CHAPTER VI

NOVELS OF BANKIM CHANDRA

Ānanda Math (1882)
Devi Chaudhurāṇī (1884)
Sitārām (1887)

In point of theme and design, the three novels included in this chapter have a striking measure of similarity. They are all thematic in the sense that their subject-matter is distinguished by certain characteristics. It appears they represent Bankim Chandra's attempt at bringing into focus the glory of heroic Bengal. Secondly, there is a peculiar grandeur in the design of each; this is due as much to a subtle use of craft as to the religious colouring that has come into the design. The author's interest in religion has been so strong that sometimes the logic of plot is disturbed by its impact. Thirdly, the structure of all these novels is comparatively simple. In fact, the tendency towards complicated patterns came to an end, for the time being, with Chandraśakhar and Raīnā. Krishnākānta Will marks a change towards simplicity in plot construction; in Ananda Math and Devī Chaudhurāṇī, the same trend is continued. In Sitārām, just a touch of complexity exists.

So far as the formal side is concerned, perhaps the religious element is the most dominating factor in these three. All of them belong to an intensely religious period in the life of Bankim Chandra. He started writing Dharmaśāstra in 1291-2 (B.S.), and Krishnā Charitra perhaps a little earlier; Srimathbhagatīṣṭha, the third and last of his religious essays, was begun in 1293 (B.S.). The first was thus taken in hand only two years after Ānanda Math (1287-89 B.S.), and Devī Chaudhurāṇī (1289-90 B.S.) and
Sitaram (1891-93 B.S.) were almost contemporaneous with Krishnas Chhattra and Dweepadweepa. Just after the publication of Ananda Math (1882), he entered into a controversy with Mr. Hastie on Hindu religion; the letters that he sent in reply, were published under the title, Letters on Hinduism. It is on record that he wrote these three novels to illustrate the cardinal principle of his Drarmatattva, which he called Anusilan Dharma.

Quotations from the Gita (chap. 12) entailing disinterested service on the devotee, occur on the title-page of Ananda Math. Devi Chaudhurani is dedicated to one who was a votary of the same creed. Similar extracts are inscribed on the title page of this book as well:

The substance of Religion is Culture.

"The Fruit of it The Higher Life" —Natural Religion by the Author of Ecce Homo, p. 145.

"The General Law of Man's Progress, whatever the point of view chosen, consists in this that Man becomes more and more Religious" —Auguste Comte —'Catechism of Positive Religion.'

It is to be noted that this religious aspect had some sort of hearing on the form of all the three novels.

Ananda Math is one of the noblest of the works of Bankim Chandra. The nature of its design is indicated by the brief, hold, and original preface:
The foreward to the first edition states further the line of development:

"..."

..."..."
This second extract forms, what is called in dramatic criticism, the motive-action of the novel. It has been enclosed with the enveloping action of the Sannyasi Rebellion of 1772. Alteration of the place and the people as recorded in history, has been made to suit one of the objectives of the author— the glorification of heroic Bengal. The impact of this objective upon craft is not much in a work of fiction. The other factor of the religio-political attitude, has a dominating influence upon the structure that holds the idea in relief. Inexorable forces are set in motion from the start. In spite of his limited purpose, the artist is swayed by a desire to present massive spectacles of life. The framework has a vastness of space over which wander restlessly men and women in conflict with forces internal and external. A dynamic movement is almost a constant feature in the story of Ananda Math. The plot is often in harmony with character and a romance thus tends to take the form of a dramatic novel. The scope for an obtrusive author is practically neutralised by the grandeur of its design and the objective nature of the narrative.

This grandeur of the design is realised not by action alone. Although not keyed up to the heightened dramatic level of Chandra sekhar, Ananda Math has very long stretches of progression in which plot and character are in harmony. The story proceeds by making a synthesis of the two as in a drama of Shakespeare. After a spiral movement, the first crescendo occurs in the middle of the story. In Part III (chap. 2), the reward of devotion is illustrated in the victory of the Sannyasis. It is supplemented by another (Part IV) over the combined might of British and Muslim forces. That is the real climax of the narrative. The story of Raisinaha follows a similar double-bouncing technique, one in Part IV and another in Part VIII. The
The climax in it is from the less important to the more, and the rising tempo is in harmony with the structure. This sense of symmetry of form with a rising tempo, is perhaps lacking in the structure of Ananda Math.

The brief Preface that starts the story, is an excellent device to add dignity of tone to the narrative. Its spirit is logically connected with the theme of the novel: it is an index to its nature and content. The brilliant introductory chapters of Chandrasekhar perform a dramatic function of a similar nature. But the novelist had to use craft in Ananda Math with greater care and skill. An ethical pointer is followed by the most darkly realistic facts of life; it is to his credit that he has forged a perfect harmony between the two parts in spite of this change in matter.

The background in Ananda Math is formed by an account of those days of famine and pestilence hundred years before the time of Bankim Chandra. Only a novelist of his distinction could make the picture actual and real in just three small-chapters (chaps. 1-3). Each word seems to be instinct with life and fire. The language responds to the cold mood of the narrator. Even a few simple and condensed expressions have become more suggestive than pages of historical documents.
A dramatised piece from the same chapter:

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The materials are drawn from history but the narrative seems to have acquired the impressiveness of the post-war Books of the Mahābhārata. It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the method of Bankim Chandra is simply unique and incomparable. Haraprasad Shastri's description of contemporary society in Heenar Meya is an extreme case of an insipid and laboured account. Ramesh Chandra has a better sense of beauty and harmony, but he can seldom pretend to the warmth and vitality of Bankim Chandra. It is a patent fact that Scott rarely succeeds in making history alive; his preoccupation with the romance of history makes him forget the mystery of life. Dickens perhaps stands at the other extreme end. He likes to work with the largest brush and the strongest colours, and the product which happens to be, as in A Tale of Two Cities, "Hogarthian farce and Tragedy."

But Bankim Chandra is a more perfect artist. His eyes are fixed upon the profundity of life which he seeks to reveal with his chastened pen. The extracts quoted above best illustrate his technique. In the next few pages of Ānanda Math he carries the sub-plot of Mahendra and Kalyani into the main story with the same purpose. As the link action constituted by the first three chapters has done its work, he passes on to the primary strand.

