CHAPTER FIVE.

A novel is something more than a story or a narrative. Like the dramatist the novelist also creates the illusion of reality in a novel but thereby doesn't bring forth a photographic representation of facts. There lies the necessity for selection of different elements of novel like - plot, characters etc. Again, the novel deals with a certain problem of life. All these reflect the author's own outlook on life. In the words of W.H. Hudson:

"..... directly or indirectly, and whether the writer himself is conscious of it or not, every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and of some of the problems of life; that is, it must so exhibit incidents, characters, passions, motives, as to reveal more or less distinctly the way in which the author look out upon the world and his general attitude towards it." 1.

The changes and developments of a novelist's criticism of life can be noticed through his different works. It is also possible that the same philosophy may be expressed with the help of different themes, plots, characters and other devices in a number of novels by the same writer or different authors.

Tarasenkar's interpretation of life, as we find in his novels under review is not necessarily detached from his other works. His outlook in these novels is a part of and complementary to his total philosophy of life. Still, in our present study we can not ignore and overlook his point of view as reflected in his novels concerned, because, the people and the background of Radh left a permanent impression upon him in a positive manner at different stages of his literary life.

It is true that, Tarasenkar's vast experience of common life, including that of remote tribes and aboriginal groups living throughout the region of Radh evoked in him an inclination for writing on local matters. But he has adhered to this region not only to write regional literature or bring out the 'chronicle' of Radh, but at

the same time he had the urge to realise the inner significance of human life with its unending mysteries. And he had the scope for observing varieties of people here, in Radh.

In a conversation with a litterateur, Tarasankar himself has disclosed -

"It is my indomitable urge for realising the deeper mysteries of life that has prompted me to write my stories and novels." 2.

As a result his point of view is well-conspicuous in his writings. We can here quote an appropriate comment by Bhudeb Ghoudhury -

"The best element in Tarasankar's literature is the tangible philosophy of life underlying his works - which manifest the historical aspect of his creative urge as well as his artistic trends." *3.

Tarasankar appeared in Bengali literature with an outlook on life which was remarkably different from his contemporary Bengalee writers and he himself was conscious about it. With a reference to the tone of dissatisfaction and revolt in others' writings he says -

"I appeared in the arena of Bengali literature with a natural view and realisation which were different from that of others. I attempted to express my ideas first in Caitali Ghurmi. Again I could draw the attention of my readers with the same philosophy expressed in novel ways through Dhatrdebaata and Kalindi." 4.

Tarasankar is remarkably an artist with a rural bias. Though he spent a considerable part of his life in Calcutta and also wrote on different subjects of city-life, still he could not, or even did not like to, develop a subtle, sophisticated and sharp urban mind.

This fact becomes more clear when we find that he is not at home in his stories and novels on town life. His flow of imagination as well as expression in such writings

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3. The Bengali Version :- v v v. Yate Srijankarmer AitMāsik gum eban prakaraṇgata svabhāb duii aki saike dhara pādeche.
are obviously retarded. Here the plots and characters are not so artistic and impressive as these are in his regional writings. (N.B.) The rural mind of Tarasankar is conspicuously exposed in the novel 'Nāgarik' which stepped half-way while being published in the journal 'Purbasa'.

In the words of Narayan Gangopadhyaya

"In writings Tarasankar did not like to go out of his familiar region as far as he could. Wherever he has crossed this region his imagination has shrunk and stiffened and the usual lucidity is missing in such compositions, e.g. Jhad O Jhanda Pātā, Manvantar." 5.

The following remark by Haraprasad Mitra also sounds very reasonable -

"It was very likely that, feeling the differences in philosophy of him and the ultramodern, pre-western urban writers of Calcutta abhorrent to life, Tarasankar would develop a mental reaction." 6.

Bearing these important points in our mind we shall now trace the view of the writer as reflected in the novels based on Rādhā.

