Literary annals have few parallels of the father and son dedicated to the service of poetry in unbroken continuity for about a century as Dalpatram and Nanalal, were in the history of modern Gujarati poetry. Dalpatram who had taken the tradition-bound Gujarati poetry by surprise with his poem 'Bapani Pipar' in 1845, died in 1898 and his obituary notice appeared in a literary magazine ('Jnanasudha') simultaneously with a poem entitled 'Vasantotsav' or the 'Festival of Spring' by his under-graduate son - a remarkable coincidence which seemed to suggest that the torch had passed from the father to the son. Between 1845 and 1898, when the father and the son wrote their first epoch-making poems, lies half a century of the rapid evolution of modern Gujarati poetry, wherein the contribution of the son is even more outstanding than that of the father. Nalanal, who once defined the son as 'one completing the work begun by the father' and equated the son with the idea of progress, took special pride in describing himself as 'Dalpatram in full blossom', which is, in a sense, true if it implies that the process which began with the father reached a remarkable fructifying stage in the poetry of his son. In other respects, however, the father and son are almost poles apart. If his father's poetry was of the world worldly and generally earth-bound, Nanalal's poetry, to adopt an image from Kalidas, moved 'more above the earth than on it'.

4. 'Viyatibahutaram stokmurvyam prayati'; 'Shakuntala', Act I.
Born in 1877, an M.A. of the University of Bombay, Nanalal once remarked, 'If there is Bombay University, there is Nanalal', implying thereby that he would not have been what he was but for the education he received from it. The native talent, hereditary background and the general benefit of English education were evidently his, but there were also specific influences which affected and moulded him in varying degrees. The 'high moral purpose' in art and life, instilled into him by Dalpatram and his poetry, was later reinforced by Milton, whom he studied at the college. Again, Dalpatram, whose contact with the practical realities of life was unquestionable, had taught his son that literature was inalienable from life - a principle which was also brought home to Nanalal through Matthew Arnold's dictum that literature was the criticism of life. Nanalal read Burke and Tennyson at the college, both of whom created a great impression on him. While Burke's sonorous eloquence claimed him as a life-long admirer and, in some measure, probably influenced him in his innovation of the sonorous rhythmic style, Tennyson's poetry fascinated him to such an extent that, while at the college, he was impelled to read his life, works and Stopford Brooke's commentary on them. His magazine article, 'The Purpose of Love-Marriage in Universal Order', written while at the college, not only bears unmistakable traces of Tennyson's thoughts on the same subject, but also carries relevant quotations from Tennyson in support of his arguments. Nanalal's views on love, marriage and the relationship between man and

7. Published in the 'Jnanasudha'.

- : 236 :-

Born in 1877, an M.A. of the University of Bombay, Nanalal once remarked, 'If there is Bombay University, there is Nanalal', implying thereby that he would not have been what he was but for the education he received from it. The native talent, hereditary background and the general benefit of English education were evidently his, but there were also specific influences which affected and moulded him in varying degrees. The 'high moral purpose' in art and life, instilled into him by Dalpatram and his poetry, was later reinforced by Milton, whom he studied at the college. Again, Dalpatram, whose contact with the practical realities of life was unquestionable, had taught his son that literature was inalienable from life - a principle which was also brought home to Nanalal through Matthew Arnold's dictum that literature was the criticism of life. Nanalal read Burke and Tennyson at the college, both of whom created a great impression on him. While Burke's sonorous eloquence claimed him as a life-long admirer and, in some measure, probably influenced him in his innovation of the sonorous rhythmic style, Tennyson's poetry fascinated him to such an extent that, while at the college, he was impelled to read his life, works and Stopford Brooke's commentary on them. His magazine article, 'The Purpose of Love-Marriage in Universal Order', written while at the college, not only bears unmistakable traces of Tennyson's thoughts on the same subject, but also carries relevant quotations from Tennyson in support of his arguments. Nanalal's views on love, marriage and the relationship between man and

7. Published in the 'Jnanasudha'.
woman in his later lyrical plays provide further evidence of Tennyson's influence on him.

Though no useful purpose is served by equating one poet with another, it is a fascinating game in which Gujarati literary criticism has also sometimes zestfully participated. Thus, was Narsinhrao equated with Wordsworth, 'Kant' with Keats, Kalapi with Shelley and Nanalal with Tennyson, where mere semblances and resemblances are sometimes pushed to absurd length, for instance, in equating Dalpatram with Milton, where the resemblance rests possibly on the mere fact that both of them in their old age were blind. But considering Nanalal's fascination for Tennyson's poetry from his formative years and his respect for law, order and an almost Victorian ethical and moral approach to love, marriage and the relationship between man and woman, as revealed in his works, there seems to be some justification for associating Nanalal's name with that of Tennyson, especially when the corroboration is forthcoming from Nanalal himself. Nanalal has openly admitted that for his poetic diction he was indebted to Tennyson and that it was while trying to write something on the lines of Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden' that he wrote his poem 'Vasantotsav'.

Nanalal's reading of English literature and criticism was, by no means, confined to Shakespeare, Milton and Tennyson in the class-room, but extended to Homer, Dante, Goethe, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Browning, Walt Whitman, and to Matthew Arnold, Carlyle and Ruskin, as the internal evidence of his output shows. Nanalal described the great works of art as 'history, philosophy and poetry in a happy harmony'. It was, therefore, a happy coincidence that he added to his gift of poetry the knowledge

1 Vide p. 43.
2 Vide, Ibid, p. 44.
3 Vide, Ibid, p. 45.
of history and philosophy, which happened to be his subjects at the University. This seems to have served him well while writing his historical plays.

Among the influences nearer home, which affected and moulded him, Nanalal mentioned - Narmad, who inspired him in his quest for a suitable epic metre for Gujarati; Goverdhanram, whose 'Sarasvatichandra', in Nanalal's own words, did for him what 'Chapman's Homer did to Keats'; Narsinhrao, from whose 'Kusummala' he received his 'first lessons' in modern poetic diction; and 'Kant' whose 'Vasantvijay' he set out to imitate. It would, however, be seen that these were not, strictly speaking, indigenous influences at all, since these writers themselves, like Nanalal, were earlier inspired and moulded, in varying degrees, by the same influences as those working later on Nanalal. Thus, Narmad, who inspired Nanalal, was one in whom the English conception of poetry was first seen at work; Goverdhanram's novel was a vision of a synthesis of the best of the cultures of the East and West; Narsinhrao's was the first deliberate attempt at adopting a part of English poetry as a model for modern Gujarati poetry; Kant's narrative poem was an amalgam of different English poetic forms, attempted for the first time in modern Gujarati poetry. These 'native' influences were, therefore, not so native as they might look at first sight; they represent what was already achieved in modern Gujarati poetry under the influence of English poetry and serve also to supplement, reinforce and accelerate the process of integration, which was still going on when Nanalal took over.

Significantly opening his poetic career in 1898 with a romantic lyrical poem, 'Vasantotsav' or the Festival of Spring, which symbolises the idea of

Renaissance, Nanalal was the poetic mouthpiece of the Indian Renaissance, which had set in by about the middle of the nineteenth century, as a result of India's contact with the West through English. Nanalal's deep admiration for ancient Indian culture, including its moral and ethical values of life; his deep emotional attachment to the land, language and people of Gujarat, including its Nature; mingled with his sincere admiration for the literary, artistic, scientific and intellectual attainments of the West, in effect, balancing and counter-balancing one another.

The great value he attached to the knowledge of English is implicit in his observation that it was 'the master-key to world literature' and is also evident in the number of English words, phrases and sentences he incorporated in his works - one of his heroines even disburdening herself in four lines of English free verse.

'The youthful modern Muse', said Nanalal, 'has around her uncomfortable legs the metrical anklets forged by prosodists centuries ago'. This 'tyranny', innovations according to him, explained 'the struggle for new metrical and combinations going on everywhere'. It is interesting to note in this context that since Gujarati poetry came under the impact of English poetry, there have been constant experiments in metre, resulting in several permutations and combinations of old Sanskrit and indigenous metres, indicative of the poet's desire for more freedom of expression. But it was only in Nanalal that this led sometimes to a total freedom from metrical discipline. Nanalal chafed at the discipline of metres, which he felt like fetters on his absolute freedom of expression and even laughed at those who would not see eye to eye with him. It was only the compelling evidence of his performance in metrical compositions that raised him above the suspicion that he was making a virtue

of his own weakness. Nanalal had to face this metrical problem seriously when he launched upon his epic poem. Harmed, as stated earlier, was the first to go out in search of a 'grand metre' in Gujarati for an epic of the Western type. Nanalal, after Harmed, continued this quest. This began, according to him, when he was reading Shakespeare and Milton at the college, when Milton's Blank Verse, in particular, inspired him to evolve something like the English Blank Verse in Gujarati. He then recounted how in this voyage of discovery of the Gujarati equivalent of English Blank Verse, he stumbled, 'like Columbus', upon his discovery of the 'Dolan Shaili' or the rhythmic disposition, and tried it first in his poem 'Vasantotsava' and his play 'Indukumar' - a discovery, which he described as the 'revolt of a young man of twenty-one against the imperialism of prosody twenty-two hundred years old'.