Part I is covered in three stages. The Mohendra-element comes down to chap. 14 and the story unfolds almost a complete picture of the action that is going to be evolved by the plot. A structure that subsists on the plane of idealism, is likely to be thin and rather abstract. But an incident in which Satyananda is first seen, in a celestial halo (chap. 4), does not happen frequently in Ānanda Math. Even in the sudden appearance and reappearance of this superman, there is generally some logic which similar episodes in Chandrasekhar can scarcely claim.
The main strand develops once again with its original force immediately after such an incident. As it develops, it creates sub-plots and gathers from them fresh energy and volume. Mahendra serves as an anchor to the floating centre of activity in the jungle hide-outs. The other strand of Santi is brought into the fold over the bridge of Sukumari, Mahendra’s daughter, who is placed under her care. The action progresses and then branches off into another sub-action in the Kalyani-Jibananda affair. By a skilful manœuvre, different aspects of life are represented simultaneously, while a slender pattern gains breadth and concrete shape. The tagging on of Santi and Kalyani to Jibananda and Bhabananda respectively, makes the structure complete for the elucidation of a high-pitched thesis.

Chapters 10-11 (Part I) exhibit the core of idealism of the inspired freedom fighters. The Kande Matarom hymn occurs in chaps. 10, and the image of Kali and a white marble statue of "the Mother that Shall Be" in chap. 11. Mahendra is the medium of expression in these two cases. Both the hymn and the images are in harmony with the lofty subject; indeed, they seem to be completely assimilated with it.

The thirty-four-line hymn seems to make the structure itself vibrant with dramatic emotion. The stature of Ananda Math is greatly increased by the extraordinarily stirring character of its tune, the Mallor-Kamal Tal, the ingenious blending into it of Bengali passages with Sanskrit. In process of time, people came to regard the book as a sacrament and the song as an impassioned expression of patriotic sentiments. Martyrs from generation to generation faced the gallows with the radiance of Kande Matarom reflected on their faces. It is the appropriateness of its context and the splendour of its content that conferred upon it international celebrity.
The many-sided interest of Part I has had its impact upon the quantitative nature of the plot. Eighteen chapters have come into this part, the highest number among all the parts; Part III which has the first climax, claims 12, the next biggest Part. Part II is naturally shorter, with 8 chaps., after the voluminous Part I. The second point to be noted is this: this novel of idealism, is mainly formed by one general action. It is the skill of the novelist that has turned the feeder stories of Santi and Kalyani into sub-plots. Part II develops both of them again. The essence of plot is the design and that of Jagnana Math is composed not by the central one action alone. Its intellectual unity -- the product of one story -- is attended with an almost equal amount of emotional intensification contributed by all the elements. Nimai, Santi, and Kalyani supply materials for the conflict of loyalties; the heroic men of action, including Satyananda, are represented as struggling against forces that seem to thwart their ideals and aspirations. The plot comes in harmony with the characters and the quality of the narrative is raised thereby. That is the spirit of Part II.

As this book is built up on the action of one plot, not on a harmony of diversities, the need for a fuller treatment of the side strata cannot be overstressed. Mahendra and Kalyani have been made to contribute much to the plan of the novel already. Additional strength is now being gathered from the Santi episode. Chap. 1 (Part II) gives her antecedents which will justify her active role in the plot later on. The Sukumar incident ends her cloistered life; it works like a magnet and draws her into the forest fortress of the Sannyasis. Mahendra is accounted for in the four intermediary chapters (3-6); the neophyte is sent back to his country-house to turn it into a secret arsenal. Kalyani is left stranded, perhaps to serve as an example to the author's
Then we confront Santi who typifies a different character. Dramatic emotion mingles with pathos in the scene (ch. 7) that narrates her detection:

The stage is set for the action to develop: the plot, which is the character of the subsequent parts (II & III). It seems the ideal enunciated in the Preface, has spread upon the design its golden colour. Towards that objective, the action was proceeding in the first two parts. Thereafter, it seems to
burst into a commotion and prepare its own path. Part III seems to be the product of the cumulative forces that gather up to Part II. The two-course narrative of Āhanda Math stops and acquires fresh life in the technical middle (Part III), and then rebounds towards a climax in a second flare-up. Broadly speaking, the entire action is finished in two rounds. The first two Parts are preparatory in character; they make things ready for the first action which begins in Part III and ends in the following Part (IV). Passion movement predominates in the earlier parts. In the next paragraph, an illustrative passage will be quoted to show the conflict of souls in the physical progression of events (Part III). In its first edition, the whole book was divided only into two parts. The arrangement was perhaps technically all right. Implications of such division would be pointed out in the appendices.

Bankim's return to history in chap. I testifies to his innate sense of craft. The events are new flowing towards the wider field of the country and hence our attention is directed to the historical background. All the three stories, already developed by diverse touches, are collected here by the force of events. Chaps. 2-3 refer to the Santi episode after her initiation in the Sāntīn cult. Her encounter with Captain Thomas is perhaps better managed than that of Saibalini with Lawrence Foster in Chandrasekhar. The purpose of the novelist is to set both the women in their characteristic form; the incidents show Santi's strength of mind and Saibalini's frivolity in equal measure. Santi's youthful exuberance is balanced with her dignified conduct in Chap. 3. The next three (4-6) illustrate, by way of contrast, the Bhabananda-Kalyani episode. This makes for comprehensiveness of the story. The tumult of souls in agony infuses passion into the narrative. The few sub-actions are utilised to bring in what density of emotion such a novel admits of. It furnishes some interesting cases of
emotional conflict that enhance the dramatic quality of the book
Santi and Jibananda
This contrasted method is followed up in chaps. 5 and 7 under different conditions. Dhirananda's encounter with Bhabananda is apparently humorous, but it also reveals the pathos of the apostate's heart. Its intrinsic importance is, however, not great. Chap. 7 in which Satyananda admits defeat before Shanti, is less irrelevant and more forceful. In between occurs the voice from the sky again (ch. 6); it is Satyananda, who
like Francis Thomson's Hound of Heaven, follows his recalcitrant disciple, through forest and field. There is poetic grandeur in it, raised up to a religious height. But the fitness of the technique in a dry, logical set-up is open to question. Things are waiting for a serious turn. Perhaps the great leader felt constrained to forewarn Jibananda for the great cause with which he was concerned. But there could have been better methods.