In many of his novels Tarasankar has shown the great changes in the age-old social pattern, customs and even morality that have taken place in the people of this region during the first half of this century and the problems arising out of these changes.

We find, here, the picture of the conflicts in different spheres and section of rural society - between the zamindars and Ryets and Mahajans and Industrialists, the village community, the Panchayat and the individual, the old and new and so on.

N.B.: Srikumar Bandopadhyay considers Tarasankar's Manvantar and Uttarayān, two Calcutta-based novels, to be utterly unsuccessful. Manvantar is 'only a collection of raw materials for a novel and not a finished art.' (P.652. BS UD) Uttarayān 'is to a great extent loose juxtaposition of small incidents, without any compact effect'. (P.590 BSUD)

Apparently, Tarasankar may be accused of anachronism in depicting the lives of the zamindars, as he has shown his sympathy for the feudal system that is regarded as a stigma to the human society and is abandoned.

We cannot fully ignore this point, nor we can accept it totally.

Tarasankar, with his experience and knowledge of the life of the landlords, could not hide his real feelings for them. They had their own problems which also deserved writer's consideration. He has drawn their pathetic condition in their vain attempts to hold on prestige and aristocracy while their resources and power were fast diminishing. His sympathy for Sibnath in Destrudeba and Indra Roy in Kalindi can easily be noticed.

It is true that, a tone of painful ruminations can be perceived in his stories of the by-gone grandeur and glories of the zamindars, but his discontent is more prominent in his short stories like Jalsaghar than in his novels. In these novels he has viewed the deterioration and defeat of the zamindars in the background of historical and social events.

Tarasankar had a close look on the rural life of Radha. Furthermore, as he was an active member of our National Congress he had an eye to the political events and their consequences in India after the First World War. For this reason he has not failed to note the trends in the village society of his own area in his time.

Tarasankar could easily understand, even in his early literary life, that with the advent of time, Feudalism was approaching its end. Unhesitatingly he has shown the shrewdness, heartlessness, pomp and luxury of the zamindars by the side of their virtues (e.g. Kalindi).

In Kalindi the author has shown the various ways of oppressions upon the poor Santals by Bimal Mukherjee, the Sugar Mill owner. And observing these, Ahindra says to Amal - "This oppression of our time is not much different from the tyranny of the zamindars. The methods may be different but for ages the rich and strong have in many ways exploited, deprived and maltreated the poor and weak." 7

7. P. Kalindi.
Again, listening to the recitation of Goldsmith’s “Deserted Village” from Amal, Ahindra feels—

“It resembles the picture of the Santals. Amal! We must save them, the bold peasantry is to be protected at any cost.” 8.

Similarly, Sihnath, on many occasions, has referred to the dreadful sides of Feudalism. Sihnath compares the condition of the common people of rural Bengal with the lot of French proletaritate at the time of French Revolution. He feels, the landlards have for ages taken away food from the weak and poor and he also, as a son of a landlord, himself shares the blame.

At the end of ‘Kalindi’ Ahindra has been arrested on charge of conspiracy with the Russian Socialists. This incident may be considered as an expiation of sins of his predecessors, i.e. the whole class of zamindars. Sihnath has donated the remains of his estate to the Ashram of Gesuibaba. Defeated Indra Roy has gone to Kasi leaving Raykata for ever.

Through Tarasankar shares the feelings of the zamindars, continuance of the system of Landlordism has never been desired by him. Nor he has supported the attitude and behaviour of the Zamindars. Rather he has shown their defeat and retreat.

But his sympathy for them is nothing to be blamed. Even a rogue may deserve attention of a writer and touch our heart in a literary composition. Jivnanda in Sarat- chandra’s ‘Devi Pren’ draws readers’ sympathy inspite of his unrestrained sensual nature. In the words of a well-known writer of our time—

“He is not a true litterateur who is not moved at the sight of departure of something magnificent, gorgeous, festive — be it good or bad. He is not a writer who does not heave a sigh when he finds even a dead python or a tiger on his way. Every artist will feel pain by seeing a banyan tree uprooted by a hurricane, under which the bandits took shelter to distribute their booty, the Sanyasis performed their worship and prayers, in the holes of which venomous snakes lived and on the branches of which thousands of birds rested and ate its fruits.” 9.