Here, he said, he had the company of Walt Whitman, whom he had found doing in his 'free verse' what he was seeking to do in his rhythmic style and, later on, the 'Vers Libre' of the French poets strengthened his faith in his own invention. Nanalal maintained that his rhythmic style followed a syntactical principle and was therefore a scientific and not a whimsical disposition of words in an irregular order.

An indefatigable romanticist, idealist and lyricist, Nanalal was immensely gratified to find that there was 'hardly an educated man or woman of new Gujarat, who had not responded to', what he called, his 'New Romanticism' in his rhythmic style. This Romanticism, which was introduced in modern Gujarati poetry almost since it came under the impact of English poetry of the Romantic Revival, was 'new'

in the sense that Nanalal presented it in his rhythmic style. It was also new in
the sense that here romantic poetry was presented without its almost invariable
concomitant of romantic melancholy, which ran through like a streak in modern
Gujarati poetry from Narmad to Kalapi, in whom it became almost tearful. Nanalal
believed that the poet's function was to infuse new hope, instil new life and to
inspire men with high ideals and visions. He would not sing doleful songs in
mournful numbers, depicting the sorrows of life; 'in these troubled times when
hearts everywhere are turned into graves', he would rather sing of the joy of life
and living.

Nanalal sang, both literally and symbolically, of Spring and his poetry
exudes the very spirit of the joy of life. Hailed as the 'full-moon' of poetry
on his very first appearance, romantic lyricism seemed to have reached its high
water-mark in Nanalal whose genius, despite his adventures in the dramatic and
epic fields, was essentially lyrical and his approach fundamentally romantic. There
is romantic grandeur of fancy, imagination, emotions and diction in his poetry, which
seems to take off from the earth, using it more or less as a spring-board, and
soar so high that the contact with the realities of the earth is not always main­
tained. The son of the earth-bound father, he seemed to revel in aerial flights
and, in his romantic idealism, hardly a more effectual angel than a kindred spirit,
Shelley. The role of a teacher and a prophet was to his liking, as it was to
Shelley's, and his lyrical plays, which were rightly described by him as belonging
to the type of Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound' are prophetic in their fervour.

Nanalal's output was voluminous - he was the author of over a hundred
volumes - and the forms he assayed were many. Though he is, first and last, a

3. By Kant on the platform of the First Gujarati Literary Conference,
   presided over by Goverdhamram.
   pp. 152-153.
poet and his most characteristic expression is to be found in his lyrical poetry, he also wrote, besides numerous things in prose, a dozen plays and twelve cantos of an epic, winding up his long and distinguished poetic career with a massive devotional poem, 'Harisamhita', as one more coincidence would have it, even as his father did his with 'Harileelaamrita'. Nanalal did not always draw a firm line dividing his lyrical, dramatic and epic poetry, or as a matter of that, between the subjective and objective representation and hence any classification of his works is likely to be overlapping.

The following brief review of his (A) Poems, (B) Plays, and (C) Epic, is an attempt, at a closer range, to show how the influence of English poetry and its ideals worked on Nanalal in his poetic forms, technique, style, expression and representation.

(A) POEMS

(a) 'The Festival of Spring'

Sanskrit and Gujarati poets in the past had written on Spring and its beauties, but the representation had been more or less impersonal and occasional. The Spring about which Kant and Nanalal, among the modern Gujarati poets, wrote came, however, to acquire an added symbolic significance of the upsurge of Renaissance, which had swept over the length and breadth of the country by about the middle of nineteenth century, as a result of its intimate contact with the West. Kant, with his poem 'Vasantvijay', heralded the advent of this Spring in modern Gujarati poetry, which Nanalal, later on, celebrated in his poem 'Vasantotsav' or 'The Festival of Spring'.1 Shelley in his 'Ode to the West Wind' had visualised

Spring as blowing her 'clarion over the dreaming earth', 'driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air', filling 'plain and hill with living hues and colours', finally prophesising that if Winter came, Spring was not far behind. Nanalal in the Preface to his poem spoke of Spring in almost identical terms, when he observed that 'the Spring was a symbol of the Renascence, of quickening new life in what was blighted by Winter', and added that the festival of Spring was the festival of the Renaissance. He also referred to the effects of this upsurge, as a result of which 'the flood-gates of India, closed for centuries, were suddenly opened and in its homes blew the winds of the world from all directions'.

The poem, the first among his poems in the 'rhythmic style', narrates the romantic story of a beautiful young girl and a handsome young man with a flute in his hand, against the background of nature, peopled by rural folks, delineated romantically in a characteristically Wordsworthian style. It was spring time and the girl with her companions set out to greet the spring and cull flowers from the woods, much like the English maids Maying and culling flowers from the fields, wherewith to crown the most beautiful among the maids as the May Queen. The heroine of this poem is also crowned in a similar ritual. It may be noted that Nanalal in his poetic zeal painted the village and its folks romantically, introducing even the festival of the spring, depicting the maids as culling flowers, dancing and singing to celebrate the advent of spring, which is more representative of the English custom than that of the villages of Gujarat, where such ceremonies or customs are hardly in existence. The hero and the heroine of the story meet and fall in love at first sight, for in a pastoral romance like this 'who ever loved who loved not at first sight?'. The heroine’s (Vilasus) 'eyes were smiling';

she offered a flower to the hero and 'her heart along with it'. The heroine then joined her companions and looked 'like the moon among the stars', which is evidently in line with Keats's fancy 'The Queen-moon clustered around by her starry Fays'. The cuckoo was pouring forth its sweet song, which rained like moonlight on earth, which is obviously not different in its delineation from Shelley's Skylark, which poured its full heart in profuse strains and all the earth and air is loud with its voice...'as when the night is bare, the moon rains out her beams and heaven is overflowed.' The spirit of Shelley seems to appear again in the lines 'the spring kisses the flower; the wind kisses the fragrance; then why not the lover his beloved?' which echo the sentiments and arguments in Shelley's poem "Love's Philosophy". The love-story proceeds in this romantic vein, in the very spirit of the Spring time; the philosophy of love, which is enunciated therein, is equally romantic. The heroine with slow steps advanced towards her lover 'like a breeze heavy with fragrance', which runs parallel with Shelley's fancy 'Like a rose embower'd...by warm winds deflower'd, till the scent it gives makes faint with too much sweet these heavy winged thieves'. The story of the hero and the heroine is developed on the lines of the ideal of Platonic love. 'The abode of God is the temple of Love; there is no singleness there, all move in pairs over there', which is once again a variation on Shelley's 'Philosophy of Love' which states,

'Nothing in the world is single,
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle'.

3. Vide, 'Ode to a Nightingale'.
8. Vide, 'To the Skylark'.
The poem has a picturesque and colourful background of Nature, which though peculiar to Gujarat, reminds one, in its delineation, of Tennyson's descriptions of nature where imaginative splendour and scientifically accurate observation go generally hand in hand. Nanalal himself has admitted that he wrote this poem, while trying to write something on the lines of Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden'. He has also admitted his indebtedness to Tennyson for his poetic diction.

The flowery tale—both literally and figuratively—ends in the marriage of the hero and the heroine. There are spring flowers, mango-trees, lakes, cuckoo, musical flute, full-moon and kisses—all ingredients of an Arcadian romance, with sophisticated lads and lasses, in the usual place of the shepherds and shepherdesses, dancing, singing, falling in love at first sight, in the idyllic surroundings of spring time in the woods. This was a poetic innovation in modern Gujarati poetry, which came to have, with the publication of Nanalal's poem, the Gujarati edition of the English May-pole and Arcadian romance, supplemented by the home-spun philosophy, out of the yarn of Platonic love and ideal marriage, delivered in prophetic tones and thundering epigrams. The shepherd's pipe is wielded by the romantic hero of this sylvan romance, the cuckoo sings, its echoes dying, dying, dying, but the echoes of true love rolling from soul to soul.

Nanalal claimed that though his poem was Gujarati in its background and characters, it was neither provincial nor parochial, but universal in its application. Describing himself as 'the messenger of Spring', Nanalal said that he had adopted the 'international ideal of poetry', which, according to him, was the 'right ideal' in a rapidly shrinking world. True to its 'international ideal', scattered through

1. Vide, 'Ardhashatadbina Anubhavbol', p. 44.
2. Vide, Ibid, p. 44.
3. Typical of Gujarat, many of them are mentioned by names, (Vide, Ibid, pp. 57-58).
this poem are references to France, Germany, Switzerland, Greece, Rome, the United States of America and Japan.

(b) 'Poems', Part I, II, III.

Nanalal published three collections of his poems under the title, 'Ketlank Kavyo' or 'Some Poems' in 1903, 1908 and 1935. The poems 'mostly personal' follow the lyrical tradition of subjective poetry, so characteristic of the English romantic poetry, with which modern Gujarati poetry since Narmad had first come in contact and, which was no longer an unfamiliar poetic phenomenon being carefully reared and tended by a line of poets preceding him.

