पादकको<br>बिचार                   | Sampadakko<br>Bichar                        | Sampādakko<br>Bicār                          |
| शारदाष्टक स्तोत्र                    | Sardastak Stotra                            | Śārdāṣṭak Stotra                             |
| साढे सातको कथा                       | Sare Satko Katha                            | Saḍhe Sātko Kathā                            |
| सरकारी कामकाज<br>गर्ने विधि          | Sarkari Kamkaj<br>Garne Bidi                | Sarkārī Kāmkāj<br>Garne Bidhi                |
| साउँ अक्षर                           | Sau Akchar                                  | Sau Akchar                                   |
| सावित्री सत्यवान                     | Sawitri Satyawan                            | Sāwitṛī Satyawān                             |
| सिकारू कविप्रति                      | Sikaru Kavi Prati                           | Sikārū Kavi Prati                            |
| सिता बनबास                           | Sita Banabas                                | Sitā Banabās                                 |
| श्रुतबोध                             | Srutabodh                                   | Śrutabodh                                    |
| श्री दर्पण                           | Stree Darpan                                | Śrī Darpan                                   |
| सुन्दर कुमार                         | Sundar Kumar                                | Sundar Kumār                                 |

|                         |                              |                            |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| सुन्दरी                 | Sundari                      | Sundarī                    |
| स्वदेशको बचाउको निमित्त | Swadeshko<br>Bachauko Nimita | Swadeśko<br>Bacāuko Nimita |
| स्वदेशको पुकार          | Swadeshko Pukar              | Swadeśko Pukār             |
| टिपन-टापन               | Tipan Tapan                  | Ṭipan Ṭāpan                |
| उद्यम                   | Udhyam                       | Udhyam                     |
| वर्षा                   | Warsha                       | Warṣā                      |
| युगलांगुरीय             | Yugalanguriya                | Yugalāṅguriya              |
| योजना                   | Yojna                        | Yojnā                      |

## Appendix B

### Key to Pronunciation of Names of persons, places, things, etc.

| <i>(Devnagri-Nepali)</i> | <i>(Roman - English)</i> | <i>(Roman with standard international diacritical marks)</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| आदिकवि                   | Adikavi                  | Adikavi  |
| अगमसिंह गिरी             | Agam Singh Giri          | Agam Siṅgh Girī  |
| अहिंसा परमो धर्म         | Ahimsa Parmo Dharma      | Ahiṁsā Parmo Dharma  |
| अमर                      | Amar                     | Amar   |
| आसाम                     | Assam                    | Āsām   |
| बाबुलाल                  | Babulal                  | Bābulāl  |
| बाहुन                    | Bahun                    | Bāhun  |
| बालकृष्ण पोखरेल          | Balkrishna Pokhrel       | Bālkriṣṇa Pokhrel  |
| बनदेवी                   | Bandevi                  | Bandevi  |
| ब्यानर्जी                | Banerjee                 | Byānerjī   |
| बंकिमचन्द्र              | Bankim Chandra           | Baṅkim Candra  |
| बंगला                    | Bengali                  | Baṅglā   |



|                  |                   |                  |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| बनारस            | Benaras           | Banāras          |
| भाग्यमणि         | Bhagyamani        | Bhāgyamaṇi       |
| भाइचन्द          | Bhaichand         | Bhāicand         |
| भाकशु            | Bhakshu           | Bhāksū           |
| भाङ              | Bhang             | Bhāṅg            |
| भिक्षाचार्या     | Bhikshacharya     | Bhikchācārya     |
| भीमबहादुर        | Bhimbahadur       | Bhīmbahādur      |
| भोजपुरी          | Bhojpuri          | Bhojpurī         |
| भूटान            | Bhutan            | Bhūtān           |
| भोटिया           | Bhutia            | Bhotiyā          |
| बिम्बसार         | Bimbasar          | Bimbasar         |
| बीरेन्द्र सुब्बा | Birendra Subba    | Bīrendra Subba   |
| बिश्वास          | Biswas            | Biśwās           |
| बोस              | Bose              | Bos              |
| ब्रम्हा          | Brahma            | Bralunā          |
| बर्धवान          | Burdwan           | Bardwan          |
| बर्मा            | Burma             | Barmā            |
| चन्द्र           | Chandra           | Candra           |
| चारस             | Charas            | Cāras            |
| च्याटर्जी        | Chatterjee        | Cyāterjī         |
| छेत्री           | Chettri           | Chetrī           |
| चिन्तामणि        | Chintamani        | Cintāmani        |
| दम्बर            | Damber            | Dambar           |
| दार्जीलिङ        | Darjeeling        | Dārjīliṅg        |
| दशेहरा           | Dashera           | Daśerā           |
| दया              | Daya              | Dayā             |
| दीनानाथ सापकोटा  | Deenanath Sapkota | Dinānāth Sāpkoṭā |
| देहरादून         | Dehradun          | Dehrādūn         |