8. P. Kalindi.
In fact, it is clear from Tarasankar's regional novels that he had some soft feelings not only for the zamindars but also for everything old, like social set-up, customs and so on. He has observed that, in old days, in our rural life men had some attachment towards others, and cooperation and good senses existed. So he feels some sort of pain to say good-bye to all good old things.

In Hasuli Baker Upakatha the writer's sympathy is, evidently, with aged Banwari who tries utmost to cling to all old customs and style of living. The writer's nostalgia is perceptible in many parts of Ganadebata, Pancagram, and Hasuli Baker Upakatha.

Let us take an example -
At the end of Hasuli Baker Upakatha, we find that Karali and his followers go back to Hasuli Bak and dig up the sand to get back their old village. The novelist says - 'From their strong-built small railway quarters they look at Hasuli Bak (with deep feelings).'

Tarasankar's tender attitude towards the 'old' is divulged in the feelings of Jatin in Ganadebata:

"The reception from the old and dying culture appeared to be very pleasant but touching just as a modern man is overwhelmed with the sad farewell to the decaying tradition in spite of its great differences with the modern."**

Still, Tarasankar has, subtly, shown in the pages of his novels that, the old had the root of its dissolution within itself. He admits that, static and stagnant life with its unchanging conventionalities is likely to disappear as it cannot cope with the need of time. (N.3.).

Selling away of idol by Dwarik Choudhury and loss of his importance in the village with the deterioration in

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* Ref. P.41  H.B.U.K.
** Ref. P.180, Ganadebata.
N.B.: Tarasankar has shown in course of story of the novels, the following causes of defeat of the zamindars of Radh.
(a) Disputes amongst the increasing number of heirs with their diminishing income. (b) Heavy expenses owing to frequent involvement in legal suits among themselves as well as with the Industrialists & capitalists.
(c) Disproportionate indulgence to their traditional luxurious ways of living. Sitaram says in Sandipan Pathasha "Though the days have gone worse for the zamindars, Ma has not allowed any cut in the formalities & expenses of the ceremonies and festivals. Hence, the financial condition of Debu & Sibu has deteriorated. " (Ref. P.257. S.P.)
his economic condition, Nayaratna's departure from his ancestral village, throwing away of sacred thread by Bishvanath, axing on the banian tree of Kartababa and removal of bamboos from Basbadi before the very eyes of Banwari, death of Kishorebabu, a follower of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda at the hand of Kapildeb – a political worker of modern times – all these indicate failure of traditional values.

Tarasankar does not disagree that, some new men have arrived with their new outlook to strike upon and win over the time-worn pattern of society with all its prejudices. At the same time he admits that life implies advancement and shows the victory of elevated and new life-force. In the strife between Param and Banwari roguish Param has to submit to Banwari who with his sincerity and tolerance represents comparatively higher ethics of life. Even the entire Atpara-class becomes eager to mix with the Behara class who are more disciplined and co-ordinated. Again, Karali with his spirit of adventure, open and progressive mind and profound self-confidence wins over Banwari who cannot shake off his conservative outlook and prejudices. Even Banwari's wife leaves him and chooses Karali as her companion.

We can also mark that, Ahindra's dedication to Communism, Karali's revolt and adventure, Aniruddha's refusal to obey old traditions and going to town – all these are important to the novelist as some facts of changed time, but nothing more than that. He does not see any new possibility and success in them.

Ravindranath Gupta has, therefore, aptly remarked –

"In 'Pancagram' and 'Ganadebata' the story of sad negation is more prominent than any care for accepting the new facts of the society."