The third episode of Part III details the war scenes from chaps. 8 to 11. Materials have been well-arranged for a trial of strength with the enemy and inevitable circumstances lead up to the first rising incident in Ananda Math. The nodal point of the novel, the fruits of Bhakti or devotion, is going to be illustrated with Bankim's usual technical grandeur. The ethereal colouring fades away in the din and bustle of soul-stirring incidents. It seems some supernatural power comes under the possession of the novelist in such situations, his craft of fiction seems to echo the words which he wrote about a decade after:

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... আজিবানকে প্রহরের সেনার সঙ্গে তাঁর অভিভাষণ শুনতে হয়ে পড়ে।
চার ধনাদি ভুড়ি, কুপড়ে নাটক, আর মুখ ঘোর।
তাঁর অভিভাষণ দুর্লভ একটি অভিভাষণ।
তাঁর প্রহর একেবারে ইত্যাদি।
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A very fine use of craft has been made by the novelist in this part of his book. The impression created by these four scenes (chaps. 8-11), is simply bewildering. The intoxication of the liberation army, its spirit of 'fight and die for the motherland,' the fight itself in the outskirts of the
forest, down the narrow passage of a make-shift bridge, face to face with the cannon, all are narrated with extraordinary skill. It seems we hear the very tumult and distracting noise of the field of war.

The patriots consider it to be a privilege to fight and die in this field for the glory of the *mantar* of *Mande Mataram*. When one hand of Shabananda is severed, he fights with the other. That too is chopped off. He lies in death but seems to be victorious by his unconquerable faith in the *mantar*:

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The tricks and stratagems of warfare could not be improved upon. Even Dumas and Scott would appreciate the force and the dramatic veracity of the narrative of war of this oriental novelist. The puzzling thing is not so much the novel, as the craft of the man who produced it. And these four chapters of *Ahsana Math* do not stand alone. They would be considered as mere overtures to grander specimens elsewhere in him, specially in *Sitaram* and *Baisincha*.

But after this splendour of technical equipment, an anti-climax seems to occur at the end of chap. 12. Victory has been secured. The Santins have recaptured a lost empire. Satyananda is thinking in terms of its reorganization. He releases Mahendra from his duties and sends back others to their own places:
This is beautifully vague in the context in which it stands. Manifestly it is some interfering agency that wants to take away the architect of the movement from the field. The logic of the plot does not justify this sudden attack upon the story from outside. The reappearance of this mystery man in Part IV will clarify the situation; its effect upon the structure would be taken up then.

It seems Part IV is more concerned with finishing the story rather mechanically. In comparison with the grandeur of the preceding part, it lacks breadth and thickness. This is a sad contrast to the second lap of action in Raisinha which is followed up with increasing vigour. Kalyani and Mahendra are settled in their old home in the first three chapters. It is not clear how the story is advanced by the three long chapters that narrate their resettlement, especially when Mahendra is preparing to join the second battle very soon. Chaps. 4-6 take up the second engagement. But it seems the author has no
inclination to elaborate the picture for the development of
the plot. The movement of the story seems to be lost, the
tempo flags. This is not a normal feature of the Bankim novel.
There is repetition in chap. 7 of the last scenes of Chandrasekhar;
Santi is moving about in the battle field, scattered with corpses,
in search of the body of her husband. The mystery man appears
in the person of a physician. Jibananda is discovered and
the dead man is brought back to life:

Then they retired from society for a peaceful life of
prayer and meditation. Poetic justice is rendered with the help
of a *deus ex machina*. The romantic odour of the incident is
apparent. Belief in the divine power and efficacy of native
herbal medicine have their place in the affairs of our private
life. But when they are allowed to control the logical course
of events, the even flow of the narrative is disturbed. Bankim
succumbed to this weakness, rather needlessly, in Rajani and
Chandrasekhar.
The next chapter (chap. 8) contains a knotty, ragged end. After being carried along the forceful inevitable tide of events, it seems the novelist abruptly remembers his dictum:

Inactivity overtakes him. He submits to a philosophical speculation about the nature of the Arya faith, and internal and external knowledge. It is the physician who comes, stops the course of events, and delivers a lecture to Satyananda about the futility of resisting the British. Rabinramsh's diatribes against terrorists in Char Adhava are better balanced; its hero at least found his creed standing in the way of his happiness. But in Ananda Math the situation is entirely different. Satyananda, at the head of a band of fire-brand patriots, is madly preparing for giving the enemy a crushing defeat. The combined Muslim and British army is vanquished. He is standing on the crest of a brilliant victory. His character is made one with the progressive movement of events. The powerfully conceived and wisely executed plan of the book points to only one alternative: the establishment of an empire by the Santans. No other indication occurs in the whole range of the text about a surrender of power to the British. The question of the wisdom of inviting the British, is not involved; we are concerned in a novel with the logic and symmetry of the plot, not with a rather sudden forecast of future historical movements.

Satyananda seems to reflect the dramatic need of the plot. The physician who perhaps is the representative of the author, like a divinely inspired prophet, demands surrender. Satyananda frets and fumes like the spirit of the narrative, but
the physician is imbued with the stronger spirit of the author. His command is the categorical imperative. Satyananda is physically dragged by the hand towards the Himalyan solitudes for a further course of moral training:

"..."
It is not melodrama, it is a tragic débâcle of art and life. The story does not move to a finale of compulsion by its own laws. A mighty drama of palpitating human beings degenerates into "an apology for the loyal acceptance of British rule." The craft has become stagey, scotched, and patched up in the process. More than in Chandrasekhar, this is a real false exit. Another improbable factor in this gesture of a show-down, is to be noted. The compromise formula with the British, is an anachronism; it came in the age of Bankim Chandra, hundred years after the fictional time indicated in *Ananda Math*. The idea of nationalism itself was non-existent during the period of the Sannyasi rebels. Driven by various forces, the novelist drifts into a quagmire: a religio-patriotic symphony gives out a dirge-like wail at the end.

The fact that yet this book has survived an aggressive doctrinaireism, is on account of the greatness of its design. At its centre is set like a purest jewel the shining hymn of *Manto Mâtaram*. Its light is reflected upon the entire design. Acceptance of failure and compromise is inconsistent with the tone of this song; the unfolding of its spirit in the pattern would have been in harmony with its significance. Balance and symmetry would have been maintained if *Ananda Math* closed with Chap. 7 (Part IV).

An elevated fabric is sought to be built up in *Devi Chandburâni* with a definite objective. Glory of heroic Bengal is to be illustrated through the medium of an ethical design, which itself has a purpose of its own. Heroism, culture, and Higher Life as stated in the title page, thus assert their right in succession in moulding the plot. These elements are
generally mingled in the framework of *Ananda Math*. But it seems the mixture of romance and reality in *Devi Chaudhurani* has unbalanced its structure to some extent; want of cooperation between two opposite elements has led to a fall in impressiveness. An objective study of its craft reveals a peculiar phenomenon in fictional literature.

