CHAPTER SIX

POEMS OF LOVE

In all ages and in all countries, love has occupied a very prominent place in poetry. Man is by nature an emotional being, and of the emotions, the emotion of love is the strongest. S.T. Coleridge has said:

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
Are but the ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

From the very beginning of creation, the mysterious attraction of love has pulled the male and female beings to each other. This attraction is so charming that none can resist it. For ages, men have sought solace in love to forget their sorrows and sufferings. The ancient sages of India could well understand the importance of and the undeniable powers of love; and hence they included Kama as one of the four ends (caturvarga) of life. We find the praise, prayer and invocation of Kama in the ancient Hindu shastras, in
abundance. In the ceremonial texts of marriage, it is said:

'Om ka idam kasm ādāt / Kāmah kāmāyādāt.

Kāno dātā, Kāno pratigrāhita / Kāmah saṃudrāpāyīsat'.

'Kāmah saṃudrāpāyīsat' : as the waves spring up from
the ocean and rejoin in it, so, they also merge themselves
into the ocean of love. Such verses prove, how greatly
the ancient Indians felt the all-pervading powers of love.
The ancient Indians wrote independent treatises on love
(like the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana) like their treatises
on political economy or astrology. And in case of poetry
the place of love was unique. Dr. V. Raghavan, the greatest
authority on the subject, observes : 'Love chastened by
suffering was held up even by poets and dramatists as
capable of effecting a lasting spiritual union, and some
of the best poetry in Sanskrit reflects this spirit and
attitude toward love. The longing of hearts in love was
taken as the most effective image to depict the yearning
of the devotee to God or the seeking by the individual
soul of the Supreme Soul, a symbolism which is at the base
of a greater part of the erotic art of India. Hindu aestheticians
explained the philosophy of beauty in terms of the enjoyment
or perception of a state of sublime composure or blissful
serenity which was a reflection, intimation, image, or glimpse
of the enduring bliss of the spirit in its true realization through knowledge.'

Love has occupied a very prominent place in Assamese poetry also. From the ancient folk-songs to the modern poems, there is a fine flash of love, all radiant with its own glow. Sanskrit álāmkāriks have classified the sentiment of love (Srngara) into two main divisions, viz., Sambhoga (love in union) and Bipralambha (love in separation).

Without going to detail discussion the different aspects of love can be summarised as follows:

(a) àṅga rāga (the appeal of the physical beauty of the beloved),

(b) anurāga: pūrva rāga (the desire to get the beloved),

(c) sambhoga (love in union),

(d) vipralambha (love in separation).

In Assamese love poetry, we notice all the different aspects of love noted above.

Tenderness of feeling and simplicity in expression are the principal traits of Assamese love songs drawn from the folk-poetry. The bodily charms of the beloved are well-narrated in the folk-songs, especially in the songs associated with the Bihu festival. The folk-poets compared the human
body with the different objects of nature. In the Bangits youth have been glorified. The poets of the Bikugita and Bangits often used the words like, 'dhan', 'maina', 'senai', 'bahanā' and 'āitā' etc., to mean the beloved. In the Bāramāhi and vilāp songs the pangs of separation of the prosita bhartrkā (a woman in separation) is nicely depicted.

In the Vaisnavite age, love could not claim an independent status in Assamese poetry. Vaisnavite poetry, being chiefly devotional offered very little ground to love. The teachings of the Vaisnavite religious leaders made the people averse to love and hence the poets saw no reason to advocate strongly for love. Sankaradeva strictly warned the people, against woman and love, with such words, as:

(a) yata dekha bhāryā putra save akārama
(All your wife and children are of no purpose)

(b) yateka jumārī-nāri samaste anārthahāri
(Every beautiful woman is but a nuisance)

(c) jana nārī māyā sarva māyāte kūṣit
(Mark, the illusion of woman's beauty is the worst of all illusions.)
The Assamese poets in the Vaisnavite age, therefore, could not venture to depict love-themes in their poetry. Deeply religious in sentiment, these poets sang less of physical beauty or worldly pleasures. And as such we do not have any remarkable love poem of this age, excepting the Usa-Parinaya by Pitambara Dvija. This Pitambara Dvija was even rebuked by Sāṅkaradeva for delineating love-themes in poetry. But despite their aversion to depict worldly-love and pleasure; some of the Vaisnavite poets could not restrict their pens from creating some masterpieces of love poetry. The Vaisnava poets spoke of devotion — devotion to Kṛṣṇa or Rāma Chandra. Kṛṣṇa and Rāmachandra were modelled after human personalities and hence they had some worldliness in them. Thus Sāṅkaradeva himself could not but portray the love between Kṛṣṇa and Rukmini; the longings of Kṛṣṇa to get Rukmini; his war with the kings for her and her final elopement with him. This is how we happen to have some fine pieces of poetry built on love-themes. Madhava Kandali's Sītā, Sāṅkaradeva's Rukmini and Ananta Kandali's Usā are fine flowers in the garden of love poetry. Their presence in Assamese poetry has added charm and glory to it.
With definite form and philosophy love poetry emerged in Assamese in the Romantic age. The number of love poems, composed in the Romantic age is indeed very great. Each of the Romantic poets attempted to write some verses of love, in the beginning of their poetic career. Sometimes, these love-verses had become head-aches to the editors of the contemporary magazines. L.N. Bezbarua, the celebrated editor of Bānhī had humorously satirised the teen-age love-poets, in the following stanza:

Goph ṭhutiova dekā-laṛāl
prem-kavīṭā lekhi,
Bhabya-gabya kabi halo
bhābi thakā dekhi;
Kārano bāru nuthe hānhi,
kārno nuthe kham,
Padya-pāth parhotār
dekhi ene dham.

= The un-bearded teen-agers
write love-songs,
And they feel exalted
thinking themselves great poets;
Who can resist laughter,
who can resist anger
Noticing the snobbery of the boys
learning the a,b,c, of poetry?

But despite of this over enthusiasm Assamese love-poetry grew to an independent status in the Romantic age itself. The appreciation of the physical beauty of the beloved, desire to obtain her, apprehension of losing the prospective mistress, disappointment in love and a deep note of dejection were the favourite themes of the Romantic love poets. It became a fashion and a tradition with the Assamese Romantic poets to run after a mistress through his beautiful lyrics of love. All the different manifestations of love poetry, e.g., erotic, spiritual, sensuous and intellectual secured due representation in the poetry of this time. The play of the imaginative sensibility centering round the prospective mistress became the prevalent tendency of the time. Assamese poets were, by this time, highly influenced by the English Romantic poetry. Thematic affinity of Assamese love poetry with the English counterpart began and the poets began to explore the integrating dimensions of life, viewing it through the telescope of love.
Han Chandra Goswami (1872-1928) began writing poetry from his school days at Nowgong, under the guidance of Rai Bahadur Gunabhiram Baruwa. Han Chandra was born at Gaurang Satra, near Golaghat in the district of Sibsagar. He lost his father when he was only eight years old. His mother Ghanakanti was well-conscious of the necessity of education for her son and she managed to send him to Nowgong, to receive education living with a relative of the family. Han Chandra then was only thirteen years old. Nowgong was at that time, the centre of literary activities. Gunabhiram Baruwa, Bholanath Das, Ratneswar Mahanta, Bala Narayan Bora, Padmavati Devi Phukanani and a host of other well-known Assamese writers hailed from Nowgong. From his school days Han Chandra had the opportunity to come in intimate contact with these writers. He could establish a favourite contact with Gunabhiram Baruwa, who was acclaimed as the literary giant of the time. Gunabhiram edited the magazine Assam Bandhu from Nowgong. Han Chandra began his poetic career in the Assam-Bandhu. Gunabhiram was confident of Han Chandra's potentialities and as such he cordially welcomed Han Chandra's writings to his magazine. In 1888
he passed the Entrance examination and got admitted into the Presidency college at Calcutta. He stayed there for four years and read up to the B.A. standard but could not get the degree. Dr. S.K. Bhuyan accounts his failure to get the B.A. degree 'to his engrossment in the work of the Assamese language Improvement Society'. Beginning his career as a school teacher Hemchandra rose to the position of an Extra Assistant Commissioner, as he could win the mind of senior British Officers like P.R.T. Turdon and Edward Gait, the celebrated authorities of Assam history. He served as an E.A.C. for long 20 years. He took much interest in the recovery, editing and publication of the inscriptions of ancient Assam and the manuscripts of Assamese literature.

The poetry of Hemchandra Goswami reveals a more consciously modern intelligence and a development of the Romantic ideal in the search of love and beauty. His poems published in different magazines were collected into a single volume, Phular Caki (Garland of Flowers) in the year 1907. Phular Caki was dedicated to Chandra Kumar Agarwalla, his friend. This dedication was significant because Chandra Kumar too was a member of the 'Romantic-trio' that welcomed and gave a firm-footing to Romantic poetry. This 'Romantic-trio' consisting of three collegean youths from Assam was
genuinely inspired by the English Romantic poets: Wordsworth, Shelly, Keats and Byron; and as a result of that the members of the trio inherited the all-pervading warmth of Nature from Wordsworth, the supreme flight of imagination from Shelly, the heroic vivacity of Byron and the lyrical and passionate sentimentality of Keats. Hemchandra could well-employ his pen in making both love and nature lyrics. But he excels in depicting love and his most remarkable love poem is the Priyatamār Cithi (Letter From A Beloved). The poet has received a letter from his beloved and with the receipt of the letter, his heart is dancing in joy. The poet is smelling and kissing the letter incessantly but yet his passion for caressing the letter is growing still more intense:

PRIYATAMĀR CĪTHI

(Letter From A Beloved)

Saundaryyar bukar kācali udaṅgāi
Prakṛtir co-ghar ālo piṭ piṭ;
Kukurāthaṅgā eie ākharkiti
Yi amiya ghaḥā āche āru kato nāi.
Kavi-nikuṇjat phuli kasa kavitāi
Malayāt uṭi uṭi phure prthivāt;
Tomār cīthiye kintu jañe yiṭi git
Kavitār kāvye tār gondhako nāpāy.
Phul phule, sari yāy, sukāi banani,
Basantar kūhi pāt radat lerele;
Tomār cīthiye priye jañe ki mohini
Nitau nohoā bāhi na na phul mele.
Yata suṅgo, cumā khāo, nelāge āmani;
Hṛdayat hepāhar bhotā tarā jvalē.12

= Much have I searched in the green-room of Nature,
Even I removed the covering of Beauty's chest;
Nowhere I have found such charm
As rampant in these loose-handwritings.
In the poets' bowers, many a poems bloom;
And their fragrance travels by the breeze,
But the fragrance of those poems cannot stand
comparison,
To the fragance of the lyricality of your letter.
The flowers bloom and wither; grasses wither too;
The new-born leaves of spring also wither
at the sun,
But your letter, my love! what charm it knows,
I know not;
Betrays all weatherings.
Your letter blooms ever-fresh flowers,
Without withering and decay;
I kiss it, I smell it ceaselessly;
I am not tired of it,
But the pole-star of passion burns intensely.

Bathed in a warm glow of love, and full of heart-touching words, Priyatamār Cīthī displays a fine sincerity of appeal. The poet's passionate sentimentality is observed clearly in the words — 'hrdayat heṇāhar bhoṭā tara jvale' — the pole star of passion burns intensely in the heart. The restraint imposed on love by the classical Vaisnavite poets was now out-done and the poet has sung freely of his response to the letter from his beloved. Under Romantic inspiration the poet is ready, without any reserve, to kiss and smell his beloved's letter, publicly. Priyatamār Cīthī displays newness not only in feelings; in form also it has some novelty. The poem is built on sonnet form; and this poem is the first sonnet in Assamese poetry. As a sonnet Priyatamār Cīthī follows the rhyming sequence of the original Italian type. But the greatest merit of Hem Chandra lies in the fact, that he innovated a purely Assamese diction for his poetry. His choice of words is
simple and homely but impressive; and in their simplicity, 
the words knock at the cosy-nooks of our hearts. When some 
of his contemporaries and fore-runners looked wistfully at 
Bengali poetry for forms and delved on a more cumbrous 
diction, Hem Chandra remained true to the unmixed homely 
diction and racy style. Spontaneity of feelings and homely 
art of narration are the assets of his other love-poems also. 
Goswami's Eti-Kaṭākṣa (A Stolen Glance) tells us the pains 
and pleasures, a lover derives from the glance of his beloved. 
A glance is the product of a soft-corner of the lover's heart; 
but the reaction of that soft-glance becomes terribly cruel 
to the sufferer. Jayadeva's Kṛṣṇa makes a request to his be­
loved to punish him, by piercing him with a sharp arrow shoot 
from her eyes: Satyameva'śi yadi sudati mayi kopini / dehi 
khara nayanaśarāghātam (If you are really angry with me, then 
pierce me with the sharp arrow shoot from your eyes). In his 
Kako Āru Hīyā Nībilāo (I shall give my heart to none again) 
the poet narrates, how he gave his heart successively to a 
beloved, to a parrot, to the flowers and lastly to the stars. 
The poet records, regretfully, how he was betrayed by one 
and all. He now promises to give his heart 'to none'. His 
another important love poem is Kakuti (The entreaty).
Lakshminath Bezbaruwa (1868-1938) an expert writer of love-lyrics came from the illustrious Bezbaruwas of Sibsagar. His father Dinanath Bezbaruwa was a high govt. official under the British. Under an order of transfer Dinanath Bezbaruwa journeyed by boat from Nowgong to Barpeta; in this journey Lakhsminath was born on a sand-bank called the Ahātguri, when the boat moored to rest. It was a Lakhsmi-purnimā night and the babe's birth was welcomed by the rich and effulgent glow of the full-moon. The boy for his birth on the eventful day of the Lakhsmī pūrṇimā was named Lakhsminath. Lakhsminath spent his early childhood at the tranquil atmosphere of culture and religion at Barpeta. Then with his father's transfer, Lakhsminath had the opportunity to come into touch with the different towns as Tezpur, North-Lakhimpur and Sibsagar. Young Lakhsminath's mind was easily occupied by the nature's picturesque representation of Tezpur, the agricultural life of the simple villagers at North-Lakhimpur and by the past glory, art and architecture of Sibsagar. Lakhsminath Bezbaruwa passed the Entrance Examination from the Sibsagar Government High School in 1886.
and proceeded to Calcutta for higher education. There he joined the First Arts class in the Ripon college but Bezbarua got transferred to City college soon. He passed the F.A. examination at 1888, and graduated from the Assembly college, Calcutta in 1890. He had a strong intention by that time to proceed to England for higher education. But he was not permitted to go to London by the orthodox section of his family. He however was not discouraged and joined the M.A., and Law classes in Calcutta. Lakhsmi Nath was offered the post of a Munsiff repeatedly after his graduation but he declined the offer. He had an aversion for Govt. job and so he started timber business with Bholanath Barooah in Calcutta. But soon Lakhsmi Nath left the partnership with Bholanath Barooah and started independent business in Sambalpur in Orissa. He spent the major part of his life as a businessman at Calcutta and Sambalpur; it was only few years prior to his death, that he returned to Assam. Bezbarua died on March 26, 1938 at Dibrugarh. His mortal remains were cremated on the bank of the river Brahmaputra. It was significant, Bezbarua saw the light of the earth on the bank of the Brahmaputra, and his last remains were consigned to flames on the same Brahmaputra.
And like the influence of the Brahmaputra on the life of Assam, the influence of Lakhsmimath on the literary scene of Assam is ever majestic and great. Some critics are now ready to place him next only to Shankaradeva for his literary genius. Benbarua's literary genius saw its early bloom in Calcutta, when he came into contact with Chandra Kumar Agarwalla and Hem Chandra Goswami. The Assamese Language Improvement Society (of which Benbarua was an active pioneer and general secretary for some times) created an atmosphere of literary pursuits. The members, who were none but the Assamese students studying in Calcutta, felt the need of the enrichment of Assamese language and literature and they endeavoured their best to place Assamese literature and language on their proper locus. The aims of the Assamese Language Improvement Society were manifold, e.g.,

1. Development of Assamese language and literature;
2. Collection and publication of old manuscripts;
3. Active agitation for the recognition of Assamese as a medium of instruction in schools;
(4) Standardisation of the language for literary purposes;
(5) Compilation of critical studies and commentaries of Vaisnava literature;
(6) Compilation of socio-political and religious histories of Assam;
(7) Publication of journals and newspapers in Assamese.

The birth of the Jonâkî in 1889 was the most auspicious event of the time, and it owes its birth to the united efforts of the student-members of the Assamese Language Improvement Society. In the very first issue of Jonâkî Lakhsmînath started his literary career with Lîtkâi, a farce on rural life.

Bezbaru'a's greatest recognition as a poet lies in his beautiful lyrics of love and nature and the satirical poems, written under the pseudoname Kripâbar Barbaru'a. The only anthology of his poems is Kadam Kali (the Kadam bud), first published in the year 1913. Of his most beautiful love-lyrics, mention may be made of Kâlatî, Priyatamâr, Saundaryya, Priyatamâ, Cûmâ, Bhram, Pravasuvâr Cithi, Prem,
Devayani, Cirayauvanâ, Dhanbar āru Ratani and Ratanīr Bejār, which are marked by high imaginative sensibility, simplicity and lyricality. Bezbarua had a definite philosophy of love; he believed that the whole world is under the spell of love and every lotus is blooming under inspirations from love (premat ghūrice bhumandal/ premat phulice sātadāl). The poem Prem (Love) records Bezbaruah's personal philosophy of love:

PREM

Brahmāṇḍar sattva yiito pariche nijari,
Giri, ban, gach, latā, sacetan kari;
Amṛt hāhir raṅ phulat phulāy;
Yi śakati prabhāvat mandākinī yay;
Anu paramānu mile ākarṣi antar;
Pṛthak ātamā mili haya ekesvar;
Byabadhān kṣay haya, ocare ātār;
Abyakta bekat haya; yuce ātma par;
Sarbāṅge sarbāṅga laya; jīvane jīvan;
Ānande ānanda, mahānandar srajan;
Saṃjhār atit śakti, viśwabyāpi kāy;
Kṣaṇik sambhoge yār devatva milāy;
Maru bure śil pame, bindur paraśe;
Prem ākhyā mahāsakti jagat prakāše.
== Love is but the soul of the universe. It spreads itself and awakens the mountains, forests, trees, creepers and makes the flowers bloom with sweet smiles. The rivers too run being inspired by love. The atoms and the molecules attract to and unite with each other being charged with the powers of love. Even two differences go away, the distance gives way to closeness, secrets disappear and the discrimination of mine and thine vanishes. The life comes nearer to life and the body nearer to body. The personal feelings of joy increase and the lovers secure immense pleasure. The word 'Love' foils every attempt of a definition; its extent is the whole of the universe. A single touch of love gives divinity to the lovers. By the wonderful powers of love the stones get melted and a single drop of water floods the great desert. The all-embracing power of love, thus, embraces the whole world.
Bezbaruwa perhaps like Virgil believed that 'love conquers all' and as such he has realised the unfailing powers of love, even upon the mountains, trees and forests. He could see with an exquisitely keen and clear insight, the mondial influence of love.

Beauty is akin to love. Hence in the delineation of love no poet can deny an honourable place to beauty. In Lakshminath Bezbaruwa's poems love and beauty are perfectly matched. His Priyatama (The Beloved) and Priyatamar Saudaryya (Beauties of the Beloved) glow with charming descriptions of his beloved's beauty. In these two remarkable poems the poet has fully utilised his poetic craftsmanship to create an atmosphere of sensuous love and beauty. Carefully chosen images, slowly but sweetly, reveal to us the unparalleled beauty of his beloved.

**THE BELOVED**

'I have yet to see a necklace of pearls although I have heard of it very often'.

I called my beloved and smiled at her.
She smiled back and a necklace of pearls was revealed.
'The beauty of the red coral is yet unseen of me'.

I pointed out the coral reefs which are
the red lips of my beloved.

'It is said that there are no roses without
thorns'.

I silently gazed at the cheeks of my sweet-heart.

'Where is that wonderful lotus
which blooms both day and night?'

I do not speak, but show my beloved.

'Who is the sculptor that has made
this exquisite statue of love?'

I do not care;

I only know that she adorns my heart.

The conversational method employed in the poem makes
it all the more lively and interesting. The poet answers
to the queries of the anonymous interrogator and the poet's
every answer doubly asserts the beauty of his beloved. His
Priyatāmār Saundaryya contains many examples of his deli-
berately sensuous imagery:

Kelai lāgiche senduriya gala?
Phariṅg premikar jui.

Kovābhāturiya òthar talat
Phetī sāp thēke sui.
Kiyabā lāgiche tir bir caku?
Yene saragar tare;
Okha buku kiya lavanu komal,
Madan pichali para.

Ki kam dighal meghبارانیّا
Sāgarar dhan suli?
Prem-pagalar hīday-taranī
Buri pāy gai tali

Mrnāl dubāhu ki kam sādhiba?
Matta prāṇayir del
Mhi mau mat, biyādhar pēpā,
Rakhe kari māthey dhol. *

== What is the use of vermilion coloured cheeks ?
They are but the flames of temptation for
the unsteady lover. The red lips are nothing
but the secret abode of the venomous cobra.

Oh ! what for are the twinkling
starry eyes--- why for the high
breasts of butter-like softness,
where even Cupid fails to climb.
What necessity is of the cloudy
hairst spreading like the waves ?
All these beauties simply lead
the intoxicated lover to lose
control over his heart's boat.
It sinks. What use is of the arms
like lotus-stalks but of fastening
tightly the intoxicated lover.
The sweet pleasant voice is nothing
but the call from the hunter's
pipe to arrest the mind. * * *

This poem stands some comparison with George Darley's
(a Victorian poet) famous poem 'It is not beauty I demand'.

George Darley too recorded a note of suspicion on the peer-
less beauty of woman, and craved for 'a tender heart' and
'a loyal mind', instead:

It is not beauty I demand,
A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair.

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips that seem that on roses fed.
Your breasts, where Cupid trembling lies,
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed:
A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks
Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours;
A breath that softer music speaks
Than summer winds a-wooing flowers,
These are but gards, nay, what are lips
Full oft he perisheth on them ***
Give me, instead of Beauty's bust **
A tender heart, a loyal mind. ***

Bezbarua knew well that in matters of love, a woman's heart is much more important than her physical beauty. The note of doubt and distrust (as depicted in doubting the pink cheeks to be flames of temptation, the red lips as the abode of the venomous cobra, the pleasant voice as the call from the hunter's pipe etc.) in the beauty of his beloved, is comparatively a new thing for Assamese poetry, nay, for the poetry of India as a whole. This doubt upon the physical charms of woman is the product of Romanticism. Though female beauty occupied an eminent place in classical Indian poetry, yet there, the ideal of happiness in love was that of married love. Love, out-side the precincts of wedlock was not a desired thing. Such a love, outside the sphere of a duly wedded couple is believed to give the relish not of a rasa proper
(sentiment) but of a rasābhāsa (a semblance of sentiment).
It is only in the great tradition of the devotional songs
that poetic theory can tolerate reference to love which may
not be necessarily in the context of wedlock. The loves of
Kṛṣṇa and the milkmaids of Brindāban are instances of divine
love in which the laws of human beings are not strictly opera­
tive. poets like Vidyāpati and Candīdas, therefore, are free
to speak of 'shapely hips', 'slender waist' and 'plum like
breasts growing larger and harder and crisper'. The happy
and tranquil love within the family campus offered very
little ground for doubts and disappointments. Thus we find
the great Kālidāsa describing the different aspects of femi­
nine beauty (like the lips resembling young buds, arms like
lotus stalks, a slender waist, swaying hips and alluring
breasts) but nowhere he has paused any doubt or suspicion
on the possible evils of feminine beauty. But in Romantic
poetry the idea of love grew more liberal and love turned
sweeter out-side the closet of wedlock. To the Romantic
poets love meant the love with an imagery or prospective
mistresses. For the Romantic love-poets these mistresses were
not the possessions but the pursuits. They were not confident
of their pursuits and oftentimes there were grounds for
deceit and disappointment from the beauty's daughters.
And as for Lakshminath Bezbarua, he nurtured a mild pain of disappointment, since his early teens. As known from his autobiography, Lakshminath had an intimate playmate named Jayā, in his boyhood days at North-Lakhimpur. She was the daughter of one Siddheswar, a gold-smith of the locality in which the Bezbaruas lived at North-Lakhimpur. Jayā was a beautiful girl, 'pretty like a goddess chiselled in barnished gold'. This playmate of his boyhood days later developed into a source of inspiration for the poet. Though he had no chance of meeting her in youth, yet, the memory of his boyhood Beatrice Jayā, was ever fresh in his mind. We have reasons to believe that his poem Malati (The Jasmine) was inspired by the living reminiscences of Jayā. In this poem, the poet is ready to espy the beauty of her beloved throughout his life and to cherish the hope of closing his eyes for ever on her lap. The poet is marked by sincerity of love and intensity of feeling accompanied by a genteel sensibility.

