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THE
SOCIAL HISTORY
OF
KAMARUPA

Vol. II.

BY
NAGENDRA-NATH VASU PRACHYAVIDYAMAHARNAVA,
SIDDHANTA-VARIDHI, TATTVACHINTAMANI &c. &c.
Compiler of Bengali Visvakosha and Hindi Visvakosha (Encyclopædia Indica) ; author of Mayurbhanj Archæological Survey Reports, Castes and Sects of Bengal, and the Modern Buddhism in Orissa, late Editor of the Sahitya Parishad Patrika, Editor, Ragakalpadruma (Encyclopædia of Indian Music) &c. &c. &c.

CALCUTTA.

Published by the Author
8, Visvakosha Lane, Bagbazar, Calcutta.

Printed by B. K. Dutt.
APURVA PRESS
47, Shampuker Street, Calcutta.



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PREFACE.

The first part of this book was published four years ago and in the Introduction I had given an outline of the plan to be followed in the second part. But I regret to say that the last four years have been to me a period of great trial as owing to chronic nephritis and asthma attended with weakness of heart, I passed my time struggling between life and death, and had in consequence to give up some of the details that I had thought of working out in the second part. Whenever I could snatch a few days of comparative health, I set myself to work, but I experienced a great obstruction from the dilatoriness of the press. I had to change four presses successively for completing this work, the shortness of accented types in these presses made it impossible for me to observe uniformity in the spelling of those words which had to be accented. Defects and irregularities on this head will be observed throughout the book, for which I beg to be excused.

One of the noteworthy features of this book is that I have given in the appendix exhaustive genealogical tables of the Baro Bhuiya and of the leaders of various sects principally the Vaisnavas, whose history I have treated in this part. I had to collect these accounts from some Assamese gentlemen and I beg to offer my heartfelt thanks to them.

I have, however given more or less elaborate accounts of the subject I originally took up in hand, working in the midst of great difficulties, but I am sorry I could not touch the interesting subject of the development of the modern Sakta cult of Assam. If I live to bring out a second edition of this work, I shall try to trace this memorable event which had such a wide spread influence on the neighbouring localities.

The Visvakoshi Cottage.
9, Visvakoshi Lane,
Bagbazar, Calcutta.

Nagendranath Vasu.

1-10-26.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF KAMARUPA Vol. II.

CHAPTER I.

THE BĀRO-BHUIYĀS IN ASSAM:

A king of the name of Durlabhanārāyana reigned at Kāmatāpur in the west of Kāmarupa when Purusottama Dāsa* was holding his sway in Central Assam. This king is called Kāmatesvara in the Assam Buranji. It has been narrated before that owing to repeated invasions of the Muhammadans the country was in turmoil. At last matters came to a pass and anarchy reigned everywhere. Petty kingdoms then rose here and there. The Kāyastha Ādi-Bhuiyās rose in power in Eastern Assam and the Dāsa dynasty established their sway in Central Assam. Durlabhanārāyana now carved out a kingdom for himself in Kāmatā or western Kāmarupa. According to the Buranji and Guru-Charitra Durlabhanārāyana had to be engaged in constant war-fare with the neighbouring

Durlabha-
narayana,
king of
Kamatā.

*See Vol. I., p. 248-249.

princes. He had to fight a long and bloody war against the king Dharmanārāyana of Gauḍa. At last both these kings stopped their hostilities and became friends. At the invitation of Durlabhanārāyana seven Brāhmanas and seven Kāyasthas came to the kingdom of Kāmatā from Gauḍa.

The following account shows that a chief of the name of Nārāyana lived in north Bengal corresponding to the modern district of Dinajpur about the time we are speaking of.

Dharma-
nārāyana
and his
ancestors.

We learn from Baṭu-Bhaṭṭa's *Devavamsa*, that Danujārīdeva of the Deva dynasty was the ruler or feudatory chief of Kanṭakadvīpa. He paid his respects to Dāsārathi the son of Makaranda Bandya at a place called Bandya-ghāṭi and made a gift the villages of Harikoṭī, Naihāṭī, Lāṭagrāma, Paiḍa, and Navachara to his sons. He was a friend and relative of Lakshmana Sena, the king of Gauḍa. He accompanied Lakshmana Sena when the latter fled away being attacked by the Muhammadans. He also fought against the Musalmāns bravely standing by the side of Mādhava Sena, the son of Lakshmana Sena. At last he drowned himself in the holy river Bhāgīrathī. Kanṭakadvīpa was then taken by the Musalmāns and his son Harideva settled at Pāṇḍu-nagara (modern Panduā). His son Nārāyana-deva was a man knowing Dharma and upholding Dharma. But still he was not favoured by the Genius of Royalty. He had two sons Purandata and Purujit. Purandata renounced the world and became a Sannyāsī. Purujit's son was Āditya. Āditya had two-

sons, Devendra and Kshitindra. Through the grace of the goddess Ranachandī Devendra became the lord of Pāṇḍunagara. Devendra's son was Mahendradeva. He became king at Pāṇḍunagara having expelled the Muhammadans and having exterminated the Kānsya race.¹

Mahendradeva, king of Pāṇḍua.

Some time ago a silver coin of Mahendradeva was found at Pāṇḍu near the ruins of Gauḍa. This coin bears the words "Chandī-charana-parāyana (চণ্ডীচরণপরাযণ) Mahendra deva (মহেন্দ্রদেব) Pāṇḍunagara (পাণ্ডুনগর) and 1336 Saka. Hence it is proved that Mahendradeva, was the king of Gauḍa in 1336 Saka year i e. 1414 A. D.