The plot of *Devi Chaudhurani* like that of Chandralekhar and *Ananda Math* develops under the enveloping action of history. In the second, it becomes willingly responsive to the needs of the characters; in the third, it is a superior power that absorbs the other elements within it. But the story is different in the first. A domestic episode becomes the main factor, and the historical element that is dyed rich in romance, seems to be feeble in substance and non-cooperative in character.

This is a natural corollary to the juxtaposition of contrary strands. A very common element of our social life seems to form the basis of the main plot of *Devi Chaudhurani*. The environs of that society are described at length in Part I and we are in full possession of an expanding type of character novel. It is expected, like situations would be added to push and develop the central story to the bigger circumference. The resultant is to be a picture of society with a spatial content. The protagonist is given a flat character, which is an essential feature in a character novel. Time passes her by and she remains impervious to it throughout. This "mythical permanence" of her character is reflected in the other chief figures, Brojeswar and Haraballav, of the primary action. They are all placed "in a stationary spatial world in which time has reached an equilibrium."

This very brilliant main plot is placed by the
side of the Bhawani Pathak sub-plot, first, it is evident, to exhibit the heroism of Bengal, and secondly, to secure an agent for elevating the character of the heroine. History is remodelled, as in Amanta Math, towards that end; the Bihari Brahmin who had only occasional connections with the Bengali woman rebel, is made a Bengali, and her teacher and guide. Nothing is wrong with this lay-out of the plan. The second purpose is admirably realised, but the first seems to be mixed up with many considerations. Bhawani Pathak makes Prafulla pass through a scorching process of moral edification until she is worthy of the eulogy of the novelist. This training justifies her future stand in the field and within the house.

But doubt exists about the fulfilment of the first objective. The soldiers of deliverance are endowed with no inherent power of action and motion in the plot. The heroine is made to throw them into the shade; the author keeps her engaged with the thought of her own narrow, material heaven and home. The plot has given her master, Bhawani Pathak, nothing short of obscurity. A thick layer of romance shrouds the entire sub-plot. The mixture of a romance with a novel of character, is not a strange fact, but in Devi Chaudhurani, a blending does not occur. Its plot presents rather the co-existence of two antagonistic strands. Even if there had been more elaboration of the romantic side, symmetry of design would remain a casualty.
With less strands than Ananda Math, its parts are compressed into three. Seventeen chapters crowd Part I which covers a fair field of reality and romance. Chap. I lays the basis of a splendid nucleus for a character story:

"..."

This story of hunger and misery is set in a social context:
The liquidness and flexibility of the craft that is in evidence in the first part of Devi Chaudhurani, are in the best tradition of Bankim Chandra. Boy Pratap and girl Saibalini are handled with equal neatness; they are made to dominate the other strata of the novel, by which the equipoise of plot is maintained. The initial pages of Amadha Math have the same effective significance and their spirit forms the background of the book. But this wonderful onset of Devi Chaudhurani seems not to be fully exploited. From chaps. 1 to 7, a fairly good picture of society is created. The heroine who loses her mother, the only one person she had, might have been made to pass through common vicissitudes, but instead she is transferred beyond the pale of society. The romantic technique of abduction which is in harmony with the pattern of Indira, is applied to Devi Chaudhurani. Chaps. 10 and 14 spread the news of a mysterious death of Prafulla. With it the character novel is technically buried. In the company of Bhawani Pathak, she not only develops angelic effulgence but angelic wings as well. This is the genesis of the amalgam in this novel.

Chapter 11 introduces the sub-plot of Bhawani Pathak and the pattern gets the colour of a romance. The narrative flows in the direction of romances, as desired by the novelist. With the transference of the heroine into the ruined building of a pathless forest (ch. 9), the first step of a rising treble soft of romance is laid. The history of the hidden treasure that comes into her possession takes the
story completely into the land of romance and mystery. What happens is "a fantasy of desire rather than a picture of life." All the scenes of real life built up with so much finesse in the earlier chapters, are greatly swamped by the flow of a romantic tide. The need for culturing a soul under the direction of a stern Puritan, is not illogical, but it is not clear why a domestic woman is cultured to take the command of a revolutionary movement. Perhaps Bankim's mind was preoccupied with the idea of heroic Bengal and he caught up the historical woman adventurer as an example of moral glory and physical prowess. In that context, the social fabric of his novel seems to be rather irrelevant. It is more so when this forms the primary and essential element of the pattern.

The positivist creed set forth in the second action, has tended to make the tone of the story progressively different. Sufficient indication to that effect is contained in the quotations attached to the book, and its structure becomes a replica of the author's frame of mind. The change-over is not quite expected and its inevitability is open to question. We must admit, there is a difference between the process of change of Sorasi of Sarat Chandra's *Bena Paon* and that of Prafulla of Bankim Chandra's *Devi Chaundurani*.

A stage that required subtle psychological treatment, is covered instead by learned discussion on problems that are not exactly fictional. The story of *Devi Chaundurani* moves on by these ideas and chaps 15-16 are devoted to turning a woman into a goddess. The philosophy of Positivism, first experimented upon Saibalini, rather inaptly, is now applied to Prafulla with greater confidence. Chap 16 is the concrete illustration
of his Anusilan creed expounded in *Dharmotthana*, and illustrated in *Krishna Charitra*.

In this progression of the story, the major defects are clearly visible. With reference to the ultimate design of the novel, this twist towards romance is not a logical thing. This purgation fits the heroine to be the leader of a religiously inspired *barikandaz* army, but the trend goes counter to the main spirit of the plot. And, secondly, the woman herself is lukewarm in her sympathies for the new life. A sensational career of robbery, however guided by altruistic motives, is repugnant to her nature. She is constantly at war within herself. It seems she accepts the duties of a stray life as a strategy for an escape into her own surroundings at the earliest convenient moment. Her character has remained as static as ever. This coldness and unchangeability of the central character within the framework of a romance, is perhaps due to not a very happy use of craft.
"All that Is prearranged is false." Forster's hasty generalization might be negatived by a hundred contrary cases, but it contains a modicum of truth.