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Malati is not a queen of the river, neither is she the queen of flowers; Neither is she an image of heavenly light, nor a music enshrined in a flute.
Malati is not fashioned a hill-maiden,
Malati is a flower bud, un-smelt and un-blown.
She is an image nurtured in the realm
of my thought, an apparition of the mind.
She is embossed in my heart,
and my love for her grows in the realm.
I shall espy on her beauty through life;
She shall be a thing of my heart.
I shall smile with her smiles,
and sob with her tears.
I shall close my eyes lying on her lap;
I shall bid adieu to this cruel world,
and the rest shall be the end.

Lakshmimath took materials for his love poems even from the
Mahābhārata. In his graceful dramatic poem Devayāni, the
poet has nicely rendered the epic story of Kaca and Devayāni and their unfulfilled love. As natural for a master artist like him Lakshmimath could well represent the spirit of the original, rather, he added never insight into the complicated love story of a student with his teacher's daughter.
Bezbarua was highly interested in the life of the common people. He enjoyed their joys and sorrows and at the slightest opportunity, he painted their lives in poetry. Dhanabar āru Ratani (The story of Dhanabar and Ratani) and Ratanīr Bejār (Lamentations of Ratani) are the baladic poems, wherein the love of an unsophisticated village youth (Dhanabar) with a girl of the same rank (Ratani) is portrayed. Hem Barua in his Assamese Literature observes: "Elemental in passion simple in musical cadence, the story (of Dhanabar and Ratani) unfolds against a scenic back-cloth of rivers. Dhanabar, the luckless lover, is a Miri youth of the Dikhaū bank; the atmosphere of this river and of the surroundings is rich with the romantic associations of Bihu songs and Bangīts. Ratani, the maiden suffering from the pangs of love, is of the Dhanīrī bank famed for its unsophisticated Mirī population. The story is unfolded through two monologues, one in the mouth of each of the lovers. Of the two, Dhanabar's lamentation is more poignant; it maintains a dirge-like intensity all through. The poem is redolent with an acute dramatic power scintillating metrical beauty in each of the stages of its movement. The other monologue Ratanīr Bejār is as poignant as a nightingale's song that dies upon its heart."
Ratani represents the type of the eternal woman, closer to the instinctive type. Dhanabar is a youth 'sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought' whose escape from the pangs of love and life comes through the gateway of death; Dhanabar found death with joyous remorse in the cold embrace of the Brahmaputra, popularly known as the Luit.

O, father Luit,
take me in your embrace,
give me a place on your lap;
I have lost my Ratani,
there is an end of everything.

The poem Cuma (The Kiss) is a bit erotic in tone and temper; the poet is desirous of making 'one hundred kisses' and as a defence of his desire, he says by drawing analogy from nature, that as all indulge in kissing, why he should resist himself? His other love poems also, are rich in imagery, spontaneity and powerful feelings.

In his poems Bezbarua has made some special reflections on love, which reveal the poet's insight into and admiration for love. Some of these observations are as follows:

(a) Life is transitory but love is permanent.
(b) The rose adds grace to the garden, love adds grace to life.

(c) Belief is the foundation of life, love is of youth.

(d) The love which changes, is no love at all.

(e) A woman's love and anger know no repeal.

(f) Ageing without love is silly.

Bezbarua had the unique gift of powerful use of alāmākāras; not to speak of the figures of speech like the upama and rūpaka, but even the complicated figures of speech like the apahnuti and atisayokti were nicely drawn by him. In the matters of metre he constructed his poems on different models; he used both old and new metres successfully well; so, in his poems we see right from the pada metres to the sonnet and the free-verse. The poet in his short preface to Kadam Kali has admitted that he did not aspire to be a poet and he was not confident of the merits of his poems. But we can hardly agree with the poet. Within the peculiar limits of his work, he displays a fine sense of imaginative power and unerring artistic creativity. No poet of his time, excepting Chandrakumar, could write with more promise and greater accomplishments. Chandrakumar a close friend and a
contemporary poet of Benzbarua was highly moved by the genuineness of his poetry. Chandrakumar wrote to Lakshminath in response to his gift of a copy of the Kadam Kali: "I have all to thank you for the kavita hay yadi hak, nahay yadi nahak thing. I appreciate it, old chap. It is in spite of your doubt really genuine poetry. I need not go into details."

CHANDRA KUMAR AGARWALLA & UMEES CHANDRA BAROOGA

Chandra Kumar Agarwalla (1867-1938) is often mistaken for a poet of love. But in our consideration, he is not primarily a poet of love but of beauty and as beauty is akin to love there is confusion. He composed no love-lyric but occasional glimpses of woman's beauty are there in some of his lyrics like the Madhuri, Santi and Kisori.

Chandra Kumar was the first Assamese poet to discover and describe the beauty of a Kisori. The appeal of a Kisori in comparison to a Yuvati is no less; and many poets including Candidasa have spoken of the precious and imperishable charms of a Kisori. But Chandra Kumar was satisfied with the admiration of her physical charms alone; he was neither
An adopted son of the merchant Bholanath Barooah, Umesh Chandra was an arts graduate of the Calcutta University and he began his writing career with the translation of the Nirañjanāstaka of Sree Saṅkarācāryya. His translation was free and as good as an original composition. Chandra Kumar Agarwalla highly praised his power of translation, as evinced in the Nirañjanāstaka. Umeshchandra was a man of high erudition and he had a thorough study of the English classics as warranted by prose-writings which appeared in the Bāhī.

He wrote a small number of poems; but even the small quantity could speak eloquently of his high quality and mastery. His poems show power and sympathy, an intense imagination and a style marked by great care and clearness. His best poem perhaps is the Ekkanāni chowālīkan tāi, (she is a pretty little maid) wherein he begins with a quotation from Robert Burns; 'Wistfully I look and languish / In that bonnie face of thine.' This bonnie face of his pretty young beloved is the source of inspiration for the poet. He has
sought her love but still he is incapable of getting her heart. Sometimes she displays some softness towards him but he is not confident of her love, because of her frequent change of moods and sentiments. We add a short extract to illustrate his clear and careful style, his skill in handling fine phrases and the powerful delineation of the Romantic imagination.

*****

Ekkanmāni chowālīkan tai - tor
mukhar ene mithā bāhi!
yen cenicampār pāhi
bāji uthe miciki mārile tai
parānar baliya bāhi!

0, ekkanmāni chowālīkan tor mukhar ene mithā bāhi.

Ekkanmāni chowālīkan tai - tor
ene manmohini māt!
-- malayrhe yen cāt!
ekēṣāratai ugul thucul mor
tat nāikiyā cāt!

0, ekkanmāni chowālīkan tor ene manomohini māt!
Ekkanmāni chowalīkan tai - tor
cakur biṣam cāb
-- ki yen kene hen bhāv !

Ekkanmāni chowalīkan tai - tor
imānto dāṉar bhem !
-- yene lāt cāhābarhe mem
bāt cāi cāi dīnto kāṭaṅ teo tor
nebhāge dekhonei lehem ;

Ekkanmāni chowalīkan tor enekhan kāṭhīn hiyā !
-- di kārhīo akau niyā
pāle kalijāto mor kuti kuti yen
tejṭūniko tumī piyā !

Ekkanmāni chowalīkan tor - tri
kacon sacāi kon ?
-- pūrnimār yen jon -
Sukānmukhiyā thā mor mukali kari
chitāb lāḡīcha lōn !

O, ekkanmāni chowalīkan tai kacon sacāi kon ?
== 0, pretty little maid,
How beautiful is your smile!
your face resembles the ceni-campana
bud in smile,
as you cast a smile, the flute
in my mad heart
begins to sing.

0, dear pretty little maid,
How sweet is your voice,
Like the sweep of a cool-breeze.
Hearing only a few words,
My heart sprang up,
And is dancing in joy.

0, pretty little dear maid,
How powerful is your look!
It arouses a sense of distress.
With a single flash from thine eyes,
my heart is broken into pieces.

0, dear pretty little maid,
What big pride you possess
Like the wife of a Governor.
I wait and wait eagerly all day long for you,
But your lethargy knows no end.

Dear pretty little maid,
How unkind heart you have!
you offer and withdraw the heart
At frequent intervals.
you are ready ( I presume) to suck
the bloods from my heart.

Prithee, my dear little girl,
tell exactly who are you,
Beautiful like the full-moon;
you are spreading salts
to my
Wounded and bleeding heart.

Apart from the simple and homely diction, the poem is marked by a close sincerity and we are compelled to re-collect in this connection the sincere and gifted praise of Candidāsa for his teen-aged beloved—Hami. The poem is based on a fine metrical sequence backed by a lyricality of dramatic type.
Padmanath Gohain Barooah (1871-1946) was born in December 1871, at a small village in the North-Lakhimpur sub-division. He received his early education at North-Lakhimpur, Sibsagar and Kahima. He went to Calcutta in 1890 to receive higher education but returned home for his failure in the First Arts examination. Giving up his hopes for higher education Padmanath joined in the Assam School service and served at different schools. Simultaneously he began his literary career and rose to prominence by the production of a large number of books. He wrote poems, dramas, biographies, novels, histories and text-books for schools. Padmanath successfully edited the Bijuli, the Assam Santi and the Ushā. The then government of Assam honoured this prolific writer by granting him a literary pension. He presided over the Sibsagar (1917) session of the Assam Sahitya Sabha.

Līlā (1901) and Jurāni (The Relief) (1900) are the poetical works of this Assamese polymath. In 1941 he published an anthology of his poems, Phular Gāneki (Selection of Model Poems). The Līlā is a long narrative poem of a Kavya type developed on a love-theme. The theme described
in this Kāvya is run on materials collected from the poet's personal life; the love described herein is the love under wed-lock. The poet narrates in a pleasing manner his experiences in love with his first wife Lila. His love poems show power and sympathy, an intense imagination and a style marked by great care and clearness. His Orāni (The veil) is an unique poem with a marked intensity of imagination and powerful feelings. The poet has noticed that the veil can derive proud privileges from the beloved and as such he is resolute to have a birth as a veil. If the poet is given a new birth in the shape of a veil, then, the poet thinks:

In the spring time, with the help of the breeze,
I will show her face to others,
by flying away from her face;
with pause and gesture from a distance
I will enjoy her smiles,
And I will kiss her cheeks
with care and emotion.

In his another poem Pālo (I received) the poet describes a personal experience of love with his prospective mistress Hira. The poet was sending a love-letter, the first one, to his cherished beloved Hira and he was eagerly waiting
for a reply. The days passed one by one and on the third day the poet received a flap of paper from her. A lotus was inscribed on the paper and only a single word Pālo (I received) was written there. The poet feels greatly elated at this achievement. The poet accords a symbolic interpretation to the word Pālo and he is happy to think that by the very word 'received', his prospective mistress has received or accepted him as her beloved for all the times to come. It is of immense pleasure to record that this Hira was formally wedded to the poet and she was a lifelong inspirer of his literary activities. Not only that Hira Gohain Barooah herself took to poetry and wrote a number of poems. Padmanath Gohain Barooah used a simpler diction. His art of narration was easy, and unlike most of his contemporaries, he made less use of figurative constructions. In metrics he displayed mastery only rarely.

ANANDA CHANDRA AGARWALLA

Ananda Chandra Agarwalla (1874-1940) was born at Barangabari, Tezpur in September 1874. He received his early education at Tezpur and went to Calcutta in 1891 to prosecute higher studies. He joined in the Metropolitan College in the F.A. class but became un-successful in the final
examination. He returned to Assam in 1893 and took to teaching. But he changed to the Police service. He served in the Police department for long thirty four years and retired as a Superintendent of Police in 1929. In the same year the government honoured him by offering him the distinction of a 'Rai-Bahadur'. He was the first Assamese to secure a prominent post in the Police department under the British government. He died of Cancer in 1939 at his Tezpur residence.

Anandachandra grew up under the personal care of the illustrious Haribilas Agarwalla. Obviously Ananda Chandra developed a literary outlook from his early teens. He started his literary career, while he was a college student at Calcutta, with the publication of a book of songs, 'Brahma Samgit'. He gained popularity with the book and as such he was inspired to devote more time and energy in literary pursuits. He made regular contributions to the Bijuli, the Jonaki and the Alocani magazines. His contributions were chiefly poetic: soon, he made a mark as a good poet. Moreover, he took to translation of English poems. He was a past-master in translation. The meritorious translations which sounded like originals earned high reputations for him and he was acclaimed as a 'Bhanani Kavar' (literally, the prince
of translation) by his contemporary reading public. Noticing his gift of translation, Dr. Satyendra Nath Sarma remarks: 'The translated poems of Anandachandra earned a high degree of reputation and a greater success than his original poems. The translated poems in the touch of his powerful pen gain superior colour and beauty.' We have little to add to this observation. In 1920 Jilikani (The Flash) the first collection of his poems was published. His another book of poems, Padumani (The Lotus Garden) did not see the light of the day. Ananda Chandra Agarwalla was not principally a love-poet. But, the few love-poems he composed, displayed an extraordinary development of the imaginative sensibility and his superb craftsmanship. He showed originality in depicting love: originality in the sense that it was backed by a personal vision of the poet. Devakanyā Mānāvī Besere (The heaven's daughter in the guise of a human damsel), Pranayār Parinām (Consequences of Love), Phulkowar (Prince Phul) are some of his love-poems. The poet has portrayed his beloved as a Devakanyā, who is the proud possessor of unparalleled beauty. Her every limb is a particular specimen of beauty. The poet has described with a sense of warm affection, her bee-dark hair, the rosy-cheeks, the enticing smile, the deer-like eyes, the campa-like face
and so on. In this particular poem, the poet's sole concern is with the physical beauty of the beloved. The poet has utilised the classical poetic conventions sufficiently in this poem. The convention of comparing the hair with the colour of the black-bee, the eyes with those of the she-deer, the nails with pearls (mukta) is classical. Pranayar Parinām is, in fact, the best of his love-lyrics. Mainā's love and sacrifice for her beloved husband are drawn with a warm humanity in this poem and the spontaneous easy style employed in the poem makes it all the more lively and interesting. The poem Phulkowar is a balladic representation of the ancient saga of Phulkowar and Pactuli. Ananda Agarwalla's attempts at the balladic representation often remind us of similar attempts of Chandra Kumar Agarwalla through the balladic poem Tezimalā.

HITESVAR-CHANDRADHAR AND FEW OTHERS

A casual writer of love-lyrics Hitesvar Barbarua (1876-1939) excelled as a master-craftsman in writing kavyas. His kavyas tell of love and despair, joys and sorrows, heroic wars and glorious victories. But a tiny love poem, Kānar Thuriā (The Ear-ring) had made Hitesvar distinguished as a writer of love-lyrics. The poet has cited the rare
privileges enjoyed by the ear-ring — it can kiss the soft
cheeks of the beloved at every moment, no matter whether
she is in sleep or engaged in eating, standing or sitting.
The poet lamentingly remarks, had he the birth of an ear-
ring, he could also have enjoyed innumerable kisses daily.
The poem is a delightful reading and it stands comparison
with the poem Omani (The veil) by Padmanath Gohain Barua.

Chandra dhar Barooah (1874—1961) was born in
Jorhat in 1874. He received his early education in Jorhat
and in 1892 he went to Calcutta for higher studies. He read
there for four years and returned home without obtaining the
B.A. degree. He took to legal practice and soon made a mark
in the profession. He was a statesman of high reputation
and he participated in the historic Round Table Conference
in London in 1920. Chandradhar Barooah presided over the
second annual conference of the Assam Sahitya Sabha. He died
of Paralysis in 1961.

Chandradhar was attracted to literature in general
and poetry in particular, in his college days. He was deeply
influenced by Michael Madhusudan Dutta of Bengal. Barooah
wrote a few dramas and two kavyas. Raidjan (The Delight) pub-
lished in 1932 is his only collected work of poems. Most of
the poems in this collection run on a humorous and satirical
strain. The poet has successfully exposed the pretensions, prejudices and orthodoxy of the then society. But poet Barooah was not lacking in the power of making serious poetry. Sarni (The Reminiscence) is a fine specimen of the poet’s expert handling of a love-theme. The poem bears a deep analysis of the lover’s psyche. With an evocative imagery the poet has portrayed the scenes, narrated the moods and ideas from his past love-drama, in a very colourful and impressive way. The poem is bathed in a warm glow of affection and it is backed by a lovely construction with rhymed metres.

---

Achane manata sei cabisai man-jovā,
Cal dāi, chagnāri lukāi lukāi cova;
Cābalako man jovā,
Cābas novārā kevā,
Cakut parila cama ṭhāite talalai cova?

---

Do you recollect the longing to see each other,
Finding an opportunity we winked to each other;
The eagerness to gaze knew no bounds,
But we could not see, (out of bashfulness)
The eyes came down after a moment’s meeting.
Thus the poet recollects the memories of his past love. The beloved had left him and the poet does not know, where she is now; but now the poet's sincere good-wish to her is: 'Live with happiness and contentment, wherever, you are'. Smrti perhaps is the most splendid poem of Chandradhar Barooah.

A writer of devotional and didactic poems, Tarun Ram Phukan (1877-1939) occasionally tried his pen at love poems also. In his beautiful love lyric Tomalai (To you) the poet depicts his romantic yearning for the beloved.

Karmavin Nabin Chandra Bardaloi (1870-1936) more a statesman than a poet wrote chiefly on patriotic themes; but he has added a new grace to Assamese love poetry also, by his beautiful poem Prem Patra (The love letter). The poet has selected the famous love-story of Abelard and Heloise from French literature as the theme and with deep insight and lovely construction he has made the poem apt, precise, vivid and delightful.

Doctor Mayidul Islam Borah (1899-1939) a historian of great reputation took to poetry only casually. But he displayed a greater sureness in handling materials than some of his contemporaries. The tiny love poem Canehi (The Beloved) speaks of the poet's appreciation of his beloved's beauty.
The poet has employed the art of narration very similar with that of the Bangits. The lyrical cadence of the Bangits is also maintained in this poem. Premar Gati (The course of love) is another beautiful love-lyric from Borah's pen. In this poem, he describes some aspects of love in a manner betraying the influence of the Persian poet Hafiz.

**AMBIKAGIRI RAYCHOWDHURY**

Assamese love poetry grew to its proper height only in the later part of the Romantic period, when newer ideas and experiments were accorded admission into its orbit. The imaginative sensibility in regards to love was further extended and new vistas were opened for love poetry. It was particularly Ambikagiri Raychowdhury (1885-1966) who extended the romantic sensibility, in regards to love, to the realisation of God. Ambikagiri is a unique figure in the history of Assamese poetry. He wrote a large number of poems of love, beauty mysticism and patriotism. This forceful poet has also earned the distinction of creating an original poetic medium to foster nationalism and world-fraternity.

Ambikagiri was born in January 1885 at Barpeta. He read up to the third class in Sonaram High school, Gauhati.
Ambikagiri had developed a keen sense of patriotism from his early life. He participated in the national liberation movement and was imprisoned several times. He fought not only for the restoration of the national life, but also, for driving out all inequalities in the human society. He wrote a big number of poems; those poems were collected into several volumes, Tumi (Thou), Bina (The Lute), Anubhuti (The Sentiments), Bando Ki Chandere (How I welcome), Sthapan Kar, Sthapan Kar (Establish, Establish) and Bedanar Ulka (The meteor of pain). The poet was awarded (posthumously) a Sahitya Academy award for literature, for his Bedanar Ulka in 1967. Tumi and Bina are the works on love theme. Tumi was published first in 1915.

Tumi records the poet's romantic search in the field of love and beauty. The poet feels a divine presence in all things. Every beautiful object reminds him the presence of the Most High; like George Santayana speaking about the transgression of the poet's soul from a personal love to the love for the Most High, we may observe also about Ambikagiri: "Perhaps the love and beauty however base their primal incarnation, are really, as they think themselves aspirations towards the Most High. In the long studies and weary journeys of the artist, in his mighty
inspiration, in his intense love of the structural beauty of the human body, in his vissitudes of fortune and his artistic disappointments, in his exalted piety, we may see quite enough explanation for the burden of his soul." We have less wonder then, when we see the transgression of the poet's soul from a personal love to the love for the Most High. In the Tumi poems, the poet's personal love for his boyhood Beatrice, Ruprâni has further extended and led the poet nearer to the Most High. Like Plato Ambikagiri thinks that all the things of beauty seen on this earth, are but the reflections of a heavenly original. The poet recognizes the heavenly original among the earthly copies as represented by the different objects of this world. The treatment of the poem is exhilarating. The poet's concentrated observations on the beautiful objects are very much entertaining. As bright specimen of romantic idealism and search of beauty, his poems are well worth quoting:

Tumi râjali òtêdi ahâ
mithâ mithâ madmur bâhi;  
Tumi sui thakâ sundarî 
ôkutîr alasa pâhîti;  
Tumi mukutâ topâl etî  
pramikar bicchedî Ôkut;
Tumi premar madirā sāmi,
garhi uthā sundar nikhot.

- you are the sweet and pleasant
smile on the pink lips.
you are the dull eyelids
of a beautiful maid in sleep.

you are a white pearl
glowing on a corner of the
separated beloved's eye.
you are but a beautiful growth
fed by matchless charms of love.

In style, in swift stealthiness of narrative speed, and
in its weird and compelling strength of imagination the
Tumi is without a parallel. It became exceedingly popular,
and its influence in Assamese poetry is still unimpaired.
Raychowdhury's love has gained more divinity in Bīna, and
here the search for beauty has become all the more mystical.
But in Bīna the poet could not maintain the simplicity of
diction and the easy rhyming pattern of the celebrated Tumi
kāvya; because, here his diction has become a bit artificial
and the metrical construction irregular.
Jatindra Nath Duara (1892-1964) was the greatest love-poet of the age under review and it was he in whose hands Assamese love poetry soared to a magnificent height. He has nicely dealt with the varied aspects of love. 'There are desire for union, regret at repulse, the despair of the unblest, the sigh of the unrequitted love and the pang of separation.' But 'the pang of separation' is the sumnum bonum of his love-poetry. Duara was a master artist, he could turn successfully the common clay of love and despair into pure gold through his intense imagination and perceptive vision.

Born in Sibsagar in the last decade of the nineteenth century, he received his early education at Sibsagar and for higher studies he went to Calcutta. In 1913 he received the B.A. degree from Calcutta University. After graduation he attended the M.A. and Law classes but did not sit for the final examinations. Soon, he took to teaching in the Scottish Church Collegiate school. In 1937 he joined the Assamese department of Calcutta University as a lecturer. He served there for ten years and in 1948 he joined as a lecturer in Assamese in the D.H.S.K., College, Dibrugarh.
He presided over the Gauhati session (1955) of Asam Sahitya Sabha. Duara died in 1964.

Jatindranath took to poetry as early as in his college days in Calcutta. He began his poetic career in the Bāhi. Soon he made his mark as a good poet and received wide popularity by his beautiful lyrics of love and beauty. Apon Sur (My Own Songs, 1938), Banaphul (The Wild Flower, 1952), Milanar Sur (Songs of Love, 1960) are his published poetical works. Duara was a massive writer; he wrote a large number of poems. Some of the poems are still awaiting publication. Duara was very shy to see his poems in print. The poet was not at all keen in publishing his poems. Only through the initiative of his friends and admirers his poems found their way to the press. Lakshminath Bezbarua the then editor of Bāhi and Tarun Ram Phookan, the poet and statesman encouraged the poet very much in his poetic creations.

The principal theme of Duara's love poems is love in separation. His poems are remarkable for a note of deep despair. These are the products of his genuine experience of the pangs caused by an unsuccessful love affair of his own life, as a consequence of which, he remained a lifelong bachelor. In the very first poem of the anthology, Apon Sur
the poet introduces himself as a 'Samgihin Bihagi' (a bird having no companion). The poems Tomalai (To you), Atitak jowahhe pahari (Let you forget the past), Atitak neyabha pahari (Please don't forget the past) and Sunya Paricay (The vain Introduction) from Apun Sur pleasantly narrate the experiences and the reminiscences of his past love. The poem Aji mok jowahhe pahari (Please forget me this day) exploits with penetrating and revealing imagery the poet's past life of love and happiness.

