Khabardar had not had the benefit of regular education in English beyond the secondary school stage, but his earnestness and love of literature carried him through a good deal of Gujarati and English poetry, which enabled him to make much headway on his own in both. His receptive mind, at once his strength and weakness, subjected him, however, to varying poetic influences from time to time, which on the one hand helped him to grow poetically and, on the other, often prevented him from striking an individual note, with the result that as a poet, he seems, more often than not, to turn to literature rather than to life for his inspiration, excepting perhaps towards the end of his long poetic career and sometimes before it, when he had something of his own to say and he said it in his own characteristic way. Not unjustifiably, therefore, he is generally classed with those among the poets, who lean heavily and sometimes even parasitically on others in their expression and representation, as also for their thoughts and fancies. He began by imitating a number of modern Gujarati poets and simultaneously drawing heavily and, perhaps a little too freely, on English poetry, of which he was an ardent and a regular student. Besides cultivating the familiar English poetic forms, such as the lyric, song, elegy and sonnet, he added the parody as a poetic variety to modern Gujarati poetry as his own distinctive contribution. Among the subjects which he handled - love, nature, religion and philosophy - he seemed most at home while writing narrative poetry in

the heroic and patriotic vein in the wake of earlier Gujarati poets, e.g. Harpad and Hari Harshad Dhruv, who were the pioneers in the field, under the influence of English poetry of the same variety. Like some of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, he set out in quest of an equivalent of the English Blank Verse in Gujarati and cultivated the sonnet form on an extensive scale, where he claimed his own creations, in that variety, as the first attempt in its most authentic form, hesitantly conceding Thakore the honour of being only chronologically the first among the modern Gujarati poets to write a sonnet.

The influence of English poetry worked on Khabardar sometimes directly, through his own acquaintance with it, and sometimes indirectly through the modern Gujarati poets whom he followed, as also through the poetic climate which was surcharged with English influence ever since modern Gujarati poetry first came under its powerful spell. When this influence worked on Khabardar unconsciously, he could produce something which was enriched by it, but when it did so otherwise, he could produce hardly anything beyond the pale and anaemic imitations or adaptations of the original. The amount of alien matter, particularly from English, in his poetry is so substantial that even Khabardar, while admitting the fact, was at pains in justifying and rationalizing it on the ground that what he had imbibed constituted a world-wide poetic heritage, which required no special acknowledgement or public declaration of indebtedness. 1

(a) Khabardar had just then emerged from his teens when he published in 1901 his first collection of verses called 'Kavyarasika', which despite his illuminating assertion that the mere manipulation of rhymes did not constitute poetry 2 - an awareness which seemed to augur well for his future - generally followed the poetic technique of the 'prince among the rhymsters' Dalpatram to a very large extent.

extent and Narmad to some extent, especially in his conception of poetry, which he defined as the uncommonly intense emotions. Since Narmad himself was largely influenced by Wordsworth in his poetic conception, Khabardar's poetic conception based on Narmad's really goes back to Wordsworth. This is fairly evident again from Khabardar's observation that 'poetic diction must suit the subject, to limit it to the language of every day use being not worth encouraging', where obviously the young poet, having Wordsworth's theory of poetic diction at the back of his mind, seeks boldly, like Coleridge, to differ from it without mentioning the target.

While this offers an interesting clue to the influence of English poetry and critical thought working directly or indirectly on Khabardar's poetic conception, some of the poems found in his very first volume provide irrefutable evidence of the fact that the young poet, despite the lack of regular education in English, had direct access to English poetry, perhaps, to begin with, through Palgrave's 'Golden Treasury', which, as already stated, was almost like the Bible for many a young modern Gujarati poet. Three poems in Khabardar's first collection may be particularly mentioned in this connection.

(1) A poem called 'Sarvavyapak Prem' where the poet speaks of the omnipresence and omnipotence of love, is a very close rendering into Gujarati of J. Sylvester's poem 'Love's Omnipresence'.

(2) Another poem entitled 'Khari Khubsoorti', meaning 'true beauty' is an obvious adaptation of Thomas Carew's 'True Beauty'.

6. Vide, Palgrave: op.cit., pp. 75-76.
(3) A poem called 'Entreaty to Sleep' is partly a translation and partly a paraphrase of Wordsworth's famous poem on the same subject.