We think that Nārāyana who has been described as 'knowing virtue' (ধর্মজ্ঞ) and 'upholding virtue' (ধর্মপালক) is the same person as Dharmanārāyana the contemporary of Durlabhanārāyana of Kāmatā. Durlabhanārāyana flourished at a time when the rule of the old royal dynasty was at an end and the various chiefs were fighting with one another in the hope of seizing the royal authority. In North Bengal, Nārāyanadeva too, in those unsettled days, made an attempt to conquer the kingdom of Kāmatā. This is why a war took place between these two kings. It is recorded in the Devavamsa that Nārāyana deva "was not favoured by the Genius of Royalty." This shows that his attempts were fruitless. It is needless to say that Nārāyana was a Kāyastha of the Deva

(1) Vide Batu Bhalla's Devavamsa, verses, 26-53.

Durlabha-
narayana
and seven
wise Kāyas-
thas.

family. Durlabhanārāyana too belonged to a line of feudatory chiefs. Being firmly established in his kingdom after his victory in the war, he had brought seven wise Kāyasthas who seem to be the members of his own caste, so that with their help he might restore peace and order in his dominions. From the account of the Deva line that has been given above it is known that Nārāyanadeva's great-grandson Mahendradeva was the lord of Pāṇḍunagara. It has also been mentioned before that his silver coin has been discovered near Maldah. Some of his coins have been found in Eastern Bengal.

These coins show that even during the early days of the 15th century when the Muhammadans had established themselves in the country Mahendradeva had for some-time been known as the 'lord of Gauḍa.' Hence it does not at all appear strange that his ancestor Nārāyanadeva or Dharma-nārāyana would have been known as the 'lord of Gauḍa' in Assam. As for the descendants of the seven Kāyasthas who were honoured by Durlabhanārāyana, some say that their ancestors migrated to Assam from Dinajpur, while others hold that the original seat of their family was at Kanaujpur. These two statements do not appear conflicting. Nārāyanadeva had indeed been living in the northern part of Dinajpur in order to be safe from the Muhammadans. This place was within the kingdom of Gauḍa and the borders of the ancient principality of Kāmata were not far from it. Hence it is but natural

that the Kāyasthas and Brāhmanas mentioned before would have migrated from this place. The place where the Brāhmanas and the Kāyasthas brought by Durlabhanārāyaṇa settled was in the vicinity of the capital city of Kāmatāpur and it was called Kanauppur. In later days, the Brāhmanas and the Kāyasthas of this place went to live in the eastern part of Kāmarupa. Hence the tradition about the coming of the Brāhmanas of Kāmarupa from Kanauppur does not appear to be without any foundation.

According to the Assam Buranji the names of those seven Brāhmanas are Bhavāninatha, Govinda Miṣra, Janārdana Chakravarti, Ramapāti, Kavibhārati, Gaurikānta, and Kedāra Miṣra.² According to the account given in Gurucharita the names of seven Brāhmanas were (1) Krishna Paṇḍita, (2) Raghu-pati, (3) Ramāvara, (4) Lohara, (5) Vayāna, (6) Dharam, and (7) Mathurā. Again in Nilakantha Dāsa's Dāmodaracharita, there is mention of the names of Brahmānanda of the Gautama Gotra the ancestor of Dāmodara-deva and of his relative Adivara and of Landādeva the ancestor of Sankaradeva, the

Kamata and
Kanauppur

Bengali
Brahmanas
at Kamata

(2) Vide Assam Buranji, p. 96. (Assam Govt. Collection Gauhati no 78)

(3) "গৌড়েখবৰ কামৰূপ ন নাগি আনিলন্ত ।
কাঁৱল ব্ৰাহ্মণ (১) হুন্দৰ বৰোক মিলন্ত ১২০৬
ব্ৰহ্মানন্দ শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ ব্ৰাহ্মণ সাতঘৰ ।
কাঁৱল সপ্তম লগা দেব শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ ।
কামৰূপে আনি আনি কনৌজপুৰৰ ।
সপ্ত ঘৰৰ মধ্যে ব্ৰজ আদিবৰ ১২১৭"

Dāmodaracharita by Nilakanthadāsa.

greatest amongst the seven Kāyasthas.³ On account of these conflicting accounts, it is very difficult to give the names of the Brāhmanas who come from Gauḍa at the invitation of Durlabhanārāyana.

Bengali
Kāyastha
ancestors

According to the author of Gurucharita, the seven Kāyasthas were Hari, Śrīhari, Śrīpati, Śrīdhara, Chidānanda, Sadānanda and Chandivara. Of all the men coming from Gauḍa Chandivara was the most learned and most intelligent. The King Durlabhanārāyana conferred the title of *Śrīmāni* or the chief of the *Bhūiyās* upon him. According to the work called Daranga Rājavansāvali, the Bhūiyās rose to power in the year 1236 of the Śaka Era i. e. 1314 A. D.⁴ Now it is to be determined whether about that time there was a king called Dharmanārāyana in Gauḍa, and whether there was any occasion for the coming of the Brāhmanas and Kāyasthas to the kingdom of Kāmatā. We are also to ascertain why the highest honour was conferred on a Kāyastha though there were suitable Brāhmanas.

It has been said before that there is no agreement between the list given in the Assam Buranji, of the Brāhmanas who were brought by the king of Kāmatā and the list of the Brāhmanas who had come to Assam with the Kāyasthas. Hence the conclusion is that the seven Brāhmanas spoken of in the Buranji and the seven Kāyasthas who were the ancestors of

(4) "বারশে ইতিশ শকে ভূঁই উপজিল।"

(Vide Assam Govt. Col. Darrang, no 2, pt. 1, leaf 5a)

the Bhūiyās of Kāmarupa did not come to Assam together or at the same time. Had these fourteen men come at the same time, the Hindu King Durlabhanārāyaṇa would never have conferred the highest honour on a Kāyastha by making him the 'Siromani Bhūiyā' ignoring the Brāhmanas. The accounts given in the "Purushināmā" of the principal Bhuiyā lines hint at the fact that the seven Kāyasthas who had come to the court of the King Durlabhanārāyaṇa and had received honours there again went to Gauḍa, the country of their origin and came back there from to Kāmatā with their preceptors, family priests and wives, children and other relatives. Under these circumstances we are inclined to believe that the seven Brāhmanas who had come to Assam with the Kāyasthas at the time of their coming from Gauda for the second time were their preceptors or priests. The seven Brāhmanas whose names occur in the Assam Buranji seem to have been brought for the worship of the family gods of the King and the performance of his religious rites. The other seven Brāhmanas, got grants of land from their Kāyastha *Yujumanus* when they rose to power and came subsequently to be known as Bhuiyās or Zamindars.