* * * *
Kon ahi keni gal,
Lalit binar tan
Rini rini pariche kanaat,
Naci uthe smerti paraasat
Bhaga hiyakhani;
Ksantekiyaa madhu paraasan,
Ataril moh avaran;
Andhare dhakile dhara,
Madmur jokar pari ral;
Kon ahi keni gal.

= Alas, who did come to my life,
And departed in which direction;
A melodious harp sings to my ears,
(And) my broken heart dances at the touch of the sweet memories.
The touch of pleasure, lasted for a moment;
The veil of ignorance gone and I saw The earth taking by a spell of darkness.
The sweet rhythm left,
(Alas,) who did come and left wherefore?

Duara's adventures of love are platonic. In his platonic ideals Duara very aptly resembles with the Italian poet Guido Cavalcanti. Guido was warmly attached to Giovanna; but he could not win her. The pangs on separation shot him like an arrow:

'Alas they shot an arrow as she turned,
And with a dead-wound from the piercing dart
My soul came sighing back into my heart.'

Musing upon his lost love Duara also says:

LOVE, alas, the word itself is a joke,
Behind the fan of affection,
The scorching rays of despair,
Dry up the well of confidence.

George Santayana commenting on Guido's death-wound says:
"So that while Guido's death-wound was perhaps in reality nothing but the rebuff offered him by a prospective mistress, yet the sting of it, in a mind of platonic habit, served at once to enforce the distinction between the ideal beauty, so full of sweetness and heavenly charm, which had tempted the soul out of his heart on its brief adventure, and the particular and real object against which the soul was dashed, and from which it returned bruised and troubled to its inward solitude". Poet Duara too suffered the same death-wound and his heart too, 'returned bruised and troubled to its inward solitude'. Duara admits the rebuff from his prospective mistress in the poem 'Silīro Sapon Bhāgil' (The stone too has lost its dream). Lying by the side of a streamlet a stone noticed that a green and delicate creeper had peeped by his side. The stone was ambitious, he expected that the creeper would develop and come to his bosom. The creeper grew young and developed. She came and crepted to the bosom of the stone. The stone was delighted. His heart danced in joy but sadly the creeper did not stop her movements. She stealthily moved on and on and finally embraced a nearby young tree. The stone was miserable. This allegory of the stone and the creeper represents none but the poet and his lost mistress.
The woes of separation brought out the inner-self of the poet outside. His personal sorrows became universal. Like Dante's Beatrice, his love too had become an ideal.

While the object of love is any particular thing, it excludes all others; but it includes all others as soon as it becomes a general ideal. So, Duara had embraced all the beauties of nature to his heart. He now speaks with the stars and the clouds, sails through the rivers and laments at the flight of a pair of wild-duck. But sometimes the pains of separation pause too great to resist or withstand. The poet in moments of such despair cherishes a great desire to meet death and to ease thereby the pangs of his sorrowful heart. Thus the poet sings in the poem *Atītak Nāyābā Pāhari*:

* * * *

(While) passing my days like this,
Time with his stormy appearance
Will put-off my life's lamp.
To the un-known lands, through the Untrodden streets,
Destiny will force me
Clasping me by the hand.

The desire to end every discomfort of disappointment in death is a unique longing in Assamese poetry. Even the folk-poets
of love, showed eagerness to embrace death to ease the discomforts of disappointment.

How shall I forget you o dear?
How shall I forget?
The Micimis will come,
(I'm sure) They will bring poison,
Taking a bit,
I will forget you o dear,
I will forget.

Another aspect of Duara's poetry is his love for loneliness. Loneliness, in fact, is man's real existence, for, in lonely hours the man faces himself. As a relief to the distress of his heart, the poet is ready to play on the harp (of poetry) in solitude.

Nirale thākim buli,
Sājico iyāte paja,
Dātiyedi bai yāy, pāharani nai,
Dhuniyā jonāk rāti
Bahi tār pāratei,
Śunām jīvan-jīti Vinkhani lai.
With a longing for the solitude,
I am making my cottage here;
The river of forgetfulness,
Passes by it.
In the beautiful moon-lit nights,
Sitting on its bank,
I will sing for thee, the song of my life,
To the accompaniment of a lyre.

Loneliness is a dominant aspect in his life as well as in
poetry. A man is the sum of his memories. These memories
gain a stronger ground to flourish in solitude. For poet
Duara his memories were his best occupation; and as such
his loneliness had helped him in the shaping of his poetic
genius. But Duara was no escapist: he equally under-stood
the most real and practical aspect of life and earth. In
one of his letters to Jatinarayan Sharma, the poet has
affectionately cautioned his young friend: "Please never
be swayed over by imagination, try to face the reality.
The real world is a cruel one. It cares for none. So, boldly
face the reality'. His poetic creed only led poet Duara to
rest in solitude, otherwise he was sufficiently careful of
the stern realities.
W.B. Yeats had once remarked, 'We begin to live only when we have conceived life as a tragedy'. This tragic conception is ever present in Duara's poems, as he speaks of the tragic aspects of love. The Sanskrit Alamkāra-rikṣ had established the tragic aspects of love as Vipralambha. 'When the love does not attain the desired fulfillment through union, it is Vipralambha śmīgarā (love in separation)', says Viśvānātha Kavirāja (Sāhitya Darpana,iii). The worst type of separation, enumerated by Viśvānātha is the Karuṇa Vipralambha, the highest pathetic state when there is no scope for further union. This is the type of sentiment we find in Duara's poems as they carry no hope for further union; the tragic recollections of his cherished damsel is his only solace. Duara, in some intimate communications to some of his close friends, often used to quote the following lines from William Blake:

'So I turned to the garden of Love, 
That so many sweet flowers bore
And saw it was filled with graves'.

This amply testifies his acceptance of the tragic aspect of love to life and hence to poetry. This tragic aspect (the Karuṇa Vipralambha) was so nicely handled by him, that till
to-day he stands unparalleled in this matter. Bhoja Deva in his श्रीग़ार प्रकाशा speaks of the eighty anubhāvas of Karuṇa Vipralambha: of these Duara's poems present the following anubhāvas frequently: - Paridevā (Mental pain), Anusोcanā (Lamentations), Guna samsmaṇa (Recollections of the beloved's qualities), Jīvitajugupsa (Aversion for life), Maranopakramā (Desire for death), Śokavinoda (Pleasure in suffering) and Śokalāghava (Recession of pain). A closer view at his poetry may lead to more things very much nearer to the Sanskrit poetry. But at the present context we do not desire to intellectualise Duara's poems - to make conscious and artful, which are better known for their spontaneity and simplicity.

Beauty is akin to love; hence in delineation of love, the poet often time speaks of beauty. Plato's ladder of love in the Symposium has different loves for its rungs. Diotima, whom Socrates describes as his 'instructress in the art of love' tells him that if a youth begins by loving a beautiful form, 'he will soon of himself perceive that the beauty of one form is akin to the beauty of another', and therefore, 'how foolish he would be not to recognize that the beauty in every form is one and the same'. He will then "abate his violent love for the one", and will pass
from being "a lover of beautiful forms" to the realization
that "the beauty of the mind is more honorable than the
beauty of the outward form". Thence, he will be led to love
"the beauty of laws and institutions ...... and after laws
and institutions, he will go on to the sciences, that he
may see their beauty". As Diotima summarizes it, the true
order of love "begins with the beauties of earth and mounts
upwards ...... from fair forms to fair practices, and from
fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions
(we) arrive at the notion of absolute beauty!"

In Duara's poems we often find glimpses of absolute
beauty. "To him", remarks Dr. B.K.Barua "love and beauty are
but the indivisible colour and fragrance of the same flower."
There is a beautiful consistency and oneness in Duara's
lyrics of love and beauty. The Banaphul poems are very much
entertaining in matters of love and beauty. Let us take a
few lines from his poem Gupta Bekat (The Revelation):

* * * * *

The flowers rose up
shunning the cover of the leaves,
and they extended their hearts in joy.
The butterflies peeping from a corner,
came forth and caroused
the sweet honey of love.
The butterflies decked their wings with sun-shine and flew in delight.
The new leaves responding to the sweet-cool spring breeze danced in joy.

With great eagerness
the silvery river ran and kissed the mighty sea.
Full of hopes in the heart it joined the sea of its own accord.

A flash of joy illumined the close precincts of the heart.
A flash from heaven to the earth descended turning all the nature gay. * * * *

Duara had a romantic yearning for the beautiful. In the poem Dūrār yātī (The traveller to the distant land), the poet dreams, as many a lover has before him, of flying with his love to some fairy land, far from the world of men.
We travel and travel to the distant lands
beyond sleep (and)
beyond dreams,
We cross the barriers of life and death.

* * *
The sun-beams peep through the clouds, 
the evening sun glows in pink;
with a smiling face it directs the path.
From a distance somebody gives a call,
'Come', 'come', 'please come'
"I am just on the shore
(to welcome).
Why are you busy in the illusions,
come, come near by".
— We go, go for the distant land.

The pleasant words of invitation
echoes in the air and the sky
(and) spread to the far distant lands.

Singing in the air
Rowing in the air,
And hoisting the mind's white flag,
Dancing and laughing we pass,
pass to the distant land.
To the distant divine dream-lands,
we pass-on and on-to the far far distant lands.

The poet's passionate longing to go to the distant land leaving away the troubles of the world is a proof of his romantic sensibility; at the same time a feeling of offensive sentimentality is present in the poem. The longing to fly to a distant land, far from the world of reality is an ever permanent longing in the hearts of the lovers of all ages and in all countries. The English Romantic poet P.B. Shelley also in his poem, Epipsychidion dreams of flying to some far distant land with his love Emilia Viviani.

* * * * *

Emily,
A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering over the mountain's brow.
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halcyons brood around the foamless isles:
The treacherous ocean has forsworn its wiles,
The merry mariners are bold and free,
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?
Our bark is as an albatross whose nest
Is a far Eden of the purple cast;
It is an isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of paradise;
The blue gean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and foam.

Some mention must be made of Duara's sufiistic approach to poetry. Duara rendered into Assamese Fitzgerald's The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayam. The book Omar Tirtha (Omar's pilgrimage) is not a literal translation of Fitzgerald's; it is rather an original work on the model of Fitzgerald. In the like manner in his Milanar Sur also the poet has expanded Hafez's sufiistic doctrines. Because of Duara's deep study in the Sufistic poetry and philosophy his lyrics too, could not but be influenced by sufiistic ideals. His love for his lost mistress under a spell of the sufiistic charms has changed to the love-divine. The Sufi did not worship God with hopes of attaining heaven or from fears of being consigned to hell. What the Sufi wanted was God Himself, for he knew that he was a particle of God, a spark of the divine-fire. There is no stronger bond then love to unite God and man, and Sufis recognized no other feeling
more powerful than love. They held that the intenser the
love the deeper was the man's penetration in the divine
secret. They believed that the greater the love the closer
was the approach of the devotee to the Fount of all Love.
And hence, Sufistic poetic literature like that of the
Bhakti-cult of the Vaisnavas, is found to be over brimming
with love-devotion. Among the Vaisnavas God is the eternal
lover (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) while the devotee is the beloved (Gopi);
on the contrary, among the Sufis God is the beloved, where
as the Sufi is the lover, enraptured by her charms. In
Duara's love-lyrics also, an approach to the divine-love
is often seen. In his poem Milan (Union) the poet cherishes
a strong desire to go to his beloved who is none else but
the Fount of all Love: God.

Kāt mor maramar milan mādhurī
kāt tār suvādī bātāri,
Samāsār dhūli bāli jokāri ketiyā
lam mai tomāk ādari.
Maratar bāndh cīṇi uri yāba khoje
man mor sarag dhiyāi,
Ceneh saphurā meli āchā yat tumī
mor kāranei bāt cāy. ***
Where is my most cherished pleasure arising from the sweet union,
Where is the pleasant invitation to that?
When shall I go and embrace you
shunning sorrows and sufferings of the world?
My mind is intent on making a flight
towards heaven,
Leaving away the fetters of the world;
To the high heaven, where you are
waiting eagerly for me opening wide
The casket of Love.

Durai was a vastly read man. He read with great
care and earnestness the continental poetry, especially
English and his particular favourite was Shelley and
Tennyson. It is natural that his poems echoed and re-echoed
some sentiments of Shelley and Tennyson. Tennyson in his
poem Crossing the Bar had woven a pain and a desire for
loneliness; Durai too, in his poem Nāoriyā(ga) (The Boatman-ga)
shows his keen intention to return to eternity all alone.

Tennyson: CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no meaning of the bar,
   When I put out to sea,

But such a tide is moving seems asleep,
   Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
   boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
   And after that the dark;
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
   When I embark;

For the' from out our bourne of time and place
   The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my pilot face to face
   When I have crost the bar.

Jatin Dura:  NAVARITA - C

Mar gale rañā beli saru tarātiye
   diye nok sādarar seē āvāhan,
Olam yetiyā mai sāgarar pie
   nusuno ghāṭat yem karun krandaan.
Duara was warmly attached to the German poet Heinrich Hainz and the Russian poet Turgenev. It is no wonder, therefore, that Duara's poems showed some reflections of the Hainzan or Turgenevian spirit. Duara's art of narration is very much simple. He employed a non-figurative diction in his poetry. His diction has no artificiality; he couches his poetry in a pleasant and homely diction. Wordsworth had advocated a simpler language drawn from the real life, in all works of imagination and sentiment. Duara had done exactly so: he employed language drawn from the real life. He used less of
tadbhava and tatsama words. The poet has developed his poems in a set of images beautifully drawn and nicely represented. The pictorial effect of his images is very rich. Let us illustrate the point with some typical images from Duara:

(a) The morning sun,
    coming down from the sky,
    printed a lovely kiss
    upon the pink-cheeks
    of the earth;
    The world smiled in joy.

(b) The tree in winter
    keep dumb and isolated
    noticing the fall of the leaves;
    I keep lonely and cornered,
    losing the music of love.

(c) A distant bird,
    came
    and sat
    upon a branch of the tree,
    and muttered few words of Love.
The silent branch,
still
remained silent.
It could not appreciate
the pains
of the (bird's) heart.

These images are the product of his deep and intense feelings, his close observation and above all his power of associating 'best words in the best order'. His images, with the progress of the words in the sentences, unfurl to us slowly but vividly. Duara's images have the power to soothe and entertain. His images are drawn chiefly from nature. The poet has made abundant use of the poetic conventions used by his forerunners; but in this respect too, he shows originality. Some of the classical poetic conventions handled by Duara are listed below:

1. Love compared to a mirror,
2. Love compared to a song,
3. Love compared to a spring,
4. Pain compared to a flute,
5. Death compared to the final union of the soul with the Supreme soul,
Recollection compared to a crematory,
The dwarf's stretching forth of his hand,
The world conceived as a guest-house,
Life's song played on a minstrel,
Life conceived as a flowing-river,
Despair compared to darkness,
The creeper conceived as a lover.

Duara displayed a rare skill in handling metres. His metres are never studied nor artificial. "Verse comes naturally to him and his sense of form never fails him," he has used both the long and short metres; but in the construction of short metres of pada type (4+6: 4+6) he has gained a rare excellence. The poem Ḥomālāl (To Thee: Ḥomālāl) is a typical example. In this poem the poetic embellishment produced by the metre is further heightened by the frequent use of the soft alphabets n, y, r, m, l (n, m, m).

James Henry Leigh Hunt discussing the qualities of a great poet remarked: "He who has thought, feeling, expression, imagination, action, character, and continuity all in the largest amount and highest degree, is the greatest poet." Duara obviously has all the qualities prescribed by Leigh Hunt. He is the greatest poet of the Romantic heritage.
Dandinath Kalita (1890-1950), principally a poet of the satirical strain, composed a few love poems of elegance and imagination. In his poem आकर्षण (The attraction) the poet allegorically puts the love between the moon and the sea. The poet's say is that the moon has a great attraction for the sea and as such he constantly gasses at the sea from up above. The sea responds to the moon's pleasant looks and she also gets elated and exchanges looks with him. बिरहीर बिलाय (Lamentations of the deserted lover) is a poetic representation of Ramachandra's deep lamentation for Sita. The source of the poem is Ramayanie. Ramachandra recollects Sita with a heavy pain and shows his stern desire to recover her at any cost or to finish himself. The poem is rich in imagery and colour. The presentation of the poem against a natural background has made it all the more refreshing.

A poet of mystic sentiment Durgeswar Sharma (1885-1961) composed few beautiful love-lyrics also. His अंजलि (1910) records a number of love-poems which are marked by a subtle and sustained melody and a graphic word-picture. His poems speak both of love and disappointment. Throughout his poems the eagerness of a love-lorn poet to get his prospective
mistress is noticed. The poem Mâyā (The Heart) is unique in romantic sentimentality: the poet's heart is full of pictures; it had collected a large number of pictures but out of all one picture is glowing bright in his heart. That particular picture is the picture of his beloved. Time can neither deface nor wither the picture from his heart. The Jāgaraṇa (The Awakening) records the awakening of the poet's heart in the first meeting with his cherished damsel.

The Awakening

On the very first day of meeting,
you paused a bit reserved,
but a sweet smile half-illustrated
crept upon your lips.
Your eyes looked inquisitive,
and the foot-steps sounded
a sweet music.
You wore no veil,
(the veil which makes even the full-moon dark).
With new posture,
new grace of body
new clothes and newer virtues
you came to me. • • •
Durgasvar Sharmo displays a Wordsworthian spirit in the choice of the poetic diction; his diction is simple, vivid, brief and non-figurative.

It had become a dominant tendency with most of the Assamese poets of the age under review, to portray at least something of love in their poetry. This tendency resulted in the fact, that love-poetry became an instrument of gaining popularity. Most of the poets under the impressions of this tendency had begun their trade with aspects of love. But later on, with the further growth of their poetic genius, the poets had changed to themes other than love. Though some of these poets could not rise above the level of mediocrity, yet, a big number of these poets earned distinction by their beautiful love-lyrics.

Surya Kumar Bhuyan (1884-1964) a great scholar rather than a poet, took to poetry in his early youth. He wrote songs of love, nature and patriotism. As for love he had a direct positive philosophy. The poet has understood the all-embracing power of love, its never-failing power to heal the sorrows and sufferings. Poet Bhuyan understood that love is the greatest bestower of happiness. Thus he says in the poem Āpne Sur (The personal song):
Love is but the crowning jewel,
it is the greatest wealth to be worshipped;
Life is but an endless sorrow,
a struggle hard and continuous.
The ceaseless flames of death
are ready to finish us,
(and) for a moment happiness comes
as a mirage, an illusion.
Many a transitory things come to us
and pass by,
But love like the pole-star radiates
beauties ceaselessly,
without a stop, without a pause.

His love-poems like Prem-Gīt (the love song), Kām Kātāki
(the love-messenger), Obhatani (the return), Madhu-yāmini
(the honey-moon), Birahinī (the disappointed damsel) and
Ponate (firstly) reveal a deep insight and a feeling;
moreover, these poems are backed by extreme regularity
of metre and frequent employment of the more formal figures
of speech, such as Personification and Apostrophe.
Padmadhar Chaliha (1895-1970) was born in Sibsagar, a town full of ancient heritage and natural beauty. He received his education at Sibsagar, Calcutta and Guwahati. Padmadhar began with a journalistic career but later he changed to law and finally took to teaching. He served in the Sibsagar college as its first principal for sixteen years (1947-63). A life-long devotee of Assamese literature Chaliha has earned high distinction for his lyrics of patriotic fervour. He often used love too as a theme of his poetry. Phulani (the flower garden, 1915), Svarâj Saîgît (songs of freedom, 1921), Citi-Lahari (lyrical waves, 1923) and Sarai (the tray, 1923) are his collected poetical works. Full of lyricality and harmony his love-songs are passionately imaginative in character. The love-song Maram yâtanâ (The pangs of love) is rich in colour and imagery. The poet has found similarity of the cricket's long cry with the cry of the lover's heart. His poetic diction is backed by economy and precision.

Mahanath Sharma (1896) one of the pioneers of Assamese journalistic movement, took to poetry only casually. His tiny love-poem Hiyar-şapen (the heart's dream) is an invitation to his beloved.
Come to me, my love, in the sweet dreams,  
deeded in the rich beauties of the world;  
Let the sorrows and sufferings part,  
Let alone you be within my reach.

Taraprasad Barooah (1886) a pleader by profession had only  
a brief poetic career. He had written more than hundred  
lyrics of love and mystic realisation. Giti-Manjari (Song-  
buds, 1928) is his only collected work. Barooah's lyrics  
of love are musical, natural, lucid and sensitive. He has  
no note of dejection or disappointment in love. In matters  
of love, his optimism is robust. His poems bear a charm  
and vivacity that delight old and young alike. The poet's  
joy in attaining his beloved to him know no bounds. In  
lyric 47 of Giti-Manjari the poet says:

(To-day) You have filled my life with new thoughts,  
(To-day) You have bestowed newer charms to life,  
(To-day) You have made love simple to the lover,  
With new feelings and grace,  
Tell, why by playing the flute of love  
81  
You stole my heart?
Deeper themes and newer philosophy to love poetry were introduced by this time by Ratnakanta Barkakati (1897–1963). His pursuit of love like his pursuit of beauty is a passion with him. The poet was born in a little village Athgaon in the Nowgong district. He had his early education at Nowgong and prosecuted higher studies at the Cotton College, the Ripon College, Calcutta and in the Calcutta Sanskrit College. A man of patriotic temperament cut and cut, Barkakati left College in order to join the Civil Disobedience Movement pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi. He served as the mausadar of the Dhang masâ since 1933 to his death. From his boyhood Ratnakanta was thoughtful and deeply devoted to arts and began his poetic career through some beautiful love-lyrics in the Bâhi. His love-lyrics were collected into a book-form as early as in 1932 which goes by the name Sowâli.

The Sowâli poems have a flawless airy grace and a sustained lightness of touch which are unparalleled in Assamese poetry. An infinite variety of verbal music is included in their fine descriptions, usually of the beloved's charms which, for sheer pictorial beauty, are the finest things the poet achieved. A close study of their
workmanship reveals an almost incredible subtlety of control
over the texture of his poems. We give a specimen below
which is a fair example of the delicate beauty of descrip-
tion accompanied by an epigrammatic neatness.

YADU (IF)

Yadi tumi hoāhale
    padum spāh
Mai yadi rib rib
    malayā batāh;
Dhīre dhīre gai dhari
    cakuti mūdāi,
Kariloheten snah
    sata cuma khāi.
Yadi tumi bōvā hale
    bhutphul eti
Mai yadi candramār
    kiran echāti,
Dhāliloheten gai
    amiyā kiran
Hāhilāheten pāi
    prem - ālingan.
Yadi tumi hovā bale
   cātak pakāṣṭī;
Mai yadi jaladhār
   syāmal murūtī;
Uripuri ākāsāt
   dhāli dhārāsār,
Karāleheten pān
   Prem parabar.

= If you had been a lotus,
and I the gentle breeze;
Slowly and slowly,
I could go
and close your eyes,
with hundred kisses.

- Had you been a lily
and I the moon-beams,
I would have spread
the rays of my love to you;
(and) I am sure you would have smiled
on my touch of love.

- Had you been a cātaka bird,
And I the grey clouds;
Sailing over the sky,
I would have sent you
the incessant showers;
thus making you drunk
with love's honey.

The poem cited above exhibits lovely and rich imageries.
With suggestive but restrained words he has made the poem
glow with romantic luxury.

Barkakati's realisation of love is deep. With a
faithful realisation in his own heart, the poet has seen
the reflection of his love in all objects of nature. Some-
times his love leads him to a passionate sentimentality;
in such moods, he thinks of becoming a cloud in the sky to
make his beloved's love quenched by pouring the incessant
rain, like the cloud that sends the waters for his lady-
love, the cataka bird.

Barkakati generally nurtures no pain of separation.
His heart is all gay; his poems abound in divine joy and
happiness. The only poem where the pain of separation is
nicely drawn is Ūrmilā. In this poem poet Barkakati has
aptly portrayed the pains of separation of Ūrmilā from
Lakṣmana. Rāmausahaan the hero of the Rāmāyana story took his
wife Sīta and brother Lakṣmana to exile with him. Lakṣmana's
wilful exile with his brother left Urmilā separated from her husband. But in the Ramayana Urmilā's pain of separation is mentioned nowhere. Poet Bārakaṅti observes:

"even the poet whose heart melted in grief at the death of a Kraungh bird, did turn a deaf ear to the laments of Urmilā." Perhaps to compensate the great poet's indifference to the bereaved Urmilā, poet Bārakaṅti himself has portrayed the pangs of her separation with utmost care and sympathy. We quote below three stanzas to illustrate the poet's superior gift in delineating the tragic sentiments of Kheda and Karuna bīpralambha type.