(1) 'Invocation' to the 'goddess' is couched in the familiar idiom of romantic poetry. The poem, which in fact, only idealises and romanticises the poet's wife, is an invocation, like Shelley's 'To the Night', to a spirit embodied in a human form; here it is the poet's beloved wife, there it is the one with whom Shelley was deeply in love. The same technique is employed in another poem, entitled 'Coronet' which is a poetic tribute to the same individual - the poet's wife - whom the poet crowns with his love. The coronet made up of flowers, culled from bowers and studded with gems and pearls of divine love, would, the lover declares, outlast and outshine the writ of life and victory-pillars, which would some day be washed away by the tide of Time and swallowed up in the vastness of space. This is a fancy similar to one frequently found in Shakespeare's sonnets and the one put in Prospero's mouth in the 'Tempest'. The lover finally observes that even if the flower-woven figure disappears with death, the deep sentiment behind it would live and permeate the sky with its song of love, which in its tone, is reminiscent of Shelley's style in the 'Skylark'. The whole poem is conceived in a typically Elizabethan strain, gorgeous

5. 'The cloud-capp'd Towers
the gorgeous Palaces,
The solemn Temples, the great Globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like this insubstantial pageant faded
Leave not a rack behind!' - Act IV, Sc.1.
in imagery and hyperbolic in its representation of the emotions, bordering on conceit. The youthful influence of Spenser, Milton and Burke may also have played its part in Nanalal's poetic diction, which is sonorous and rhetorical in places. 'Wedding Anniversary'\(^1\) dwells retrospectively on the pleasant memories of the past, when the poet and his beloved met 'on the sands of Time', played together and built castles in the air. Tears then passed by, even the Spring of life was gone; the eye lost its lustre and though the sea was not yet crossed, (probably inspired by Tennyson's 'Crossing the Bar') the lover is sure that they had not lived in vain, since they would certainly 'leave their foot-prints on the sands of Time'.\(^2\)

(2) In his 'Reminiscences', the poet refers wistfully to the lost dear ones, whose loving memory overwhelms him with emotions. The elegiac tone and the philosophic mood of the poem are reminiscent of some of the stanzas in Tennyson's 'In Memoriam'. The poet observes that the revolving earth has rounded its circle in its universal journey; spring has come again; the year is at the end, but the loving presence of his dear ones has not come back to him; which, in its representation of personal grief in a wistful vein, runs parallel also with Thomas Moore's 'The Light of Other Days'\(^4\) and partly with Thomas Hood's 'Past and Present'\(^5\). The poet then hears the wailing of men separated from their dear ones, through the distant grove of trees. 'While the stars bathe and dance in the waters of the river' and the whole of nature is a happy harmony of peace and love, the poet alone finds himself sad at the loss of love from those lost beyond recovery. Here, the contrast between the state of man and nature is partly Tennysonian and partly Wordsworthian, especially, as delineated in 'In Memoriam' and in some of the lines:

1. Vide, 'Poems', Part I, p. 25; the image is derived, on the poet's own admission, from Longfellow.
in 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality'. The poet proceeds to observe that
the memory of the dear ones induces the heart to mourn and weep, there being some­
thing in those tears, which is beyond the pale of reason. Here again, the influence
of Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' is at work. Further, the poet reflects philosophically
on life and death, suggesting that there was 'innocent, pure, white' life before
this life', the 'recollection of which guides the child and the man on to the path
of heaven' and inspires the man 'to break all the bonds of the world, and link his
soul with eternity'. Here, there is a peculiar mixture of the Hindu belief in life
before life, and Wordsworth's philosophy in his famous 'Ode'.

(3) 'A Glimpse of an Ideal Love-Life'1 depicts a lover, who wishes to
swing like a dream on a cloud in the 'pearl-studded grey realms of the high heaven';
or to sail in 'the boat of the moon over the ocean of love'. But his roving eyes,
gazing in the depths of the sky lighted by the 'golden' evening, finds 'not a petal
of love' there and in despair he comes down tearfully to earth. Here, 'the swing
of the cloud', 'the boat of the moon', 'grey realms of the high heaven', the 'dream'
of earthly paradise are fancies and conceits, characteristic of the Romantic poetry
of the Elizabethan poets and of those of the Romantic Revival, particularly of
Shelley.

The influence of Dante Rossetti's 'Blessed Damozel' mixed with Tennyson's
'In Memoriam' is evident in the fancy behind the poem 'At the Time of the End',2
where a wailing woman, bereaved from her husband, asks him if they would ever meet
again and is assured by him that, since true love never dies and true lovers are
never separated, they would meet again at the feet of God in heaven, where there is

no separation or death, but only perennial bliss and immortality. The poem, which presents a story against the background of nature in the English romantic tradition and in the style of Tennyson's idylls, also provides an illustration of the romantic technique of reinforcing the effect of the human emotions, delineated in the story, with the descriptions of a particular mood of nature, which is apparently in tune with the subject. The dark quiet of the night, relieved by the glimmer of a few stars and shattered by the sound of weeping heard from afar, starts off a narrative which is rounded up with a similar description of the 'thick shadows of the clouds, smeared with the light of the stars'.

A poem called 'Shravani Amas', which presents a picture of the darkness on the no-moon night in the densely clouded sky, written in 'free verse', is remarkable for some of the images conceived in a typically English romantic style. The midnight, which is personified like Shelley's 'Night', is described as 'opening its heart and revealing its secrets'; darkness is compared to the 'dust fallen from the wings of Death' and also to 'the network of rays reflected from the black baton of the God of Death'. Since 'Yama', or the God of Death, is not fancied in Indian mythology as an angel 'with wings', the simile 'like the dust fallen from the wings of Death' may be taken as an illustration of what the poet, in his Preface to the Poems, described as his 'New Romanticism' of the English conception. Again, while the 'Yamadand', or the baton of Death, is Indian, the network of black rays reflected from it is based on, what the poet describes as 'a modern scientific discovery' which has established that 'light consists also of black rays'. Further in the poem, when the poet refers to the arrival of the aeroplane and everybody 'emplaning' on a journey through the 'heart' of the Dark night, he is using the word 'heart' in the English idiomatic sense, which is interesting as an illustration.

1. Vides, Ibid., p. 92.
2. Vides, Ibid., the Poet's note, p. 123.
of how modern Gujarati poetry was being influenced even in its usages by English.

'In Pleasure and Aspirations', the poet asks whether behind the 'happy broad smile' there is not a sense of something wanting, that is felt 'every moment by the heart. The poet further asks if love is lost when it is expressed in words. Here, the poet's reflections on the 'broad smile', suggestive of something wanting, are reminiscent of Shelley's idea of 'some hidden want' and of 'our sincerest laughter', which is 'fraught with pain' (in the 'Skylark'), while the distinction between what is expressed and unexpressed is in tune with Keats's observation that 'heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter' (in 'Ode on a Grecian Urn') and with Tennyson's lines in 'In Memoriam'.

(4) 'The Young Lady' is a poem on the Muse of Poetry, 'one of the beautiful daughters of the man's sense of beauty, bearing also some family-likeness with her other sisters'. The poet here speaks of the 'close relation' between poetry and music, on the one hand, and between poetry and painting, on the other, even describing his own poem as a 'picture-poem', as against others in his previous collection, which he describes as 'sculpturesque'. This is an interesting illustration of the influence of English literary critical concepts on modern Gujarati poets with regard to the classification of 'styles'. Hardy's sculpturesqueness, Tennyson's picturesqueness, the harmony of poetry and painting in the Pre-Raphaelite poets like Dante Rossetti, and Browning's poems on the Italian painters and musicians were all there before Nanalal, who here describes some of his poems as sculpturesque and others as picturesque. His 'Young Lady', which the poet

classified as a 'picture-poem', may be an attempt at writing a poem which is like a picture, as Spenser 'the greatest painter who never held a brush', or, as Pre-Raphaelite Dante Rossetti or Tennyson often did.

(5) 'Married Again', which reaffirms the poet's love for his wife on their wedding anniversary, is a poem surcharged with the emotions of love, recollected in tranquility. The poet apostrophising his wife and talking to her of love has a parallel in Browning, who used this technique, in several of his poems addressed to his wife, such as, 'By the Fireside' and 'One Word More'. Nanalal's personal experience of love and marriage and his emotional attitude towards his wife, as it affected his poetry, is like Browning's with regard to Mrs. Browning.

In a poem, on the same theme, entitled 'Our Wedding Anniversary', the poet reminds his wife that 'this is the very day when the two flames of our souls became one, like one finger entwined with another', which may be compared with the following from Browning's 'By the Fireside':-

'My own; see where the years conduct!
At first, 'twas something our two souls
Should mix as mists do, each is sucked
In each new; on, the new stream rolls
Whatever rocks obstruct.' (XXVI)

In a poem called 'Vilasni Shobha', Nanalal claimed to have touched upon 'one of the most important questions related to woman', namely, a woman whether married, unmarried or a widow, was always an object of admiration, the woman having complete freedom to be in what state she chose for herself emphasising, however, that the ideal expression of woman was to be found in married love, that is, love

based on marriage and marriage based on love. Nanalal's view of the woman as not an undeveloped man, but a complement and companion to man is influenced by Tennyson particularly, by the "Princess", which he had read admiringly at the college and on which, as already stated, he had written an essay in his undergraduate years.