The other poems in the collection, such as those on nature, rainy season, cloud, wind, lightning, streams, lake, hills, flowers etc., seem to be poetic efforts directly emulating Narmad and indirectly English nature poetry, which entered into modern Gujarati poetry since Narmad. In the same mixed category of influence, fall the poems on patriotism and those in the elegiac vein on the death of individuals and celebrities e.g. Dalpatram, Queen Victoria, and the poet's own infant daughter.

(b) Khabardar's next collection entitled 'Vilasika', which followed four years later, seems to get closer in impulses and inspiration to English poetry, both directly and indirectly. This fact is suggested in the Preface to the volume, where the poet himself states categorically that the lyrics, which formed bulk of the poems, followed the 'new Western style of writing'. The Wordsworthian attitude towards nature is also implicit and revealed in Khabardar's poems on nature, especially in the relationship between man and nature, as also in man's deep delight in the company of nature, which is explained on the ground that 'man's world is interlocked with nature and the poet who is the child of Nature not only derives joy from her company, but also seeks to communicate it to others'.

The poems in this collection offer a mixed fare, where besides attempting the English poetic forms, of which the sonnet, presented with the English traditional rhyme-scheme and improvised Gujarati metre

on the lines of Iambic Pentameters, is the most outstanding feature (more on this
is dealt with in the remarks on the poet's collection of the sonnets 'Nandanika'
later), and themes covering love, nature and patriotism in the English type, the
poet submits himself sometimes to the influence of English poetry through the works
of some of the modern Gujarati poets who wrote under that influence, and sometimes
directly through his own contact with some of the English poets and poems he seems
to have read on his own.

The volume opens with an invocation to the Poetic Muse in the classical
English style, where the poet, indulging in hypothetical fancies, wonders where the
Muse resides - on the rainbow, among the stars, in the west where the sun sets, on
the dawn-coloured clouds, moonlit sea or in some brooding corner of the earth -
imploring her to return to the land which she has left. This is followed by a poem
called 'On the Bridge of River Tapi', which carries with it an evidence of being
inspired by Wordsworth's 'Upon the Westminster Bridge - September 3, 1802' also in
mentioning the date of its composition - June 14, 1902 - along with the title of
the poem. The poem which is longer - being a paraphrase - than Wordsworth's, ends
with certain reflections, which on the author's admission run on the lines of those
in Shelley's poem called 'Recollection', The next poem 'Companion of the Night',
implying the Moon, if directly inspired by Marsinhrao's poem on the same, is
twice removed from Shelley's 'Cloud', of which Marsinhrao's own poem was an adaptation. Another poem called the 'Cloud-at Dawn' is again an adaptation of Shelley's 'Cloud'

but is remarkable for the poet's conscious attempt to adapt the metre of Tennyson's 'In Memoriam' into an experimental Gujarati metre called 'Totalamani' improvised by Khabardar. The English Iambic Pentametre is used as a model for the Gujarati 'Brahmavali' metre in the sonnet on the poet Narmad, where the lines are cut according to the English system of feet and accents. The sonnet is a tribute to Narmad, eulogistic in spirit and reminiscent of Wordsworth's sonnet on Milton, where Narmad's heroic and patriotic qualities, rather than his literary ones, are stressed, as done by Wordsworth in the case of Milton.

Further, a poem on a flower called 'Champeli' is largely indebted to Wordsworth's 'To the Daisy', with a few more reflections from the 'Daffodils' and Shelley's 'Skylark'. The poem is composed in the 'Adal Ghand', which is Khabardar's innovation based, as he points out, on the English prosodic pattern. Another poem, called 'Beautiful Night' is Shelley's 'To the Night' with a part of 'Love's Philosophy' grafted on to it towards the end. The poem called 'Cuckoo' reveals unmistakable imprint of Wordsworth's 'To the Cuckoo' and Shelley's 'Skylark' to such an extent that most of it is either a translation or paraphrase of the two famous English poems. The same may be said more or less of many other poems in the collection. Thus, for instance, 'My Childhood House' is substantially influenced by Thomas Hood's 'Past and Present', 'My Favourite Mena' by Shelley's 'Skylark'; 'The Messenger of Spring' by Wordsworth's 'To the Cuckoo', combined with a part of Shelley's 'Skylark'; 'To the Morning Star' by Thomas Campbell's 'To the Evening Star'.

On the Seashore' by Wordsworth's 'By the Sea', 'Eternal Darkness' by J. Norris's 'To Eternal Darkness', of which it is a translation; and 'We' by O'Shaughnessy's well-known poem, beginning with 'We are the music-makers'.