Tarasankar has always viewed the modern in the light of the departing old. No doubt our attention has been drawn to the points on which Aniruddha Karmakar and Karali break conventions and Aniruddha disregard the village-panhayat, but we do not get any clear picture of their ideals. After all, refusal to conform with the existing system is a negative approach, though there may be courage and firmness. The novelist does not mention whether they have any positive clear notion in other sphere.

Actually, Tarasankar, in these novels, is not prepared to welcome the modern which has not proved its sincerity and honesty. As a political worker probably he observed that between 1922 and 1936 - from the commencement of Mussolini's rule in Italy till Japan's invasion of China - Dictatorship was seen established in Italy, Germany and Spain in the name of Socialism. Particularly in British India with the failures of various political reforms and our different movements for independence, a sense of frustration filled the hearts of many. So, there were reasons for viewing with suspicion the new trends in political and social sphere.

Ahindra's political utterances express writer's trust on and expectations from Socialistic ideals. But later, Tarasankar noticed that, communist activities in our country was based on negative outlook and therefore weak and hollow. He did not believe that, 'Transition comes out of Revolution' - as has been proclaimed by Kapildeb and Santi in his novel Kālātar. The premature, unusual and unexpected death of Biswanath indirectly reveals Tarasankar's partial and incomplete view of such communists.

Though Tarasankar had practical idea and experience of oppression and exploitation and was engaged in political and social activities he did not consider Marxism as the only way of eradicating poverty and social problems.

It appears from the comments and indications of labourers' revolt at the end of 'Caitali Ghumi' that Tarasankar had faith in revolution and communism. But from his own statement in 'Amr Sāhitya Jivan' it becomes clear that he was never attracted in Marxism nor could accept materialism. He only realised Economic Determinism as an established truth.

It is noticed that Tarasankar did not possess that dispassionate outlook of a scientist or a physician which made Manik Bandopadhyay faithful to Marxism. Tarasankar's political and social view is more emotional and subjective than objective.

Most probably this trait influenced Binay Sarkar in his following observation: -

"There is neither Marxism, nor Socialism in Tarasankar's writings but romanticism - a fascination for the rural life and an emotion of humanitarianism can, however, be traced." 11.

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This remark appears to be unsympathetic and too hasty. The presence of emotion for a part of the distressed humanity cannot be justified to be the author's submission to romanticism.

Sashibhusan Dasgupta has also stressed upon the romantic predominance in Tarasankar's regional novels, as is revealed in the following quotation: -

"An attachment to the unknown, far off regions, an attempt to find out something noble in the trifling, or a longing for the rare, remote and obscure things - all these elements in his novels take away the reader from his unpleasant surroundings and thus bring a relief. ********

Still then, why there is a tendency to establish Tarasankar as a realist? I think it is because of his inherent and genuine contemporaneousness and consequently the pleasure that one easily gets from his literature." 12.

Here we should accept a point that, proximity or distance is not the pre-condition of romance. After all, every region of the world is home to somebody. In fact, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, romance depends on the writer's point of view.

The lives of the unfamiliar Kahars, Bauris, Snake-charmers, Bedes or Jhumur Parties are drawn in many novels of Tarasankar. The urban intellectuals may consider these to be the indications of romantic attitude of the author. But our readers' unacquaintance and ignorance cannot, certainly, be the root of romantic nature of a literary piece. To come to this conclusion one must take into consideration whether Tarasankar, in depicting their lives, has set for the far off on the wings of imagination with a view to produce the delusion of mystery and prismatic beauty.

Tarasankar's own statement on this matter is noteworthy -

"It is reality that has inspired and provided me with materials to write about. My mind is not much attracted by any theory, but this real life brings out some philosophy or reveals itself as truth in my stories and novels. Most of my writings are developed on characters actually seen by me." 13.

What Tarasankar has said about Panu of Tamash Tapasya is also true for his many other characters -

"Panu is a strange man. Though he is of a very unusual nature, still with his peculiar living Panu is a reality." 14.