* * *

On the day of the two brothers' departure from Ayodhya
In the guise of hermits, along with Sīta
(thus leaving Ayodhya to groan under darkness); Who did notice you, O Urmilā, under the roofs of the royal palace?
Who knows on that painful day, the simple and honest maid suffered and groaned;
How sad her plight was,
with her hair untied
(and heart-broken).
Like a flower-bud
untimely snatched away
from the calyx.
0, Urmila! you suffered
unbearable pains
silently.

Barkakati could estimate the pains of a prośita
bhartrkā woman in detail and as such the poem displays a
tragic sensibility. To bestow classical granduer into his
poem, the poet has modelled Urmilā in a classical model.
The poet has suggested 'untied hair' to Urmilā; according
to Yājnavalka, the greatest authority on the Hindu Sams-
kāras, a woman left by her husband should cease to deco-
rate and apply toilet to her body.

Barkakati's love lyrics are often interspersed
with the lively descriptions of natural beauty. He under-
stood well, the invisible tie of love and beauty in poetry.
But sometimes his love soared high above beauty. In his
beautiful love-lyric, Visva-haran (Stealing the Universe)
the poet gives a comparative reflection of love and beauty.
The poet in his early youth, before the coming of his
beloved found ample beauty in the objects of nature. But
with the coming of his beloved everything changed:

When you were not there
to get me enamoured of your beauty,
I had then,
the sun, moon and the stars
to quench me.

The sky was an open space;
The breezes were there too
to kiss and embrace me.
The river murmured music
with me, my joy defined no limits.
The morning flowers smiled
with me;
And with me
The stars of the night sky wept too.

The day you emerged,
enchanting me, that day onward,
you have robbed the joy out of everything.

You have depreciated the universe.
Like Tilottama you have robbed everything:
and even the moon of its face.
You have laid the sky vacant;
you have emptied the breezes
of their joy,
and that of the river too.

You have robbed the flower
of its heart:
You have robbed it of
its brightness and colour,
and have made the stars
less lustrous.

You have robbed the sun
of its morning glow:
You have robbed the universe
of its last shreds.

My heart breaks;
And could it be saved?

The intimate descriptions of nature given in his poems have made his poems all the more lively. The poet is a great lover of flowers. He has drawn his similes, analogies and comparisons from the flower kingdom. Even the title of the book Sevālī goes by the name of a flower.
In the poem Sundar (Beautiful) the poet has said that the beautiful flowers in the garden remind him that they are nothing but the blood extracted from the hearts of the disappointed lovers. Śri Harṣa also, has said in his Naśadha carita, that the flowers in bloom increase the sorrows of the forlorn lovers. It may be mentioned here that flowers have occupied an important place in Assamese love poetry. Most of the poets including Jatindra Nath Duara have dealt with flowers in their narrations of love. The sight or smell of flowers are often mentioned as agents in enhancing the grief of the forlorn lovers. Poet Duara in his poem Tomālai (To thee) has described how the sweet fragrance of the rose has increased sorrows in the heart of the love-lorn poet. But the lover's flower, according to the conventions of Assamese love-poetry, is not the rose but the lotus. Like Burns' comparison of his love to 'a red, red rose, that's newly sprung in June' the poet Barkakati also, conceives his love in the form of a lotus and himself as the sweet breeze ready to bestow its tender touch upon the former. 'Flowers are lovely and love is flower-like' and hence we see innumerable instances where flowers are made evocative agents of love, in the poetry of all countries. The ancient love-festivals of India were mainly festivals of flower. Some of the love
festivals (of ancient India) even go by the name of some flowers. Thus we have the Vakulavihāra, Aṣokavihāra, Sālmali-
mulakhelana, Aṣokottamsikā, Kadambayuddha, Vasantośava,
Madanotsava, Cūtabhaṇjikā, Puspavacāyikā, Navalatikā, Pallava-
\textit{bhaṇjana} and Navapatrikā as some of the love festivities
associated with flowers. It is interesting to note that the
Indian God of love Kāmadeva is himself a Puspadhanvan (a bearer
of flowery bows and arrows) and his five principal shafts
are made of flowers.

Apart from his rich themes and feelings, Ratnakanta
showed extraordinary craftsmanship in the technical construc-
tion of the poems. He constructed his metres with variety,
ease and fluency. His rhymes and metres varied with the vary-
ing of his emotions. His metres often ran like a mighty swir-
ling river coming down from the mountains and running towards
the sea, with different dancing movements and occasionally
changing its course to gain further strength in running. The
dignity of his style and its precision and care and the rich
romantic lyricality established Ratankanta Barkakati in an
unique position of grace and dignity.

YAMUNESVARI AND KRISHNAPRASAD

Yamunesvari Khataniyar (1899-1924) had died young
and her poetic career was brief. She wrote principally on
metaphysical themes; but in her poem Uṣā-Kuvari (Princess Uṣā) the poetess has depicted the classical story of Usā's longing to get Anirūddha by her side. Uṣā-Anirūddha's love story has inspired many poets to dwell on this theme even in the modern times. Yamunesvari has couched the poem in a very homely and simple diction. Usā's longings to get her beloved (whom she had met in a dream) is nicely portrayed.

* * * * *

Kuli māte mitha mane lāge bethā
bhāvare bagare dhau,
Kahāni āhino kumāre dibahi
ōthate cumāre mau.
Īśvare kapāle ki lekh lekhile
manate birah lai,
Saponare mor hīyār mānik
kāhāni dekhim ai.

= The cuckoo sings pleasantly, my heart awakes in pain;
And infinite thoughts play upon my mind.
(oh !) When shall that prince come
and print honey-sweet kisses,
on my lips.
What was ordained to my fate by God,
I know not;
But with an irresistible pain I long:
To meet my heart's jewel,
(whom I met in dreams).

A woman's pains are better understood by another woman.
Naturally, we find Usa's pains getting nicely portrayed by Yamunesvari. Yamunesvari's power of description is always backed by a strong sense of sympathy and understanding.

Like Yamunesvari, Krishna Prasad Agarwalla's (1872-1897) poetic genius too could not flourish fully as he was cut off very early in life. Krishna Prasad began his poetic career in the contemporary magazines like the Bijulî and the Jonâkî. His poems are fed with a sense of love and desire.

SAILADHAR RAJKHOWA

Sailadhar Rajkhowa (1892-1968) in his beautiful lyrics of Nijara (The Brook, 1935) has woven a fine radiance of love and beauty. Sailadhar was born in Dibrugarh and received early education in the same town. He graduated from the Cotton college in 1914. After a brief career of teaching and business he joined the Assam Civil Service
in 1919 as a Sub-Deputy Collector. For long 28 years he served in the Assam Civil Service and retired as an Extra Assistant Commissioner. In the initial stage of the Guwahati University he served as its first Treasurer (1948-54). The poet breathed his last in December, 1968.

Sailadhar's delicate and touching love lyrics reflect the longing and the sadness of human heart in love. Apeksa (The Awaiting) is a beautiful lyric of the poet's resolute longing to meet his beloved. The poet believes that with the coming of the beloved his youth will take to bloom and his heart will receive permanent solace. The poem Birahini (The love-lorn lady) exhibits a high sense of tragic flow so far as the love-lorn lady's heart is concerned. The lady was not only separated from her lover but was also robbed of her charms by nature. The wind had robbed her of physical beauty, the flowers her smile, the clouds the pink colours of her cheeks, the deer her beautiful winks and the new leaves robbed her of her youthful attire. Desolate and robbed of her charms the love-lorn lady now eagerly looks forward to meet her beloved even after the final closure of her eyes. Sailadhar has aptly realised that the closure in love marks an end to the joys of life of the lover. F.W. Bourdillon has rightly observed in his poem Lights
"The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done'.

Pāşan-Pratimā (The stone-image) is a miniature epic of love and heroism. His Homar Kāsat (Near the Wedding-fire) speaks of the pious aspects of love within the wed-lock. The poet has accepted the bride to his life in presence of 'the gods, the Brāhmīns, the respected superiors and the divine fire' and he is confirmed that she would be her life-long companion in all matters of life and death.

Sailadhar's style is racy and his metres are regular. He preferred the rhymed sequences in verse-making.

DHARMESVARI DEVI BARUANI

Dharmesvari Devi Baruani (1892-1960) better known for her metaphysical poems and nature lyrics took to love-poetry only casually. The classical convention of the Sun's love for the lotus and of the moon for the lily has been
nicely represented by her in the poems Priyalai Padumī (the lotus to her beloved) and Saralā Kumādi (the simple-minded lily) respectively. The lotus has dedicated her heart to the Sun. She is very much optimistic about her love. The sun with his beautiful rays has decked her beautifully. Her colour, fragrance and beauty are the gifts of the Sun. She is eagerly awaiting union with him. 'For her deep love for the Sun', she says, 'she has refused the black-bee'. The plight of the lily is almost the same. She is also suffering from the pangs of separation from the moon. Moreover, she has no hope of attaining union with the moon in the present birth, but she hopes to get united with the moon at the final departure from this earth. Both these poems are marked by a free-play of the imaginative sensibility. Her success lies in the fact that she has been able to represent the classical love-myth between the Sun and the lotus and the Moon and the lily in a sublime way. Dharmesvari's art of narration is simple but homely; less figurative but convincing and her handling of metres is easy and regular. The sublime feelings and the neat diction have made these two poems worthy of attaining the standard of Sukumāra mārga prescribed by Kuntaka. The poems exhibit all the gunas of the Sukumāra mārga, viz., Madhurya, Prasāda,
Lavanya and Abhijatya. Dharmesvari Devi Baruani is one of the outstanding Assamese woman poets.

Lakshminath Phukan

Lakshminath Phukan (b. 1897), a celebrated journalist, took to poetry in his early youth. He was born at Dergaon. In 1915 he passed the Matriculation examination and got admitted into the Ripon College, Calcutta. But soon he left studies and began his career as an assistant teacher in the Dergaon High School. After a brief stay he changed over to the journalistic profession. Lakshminath Phukan served in many newspapers as sub-editor or editor and finally he joined The Assam Tribune, the premier English daily of Assam, as its first editor. For more than twenty years he served in this paper and after retirement he is happily settled at Calcutta.

A prolific short-story writer, Phukan could exhibit his genius in writing poetry also. He wrote of love, beauty and nature. But Phukan’s gift lies in his beautiful love-lyrics. With flawless taste and restraint, and with the delicate artistry of an accomplished technician Phukan handles his poems. His is the art which conceals art, and his mastery of rhythms, sure ear for verbal music, and
lightness of touch give to these lyrics something of the quality of the best Romantic poems. His sense of beauty is strong and his poems exhibit the indivisible tie of love and beauty. Nature too has occupied an important place in his love-poems. In the poem Diva ne akani thāi (Would you give a little space?) the poet has portrayed the exchange of love between the two doves on the branch; and this love-game of the doves has inspired the poet to seek his beloved, near-by. Saksī (Witness) is marked by a passionate appeal (to his beloved) and a picturesque effect accompanied by grace and brooding introspection. The poet in this poem has shown transparent simplicity of tone and language and strikingly vivid imagery. A dreamy melancholy mood is woven into the poem. We quote the poem below to show the exalted mood to which his poetry can ascend:

**WITNESS**

Why is it that you conceal yourself so?
The garland-bead has fallen down,
the flower-petal has fallen down too,
disturbed by your aṅchal.

Donot think, when you depart,
there shall be no relic of your presence:
Donot think, there shall be nothing
to announce that you came.
Even now, the *durba* grasses bear
imprints of your feet;
Even now, the butterflies are sad
in separation.

Even now, your breath hangs
on the leaves of trees;
Even now, your fragrance burdens
*malaya* breezes with its beauty.

Even now, the coy creepers continue
their bashfulness;

Even now, the honey bees
are buzzing out their sadness.

Even now the echoes of your
are not mute;
Even now, the bird is dazed
in slumberous silence.

The star too hides somewhere.
It shall glitter again,
announcing your existence.

Lakshminath Phukan's diction is soft and sug­gestive; often he uses words full of pictorial suggestiveness.
The words like cakut nira bhasa (the silent speech from the eyes); niar topale kare kolakuli (the dew-drops clasp each other in love); tatinibukut sau jontir khela (the yonder moon plays on the lap of the river) are very much suggestive and such words are capable of filling the readers' hearts with a warm sensibility. All these poems are found in his only anthology, the Sonali Sapon (The Golden Dream, 1961).

DEVANANDA BHALARI

Devananda Bharali (1880-1972) an eminent linguist and a forceful writer in prose had little time to devote to poetry and as such his poetic productions are scanty. But out of those scanty productions, his Ephil Golap (A Rose) shines with brightness of colour and sweetness of fragrance. The poem is struck by a note of romantic sentimentality which is extremely impressive and intensely imaginative in character. Instinctively right in the choice of his language, Devananda Bharali can speak straight to the heart of the reader. His descriptions are brief but artistically matched to evoke and win the sentiments of the readers. The poem is over-brimming with a thirst to explore his past-experiences in love centering round a rose. The young lover's feelings and responses to the offer of a rose is interesting in every detail. We quote below the poem to show the poet's power of feeling and expression.
Epāhi Golāp (A Rose)

Dichil edin tēo epāhi golāp
golāpar sāmāṇya epāh;
Hat melotei mor sarīrat yen,
Vai gala vasanta - vatāh!
Sadhāraṇ golāp epāh

Kapi uthā āṅgulīre kathampi lalo,
hāte hāte lāgil paraś;
Ājo suvari mor pulake sarīr,
Hṛdayat uthale haras!
Āhā! sei madak paraś!

Sukāi lereli gal bahīr mājat
haril āgar gondh - bhāp;
Gīra natunatva tār nuguce tathāpi,
sāt kare antarar tāp!
Sadhāraṇ epāhi golāp!

= One day she gave me a rose,
(trust me) only one, one single rose.
With my stretching of the hand
to pick it up;
The spring-breeze passed through my body.
Only one ordinary rose.
With trembling fingers,
I picked the rose with much difficulty;
And accidentally my hand
touched her hand.

Oh, how pleasant it is to recollect
the touch,
The heart dances in joy at the
very recollection.
Oh! that intoxicating touch!

The rose now withered
under the covers of the writing-book;
it's original colour and fragrance gone;
(but to me) it is ever fresh, ever new;

Capable of soothing my hearts' afflictions.
Oh! only a rose.
(Trust me) she gave me only one,
one single rose.

Surely, these are the words of a poet who sings because he
must, he can never dishonour the intense feelings of love
accentuated by a strong romantic sensibility. The poem bears
a fine comparison with Ellen C. Howarth's poem, 'Tis But a
Little Faded Flower. Poet Howarth too fondly recollects 'a
little faded flower' ;
'Tis but a little faded flower,
But oh, how fondly dear!
'Twill bring me back one golden hour,
Through many a weary year.

NALINI BALA DEVI

One sweet little love-poem Smṛti (Recollection) came out from Nalini Bala Devi's (b. 1898) pen by this time. Daughter of the illustrious Karmavir Nobin Chandra Bardalai, Nalinidevi made experiments with poetry very early in life. She wrote her first poem Pītā (Father) when she was only ten years old. Nalinidevi's distinction, however, lies in her mystic poems, her search for beauty and divine bliss. The poem Smṛti is the solitary example of the poet's attempt at love-poetry. But Smṛti has earned a high reputation for its lyrical gift, freshness of sensibility and a deep tragic sentiment. Nalinidevi became a widow very early in life. The untimely death of her husband made the poet an introvert and as a solace to her sorrows the poet began a serious study of the Upanisads. The poem Smṛti records the grief for her husband; an old letter from her husband that came to her sight suddenly evokes the poet's sorrow. A sorrowful recollection makes her heart heavy and
she laments over her hard-fate. One day her heart was full, She was the beloved of a person and she was warmly covered by his love. But now he is no more. The poet does not know where he has gone? Looking back at her past life of joy and love the poet now wonders, had she herself enjoyed such days of love and pleasure? We quote below three stanzas from the poem to illustrate the deep feeling of her heart lacerated by the sorrows and sufferings.

* * * * *

Achilne bāru hāy
tayo eti dhan nepāhar
Vyākul bāsanā dehi !
kono eti najanā janar ?

Āji dekho cin-cāv
nepāo vicāri eko ṭār,
Ātara ātari jova
nopovā ekoke cin ṭār.

Sapon bātari siti
saponate līn hai gal,
Dekhā nedekhār dare
matho eti cin rai gal.
Were you also a beloved,
a much-cherished dhan (wealth)
of some one;
An irrevocable desire,
a pole-star of passion
for some one;
Who is now no more?

To-day there is little evidence
of that love;
Alas! the departed leaves no signs
to trace him.

Like messages received in a dream,
my love ended in a dream;
Only a shadowy recollection
and the rest is silence.

Nalinidevi's Smṛti bears some resemblance with Hemchandra
Goswami's poem Priyatatāmr Gīthi; both the poets have used
letters as means of evocation in love. But to Hemchandra
the letter comes as an excitement (Kṣovaka) whereas it
comes as an agent of enhancing sorrow (abhivardhaka) to
Nalinidevi.
GANESHAL - LAKSHMIKANTA

Ganeshal Chowdhury (1896-1932) a minor poet showed skill and perfection in depicting love. His Priyā Samga (The company of the beloved) is rich in sensuous descriptions, lyrical rhythms and dramatic effect. Ganeshal in this poem speaks of his beloved: his love is not an imagined goddess but a real woman, whom the poet loves not because she is his ideal but because she is herself. The poem Rupāntar (The transition) is backed by strong resolution and bold and sincere expression. The young poet is ready to out-do the claims of society, wealth and pride to obtain his beloved.

Lakhsmikanta Baruah (1895-1931) took to love poetry passionately and sincerely and wrote with imagination and feeling. The tenderness of lyrics, his simple yet powerful diction and above all the directness of communication have made his poems gay and entertaining. Lakhsmikanta Baruah knew that love is made out of life, belongs to life and exists for life. The poem Bhālpowā (Love) narrates how love had entered into his heart and how much elated he felt at his first experience of love. The extract quoted below proves his excellence in portraying the profound longing in the human heart — the longing to love and to be loved.
Navin bāsanā āhi hīyār vīnāt
jurilei sulalit tān;
Sakalo bāsanā sakhi, niphūt surat
mīli āle sanmohan gān.

Samgītar sudhābhavani vīyāpi parīl
śarirar śīrāi śīrāi;
Visvajayi mṛtunjayi kibā ek bhāve
hrdayat lāle āhi thāi.

Antararo antarar āveg-lahari
nayanar konat jilika,
Kathātir samīdhan bhāsa āphūtan
nakhtire prthīvīt likhā. ***

āpon astvitva mor āponat nāi
bhālpośa- gosāṅir dāsa;
Par hante jīvanat ātma-balidān
prāṇ mor surabhi samkās.

= A new wave of desire
played in the heart's lute
with a sweet melody;
The desires sang in a chorus
but, O my love
it was a music of silence.

The sweet but silent music
ran through the veins;
A feeling capable of conquering
the whole universe,
and even death;
Made my heart robust.

The waves of desire
peeping through the heart,
And the twinkling dew - drops
On the eyes;
The words fail to answer
simply the nails make portraits
on the ground. ***

I am not in myself
I am a slave to the goddess of love;
My heart is ready to sacrifice
itself for others;
And my life is full of sweet fragrance
(of love).
Lakhsmikanta Barua had an unique gift of description. With lovely words he created the atmosphere lovelier. The word gosāni (the goddess) deserves some attention. It has become a convention with the Indian poets to compare the lady-love with a goddess. Even in the Rāmāyana we find Rāvana comparing his cherished mistress to a goddess.

Kā tvam bhavasi rūdrānām marutām vā sūcismite,
Vasunām bā barārohe devatā pratibhāsi me.

Oh, the sweet smiling lady! to whom do you belong, to the Rūdras, the Marutas or to the Vasus: you appear to me a veritable goddess.

Lakhsmikanta's art of metrics was simple; he used rhymed sequences in his poems.

KRISHNAKANTA HANDIQUE

Krishnakanta Handique (b.1900), an erudite scholar, took to poetry in his early youth. He showed powerful gift for love poetry; the poem Aveg Antar (The Longing heart) speaks in a pleasant and lucid way the desires that crop up in a lover's heart. In this poem (which was written while he was a First year student of the Cotton College) the poet has amply drawn similes and metaphors from the domain of Nature. His choice of words is entertaining and his words
are full of suggestive and musical resonance. The words like adhāphula phulkali nuphuli napari dhali (the half-bloomed buds neither blooming fully nor decaying); Kalpa-nār rāmā rānī nāciche āveg tānī (the fairy queen of fancy is dancing in desire) have the power to transport the readers to a fairy dream-land of love and beauty.

RAJENDRANATH - PRABHATCHANDRA - BADANCHANDRA

Rajendranath Barooah (1891-1945) could delight, his contemporary audience by his fine lyrics of love and beauty. His Nuśūna eketi sur (The same unheard melody) describes his past adventures in the field of love with a sensuous insight and lovely diction.

Prabhat Chandra Adhikari (1900-1954) made a rich contribution of poems to the journals Cetanā and Āvāhan. He composed a few love-lyrics of considerable merit and magnificence. Vyathā (Pain) and Yauvanāsis (The blessings of youth) record his high imagination and the unique gift of description. The poet has gladly welcomed youth (in the poem Yauvanāsis) and he is very happy to arrive at the precincts of youth.

Love has touched me,
My songs now turn gay
The lotus of my heart
is now in full-bloom;
The sweet fragrance of youth
Has maddened my heart
And now it mutters
(words of love).

Prabhat Chandra's style is racy and the word pictures that he draws are rich with colour and accuracy.

A poet enjoying a fine play of the romantic imagination, Badanohandra Sarma (1910-1945) showed a rare genius for love-poetry. But the poet was untimely reaped away from the earth and as such his poetic genius could not bloom into fullness. Badan chandra was attracted to poetry and drama even from his very childhood. His first book of poems Puravi (1928) was written and published when he was a student of the Jorhat Normal School.

Full of metrical excitement Badan Chandra Sarma's poems spring from a deep corner of his heart. He is keenly devoted to his beloved and he spares no pain to keep closer to her. Thus, even in his dreams the poet cherishes the company of his beloved. His Sapon-Smrti (Recollections of a dream) tells how at the dead of night, the poet worships in the dream, his beloved. Passionately he describes his
pleasant meeting with his beloved in the dream-land, on an autumn night and in an hour of the sewali's spreading their sweet fragrance.

DIMBESWAR NEOG

With a definite form and philosophy for love a new poet emerged out by this time; he was Dimbeswar Neog (1899-1966), the famous Romantic poet and scholar. Neog was a versatile genius; his contributions to Assamese literature in general and to poetry in particular were immense. Dimbeswar Neog was born in Sibsagar and was the eldest son of Manick Chandra Neog. He received his early education in his village-school and passed the primary school final examination with a competitive scholarship in 1909. From 1910 to 1918 he was a student of the Sibsagar government High School. Actually his high school-days at Sibsagar were the formative period of his genius. In his high-school days Dimbeswar developed a love and a taste for Assamese literature, and his first experiment in writing poetry was complete by this time. He was a gentle and thoughtful child, and at times he turned meditative. Passing successfully the Matriculation examination in the First Division in the year 1919, Dimbeswar Neog went to Gauhati and got himself admitted into the First year
Science class in the Cotton College. His college days at Gauhati gave Dimbeswar Neog a great opportunity to develop his personality. He not only passed the B.Sc. examination successfully but also he had the chance to come into direct contact with the illustrious professors of his time like Dr. Banikanta Kakati, Dr. Surya Kumar Bhuyan, D.E. Roberts, David Thomson, Chunilal De and Rajani Kanta Barat. The natural sceneries of Gauhati and its neighbourhood feasted his eyes and inspired his mind to work at poetry. He had completed the M.A. Syllabus in English from the same college but did not appear in the final examination; later, he passed the M.A. examination in Assamese. It is interesting to note that Dimbeswar Neog was the first man to secure the M.A. degree in Assamese, because the M.A. syllabus in Assamese was introduced in the Calcutta university only in 1939.