(c) Khabardar's third publication called 'Prakashika' (1908) shows the same love for metrical experiments on the English model and the same devotion to English poetry, which while inspiring him materially and stylistically in many of his poems, is too overpowering in its impact to let him assert his own poetic identity. Thus, in a poem on the cuckoo, which is formally designed as a song in Nanalal's musical style, the thought and imagery adopted in it are largely derived from parts of Shelley's 'Skylark', while another poem, which depicts the 'marriage of the stream and the sea', is, in parts, an adaptation and a translation of Tennyson's 'Brook'.

A poem called 'Barai' or the 'Shadow of Greatness' relates the history of a village, at one time prosperous and beautiful, but later falling into the intruder's hands, reduced to a shadow of its former greatness, with all its glory gone. Here, the poet has adopted the style of Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village' in showing how his 'sweet Anburn' suffered a woeful change. 'A Lonely Lady', one of the many longer narrative poems in the volume, tells the story, based on newspaper report, of a young lady who lost her family of six in a deadly epidemic. The poet visualised the lonely miserable lady one dark evening wailing on the deserted seashore. The poet, approaching her sympathetically, induced her to tell her story, which she does tearfully. Here,
the Wordsworthian technique and representation of some deeply moving human story, against the background of nature, with the poet himself in the story, would bring to one's mind similar poems by Wordsworth, such as 'The Female Vagrant' and 'The Sad Mother'.

Besides the narrative poems, there are in this collection also a few elegies, for instance, 'In Memory of Mr. Kabraji', 'Tears of Gujarat', a tearful tribute to G.M. Tripathi, and 'Tears', where the seven types of tears - sorrow, love, repentance, joy, innocence, divine ecstasy etc. - are described in a style reminiscent of Tennyson's well-known 'Tears Idle Tears'.

While these poems reveal the influence of English poetry, which is more or less overwhelming, there are some other poems in the collection, where while being spiritually nourished, but not smothered by that influence, the poet is able to assert his poetic individuality. To this category belong Khabardar's heroic and patriotic poems, which constitute probably his best offering. Perhaps, the finest among these is his 'Battle of Haladighat', based on one most stirring of episodes from Indian history, namely, the battle between Rana Pratap of Mewar and the forces of Emperor Akbar, cast, as the author states, in the form of the English ballad.

There are also some patriotic lyrics and songs, for instance, 'We Shall March Under the British Flag', which is treated as the 'Victory-song of India', the "Patriot's Request" and the stirring verses called 'Good Gujarat' - all of them instinct with the patriotic sentiment and fervour.

2. Vide, 'Prakashika', p. 94.
(d) In the same heroic and patriotic vein are the poems collected under the title 'Bharatno Tankar' (1919), partly inspired by India's participation on the side of the British in the First World War of 1909-1914, fulfilling in a sense the poet's own prophetic 'We Shall March Under the British Flag' in the earlier collection, and partly inspired by the love of the land, which could come in dangerous conflict with loyalty to its rulers in the days when India was not politically free. Striking a very delicate balance between the two, Khabardar wrote some loyalist and patriotic verses, which often come nearest to Scott, among the English poets, in vigour, movement and energy of sentiment and expression. As in Scott, Khabardar's patriotism expresses itself through themes based on episodes from history, exploits of heroic men and the ancient heritage of courage and sacrifice. The style in these poems is suited to the subject and the vigour of expression is matched by the energy of the heroic sentiment, in delineating which Khabardar is almost always at his best. Here, only the impulse is derived from English poetry, which has a glorious tradition of heroic and patriotic poetry from Shakespeare to Rupert Brooke. Patriotic poetry of the English type was the source of inspiration for modern Gujarati poetry, beginning with Narmad for whom Khabardar expresses his grateful appreciation, but whom he outstrips in poetic performance.

(e) 'Sandeshika' (1925), another volume from Khabardar's pen, consisting of lyrical, elegiac, patriotic and musical compositions, shows an advance upon his earlier volumes in workmanship and command over expression. Many of the poems in this collection belong to the variety called 'rasas' or songs, popularised by Nanalal and the result of the revival of folk-songs, their tunes, cadence and rhythm. The musical propensity of Gujarati poetry which Thakore, it may be recalled, vigorously opposed is here in Khabardar with all its advantages and disadvantages. Faulty

1. Vide, 'Prakashika', p. 70.
rhymes, far-fetched conceits and inaptness of expression mar the beauty of some of
the compositions. The more successful songs in Nanalal's vein do not impress much
and the best among them remind one of the better ones by Nanalal. Interspersed with
these local influences is the influence of English poetry, which abides in a variety
of forms, sometimes manifest in single lines, stanzas or whole poems either through
translation or adaptation. Thus, a poem called 'Madhuri', 'The Empty Cage' and
'Agochar Dham' are very close adaptations of Francis Thompson's 'Daisy', 'A Carrier
Song' and 'In No Strange Land' respectively. Similarly, a poem called 'The Evening
of Life' is largely an adaptation of some parts of the thought in Wordsworth's
'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality' with some of its passages paraphrased.