Part II of Devi Chaudhurani narrates the success obtained by Bhawani Pathak in training Prafulla, although his romantic ideal is yet unrealised. Part I ended with:

The course of events justifies the author's apprehension that Bhawani Pathak failed to recognise the true nature of his disciple. Devi Chaudhurani remains at bottom Prafulla; she uses her nurture in the service of her nature. The story turns not to the desired plan of succouring helpless humanity but it moves round and about the character of the
main action. The chronological tempo does not produce exactly the psychological tempo that lapse of years should have generated. When the second chapter opens, Devi Chandhurani is presented as an eaves-dropper at the windows of her co-wife, Sagar. She is practically tied up with the movements of her husband. It seems no change has come upon her mind during the five years of her training; we seem to follow the same old story immediately after her training period.

All the 12 chapters of Part II, except chap. 11, hinge upon the main action. Chap. 1 brings the father-in-law, Haraballav, into the plot; insecure conditions of the country have had their effect upon him, his money is robbed, he runs into debt and becomes a defaulter to the Company. This becomes a link incident to cement the two strands together. Brojeswar is to go on errands for money and is entrapped into the plot by the pseudo-romantic tricks of the arch-dacoit. The superstructure of Bhawani Pahak glimmers in the distant background like a faint streak of light in the western sky. It appears he has been reduced into the position of a passive spectator of the scene from a distant end of the pit. His active interest in the development of the plot after Part I is insignificant.

Chapters 2-3 offer a panoramic view of the Devi's pomp and power; she is waiting in her historical baija or boat in a leisurely manner. She has taken up position to capture her husband on his way back home. Instead of a daring act to feed the enervated historical action; a comic episode ensues (chaps 6-8). The technique helps the process of her steady withdrawal from the stirring centre of activity. Her playful treatment of Brojeswar is rather overdrawn in relation to the plot; it has the tone of the unrevised version of Jibananda's with Santi at Ananda Math.
But the main story gains in volume and strength as it brings out Devi Chaudhurani's dignity of conduct. Her missionary outfit is just a show which she can give up at will. By pure technical standards, this action is a false exit of the plot; concentration upon the primary element would have been more conducive to symmetry. The novelist altered geography to bring down Bhawani Pathak within the confines of Bengal, and history to turn the woman into an inspired liberator of starving millions. That is an unpracticable proposition for one yearning for a home and a husband. A novel of character fails to compromise with a novel of action. The second line of the story meets the first seldom to form a full circle. A change of history yielded fine results in Aganta Math, and still better in Rasimsha, perhaps because a mixture of crafts was not involved there. Technically speaking, Devi Chaudhurani has the paradox ingrained in the design of Mridulini.

With this reservation, there is resuscitation of the decaying unity of action in Part III. The two elements of romance and reality are harnessed to help a rounded movement of the plot. A static action movement seems to rise up and move, and give the story a dynamic progression. The climax that was not effected so long, now appears by the interaction of a series of factors that touch upon all the different aspects of the plot. Haraballav's treachery lends breadth to the story; Englishmen are entangled:
Brojeswar is already on the scene. The barkandazes, conspicuous by their aloofness from the Devi, are lying hidden not far off, behind her knowledge. Even Shawani Pathak is there; he has led the forces to rescue the nonchalant woman. Commotion is at once created by the conglomeration of all these diverse elements round the heroic Danceless Devi Chaudhurani. The curiosity generated is exciting, as in a romance, which the novelist seems to aim at. That end is realised well at this stage. The characters and characteristics of the novel have been of secondary importance in proportion.

Chap. 1 contains the famous apostrophe to the lāthi, the indigenous bamboo weapon of the barkandazes of Devi Chaudhurani. Appropriateness of its existence is clear. It testifies to Bankim's sense of beauty. It is also in his hands a potent instrument to increase the force and the volume of the narrative. Like the address to the cuckoo in Krishnakantver Mill, its implications are many-sided. The lāthi stands as the symbol of an age gone by with all its primitive
magnificence. Under the image of the lathi, the factors at work in Part III are brought out in a concrete outline:

The fourteen chapters of Part III conclude the action of the novel in two stages. Unification of the different elements has been made by the money incident in Part II. Ch. 1.

An engagement takes place, which is ended by Devi Chaudhurani's tactical escape in chap. 9. That is the first phase of the action. Political and philosophical features enter into the story in second stage extending from chaps. 11-14. The spirit that governs the structure of the plot in Part III, has been sufficiently made clear from the beginning of the action. The philosophy of the doctrine of self-abnegation is elaborated
in Chap. 2, their first engagement occurs in chaps. 3-6. Bhawani Pathak, the main character of the sub-plot, is represented as leading a skirmish with the sepoys in the distant borderland. It seems the episode of the unseen warrior continuing a lost battle, is symbolical of the shape of things to come. He is separated from the plot not long after. Just a glimpse of him was offered during what may be called the coronation ceremony of the Devi (Part II, ch. 11). His hold upon the whole story is little, although his emotional existence is great.

The romantic story moves towards absolute poetic justice from chaps. 11 to 14. This part contains a knotty spot, the ragged end of the work. Devi Chaudhrani leaves behind her borrowed coils and enters a happy domestic life. But she does not make a silent exit; it is made with a fanfare, by reducing to shambles the structure raised up by an idealistic novelist and an ambitious leader of men:

[missing text]
The boat is significantly cut to pieces to be used as fuel:

The last remarks are in consonance with the desire of the novelist and the tone of his narrative. No fundamental change has taken place in the character of the protagonist through the long ten years during which it was supposed that she knew nothing but Jnāna and Karma. The "mythical permanence" of Devi Chaudhurani, as well as of the other dramatis personae of the primary strand, is preserved. But this conclusion lays the axe at the root of the subsidiary action of the plot. It is rendered practically meaningless in the long run after being reared as a substratum in the body of the plot. The novel is prefaced with quotations from the sacred Gītā in praise of disinterested work; the body of the text is larded with similar citations. Doubt exists if the same Gītā enjoins surrender and retirement from duty which is found to be cruel and unpleasant. The performance of duty at a critical period of history, is one
of the basic elements in the story of Devi Chaudhurani. It is not the character of the heroine that is involved in a contradiction; it is the author who seems to go against the principles embodied in his own quotations. His movement is towards a prearranged shape of the plot. When that stage arrives, he obtrudes and hustles his beloved character through conflicting situations.