"The Romantic spirit can be defined as an accentuated predominance of emotional life, provoked for or directed by the exercise of imaginative vision, and in its turn stimulating or directing such exercise," 15.

A novelist, in the last analysis, can not but bring his imagination in the fore and so romanticism is not unlikely to be a part of it. Not to speak of other literary types, even a classical art is saturated with romantic spirit. In fact, as Legeuis and Casamian put in 1-

"Just as an individual memory is a latent persistence of the thing remembered, so Romanticism was ever present in the background of the classical spirit." 16.

In his regional novels Tarasankar has depicted, sometime in the line of a naturalist, the joys and sufferings of these people remote from the urbanity but real with their problems of existence. In Kalindi, Gamadebata, Pancagram, Hasuli Baker Upakatha Tarasankar has not failed to observe the social reality that the society was in a flux due to the impact of changing mode of production which in its turn result in the change of social relationship.

In Kalindi and Gamadebata we find that the introduction of mechanised system of production has adversely influenced the relation between man and man. All these factors have resulted in the 'bankruptcy of tradition'. (N.B.)

In the regional novels, Tarasankar, like a realist, has made an effort to foresee the future condition of the region he deals with. He has imagined that with the advent of industrialisation the old social set up with break up strong individuality will take place of joint community life.

16. P.999 ibid.
N.B. : Tarasankar has indirectly shown the impact of the defeat of the zamindars on rural society. Inspite of their eccentricity, whims, luxury and vanity the zamindars had some responsibilities which they could not easily shake off. They used to look after the tenants in their distress. But the newly appeared industrialists & merchants clearly betrayed their intense greed. In Industries Man is only a factor of production, i.e. Labour, nothing more than that. So, the human relation between ryots & zamindars has been totally ignored by the new class of profiteers in their dealings with Labourers.
Sometimes Tarasankar's optimism is very clear. The story of Pancagram ends around 1933 where we find Debu, the hero, speaks before Svarma of his idea of the new society where people will flourish with new hope, men and women with their respective responsibility will be able to meet up their needs. Even Durga can follow Debu and imagine the future of Pancagram, where people will have all-round prosperity - health, wealth and peace. Finishing the words Debu, on hearing the whistle of nearby factory gets up for work. This description has some significance. The society which he expects will come out of hard work and joint efforts of all concerned. That is the re-appearance of Satyayug according to Debu and Svaraj as our politicians contemplated. It will not be based on gift or slavery, but on work and exchange, as Debu clearly says. *

Though Tarasankar says - 'I dreamt of a new creation through revolution', his expectations, wherever reflected, are not the invariable outcome of his plots and characters, or the desired result of any revolutionary process shown by him.

Hence, these are coloured with his idealism and almost Utopian.

The depth of realism portrayed in Tarasankar's novels, has been questioned.

While Sarej Bandopadhyay has appreciated the social realism in Hasuli Baker Upakatha, many others feel that though Tarasankar presents the details of things in a convincing way he fails to go deep into problems, as a result these appear to be individual's own and not a social one, and in his writings social relations also remain unexplained. **'Therefore, the attribution of social realism in his novels is an exaggeration'.' ***

It is to be admitted that Tarasankar has not always been very successful in bringing out the social problems, their root and remedies in their real perspective. For example, his opinion regarding industrialisation is partial; the origin of revolutionary attitude in Anindra, Aniruddha, Karali is also unanswered. The above charge can greatly be justified with illustration, which would not be very relevant in the present study.

Probably, it will not be justified to judge his social outlook in the light of our present-day political realisation.

@ P. 77. L.S.J. (Vol.I)
Now, we conclude in the following words applied to Sir Walter Scott by E.M. Forster:

"Tarasankar grasped "the organic relationships between man and man, man and place, man and Society, and man and his past, the impersonal past of history." 17.