"My Peacock" is steeped in the romanticism of diction and fancy, which is exuberant, if not extravagant. There is a semblance of a story told in the poet's rhythmic style, describing a 'palace on the sea-shore, a queen living therein, bright like a chain of gems and her mind, like an oyster full of the pearls of thought'. The queen 'in tears, sang like a cuckoo and the sound overflowed her palace', which is reminiscent of Shelley's 'high-born maiden, in a palace-tower, soothing her love-laden soul in secret hour, with music sweet as love, which overflows her bower'. The poem has numerous expressions which sound typically English in their construction, syntax and idiom, e.g. 'There was an appeal in her eyes', "Death is the shadow of life", 'She (the bitch) was the daughter of darkness', 'Man has not yet acquired the keys of life', 'From her sea-blue garment the queen stretched out her begging hand', 'If 'what is' is taken to heart as much as 'what is not', half of the grief and tears would disappear from the world'; 'the death of peacock is dead: he has become immortal; and 'give me what is not', most of them reminiscent of Shelley.

3. Vide, 'To a Skylark'.
(7) Though a poet, who found the very idea of putting his poetry in a metrical form irksome, could hardly be expected, of all things, to submit to the rigorous discipline of packing his emotions in a sonnet, Nanalal attempted a few sonnets at the outset of his career. A group of four sonnets carries a note by the poet, reminding the readers of the 'two types of sonnets in English - pure English and Italian'. The poet then classifies his first sonnet as 'pure English' and his other three as 'Italian'. But these compositions without any unity or design, consisting of uncommonly short lines of unequal lengths, with rhymes phonetically irregular, have nothing in them excepting their fourteen lines to justify their title to the name of the sonnet. Inspite of a few stray attempts, in the past, the sonnet was yet to arrive in modern Gujarati poetry and Nanalal was, by his poetic temperament, hardly the person to make a successful beginning in this direction.

(a) 'Chitradarshano'

This volume, published in 1921, is a collection of a few poems 'presented as pictures' which, as the poet insists, are 'as true as those in colour'. This would have been an attempt at Pre-Raphaelite style of writing poetry, but since the poet's aim here is to present Truth as it is and since the poet would not accept 'word-pictures' as synonymous with poetry, the whole attempt generally results only in subjective lyricism with emphasis on Tennysonian picturesqueness.

In 'Gujarat', described as an 'historical poem', the poet gives a beautiful word-picture of Gujarat. Despite its overtones, this poem is one of the few patriotic poems written on Gujarat, which have not lost their appeal through changes of time and poetic taste. It is sentimentally in line with the patriotic poems in English and those of Narmad, who, under the influence of English poetry, was the first among the modern Gujarati poets to write patriotically on Gujarat. Nanalal's poem has, however, his favourite 'international' ring, inasmuch as it refers to Greece, Rome and Europe by way of comparison or contrast. Another poem entitled 'Sharad-Poonam' is an instance of nature poetry, represented picturesquely, subjectively and romantically. The full-moon and moonlight are described pictorially through a chain of similes, reminiscent of Shelley's technique in his poem on the Skylark, e.g., the moon rising slowly is compared to a 'shy maiden slowly lifting up her eye-lid weighed down with bashfulness', which may remind one of 'Like a high-born maiden in a palace tower, soothing her love-laden soul in secret hour', in Shelley's 'Skylark'. The other similes and analogies are on the same lines. 'Pitrutarpan', a poem embodying the poet's elegiac tribute to his father, is one of the finest of the poems from Nanalal's pen. Nearer to Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' than to Milton's or Shelley's elegies, the poem, which is intimately personal, unfolds the past in a reminiscent style, dwelling on the different experiences and episodes in the life of the father and the son, not in tears or sobs, but in subdued dignified utterances charged with deep emotions.

(d) Songs

Among the lyrical forms of poetry, Nanalal also handled with rare distinction the song and wrote a number of lovely songs. Borrowing sometimes a strain or a line from popular old songs, or from the repertory of folk-songs, Nanalal seemed
to have a special gift for pouring new wine of emotions sometimes in old bottles
of traditional shapes. As Bishop Percy's collection of ancient songs and ballads,
proved a source of inspiration to a number of English Romantic poets of the nineteenth
century, the traditional, devotional/and folk-songs and 'Rasas' in earlier Gujarati
poetry did the same to Nanalal. Nanalal declared that though he knew neither to
sing nor play, he was 'a lover of rhythm in poetry and of swing in music' which
he has substantiated in his own creations alike in poetry and musical songs.

Though Nanalal's lyrical impulse was sometimes rooted in the mediaeval and
traditional, devotional/folk traditions of Gujarati poetry, it has also to be remembered that he was
considerably influenced by English poetry in general and by the songs of Shakespeare,
Shelley and Tennyson in particular. Like them, he incorporated a number of songs
in his plays. Songs of this type written by Nanalal, both in technique and
conception, are reminiscent of English romantic lyricism, which sometimes finds its
expression in snatches of songs, seeking to represent emotions subjectively or
objectively in music and pictures, a typical instance of which may be found in Nana-
lal's song 'Oh, my 'champa' flower is charming with the light and fragrance of love!' which reminds one of Robert Burns' "My love's red, red like a rose". Another song,
'There are Spring-flowers blossoming on his face; there is the sun shining in his
eyes; his heart is generous like a cloud', has a freshness of imagery which marks
it out, on the one hand, from the traditional Gujarati songs and brings it nearer,
on the other, to modern English poetry, as for instance, in Keats's imagery in "There:
a lily on thy brow and the roses have faded from thy cheeks' in his 'La Belle Dame
Sans Merci'. Here, the same technique of using the concrete for the abstract results

in picturesqueness, which combines the fact of the matter with the truth of emotions. Further, 'Take off, take off, that loving expression on your face; there is no pleasure in falsely attracting a heart'¹ may well be compared with the technique in Shakespeare's 'Oh! take those lips away'. Another song 'Oh, for me the bed of thorns, for you the rosy sleep, my dear'² is evidently English in its antithetical representation of the lover's love and sacrifice. The song with its fancy 'Moon, I shall instal you in my eyes and worship you if you make my lover smile like you',³ and the other beginning with, 'Dear, this is the dawn of love; gone is the night and the sun shines in my heart',⁴ are almost Elizabethan in their conceits.

Nanalal, who also wrote a few sea-songs, once remarked that Gujarati poets had not paid enough attention to the sea which lay stretched before them in all its glory and beauty.⁵ English poetry has been enriched by many sea-songs by English poets. The poverty of modern Gujarati poetry in this respect was to some extent embodied by Nanalal who, besides writing occasional poems on the sea, gave even a volume, full of songs inspired by the sea, under the title, 'Pearls from the Sea'. Though Gujarat has a pretty extensive sea-line, the sea does not seem to have exercised any special fascination for the poets of Gujarat. It was probably the impact of English poetry which first directed their attention to this subject. Nanalal's sea-poems, though not many in number, are suggestive of the new interest entering into Gujarati poetry.

Between 1903 and 1943, Nanalal wrote a number of lyrical \(^1\) plays based on history, mythology and his own invention, located in nature, cities and villages, between ideality and reality, ranging in time from the dim past to the distant future. The characters, conceived more as types than as individuals, fall into two groups, representing some moral or social ideals, include saints, sinners, dreamers, visionaries, self-seekers and idealists at different social, intellectual and spiritual levels. Love, marriage, social and human welfare constitute their themes and the moral uplift and ennobling of man, society and the world their purpose. The story, including incidents, events and situations, is woven into a plot which in structure belongs to the inorganic type. Designed as 'the criticism of life', the stories are treated romantically, interpersed with songs which stand on their own, regardless of their context. Professing no allegiance to the classical unities of time, place and action, the plays seek to replace all unities by the over-all unity of sentiment, \(^2\) which gives the plays whatever unity of impression they possess. Written in impassioned 'rhythmic style', the plays can be described neither as regular verse nor prose plays.