The final plan of the novelist is given in the last page:

Bankim's encomium on her character is all his own; it has got nothing to do with the systematic development of the plot. This extract, like the one castigating the barkandazes for their humanitarian zeal, is irrelevant. It is difficult to understand how the distibutes follow from the story. Devi Chaudhurani's peaceful withdrawal from the scene as unsuitable
to her nature, would have been less puzzling. The historical fabric with a different ideal, is the real cause of imbalance. A better alternative, in relation to a novel of character, would have been perhaps a preceptor of our known world. We had no dearth of great Sannyasis round about in those days; Bankim had personal knowledge of some of them. Some ordeals in this heartless society could transform Prafulla into the desired pattern of a woman.

That is what might have been. As it stands, *Davi Chandurani* begins with a picture of life. It comes to an end with a fantasy of it.

The most glaring example of that fantasy is the treatment meted out to the architect of the sub-plot:
Bankim's Satyananda is taken over to the Himalayan solitudes when he is on the crest of victory. The logic of plot of Sarat Chandra's *Pather Dāni* does not allow Sabyasachi to accept failure and resign himself to the mercy of circumstances. There is some basis for the childish grumbling against fate by Atin of Rabindranath's *Char Adhava*. But Bhawani Pathak's submission to the British government has no sanction of logical compulsion whatsoever in the frame of the novel. It comes as a downright anticlimax. Pathak is uniformly maintained as a spotless patriot and then all at once he is branded as a footpad. When the plot is technically finished, it is carried over beyond its normal limits just to complete the picture of poetic justice. Transportation of criminals to Andamans in the eighties of the 19th Century is an anachronism. The story developed this false exit, it seems, because the incident was in the mind of the novelist already. A better use of the historical strand would have perhaps rounded off the main ragged end in the plot.

In plan and execution, *Sitāramiśi* is to a great extent of the romance variety. The type suits will for the illustration of the patriotic and religious ideals of the author indicated in the introduction to this chapter. No change of historical facts has been necessary in this title; the glorious example of the Bengal chieftain offered a ready subject.
for his objectives. More than in the other two, Ananda Nath and Devi Chaudhurani, the structure of *Sitārām* is surcharged with the emotional quality of Bankim's patriotic and religious ideals. The scene shifts to the southern borderland of Bengal. These river intersected territories, during the late medieval period, were the homeland of romance and chivalry. A structure vibrant with the din and bustle of romance, springs up in *Sitārām* by the very nature of the topic. Patriotic fervour and religious zeal were to be incorporated by the novelist in the other two cases; in *Sitārām*, they were concomitant features of the subject itself. Only an addition of ethical stratum was necessary to rival their design in point of extent and profundity.

The plot of *Sitārām* is rigorously formed by two strands. The main action of the protagonist is supplemented by the enveloping action of history. Complication arises in the primary strand from Sitaram's first wife, Sri, who becomes a problem in the pattern on account of fateful astrological calculations connected with her dearest one. Another jostling to the plot comes from the unsettled political conditions of the time. Serious consequences ensued in those days from the slightest disturbance in the body politic. In *Sitārām* of all the three, a reflection of this element seems to be the most powerful. The hero falls into the Delhi-Murshidabad tangle by his chivalrous interference with the mythical course of justice; this rather thoughtless step has far-reaching effect in the broader context of Bengal. He has to leave his home and hearth, and seek residence elsewhere. This becomes the genesis of a separate Hindu Kingdom, where the main action takes place.

The social-cum-political background of the age supplies raw materials for the plot of *Sitārām*. A very strong emotion element comes into the story by the actions and interactions of the dramatis personae. Sri's brother Gangaram becomes the main
source of this second ingredient. It is his danger that brings into the picture Sitaram's long abandoned wife, Sri. Her presence and absence are equally fraught with disturbing potentialities for the plot; her brother becomes the cause of further inner and outer complications. He becomes enamoured of Sitaram's third wife, Rama. A man who is saved from the jaws of death, becomes a traitor to his deliverer. The force of this sub-action is immense in the design of the novel; its action movement is strengthened by passion movement. These continue right up to the end of the structure. Harmony of strands follows almost by the nature of the incidents that happen in the process of a link. From the first occasion of Gangaraj's trouble to his inglorious death in battle against Sitaram, the story is one unified progression. There is no flagging of interest, no break in the narrative of Sitaram.

Its impressiveness has been due, among other things, to its compactness of plot, its frequent dramatic stretches of story in which plot and characters harmonise, and its occasional heightened effects towards massiveness. It would be an underestimate to take it as a pure romance, like Durga Mandini; for example. Forster would have been pleased to see how Bankim "bounces" us into a belief in his characters and gives us "life." His purpose is to hold life, which is successful within limits. The emphasis is on life, there is an emotional realization of it in the design. A single complicated action is made to evoke a whole scale of poignant emotions. It is to be noted that the happenings in Sitaram are not a string but a sequence, on account of the novelist's comprehensive grip over them. That is why the plot very frequently melts into the characters and the pattern of a dramatic novel evolves. Its smooth and stirring story moves
towards a climax in three stages in its three parts, sub-titled, Dīkā - Yūhini, Sanshāya - Jayanti, Rathī - Dakini.

They sound better than the ethical sub-titles attached to the parts in Chandrashekhar, but it is doubtful if those in Sitaram add to its technical embellishment.

Curiously enough, the structure of this thematic novel has some resemblance to that of the historical, Rāisingha. An interlinked course of events is a great common factor. There is the conflict in both of a proud potentate with the imperial suzerain, and in both again this story is placed on the track by a wonderful specimen of a link action. The tendency towards dimensional content in Sitaram has been noted. There are broad patches of it scattered here and there, which seem to be widespread in the fabric of Rāisingha, rewritten just after Sitaram. The scene of a surging, chaotic rabble in an open field, giving out deafening shouts and countershouts, is but a prelude to similar ones making for vastness. Sri and Jayanti's lone pilgrimage to far-off shrines by the side of rivers and mountains, has had its effect upon the picture. Sitaram's first battle, the open trial of Rama, the naked humiliation of Jayanti, have all a spectacular grandeur about them. And last, but not the least colourful, is the description of the still faithfult faithfult faithful soldiers of Sitaram, arranged in a small phalanx during the final engagement. Such scenes recur because, it seems, the technique of Sitaram is handled to produce dimensional effect.