|                  |                   |                  |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| देवकुमारी सिन्हा | Deokumari Sinha   | Deokumārī Sinha  |
| धर्मसाला         | Dharamsala        | Dharamsālā       |
| धरणीधर शर्मा     | Dharnidhar Sharma | Dharnīdhar Sarmā |
| धुव              | Dhurba            | Dhurwa           |
| डोग्री           | Dogri             | Ḍogṛī            |
| डुवर्स           | Dooars            | Ḍuwars           |
| दुर्योधन         | Duryodhan         | Duryodhan        |
| धृतराष्ट्र       | Dhritarastra      | Dhritarāṣṭra     |
| गजाधर            | Gajadhar          | Gajādhar         |
| गंगा             | Ganga             | Gaṅgā            |
| गान्तोक          | Gangtok           | Gaṅtok           |
| गाँजा            | Ganja             | Gañjā            |
| गोवर्धन          | Gowardhan         | Gowardhan        |
| गोरखनाथ          | Gorakhnath        | Gorakhnāth       |
| गोपाल सिंह       | Gopal Singh       | Gopāl Sīṅgh      |
| गोर्खा           | Gorkha            | Gorkhā           |
| घुम              | Ghoom             | Ghum             |
| गुरूंग           | Gurung            | Gurūṅg           |
| हर्कजङ्ग         | Harkajung         | Harkajuṅg        |
| हरिसिंह थापा     | Hari Singh Thapa  | Hari Sīṅgh Thāpā |
| हर्कधोज          | Harkadhoj         | Harkadhoj        |
| हिन्दी           | Hindi             | Hindī            |
| होङ्गकोङ्ग       | Hongkong          | Hoṅgkoṅg         |
| इन्द्र सुन्दास   | Indra sundas      | Indra Sundas     |
| जलपाइगढ़ी        | Jalpaiguri        | Jalpaigaḍhī      |
| जितामणि          | Jeetamani         | Jitāmāṇi         |
| जोम्बे पावल      | Jombe Paul        | Jombe Paul       |
| कादम्बिनी        | Kadambini         | Kādambinī        |

|                    |                           |                        |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| काली               | Kali                      | Kālī                   |
| कालिम्पोङ          | Kalimpong                 | Kālimpoṅg              |
| कालुसिंह           | Kalusingh                 | Kālusiṅgh              |
| कमला नेहरू         | Kamala Nehru              | Kamalā Nehrū           |
| कमल दीक्षित        | Kamal Dikshit             | Kamal Dikcit           |
| कान्ता             | Kanta                     | Kāntā                  |
| कर्ण               | Karna                     | Karna                  |
| कर्मयोगी           | Karmayogi                 | Karmayogī              |
| काशीराज            | Kashiraj                  | Kāśīrāj                |
| काठमाण्डौ          | Kathmandu                 | Kāṭhmanāndau           |
| कविशिरोमणि         | Kavishiromani             | Kaviśiromaṇi           |
| काजीमान कन्दोडवा   | Kaziman<br>Kondongwa      | Kājiman<br>Kandoṅgwā   |
| खासी               | Khasi                     | Khāsī                  |
| खसकुरा             | Khaskura                  | Khaskurā               |
| खुकुरी             | Khukuri                   | Khukurī                |
| कोकनीज             | Konkonese                 | Koinkanīj              |
| कृष्णचन्द्र आर्याल | Krishṇa Chandra<br>Arjyal | Kṛiṣṇa Candra<br>Āryal |
| कुमारी जसमाया      | Kumari Jasmaya            | Kumārī Jasmāyā         |
| खरसाङ              | Kurseong                  | Kharsāṅg               |
| लक्ष्मीमाया        | Laxmimaya                 | Lakchinīmāyā           |
| लेप्चा             | Lepcha                    | Lepcā                  |
| लिम्बु             | Limbu                     | Limbu                  |
| मदन पुरस्कार       | Madan Puruskar            | Madan Puraskār         |
| महाबिहार           | Mahabihar                 | Mahābihār              |
| महाराज             | Maharaj                   | Mahārāj                |
| मैनागढ़ी           | Mainaguri                 | Maināgṛhī              |
| मैथिली             | Maithili                  | Maithilī               |