(f) Khabardar's next, 'Kalika' or the Bud (1926), is a long love-poem,
consisting of three hundred and sixty-five stanzas (and ten more by way of summing
up), representing an equal number of days in a year - an extension of the frame-work
of Spenser's 'Shepherd's Calendar', which confined itself to the twelve months of
the year. The whole poem, which is the lover's rhapsody on his beloved, has, however,
no continuity of narrative, development of character or dove-tailing of incidents,
each stanza of eight lines being a word-picture of a scene, situation, mood or merely
an over-worked metaphor, with little to hold these pictures together excepting the
physical frame of the poem. The course of love, which is traced through its supposed
seven stages, may be summed up as the history of a bud which becomes a flower,
symbolically representing the beginning of love at first sight and culminating in
the union of two loving hearts. The lover, who tells the story, speaks of his

metamorphosis through the exhilarating experience of love, of his wooing, of his dedication to 'Love who is God', of his disappointment that beauty and life are short-lived, of his reconciliation to make the most of what is given to mortals, of his ecstasy over the immortal character of true love and of his bliss of self-fulfilment. The approach though lyrical and subjective is not autobiographical; the poem is anything between an ode and a dramatic lyric, too ponderous for an ode and too undramatic for a dramatic lyric, where the very length without much depth or structural design tends towards a diffusion of interest and impression.

The poet, quoting with seeming approval and gratification a friend, who describing this poem as an 'encyclopaedia of love', claimed that though the theme of love in his poem had been handled by poets, both in the past and the present, his poem would reveal to his readers an 'unseen new world'. The poet, however, in the same breadth speaks of his intensive and extensive reading of 'English, American and European' poems, which he admits as having 'unhesitatingly' and unapologetically appropriated in the different parts of his poem, through 'translation, imitation or adaptation', which is curiously defended on the ground that it constituted the world's poetic heritage, which he was entitled to draw upon, not merely to enrich himself, but to share it with his readers. "I am acquainted", said Khabardar, "with the poetry of many languages of the world and as a result of its study, many poets have left deep impressions of their poems and speech on my mind, which I am unable to dissociate from my own utterances. A poet's heart, being soft and sensitive, is moulded by many influences and the art of poetry is as much imitative as it is creative, which explains the obvious and the inevitable

correspondence in thought among the great poets of the world. He would, therefore, propose a test and that is, 'while assessing a poet's work, a critic has to see how far the poet's genius and creativeness go beyond what he imbibes, since after all, originality consists in doing what the painter does - the mixture of colours to create something new'.

A close scrutiny of this long poem, while confirming the self-admitted influence of English poetry on Khabardar's output, reveals that this influence often goes beyond its legitimate share of the 'world's poetic heritage' and amounts to the questionable appropriation, even misappropriation at times, of the thoughts, fancies, images and utterances of several English poets, chief among whom is George Meredith, whose 'Love in the Valley', also composed in stanzas of eight lines each on the same theme, has not only served here as a model, but also as an exchequer for unstinted 'loot' - to use Khabardar's own favourite word. Thus, it would be found that the very first stanza of 'Kalika' is a very close adaptation and partly translation of the first stanza of Meredith's 'Love in the Valley' and then its stanzas 108, 109, 110, 111, 114, 115, 117, 128, 129, 142, 143, 147, 148, 150, 151, 152, 188, 241, 328, 339, 340, 341, 346, 348, 359 and 365 are drawn respectively from Meredith's 3, 2, 4, 5, 14, 16, 6 (again), 11, 19, 13, 12, 22, 5 and 8 put together, 21, 19, 15, 20, 26, 17 and 23. The texts of the actual passages are not juxtaposed here, partly because when Khabardar's stanzas, unless presented in their original Gujarati, when rendered into English and put beside those of Meredith would only carry as much distinction as there is numerically between half a dozen and six, and partly because, in the light of what has already been shown about his poetic practices, the actual quotations may be found to be unnecessary.