Its many revisions, as elsewhere, testify to Bankim's consciousness of form. The three parts of Sitaram have increasing number of chapters, perhaps in tune with the rising volume of the story. Part I has fourteen chapters, the next seventeen, to be followed by twenty-four in the last. Three strips of action complete Part I. The link action of Gangaram continues up to chap. 4, the next six chapters
(5-10) relate to Sitaram's new kingdom, and the last four (11-14) to Sri's desolation. A very sparkling chapter is the initial one. It starts the story and gives complication to the whole plot.
Gangaram is drawn into the framework of the novel, and with him Sri. This incident is at the basis for the establishment of a separate kingdom by Sitaram, which will lead to conflicts with the Muslim rulers. As a link action, chap. 1 is comparable to the Chanchal Kumari episode in Ha.lsingha (Part I, chap. 1), which has similar influence upon the whole plot. Gangaram's unavoidable offence to the Shah is as forceful for the structure as Chanchal's intentional trampling upon the picture of Emperor Aurangzeb. It is apparent the brief preparatory chapters in Chandrasekhar have the same technical equipment. Such direct introductions constitute an important aspect of the Bankim technique. The plot seems to assimilate characters in these situations and the shape of a dramatic novel becomes apparent. Chap. 4 is superb. It presents the seething multitude assembled in the field where Gangaram would be buried alive. The intrusion of a romantic element into the scene, in the person of Sri, is amply compensated by the weight and breadth suggested by the episode. After the commotion, the story reaches a point from which it can branch off. The major part of it centres round the new principality of Muhammadpur which takes shape with the directness of the narrative.

Unnecessary cumbrousness was involved in the first edition version. Sitaram's residence and the members of his family came in for some amount of treatment. The hero was also shown as a daredevil, courting arrest and breaking out of jail with the other prisoners. Sri reappeared on the scene and was dragged inside the lock-up. All this was done perhaps with the purpose of making Sitaram revolt against Muslim autocracy. The first edition also included a dream-picture of Sitaram's idealism. Details of this aspect would be discussed in the Appendices.

In the revised edition, we are brought instead straight into the new field of action at Muhammadpur. Rama's excessive affection for her son and husband, is touched upon
(chap. 10); that leads to tremendous consequences rather too soon. The other powerful stratum of Sri is prepared outside the framework (chaps. 11-14) for its re-entry into the plot. A great measure of the impressiveness of the Sri-Fabric comes out of her being placed in a better silhouette than that of Saibalini in the course of her moral purification. Perhaps the last patch of what may be called the extra-structural Banki narrative, occurs in connexion with Sri's wanderings. It comes by the inertia of the narrative and the massiveness of the frame absorbs it. The design infused with fresh vigour, becomes peculiarly Bankimite:

The picture continues until the story seems to be alive. We are drawn along with it and reach the mythical cave which has become the abode of Jayanti's preceptor. Such a bold but effective extra-structural pictorial narrative is perhaps
If Part I is preparatory to the whole plot, Part II makes the action ready for its full development in Part III. The commotion that gains gradual life and force, is first created internally by the ill-conceived league of Rama with Gangaram. That is a common phenomenon in the rise and fall of kingdoms; souls connected with the league, either have tragic death or mortal humiliation. Bankim himself has a parallel case in the Dalani sub-plot in Chandrasekhar. Rama has a child to save, and there is more dramatic verisimilitude in her clandestine pourparlers with the nefarious Gangaram. The abnormal normality of her love and affection lands her into tragedy:
Its effect upon the plot is tremendous. Sitaram's journey to Delhi to secure recognition of his kingship, develops the story further. His absence from the kingdom gives fillip to the plan of Gangaram; it matures and ripens and assumes catastrophic proportions. The first edition contained — and that rightly — more extracts about Gangaram's rising tempo of infatuation. Passion made him half-mad; like Jibananda in the first edition of Ananda Math, and he also decided upon the path of evil. Jibananda's pristine goodness in the scheme of the book is maintained by the expurgation of the unfavourable lines. But Gangaram is not his counterpart; his perfidy would have been delineated in clearer outline if the abandoned extracts had been retained. There was elaborate description of his contact and collusion with the Fauzdar, Torab Khan. He even consented to become an apostate to be assured of undisturbed possession of Rama under a Muslim Emperor.
It seems even Chandrachur is more usefully exploited, as a religious preceptor, in the body of the plots than his counterparts elsewhere. He has mixed himself up in the imbroglio. He is seen palely loitering about the kingdom, rather helplessly, with his limited powers as news of Gangaram's dark movements reaches him through informers. Chandrachur has been invested with a distinct personality. His activities are dynamic, they further the course of the narrative:
Treachery is met with shrewdness. An extremely delicate situation is handled with care and caution. Chapter after chapter repeats this trick of the man. But the force of the realistic story is to some extent lost by the introduction of romantic incidents at a very exciting moment. On the earthly plane at Muhammadpur, mighty things have been arranged by the novelist, they are on the bursting point for a normal motion. At the same time he is making ready Sri and Jayanti to bring them into the plot from the mystery land of romance.
Religious personages with the halo of romance about them, is an endemic feature in the novels of Bankim Chandra. Except in Indira, Radhamani, and Rangantha; they occupy some position in the plot in some form or another. The atmosphere in Sitaran seems to be more congenial to them; in addition to the stock character of a mendicant as a master, two others, Sri and Jayanti, have been created. They are made to take periodic interest in the action of the story. Bona fide dramatic personae have a birth-right to any type of interest in the action; but that right must be in them, not thrust upon them. If they are propelled into the plot at convenient points, their presence becomes but an intrusion. The unity of action becomes directly affected. The existence of Chandrachur is perhaps the brightest example to the contrary. In Sitaran, the responsibility for technical disturbance of the plot seems to lie with the two women.

The title character's providential arrival at the nick of time, is understandable with reservation. At the worst, that is romantic. But the dropping of Sri and Jayanti into the picture at that juncture and bestowing upon them decisive powers, look like changing the logical development of the technique. They remain unseen and yet we hear of their supreme power in guiding the destiny of Muhammadpur. They are really not in the plot, but they take charge of it all on a sudden.
The immediate effect of this romantic colouring, is the thinning of the dramatic volume of the novel built up with sedulous care. It seemed ere long the plot was unfolding itself in unison with the characters. Gangaram's adventurism, Chandrachur's restlessness, Rama's childish frivolity; these were going on backwards and forwards in a criss-cross style. The plot seemed to be made only for that purpose. But a settled impression is greatly unsettled by the introduction of strange factors. Jayanti's spasmodic interest in the action of the drama, takes us unawares. Enough greatness was shown in Sitaram; his single-handed efforts with some amount of outside help, could save the situation. The novelist could easily make some such make-shift arrangement with the help of Sitaram's loyal follower, Mrinmoy. Then the ethereal creatures might have been left free to move about the circumference of the plot with impunity. It is really not clear why this desirable alternative was not permitted for the sake of the beauty and impressiveness of the design.

