CONCLUDING REMARKS.

The foregoing chapters are discussion on elements of folklore in Rajanikanta Bordoloi's literary works. The elements are tried to be discussed here in line with Richard M. Dorson's four groupings viz (1) oral literature, (2) physical folklife or material culture, (3) social folk-custom and (4) performing art-form. At the very outset we have covered a general deliberation on two concepts—folklore and folklife. A brief note on the history and development of Assamese folklore up to Rajanikanta Bordoloi is attached here in the form of a sub chapter. Then we have attempted to cover the life and time of the author. Attempt is also made to furnish idea of the socio-literary back-ground of Assam and elaborate description of all the major works of Bordoloi. In the main body of the work i.e. from the fifth to the eighth chapter endeavour is made to find out the folklore materials in the writings of Rajanikanta Bordoloi. The works of Bordoloi are good repositories of oral narratives. In the fifth chapter of the study elements of legend, proverb, aphorism and folksong etc. are sorted out. General discussions on each and every item of oral narratives are also furnished and parallels of these
items are given in possible places. The elements of material culture that have been incorporated into writings of Bordoloi form the cultural milieu of Assamese folklife. These elements are discussed in the sixth chapter of the work. The writings of Bordoloi specially his novels are adorned with references of social folk-custom — ranging from the mention of festivals like bihu, holi and barsabah to the marriage rites and various sports and pastimes. We have also discussed all these major fairs and festivals and other folk-customs that have been found to prevail upon the author. In the remaining portion, occurrences of some premier performing folk arts namely ojanali, bhaona, bihu dance, deodhani dance etc. are discussed. Attempt is also made to outline general discussion on such art-forms and its structure and mode of performance.

Besides these, bulk of materials still remain to be discussed. Detailed description of all such materials are avoided here for fear of volume of the work. Tradition as has been rightly opined endures for generation to generation and it embodies cumulative heritages of the society. Assam, being a land of rich traditional heritages preserves secure depositories of the same from time immemorial. It becomes an arduous task for any literetteur to cover up all such elements in selected band of literary
works. Yet, Rajanikanta Bordoloi, who is regarded as a writer par excellance, infused into his writings the legacies of his motherland.

Bordoloi's authorship primarily rests upon his persistent emphasis on rousing the national spirit among the minds of common readers. He was out and out a patriot and as a writer also he dedicated his endeavour to inculcate in the mind of common a sense of love, esteem and earnestness for their motherland. An author is complete when he is a nationalist within himself. High regards for folklore materials in an author's mind can bring forth nationalistic fervour. R.M. Dorson quite rightly observes it - "The concern with folklore and the rise of a nationalistic spirit frequently coincide". ¹ That is why perhaps Bordoloi believed that infusion of folklore and folklife material would do much to foster a pride in national heritage. Folklore has its own role building up the history of a nation and Bordoloi literally being a historical novelist combined history and folklore to restore much of the pictures of ancient time and regards for the heritages as well. For such reasons, Bordoloi bent upon the objectives of Scott and Bankim chandra in composing novels and moulded his literary career on fervid national feeling.

1. Quoted in Loksanskritir Tattwarup O Swarup Sandhan by I. Chattopadhayay, p. 247.
Bordoloi except in the skeleton of the episodes of the novels, inducted the materials, collected from direct field observation. Either it can be said of him that he resorted to themes of national pride and feeling only to project the materials of Assamese Socio-cultural life.

What is worth noticing in Bordoloi is that inspite of being a novelist, he undertook the mission of incorporating the traditional elements in such a genre of literature and thereby popularise it among the readers.

Folklore is a function oriented proposition. It has been more categorically endorsed by W.R. Bascom in his famous four function theory. This may will be entailed on Bordoloi's context which in first convenience may be referred to the 'social context' concept. Bordoloi identified the folklore materials and used these in proper contexts by grafting onto the real historical and social perspectives of his writings. In doing so our writer allowed himself to cast his own views with his personal emotional feelings. For example we can refer to his own


3. Bascom points out to the four functions of folklore. The first is its social context, the second is that it validates culture and justifies rituals and institutions, the third is education to non-literate societies and the fourth is that folklore maintains conformity to the accepted patterns of behaviour. See Contribution to Folkloristics(pp. 42-60) by W.R. Bascom.
statements regarding bihu in Rangili\textsuperscript{4}. Moreover he corroborated traditions from both oral and printed versions and while slanting these he laid importance on geographical landmarks also. His coverage of material culture used in daily life of bygone ages may assist in confirming the perspective of traditional history.

The mastery of a novelist rests on his portrayal of characters and situation. In this field also Bordoloi does not lag behind. A critical appreciation of the characters of the novels reveals it well how Bordoloi mingles together the characteristics of menfolk and womenfolk to the dignified characters of history. Moreover he lent on the folk elements in portraying other characters which came out of their own selves and assimilated with rural folk.

Though written on historical footing Bordoloi's novels are rolled on love themes. In his treatment of love scene also, Bordoloi has demonstrated tremendous understanding of the emotional instinct of human nature.

The novels of Bordoloi are heroine based. His heroines are all clustered from the class of rustic maids of Assam's village life. The undisputed penmanship of

\textsuperscript{4} Bordoloi, R.: \textit{Rangili}, p. 12
Rajanikanta has made these characters, in terms of physical descriptions, the rare source of imagination to common readers.

The writings of Bordoloi are complete reflection of Assamese life. A careful study brings forth the exposure of this life where he incorporated all indigenous factors in any narration found to be fit. Keeping the popular taste of readers in view, Bordoloi created different scenes which engaged it in reflecting folk mind of Assam. Besides, such other scenes which regulate mass involvement viz. awe wonder, humour anger etc. are all found in Bordoloi's works. The physical transformation of Rahdai in Rahdai Ligiri\(^5\) arouses wonder, the life-span of Nirmal in Nirmal Bhakat\(^6\) makes the readers awe-struck and the fate of kamud in Miri Jiyari\(^7\) leaves one guessing.

Bordoloi even does not forget to mention the castes and sub-castes and their professions. That he was very much aware of social status of professional castes and sub-castes can be assumed from various sources of his writings.

\(^5\) Bordoloi, R. : Rahdai Ligiri, p. 122
\(^6\) Bordoloi, R. : Nirmal Bhakat, p. 59
\(^7\) Bordoloi, R. : Miri Jiyari, p. 52
Besides these, beliefs, superstitions, omens, even blessings and curses which are closely associated with Assamese social life are clearly abundant in Bordoloi's writings. In fact Bordoloi left no avenue untouched which could represent well the traditional life of Assam. That is why he emerges as a true traditionalist. His visualisation of both ancient and contemporary life is a path-finder to fellow writers and that is why his popularity is still going on unabated. Calling himself the Scott of Assam is most rewarding because like that legendary novelist in Bordoloi also the past was re-born, re-animated, re-realised and tradition revived and re-oriented.