Most of the readers of Bengali fictions are little concerned in their practical life with the day to day life of a Kahar, a Bede, or even a Baul. So, they find these characters in Tarasankar's writings as very unfamiliar and this distance lends an enchantment. Hence, these writings appear to them as romantic out and out. But we must not forget that these people actually live and move about in Radha. Tarasankar in his descriptions of the tenets of their life has used their beliefs, practices and even their dialect and idioms without least deviations. The writer has not imposed his own imagination or ideals on them.

But, still then, in Raikamal, Kabi, Nagini Kanyar Kahini, Radha, and Hasuli Baker Upakatha certain subjects like love and passion, intrigue and a supernatural environment have of course contributed to some extent to a romantic effect on the readers in general. Large descriptive portions in Raikamal, Kabi and Nagini Kanyar Kahini create a poetic atmosphere. The very name Nagini Kanya is explicit. Still then Raikamal and Kabi, though romantic to a great extent, are based on reality. Actually Tarasankar's imagination and romantic feelings do not refuse to accept reality.

Tarasankar marked an intense impulse of life in the people of Radha variegated with different situations, feelings, emotions and activities.

His perception and attitude towards this strong physical force is clearly expressed in his following remarks as he read Premendra Mitra's 'Penagem Perte' and Sailajamanada's 'Benami Bandar - Jani O Tani' in Kallel, Jaistha, 1334.

"I felt that, the souls of the stories were full, at times almost to an excess, of physical passion. ***** True, that, life centers in the animal portion of human being, but it attains rationality through its efforts to overcome the primary emotions." 18.

He feels,

'In human being of flesh and blood, hunger and thirst flow side by side with his passion. But life flows on in its own course (without totally submitting to his physical desire)'.

Tarasankar, while disclosing the real source of 'Rasakali' - a story on Vaisnav - life of Radha, compares the physical urge with a lake on which blooms the lotus of human life.*

With an objective view Tarasankar has shown how people are dominated and fermented with their passions which are almost elemental, and meet the consequences arising out of it. He noticed the mysterious play of passion which is difficult to overcome even for a Baul (e.g. Rasikdas in R.K.) or a Sanyasi (e.g. Madhabananda in Radha).

This depiction of passion in the writings of Tarasankar and the Kallelians, may apparently seem to be common and similar. But we feel that this uninterrupted primitive force in the bucolic people of Radh as shown in Tarasankar’s works is a bit different from the suppressed and hesitant sexuality of the people of upper strata of Society.

The economic, moral and ideological crisis that developed in Bengalee urban life as an aftermath of the First World War brought a sense of decadence and frustration among the educated intelligentsia. This mental depression is reflected in modern Bengali stories and fictions in the manner which is referred to by the critics as 'an attitude of revolt of sex. (Yauna bidroher manabhab)' **

But in Tarasankar's characters the play of passion is spontaneous and more forceful than that of the so called cultured people, and not haunted by any prick of conscience and morality.

Two sides are evident in Tarasankar's view on life. As if the two-fold nature of Birbhum has influenced him inwardly. At the same time we should bear in mind the strong impact of the two distinct aspects of the spiritual culture of Radh. Pramatha Nath Bishnu has rightly pointed out that - 'The vaisnav Birbhum has influenced him in his 'Raikamal'.

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* Ref. P.21. Ibid.
'Rasakali' and such other writings and the Sakta influence can be observed in Dwardebata, Kaliadi, Gomadebata etc. The Sakta-cult has worked upon him when he is a contemplative social being, at the same time he is a Vaisnav when he is alone and inspired by his sentiments."

In his Raikamal, Radha and Svarga Marta, Tarasanker has shown that practice of Vaisnav rituals alone without a touch of life is useless and sometimes amounts to hypocrisy.

The reader of Raikamal finally develops an anti-pathy for Ranjankhatna whose senseless hollow words which only reveal his deceitful character. The story ends with separation and isolation in Kamal's life. Still, she is not dismayed, rather finds confidence and peace in spiritualism.