Though the plays speak for themselves, Nanalal's own observations in the Prefaces to his plays and elsewhere throw much light on his conception of the drama. Thus, in the Preface to his very first play, Nanalal maintained that his play was to be classified as a 'Lyrical Drama'. \(^4\) The usual connotation of the drama, he

---

1. 'Indukumar', Act I (1909), Act II (1927), Act III (1932); 'Jaya-Jayant' (1914), 'Rajarshi Bharat' (1922); 'Premkunj' (1922); 'Vishvageeta' (1927); 'Jehangir-Noorjehan' (1928); 'Shahjahan Akbar' (1930); 'Sanghmitra' (1931); 'Oj ase Agar' (1933); 'Gopika' (1935); 'Jagatprerana' (1943).
warned, did not apply to his play, which belonged not to the Shakespearean variety, but to the type of Goethe's 'Faust' and Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound'. Further, while substantiating his argument that 'the lyric is not always short', he mentioned 'Prometheus Unbound' as a specimen of the English type of the long lyric. It seems, therefore, that Nanalal did not draw any line between the long lyrical poem and the lyrical drama, and this lack of definition has likewise entered into his own plays, which fall between the long lyric and the lyrical drama. Nanalal was, however, clear on one point, namely, in describing his plays as, not classical, but romantic, in the English critical parlance.

There is indeed some justification for the poet to associate himself with Shelley and Goethe, rather than with Shakespeare. Nanalal shared with Shelley his romantic idealism, and with Goethe his moral earnestness. Nanalal had read Shakespeare at the college, but curiously found 'the great poet of England trite'. This is understandable in view of Nanalal's moral approach and reformist zeal, which found Shakespeare's occasional levity of tone and his all too human approach as anything but behoving an ideal poet, whom Nanalal expected to be a purist, a teacher and a prophet at the same time. Shakespeare's plays may not serve as a model for Nanalal, but Shakespeare's lyrical and romantic charm was not too easily to be resisted by Nanalal, as his poems and plays, in places, tend to show. A specific reference to "Back to Methuselah" shows that Nanalal was not unaware of Bernard Shaw's work as a dramatist, but it was unlikely that Shaw, with his rational and biological approach to love and marriage could affect Nanalal, whose approach to the same subjects was essentially romantic and idealistic. On the contrary, Shelley's

3. Vide, 'Ardhashatabdina Anubhavbol', p. 44.
romantic idealism, his philosophy of love, his prophetic fervour and lyrical exuberance were more in tune with Nanalal’s own approach and attitude.

Nanalal’s fascination for Tennyson, as also his magazine article ‘The Place of Love—marriage in the Universal Order’, already referred to, is also seen at work in Nanalal’s plays, where his views on love, marriage and the relationship between man and woman bear a close resemblance with those of Tennyson. Even in his historical play on Akbar, Tennyson’s ‘Akbar’s Dream’ was before Nanalal’s eyes, besides Flora Anne Steele’s novel ‘A Prince of Dreamers’. Nanalal, like Shelley, was a dreamer and all his plays have the quality of a dream—beautiful, romantic, utopian and mostly inconsequential. The dream defies all unities of time, place and action; Nanalal’s plays have likewise none of these. In the Preface to his play, ‘Vishvageeta’, Nanalal refers to Marlowe, Shakespeare and Shaw, as willfully defying the tyranny of the classical, unities and seems to derive considerable satisfaction at finding himself in such a distinguished company.

Nanalal’s plays are based on some lofty sentiment, which serves an ideal, and their representation is not that of a dispassionate observer or thinker, but of a poet, who seeks to embody that ideal with the help of characters, who express themselves like the poet’s mouthpieces. There are few incidents and events and of action or movement in his plays there is next to nothing. There is not the usual exposition, development or denouement in Nanalal’s plays, which look like long lyrical poems in dialogue form. The characters, who are not sharply distinguished from one another, all talk alike in the same heightened rhythmic style, which may remind one of Goldsmith’s complaint to Dr. Johnson that even his fish talked like

whales. Nanalal's plays demand a 'willing suspension of disbelief' if they are to be read through as they are. In fact, the usual test of a drama or a stage-play would not do at all for Nanalal's plays, which, as he himself once categorically stated, are not plays but poems. On their fitness for the stage, whatever his initial expectations, he does not seem to have had any illusions, for about his 'Jaya-Jayant', which of all his plays, was expressly designed for the stage, Nanalal admitted that it had not much stage-worthiness. In any event, the plays speak for themselves and their testimony goes to show that they are essentially poems, partly dressed up as plays. Nanalal seems here to be considerably influenced by the peculiar poetic product of nineteenth century England, when poets became playwrights and produced something which was neither a poem nor a play, but a cross-product of the two known as a poetic play or a closet-play. Rightly, Nanalal allied himself with Shelley, but he is likely to have been also influenced by Tennyson, whose very great admirer he was.

A few of his (a) Social and (b) historical plays, reviewed below, would tend to show how near to this English model of the lyrical play Nanalal was.

(1) 'Indukumar'

Indukumar, the hero, is an artist, returned to his native land after a long absence, who, like Tennyson's Ulysses, longs again to see the world and not rest content. The hero has not only the Ulysses-like desire to see the world, to sail beyond the horizon, acquire new experiences, and gather knowledge about men and cities, but also a Shelley-like zeal to reform - not the world - but his own land by implanting on it a new ideal of life, gathered from abroad. Thus like

Tennyson's hero, Nanalal's hero also represents the spirit of the Renaissance, to which he refers in his lengthy monologue as an upsurge, sweeping over Europe and Africa. Despite his ideal of single blessedness, like that of Benedict in 'Much Ado About Nothing', the hero (literally meaning the moon) falls in love with Kanti (literally meaning beauty) who also responds identically, impelled by her own ideal of offering herself only to the man, whom her heart and soul—not her parents—approve of. This approach to love and marriage is in sharp contrast with the usual social trend in Gujarat and India, where love-marriages, so common in the casteless societies in the West, were more or less an exception and matrimonial alliances arranged by the parents were the rule. With the new social awakening, which manifested itself firstly in its movement against the tyranny of caste-barriers and enforced widowhood, under the impact of the West, the social philosophers and poets of Gujarat then did some fresh thinking also on what truly constituted love and marriage, as it affected the lives of young men and women and their mutual relations; and a new equation between love and marriage was attempted in modern Gujarati literature, wherein the inspiration from Western literature, in general, and from English poetry in particular, does not seem to be negligible. Goverdhanram, in prose, and a little later Nanalal, in his poetry, like Tennyson in England, wrote feelingly on the dignity of women, their social status and their proper role. Associated with this new awakening was also the question of the woman's education, which made her mentally free from blind submission to the existing social order. The social philosophy, inclusive of the ideal of Platonic love, love at first sight, marriage based on free choice, spiritual companionship of men and women in pursuit of a common ideal or mission, is reflected in the poems and plays of Nanalal, who was probably inspired by analogous ideals reflected in the works of Ruskin in prose.

and Tennyson in poetry, especially where there was some common ground between these Western ideals and those sanctified by the cultural traditions of ancient India, of which Nanalal was an equally ardent admirer.

Nanalal's ideals of love and marriage are represented through his characters, who seem to be trumpeting Nanalal's own views almost all the time. 'Wherever there is love-marriage, the world is a heaven on earth,' is followed by a corollary that 'if the social philosophers did not promote love-marriage, artificial plants called marriages would only bring forth children, without vitality, like artificial flowers without scent'. Hence, the mission of the hero and heroine in Nanalal's play is 'to plant heaven on earth' through love, which is Biblical in its aim and Shellyan in its means at the same time. 'There is the empire of love over the entire world', where the woman is the reigning Queen of the Kings of Love, her dominion being 'the man's heart', which is in line with the romanticized and idealized picture of the woman in Ruskin's 'Sesame and Lilies'. Further, 'children are the prophets of God' is reminiscent of Wordsworth, who visualised the child as a 'mighty prophet, blessed seer'. But Nanalal finds that 'it is the malady of this age that the youth feels tired on the very threshold of his journey', which is substantially the picture painted by Keats when he wrote 'where youth grows pale and sceptre-thin and dies'. Yet, the poet, unlike Shelley or Keats, would not harp on the sorrows of life. The Nepali Jogan, in the play, whose ambition is to 'transform India into a heavenly

---

9. In his 'Ode to a Nightingale'.

---
garden meditates on the political and social condition of the country, and her mind roves reflectively over India, Europe, and America, international history and politics, where one could only hear the poet's own voice as Tennyson's voice is heard in his 'Locksley Hall' while reflecting in a similar vein. Stating that 'Asia is the focal point of world history and India of Asia', the Nepali Jogan bursts into a long eulogy of India, which in its rhetorical representation of a patriotic sentiment, is in tune with Cloten's performance in Shakespeare's 'Cymbeline', which is repeated in the Second Act of this play, where she uses even English words and phrases, refers to the 'Iliad', Homer, Helen, Goethe, Shakespeare, Aristotle, Plato, Kant, Napoleon, Caesar and the whole history of Europe from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, least expected of one in her situation, evidently deputising for the poet who, like Tennyson in his two poems on 'Locksley Hall' at the interval of sixty years, speaks here of the changes brought about by the World War (First) which came between the publication of the First and Second Act of his play. The World War induces the poet to reflect that 'the great problem before the world of to-day is to destroy the instinct for destruction' and the characters in his play, therefore, set out 'to warry fire over every mountain and burn the age-old dung-hills of the world', where the desire to destroy the old and the useless as a preliminary to the mission of reforming the world, sounds like Shelley's voice in his 'West Wind'. The heroine Kanti sings of the approaching Spring which is symbolic of the spirit of Renascence to which the poet referred in more than one place in his works.