Dimbeswar Neog took to teaching in 1926. He remained a lifelong teacher and he served in many High schools throughout the state and retired as the Superintendent of the Jorhat Normal School. Dimbeswar Neog married Ajalitara, a daughter of the illustrious Benudhar Rajkhowa in 1930. Ajalitara herself was a writer of repute and she was the constant source of inspiration for her husband's literary pursuits.
Malika (the small garland) written at the demise of his friend Maniram Kalita is his first poetical work. It was published as back as in 1921. This elegiac poem brought fame and inspiration for him. Malika was followed by a host of poetical works. The Thupitara (A cluster of Stars), published in 1925 when he was a post-Graduate student in the Cotton College, secured praise of such eminent authorities like Dr. Banikanta Kakati. Reviewing the book Thupitara Dr. Kakati remarked in the Cotton College Magazine: "Thupitara (A Cluster of Stars) is the fourth volume of small poems published by Sjt. D. Neog, B.Sc., a student of Post-Graduate English class of our college. The rapidity with which the several volumes have been brought out during the five years of College life testifies to his remarkable felicity of composition. All the poems are noted for choice of diction, felicity of expression and smooth flow of verse". Neog wrote as many as fourteen works of poetry. He sang of love, nature, freedom and social emancipation. Elegiac and humorous strains also found proper treatment from poet Neog.

And as for his poems of love, Neog displayed a fine sense of imaginative sensibility. The most conspicuous feature of the poems is their intense imaginative power, superbly controlled, in his finest poems, by his unerring artistic sense. Neog’s Indradhanu (The Rainbow, 1930) and
Vicitra (The Variety, 1948) are the collections of his love-poems. He had a deep conviction over the divinity of love.

In the poem Bhalpowa (Love) the poet remarks:

Love, O my beloved, is a celestial river
coming from heaven it passes
On the earth.
By drinking a drop from that river,
O my beloved, 112
I have been intoxicated.

The poet has discovered the immense power of Love on the different objects of the universe: Out of love, the poet says, the stars twinkle at each other, the sun and lotus exchange love, the river kisses the sea and the waves clasp each other.

Dineswar Neog in his love poems has frequently dealt with youth and beauty. Love, Desire, passion and disappointment are some of his favourite aspects of love. The tone of disappointment is of course not very much serious. The poet displays a gayness throughout most of his poems: the gayness which reigns the hearts of the lovers. He has expressed a mood of blessed cheerfulness, a sane and delectable joy. The poem Yauvan yidina jag (when the youth awakes) the poet records the profound joy that the lover cherishes in his youthful heart.
Teo kon niṣṭhr anaṅga, yār bābe
śarīr sarvāṅga
āji mor idare purice?
Vai parā cakur pāhire,
manorām kalpanā hāhire,
Bidare jīvan juriṣe!
Jīvanar amṣā purar,
ki sundar kusum kowar!
Teorei saundarya hātat,
Viki mor ananta yauvan,
āji mor sārthak jīvan
Migdha maś asim premat.

Who is that cruel Cupid? for whom
my every limb burns restlessly;
With beautiful eyes and charming smiles
he has graced my life.
The flowery prince
has turned my life into a
veritable paradise.
In his beauty-exchange
I sold my youth (to him)
I am now bound by infinite love,
My life now is full.
This all-abounding joy of the poet in touch of love stands comparison with English Romantic poet Shelley's blessed cheerfulness. To the Spirit of Delight, poet Shelley says:

"I love Love, though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee.
Thou art love and life: O come,
Make once more my heart thy home."

"There is nothing half so sweet in life" says Thomas Moore, "as love's young dream." The lovers turn the whole world into a dream-land of love and beauty with their fancy. Poet Neog has nicely depicted the dreams and aspirations of youth in his poems. One such poem full of the young lover's dream is the Svargabâs (The celestial abode) wherein the dreamy lover guesses that the lover secures the heaven at the very moment his beloved is near by him. The poem is rich in passionate appeal and it is full of suggestive music.

Dimbeswar Neog had dived at foreign sources also in search of materials for his love poems. Thus he has reproduced the famous Arabian love-story of Sirin and Farhard in a pleasant manner. He has made Farhard more of an aspirant for beauty than a lover; but both Sirin and Farhard, in the
Dinbeswar Neog had a fine felicity of expression. It was because his thought was most spontaneous and his art unstudied and simple. Naturally his speech became most alive. He knew the art of putting best words in the best order. We quote below a few examples to represent his powerful diction.

(a) Kon nayanar putali nāciche āji
kalpanār tire?
= Who is that dear eye-doll dancing
on the shores of the (river of) imagination?

(b) Bolābā dūgāl sāni raīā raīā lājar sendur.
= He decks my cheeks with a stretch of
the pinks (vermilion) of bashfulness.

(c) Tente āji āhā mor bisādar sāta sahacari
Pranāyar sahasra katakī.
= Then ye come! the hundred friends of pain
And the thousand messengers of love.

(d) Dine ārātī matalīyā hrdayar bowatī yamuna.
= The intoxicated mad yamuna flows vigorously in my heart day and night.

(e) Meghdute priyalai niye mor pranāy varata.
= The cloud- messenger carries informations
from me to my beloved.
(f) Girantin gati dhara sambarar kal Vaitaranî,  
Kane kane jagatak sunuva maran jannani.  
= The eternal river Vaitaranî flows  
ceaselessly declaring every minute to the  
human-world the approach of death.

Such powerful dictions illuminate the readers' hearts with  
profound feeling. Such words as quoted above, slowly and  
gently open the images to the readers in a manner in which  
the cine-prints come to the vision of the audience on a  
white screen. "Poets have always known the power of incan­  
tation, of the hypnotic effect of simple chanting and the  
repetition of sounds and phrases". Poet Dimbeswar Neog too,  
knew this art of incantation perfectly well.

In the field of metrics Neog made much innovations.  
Though he had particular liking for rhymed sequences in  
poetry, yet, sometimes he made use of metres constructed  
in a mixed way. Svargabas, Svaryapuri and Yauvan viday  
are some of the fine examples of metrical craftsmanship.

It will be not out of place to mention here that  
Neog's poems of love had often showed some aspects of  
patriotism in them.
POEMS OF LOVE

DAIVACHANDRA TALUKDAR

Daivachandra Talukdar (1900-1968) more important as a novelist and a playwright had made his mark as a romantic poet also. A life long devotee of Assamese literature Daivachandra showed an uncommon gift in narration. His art is simple and within the range of simplicity he convincingly communicates to his readers his deep-rooted feelings. He wrote of love, nature and patriotism. Daivachandra's Prem-Pat (The portrait of love,1922) is a rare epic of pastoral love. He has established the story on a riverine background, where nature nurtures the spirits of youthful lovers. The unsophisticated love between Malo a pastoral youth and Junu his cherished dame glows in warm description and simple narration in the hands of Daivachandra Talukdar.

SINHADATTA DEVA ADHIKARI

Similar attempts at representation of pastoral love into poetry was made by Sinha Datta Deva Adhikari (1889-1925) in his love-poem Thunuki. Thunuki was a Garo girl and she had developed love for a youth named Leti. The story of Leti and Thunuki has obtained a simple but fitting treatment from the poet. Deva Adhikari was a
vastly read man, he obtained themes also from ancient Indian literature. In his beautiful little love poem Meghdut the poet has drawn in an original manner a nice monologue for the yaksa who had suffered pains of separation and to ease the pain has requested the cloud to carry the messages to his beloved. The story is from Kalidāsa and the poet exhibits a high sense of imaginative invention by reproducing the yaksa's pains in a homely and subtle way.

ATUL CHANDRA HAZARIKA

Atul Chandra Hazarika (b.1906) who has earned high distinction as a master dramatist took to poetry only as recreation. Still then, the bulk of his poetical works is considerably great. His poems are fed with nature, patriotism, beauty and love. He made humorous poetical sketches too, for children. Hazarika's love-poems like the Devadāsi (the temple dancer), the Manasi (the imaginary mistress), Priyār Samgit (Song for the beloved) betray passionate feelings and grammatical neatness. His prospective mistress is an unbodied angel, a dream girl, having no form; still she is none else but the queen of beauty. Neither the fullmoon nor the flowers of the spring can stand comparison to her beauty. The poet is all agog in praise of the
physical charms of his beloved in the poem Priyar-Saṅgīt. He has amply used the classical poetic conventions in the description of the beloved's charms. His beloved's cheeks are like roses, the teeth are like pearls (muktā) and her voice is like the melody of the harp. We quote an extract from the poem to illustrate the passionate sentimentality that he had woven in the poem.

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Poval bākhar yen kapālat ghāmar ṭopāl,  
Mīṭhite lukāi pare leuseu lāharī kakāl.  
Sāpar nejar dare sādarīr ka'la venītārī  
Melīle āthut lāge, śuba pāri diye yadi pāri.***  

Ālāsate bhāni yāya tarunīr gītar tarāni,  
Ākāśi rathat uthi cao mai śyāmal dharaṇī.  
Viśva nātakar hai āmi duyo nāyak-nāyikā,  
Katabār dicho ene pranayar rūpah bhumiṇa.  

= On her forehead drops of sweat glitter like coral beads.  
Her flexible little waist may be concealed within a grip of the feast;  
And her snake-tailed braided hair goes down the knees (when stretched out)  
The long stretched hair even suggests a bed.
The boat of her song plies in the ether;
Soaring high above the earth I see
the green earth below;
We simply are the hero and the heroine
of the drama universal.
Birth after birth we have played these
pleasant roles, times without number.

Hazarika's beloved is like Heinrich Heine's fisher-maid
having "many pearls of beauty" hidden within her caverns.
The poem Priyar Saṃhit may be compared happily with Persian
poet Nizami's beautiful poem "Love's Message". Nizami's
Laila, like Hazarika's beloved, was an epitome of beauty.

"Laila in beauty, softness, grace,
Surpassed the loveliest of her race;
She was a fresh and fragrant flower,
Plucked by a fairy from her bower;
With heart-delighting rose buds blooming,
The welcome breeze of spring perfuming.
The killing witchery that lies
In her soft, black, delicious eyes, ***
Her eyelash speaks a thousand blisses,
Her lips of ruby ask for kisses;**
Her cheeks, so beautiful and bright,
Had stolen the moon's refulgent light.***
Atul Hazarika's Devadāsi is an unique love-poem as it speaks the pains of a temple dancer. The Devadāsi or the temple dancer charges the temple God for his heartlessness. The Devadāsi has passed her days by dancing in the temple. Yet she is best recognised only as a slave (dasi). She however, claims nothing more; she is contented to be known merely as a slave or a humble servant of the God. But yet the God is apathetic to her. Because, she could not worship the temple God with a pious heart (rather with a pious body). She has blemishes on her person, her life is full of errors. But she thinks, she herself is not responsible for her blemishes. With the music of the evening prayer her pains also go on increasing. She devotedly requests God to accept her as one of his true devotees. The God is kind enough to the flowers; because, he accepts them though their honey is robbed by the black-bee (the Devadasi was also robbed of her honey by somebody), on the pretext that the flowers are very much simple and ignorant of the ways of the world. The Devadasi requests God to show equal favour to her. The world has shown her injustice but she hopes that God will not impose His injustice upon her. The Devadāsi goes on requesting and requesting and observing the continued silence of the stone-god she turns rebellious.
She rebels and protests and finally presses a strong demand to him:

"You are compelled to accept the flowers of my devotion,
Since, none else but you are responsible for the total failure of my life and youth."

Devadāsī's arguments are note-worthy. She accuses god for her fall, since, she believes that it is God who prompted somebody to robe her life's honey. The devoted Debadāsī knows that nothing happens beyond the range and control of God. Hazarika portrays with sympathy the sad plight of the Devadāsī. A girl when she is fair and young has to face many difficulties. Love and youth launch constant attacks at a beautiful dame. Queen Elizabeth I in her poem "When I was Fair and young" shows the problems of a beautiful girl in her blooming youth very nicely.

**WHEN I WAS FAIR AND YOUNG**

- Queen Elizabeth I

When I was fair and young, and favour graced me,

Of many was I sought, their mistress for to be;

But I did scorn them all, and answered them therefore,

"Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere,
Importune me no more."
How many weeping eyes I made to pine with woe,
   How many sighing hearts, I have no skill to show;
Yet I the prouder grew, and answered them therefore,
   "Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere,
      Importune me no more".

Then spake fair Venus' son, that proud victorious boy,
   And said, "Fine dame, since that you be so coy,
   I will so pluck your plumes that you shall say no more,
   "Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere,
      Importune me no more".

When he had spake these words,
   such change grew in my breast,
   That neither night nor day since that,
   I could take any rest.
Then lo! I did repent that I had said before,
   "go, go, go, seek some otherwhere,
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      Importune me no more".

The period of youth in a human body is too short and the
warning of the Venus' son is too great to disobey; and
hence the difficulty. The same plight had pushed the
Devadāsī to the present state of affairs. Devadāsī's devot-
tion to god at the present moment is her only asset. Her
devotion to God is so sincere that she claims God to be her lord (Śvāmī). She boldly declares, 'as you are the lord of everybody on earth, so, you are the lord of mine also'.

Apart from the feelings, Hazarika's form of expression also deserves notice. He wrote in a less ornate style; simplicity was his prime business. But Hazarika did not refuse the conventional literary techniques; rather he wanted to add more strength, sincerity and simplicity to it. The prasada element is high in his poems.

PRASANNALAL CHOWDHURY

The poet who launched an attack on the conventional approach to love and sought to establish a new formula by this time is Prasannalal Chowdhury (b.190?) of Barpeta. His political poems however, form the most solid granite for his fame. The number of his love poems is small. But within the small range Chaudhury could make newer innovations in respect of form and content. He reveals much closeness and sympathy of observation, and he can command a sweet and readable style. He shows respect for love in a practical and praiseworthy form. The poem "Hatas premik ejanar mṛtyut" (On the death of a disappointed lover) in backed by close observation and newness of feelings. A friend of the poet...
who was disappointed in love committed suicide to get rid of his pains of disappointment. Somebody may call the lover a coward and a sinner (as the act of suicide is regarded as a sin) but the poet does not. He is confident that death has made his disappointed friend bold and great. With accurate observation and sympathy the poet writes an argument in favour of his departing friend.

***
So you could not adjust with the world, your heart found no way of relief, For you this world devoid of LOVE turned a fag.
The lotus-stalks of love decayed in an instant; Their colour and fragrance gone. You were bold to desert the earth, undelaying you challenged the laws of the creator; Leaving behind this cruel world you made an adventure towards the eternity, with a sullen heart.

If love is great and is worthy of worship,
how can I accuse you of
self-immolation;
The devoted wife sacrificing herself
at the burning pyre of her husband
attains respectful worship as a Devi.

The age is cruel
and the society is unyielding;
How can the halves unite in such
a world?
Like the flashes of lightning
the hearts run after each other;
The world is then alarmed,
and the society trembles in fear.

The incompetence of the society
to sympathise with the lovers
and its innate fear
has made you my friend a bundle
of blemishes.

They cannot admire
the pure, glorious and
heavenly charms on you.
But I do admire
I do love
your lover's personality
full of nobleness.
So, I write this pen-picture
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to collect you into memory.

Prasannalal's poem 'Yauvan' (youthhood) declares the high
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hopes and aspirations of the youths. The youth's heart is
full of love, courage and patriotism and he has a promise
to make the world richer than it is. The poem depicts the
youthful dreams of the poet himself. A revolutionary and
nationalist poet Prasannalal in his youth hoped to esta-
blish a world full of freedom, happiness and equality.
The spirit of the poem sometimes makes us recollect Kazi
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Nazrul Islam's poems on similar themes. The rhymed con-
struction of the poem has made it all the more lovelier
and gay.

Chaudhury's another beautiful love-lyric is Vidāy
(The Farewell). The poet under tragic circumstances is to
leave his beloved permanently. With a heavy heart the poet
requests her to forget all about their love; their words of
love and the happiness of the past.
If at any time I disturbed you
With my words of love, Prithhee, forget all.
If at any moment
you wanted to tell anything,
I request, Tell me that you have forgotten those all.
If the past episodes of
happiness and love
Donot decay in the heart,
Pray open the door and let them fly
One after another.

Prasannalal's attempt to forget the past has some resemblance with poet Duara’s active approach to conceal his love-life under a curtain of forgetfulness. Obviously for a disappointed lover his memories of love-life increase pains.
So, if the lover can forget his past it is ample blessing for him. But that is not easy. Every active attempt at forgetfulness simply encourages the memory. And "there is no greater sorrow than to recall, in misery", says Dante in his Inferno, "the time when we were happy".

Prasannalal's style is neat and free from studied ornamentation. He employs a direct and clear diction followed by graceful turn of sentences and backed by a commanding vocabulary.

KAMALESVAR CHALIHA

Kamaleswar Chaliha (b. 1904), a pioneer worker in the field of Assamese literature, had occasionally tried his pen at love-poetry also. The number of his love poems is very small; but within the smaller number he has proved his novelty. He has spoken of the women who can inspire and of those who deceive man. He has discovered that within the outward view of beauty and kindness deceit and disappointment lie concealed. The poet has realised that wherever there is greater beauty in woman, greater is the scope for deceit. He is more careful of the illusory aspect of a woman's beauty. Chaliha perhaps like Rudyard Kipling believes that "the female of the species is more deadly than male."
Chaliha has a rare gift of description; he often uses lovely words backed by feelings, imagery and splendour which are capable of creating a peculiar excitement in the readers. We quote a few lines from his poem Vrata to illustrate his power of expression.

Kekorā culire mukkhani
Cakitā-harinī yen mukhar lavani
Bukut amar
Dūranir ayut bhramar,
Tat prāṇ-sikha
Chandahīn ullāsere likāh
yen jayar patākā
Valakār pānti palataka,
Ei visva yen buri yāy,
Astitva herāy
Ananta Tāmasī
Nai ya't tarā sūrya Saśī,
Tāt pūrṇa payodharā
Antahīn iyotiye ābarā,
Padum kusum,
yak beri bibhrāntar dhūm
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Dhūp-surabhīre bharpur.
Your beautiful face, 
decked with curling hair 
suggests the charms of 
a she-deer in distress. 
The flowers of your bosom 
invite the distant black bees. 
The life's flame is decorated 
there with eagerness 
like a banner of victory. 
(Or they suggest) 
a row of fleeting cranes. 
Even this universe gets plunged, 
loses its existence, 
in an endless gloom, 
Where the sun, moon and the stars 
lose their holding. 
But your two full lotus-breasts 
shine and shine with endless radiance. 
At the sight of which 
misgivings come to me 
like the fragrance of the dhūp (incense).

Rtā (1941), Chanditā (1941) and Āhinār Hāhi (1963) are 
Kamalesvar Chaliha's poetical works.
BHAVANATH HAZARIKA

Bhavanath Hazarika (1904-1934) who was a regular contributor of poems to the Bāhī, Āvāhan and the Milan, wrote principally on nature, beauty and patriotism. The tiny love-poem Rūpāhī (The beautiful dame) speaks the virgin love and beauty of an unsophisticated village maid. The poet is enamoured of her charms; he gets immense pleasure at the sight of her face which is beautiful "as the first-morning flower". Rūpāhī had bloomed to her youth as an innocent flower and her loveliness had earned pride for her village. Even the birds and the deers from the nature kingdom were attracted by her beauty. The poet was separated from the village for sometimes but in his return to the same village few years later "he saw the beautiful smile vanishing". Long before the poet's return to his village, Rūpāhī closed her beauties and left this earth and returned to her eternal home. The poem is nurtured by a tragic sentimentality; a deep sigh of love and tempered pathos. The transitoriness of beauty is well-reflected in this poem.

GANESHER CHANDRA GAGOI

The tradition of love-poetry was further strengthened by the new and passionate approaches made by Ganesh Chandra Gagoi (1907-1938). He introduced a tone and a climate
hitherto unknown in Assamese love-poetry. Ganesh Chandra demonstrated a close sincerity, emotional rapidity and above all an unique approach to beauty. With his efforts love-poetry enwinded further popularity with the connoisseurs. He drew much of his material for his poetry from his life; his emotions coloured all that he read; and almost all that he wrote was subjective. The man and the poet cannot be separated; his life and his writings are complementary and interwoven to an unusual degree. His life throws light on his works and his works reflect that life. Therefore, some knowledge of his life and background is necessary for the better understanding of his poetry.

Ganesh Chandra was the eldest son of Kanak chandra Gagoi an Extra Assistant Commissioner under the British regime. Kanak chandra hailed from Dhakuwa Khana, a small village in the North-Lakhimpur sub-division. He had to move from place to place at the call of his duties. Later on, he settled at Jorhat permanently. It so happened that Ganesh chandra spent his childhood at Jorhat. Jorhat at that time was a lovely small town with enough scope for literary and cultural pursuits. Young Ganesh Chandra was charmed by the beauties of nature dominant at that time in Jorhat. He visited the suburbs and the fields for sight-seeing. A moody and thoughtful child Ganesh Chandra collected the natural
beauties to his memory even from that time which later on he shaped into poetry. He passed his Matriculation examination from the Jorhat Govt. High school in 1926 and proceeded to Cotton College for higher education. After a year he went to Benares Hindu University and got admitted into the Intermediate Arts class. But he returned, without obtaining any degree, to Assam in 1928. His educational pursuits thus ended prematurely. Two years later, his father died as a result of which Ganesh Gagoi had to shoulder the responsibility of maintaining his family. He started timber-business at Dhansirimmukh (in Golaghat sub-division) along with one Devi Barua from Jorhat. In this business he could not prosper; a few years later, he took the management of a liquor-shop. In this also he failed miserably. A big portion of his father's savings was exhausted by this time. Gagoi could not get time to repair the losses or to start any new career, as he fell victim to Tuberculosis. His health began to fall with tremendous rapidity and on August 21, 1938 Gagoi breathed his last.

In his school-days Gagoi exhibited a deeper interest in games and sports rather than in his study. He was a good footballer. In the school-sports Ganesh Chandra snatched away the medals easily; and he maintained a suitcase full of medals and cups earned in the school-sports.
He was a good debator and once by his clear wit he asserted in a debating competition that smoking is good. Ganesh Chandra was a good hunter. He liked sweetmeats very much and it is pleasant to note that his first poem Rasagollā goes by the name of a sweet-meat.

Rasagollā is a humorous poem; it was published in a school-magazine. It is the earliest record of his poetry making. He was a past-master in writing funny poems. In his college days in Benares he delighted his fellow students by his funny poem Tāpā Sampādak (The bald-Editor). But the chief aspect of Ganesh Gagoi's poetry is love. Occasionally he wrote of nature and patriotism. Rūpajyoti (The Rays of Beauty), Papari (The Petals), and Svapna ḍhaṅga (The Shattered Dream) are his published poetical works. In the early stage of his poetical career Gagoi was patronised by two contemporary magazines, the Sahī and the Ghar-Jeuti. He was a good-dramatist; his dramas Sakunir Pratisodh (Revenge of Sakuni), Kāshmir-Kumāri (Princess from Kashmir), and Lāchit Barphukan earned much popularity amongst the contemporary audience.

He had hundreds of songs and a number of record-plays to his credit. Gagoi was an actor of repute and his acting skill is even to-day recalled with great admiration in the Jorhat Theatre. Throughout his poetry, dramas and songs a serious approach to beauty is nicely demonstrated.
Ganesh Gagoi's life had another aspect also: the aspects of friendship and love. From his late teens to the hour of death he had lived in a world full of friendship and love. The friendship he owed to Ananda Barua, and the love to a young girl named Kiran 'Who was an epitome of love, beauty and poetry'. Ananda Barua and Ganesh Gagoi met each other in the Cotton College wherefrom they together went to Benares. Ananda Barua himself was a poet of no mean order. He later became famous as the Bakulvanar Kavi. Ananda Barua was Philosophic in temperament. The Philosophic sentiments in him influenced Ganesh Chandra also. Barua constantly encouraged Gagoi in his poetic activities. Ananda Barua's inspirations had worked in him so much so, that he in his dedication of the book Papari to Ananda Barua says: "Papari is the product of your 'tortures'. Apprehending further tortures from you, I dedicate this Papari to you". Ananda Barua never parted from him. The two friends read, travelled, talked, acted in the stage, wrote poetry together; and each shared the joys and sorrows of the another. The Jorhat Bani Sammelan, organised by these two friends became an ideal institution for cultural and literary pursuits. From 1928 to 1938 — these ten years saw Gagoi's genius in its best form. In this period Gagoi had the opportunity of having Ananda Barua near him. Barua even to-day recollects how they used
to talk ceaselessly on the banks of the Mithāpukhuri on summer evenings, to organise theatrical performances in the Pujās and to organise the Bānī Sammelan. After Gagoi's death, Ananda Barua has made the understanding of Gagoi's poetry convenient to the critics and the historians by his intimate observations and interpretations.