Meredith’s poem, consisting of twenty-six stanzas, being shorter could thus be embodied in Khabardar’s longer poem, yet leaving room for more, which in fact, is occupied with the adaptations, translations and free renderings into Gujarati from several other English poets, most of them seem to be drawn, in all probability, not directly from the original sources, but from a very popular anthology of verse, called ‘The Pageant of English Poetry’ (Oxford), which seemed to have enjoyed a very great vogue in Khabardar’s time. Thus, stanza 21 of ‘Kalika’ is derived from W.S. Landor’s ‘Well I Remember’; its 31 from Ben Jonson’s ‘A Celebration of Charis’; 42 from Tennyson’s ‘The Miller’s Daughter’; 44 partly from Beaumont and Fletcher’s ‘The Bloody Brother’; 55 partly from Herrick’s ‘To Electra’; 74 from Edmund Waller’s ‘Tell Her That is Young’; 75 from Thomas Carew’s ‘Ask me no more where Love bestows’; 83 from R. Crashaw’s ‘Euthanasia’; 138 from Coleridge’s ‘I Asked My Fair One Happy Day’; 155 from A. Munday’s ‘Beauty Bathing’; 155 from Coleridge’s ‘Love’; 170 partly from Keats’s ‘As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again’; 181 from Shelley’s well-known ‘One Word is too Profane’; 202 from Emerson’s ‘Give All to Love’; 226 from Mrs. Browning’s ‘Live in Love’; 223 from Byron’s ‘All For Love’; 234 partly from T. Otway’s ‘The Enchantment’; and 267 from Thomas Lodge’s ‘Love in my bosom like a bee’.

These incorporations again do not exhaust Khabardar's long poem, which for the rest is made up of his own writings. Here also the influence of English romantic lyricism, in general, is in evidence in the contents and style of the poem, which bears another, though different and indirect influence of English poetry in its metrical structure. The poem, which Khabardar claimed as having flowed freely from his pen, is composed in a metre, significantly called 'Muktidhara' - literally meaning as uninterrupted flow - which is the poet's own metrical improvisation, claimed as being closest in effect to the English Blank Verse. In a long note included in the Introduction to the poem, Khabardar refers to the number of experiments in the field of Gujarati prosody since Gujarati poetry came in contact with English poetry. Finding most of modern Gujarati poetry unnatural in its sound effect when recited loudly, and observing that the classical Sanskrit and indigenous Gujarati metres did not adequately answer the expressional needs of rapidly evolving Gujarati Poetry, he suggested that Gujarati verse should follow English poetry by adopting its metrical structure based on accent and remarked that his own metrical improvisation called 'Muktadhara' had everything in it to recommend itself to others, for a trial. After expressing satisfaction at his own attempt, Khabardar said that there was a vast field for writing Gujarati verse on the structural principle of accent, which would ensure something closest to the English Blank Verse.

(g) Khabardar's long philosophical poem 'Darshanika' (1931), consisting of 375 stanzas of two units of eight lines each, likened in unity and appearance to

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the 'sonnets', as in Meredith's 'Modern Love' written in 'sonnets of sixteen lines' was intended as an elegiac expression of a personal loss and a 'great commotion' in the poet's heart, consequent on the death of the poet's young daughter. The poem, as it stands, is however not a recognizable elegy in its tone or form, being a chain of philosophic reflections and musings on life, death, love, God and religion, divided into nine sections, without any ostensible connection between its different components or with the death of the individual, which was the immediate source of the poet's inspiration. Philosophic reflections, induced by the death of a dear one, traditionally a part of elegies like those of Tennyson and Shelley, are here presented as a 'Darshan' or philosophic vision, without the usual element of the lyrical expression of personal grief at the loss, thus giving the straggling poem the appearance of a truncated elegy, close, in a sense, in its impersonal philosophic meditations to Gray's 'Elegy', a part of which is also reflected in it.