2. Vide, Ibid, pp. 77-78.
5. Vide, his Preface, 'Indukumar', Act II, published in 1927 after an interval of eighteen years when the first Act of the play was published.
The Second Act of the play, like the First one, has little of dramatic action, conflict or suspense. Men and women come and go, stand on terraces, gazing at the moon or singing and dancing, delivering themselves in lengthy monologues, where a thing is multiplied into its hundredth with a succession of analogies and epigrams, as if the poet was writing a long poem of the type of Shelley's 'Skylark'.

The Third Act of the play, published in 1932, introduces the character of the Saint, who has built a temple called the 'Temple of Spring' on the top of the hill. He represents the Spring or the Renaissance whose high-priest he is. In Scene III, the different characters assemble to celebrate the Spring and another 'May-pole' is erected and the heroine, in English country-side fashion, is crowned the Queen of the Spring. The whole of the Scene IV is devoted to representing what the poet calls 'The Philosophy of the Spring', which is the philosophy of a new life, of Renaissance, which is further likened to an 'upward step in Evolution'.

The hero, Indukumar, in the meantime, is shown as transformed from 'the man into a God' and, as the Head of a New Temple, working out 'the world's Age of Synthesis', planting the 'Upanishads' in Evolution and Modernism in Ancient Traditions.

This so-called play has little of the technique of the play beyond the external one of splitting up of the play into Acts and Scenes, of the speech into dialogues and monologues, which look like the author's random thoughts on random subjects, in some sort of questions and answers. The yarn is as thin as its texture and the characters are more or less static for all their dynamic professions. Since there is no pre-conceived plan to begin, develop and end the action, the play is one of those compositions which can go on indefinitely for ever, so long as the supply

of ink and paper is assured to the writer. The 'play' has a number of songs -
the Third Act alone containing thirty-eight of them - a la Shelley and Tennyson,
some of them musically very charming indeed and lyrically very beautiful, but few
of them serving any dramatic purpose.

(2) 'Java - Jayant'

The theme of this play continues to be love and marriage where Nanalal
claimed to have touched upon a 'subtle psychological truth', namely, 'Love does
not mean physical yearning, but something spiritually clean and above it. It is
not naturally indispensable that the union of love should invariably result in
physical gratification'. This idea is embodied in the hero, Jayant, and heroine,
Jaya, whose romantic love ends in a spiritual marriage. Since the author himself
had his own doubts as to the stage-worthiness of his 'stage-play', this play
may be taken, like its predecessor, as a closet-play, fit for the reading-room or
the study as Shelley's and Tennyson's plays. The play opens with a song in
 glorification of Love, which strikes the keynote of the play, in tune with Shelley's
conception of universal love, which alone could ensure the realisation of a brave
new world. The play, as it unfolds itself, is however another hymn to Love as if
one more 'rare spectacle' revealed by Prospero's magic art. Whatever distinction
there is in the play between the natural and the supernatural, real and imaginary,
human and divine, almost disappears with the hero's declaration that on his 'way to
heaven, he saw Lord Vishnu', which leaves the readers or the spectators guessing as
to the plane on which the action of the play is taking place and whether these

characters are human or divine, whether the scene is laid in heaven or on earth.

There are some thirty-four songs in the play, which, as in the earlier play, have generally no dramatic propriety, though some of them are exquisitely lyrical and musical. From the point of view of its stageability, the play, like 'King Lear' is perhaps 'too huge for the stage', though for a different reason. The mountains, lakes, valleys, gardens, rivers, cities, fairies, 'apsaras', invisible Devarshi, dead parents appearing in a dream, voices from above, the hero's journey into heaven - all in one may probably find the stage too small. In theme, nothing new or fresh is achieved in this play, which may even be called an extension or the Fourth Act of 'Indukumar', as Nanalal himself actually did. The theme is Love, but not in the Shakespearean sense; it is a romantic comedy, but not in the sense, for instance, 'As You Like It' is; more than the desire to hold the mirror to life is the desire to teach and preach, which seems to have prompted the poet to write this play.

There are some resemblances between the story of this play and that of Shakespeare's 'Cymbeline', for instance, Jayant is brought up by the King and Queen after the death of his father and falls in love with Jaya, like Posthumous, brought up by the King and falling in love with Imogen. The Queen charges Jayant with ingratitude as Posthumous was in 'Cymbeline'. Jaya, like Imogen, also goes in search of Jayant as in 'Cymbeline'. The parents of Jayant appear in his dream as those of Posthumous did in his. Again, Jayant's remark, 'God tries only those whom He wishes to make His own' almost like the words of god Jupiter —

'Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,
The more, delay'd, delighted'.

in 'Cymbeline'. In Act III, Sc.V, the celestial nymphs, including the famed 'Apsaras' - Rambha and Urvashi - come down to earth, to dance and sing at a wedding Juno, Iris and Cares do in the 'Tempest'.

(3) The Other Plays

In the Preface to his next play 'Prem Kunj' or the 'Bower of Love' (1922), the poet observed that 'the world to-day needs the poetry of the re-instatement of Love in life, where, what is not love is accepted as a true coin..... hence, to guide those who have lost their path by presenting a true love-story is essential to-day'. Presumably, the poet thinks with Shelley, that though the Kingdom of Love was universal, that one word was too profane for him to profane it, he would, therefore, seek to reinstate it to its original glory, by presenting the story of 'how the extinguished flame of Love was lighted again, how it was lost, recovered and re-installed in the Temple of Love'.

Having set forth his purpose and mission, the poet then shows how his hero, like Tennyson's Sir Galahad going in search of the Holy Grail, visits a number of men and places and returns triumphantly with his mission fulfilled. He is another Prometheus Unbound, who succeeds in bringing light to the dark world. The play, which is like an elaborate parable or an allegory, ends with a Hymn to Love, and with the installation of the Flame of Love in the Temple of Love, the kingdom of Love is symbolically established on earth

'All love is sweet,
Given or returned. Common as light is love;
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.'

1. Act V, Sc. IV.
4. Vide, Shelley: 'Prometheus Unbound'.
Even the dumb (Devba) miraculously begin to talk and a New Age is declared to have begun.

'The world's great age begins anew,
The Golden years return'.

In the Preface to the play called 'Vishvageeta' (1927), Nanalal wrote that the dramas of Europe were based on the classical unities, inspired by the ancient Greek models. Marlowe and Shakespeare then broke the tradition, observing only the unity of action, till Shaw performed the last obsequies and did away even with the unity of time in his 'Back to Methuselah'. Nanalal declared that 'the unity of sentiment is the only unity' he had cared to follow in this play.

'Vishvageeta' is an amorphous play, which ranges in time from the dim past to the distant future, brings Buddha, Mahomed, Jesus, Rama, Shankaracharya and the other prophets of the world together to hear the Earth's complaint that the problem of evil, despite their laudable efforts, had remained unresolved. The characters - mythological, historical, real and imaginary - have hardly any individuality, the style is even more rhetorical and declamatory than usual with Nanalal, the only saving grace, as in his other plays, being a number of lovely lyrics.

Another play, 'Oj ane Agar' tells the romantic story of two young lovers, and if the author is inconveniently reminded that he has told this story before, his answer is, 'In every age all lovers build their own Taj Mahals' and he substantiates his argument by referring to the never-ending love-stories of "Romeo, Juliet, Desdemona, Penelope, Lucrecia, Dante and Beatrice'. The author also seeks

2. Vide, Shelley: 'To Hellas'.
to establish 'the great truth that man and woman constitute the two wings of the bird of life' and the 'great truth' is again enforced in a typically Tennysonian vein, in the observation that man and woman are not each other's rivals, but complements. The romantic story of the young hero and the heroine, against the background of natural beauty, is conceived in the spirit of the English romantic comedy and the heroine is shown waiting for her lover in the twilight and finally parting on a kiss to meet again the next evening in almost English romantic style. In the play, the author has introduced an idyllic village named 'Shashpar', whose history is recounted in the manner of Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village'.

'Gopika' (1935), another play, is set against the background of a village which, as the author himself says, 'was once like Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village' which provides further evidence of the influence of Goldsmith's poem on the poet, whose approach to the problems of the villages is, to some extent, not different from that of Goldsmith, more particularly because Nanalal believed that 'the villages and cities whether in the East or the West are all alike - different in shapes, not in types'. His ideal in the play was to paint an ideal village, like one of those 'Garden Cities of England'. Nanalal ends the play by suggesting that if the villages are to be saved from extinction, they should be reconstructed in such a way that the village should have the finer points of the cities, as cities of the

8. Vide, Ibid, p. 84.
The hero of 'Jagat-Prerana' (1943), allegorically named 'Parakram' or 'Adventure', has travelled all over 'Europe, America and Japan where he saw only dark shadows',  
and has returned home fully convinced that 'India is the one hope for mankind',  
since nowhere else is to be found the 'Dynamics of Humanity'.