And as for Kiran, the veritable Fanny Brawne of his life, it might be said that she was the soul of his poetry. Kiran was the daughter of the celebrated poet Hitesvar Barbarua. Ganesh Chandra came into direct touch with the senior poet Barbarua in his teens. At that time Barbarua lived in his Sockalatinga residence (Sockalatinga being a small teagarden on the bank of the Kakadoniga river). There he met Kiran, a pretty fairy with charming physique and melodious voice. The poet was charmed by her beauty and enamoured of her melodious songs. He developed an intense love for her. Kiran also showed an intimate love for him, a lovely youth with a fine nose and shining eyes accompanied by a poetic personality, grace and dignity. But their love did not result in an union. Kiran was given in marriage to an Extra Assistant Commissioner. Kiran's marriage was a great shock to him. The poet found it hard to bear the pangs of disappointment. The sorrows of disappointment accompanied
by Tuberculosis brought his end nearer. He died at twenty eight. Better it was for him to die at twenty eight than to wear his life out in the lamenting reminiscence of a fairy who was so near and still so far from him. Kiran came to see Gagoi at his death-bed; but it was too late for her to see the disappointed lover, because Death was slowly and sadly coming to him to offer him the final solace. His disappointment and early death make one recollect the identical fate of John Keats. In the Keatsian way Gagoi had nurtured a pain of dejection in his poems. Ganesh Gagoi himself has recorded his sufferings of love and life in the story Vyartha-Jivan (The Frustrated Life) published in the magazine Avahan.

Папари (1934) and Svapnabhanga (1935) are the two epics of his love-life. The theme of Папари is based on the pursuits of love, while, Svapnabhanga, as the very name suggests, records his notes of disappointment. Ganesh Gagoi knew the dominant power of love. Life is transitory; time also is fleeting; but love remains constant. It is outside the bondages of life and time. Love accompanied by beauty makes the life of a man enjoyable and gay. This was Gagoi's personal philosophy of love. Though he suffered heavily under the pressures of disappointment, yet, Gagoi was
The poet regards love as the most precious possession of man. Love enriches the life with its varied aspects. Love
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is entertaining and of "the rich, the poor, the happy, the sorrowful, the kind and the proud, none can escape the charming spell of love". 'Love lingers', says Gagoi, 'even beyond death'. This universal and all-embracing power of love is the thing of study and worship of the poets of different ages. Rumi, the thirteenth century Persian poet too, noticing the all-embracing power of love remarked:

"Prize not all life that has passed without love,
Love is the water of life; receive it in thy heart and soul."

The pursuits of love made by the poet is warmly described in Pāparī. The poet is in love. He cherishes his beloved day and night, in sleep or awake and in dream or reality. Gagoi admires the beauty of his beloved, 'her rosy smile' and the 'half-blooming poetry-buds in her bosom'. Another point of appeal of his beloved is her unparalleled sweet voice, 'like the voice of the cuckoo singing in the spring in the Vakula-garden.' Gagoi has very gently and intelligently introduced his theme to the readers. In the very first stanza of Pāparī, the poet narrates the experience of hearing his beloved's melodious song. The first line of the song, 'bilat tare birāi padumar pāhi ai' (the lotus
buds glitter on the lake) sung by his beloved is recollected by the poet with a happy and warm affection. Actually, it so happened that the poet's beloved one evening sang this particular song to the poet. The song's rich melody echoed and re-echoed in the poet's heart ever afterwards. Like a devoted worshipper worshipping a powerful deity with all the devotions of his heart, the poet sat to worship his beloved with devotion, confidence and promise. The love of the black-bee and the flower, the cākai and the cakovā birds and the sun and the lotus reflected the poet's own love, for his dear devoted beloved. The spring, the Sevāli flowers, the melody of the Keteki bird's songs and the rainbow in the blue-sky further accentuated the love in his heart. The passionate dreamer even dreams of taking his beloved to a flowery kingdom—lovely and gay with its own beauty.

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Seidinā bhāvichilo heṇuliā arunār
Sātōṭi raṅere mor priyak sajāi,
Kamal vanar parā raṇā vague padumar
parāg pāpari āni dim opacāi !
Phulere sājim tari, phulere tarim pāl
phular hātate dim phularei bathā,
Phular pāhite vahi phulanite phul cuhi
Melim ananta man phule phule gatha.
That day I thought,
I will deck my beloved,
with the seven colours
of the red sun;
And shall strew the petals
drawn from the red and white lotus
(from the lotus - island)
upon her flower-soft body.
I shall make a flowery boat
and the mast too of flowers;
The flowery - hand will play the
flowery oar;
Sitting on the flower petals,
sucking honey from the flowers,
we will open our hearts eternal
each to each.

But this passionate longing of the poet is not free from
doubts and apprehensions of a possible disappointment. The
lover though bold, has failed to forsake the apprehensions
of a disappointment, a possible failure and an unforeseen
ill-luck. The apprehension of the poet is not at all base-
less. Because he has seen that 'the dry hearts of many
reawake to freshness at the single touch of a dear-devoted beloved and on the contrary 'some others' hearts suffer the burning of separation at the sudden departure of the dear mistress.' It is within anybody's guess how much the young lover-poet had suffered, when his apprehensions in poetry came to truth in his own life. Yet, the note of disappointment is not strong in Papari; it is only in his Svapnabhanga that we find the heart rending pathos and the attempts at self-solace from the lamenting poet.

In the very preamble to the poem Svapnabhanga, the poet speaks that his book is nothing but a record of his shattered dreams.

In a world full of dreams, the people dream always; I too was no exception. But in my life the golden rays of love were shattered. My dreams are lost. I weep.

Svapna-bhanga is the record of dreams In my irresistible heart; A record of my barren life,
Devoid of songs
And music.

The poet has completed the poem in 44 stanzas. Sincerity of feeling, deep emotional outbursts and neatness of narration has made the stanzas delicate and delightful. The poet is now separated from his beloved. He nurtures in his heart the pains of separation. The poet longed a return of his mistress but it was not possible. The grief stricken poet was at first inclined to make his lost beloved responsible for the break-off of their love. But later on, he realised that it is not wise on his part to make her responsible. "If happiness in love was not ordained to us how can we have it," says the consolation-seeking poet. It is only the cruel God who lotted a separation to them.

I love you,
and so you too (love me);
But the cruel God
could not tolerate it;
He plied his chisel
on the picture of union
and designed a separation to our fate.
The consolation-seeking heart of the poet has found solace in the fact, that it is not only they who are groaning under the wheels of separation; but on this big earth, there are more fellow-travellers suffering the same lot. "True love is never-failing, howsoever man faithless be" and Gagol too, believed in this never-failing power of love. Though in the public eyes their union was not possible, yet, the poet believed their hearts were ever-united. The difference of their earthly abode could not destroy their hearts' Paradise abounding in love. Love is an ever victorious affair, even death cannot kill the spirit of love. The poet thinks, then, that their love too is victorious and ideal. So long they live they would worship the God of love, though from different corners. But sadly, the poet did not live long to worship the God of love carrying the incense of reminiscences of his lost mistress.

Rūpa-jyotī (1945), a posthumously published anthology of the poet's shorter lyrical poems incorporates some of the fine love-lyrics like, Pāparī Svapna (Dreams of Pāparī), Pār Kari de mok saupāralai (Please transport me to the other shore), Bīphalatā (Frustration), Vidāy (The Fare-well), Śēṣ-Śayyāt (The Death-Bed), Nikarun (The Heartless), Vyathi (The Agrieved), Priye Alap Roā (Tarry a while, My Beloved)
Kone (By whom) Ginācini (The Introduction) and the
Navariyā (The Boat-man). All these poems exhibit an
intense feeling and passionate longing for love and beauty.

The poem Ses Sayyāt records the poet's dramatic
meet with his past mistress. Kiran paid a courtesy visit
to the young poet, a few days before his death. Meeting
her lost lover at the death-bed, Kiran could not resist
her tears. Gagoi who was ready to face death and who by
that time turned more philosophic than sensuous, consoled
his past-love, pointing her the dire consequences of human
life.

My love,
the image of my heart's heart
you are weeping;
But with your weeps
can you make me return
(Who are already on verge of death).
Who is there to resist
the ordains of destiny;
See,
every new-birth is a prelude
to a new-death only.
The dejected poet Ganesh Gagoi, sometimes like poet Duara, thought of death as a final appeasement of the pains of separation. In the poem Par kari de moka sau paralai, the poet very pathetically requests the boat-man to carry him to the other shore of life (i.e., Death). His arguments for such an appeal to the boat-man are clean and convincing.

Ye, Boatman
you want to know,
Why am I coming to cross
to the other shore?

Listen ye, then
I have none near and dear to me;
Though one was, she too left
tearing my heart into pieces;
Pity me! What shall I do
By waiting in this shore,
So,
Kindly transport me to the other shore

There are strong resemblances between the poets, Ganesh Gagoi and Jatin Duara. Both were separated from their prospective mistresses and both wrote poems with bleeding hearts and in recollections of their past love.
Gagoi's dejection like that of Duara exhibited a sense of Karuṇa bipralambha sentiment.

It is gratifying to note that the positive aspect of love, that is the desire for union, appreciation of the beloved's beauty and reflection of the personal self in nature and the like were not unknown to Ganesh Gagoi. Rather, he was bold and sometimes extravagant in appreciating the different aspects of the beloved's personality. With a sensuous appeal and unique charm he has described the beloved's beauty. We quote the following lines from his Rūpajyoti where he has aptly handled a description of his beloved's physical charms.

Jalikatā rihārei dhākile kihaba sakhi
pāhi meli phuli ahā padumar kali,
Āvegar vā lāgi nurivane reṇu tār
nāhivana kās cāpi mataliyā ali?
Kecā soṇ varaniyā tomār lavanu tanu
dahibatā khaniyāre novārā dhākiba,
Virimāi virimāi sakhi manoram ruplekhā
jonākiparuwał hai jiliki āhiba.
Orani talata thai adharar rahghara
mohlagā mukutāk novārā rākhīb,
Nilājī samīre sakhi orāṇī guchā lāi
kamāṇīya kamālīr kavītā gāthīb.

What utility is there in attempting,
to conceal the two blooming lotuses;
With the cover of a jalikaṭā rīhā.
Will not its petals fly at the single touch
of a breeze of emotion?
Will not the black-bee approach it
under a spell of intoxication?

Never, never you can hide
the raw-gold charms
of your buttery body
under the cover of a dāhibāṭā khaniyā.

Your pleasant charms will leak
( even instead of your concealment )
and glitter like the glow-worm.

The cover of a veil is useless
to hide the honey-lips,
or the pleasant pearls;
The naughty breeze will display
the sweet poetry like softness,
pushing aside the veil.
Gogoi was rich in emotions; and his rich emotion was backed by a careful style, vivid representation and a sincere and artistic diction. Every word he used suggested an image; an image of beauty, love and splendour. His words are so much communicative and picturesque that it is hard for any reader to forget their undying influence. His powerful diction is illustrated by the following extracts:

(a) **Sonar harini mor yaba jal phali**
My golden she-deer will fly-off tearing the net.

(b) **Vimal premar dhruvatar sakhi**
*hiya gaganata gopane uthe.*
The pole-star of unalloyed love
(0 my dear !) slowly and silently rises on the heart's sky.

(c) **Nisa akasat lila-khela kari**
*eti duti tara mukahi gala,*
The stars completed their play in the blue-sky and departed one by one.

(d) **Sidinai nyatiye murtimati yakhiniye,**
*cakut tapat vali dile catiyai.*
On that very day, Destiny, the veritable witch threw hot-sands on my eyes.
(e) Pathar s'esat gai
Āruto nepām aie
radālīr sonālī kirān.
Alas! at the end of my journey, I
shall not receive the golden rays
of the sun.

The above extracts indicate his fine gift of selection of
words. The words he uses are very common, but the specia­

lity and skill of use have made them shining and entertai­
ning. Dr. M.M. Sharma observes that Gagol had exhibited a
fine sense of padalālītya in his poems. The word Kiran
mentioned in 'extract-e' has a pun. 'Kiran' was the name
of his beloved. The lexical meaning of the word is rays
of the sun, illumination and light. It is no wonder then
to find the word Kiran repeated frequently in his poems.
In the poem Āvāhana (The Invitation) the poet has made
direct mention of and a direct appeal to Kiran.

'Pata āche puspa śayā saja āche prem-vedī
āhā devī Kirānmai abhimān eri.'

= The altar of love is ready,
so, is the flower - bed ;
Leaving aside your resentment
Come ye! o beloved Kiran.
This aptly illustrates how eagerly this Romantic love-poet desired Kiran to grace his life. The chaos created in his heart by the loss of such a dear mistress is within anybody's guess.

Apart from his forceful diction, mention may be made of his figurative expressions. The figures like upama, rupaka, atisayokti, utpreksa and smaran found abundant expression in his poems. The following stanza is a nice illustration of Gagol's superb art of alliteration:

Basantar bā boā bakul banat
Kamanīya Kavitār komal kanikā,
Kaviye kamanā kari kāvyār kārane
Bicāre banat bahi biyalī belika.

In metrics, Gagol followed strictly the rhymed sequence; but he sometimes made experiments with newer varieties, also. The metrical texture of Svapna bhaṅga is more compact and the most regular.

Ganesh Gagol's poetic fame reached its nadir only after his death. Critics everywhere praised his works. He will live for ever in the hearts of those who love poetry. The wide and enduring influence of his poems is easily estimated when we see a host of minor poets following him closely, in the contemporary period. Hem Barua in his book
Assamese Literature maintains that Ganesh Gagoi's poems lacked 'intellectual animation.' But we see little ground to find fault with Gagoi for non-intellectualisation of his poems. Gagoi's themes were purely human and personal: emotions and not intellect was his prime business. He has expressed ideas and emotions felt by all mankind to be true in the long run to the common experience of humanity. And of the emotions, the emotion of love is the strongest and the most common; and love after all is an affair of the heart rather than of the intellect. "In our reading of poetry" says William Henry Hudson, "We should always remember that the poet appeals directly to the poet in ourselves, and that our real enjoyment of poetry therefore depends upon our own keenness of imaginative apprehension and emotional response; Gagoi's poetry received and is expected to receive for all the time to come, the imaginative apprehension and emotional response from his readers.

ANANDA BARUA

Ananda Barua (b.1910) a close friend and associate of Ganesh Gagoi earned high-distinction of a poet, by his romantic nature and love lyrics, his mystic poems and translations of classical Indian poetry. Born in a small tea-garden (viz. Khumtai T.E., in Moran Circle) Ananda Chandra
spent his boyhood days at Dhekiyakhowa (a small village in the Jorhat sub-division) and Jorhat. He passed the Matriculation examination from Jorhat Government High School in 1926. For higher studies, thereafter, he went to the Cotton College and later to the Benares Hindu University along with his friend Ganesh Gagoi. He spent three years there and returned without obtaining any degree. Barua took to journalism as a profession. For long years he served in the Asamiya and the Dainik Bâtari. During the second world-war he served in the military department as an office clerk. Later he joined the Industrial Training Institute, Jorhat as its Office Superintendent. He retired from his service in the year 1968.

Barua like Ganesh Gagoi had an early showing of the poetic genius. Within his teens, he produced a dozen of lyrical poems. In his youth he composed a large number of poems which were later collected into Parâg (The Petals), Puspak (The Flower-collection) and Rañjan Raśmi (The Pleasant Rays). Barua's poems are Romantic. And as for love he was a master artist; his love poems are bestowed with deep warmth of imagination and colour. "The most important function of poetry" says M.H. Abrams, "is by its pleasurable resources, to foster and stabilize the sensibility, emotions
and sympathy. His Parāg (1931) was received with acclamation. Among the poems most admired are Bhābī Priya (The Aspired Beloved), Garakhiyar Prem (The Cowherd's Love), Bhābar Abhivyakti (The Expression of emotion) and Ahvan (The call). Bhābī Priya, perhaps the best known of his poems, both because of the emotions and word-paintings involved in it, tells how eagerly the poet longs to receive his aspired mistress.

Kusum kānan jini āchā yen tumī
Āvegat viyākul hai,
Varaṅaṛ marādharī mor dinītei
Hēpāhere dio dio kai.

Āśā malāyaṭ uti āhiche tomār
Pranayār pūta parimal,
Tāte mor mau-piya mataliya man
Bhavi-trpiti talamal.

Nicino nejāno hay tomār rūpar
Les māno mūrti nākiyā,
Tathāpiyo āchā yen hīyāte lukāi
Mūrtimati tumī prāṇ-priya.

Tomār bukut yen rēnu rēnu kai
Maupiya janaṛ karāne
Etupi suvadā mau sācīchā sadāi
Nijāḥat atike gopane.

Taraṅga kallol pray tomar kathāti
Uṭi yāy dūr dūralai,
Candrama sītal yen tomar cābīti
Chāpi āhe mor kāsālai.

Riniki riniki yen dekhico dūrat
Sau mor gābhīr garima,
Keni yāo, keni yāo, keni gale pām
Mor sei mānasi pratima.

= Restless of intense emotion
you are delighting the flower-garden;
With a desire to put
The garland of acceptance
On my neck;
With a feeling and a commotion.

The pure petals of love
from your heart
Are flying in the breeze;
My intoxicated mind is restless
to drink a drop (of your love)
I know not
I understand not;
Neither can I imagine a form
Of your beauty serene;
But (do trust) I feel as if
you are concealing in a cosy-nook
Of my own heart, my beloved.

For the questing lover,
you have accumulated
drop by drop;
The nectar of love,
hidden with care and silence.

The glow of love,
I presume,
From a distance reflected to me;
Where, whither, whichway shall I go
To meet my beloved,
Long cherished in my heart.

These stanzas of extreme delight display the passionate longing of the love-lorn poet to see his beloved. The image of the beloved has transpired the poet's soul to an airy kingdom of love and beauty. The poet has an unending
eagerness to meet his beloved; and he espies the same eagerness in his mistress' heart and as such he fancies that his beloved is ready to lay the garland of acceptance on his neck.

The poem Garakhiyar Prem reflects the sincere and intimate love of a pastoral youth for his beloved. The cowherd has assured his prospective mistress that he will procure for her, from the Sunday-market, mugar-mekhela, silken blouse and a bottle of Sushilmalati hair oil. A packet of Mohan cheroot and a bottle of scented oil will not also be denied to her. Drawn against a rural background, supported by a riverine atmosphere, the poem is rich in pictorial effect. The sincerity of heart, the eagerness of appeal, the joy of hope in the cowherd lover's heart has made the poem as great as Marlowe's poem "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love". Marlowe's passionate Shepherd too, assures his beloved:

"A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold."
A belt of straw and my buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

Unlike Jatin Duara and Ganesh Gagol, Barua has a robust optimism in love. He propagates no pain of separation but the joyous hope of union. A sense of divinity imposed on love is vivid in his poem Milan maṅgal (The Grace of Union). Tragic alienation and parting is not known to him, but the mutually contented love blended with emotion is the chief-strain of his love-lyrics. Barua's poetry is more dedicated to the rural life and atmosphere than those of his contemporaries.

Ananda Barua's style is racy: his diction is simple yet powerful and his metres are regular. His poems exhibit a high sense of Madhurya guṇa, if judged by the standard of Sanskrit Ālamkārīks. Ease and grace in idea and expression, to be brief, are the criteria of Madhurya guṇa; and Ananda Barua's poems carry ease and grace to the extent of opulence. It is in the fitness of things that Ananda Barua has earned the distinction of being the President of the Asam Sāhitya Sabha's (1970) Barpeta session.
A success almost contemporaneous with Gagoi and Barua is that of Sitanath Brahmachowdhury (b. 1908). He sprang to fame as early as in 1925, when he was a mere school-boy. To the august Assembly of the Dhubri Conference of Assam Sahitya Sabha (1925) he introduced his first poetic venture Kamal kali (The Lotus-bud) and it obtained a very encouraging welcome from the learned assembly. His other works Aveg (The Desire, 1929) and Cakulo (The Tears, 1929) soon followed. The unquestionably best of his lyrics is the Anvesan (The Quest).

ANVEŞAN

Nijmane gai gai virahar karun saṃgīt
Samasta jagat ghūri nijmane phurico vicāri,
Ka't si premar rāṇī, nirupama Saundaryapratimā,
Mor pūrva janamar yauvanar pratham lagari!
Ka't si lāhari mor yah sei lavanu dehat
Sahasra vasanta nāce, hāli jāli phule yata phul,
Prem-bhārā eti cumā, eti mātra alingane yār
Unmatta yauvan āni kari diye adhīr ākul?
Mor pūrva janamar yauvanar sandhiyā parat
Cakur pānīre kata dujanar sate erāeri;
I janmat kat āche, kene ache, kone jāne hāy,
Tathāpi hīyāi khoje hṛdayar ekānta laγāri ;
Virah kātar mai, virahate maro dei purī,
0, mor pranar priya, kat pām tomāk vicari ?

= Singing unto myself the doleful song of
disappointment,
I have made a search throughout
the world, on my own accord;
The Queen of Love,
the matchless beauty's daughter;
The first companion of my youth
in the previous birth.
Where is she? that sweetie,
On whose butter-soft body;
thousands of spring dance;
And many a flowers bloom
'tossing their heads in sprightly dance'.
A loving kiss, a single embrace from her
make my restless youth mad with emotion.
On the previous birth, at the end of my youth;
We two parted with weeping-eyes;
And in this birth (I wonder)
where is she?
and how she is?
Alas! nobody knows;
Still my mad heart quests
that sincere friend.
Love-lorn am I, I burn
under the fire of separation,
O my love, my heart's heart,
where shall I find thee?
Where? in which direction?

The poem illustrates Sitanath's power of description and
the gift of imagination. The poet has tried to discover the
missing link of the previous birth with his beloved. Love,
the poet thinks, is an affair running even from the previous
births. The poet is now in active search of the beloved from
whom he had parted with weeping eyes at the closure of his
previous birth. To espy love as an affair running through
the successive births, is truly an Indian belief. Sita,
being banished by her husband Râmachandra, sends the follow-
ing message through Laksmana. "After the delivery of my pro-
geny, I shall start a severe penance gazing constantly at the
Sun so that I may have you (Râmachandra) as my husband even
at my next birth, but without any further separation."
The quest of the poet for his beloved is charming: he has keenly felt her absence and now his eager-heart is burning under a fire of separation. The infinite longing of the poet's heart is keenly felt in the words: "O my love, my heart's heart, where shall I find thee, where, in which direction?"

Two things detain us with Anvesan: the shape of the poem and the clean and courageous expression. The poem, by shape is a sonnet. Built on the traditional method this sonnet is notable for rhythm and sound. As for expression, Sitanath displayed original talent. The expressions like:

(a) Katā si premar rāṇī nirupamā saundarya
    pratimā (where is that Queen of Love, the matchless image of beauty.)

(b) Yar sei lavanu dehat sahasra vasanta nāche
    (On whose butter-soft body thousands of spring dance)

(c) Tathāpi hiyāi khoje ḫrdayar ekānta lagāri
    (Still my heart quests for that mate nearest to the heart)

are full of imagination and inspiration.
The poetry of love was further accentuated by the zeal of Devkant Barua (b. 1914). He brought newness both in form and content and in his hands, love poetry rose to the state of an exciting loveliness. The third decade of the present century was the period of his poetic activities. By his beautiful love-poems published in the Avahan he created almost a stir. The exuberant, adventurous spirit of love was nowhere to be seen more clearly than in his dramatic monologues. Symptomatic of the decline of blank-verse was the growing proportion of prose securing assimilation in the poetry of the period; and Devkant displayed a rare genius in accomplishing this assimilation.

Devkant Barua, the son of a school-master was born at Dibrugarh. His father Nila Kanta Barua belonged to the illustrious Kharangi Barua family of Nowgong. Devkant received early education at Nowgong and Gauhati. He passed the Matriculation examination from Nowgong Govt. High school in 1931, and in the same year went to Benares for higher studies. From Benares Hindu University, Devkant secured graduation; firstly in Arts and then in Law. A life-long politician and journalist Devkant actively participated in the freedom movement of the country. He suffered
imprisonment in 1930 for his participation in the Civil Disobedience movement. Barua is up to this day keenly associated with the Congress Party. He was elected to the Parliament in 1949; and he was elected to the Assam Assembly twice. As a Speaker, first, and then as the Education Minister he served the state of Assam and during this time he could display his statesmanship and profundity of scholarship. Sri Barua represented India in the United Nations General Assembly in 1956. For some time he became the Chairman of the Oil India Limited, and now he is the Governor of Bihar. Baruah's journalistic career is well-known. He was the editor successively of three Assamese newspapers: the Asamiya, the Dainik Asamiya and the Natun Asamiya. Devkant Barua perhaps is the only poet of the period under review, whose genius covers the different fields of Poetry, Journalism, Politics and Administration.