A careful perusal of the geneological tables collected from various places in Assam shows that the seven Kāyasthas mentioned above had, at the time of their coming from Gauda for the second time, brought with them five families of their relatives. These twelve

persons might have in after ages been known as the twelve Bhuiyās. Their names are given below :—

The names
of the Baro-
Bhuiyas or
the 12 chiefs

1. Chandivara the Siromani Bhuiyā, son of Landādeva. (Krishnātreyā Gotra.)
2. Haripāla alias Vishnukanta Bhuiyā, son of Krishnakānta. (Ālāmyāna Gotra).
3. Sripati alias Jayapāla Bhuiyā (Kāsyapa Gotra),
4. Sridhara Bhuiyā (Kausika Gotra).
5. Sṛīhari alias SripatiSarasvati (Gautama Gotra).
6. Sadānanda Bhuiyā (Ātreya Gotra).
7. Chidānanda alias Chirapati Bhuiyā
(Kāsyapa Gotra).
8. Sripati Datta (Maudgalya Gotra).
9. Gandharva Bhuiyā (Ālāmyāna Gotra).
10. Buḍā Khān (Parāsara Gotra).
11. Lohāvara (Sāṇḍilya Gotra).
12. Chānugiri (Maudgalya Gotra).

At first the above Kāyasthas lived at Kanaujapur near the capital of Kāmatā. The great Vaishnava reformer Sankaradeva writes in one place that the King Durlabha-nārāyaṇa had conferred the title of Devīdāsa upon Chandivara.⁵ There is a tradition current among the descendant of the above Bhuiyās, that during the time of Durlabha-nārāyaṇa, though the country was not weak in military strength, yet there was utter absence of a good internal government and the cultivation of learning. The country in those days was specially subjected to the

(5) Vide Asamiya Sahitya Buranji, by Debendra Nath B.-Barua, pp-95.

inroads of the Kochas, the Mechas and the Bhotias. In order to hold them in check the Bhuiyās had to live at Lengāmaguri so that there they might check the progress of the Bhotias. Sir E. A. Gait calls this place Paimaguri. He says that here "they earned the gratitude of the people by erecting a bund. Subsequently the Bhutias raided and carried off a number of people, including the son of Chandibar, but the latter, with the other Bhuiyās, followed the raiders and rescued the captives. He subsequently settled at Bardowa in Nowgong where his great-grand-son⁶ Sankar deb was born"⁷

Bhuiyas;
their rise

It seems probable that King Purusottamadās, an account of whom has already been given was deprived of his kingdom by the Bhuiyās. It also seems likely that it was through their assistance that king Durlabhanārāyana was able to extend his territories up to the river Bara Nadi. The Bhuiyās remained semi-independent during the time of Durlabhanārāyana and asserted their independence after his death. They ruled the country towards the middle of the fourteenth century.

Sir E. A. Gait says,—

"One of the legends of the Bāro Bhuiyā mentions Durlabhanārāyan as a Raja of Kāmata and if it can be relied on, he would seem to have ruled at the end of the thirteenth century over the country between Bar Nadi and the Karatoyā. About the same time mention is made in the Ahom *Buranji* of a war

(6) This should be great-great-grand son.

(7) Vide Sir Gait's History of Assam, p. 38

Rise of the
Ahoms and
decline of
Bhūiyā
influence in
Upper
Assam.

between the Ahoms and the Kāmatā Raja.”⁸
“Hostilities continued for some years with heavy losses on both sides. At last, their adversary grew weary of the war, and, on the advice of his ministers, sent an envoy to sue for peace. A treaty was made, and his daughter Rajani was given to the Ahom King (Sukhāngphā) in marriage. Sukhāngphā died in 1332, after a reign of thirty-nine years. He left four sons, Sukhrāngpha, Sutupha, Tyāokhamti and Chao Pulai..... Sukhrāngphā, the eldest of the late King’s four sons, ascended the vacant throne. He soon became unpopular, and his half-brother Chao-Pulai, whom he had appointed to be Sāring Raja, hatched a conspiracy against him. The plot being detected, Chao Pulai fled to his kinsman, the Raja of Kāmatā, who agreed to help him and marched to Athgaon and thence to Saring. Sukhrangpha then became alarmed and not feeling sufficiently certain of the loyalty of his troops, opened negotiations and became reconciled with Chāo-Pulai.”⁹

With the rise of the Ahoms the power of the Bhūiyās in Upper Assam came to an end. They had been the right hand of the King of Kāmatā and had extended their possessions up to the districts of Darang and Nowgāon¹ beyond the river Brahmaputra. About this time the Ahoms occupied the country to the east of Majuli while the Bhūiyās ruled it up to the river Karatoyā in the west.

(8) Sir E. A. Gait's History of Assam, p. 41.

(9) Do.

p. 77-78.