|                                |                                 |                                |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| मलाया                          | Malaya                          | Malāyā                         |
| मणिपुर                         | Manipur                         | Manipur                        |
| मारा                           | Mara                            | Mārā                           |
| मेघालय                         | Meghalaya                       | Meghālaya                      |
| मेहताब                         | Mehtab                          | Mehtāb                         |
| मल्ली                          | Melli                           | Malī                           |
| मेमसाहेब                       | Memsahib                        | Memsāhib                       |
| नेपाल                          | Nepal                           | Nepāl                          |
| नेपाली                         | Nepali                          | Nepālī                         |
| नेवार                          | Newar                           | Newār                          |
| निर्वाणा                       | Nirvana                         | Nirvāṇā                        |
| पादरी गंगा प्रसाद              | Padri Ganga Prasad              | Pādrī Gaṅgā Prasād             |
| पहाड़िया                       | Paharia                         | Pahāḍhiyā                      |
| पारसमणि                        | Parasmani                       | Pārasmaṇi                      |
| परशुराम रोका                   | Parsuram Roka                   | Parśurām Rokā                  |
| पासाङ गोपर्मा                  | Pasang Goparma                  | Pāsaṅ Goparmā                  |
| पाटन                           | Patan                           | Pāṭan                          |
| प्रभाकर माचवे                  | Prabhakar Machwe                | Prabhākar Mācwe                |
| प्रधान                         | Pradhan                         | Pradhān                        |
| प्रसमान                        | Prasman                         | Prasmān                        |
| पृथ्वीनारायण साह               | Prithivinarayan Shah            | Prithwīnārāyan Sāh             |
| प्रियनाथ होर                   | Priyanath Hore                  | Priyanāth Hor                  |
| पुदुङ                          | Pudung                          | Puduṅg                         |
| पण्डित गुरुराज<br>हेमराज शर्मा | Pundit Gururaj<br>Hemraj Sharma | Puṇḍit Gurūrāj<br>Hemrāj Śarmā |
| पण्डित लेखनाथ                  | Pundit Lekhnath                 | Puṇḍit Lekhnāth                |
| पुष्पमणि                       | Pushpamani                      | Puṣpamaṇi                      |
| राई                            | Rai                             | Rāī                            |
| राजस्थानी                      | Rajasthani                      | Rājasthānī                     |

|                       |                         |                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| राजशाही               | Rajshahi                | Rājśahī               |
| राम                   | Rama                    | Rāma                  |
| रामलाल अधिकारी        | Ramlal Adhikari         | Rāmlāl Adhikārī       |
| रम्फू                 | Rangpo                  | Ramphū                |
| रंगपुर                | Rangpur                 | Raṅgpur               |
| रायाको साग            | Rayako Sag              | Rāyāko Sāg            |
| साहिब                 | Sahib                   | Sāhib                 |
| शम्भु प्रसाद          | Shambhu Prasad          | Śambhu Prasād         |
| शकुनि                 | Shakuni                 | Śakuni                |
| शंखमणि                | Shankhamani             | Śaṅkhamañi            |
| संस्कृत               | Sanskrit                | Samskrit              |
| सानुमति               | Sanumati                | Sanumati              |
| सरस्वती               | Saraswati               | Saraswatī             |
| सर्दार लेडेन ला       | Sardar Laden La         | Sardar Ledan Lā       |
| सत्रजित               | Satrajit                | Satrajit              |
| शेषमणि                | Sheshmani               | Śesmani               |
| शिव                   | Shiva                   | Śiva                  |
| शिखरनाथ               | Shikharnath             | Śikharnāth            |
| श्याम                 | Shyam                   | Śyām                  |
| श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी | Shyama Prasad Mukherjee | Syāma Prasād Mukharjī |
| सिद्धार्थ             | Siddhartha              | Siddhārtha            |
| सिद्धार्थ शंकर राय    | Siddhartha Sankar Ray   | Siddhārtha Saṅkar Ray |
| सिक्किम               | Sikkam                  | Sikim                 |
| शिक्षा                | Siksha                  | Śikchā                |
| सिमकोना               | Simkona                 | Simkonā               |
| सोहनलाल               | Sohanlal                | Sohanlāl              |
| शोभा यात्रा           | Shova Yatra             | Śobhā Yātrā           |