Devkant's poetic achievement centres round his book Sagar Dekhicha (Have you seen the Sea, 1945). The book deals with youth, woman and love. His close and honest observation of life and love finds expression in a plain, homely style backed by vigour and directness of narration. Instinctively right in his choice of language, he speaks straight to the heart of the reader. Barua has an intimate understanding of youth and love. The greatness and loveliness of
youth is nicely portrayed by him, in his poem Yauvan (youth).

It was he who for the first time declared youth to be the "Oasis of life". The poem Nari Vandana (An appreciation of women) is a species by itself, which records the poet's praise for the ancient heroines of love, 'Miranda', 'Rami', and 'Sakuntala'.

Like most of the other poets of his time, Devkant dealt with the different aspects of love. But he has excelled in writing the apprehension of separation. The apprehension of separation is dominant in most of his poems. The different aspects manifested in his love poems, may be summarised as follows:

(a) Description of the physical charms of the beloved;
(b) Desire for union;
(c) Apprehension of separation;
(d) Response at separation.

With a colourful poetic fancy the poet describes the physical charms of his beloved, in the poem Manorama (The Beloved). The brilliant imageries and sparkling expressions make the poet's beloved, an abundant source of delight, a queen of beauty and a spring of poetic inspiration.
Cakut tomar saponar maya,

mukhat jonar vimal cha,

Nisahat yen komal ghâhar

surabhire pûr mrdul va.

Kalâ culiṭâri, kone sâni dile

ausî nisâr susâma tât ?

Ketiyâ sikâle kapauveno târ

man kiva kara uruña mât ?

Äg variśār va rib rib

vatâhar dare tomar hāhi

Ulāhate târ nâciche kalam

vih meṭekâi meliche pāhi !

Dahoṭi anuli capā-kali yen

padumar thâri dukhâni hât,

Guî dorpati tharak varak

tat nâikiya makor gât.

Nipotal vuku lâtumâni ötha

duyopâri dât dâlim guṭi,

Marumay mor jivanat sakhi !

tumi kavitar eketi suti.
The Beloved

The illusion of a dream resides in your eyes,
and the flawless moon light covers your face;
The mild breeze carrying the fragrance
of soft new grasses passes with your
every breath.

And your black-hair! Who it was
to paint the gloss of the
dark-moon night?
And when did the dove train you
in uttering the lonely cooing
(capable of deranging the mind).

Your smile, like the soothing breeze
of the approaching rainy-season
has impelled the river Kalani to dance;
and the river-ferns to bloom.

Your ten fingers are like ten small
campaka buds; and your hands
are nothing but two lotus-stalks;
At the very touch of your finger
the dorpati runs helter-skelter out
of joy; and the mako too,
moves in an intoxicated speed.
Your breasts are high, the lips coral
and your teeth are like the fruits of
the pomegranate;
In this sorrowful life of mine,
O my beloved,
you are the veritable spring
of poetry.

There is no denying the fact, that, his charming beloved
has awakened his poetic self. Throughout his poems, the
poet has narrated the 'lotus-like' beauty of his beloved.
The poet had sought for his heart's lotus in the ditches
and lagoons of life; and now he has found her. The poet
now weaves a dream round her, though he knows that there
is the sad end of his love's paradise — i.e., in Death.
He has loved her and has obtained reciprocation. The poet
now seeks from her the 'soft-warm-touch of her bosom'. An
intimate appeal from the love-lorn poet, to his prospective
mistress is seen in the poem Raīnā eti Karavīr Phul
(A red Oleander). The poet has suggested an invitation to
his beloved:
Come to me, my beloved
silently,
as the evening darkness comes
to the earth;
Come to me, my beloved
gracefully,
as the herons' fly on the
autumn-sky;

Pray, don't come in the day-time,
these roofs and walls are broken,
how can you tolerate the cruel-rays?
Come, come my sweetie
in the night
with the fragrance of the Sewali flowers,
in a silvery night.

If I keep engrossed in a deep sleep,
my beloved! make me awake
but silently;
Be not gloomy, if I reciprocate no word,
but gaze silently at your eyes.

Prithee, talk me nothing
and I too shall observe silence,
But let us wink at each other;
let us talk eye-fuls of words,
Rooted deep in our hearts;
the words that we have
given to none.

This romantic yearning of the poet to tell the secrets of his heart to his beloved in an ocular language betrays his gift of lofty-imagination. In the moments of his exalted emotion the poet Devkant Barua stands comparison with the poets Vidyapati, Candidasa and Locan Dasa. These poets in their beautiful love songs expressed nicely the intense feelings of love, "where every limb tries to unite with the limbs of the beloved."

The poet, however, is not very much confident of his love. Oftentimes, apprehensions of separation disturb his mind. Barua has respects for love, he believes in the mighty powers of love; but he cannot believe in the jealous gods. For centuries, these powerful but extremely jealous gods have sacrificed the lovers at their altars of jealousy and revenge. These gods ever suck the red bloods from the wounded lovers' hearts. The threat of separation has appeared too great to resist in the poem Kalañ-Parat Māñisā (On the banks of Kalañ, at midnight). The poet has learnt the terrible truth, that it is only ten days left to the day of
wedding of his beloved with some one else. The poet meeting her on the bank of the river Kalai on a cloudy mid-night softly and sadly intimates his feelings at the apprehending separation.

How many days are left for your wedding?
Ten days;
Alas, only ten!
So after ten days and ten nights you will follow your own way and I shall my own.
In a new home you will light a new lamp of love; dispelling the hopes, joys and sorrows of your girl-hood days,
?ll day by day.

Knowing the inevitable separation, the poet entreats:

Pray, you will forget me, my faults my qualities and my sincere love;
Please, you will forget
the reminiscences of this night
and the fact that once
you were solely mine.

Even at the face of separation, the poet is warmly alive
to the fact, that it was he who had made the lover in her
'awake'. The poet closes the poem with a bold assertion:

My pride,
That I one day made
the drowsy damsel in you
awake to a lover
with the clarion-call
of my own love.

Devkant Barua has requested his beloved repeatedly to forget
him, his love and the common joys and sorrows that they
shared. Because, there is no greater pain than to recollect
the memories of lost love, "There is no greater sorrow"
remarks Dante, "than to recall, in misery, the time when we
were happy." One day the much-dreaded separation came. The
poet's heart has turned 'blue like the sea with sadness.'
He was at first inclined to make his beloved responsible
for the failure in love. In the poem Sagar Dekhichā the poet
POEMS OF LOVE

makes his lost beloved almost responsible for the cruel end of their love drama.

Have you ever heard
the brokenhearted plaint
of the Keteki at midnight?
(awaking yourself suddenly).
Have you ever realised that the human heart rings in the voice of the bird?
I know, what you know, my heartless love:
you know, you are you, and I am I.
you do not know why is it that we weave wreaths of victory with jasmines that fade.

Why is it that we raise gold-trimmed palaces of love-life?
Why is it that we besmear the feet of the idol with our heart-blood?
You will not know, 0 dear,
It is with what pain that we renounce the Devi, established on the pedestal on the Sasthi day, in the disappointing evening of Vijaya?

* * *
The poet had taken his beloved with a sincerity much the same with the sincere love of an idol-worshipper. The devoted worshipper establishes the image of his cherished goddess Durga Devi on the sixth day of the newmoon and obeying the ritual disciplines he renounces her on the tenth day. Not only that his much loved image is immersed in the water. Naturally a heavy pain saturates the heart of the devoted worshipper. The poet is experiencing the same pain; he has seen a close proximity, a fine resemblance of his pain with that of the devoted worshipper. But later on, the poet has developed a forebearance and has become capable of swallowing his grief. The poet now realises that it was the cruel Destiny who acted against their will. From primitive ages, the cruel gods are engaged in killing the joys of the lovers by imposing separation. Moreover, the poet has seen that there were many other youths who too had flooded the banks of the river Kalan with doleful songs of separation. Barua now agrees to accept 'the broken heart as the shining glory of the faded lover' and 'the tears of separation as the waters of the celestial river.' The poet, perhaps like Tennyson, understands that, 'it is better to have loved and lost than never to love at all.'
Love and admiration for woman and more especially for woman’s love found a neat expression through Devkant Barua’s poems. Love is not all pleasure, but pleasure and pain mingled in right proportion. Barua took pain as a positive aspect and hence in the mood of dejection, unlike poet Duara, he has not tried to evade reality and to escape into loneliness. Youth is love’s best season and at the same time youth is the period of courage and denial. The youthful poet sometimes sings a note of rebellion also. His courageous personality revolts against the existing rule of destiny upon the lover’s fate.

'Delight is the chief', says Dryden, 'if not the only, end of poetry'. Devkant Barua’s poems succeeded in giving delight to the readers in a great degree. To heighten the aspect of delight, the poet has set his poems in a colourful and pleasant background. Most of his poems are set particularly against the background of the river Kalan. The river Kalan had worked as a constant source of inspiration for the poet. As an environmental aid to love, the rivers, lakes and mountains serve better. In Devkant Barua’s poems Kalan has appeared as an uddipana bibhava, as much as
the river Yamuna became an uddipana to the love of Radha-Krsna. It will perhaps be not out of place to mention that with the Assamese Romantic poets, the word Kalani had itself become a (poetical) convention. Apart from the riverine background, Barua's poems exhibit a close intimacy with nature; the flowers, the rain-bow, the birds, the breeze, the moon and the stars.

Barua accommodated the beautiful Devadasi also to the arena of his love poetry. The only forerunner to Barua, in introducing the Devadasi to Assamese poetry, is Atul Chandra Hazarika. Assam is a land of temples and naturally a big number of temple-dancers were associated with the temples in the different corners of Assam. The earliest trace of the Devadasi institution is found in the copperplate inscription of king Vanamalavarma. In the said copper plate the boats are compared for their beauty with the temple-dancers (ramaniya daluhamganabhiriva). But besides this reference the temple-dancers generally received no patronage of the poets. The peculiar, yet colourful lives of the Devadasis could have very well arouse the imagination of all poets but regrettably they were ignored by all except two of the last Romantics. It was Atul Chandra Hazarika, who for the first time made room for the Devadasi in the realm of
romantic poetry. Hazarika's Devadāsī though a bit rebellious speaks to the temple god to show mercy on her but in Devkant Barua's poem, the poet himself induces the temple-girl to revolt against the gods. The poet sees no reason to offer the beautiful body of the Devadāsī to the gods, since, 'the gods' thirst is never quenched by the love of the simple-minded Devadāsī'. The gods are cruel and according to the poet, 'the gods demand only blood—the red blood oozed out from the wounded human heart?' The poet has pointed out the eternal strife of man against the gods to the Devadasi and assures her the final victory of men. Both the poets have tried to arouse a rebellious sentiment in the Devadāsī. By the time of Barua and Hazarika the institution of Devadāsī had already become obsolete in Assam and it was hardly a burning problem of the society. But the very theme of Devadāsī is full of romantic flavour: with her beauty and particularly with her art of dancing. These two Assamese romantic poets, presumably sang of the Devadāsīs, out of their love for looking back to the past, like the English romantics, who used to take interest in the medieval themes like that of Knight errants and medieval art institutions and beliefs. Both the poets could well-estimate the crisis of personality in the Devadāsī.
Devkant introduced some newness in the art of narration. He has successfully employed the dramatic monologue as a poetic form. In his selection of the dramatic monologue as a convenient form for his poetry, the poet perhaps was influenced by Robert Browning. Browning extensively used dramatic lyrics as form of expression of his various themes. Devkant’s employment of the dramatic monologue has made his themes entertaining and gay. Almost all his poems pause an interview with an imaginary second person. The dramatic monologue has certain advantages over narrative poetry. "The dramatic monologue, because it always gives us a particular person in a particular situation, presenting aloud to himself or some other person both the physical details and the emotional character of that situation, is one of the poetic forms most rewarding for study. Through such study the reader can perfect himself in that indispensable essential of critical understanding — identification with the supposed speaker in a poem: his personality, his moral and intellectual outlook, his whole manner of life. Every poem demands identification with the speaking voice, but the dramatic monologue does so most openly and directly." The direct and open method of expressing his ideas and emotions to his readers has made Devkant’s poems intimate and easy of access.
Sagar dekhicha, Tumi nai (In your absence), Tilottama, Premar uttar (Love's Reply), Kalan parat (On the bank of Kalan), Kalan parat Majhisa (On Kalan at midnight) and Devadas are some of his best dramatic monologues.

In the field of metres also he brought some innovation. His verse lines often ran on a prose-like sequence, but the lines everywhere ended in a rhyme. Throughout his poems, poet Barua has made an elaboration of the rhythms of the common speech to match his profound feelings expressed in a homely way.

The Madhuryya Guna, most befitting for love poetry, is abundantly found in his poetry. Devkant made successful use of classical poetic conventions. He drew epic and poetic allusions also. Tilottama and Urvasi the love-heroines of epics and puranas have found adequate treatment from him. Urvasi, the cursed lover has received glorious sympathy from the poet. The cursed heavenly danseuse Urvasi with her matchless beauty glorified the earth. The poets too were elated by her presence on earth. For the poet she is a rare example of sacrifice in matters of love. She prized more a single kiss of an earthly prince (king) than her right to heaven. It will not be out of place to mention here that the immortal
love of Urvasī for Purūravas first introduced in the Rgveda inspired many a poets including the great Kālidāsa. Moreover Urvasī’s pains of separation and her fall from heaven have been alluded to by a host of other later day poets.

In his youth Devkant was closely associated with Ratna Kanta Barkakati; naturally he was inspired if not influenced by the love songs of Barkakati. The poet has tendered his allegiance to the senior poet Barkakati in his beautiful poem Śevāli kavir prati (to the Śevāli-poet). A vastly read man Devkant perhaps had close acquaintance with the poetical works of Rossetie, Swinburme, Matthew Arnold and Kazi Nazrul Islam. Dante Gabriel Rossetti excelled in worshipping love and beauty, Algernon Charles Swinburne depicted sensuous passion and hero-worship; Matthew Arnold made lyrical representation of the poignant and disturbing aspects of love and the Bengali poet Kazi Nazrul Islam sang the glories of youth. All these different aspects are present in Devkant’s poems, and they lead us to presume that Devkant derived inspiration from the aforesaid poets.

"There is no other remedy against love ", says Theocritus to Nicius, " but only the muses; and this is
Devkant one day took to poetry to secure a remedy against love and to find some solace to his dejected heart. "I console my heart by weaving garlands of poetry" — so says the poet in his poem _Aprakās_. And the sweet fragrance of his garland, we are sure, will ever charm the men of taste.

**SASHIKANTA GAGOI**

Sashikanta Gagoi (b. 1916) deserves mention as the typical follower of the Romantic tradition of love established by Jatin Duara, Ganesh Gagoi and others. Sashikanta was born at Sibsagar, studied at Gauhati and took to teaching. He was an active participant in the Freedom movement. Sashikanta's poetic career saw its early offing in the magazine _Avahan_. His love lyrics like the _Saron - Priyā_ (The Dream Beloved) and _Niralāt_ (In Solitude) reflect the Devkant-like out-look on love. Sashikanta reveals much closeness and sympathy of observation and can command a sweet and readable style.

**BHAVAPRASAD RAJKHOWA**

Bhavaprasad Rajkhowa (b. 1917), a contemporary of Sashikanta sang the melodious raptures of love. He started his poetic career with his beautiful love-lyrics in the
Avahan. A fine combination of strength and simplicity without affectation or verbal posturing marks his poems. Niralār 244 Mamataž (The Solitary Mumtaz) and Cirakumar (The Bachelor) are perhaps the best specimen of his poetry. In Niralār Mamataž he draws the touching picture of love between a village youth Shāhjāhān and a village damsel Mamataž. The illustrious love of king Shahjahan and Begum Mumtaz is kept in the background of the poem. The marked deviation that the poet makes is that he has made his heroine Mamataž to weep the death of her dear-departed Shāhjāhān. Shahjahan the young lover was carried away early from Mamataž, by death's cruel hands. The love of these young lovers did not achieve union. Emperor Shahjahan had erected a marble edifice to memorise his lost love; here the bereaved heroine Mamataž plants a Sevāli sapling on the grave of her lover, to memorise their precious love. And in the still middnights she comes to the grave stealthily and tries to wake up her dear departed, the poet believes that the pathetic entreaties of Mamataž can wake up even the person lying in the grave.

Jārkālī mājnisā dharanīr cecā parā
Komal parasā pāi ban bananir,
Pakhīr binani suni phular surabhi pāi
Śui thakā jano jāge mariśālanir. ***
= In the still midnights of winter
Having a soft touch of the grass;
Hearing the lamentations of the birds,
And smelling the sweet-fragrance of flowers,
Even the man lying in the grave wakes.

The poet's clear sympathy for the rural lover does not allow the dead Shahjahan to lie in the grave. Bhavaprasad is an expert in image-making. His descriptions are also appealing. He has portrayed the picture of the Sewali flowers on the grave with imagination and colour. The tiny Sewali flowers all retire to bed with the coming of the night. But in the midnight one little flower suddenly wakes up, perhaps, frightened by a terrible dream. The little flower right with the awakening makes a close glance at her lover the moon. The breeze mingled with particles of dew cools and comforts this little flower. The poet has bestowed human sentiments even upon a little flower blooming singly on a grave. Bhava Prasad's Cirakumār is a romantic search of the young poet for his lady-love Manasi. Manasi is full of tenderness, love and beauty, and these qualities are very powerfully delineated by Bhava Prasad. He is an expert craftsman; he has the gift of associating fine words with fine sentiments.
DULAL BARPUJARI

Dulal Barpujari (b. 1919), a contemporary of Bhava Prasad Rajkhowa took to love-lyrics through the auspices of the Avahan and the Jayanti. With minimum stylization and with directness of appeal, Barpujari could successfully lead his readers to the height of romantic sensibility of lover and beauty. His poems sometimes show an undeniable influence of Ganesh Gogoi. Smritir Saurabh (Fragrance of Memory) Vyartha Saurabh (The lost Fragrance), Ses Puja (The last worship) are some of his famous poems. Reminiscence of the past love is a notable characteristic of Barpujari.

THE FORTIES AND BEYOND: REALISTIC APPROACH TO LOVE

The late thirties and early forties of this century saw the emergence of a host of young poets working with a clear aptitude for love. While most of them followed the beaten track of Duara, Gogoi, Ratnakanta and Devkant Barua some others approached love with a more realistic outlook. The ideal of a perfect imaginative love receded by this time; Romantic idealism gave way and newer and progressive ideals of love appeared. By this time a change swept over the sociological norms. Due to the growing
influence of the western outlook and the cruel but practical impact of the Second World War the then society changed enormously. The change in society and hence in the approach to love found reflection in poetry also. Along with the newer feelings attempts were there to discover newer forms: but such a discovery was not immediately accomplished. In the poems of the more realistic poets of this period (i.e., the late thirties and early forties) the impact of the political, economic and scientific trends of the time is clearly visible. The modern love poet is well aware of the harshness of life. The modern lover too, is not a fine piece of lamenting cuckoo, but a stern realist who can boldly face even the pangs of separation.

Syed Abdul Malik (b. 1919) in his famous love-poem *Phulsayyar Rati* (In the honey moon night, 1955) nicely combines raw love and hard realities. The day is the 'Tenth Fagun' (Fagun is a lover's month according to the Indian tradition). In the honey-moon bed, the lover, a clerk by profession, acquaints his lady-love with the hard realities of their life.

*** Sādin pācat šes hava cuti,
Atarā atari ham āmi duṭi,
Tomār hātāt rava caru cāi,
Mor hat kalā kalam tiyāi
Kāgajat mai āk pari yam
Ehātere maci kapālar ghām
Sei ākbor tumī āru mor,
Kapālato hava lekha.
Chuti diye yadi ghuri phāgunat
Hava punarāy dekha.

My leave expires after seven days,
We will part from each other;
Your hands will be spotted with oven ashes,
My hands be black with constant diving of the ran,
in the ink-pot.
I will draw lines on the papers,
By wiping sweats with the other hand.
And alas ! those lines will be written
On our fore heads too.
If they grant leave, my darling
We will meet, again
in the next Pāgun.
We will meet.

In the pre-war days ( i.e., the years preceding the Second World War) love had not to face such stern-realities. This realistic consciousness has an undeniable part of almost al
the new poets of love. Some remarkable poems of the same strain are Hem Barua’s Mor Prem (My love, 1955), Mahendra Borah’s Karen Shellyr Cithi (Letter from the lover clerk, 1953) and Keshav Mahanta’s Suburi (The Whistle, 1957). Keshav Mahanta deserves appreciation for his bold and accurate description of the hard realities of the lover’s life.

***

Aglati cit lare-care mor

Konoba aheneki,
Makhinai ahì cumà diva khujicila,
Ahiba kaliya mor
Catari radate cidal phatadi
Iaghonar sìralu jorà mor dukhani vàl
Tàre màjate vicarı yadihe
Thài uliaba pàra
Eti cumà kele
Esà etì cumà divà,
Mor sarìl eìe, esà etì cumà divà.

== My heart throbs pleasantly,
Is there anybody coming?
You wanted to come as a fly
to kiss my cheeks.
Pray, my Darling come!
Like the citrīl fruit bursting under the Chaitra - sun,
My seeds are withering due to Constant starvation;
Even then, if you can discover some scope for a kiss,
Kiss me not once, but hundred times
My love, why one? Pour me hundreds of kisses.

Of course, the Romantic consciousness has not been permanently ousted from the new poetry. In matters of love, imagination is to play a greater part than reality and hence even in the most modern period, the poems of love tinged with romantic sensibility are gaining ground. The romantic aspects of love has inspired a number of modern poets to colour their poems in the glory of romantic imagination. Even amongst the modern poets, Amalendu Guha, Dinesh Goswami, Hari Borkakati, Mahendra Bora, Nilmani Phookan(Jr.), Biren Barghain, Bireswar Barua, Padma Barkataki and a few others have delineated the romantic and platonic aspects of love in their poems. In form and feelings, in diction and image-making they have closely followed the romanticism of the early period. The love-poems of Amalendu Guha are picturesque and passionate and their appeal is unfailingly
great. A delicate loveliness pervades his poems. The poet advocates a love free from the bondage of the body.

""" Seye dehar par bhāni di
die dehotimā mane
Bakṣar baikuṇṭha bhedi gīt hai
evatī haok.
Gītal mekhelā hai
Samkhar nicinā bagā
Karangan āvari diyak.
Sarvāṅga savāṭi dhari gān rovā
snigdha, subhra man,
Dehar tabat phulā rajani
gandhār thok
Seye mor atike apon.
(Tomālai)

== So, crossing the bars of the body
my bodyless mind over flood
thy heart's heaven,
with a delightful song;
Let my mind be a singing mekhelā
to cover the pretty conch-coloured thighs.
Let my mind embrace
your whole body,
And sing with delight and excellence.
I appreciate much the two tubs,
Decorated with the \textit{rajanigandha} flowers
that resides in your body.

Dinesh Goswami's poems of love are full of meditation, grace and philosophy. In his poem \textit{Purvarag} (The Prelude to love) the poet makes a keen and convincing invitation to his prospective mistress. This particular poem records an extension of his personal love to a wider horizon. Goswami has universalized his love.

\begin{verbatim}
Aji mai pālo ākas' pathār
māti sakalote,
Pratyekar antare antare
eke sur, eke bhāśā, eke anubhūti.
* * *
Jīvanar uttāp āru sonāli
dhānār svapna,
āki lowā cakut ebar.
\textit{(Pūrvarāg)}
\end{verbatim}
This day I have realized
In the sky, in the land and the fields
And in everywhere
And in everybody's heart:
The same tone, the same speech and
The same sentiments flourish.
So, you too portray
in your eyes:
The life's warmth
And the dreams of the
golden paddy fields.

A sweet diction and a still sweeter blazing of
emotions have made Hari Barkakati's love poems gay, signi-
ficant and effective. He wants to give himself to his belo-
ved in full. The poet's invitation to his beloved is tou-
ching and unique:

* * *
Tumi aha sonpahi
eyei samay,
eyei samay, son
eyei samay.
Come, come my darling
This is the proper time
for your coming
Proper time, my golden lady
This really is the time for love.