On account of the excellence of their administration as well as the oppressions practised in Bengal by the Muhammadan rulers many families of the Brahmana and the Kayastha class migrated to Assam to live under the peaceful rule of the Bhuiyās. From a study of the genealogy of the descendants of the Bhuiyas we learn that Bardowā in Tembuānibandha was the seat of Chandivara, Pāndunāth and Tapīchāmatī of the ancestors of Pratāpa Bhuiyā and Nārāyana respectively, Lohāguri of Śrīpati, Harakākuchi of Sarasvatī Bhuiyā and Phulaguri of the ancestors of Rājendra Bhuiyā. Besides these, Uguri and Luki under Brāhmanas and Badanagar, Karnapur, Bejeni and Dighalpur were the other centres of Kāyastha rule. Even the families of their priests and preceptors who had migrated to the country with them became Bhuiyās or Zamin-dārs in various places.

Brahmana
& Kayastha
families
migrate to
Assam.

At first the Bhuiyās came to the village Lengāmāguri. Chandivara constructed a big bund there and thus saved these parts from the flood of the Brahmaputra. At this the people were greatly pleased and blessed Chandivara. After he had been here for a short time Chandivara had a son of the name of Rājadhara. Here the Bhuiyās continued to live sharing the joys and sorrows of the King. In the month of Agrahāyana, the Bhotias commenced their raids. Gandharva Rāya fled to the southern bank of the Brahmaputra. The Bhotias captured Rājadhara and many other men and carried them off as prisoners. Chandivara, however, pursued and rescued all the captives. On account of the

Bhuiya-
Bhotia
encounter.

The Bhuiya
forts near
Singari.

Bhōtiya incursions the people got offended with the Bhuiyas and gave out that none of them were against the Bhotias. The Bhūiyās became grieved at this. They said that it was no longer proper of them to stay on in a place where those, for whose benefit they were always working were against them. Then they left the place and after a short residence at a place called Somāi-bhalukīguri settled at Kutharaduri, Phonta and Simulatalā in Uttarakūla. On account of some inconvenience here they built four forts near Singārī. After a short while the Bhotiās invaded the country again; after a three days' battle they were defeated. At this stage Chandīvara died and his son Rājadhara became the *Stromani* Bhūiyā. Durlabhanārāyana was filled with despair to see the increase of the power of those fear of whom he had engaged the twelve Bhūiyās in the distant parts of the country. Gunābhīrāma speaks of Chandīvara's residence near Singārī; while from the version of Sankaradeva we learn that he settled at a place called Baṭadravā (Bardowā) in Tembuānibandha.

Seats of the
Baro
Bhuiyas.

From the Purushāvali of Prasiddhanārāyana, the Daranga-Rājāvanāvali and other genealogical tables of the Bhūiyās we learn that the following twelve places were the seats of Baro Bhūiyas viz, Bardowā, Badanagara, Kshetribhāga, Pāndunāth, Karnapur, Phulaguri, Bejnī, Dighalapura, Uguri or Lohāguri, Luki, Jhargāon, and Dimuria. Moreover we learn from the Purushanāmā that the Bhūiyās reside at Harkākuchi,

and Nārāyanpur in Nowgong District, Kumirakantā, Golāghat, Dhumahatā, Gajalāsuti, Bhabalwubi (in Sibsagar district), and then at Kamalābāri, Chunapara, Ganakakuchi, Kumīrakuchi, Pātābāusi, Sundaradiā and Barapeta (in Kamrup district). The thing is that at the beginning the Bhuiyās had no permanent seats. They had their camps in various places to carry on the work of administration in an efficient manner. Now we proceed to give a short account of the Bāro Bhuiyās.

Chandivara.

Chandivara, the *Siromani* or the chief of the Bhuiyās had settled at a place called Batadravī (Bardowā)¹⁰ in Tembuinibandha in the district of Kamrup. His preceptor and priest Krishnapandit (ancestor of Rāmacharana Thākur) came with him to live at this place.

Even in the *Sankaracharita* by Bhushanānanda Kavibhūshana it has been recorded that after staying sometime in Gauḷa Chandivara

(10) It is recorded in Nilakanthadasa's *Damodaracharita* that Chandivara's father Landadeva settled at Bardowa and that Damodaradeva's ancestor Brahmananda of the Gautama gotra settled at a neighbouring place called Nalancha (vide verse 179). But this runs counter to what is recorded in History and the book called "Vanavah". Hence we cannot accept the version of Nilakantha. Sankaradeva the great great-grand-son of Chandivara has written in several places of his many books that Durlabhanarayana of Kamata had brought Chandivara to his court, has highly honoured him and had appointed to him the post of the chief Bhuiya. Vide *Asamiya Sahitya Buranjī*, by Debendranath Bej Barua, p. 95, 103, 184.

Encounter
between
Durlabha-
narayana
and
Chandivara.

went up the Bramhaputra river in a country boat. Then he furnished his own house at Baṭadravā on the coast of the Bramhaputra in Tembuānibandh.¹¹ According to the account furnished by Rāmacharana Thākur in his Saṅkara-charita :—There arose in the mind of Rāja Durlabhanārāyana some unreasonable suspicion on account of the gradual increase of his influence and possession and the frequent visits of his relations from Gauḍa. The Rāja thought that Chandivara was conspiring against him with the king of Gauḍa for the purpose of invading his kingdom. The other Bhūiyās had already grown disobedient to him. In order to punish the Bhūiyās Rāja Durlabhanārāyana now sent his General Sasipātra with an army. Apprehending that it would not be very easy to defeat Chandivara in open fight Sasipātra, by unfairness, managed to take him captive at Kājalimukh (modern Kolongmukh). For about a year Chandivara was in prison. A Pandit named Chandrakavi came from Nadia before the Rāja of Kāmātapur and offered to enter into discussions of the Shāstras with the Pandits of his court. None among the latter accept the challenge thrown out by this Savant of Navadvipa. Thereupon the Rāja issued orders upon the General to the effect, 'You will get into