|                               |                              |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| श्री सत्य साई बाबा            | Shree Satya Sai<br>Baba      | Śhrī Satya Sāī<br>Bābā       |
| सुब्बा देवी<br>प्रसाद सापकोटा | Subba Devi<br>Prasad Sapkota | Subbā Devi<br>Prasād Sāpkoṭā |
| शुद्धोधन                      | Shudhodhan                   | Śuddhodhan                   |
| सू-ध-पा                       | Su-Dha-Pa                    | Sū-Dha-Pā                    |
| सूर्य                         | Surya                        | Sūrya                        |
| सूर्य विक्रम<br>ज्वाली        | Surya Bikram<br>Gewali       | Sūrya Bīkrām<br>Gewālī       |
| सुनवार                        | Sunwar                       | Sunwār                       |
| स्वामी प्रभुद्धानन्द          | Swami Prabuddha-<br>nanda    | Swāmī Prabuddhā-<br>nanda    |
| तामंग                         | Tamang                       | Tāmaṅg                       |
| ताङता                         | Tangta                       | Tāṅgtā                       |
| टिस्टा                        | Teesta                       | Tistā                        |
| थारू                          | Tharu                        | Thārū                        |
| टिबेटन                        | Tibetan                      | Tibetan                      |
| तीर्थप्रसाद                   | Tirthaprasad                 | Tīrthaprasād                 |
| त्रिभुवन                      | Tribhuwan                    | Tribhuwan                    |
| छिरींग                        | Tshering                     | Chirīṅg                      |
| तुलसी                         | Tulsi                        | Tulsi                        |
| उर्दू                         | Urdu                         | Urdū                         |
| येन सिंह                      | Yen Singh                    | Yen Siṅg                     |
| युधिष्ठिर                     | Yudhistar                    | Yudhiṣṭir                    |

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| सजिलो नेपाली व्याकरण                              | 1935 | नेपाली सजिलो साहित्य (भाग 1) | 1933 |
| नेपाली व्याकरण-भारती                              | 1955 | ऐ० (भाग 2)                   | 1933 |
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| प्रवेशिका व्याकरण र रचना                          | 1955 | ऐ० (भाग 4)                   | 1935 |
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| नेपाली रचना भारती                                 | 1954 | दोस्रो शिक्षा                | 1967 |
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| नेपाली मुहावरा                                    | 1954 | नेपाली साहित्य कथामाला       | 1925 |
|   |      | ने० साहित्य कथा (भाग 1)      | 1935 |
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|   |      | ऐ० (भाग 3)                   | 1936 |
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| नेपाली पहिलो किताब                                | 1921 | नेपाली कविता पाठ (भाग 1)     | 1957 |
| नेपाली साउँ अक्षर                                 | 1922 | ऐ० (भाग 2)                   | 1957 |
| नेपाली साहित्य (पहिलो भाग)                        | 1923 | कवि र कविता                  | 1957 |
| ऐ० (दोस्रो भाग)                                   | 1923 | बटुल-बाटुल (कविता संग्रह)    | 1957 |
| ऐ० (तेस्रो भाग)                                   | 1924 | बीरू डाइभर                   | 1957 |
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| ऐ० (पाँचौ भाग)                                    | 1935 |                              |      |
| ऐ० (छैटौ भाग)                                     | 1935 |                              |      |

\* सह लेखक-श्री टीकाराम शर्मा

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