Stating that poetry and philosophy were nearest to his heart since the age of eighteen, when also he came in contact with a 'seer' who initiated him into certain spiritual experiences, Khabardar describes his poem as an attempt at 'criticism of life' of Matthew Arnold's conception and an earnest effort to harmonize poetry and philosophy, to save the latter from the danger of dry abstraction and abstrueness, pointing particularly to Wordsworth's 'prosaic' performance in this pursuit as an illustration of the difficult and delicate nature of this undertaking. The poem, according to Khabardar, also seeks to reconcile and integrate 'religion, philosophy and science', since there is no natural antipathy between science and

religion or philosophy, which reminds one of Tennyson's attempt in his 'In Memoriam' to deal with the apparent conflict between science and religion, nature and God, leading to a final realization that there is one Law, one God and that God is love, which also happens to be Khabardar's problem and solution in this poem. True religion being based on love, Khabardar maintained that love was the only proper religion for the entire human race and declared with a prophetic fervour that as human life advanced in knowledge on all sides, it would progressively move towards this ideal, thus fulfilling in course of time, the dream and the hope of poets and prophets. The philosophy of universal love, suggested by Khabardar may be compared with that of Shelley, who with a prophetic zeal and fire also held fast and hopefully to this ideal, restated in Khabardar's poem without any fundamental difference.

With more meaning in it than he probably intended, Khabardar said that 'there is so much written on this subject that it is but natural that nothing new would be found in this poem' and then entered a rather queer apology for having freely drawn upon, what he calls vaguely, 'the collected wisdom of the world', seeking to justify himself on the ground that 'a creator has always been a royal plunderer; the creative art consisting in merely a new form and expression to what is plundered'. While this argument is to some extent in line with Emerson's that the most original man is the most indebted man and Milton's that to borrow and to better it in the borrowing is not plagiarism, Khabardar could have made the distinction clearer between plundering and pilfering. Khabardar, who since the

the publication of his first two volumes of verses was sometimes charged with appropriating without acknowledgement the creations of others, particularly the English poets, has his deep love and intense devotion to English poetry as perhaps the only excuse for the striking resemblance between much of what he wrote and some of the things in English poetry, which fascinated and held him, it may be imagined, spell-bound from his early days to such an extent that even though, as he averred, the original was not before his eyes, his memory saturated with what he had imbibed led him to expression, which not infrequently tallied with the original. The striking resemblances between some of Khabardar's and English poets' works may partly be due to the influence of English poetry, which he constantly read, and which in effect often smothered his initiative, and partly due to his conscious or unconscious appropriations - both these processes being in evidence in 'Darshanika' as, in varying degrees, in his other poems. A few illustrations from the body of this poem, given below, would tend to confirm the debt vaguely acknowledged by the poet, while in a few cases at least, even the long arm of probability would be found not long enough to describe some of the passages in the poem as sheer coincidences of the type, where great minds think alike.

'Darshanika' opens with a short description of nature, mixed with philosophic meditation in characteristic English style, where the poet speaks of the sky as smeared with golden sunshine, everything in Nature happy, while his own eyes wet with tears which make no distinction between day and night. (St.1). Here, the contrast between the bright joy in nature and the gloom within him, which poses an intriguing problem to the poet is evidently not different from Wordsworth's similar observation in his Ode on the 'Intimations of Immortality', where the same

contrast is presented and explained later in terms of a lost vision or 'darshan' -

'The sunshine is a glorious birth,
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath pass'd away a glory from the earth'.

The next stanza says, 'to live, to strive and fight against injustice; life,
where there is little of laughter and more of tears, is like the lava, which burns
the onlooker in the eyes'. (St.2.). Here, apart from echoes of Tennyson's lines'
from 'Ulysses' and of Shelley's 'Skylark', the whole expression and representation
is typically English, including the imagery of the lava. But further in the poem,
where the poet asks, 'Whence? Why? When? How? Where? are all questions rising like
spectres. Human mind, in confusion, looks before and after', (St.8) the thought
and its expression are very close to Fitzgerald's English translation of Omar
Khayyam -

'Into this universe, and why not knowing,
Not whence, like water will-nilly flowing,
And out of it, as wind along the waste,
I know not wither, will-nilly blowing'.

('Rubaiyat', St.29)

The line from Shelley is too well-known to need comment, but what follows
in the same stanza, 'From dust to dust and unto dust again, the living image of
dust is formed anew', (St.8) is also a transplantation of Fitzgerald's Omar Khayyam -

'Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too unto dust descend;
Dust into dust, and under dust to lie'.