(11) "কত দিন বকি গৌড়েশ্বরের রাজ্যত ।

ব্রহ্মপুত্রে উজালন্ত চরিতা নাগত ॥

টৌয়গামিবদ্ধ নামে অতি অসুখান ।

লোহিতর অশুকুলে বটপ্রবা গ্রাম ॥

তথাও ঝড়িয়া বর বাউী স |জাইলন্ত ॥"

Saṅkaracharita by Bhuvanannanda.

trouble if you fail to present a Pandit for this purpose within a week." Sasipatra knew full well of the erudition of Chandivara and conducted him from the prison-house to the royal court. Then the Pandit of Nadia entered into discussions of the Shāstras with Chandivara. The latter however came out successful. At this the Rāja became highly pleased with Chandivara. Thinking him to be a real *bhukta* of the Devi, the Rājā conferred upon him the title of "Devidāsa" and "Śiromani" or chief among the Bhuiyās and gave him permission to rule independently. From that time Chandivara and his descendants became independent rulers in Central Assam. Within a very short time the part of the country between Nowgong and Tejpur lying on both sides of the Brahmaputra came under the sway of Chandivara. He appointed Brahmanas and Kāyasthas connected with him to be Bhuiyās in every village in this part of the country and exercised his rule very vigorously. A well-furnished house was set apart for him for the performance of his royal duties. It was named "Kārkhānā." He appointed a general named "Dalapati". Thus having appointed competent officers to look after the different departments of state and mixing freely with the other Bhuiyās he began to pass his days happily. As the progeny of the Bhuiyās increased in number the people on the eastern and western banks of the Brahmaputra evinced a great desire for physical and mental culture as there was then no birth of food or cloth

How
Chandivara
founded
a line of
independent
kings.

Origin of
the Bhuiya-
System..

and as the people also were comparatively well off. The Bhotias from the north and the Kachāri from the south made frequent incursions into Kamrup. To protect their life and property from these incursions every one learnt the use of arms regularly and took steps to increase his physical strength.

Chandi-
vara's sons
Rājadhari &
Gadādhara.
How they
had different
Gotras.

Chandivara had two sons, Rājadhara and Gadādhara. After his death Rājadhara became the Siromani Bhuiyā. Śankaradeva has described him as 'highly pious.' His younger brother Gadādhara was a bit haughty. As there was no love lost between him and his brother, he left Bardowa, came to a place called Nāmabatabhāga (modern Mākhībāhā) and lived there as the Bhuiyā of the place. As his father's priest had sided with Rājadhara, he brought a Brāhmana of the name of Ananta Āchārya from Kanaujapura and made him his priest and preceptor and accepted his Gotra. Since then the family of Gadādhara came to have the gotra of Kāsyapa, that being the gotra of the new family-preceptor. The line of Rājadhara, however still retains their original gotra, the gotra of Krishnātreya. Rājadhara had three sons—Sūryavara, Jayanta and Mādhava Dalai. Sūryavara became Bhuiyā or the lord of the land. He was charitable and self-respecting and was greatly esteemed by all. Sūryavara's son was the great Bhuiyā Kusuma. Kusuma's son was Sankaradeva, who was regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu. 13

Bisu or Visvasinha rose to power during the time of Kusuma and Gadadhara's grandson Madhusūdāna. How he crushed the twelve Bhuiyās will hereafter be dealt with at some length.

When Madhusūdāna was deprived of his Bhuiyāship, his son Purmananda took shelter with the Ahom king. Purmananda's son Visudeva got the title of Ray-chaudhuri from the Ahom king Chukleng Mung at Garhgāon in 1542 A.D.*

Vasudeva, grandson of Bhuiy Madhusūdāna, made a Rai-Chaudhuri by the Ahom king.

2. Hari Bhuiyā.

It has been mentioned before that Krishnākānta's son Vishnukānta alias Haripāla came to Assam with Chandivara. He came to be known as Hari Bhuiyā. According to some he had his seat at Balidiā and according to others at Dighalpurā. His son was Gayāpāla. Gayāpāla's son was Rāmapāla. Rāmapāla had a son of the name of Janārdana Sarasvatī whose son was called Govinda Bhuiyā. This Govinda Bhuiyā came to be known as Dighalpurīā Giri. He had two sons, Kānāi

Govinda Bhuiyā or Dighalpurīā Giri—the last Bhuiyā of Haripālā's line.

সেই মহা ঔমস্বয়, আহিলন্ত রাজধর
কাষত কুলত পদ্মকুল ।
তান পুত্র জগদ্বর মহাবরা দেশধর
দানী দানী পবন বিশিষ্ট ।
জারি বশ এ ভুধনে জরজ্ঞ মাধব মলৈ
দুবো ভাই বাহার কনিষ্ঠ ।
তান পুত্র কুলোদ্ধার ভৌমিক মধ্যত নার
প্রসিদ্ধ কুহুম নাম বার ।
তান পুত্র শিশুমতি, কৃষ্ণ পায়ে করি নতি,
বিরচিত শব্দে পহার ।”

Bhagavata, 10th Skandha, by Sankaradeva.

* For Gadadhara and his descendants, see p. 23.

and Balai. Kānāi was known as Kānubārā. He had two sons, Dāmodara and Mādhava, the latter being the principal desciple of Śaṅkaradeva. During the time of Govinda the family lost its Bhuiyāship.

3. Srihari.

Gopala,
the last
Bhuiya of
Suhari's
line.
Rama-
charana
Thakur—a
scion of this
house.

Srihari Sarasvatī of the Kāsyapa gotra came with Chaṇḍivara. He came to be known as Sarasvatī Bhuiyā. At first he became the Bhuiyā of Baḍanagara. His son was Rāmapāla; Rāmapāla's son was Haripāla. Gopāla was the son of Haripāla. His son Jayapāla removed to a place called Harkākuchi in the district of Sihsagar. Jayapāla's son was Rāmadāsa. The famous Rāmacharana Thākur was the son of Rāmadāsa. The family lost its Bhuiyāship during the time of Gopāla.