One of the most dramatically lively in Bankim Chandra is Part III of Sitaran. Its one action plot set within the enveloping action of history, develops towards a climax in rings of strenuous flight. All the subsidiary components have been drawn; Sitaram who was practically absent in Part II, is now in full form as the centre of all the activities. The volume of the narrative has been intensified by the scenes of trial and battle,
as by the inclusion of new characters and the exploitation of old ones. The story moves in a vertical line as before through all these variegated elements. Action movement of the preceding part is replaced by passion movement; the plot has become dynamic by the action of characters in conflict with one another. Even the passionless love of Sris, a dedicated soul, becomes the cause of chaos and confusion in the whole state. Sitaram declares after her recovery that he had been in search of her for the last five years (Part III Ch. 7, p.103), but the movement of the story seems to indicate no break from Part II to III. It becomes wider, intenser from part to part. Notwithstanding the intrusion of a romance stratum, the story effectively completes the design intended.

Sitaram.

Victory in the first battle is followed by the establishment of peace in the domestic sector. The trial of Gangaram with so much show, has a deeper connotation; the incident focuses attention on Sitaram's triumphant career, and the scene of trial on the vastness of the perspective. Its dimensional implication has been pointed out in a preceding paragraph. Chapter 3 (Trial Scene) has affinity with chapter 4 (Part I) in point of breadth and extent. A stage in Part III is closed with the Gangaram episode in chap. 5. At the intercession of Jayanti, the despicable person is set at liberty. That finishes the first round in this part, and the second and the most exciting one continues from chap. 6 to chap. 18. It records the downfall of Sitaram. Sri's physical entry into the plot (ch. 6) starts the process of disintegration of the kingdom; from this point the denouement of the story begins. The novelist has intended to call Part III as one of darkness. The soul of the heroic man of action is enveloped in darkness as he descends from day to day into hell:
A turn in the structure of the novel after the technical middle, is an important point in craft. The most pertinent questions involved, relate to logic and symmetry. A change occurs in the plot of *Sitārām* with the appearance of Sri as a purified nun. The question arises if her entry is through the broad gateway of logic or an intrusion through a narrow backdoor. It appears she does not come by the compulsion of events. The endings of Bankim Chandra in the thematic novels, are not as skilfully finished as the onsets. A very artistically conceived chapter begins all the three of them; *Ghanda Nath*, *Devi Chauchurani*, and *Sitārām* have this common factor of fine starts.

But the novelist seems to be in the doldrums when he reaches the midway. Resolution occurs not in the smooth, peaceful manner in which the progression of events was taking place.
In *Ananda Math*, the role assigned to the Physician has had its devastating effect on the plot. The realistic and romantic admixture in *Devi Chandurani* has been pointed out. *Sitarām* proceeds towards the end under the compelling influence of a deadened, petrified external agency. The man who holds even now the splendid open court for the vindication of the honour of his household, is very soon thrown into the condition of a senseless profligate. This rather sudden turn of a man who evinced no weakness of character before, might have been brought about by other more plausible means.

If that downfall of Sitarām is accepted, the steady course of events thereafter is well managed to produce the vehemence of a tragic drama. The rot spreads upon every fibre of the state. Chandrachur retires in disgust, the people become panicky and begin to drop off slowly. By a new technique Bankim tries to throw light upon this state of affairs. He imports two citizens and engages them in a talk:

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- page 215 -
This is a device taken straight from the drama. As it describes the affairs of the kingdom, it brings all the different incidents of the plot together. A straight author recit is thus obviated by this excellent dramatic technique not found elsewhere in Bankim Chandra. The technique is repeated in Chap. 17, and also at the end, where it takes the form of a dramatic epilogue.

At the outset it has been stated that the story of Sitaram is constituted by a sequence, not a series, of incidents. The chapters with a dimensional extent which have been pointed out already, might be considered as landmarks in the way of its vertical movement. Another is supplied by the Jayanti scheme (ch. 18). Sri has left the shelter of her husband to save him from further fall. But the mischief is done; Sitaram's degeneration is complete. The plot that came to a static point like the hero himself, as long as Sri was there, is now freed from a benumbing influence. It jumps into movement "like a pawing horse let go." In the midst of the darkening chaos, Sitaram stands unbalanced. He catches upon
Sri's substitute, Jayanti, and dishonours her before the assembled multitude in the most revolting way imaginable. The scene that narrates the incident, is one of the most sensational in the whole novel. As he presides over the public trial of the dedicated woman, he indirectly hastens the process of liquidation of his own kingdom. The art that goes into the making of the battle scenes in Bankim Chandra, works behind such narratives as well. A picture of vastness and massiveness is aimed at, and the plan is made real and actual by a skilful use of technique. There is an atmosphere of tragic grandeur in the entire chapter.
The scene continues. Like a fragmentary piece of epic, it has at once range and extent, and profundity. One of the characteristic features of the Bankim technique is perhaps revealed in these three dimensional chapters. The question does not arise in the case of modern novels: they tend to collect only selected fragments of experience into a narrative. But even the
classics of the last two centuries can scarcely boast of such heavy and massive structures raised up with materials gathered from the flight of time. Humour, pathos, and satire, drama and picture, - all come in a body transfigured by the creative artist's imagination. If such things are grand, Raasingha which succeeds Sitaram, is full of grandeur.

The momentum of the narrative is at the highest pitch in Chap. 18. Several scenes follow in a leisurely manner, as is natural after a moment of high tension. The two "weird sisters" hover about the tragic hero; romance once again comes in and interferes with the course of events. But that interference pales into insignificance before the gathering storm in the distance. The technique now gets above any such intrusion. Sitaram flares up before dying out. When the fort is being battered, he with the members of his family, helped by the remnants of his followers, carves out a way right through the enemy lines. The brilliance of the technique is kept up to the end.

After the addendum, there was an important sermonising by the author from the rostrum:

The author's purpose is suggested by the extract. Religious considerations demanded the placing of the incongruous elements of Sri and Jayanti into the framework of Sitaram. They are not unwelcome in a romance but their non-cooperation with the
plots make them unwelcome. It is in the fitness of things that this author commentary was left out. Ramchand and Shyamchand best close the book by their cynical but informative conversation.

Notes and References


2. From an article on Bankim Chandra by Dutt, R.C., in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. VI (11th ed.).


The quotations from the novels of Bankim Chandra have been taken from the Sahitya Parised edition.