('Rubaiyat', St.23)

Similarly, stanzas 9, 15 and 21 of this poem may be juxtaposed with 13 & 14
8 and 32 to put together respectively from Fitzgerald, but what follows in stanza
41 of this poem, namely, 'Over the earth is the cup of the sky, under which all
life is astir, while the saucer of the earth continues to revolve, as does the
oil-mill drawn by a bullock' is an instance of how the poet, who has obviously
derived this from

'And that inverted bowl we call the sky,
Whereunder crawling coop't we live and die'

('Rubaiyat', St.52)

is unable to 'better' what he 'borrows', since while transforming Fitzgerald's 'bowl' into a 'cup' and the earth into a revolving 'saucer' in the teeth of all astronomical, geographical and scientific observations, he deprives the original fancy of all its aptness and charm. What follows in the same stanza 'What for should men look to above and ask, when the cup (sky) itself is helpless', is also an adaptation of 'Lift not thy hands to it for help, for it
Rolls impotently on as thou or I'

('Rubaiyat', St. 52)

Further, stanza 43 of the poem, 'Pandits and Maulavis talk learnedly of this world and the other, of heaven and hell, but their mouths are stopped with dust blown over by the whirlwind of death, obviously, embodies the whole idea and imagery from Fitzgerald's -

'Why all the saints and sages who discuss'd
Of the two worlds so learnedly are thrust
Like foolish prophets forth; their words to scorn
Are scatter'd and their mouths are stop't with dust'.

('Rubaiyat', St.25)

The temptation to juxtapose more from Khabardar and Fitzgerald may now be resisted and a few illustrations of the influence of other English poets may now be given. These are provided by stanza 28 of the poem, where the philosophy of Tennyson's Lotos-Saters, who criticise the gods sitting on Mount Olympus, careless of mankind, is appropriated, but only for rebuttal with the help of the thought in W.E. Henley's well-known 'I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul'; stanza 42, where W. Drummond's lines -

'This life, which seems so fair,  
Is like a bubble blown up in the air,  
By sporting children's breath,  
Who chase it everywhere?  

are almost verbally adopted; stanza 49, where Shelley’s famous 'Flight of dove' is embodied; stanza 72, 80, 121 and 123, where the thought in Tennyson's lines from 'In Memoriam' is paraphrased; stanza 319, where Browning's 'Leave Now For Dogs' and 'Apes! Man has Forever ('A Grammarian's Funeral') is adopted, stanza 330 where lines from Shelley's 'Love's Philosophy,' are almost translated. This list could be easily prolonged, were it not for the fact that it is not strictly necessary now that the influences have been indicated broadly and sufficiently. While the almost overpowering influence of English poetry on Khabardar's may be conceded, it only remains to add that the poet has offered in this poem much, which is very readable and, in places, even positively beautiful.

(h) Next, Khabardar's numerous devotional poems, collected in his 'Bhajanika' (1928), 'Kalyana' (1940) and 'Nandanika' (1944) may be taken as one group despite the differences in form and style. In direct line of tradition, which is almost as old as Gujarati poetry, these poems express the devotional sentiment often in a typically modern subjective and lyrical style, which marks them out from the merely traditional.

Khabardar, who described these poems as the products of his deepest introspection and spiritual experience, running over the full gamut from the agony of the quest to the ecstasy of realization, including a moment of the actual glimpse

3. Vide, 'In Memoriam,' I iii, CIXIII and LVI, respectively.  
of God, expresses through these poems his faith in God in a distinctly personal vein, seeking to establish a personal relationship with God, who is conceived, as in Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', as Love, and approached sometimes as the supreme Lord in the traditional style, sometimes as Father in the Christian style, and sometimes as a friend in the modern style, avoiding abstraction at all times, Khabardar believed, like Shelley in another context, that the poet was a prophet and that his mission was to carry the message of God, which he attempted in his own way through his devotional poems. Like Blake and Francis Tompson whose 'Hound of Heaven' has influenced some of his poems, among the English poets, Khabardar seeks to communicate what he sees and hears mystically, achieving in the process a measure of success which was not always his in his purely secular and philosophical poetry.

While the poems in 'Bhajanika' and 'Kalyanika' are presented in the form of songs and lyrics, partly traditional and partly modern, those in 'Nandanika' are all set down in the form of 202 sonnets, divided into so-called nine skies after the title of the volume, which means heaven. Khabardar claimed that the sonnets presented by him belong to the true and authentic type (Petrarchan), which alone deserved the name of the sonnet. Quoting Watts-Dunton's definition of the sonnet