4. Sripati.

Jaga-
nātha, as
third Bhuiya
ruling as an
independent
King.

Śripati Bhuiyā also had the title of Sarasvatī. Originally he lived in the village of Bherāgrāma. His son was named Lakshmīpati and the name of his grandson was Jagannātha. Jagannātha ruled in Saumāra in Upper Assam as an independent ruler. His son Prānakrishna left this place in consequence of the raids of the Ahoms and settled at a place called Uguri or Lohāguri. Here he exercised his Bhuiyāship with great power. His son Padmanātha fought with Visvasinha and was deprived of his Bhuiyāship.

Padma-
nātha—the
last Bhuiya
of Sripati's
line.

5. Śridhara.

Śridhara Bhuiyā belonged to the Kāsyapa gotra. At first he settled at Lengāmāguri

and engaged himself in guarding the frontiers of the country. His son Govardhana met with his death at the hands of the Bhotias who invaded his country. At the time of his death his wife was in the seventh month of her pregnancy. She managed to save her life by concealing herself in "pāni" or water. And thus the son, she bore, came to be known a Pāniā-Bara-Kāyastha. He got back one-fourth of his ancestral property from the king of Kāmātā. As directed by his mother he removed to a place called Ghilā-jhari in Sarukhetri Parganā, where he had a fort built for his residence. The king of Kāmātā presented him with five families of learned Brāhmanas and 200 *Seras* of rent-free land (one *seras* being equivalent to nearly 96 bighas). He also got from the king fourteen families comprising Brāhmanas, Kāyasthas, Astrologers, Vaidyas, Chandāls, Kochas and Mechas, lived at the aforesaid place in the capacity of a Kshatriya-Samājapati. His son Gadādhara became independent. The tract of land ruled over by him is now called Kshetribhāga pargana. Gadādhara's son was named Nārāyaṇa Bhuiyā. By dint of his own prowess, he became the foremost of the Bhuiyās. He fought with Hosain Shah of Gauḷi. In Muhammadan history he is better known as Nārāyaṇapāla.

Siddhara's house—the most illustrious Pāniā-Bara-Kāyastha of Nārādhara's line exercises the functions of a Kshatriya-Samājapati, his son Gadādhara rules as an independent ruler.

6. Sadananda.

Sadananda Bhuiyā of the Ātreya gotra lived at Kanaujpur near the capital of the king of Kāmātā. He had two sons, Adirāma and Aniruddha. Aniruddha migrated

Adirama's descendants Kālikānta and Sātānanda, the last two scions of Satananda's house at Kanaujpur take refuge in Bengal.

to the land of Bhāṭi. Ādirāma became the Bhuiyā of a place near Kanaujpur. His son was Kamalākānta. Kamalākānta's son was called Krishnakānta. Krishnakānta had two sons, Kālikānta and Śātānanda. At the time of Visvasinha's invasions both of them fled to Bengal. Kālikānta did not come back. After some time Śātānanda however returned to Assam. He married Kanakapriyā, the sister of Dāmodarā Ātā.

7. Chirananda or Chirapati Datta.

Madhuchandra the last Bhuiyā of the time of Chirānanda meets with defeat and disgrace at the hand of Visvasinha.

Chirapati Datta of Kasyapa gotra became known as Chidānanda or Chirānanda Bhuiyā in Assam. His son Narapati became Bhuiyā of Jhargaoṇ. He had two sons named Umāpati and Manapati. Umāpati became Bhuiyā after his father's death. Manapati went to Bāligaon and settled there. Umāpati's son was named Ranajit who again had a son of the name of Purnachandra. Purnachandra's son was Madhuchandra. He was defeated by Visvasinha and was deprived of all that he was worth.

8. Gadadhara.

Gadadhara, the founder of the Gamatha house of Sukekuchi.

Gadadhara belonged to the gotra of Kauṣika. He accompanied Chandivara when the latter was coming to Assam for the second time. The ruler of Kāmātā appointed him as the Gamatha or representative of the king at a place called Sukekuchi in the district of Kāmrup. His descendants are known as the Gamathā of Sukekuchi. His son was Bhagratha. Bhagratha's son was called Udayagiri. Udayagiri had a son of the name

of Rāmachandra. Rāmachandra's son was Devānanda and Devānanda's son was Haripāla. In consequence of a family dissension Haripāla fled to Luki and lost his Bhuiyā-ship.

9. Buda Khan.

Budā Khan of the gotra of Parāsara came to Assam with his preceptor Priyantana Sarasvatī. Priyantana was also the priest and preceptor of Śrīpati Bhuiyā. Budā Khan became the Bhuiyā of Karnapur through the favour and interest of Chandīvara. The names of his son and grand-sons are not legibly written in the genealogical table. Kālikanta and Jadumani seem to be the names of his grand-sons. According to Prasiddhanārāyaṇa's Vanāyali, Kālia was defeated by Visva sinha.

Budā Khan and Śrīpati Bhuiyā both disciples of were the same preceptor Priyantana Sarasvatī.

10. Gandharva Raya.

Gandharva Bhuiyā belonged to the gotra of Ālanyāna. At first he lived at Kanaujpur near Kamata. Then, as desired by Chandīvara, he went over to a place called Lengamaguri in order to guard the frontiers of the country. When his power increased sufficiently, he came to be known as Gandharva Rāja. When the Bhotias invaded the country he moved to a safe place on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra. Here his great-grand-son Lakshmana Bhuiyā fought bravely against the Musalmāns. He has been described as a powerful chieftain in the Muhammadan annals entitled Riyaz-us-Salatin. As a result of the invasion of Husain Shah he

Gandharva Bhuiyā (afterwards Raya) grand-son of Lakshmana Bhuiyā meets with defeat and death at the hands of Husain Shah after a brave encounter. Charabari satra—the present home of his descendants.

was deprived of all he had and also met with his death. His son Chandra fled to a safe place and thereby saved his life. Chandra Bhuiya's descendants now live at a place called Chārābari-satra.