In these writings and also in 'Kabi' love has been glorified as a precious wealth of life.

In Radha Madhabananda fails in his mission of extirpation of the parakiya practices among the Sakatiya Vaisnavs of Bengal with his partial view and contradictory attitude. He worships Krishna as 'Kamsari' instead of as 'Radhaballabh', but does not like to fight the oppression of the rulers and the Bargis. The novelist has thus shown that, noble plans are likely to be frustrated if our ideals are not balanced and consistent with our activities and do not bring out a clear conscience. Also, the dreadful results of unrestrained lusts are shown through the incidents of insanity of Kamsari and death of Gopalaswami at the hands of Madhabananda and killing of voluptuous and shameless Radharaman and his son Akura at the hands of the Sayyasis. But this Madhabananda who once discarded Parakiyabhad along with Radha and any kind of physical infatuation at last gratefully accepts Mehimi after long sixteen years from the flat refusal of her love by him. Through this change in Madhabananda is reflected the depth of passion and influence of love in Man which is often difficult to overcome even for a Sayyasi.

These stories and with a feeling of serene spiritual delight in the main character that is not disturbed by any earthly misery. It indicates, as if the author who is not comfortable with rapidly changing sceptic society of modern times receives some consolation and pleasure in Vaisnav ideals.

The following remark by Kazi Abdul Odud points to a notable side of Tarasanker's Philosophy of Life -
"Tarasankar's heart is broad but, in comparison to that, his insight is rather less clear." 21.

In fact, Tarasankar's sincere love for Mankind—irrespective of good or bad, honest or dishonest, high or low, has outshined his political, social or religious outlook.

In Kabi the writer's sincere feeling not only for the frustrated life of a prostitute like Bason, but also for the unfortunate class of fallen women is apparent in the description of their way of living, particularly prayers and bratas and their dormant desire for a fruitful social life.

We can hear the voice of the novelist in the following words of Makanta of Alipur fair counseling Nitai, dejected for his low-birth and living in the company of prostitutes:

"My dear boy, one's origin is not all-important but one's doings. **** In this world of God none is low. **** And what of a prostitute, my boy, Chintamani, the harlot was the preacher of 'love' to the great devotee Bilvamangal." 22.

When Nitai asks Basanta just at the moment of her death, to utter the name of Govinda, Basanta refuses in these words —

"No, what has He bestowed to me? He has not granted me a husband, a son or a home."

Similarly, dying Pari, in Raikamal, refuses to pray before 'Pravu' at the request of Ranjan, She says —

"Much I have worshipped God, but what He has blessed me with? Neither God nor even you, Makanta, has given me a return."

Thus the sufferings and afflictions of social outcasts and unknown men and women of Rada have moved the novelist. The pain in the barren life of Nagini Kanya and her thirst for love are transfused in the readers' mind imbued with the compassion of the writer. The novelist says through Kaviraj Sibram Sen —

"The agony the poor girl (Sabala) bears in her way of abiding by their social custom must be admitted sympathetically." 23.

22.PP.113-14. (Kabi) Tarasankar Racanabali. Vol.VI.
Sibram Sen casts his look on the face of Sabala with a soft feeling as an experienced doctor watches his helpless patient. So also, Tarasankar shares the agony of different types of common men he had observed in different corners of Rashtra.

'The story of Nagini Kanya ends with the tale of Satali. O listener! please shed in compassion a few drops of tears.' *

These words clearly express Tarasankar's sympathy for Nagini Kanya. In fact, Tarasankar had a profound attachment to the plebs, the tribal or aboriginal groups of people. What Sibram says in Nagini Kanyar Kahini is actually the feeling of Tarasankar.

"I had a sincere tender feeling for them. ***** It is natural to be attracted to those who are primitive like the Bedas, those who bear in their nature the unmixed charm of childlike expressions and habits." 24.

Out of these love he has never judged men with the common conceptions of good or bad, noble and mean, creative and destructive.