in 'Encyclopaedia Britanica' in his support, Khabardar insisted that the sonnet in Gujarati should faithfully follow the Italian model even in its metrical structure and rhyme-scheme and that Gujarati sonnets, written in classical Sanskrit metres and without the traditionally fixed rhyme-scheme, were not truly entitled to that designation, since any change in its authentic form amounted to a change in and cut at the very root of the form of the sonnet. Khabardar sought to demonstrate through his sonnets, written in his metrical improvisation called 'Bhramaravali', that the iambic pentameters, in which the sonnet should invariably be written, was also feasible in Gujarati verse if it followed the accent-structure of English prosody. Khabardar hoped that his own performance would put the Gujarati sonnets on the poetic map of the world and that they would suffer nothing by comparison with the best of the kind in the world. Khabardar's rigidity and dogmatism, which would not even include the Shakespearean, Miltonic or Wordsworthian, type in that sacred preserve called the authentic sonnet, deny in effect the principle of evolution and progress in literature. Apart from their craft, Khabardar's sonnets do not generally seem to justify his high optimism or his self-confidence, being poetically rather indifferent in quality. They are, however, very significant as evidence of the influence of English poetry even in its highly technical aspect and as attempts to write Gujarati verse on the lines of English prosody.

(i) Khabardar broke new ground in modern Gujarati poetry with a new poetic form - the parody - where his targets were Nanalal and Thakore, whose mannerisms

4. Khabardar has dwelt in detail on this aspect of poetry in his Bombay University Lectures on 'The Craft of Gujarati Poetry' in 1939.
lent themselves easily to this treatment. It may be recalled that Nanalal, in his attempt to liberate the Gujarati Muse from her metrical 'fetters' and to evolve something like the English Blank Verse in Gujarati, had evolved 'free verse' based on rhythm, which he described as 'Dolan Shaili' or rhythmic style, and which his less charitable critics described as something that was neither prose nor verse.

Though from time almost immemorial verse has not always been an indispensable condition of poetic expression, poetry has, by and large, accepted verse as more than an aid for its expression. Poets who have felt cramped with the restrictions imposed upon their freedom of expression by the rigorous discipline of verse have sought to enlarge the size of its silver fetters, sometimes defied, but never succeeded in throwing off those fetters or discarding them completely. If nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room and hermits are contented with their cells, the prison into which the poets voluntarily doom themselves is no prison and the fetters which they willingly impose upon themselves are no fetters. On the contrary, it is a pastime to be bound. Nanalal, however, felt otherwise and like Prometheus Unbound himself of those fetters and allowed his muse unrestricted freedom of expression in the hope of bringing light and warmth to the world of modern Gujarati poetry. Nanalal's rhythmic style was for a time a literary sensation and then a curiosity. Its novelty worn off, the style on close and cold analysis, was seen to consist of certain mannerisms, which Khabardar was quick enough to grasp and ridicule through his parody, where also Nanalal's very ground for looking upon his new style as a mode of poetic expression is challenged. Khabardar's 'Prabhatno Tapasvi' is a rollicking parody, first under the pseudonym 'Motalal', of Nanalal's well-known poem called 'Gujaratno Tapasvi', in Nanalal's own 'rhythmic style' which is handled with such distinction that it very nearly and paradoxically to be a vindication, rather than a indictment, of that style which he was paroding.
Its success may be measured by the fact that even Hanalal joined his parodist, who had put him on a pillory, in laughter. Similarly, Khabardar parodied Hanalal's poem 'Bhramadiksha' in his 'Kukkutdiksha', where he compared Hanalal to a cock who failed to bring the dawn. Khabardar showed a deep insight into the weakness and mannerisms of Hanalal's rhythmic style - its hyperboles, repetitions, alliterations, apostrophies, inversions, exclamations, epigrams and analogies.

Khabardar, who also parodied Thakore's poem 'Arohan' or the 'Ascent' in his 'Avarohan' or the 'Descent' particularly for Thakore's 'fetish' of thought-dominated poetry through free unsingable verse, was the first to introduce parody as a poetic form indirectly from English poetry of that variety and achieved great success in it, perhaps more than he ever did in his own original compositions, with the possible exceptions of his heroic and patriotic poetry in which he over-reached himself.

To conclude, Khabardar's poems show how close - both literally and figuratively - he was to English poetry and though a sizable portion of his poetic output was mostly derivative in character, there is an amount of poetry in him, which is only broadly and generally influenced by English poetry and which entitles him to a modest niche in the history of modern Gujarati poetry.

1. For instance, 'Prabhatno Tapasvi', p. 8, lines 94-103; 0-20, lines 330-347; p.26, lines 450-462; 'Kukkutdiksha', p.4 lines 180-185 etc.