11. Lohabara.

Kumara
Ghosha, the
most illus-
trious of the
line of
Lohabara,
encounters
Husain
Shah.

Lohabara belonged to the Sāṇḍilya gotra. He also became a Bhuiyā during the time of Chandivara. According to some he came to Assam with Chandivara and according to others he was a member of the Ghosha family living near Kāmatapur. He had two sons, Rāmesvara and Kāmesvara. Ramesvara's son was Divākara and Divākara's son was called Kumāra. In the Riyāz-us-Salatin he has been described as a powerful chief under the name of Kumāra Ghosha. He was defeated and slain by Husain Shah. Then his son fled to a place called Khātā. Here he became known as Thānu-baḍa Bhuiyā. The Chaudhuri family of Khātābari claim to be descendants of Thānu-baḍa Bhuiya.

12. Chanu Giri.

Rupa
Narāyana
and Charu
—the most
illustrious
persons of
Chanu Giri's
line.
Charu's son
Manu Ray
becomes the
Barua of
Rangamati.

In the Purushanāma he has been described as a Kulina Kāyastha living in Kāsi. He became a great favourite of the King of Kāmata. According to some writers he also came to Assam from Gauḍi with Chandivara and was made a Bhuiyā by the King of Kāmata. He had two sons, Hari-manu and Krishn-manu. Hari-manu's son was Srīhari. He was known to be a resident of Kanakpur. His son was named Govinda and Govinda's son was Rūpanārāyana. Rupa put up a long fight against Husain Shah

but was defeated in the end and had to pass his days in poverty. His son Chāru Bhuiyā, however, rose to eminence, became a friend of the king Visvasinha and came to be regarded as a very powerful Bhuiyā. His son Manu Rāya at first became the general of Chilā Rāya and then the Barua of Rāngāmāñi.

13. Gadadhar Bhuiya.

Chandivar's second son Gadādhara did never settle down in Bardowa which is situated on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra. On the other hand he collected a vast army around him from Singeri, and afterwards accompanied by a host of relatives and with the help of these troops he conquered the small tracts on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra proceeding as far as Sadiya in the eastern frontier of Assam. Here, however, he was defeated and taken prisoner in a battle against the king of Khāmti and Chutia, and tradition has it that he was liberated only after a few days by the grace of God. This attack, by Gadādhara, upon the hilly tribes of so distant a country with such scanty troops he speaks his reckless temper and fondness for war.

Gadadhar--
an adventurous
prince,
carrying
war from
Singeri
to Sadiya.

Though he was baffled in his attempt against Sadiya and had to retrace his steps from there, yet he had considerable power in tracts like Garhgāon in the district of Ujāni. Even these places were afterwards conquered and annexed by the Ahom kings; consequently Gadādhara had now to turn back from the

Gadādhara
meets with
reverses His
descendants,
however,
maintain
their
authority
Nāma-
barābhag.

Ujāni tracts and resettle in Singāri. Here however, he felt keenly the want of priests, and hence left the place for Mākhibāha in Barābhāg in the eastern part of the country. There he brought over a Brahmin of the name of Anantāchārya from Kanaujpur and made him his familypriest and spiritual guide. Gadādhara's son Brihatbhadra was in charge of a couple of tracts lying on the border lines of Bhotān and Kāmātā. These two tracts were termed Bāskā north Tāngni and Bāskā west Tāngni. Brihatbhadra possessed Herculean strength in his arms; on a certain occasion being attacked by two wild buffalos he caught one by the horn and drove it away while he killed the other by dashing it against the earth. Thenceforward he was nick named Maṣāmohan,—(of the Maṣā denoting one who is at once big and strong.) Of the descendants of this family one got the hereditary appointment in the Bhuiyāship of the Nāmabarābhāg, while—other was vested with the charge of protecting the frontier provinces. Although the power of the descendants of Gadādhara was curtailed by the Koch and Ahom kings, yet their authority in Nāmabarābhāg and Bāskā-Tāngni remained unaffected. Those two Bāskās have been termed Chamuya by the Ahom kings and the descendants of Gadādhara are appointed in the post of 'Chamuyādār'. Even the British Government too kept the Nāmdhar tract and the Bāskā-Chamuya for a period of about thirty years in possession of the descendants of this family.

But during the *Maujadarship* of the Late Garganirāyana Chowdhuri 'Bāskā' itself was turned into a Maujā and a second Maujādār was appointed in charge of it. A branch of Gadādhara's family is still living in the village of Mangaldai in the district of Darang. It is uncertain when they went over and settled there, although their residence here can be traced up to the reign of king Mahendranārāyana of Darang. It is also found that the title 'Pitgiri' has been attached to their name since that time. Puyārām Pitgiri is the last "Pitgiri" of this branch. His son Ānandrām Chaudhuri has now been appointed a Maujādār by the Government. They too belong to the Kāsyapa gotra; but being the disciples of the Adhikāṇṇa of Bardowai they have now embraced the Mahāpurushīya-Vaiṣṇava religion.

The Pat-
guis of
Mangaldai
have des-
cended from
Gadādhara.

At the time of the arrival of Śrī Sankaradeva the descendants of Gadādhara of Mikhībāhā were initiated into the Vaiṣṇava religion by Dāmodaradeva.