Priyar Githi (The Beloved's letter) is another well known love-poem of Barkakati. His imaginative power has climbed to the highest excellence in this poem. The poet is of opinion that the cold moon on the sky is nothing but the tear-drops of beloved's eyes. The tear drops from the eyes of the lovelorn ladies collected and condensed gave the birth of the moon.

Rich in imagery and bold in description Mahendra Bora's poems of love exhibit a strong admiration for the feminine personality. In the poem Come My Beloved the poet suggests a peculiar similarity between his lady-love and the moon. The poem is unique in description: here the verse movement enables the emotion to rise with the contemplation:

In the gate-way to the sky
I saw the round full-moon
She was as fresh as a girl,
Just returning from the bath-room,
I fell strongly for the sky
The sky which I have known and loved for years.

Mahendra Bora has not philosophised love, his only concern is the beauty of woman and like the Pre-Raphaelites he tried to discover newer avenues of woman's love and beauty. His zeal for obtaining admiration from woman is better illustrated than described.

'And yet another
With a tender body
Like an Ivy creeper,
Who passes for the 'COLLEGE QUEEN' 
Said with a smile:
'Your description of the moon is even better than Shelley's!

Bireswar Baruah's Sasvati (The Eternal Woman) represents the poet's solace seeking endeavour in the eyes of his dear lady. The poet has discovered that the beautiful eyes of his beloved is the abode of hope and tranquility.
Like Hari Barkakati, Bireswar Barua too liked to be charmed by woman's beauty and love. He used words which are strongly romantic in tone and which were frequently used by his romantic predecessors. In the above illustration, Sāntir Nīlimā, Kapi uṭhā mihi oth, triptir lālimā, dishāra asim yatra are the words full of romantic resonance and verbal music.

Biren Borgohain's Niveditä Barua and Nilmani Phukan's (Jr.) Svapna Vāsavadattā are the out puts of love. These two poems bear testimony to the fact that even with the most modern poets the romantic strain is not mute. In the modern love poems the influence of some western counter-
parts is clearly noticed. The number of modern love songs is also worth-noticing. But the strain of these songs have become more realistic and tangible. Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's love songs record the sorrows and sentiments of the modern lover. The lover, unable to give a box-full of ornaments to his bride has lamented, in one of the Bhupen Hazarika's songs.

Dhanir gharat paraheten
   Aji tumi kainā
Perā bharāi maṇi-keru
   Pālāheten katanā.
   Aji pāharibu khojā yadi
   Petar bhokar yātanā,
Dekhuvāba pāro mai
   Kamsa badhar bhāonā.
Nekāndibā kainā.
Ānak māri dhān sāchibalai
   Guruve sikṣā nidile,
Mithātelat vih dhālibale
   Guruve sikṣā nidile.
   Sunib khusicā yadi bajāi ṣunāṁ
   mainā, mainā
   Nekāndibā kainā.
Had you been given to a rich family
0 my bride,
How much box-full of ornaments
You could get!
(To-day) If you want to subdue
The burning hunger.
I can arrange a death-rehearsal
Of Kamsa.
Pray, don't weep my bride,
My teacher did not advise
To earn money by bribery;
To pour poison to the mustard oil,
He did instruct not;
If you are interested in listening
I will play my flute, my darling
My dear one, pray don't weep
Don't weep.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. S.T. Coleridge : 'Love', incorporated in the Golden
    Treasury, Oxford University Press, London, 1960; p. 171
    Anandavardhana too in the III udyota of his Dhvanyāloka
speaks of the importance of the sentiment of love. He considers Śṛṅgāra rasa to be the most appealing of all sentiments. Cf. 'Śṛṅgāraraso हे सामसरिन्त्यं नियमनानु- 
भवाभिसायत्वत सावरसेय्यं कामानियत्या प्राधानाभूताः.'
Vide also, Dr. M. M. Sharma : The Dhvani Theory in Sanskrit Poetics, pp. 182, 254-55

2. These four ends of life are Dharma (practice of Religion) Artha (earning of money), Kama (pursuit of love and pleasure) and Mokṣa (salvation).

3. These lines ascribed to Halāyudha are found in the Vivah-Vidhi, Bhattacharyya Agency, Dibrugarh, 1934 ; p 38

4. Dr. V. Raghavan : 'Kama, The Third End of Man', in Sources of Indian Tradition, Columbia Univ. Press, 1956 ; p 258

5. Viśvanātha Kavirāja : Sāhitya Darpanā , III. 189

6. For example, we give the following illustration:

Tomar cakuyuri harinār cakuyen
bukuto padumar caka
Tomār bāmuduti padumar thāri yen
recamar kāpore dhakā.
Tomār gāl dukhāni pābha mācar nicīna
ghora phānār nicīna culī;
Lam, lam bulī edino nālalā
dukhāni hātāre tuli.

== Your eyes resemble the eyes
of the gazelle,
And in your breast
the lotus buds reside;
And your arms are
the veritable lotus-stalks
covered with the silken cloth.
Your cheeks resemble the pābha fish,
and the hair a pony's tail,
After long assurances,
you did not give me
a single embrace.

Vide, Lila Gagoi, (ed.); Bihu Git āru Banghoṣā, Lawyers'
Book Stall, Gauhati, 1961, Page VII

7. Śrīmanta Saṅkar Vākyāmrita, p 263
8. Ibid., p 923
9. Ibid., p 118 The consideration of woman as a vehicle of
sin is a relatively new thing in the Indian religious belief. In the Vedic period the attitude of the people towards woman was liberal. "Love has been a very strong force in the life of the Vedic people; they never considered the man-woman relationship as an evil to be avoided and they never condemned woman as vehicles of sin and as sources of suffering and as bar to the path of Man towards his goal."

Vide, Dr. C.K. Raja: The Quintessence of the Bhagvada, Bombay, 1964; p 77

10. Pitambar Dvija in describing Rukmini's sorrows, wrote:

Vilāpa karīya kānde māi Rukmini,
Kona am̐ge khuna dekhi nāilā Yadumāni.

= Rukmini wept with deep lamentations,
Finding fault with which of my limbs,
Yadumāni did not come?

Nārāyaṇ Thākur read these verses to Śrī Saṅkaradeva and the later immediately replied to Nārāyaṇ thus:

Guniyā bolanta āra gāibe nālāgaya,
Garba parbatata sīto uṇthiyā ācay;
Dharma dharibāra sīto yogya nohe loka.
= Thoughtfully he replied: Read no more.
He (Pitambar) sits at the top of
the mountain of vanity,
See, he is no more fit for,
upholding the cause of religion.

Vide, Uṣa Parinaya, Surabhi Press, Nowgong, 1955, p VII

11. L.N. Bezbarua: 'Cālani āru Beji', incorporated in
Sāncayan, p 201

12. Ibid., p 187

13. Gītā Govinda, X, 4

14. The full-moon day in which goddess Lakṣmī is worshipped.
This day is regarded as a very auspicious one by the
Indians.

15. Dr. S.N. Sarma: Asamīyā Sahityar Itibritta, Gauhati,
1959; p 190

16. L.N. Bezbarua: Kadamkali, Ist Sahitya Prakas edition,
Gauhati; p 120

17. Ibid., p 50

18. James Rhodes (tr.): The Poems of Virgil, University of
Chicago, 1952; p 187

19. Priyatama in Kadam Kali, pp. 15-16
20. This poem is very rich in imagery. The unsteadiness of a lover is admirably depicted by calling him a pharing premik (a grasshopper-lover).

21. Bezbarua in his poem Priyatamār Saundaryya (Kadam Kali, p 17) says:

I crave for no beauty’s daughter
But give me such a heart
At the touch of which
My own heart dissolves.

22. Apart from the philosophic content of their works, these poets stand unrivalled for their artistry.

23. Translated by Hem Barua, vide, Modern Assamese Poetry, Kavita, 1960; p 31

24. Mahābhārata, Ādi-parvan, 66th Adhyāya. The Kaca-Devayāni episode had inspired even the great Rabindranath to utilize this story in a new form.

25. Assamese Literature, p 302

26. Kadam Kali, p 121

27. Ibid., p 123

28. Ibid., p 125

29. Ibid., p 130

30. Ibid., p 80
31. Kadam Kali, p 80
32. A.C.Hazarika (ed.): Chandramrit, Gauhati, 1967, p 159
33. A.C.Hazarika (ed.): Marahā Phular Karanī, Gauhati, 1962, pp. 15-18
34. Cf. Candidāsa:
Rajakini rūp kisori svarup, Kāmagandha nāhi tāy,
Nādekhile man kare ucātan dekhile parān jūray.
Tumi rajakīrī amāra ramanī, tumī hao pitṛ-mātr,
Trisandhyā yājan, tomāri bhajan, tumī vedamāta gāyatri.
Tumi vāgvādini harer gharanī, tumī se gālar hārā.
Tumi svarga mārtayas pātāl parvāt tumī se nayaner tārā.
O rūp mādhūrī, pāsarite nārī, kīdiye karība vāsā,
Tumi se tantra, tumī se mantra, tumī upāsanā rasa.
35. For a detailed discussion on Līlā, see chapter xvi of the present work.
36. Saṅcayan, p 208
37. P.N.Gohain Barua: Jurāni, Tezpur, 1900; p 3
38. Sahityar Itivritta, p 203
39. See chapter x of the present work.
40. Fr. Pierre Abelard, a French philosopher and theologian (1079-1142). He is celebrated as a master of scholastic dialectic and theology, as one of the founders of the University of Paris, and as a principal figure,
Heloise, in one of the world's famous love-stories. He fell in love with and seduced Heloise, the learned 17 year old niece of the Canon Fulbert, and when her uncle's wrathful opposition to their attachment became evident, they fled to Brittany. Abelard and Heloise were secretly married and resumed their life at Paris. When Heloise was finally forced to flee her uncle's home, Fulbert, suspecting Abelard of planning to abandon his niece, had him brutally attacked one night and emasculated. Heloise became a nun in the convent of St. Argenteuil, and Abelard, forsaking all hopes of canonical life, entered the abbey of St. Denis as a monk. Abelard and Heloise exchanged some love letters which are famous for their deep emotions and unfailing pathos.

Vide, Encyclopaedia Americana, N.Y., 1966; pp. 35-36

41. Marahā Phular Karani, pp. 170-71


43. In his article Tumi Kāvyar Gurir Kathā (Sources of the Tumi Kāvyā) the poet has admitted his love for Ruprani. Vide, Ambikāgiri Rāichowdhury Samāti Grantha, Asam Sāhitya Sabha, 1968; pp. 224-229
44. Ṣāncayan, p 283
45. Dr. B.K.Barua: History of Assamese Literature, New Delhi, 1964; p 122
46. In his letter to Jatinarayan Sarma (10.8.42) he has admitted his shyness of publishing his poems and has requested Sri Sarma not to publish his poems which the later possesses with him.
47. Āpon Sur, p 71
48. Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p 124
49. Āpon Sur, p 39
50. Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p 124
52. The poem Siltiro Sapon Bhāgil is nothing but an indirect autobiography of the poet.
53. Interpretations of Poetry and Religion, p 126
54. Āpon Sur, p 68
55. Ibid., p 67
56. Sāhitya Darpana, III. 190-191
58. Dr. V. Raghavan: Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāṣa, 1963; p 60
59. Plato: The Symposium
60. Banaphul, Page VI
61. Ibid., pp. 29-30
62. P.B. Shelly: The Epipsychidion

63. All throughout the poem Milanar Sur, there is a Sufistic urge to get united with god.

64. Апон Sur, pp. 15-17

65. Tennyson: Crossing the Bar

66. Апон Sur, p 25


68. Апон Sur, p 6

69. Banaphul, p 63

70. Апон Sur, p 61

71. B.K.Barua: History of Assamese Literature, p 123


73. Д.Н.Калита: Бинар Jhaïkār, Tezpur, 1950; pp. 25-28

74. Ibid., pp. 33-36

75. Durgeswar Sarma: Anjali, 1st edition, Gauhati; p 12

76. Ibid., p 13

77. Ibid., pp. 13-14

78. Dr. S.K.Bhuyan: Nirmāli, Prājyoṭiṣ Granthaśāla, Gauhati, 1951; p 161
79. Nirmāli, p 161
80. Dinabandhu Talukdar: Prema Sur, Gauhati, 1941; p 75
81. Tara Prasad Barua: Gitimājari, Golaghat, 1928,
Lyric No. 57
82. Ratna Kanta Barkakati: Sevali, Lawyers Book Stall,
83. Kṣantek māthon hay
   cauku coā cui,
   Prāṇ man hai yowā
   ek guci dui.
84. Rabindranath Tagore perhaps was the first man to point
out the pathos of Urmilā in his thought-provoking
article Kāvyer Upekṣhitā. Vide Vicitrā, Calcutta, 1961;
pp. 137-44 The article is incorporated in Rabindranath's
Prācin Sāhitya also.
85. Krauñcha virahi dukhat
   ārdra yi hṛday,
   Sīto necāle ghuri
   Urmilā vilai.
Vide, Sevali, p 60
86. krīḍām śāriṇḍaṁkāraṁ samājotsavadarśanam /
   hāṣyaṁ paragho yānaṁ tyājet prośitābhārtkā //
   Yājñavalkya Sṛṣṭi, I. 68
87. (Tr.) Hem Barua: Modern Assamese Poetry, pp. 65-66
88. Cf. Naisadha carita, I.77
89. See, 'Tomālai' in Apon Sur, pp. 9-11
90. Robert Burns: A Red, Red Rose
91. In the poem Yadi (Ii), vide, Sewāli, p 37
92. Dr. V. Raghavan: Bhoja's Śrīgāra Prakāśa, pp. 648-53

93. Dinabandhu Talukdar (ed.): Premar Sur, pp. 28-29
94. See the chapter on Patriotic Poems of the present work.
95. Dharmeswari Devi Baruani: Prāṇar Prāśa, Gauhati, pp. 23-31
96. Cf. Dr. V. Raghavan: 'Bhoja's Śrīgāra Prakāśa', p 342
97. (Tr.) Hem Barua: Modern Assamese Poetry, pp. 33-34
98. Satapatra, pp. 51-52
99. Nalini Bala Devi: Sandhyār Sur, Gauhati, 1941, p 83
100. See, Bhoja's Śrīgāra Prakāśa,
101. Marahā Phular Karāṇi, pp. 257-58
102. Ibid., pp. 257-58
103. The Rāmāyana, Aranyā Kāṇḍa, 46th Sarga, verse 27-28
105. Marahā Phular Karāṇi, p 158
106. Premar Sur, pp. 150-151
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107. Marahā Phular Karāṇī, pp. 281-82

108. Paras maram mor

Sudhāmay mithā sur

Vikāṣita hṛdaya- nalinī,

Yauvan madirā gandha

Āmodice hṛdi andha

Pnute kata apnute lāvari.

Marahā Phular Karāṇī, p 281

109. Ibid., pp. 286-87

110. For Ājalitarā's life and works, see, Ājalitarā Neog,

by Surendra Nath Dutta, Jorhat, 1954

111. The Cotton College Magazine, 1926

112. D. Neog: Vicīṭrā, Jorhat, 1944; p 1

113. Ibid., pp. 2-4

114. Ibid., p 34

115. Thomas Moore: Love's young dream

116. Vicīṭrā, pp. 4-5

117. Sirin Farhard, Jorhat, 1943, 1st Edition

118. Vicīṭrā, p 31

119. Ibid., p 33

120. Ibid., p 85

121. Ibid., p 89

122. Ibid.,
123. *Vicīrā*, p 89
125. All from *Vicīrā*
126. Refer to the chapter on 'Poems with Patriotic Fervour' of the present work.
127. *Matriculation Assamese Poetical Selection*, Gauhati University, 1952; p 46
128. *Sataptra*, p 8
129. 'Mānasī' in *Premar Sur*, pp. 14-15
130. 'Priyār Saṅgīt' in *Premar Sur*, pp. 89-94
132. Ibid., p 54
133. Ibid., p 252
134. *Sataptra*, p 80
135. Viśvanātha Kavirāja in his *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* maintains that the words which immediately convey meanings contain the quality of Prasāda (perspicuity).
S.D., VIII. Hazarika's use of simple and accurate words made his poetry easily absorbable to the readers.
136. Prasannalal Chowdhury: *Cāneki Kavīta*, Calcutta, 1967, pp. 73-75
137. Cāneki Kavitā, pp. 10-13
138. See, Kazi Nazrul Ismal's Saṅcayitā.
139. Premar Sur, pp. 201-203
141. Dante: Inferno, V
142. Kamaleswar Chaliha: 'Galanā' in Āhinār hāhi, Gauhati, 1946; p 42
143. R. Kipling: 'The Female of the Species'.
144. Āhinār hāhi, p 37
145. 'Rupahi' in Saṅcayan, pp. 360-63
146. Timber-business was a very profitable business in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century Assam. For the expansion of the railways, erection of new-type buildings and in making furnitures a big quantity of timber was necessary. Moreover, timber secured All India market. Even to-day timber is a big revenue earner to the Assam Government. It is interesting to note that Lakshminath Bezbarua, another celebrated poet of the age was a notable timber-merchant.
148. Rūp-Jyoti, p V

149. At the initiative of the Assamese students in Benares, a magazine named Jāhmāvi came out. This particular poem along with two other poems from Gagoi's pen came to light in this magazine.

150. Dr. S.N. Sarma: Asamīyā Nāṭya Sāhitya, Gauhati, 1965; p 170

151. A.C. Hazarika: Maṇcālekha, Jonaki Prakás, Gauhati, 1967; p 372

152. Prof. Syed Abdul Malik in his book Marahā Phular Pāpari (The faded flower petals) has given a story-like narration of Gagoi's love in a very interesting way.

153. Dedication page, Pāpari, Jorhat, 1961

154. Maṇcālekha, p 367

155. Rupajyoti, p III

156. Ibid., p 84

157. Āvāhan, vol. v, no. 9

158. Pāpari (1961), p 7

159. Ibid., p 13

160. Rupajyoti, p 84

161. The World's Love Poetry, p 51

162. Pāpari, pp. 3-4
163. Papari, p 3
164. This song by Kamalananda Bhattacharyya received popular admiration in Ganesh Gagoi's times. The song is marked by a suggestion to the aspirant young lover. Gagoi perhaps, was charmed more by Kiran's melodious voice, rather than by the purport of the song. For a full text of the song, see, Kamalananda Bhattacharyya's Bauli, ( 1928 ) Nowgong; p 28
165. Papari, p 18
166. Ibid., p 13
167. Svapna bhang (1961), see, the poet's appeal in the begining of the book.
168. Ibid., p 26
169. Ibid., p 28
170. Ibid.,
171. Svapna bhang, p 36
172. Rupajyoti, pp. 86-87
173. Ibid., p 80
174. Ibid., p 49
175. A loin-cloth with net-work designs.
176. A scarf with rolled fringes.
177. Pāpari, p 10
178. Svapna bhaṅga, p 33
179. Ibid., p 29
180. Rupajyoti, p 66
181. Ibid., p 73
182. See, Dr. M. M. Sharma's observations in his Upamsā Kālidāsasya, Gauhati Book-stall, 1972; p
183. Rupajyoti, p 51
184. From his poem Pratīkṣā incorporated in the anthology Marahā Phular Karani, p 286
185. See, the Section on Minor Poets.
186. Hem Barua: Assamese Literature, p 177
187. William Henry Hudson: An Introduction to the study of Literature, George G Harrap & Co. 1960; p 182
188. M.H. Abrams: The Mirror and the Lamp, p 190
190. A kind of waist-cloth made of yarn derived from the mugā - cocoon. A mugā cloth indicates dignity.
191. Parāg, pp. 16-17
192. The World's Love Poetry, p 250
193. Still in Ms form.
194. Saṃcayana, p 374
195. Raghuvanaśa, XIV. 66
197. Ibid., p 66
198. Ibid., pp. 38-39
199. Ibid., p 42
200. The river Kalan is a tributary of the Brahmaputra; it passes through the town of Nowgong.
201. A kind of fragrant flower of the Magnolia genus. Campaka has secured representation in many poems, both Indian and Western.

Cf. (1) MADHAVA KANDALI's

Campaka Karoka same mama kalevara,
Lundi ghundi āchilāhā yehena bhramara.
(My body is like the soft-petals of the campaka flower and you have enjoyed it, at your pleasure, like the black-bee.)

(11) P.B. SHELLY's

The Campak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream.
- The Indian Serenade.

202. the batten of a loom
203. a weaver's shuttle
204. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 44
205. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 45
206. Ibid., pp. 52-53
207. Ibid.,
208. Ibid., pp. 14-15; p 30; pp. 48-49
209. Ibid., p 46
210. Ibid., pp. 40-41
211. Ibid.,
212. Ibid.,
213. Ibid.,
214. Ibid.,
215. Dante: Inferno, V
216. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 11
217. Hem Barua (ed.): Modern Assamese Poetry, pp. 15-16
218. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 47
219. Ibid.,
220. "Ākul gītere tār Kalañar duṭipār kari gal komal karun".
   (Sāgar Dekhichā, p 34) These lines suggest a reference
to the sad and of Ganesh Gagoi's love-life.
221. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 47
222. Mammaṭa in Kāvyaprakāśa - I, says:
   "sakalaprayojanamaulibhutam vigalitavedyāntaram
   ānandam," Cf. also M.M. Sharma: The Dhvani Theory
   in Sanskrit Poetics; p 255
223. Cf. Ganesh Gogoi:

Nāvariya āji rāti
Kalañar kāše kāše
Nāvere āhiba mor
lakhimi ujāī.

'Nāvariya' in Rūnajyoti

224. R.N. Dasgupta: 'The Institution of the Devadāsīs,' in
Indian Historical Quarterly, vol. xi, iii, part ii
pp. 555-576

225. The Tezpur Grant of Vanamālavarṇa, Vide,
P.N. Bhattacharya: Kāmrūpa Sāsanāvali.
See also, B.K. Barua: A cultural History of Assam,

226. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 46

227. Ibid.,

228. Ibid., p 47

229. Grierson & Smith: A Critical History of English Poetry,
Chatto & Windus, 1962; pp. 410-22

Macmillan, N.Y., 1961; p 391

231. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 62

232. Urvāśī: Pururavas in the Rgveda, 10.95

234. For example,

(1) in Sanskrit poetry, Śrīharsa has utilized this allusion, as follows.

"They made themselves similar to Nala, as if by means of a quintessence drawn from Pururavas, while consumed by the fire of separation from his beloved (i.e., Urvasī); from the moon while crushed by Rāhu; and from cupid while he was burnt by Śiva".

-Naiṣadhacarita, X. 22

(ii) in Assamese poetry, Raghunath Chowdhury in his beautiful nature-lyric 'Dahikatarā' alluded to Urvasī, as follows:

"Devapuri eri thai ākāśī nartakī
Maratat bhari dile Urvasī ketekī."

(The Ketekī bird who is none but the heavenly danseuse Urvasī has left the abode of the gods and has come to the earth.)

Vide, Dahikatārā, p 7

235. Sāgar Dekhichā, p 60

236. A critical History of English Poetry, pp. 442-45

237. Ibid., pp. 447-451

238. Ibid., pp. 435-440
239. Vide, Sañcitā
240. Quoted in the R. S. Pandit's edition of Kālidāsa's
       Rtuṣaṃhāra. (See Introduction)
241. 'Manak bujāo mai kavitār mālā gāthi tumi phul hār.'
       Sāgar Dekhichā, p 48
242. Premar Sur, p 47
243. Ibid., p 53
244. Sañcayān, p 387
245. Premar Sur, p 86
246. Ibid., p 93
247. Ibid., p 95
248. Natun Kavitā, p 36
249. Ibid., p 62
250. Ibid., p 65
251. Āgantuk, p 34
252. Ibid.,
253. It is interesting to note that the Assamese lover
       always dreams 'to come as a fly to the loving cheeks'
       of his beloved to paint a kiss gently and stealthily.
       The Assamese folk-poet says:

       "As a swan I shall drop at your pond, my darling.
       Like a pigeon I shall step down on the roofs of your house,
As the sweats I shall enter into your body
And like a fly I will steal a kiss on your pretty cheeks.

255. Rāmdhenu, vol. XVI, no. 7, p 84
256. Konobā Sītar eṭā Bagā Sandhiyāṭ, p 11
257. Ibid., p 18
258. Natun Kavītā, p 48
259. Ibid., p 53
260. Ibid., p 61
261. Rāmdhenu, vol. XVIII no. 6, p 384
262. Suryya heno nāmi āhe eie Nādiyedi, p 12
263. Āgali Bāhare Lāharī Gaganā, p 5