Shelley wanted this 'Dynamism' from the West Wind. Nanalal's hero asks, 'Shall I seize the Wind or the Lightning? Does the Wind offer inspiration to the world?'  
where evidently, the author has Shelley's symbolism of the West Wind at the back of his mind, but he, for one, would want it to be not merely as a destroyer and a preserver, but also as a spiritual power. The imagery of the West Wind is, however, continued in the Invocation which follows:—

'Come and awaken the hope of the world'

The hero, like Prometheus, in his self-appointed mission, sets out in his adventures to bring Light to the dark world,  
as in the earlier play 'Premkunj'. The hero finally returns enlightened and is married to the heroine Jyotika, meaning light, the poet having demonstrated that man and woman cannot realise their ideals in life alone; which is indeed what Tennyson also said, when he stated that man and woman complemented each other. The poet's idea of the principle of synthesis - body and soul, man and woman, East and West, worldliness and other-worldliness, enjoyment and renunciation - is worked out once again in the play, which also happens to be his message to the world. The play has twenty-five songs, plenty of moonlight, and a lot of dancing and singing, without which no play of Nanalal could possibly be complete.

(b) Historical Plays

In his two historical plays, 'Jehangir-Noorjehan' (1928) and 'Shanshah Akbar' (1930), the poet's aim is to harmonize the truth of history with poetry, while conceding that the historical play should be essentially true to history both in its characters and events. Though history was Nanalal's subject at the University and though evidently he seems to have taken great pains to collect his material, Nanalal's approach is of a romantic poet rather than of a historian, for instance, like that of Scott in his historical novels or that of Tennyson in his 'Queen Mary', 'Harold', 'Becquet' or 'Akbar's Dream'. His general lack of inventiveness is to some extent remedied here, inasmuch as the events and incidents are provided by the actual happenings recorded in history. But his looseness in plot-construction continues even here in these plays, which look like a series of pictures and portraits without frame-work or co-ordination, though a few of the pictures are indeed poetically very charming. The songs incorporated in the plays, as usual, remain the star-attraction of these plays.

Stating that 'the synthesis of Truth and Poetry is rare in the whole world', whereby he probably implied the harmonious blending of history and poetry, or that of the truth of facts and the truth of imagination, he claimed that his historical plays constituted 'the art-form of painting that rarity'. In other words, his historical plays were neither history nor poetry, but 'the poetry of history', where his aim was 'to depict the souls of great men, the face of the times in which they lived and ultimately the joyful vision of Time, which presides over history itself'.

Nanalal maintained that 'the royal love-story of Jehangir and Noorjehan is as wonderful as the natural beauty of Kashmir', which gives a clue to his approach alike to the story and history, namely, eulogistic and romantic, but in comparing the historical couple to Radha and Krishna, he seems to have allowed his zeal to outrun discretion. 'Jehangir-Noorjehan' is conceived and presented in a romantic spirit and the poet has scrupulously and sedulously kept out all shows of strife and reality of history from this microcosm of romantic love. Even the drums of war and the poison of court-intrigues are as if inoculated and presented romantically.

Nanalal is, however, on firmer ground in his other historical play 'Akbar', when he comes to depict the greatness of Akbar, 'the Great', where, among others, he quotes from Tennyson's "Akbar's Dream" and Flora Steele's novel 'A Prince of Dreamers', which coincides with Nanalal's own attitude towards the Mogul Emperor - the approach of Carlyle's 'Hero and Hero-worship'. An advocate of synthesis himself, Nanalal saw in Akbar the synthesis of cultures, religions, arts, literatures and different communities. The identity of outlook and purpose seems to have endeared Akbar so much to Nanalal, who claims to be not alone in his admiration for Akbar, who was being admired 'for three centuries from Elizabeth to Tennyson', quoting even H.G. Wells as saying that 'Akbar was one of the hinges of history'. The play,

2. Vide, his Dedication Poem to 'Jehangir and Noorjehan', p. 8.
in effect, turns out to be a lyrical tribute to Akbar's greatness.

(c) p. 1 e

Nanalal defined the epic as 'the great story of the adventures and heroism of great men and heroes'. This gives an impression that Nanalal did not draw any line between heroic poetry and an epic, as he did not between the lyrical and the dramatic. Observing that 'every age has its own story of heroism to tell and every age has its own poet who tells it', Nanalal lists the 'Iliad', 'Shahnama', 'Ramayana', 'Mahabharata' and 'Bhagvat' as 'Cosmic poems available to the world once in a thousand years' and maintains that his own epic was not one of the old Sanskrit type, but of the type of Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. Again, under the heading, 'My Conception of an Epic', included in the Preface, the poet says that Narmad inspired him to write an epic, which amounts to saying that he was trying to write an epic of the English type.

Nanalal found that the choice of a suitable subject for his epic poem was even more difficult than that of an epic metre, which he had found in his 'Rhythmic Style'. It is interesting to note that it was also Milton's difficulty before he wrote his 'Paradise Lost' and it was Narmad's when he thought of writing an epic. As Milton finally fell back on the story from the Bible, where he could conveniently combine art with morality, Nanalal who was, in a sense, like Milton in his attitude towards art and morality and like him was as much a child of the Renaissance as of Puritanism, also fell back on the story from the 'Mahabharata', where he could be

postic and dactic at the same time. But the 'Mahabharata' differs from the Bible in this that it is already formulated into an epic, whereas the Bible is not. This means that Milton approached the Bible for his raw materials, while Nanalal sought to write an epic from an epic, as Kalidas had done. But Kalidas's epics are not epics in the English sense of the word, which Nanalal claimed for himself. Recounting his struggle in selecting the subject for his epic, the poet observed that, after considering different alternatives, which included the life-stories of Jesus and Buddha and the study of world history, he came to the conclusion that 'the most awe-inspiring word in human history was Kurukshetra', where five times the fate of one-sixth of the human race was decided on its battlefield, creating histories and epochs, which no battlefield has ever done. He was resolved finally on writing his epic on Kurukshetra in a 'new style for the new age'. The poet then, like Chapman, spoke out 'loud and bold' and, was greeted as 'one talking like Demosthenes or Cicero of a bygone age' and as having in his Mahasudarshana (a part of his epic) the sheer grandeur, seen in poets like Milton and Dante. All this must have been very gratifying to the poet; but it remains to be seen how far his Kurukshetra is an epic poem of the Miltonic type, which, according to him, was his ideal.

Nanalal's epic of 10,703 lines is divided into twelve Books or Cantos, each Book carrying at its beginning the gist of the story told in it, in the manner of Milton's 'Argument', which is never found in the Sanskrit type of the Epic. The First Book or Canto, entitled 'The Change of the Era' seeks to establish how Krishna
was 'transformed from a beautiful to a sublime personality', how he left Mathura and settled in Gujarat. If this is technically the beginning of the Epic, it conforms to some extent to the English type which begins in the middle, which is connected retrospectively with the beginning and then the whole proceeds to its conclusion. Nanalal has, however, almost the same style for all that he writes - lyrics, plays, prose-stories, prefaces, and poems. The style in the epic is not epical, in the drama not dramatic, but only lyrical everywhere. Nanalal had little narrative power, which made him a poor story-teller, as having no dramatic genius, it made him an indifferent dramatist. The same repertory of hyperbolic analogies, similes and metaphors are employed for description and narration and his imagery, enchanting in small doses, is severely limited in its range, mostly revolving round the cuckoo, mango-groves, flute, moon, stars, sea, cloud, thunder and the like. Even here, the imagery and the style remain unchanged, e.g. 'The flute was resounding like the cuckoo in the air'. After a few lines of the romantic and lyrical description of the morning twilight, symbolically used here to suggest the transition from one Age to another, the epic then proceeds in the dialogue form between Krishna and Subhadra, which is in no way different from what Nanalal had done in his lyrical plays. This raises the question whether Nanalal really distinguished between the epic and the drama or the lyric as distinct forms.

The Second Canto, which consists of 895 lines, opens after a lapse of twelve years in the time of the action and shows Krishna approaching Duryodhan to claim the Pandavas' share of the dominion, in which mission he fails. The five Pandavas are shown conferring among themselves as to their future course of action and arriving at the conclusion that war as the last resort was inevitable, which

is, to some extent, reminiscent of the debate in the Pandemonium in Milton's 'Paradise Lost'. Almost every statement is buttressed by a simile either from nature or mythology, but the similes are not Homeric or Miltonic, being limited to a line or two. Most surprising is the inclusion of a song or a lyric in what he claims to be an epic.

The Third Canto of 963 lines shows the Pandavas and Kaurvas resolved to settle their argument on the field of battle. Their tents are pitched up and the Kauravas see ill-omens in the sky, in the tradition of classical epics, also vividly portrayed in Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar'. The messenger, coming to report the enemy army approaching, is reminiscent of a similar device used by Shakespeare in many of his plays e.g. 'Julius Caesar' and 'Macbeth'. This Canto also contains a song.