In 'Tamas Tapasya', Panu is thrown out of his own society with rude shocks of incidents into the company of a group of nomads, in whom darkness of ignorance has accumulated through centuries. Panu, in a short time becomes habituated in the aboriginal savage life. Again, under some strange circumstances like witnessing the mute pain of a hungry calf and the sudden death of his faithful wife Rajia, the world moves the darkness of his heart and let in a beam of light. Rough and rude Panu, now, changes into a soft-hearted devotee. A melody pervades his tone, and his words are saturated with the softness of love. Citing the example of Panu, at the end of the novel, the author, comes to a general realisation that, - "Every man in his mental advancement is illuminated ray by ray on every morning."

Thus his faith in and regard for Indian Spiritualism is expressed in Kalantar and Tamas Tapasya in particular. He believes - "Life is progressing from matter to mind, sensation and consciousness; from consciousness to knowledge; from transitoriness to eternity; from violence to non-violence, love and bliss. Our soul is advancing through ages. Transition comes again and again ........" 25.

Above all, Tarasankar's view is fixed on the greatness of human beings with its pure soul. And though realist his humanism and patriotism mixed with strong optimism and spiritualism sometime bring out an idealist in him. His regional novels give us this impression.

Tarasankar is often compared to Hardy because both of them have written on a selected region. So a brief comparison of their philosophy will be quite pertinent here.

Both Hardy and Tarasankar have drawn the deterioration of agricultural economy. But agricultural decline with wide industrialisation in England is something different from the decadence of feudal masters and individualistic trends in India. It is why, though, Tarasankar has shown his insight, he has not succeeded in producing generality in his subject and themes (with exceptions of G.D. & P.G.) as done by Hardy.

Hardy is essentially a pessimist while Tarasankar is basically an optimist.

"For Hardy, Wessex was a microcosm of the Universe and we accept it as such." 26.

"It is Hardy’s peculiar contribution to literature, and unique glory, to take a Wessex peasant, intensely local in birth, speech and story, and set him against a background of the Universe; in so doing he illuminated Wessex, certainly, but in a light which comes from beyond the stars." 27.

But for Tarasankar, England was very much provincial, and he attempted to bring out its regional characteristics as far as he could without comparing it, or bringing it in relation to an outside world taking that to be a norm.

Hardy has presented through his works a distinct and compact philosophy. But Tarasankar could not achieve such a clear view for his incongruities. He is at a time Gandhi and attracted by Subash Chandra and also by the anarchists; a vaisnav and a sakta; a conformist yet he dreamed of new creation through revolution. * The most pronounced is the conflict between his intuition and intellect. Guided by his intuition he has sought, some time beyond propriety, to realise some greater truth of Mankind; and his intellect has sometime put him to judge, the things as good or bad in the light of his own idealism, as can be noticed in Dhatrdebata, Ganadebata, Pancagram and Hasulibaker Upakatha.

Tarasankar did not, actually, possess that refined sophisticated urban outlook natural to Buddhadeb Basu, Binod, De, Suddhindranath Dutta, Dwijati Prasad Mukhopadhyay or Annadasankar Roy and such other writers. His rurality will

be more prominent if we compare the plot, character, subject-
matter, theme and style of his works with those of those
writers. We can, here, take help of an expression of Ratrin-
dranath Roy on this point: -

"Tarasankar possessed such a mind where the typical
groove of the self-cloistered selves along with the morbi-
dities of the so-called intellectuals was absent." 28.

We feel, his environment and subject - the regional
life, the bucolic people of Radha - have affected him with
this nature-like simple, straight-forward and uncomplicated
attitude towards the life. His outlook is, therefore,
perfectly matching with the things he has written about
in his regional stories and novels. Tarasankar has viewed
these people not through any urban conceit and not measured
them in terms of pre-imposed ideas of an enlightened urban
man, but has tried to catch hold of the simple reality of
mysterious human-life.