The other Cantos follow more or less the same pattern and style of writing, which hover uncertainly between the epic and the lyric methods of poetic representation. They contain songs, including the one chorus led by Krishna, of all characters, which appear to be incongruous in an epic, which, in absence of any precedent, may be put down as Nanalal's own innovation. By and large, Nanalal's 'Kurukshetra' seems to be neither an epic nor a lyric, neither following the Sanskrit nor the English model and the twelve Cantos look like Tennyson's 'Idylls' - only that they are more lyrical than narrative. Nanalal had the story, characters, incidents, episodes and situations at his disposal from the original, but he made little attempt to dovetail them and conceive the parts as constituents of the whole.

Nanalal lacked the architectonic genius, which handicapped him as much in his epic as in his plays. He could probably see the trees, but not the wood and being essentially a lyrical poet, he showed himself to his advantage in his songs and shorter lyrics. His elaborate Preface to the poem shows that Nanalal was fairly aware of what constituted an epic and his references to a number of Sanskrit and English epics show that he was fairly well acquainted with the finest among both the types, yet his actual performance which had the Miltonic epic as his model leaves little doubt that he was not able to realise his epic ideal in this poem, which has no epic scale, proportions or vision. Nanalal's own view expressed in his own English, 'An epic is a hymn of history, a psalm of great deeds dared and done', shows that his approach to the epic also was lyrical and romantic. His 'Kurukshetra', in effect, is only a long lyrical poem on a heroic theme.

In sheer grandeur of his imagination, freshness of representation, sweetness of his diction, delicacy of touch, and the exuberance of his lyricism, Nanalal represents the high water-mark of romantic lyricism, which had set in since Narmad. The self-acknowledged product of the Western type of education, an admirer and advocate of ancient Indian spiritual and cultural traditions, he was the typical product of the Indian Renaissance, of which, in Gujarat, he was also its most lyrical exponent. Unyielding in his appreciation of the finest attainments of the West, acknowledging his indebtedness to Milton, Shelley, Burke and Tennyson, among others, who inspired him in one way or another, even translating some of the poems from English, Nanalal declared that his ideal was to live the poetry and history of India.

He represented Indian history, philosophy, mythology, epics and the 'puranas', invented a new set of heroes, inspired by lofty, sometimes even seemingly impracticable ideals, spreading light and cheer; and painted the natural beauty of Gujarat to show that its bowers were neither deserted nor devoid of charm; recaptured the magic of its folk-songs; and confidently asserted that Gujarati lyrical poetry had an honoured place in world literature.

Like some of his predecessors, Nanalal did not engage himself in the social field, though he admitted it as one of the functions of the poet, nor like some of his contemporaries in singing sadly though sweetly of life, since he believed that 'in this land and elsewhere, when hearts are turned into tombs' and men and women everywhere pined and suffered, the supreme function of the poet was to infuse faith, hope and cheer in those who had lost them. He subscribed to Matthew Arnold's view that literature was the criticism of life, but Nanalal's criticism of life was often more than twice removed from reality, whereby the sorrows and sufferings of life were tranquillised and ohly light without the heat of life was reflected in his works. This should be satisfying, in an unexpected sense, even to Matthew Arnold, who held that highest literature was characterised by its qualities of light and sweetness, both of which Nanalal possessed in generous proportions. Even if Nanalal's reluctance to take full poetic cognition of the existence of sorrow, suffering, evil, injustice and oppression in the scheme of life was of the nature of

romantic escapism, Utopian idealism or Victorian smugness or complacency, it served an immediately useful purpose in arresting and off-setting the disquieting trend of melancholy and pessimism, which threatened to make modern Gujarati poetry, partly perhaps under the first impact of that variety of English romantic poetry 'where but to think is to be full of sorrow', a little too prone to tears, sighs and complaint against man, nature and God.

True to his ideal, Nanalal refused to centre his music in doleful songs and sang cheerfully, optimistically and ecstatically of love, devotion, of men and women, jointly winging their way, and particularly of Spring - a mission which he had accepted at the very outset of his poetic career, even declaring, later, that he would be content if he was remembered as one who was the messenger and the philosopher of Spring with all its implications.¹ 'Kant', before Nanalal, had written of Spring, but apart from the fact that it was not the key-note of his poetry, the Spring which Kant had delineated in its triumph was symbolically different from that conceived by Nanalal. Not only did Nanalal sing of the glory and beauty of Spring, but also gave it, like Shelley, a wider significance of more than a seasonal phenomenon. The Spring for him, as for Shelley, stood symbolically for the Renascence, a power quickening a new birth, offering a recurring hope to mankind, which was burdened with its unhappy past or present. What was probably a hint in Shelley was worked out into a comprehensive philosophy and ritual² by Nanalal. His poems and plays, therefore exude the very joyousness and festival spirit of Spring, where men and women go out in the vernal woods, gathering flowers, dancing and singing, not hesitating even to erect a variation of the English May-pole in the heart of Gujarat. In this respect, Nanalal was, like Browning, a poet of the joy of living. But there was nothing

² Vide, 'Archasahatabdina Anubhavbol', p. 68.
epicurean or Bacchanalian about Nanalal's philosophy of joy. A Puritan by nature and moral convictions, whose hereditary Puritanism, derived from his father and his own upbringing, later reinforced by that of Milton, gave him a sense of high moral seriousness in his mission as a poet.¹ Nanalal was a purist in art and life, whose advice to his fellow-poets was to 'keep poetry pure; if you can't, do not touch it'.² Yet, Nanalal's Puritanism is not of that variety which Shakespeare laughcd at heartily in his creation of Malvolio; if anything, it was poetically nearer to that of Milton, who was the finest product of Puritanism in English poetry, a rare product of the Reformation and Renaissance at the same time. Not only was there for Nanalal no Art for Art's sake, but Art and Morality were for him inseparably wedded together. All his romanticism of love and marriage was hedged in, as in Tennyson, an insistence on the sanctity of life, purity of conduct and self-imposed moral restraint. Having an exalted notion of a poet as a prophet and a teacher, Nanalal was not afraid to be openly didactic. If here, on the other hand, he was with his father, whose poetic reincarnation he believed himself to be,³ he was, on the other, with the Victorian, like Tennyson, Carlyle and Ruskin, who preached their sermons in prose or poetry. Nanalal's approach was not rational like that of a realist, but emotive and imaginative like that of an idealist. He, therefore, often adopted an oracular style, where he delivered himself in words like incantations or aphorisms, which when joined to his inclination to invest even the commonplaces of life with an air of grandeur, sometimes landed him into a grandeur of expression, hardly to be distinguished from mere rhetoric. His honeyed words, on the one hand, placed him by the side of the poet 'on honey-dew was fed' and, on the other, with the poetic confectioner, whose

sweets are too cloying in their sweetness. His manner of representing the grand things in a grand style, probably induced by Milton on the side of grandeur and by Burke on the side of rhetoric, when indiscriminately and uniformly employed for things both great and small, assumed the character of a mannerism, which coupled with his self-confessed 'fondness for uttering half-truths' at times, made him the veritable paradise for his parodists.

But Nanalal at his best and in his heyday was a name to conjure with. Though he assayed all the varieties of poetry - lyrical, dramatic and epic - he wrote poems and plays in profusion, he was essentially a lyrical poet, who found his best expression in his shorter lyrics and songs. His lyrical plays are only poems, readable only in parts and, having no story to tell or plot to unfold, may even be read backwards. The twelve books of his epic are conceived more in the lyrical than in the epic vein. Though Nanalal said that he neither knew how to sing nor play, his songs, scattered all over his works, are a symphony in words, where thought, emotion and imagination, in combination, acquire a rare felicity of expression and representation, putting him, when at his best, by the side of the mediseval Gujarati poets like Narsinh, Meera and Dayaram and of the English poets, like Shakespeare, Shelley and Tennyson. Unchallenged for years almost as the 'lyric lord' of Gujarat, as Shelley was of England, Nanalal was the victim of the reaction which he himself generated against himself, when he gave the impression that he did not grow but merely multiplied himself, and partly of the changes, which came over modern Gujarati poetry even during his life-time. Nanalal's romantic idealism, aerial flights, lyrical exuberance, romantic yearning for freedom of expression, which in his case, resulted in his peculiar rhythmic style, were all off-shoots of the English poetry of the Romantic type, with which modern Gujarati poetry had come in contact since its beginning. His lyrical plays of the

Shelleyan type, which broke new ground, testify to the influence of the English poetry in yet another field. His work in the other varieties, besides revealing the influence of Shakespeare, Milton and Shelley, among others, shows the extension of the influence of English poetry to Tennyson, Browning and Dante Rossetti.

Nanalal made no secret of his indebtedness to English poets and poetry. Yet, he is not an imitative or a derivative poet. The poet, who had uttered a note of warning against living in 'splendid isolation', who had advised his countrymen to adopt an 'international' outlook, as against the 'parochial or provincial' one, and whose own message was 'synthesise or perish' was himself one of the most poetic exponents of the synthesis of the best of both Gujarati and English poetry - the only course between 'splendid isolation' and servile imitation.