Besides the thirteen persons mentioned above we also come across the names of some Brāhmaṇa Bhuiyās. These were Harichārana, the owner of the village of Vyāghrapinda, Dāmodaradeva's ancestor Brahmananda of the gotra of Gautama, and Ādivara, the Bhuiyā of Nayānagara. Gunabhirama Baruā says that there were seven other Brāhmaṇa Bhuiyās also who had come to Assam from Gauda. Their names were Kṛishnapandit, Raghupati, Rāmāyana, Lohara, Vayāna, Bharana, and Mathura. We have, however, got no evidence

Some
Brāhmaṇa
Bhuiyās.

yet of the acquisition of Bhuiyaship by these seven Brāhmanas. All that is as yet known of these seven persons is that Krishnapandita was the priest of Chanḍivara. Krishnapandita's son was Ratneṣvara and Ratneṣvara's son was Narottama whose son was named Mrityunjaya and Mrityunjaya's son was Chaturbhujā, whose son Rāmarāma Thākura was the teacher of Sankaradeva.

In the old Assam Buranji of Government collection we find the name of Suchāru-chānd, the descendant of Durlabhanārāyana. He seems to have been a contemporary of Husain Shah.

Social
intercourse
between
Gauda and
Kamata.

It is recorded in the Assam Buranji that the king of Gauda was an ally of the king of Kāmata and had given him his daughter Susuddhi in marriage. As she was a very beautiful damsel, the king of Kāmata gave her the first place among his principal queens. He had another queen of the name of Sulochanā. Besides these he had as many as eight minor queens.

How Gauda
and Kamata
fell out.

Nilāmbara, the priest of the king, had two sons, Dmanātha and Chandrasekhara. Every-day Chandrasekhara read out to the queen Susuddhi a book called *Harā-Gauri-Samvada*. The king of Kāmata was highly pleased with him. Very soon, however, he had reasons to suspect that Chandrasekhara was in illicit love with the queen, there being an abatement of the divine power of the goddess, and a revolution breaking out in the country. He was enraged to find that the son of his priest had fallen from virtue and his queen was tainted with sin.

Chandrasekhara loo was seized with madness and was about to commit suicide.

The princess of Gauḍa had not been inactive all this while. She sent Dinanātha, the younger son of the priest, to her father with the news that she had been subjected to a cruel oppression by her husband the king on a false charge. She maintained that the son of the priest had been disgraced simply for reading out to her the highly interesting book called '*Itara-Gauri-Samvadā*',—adding that she had brought all these troubles on her head as she had one day observed that such a book ought fittingly to have been with her father. Receiving this message from his daughter, the king of Gauḍa sent a man to the king of Kāmatā requesting him to send to him the Book in question as well as the Brāhmaṇa who used to read it to the princess.

The king of Kāmatā had put Chandrasekhara in chains. He had employed seven Mechs to kill Kesharāma who used to take Chandrasekhara to the harem of the king. He was killed and two brothers were made to eat his flesh with *Pitṭhā* and *Paramāṇna*. Grieved at this heinous deed, the gate-keepers of the king, Sadānanda Baruā and Sachi Rāya, went over to Gauḍa with the priest and brought the whole matter to the notice of the king. The Pādshah of Gauḍa sent Hallol Khān and Bijit Khan against the king of Kāmatā, who in his distress sought the assistance of the Ahom king Svargadeva.*

After
vicissitudes
Suchaim-
chand, a
descendant
of the king
of Kamata
was assisted
by the
Ahom king
to the
throne of
Behar.

* "A treaty was made, and his daughter Rajani was given to the Ahom king (Suklaampha) in marriage." Gait's Assam, p. 77.

Subsequently Durlabhendra (of his line) became the king of Kāmātī. His reign was a long one. A member of the royal line, Fingua by name, used to play the games of dice and chess with the king. One day while engaged in playing he stabbed the king to death and himself ascended the throne. He spared the life of the late king's son Suchāru-chānd and kept him as an attendant. Then the Ahom king sent Chan-khām Ghar-sāndikai the son of Pachim Gohain for the restoration of the king of Kāmātā to power. In the year 1401 Śaka Era (1479 A.D.) Cham-khām marched with his army and placed Suchāru-chānd on the throne of Behar.¹

A different version of the rise and fall of Kāmātā.

The Assam Buranji of Gunābhīrāma Barua gives the following account of Kāmātā :—
 "It is said that there was a certain city in the modern district of Rangpur, to the west of Kāmrup. A certain Brāhmaṇa of this place had a boy servant whose duty was to tend the cows. This cow-boy was very haughty and mischievous. One day the Brāhmaṇa had to go to the fields in search of him. There he found the boy sleeping at the foot of a tree. A poisonous snake was holding its hood over his head to protect it from the sun. The Brāhmaṇa was in a fright to see this. When the serpent glided away, he had approached him, the Brāhmaṇa examined the palms of his hands and noticed therein the following signs,—a lotus with eight petals, a trident and the padma-rekhā (lotus-

(1) Vide Assam Buranji (Assam Government collection, No. 78, Gauhati) pp. 8-9.

line). The Brāhmaṇa took him home and from that day forward took care not to employ him in any lowly work. He also made him pledge his word to the effect that in case he became king, he would make his master his minister. In course of time that cow-herd became king under the name of Nīladhvaṇa, and the Brāhmaṇa became his minister. He brought many learned Brāhmaṇas from Mithilā for the introduction of Vedic customs among his subjects. It was this king Nīladhvaṇa who built the city of Kamatā and himself took the title of Kamatēsvara or the lord of Kamatā. After Nīladhvaṇa his son Chakradhvaṇa became king. Nīlāmbara succeeded him. He constructed the fort of Ghorāghāṭ and a number of bunds. The son of his minister was in love with his queen. The king had this man murdered and served his father with a dish of the son's meat. Later on he spoke to the minister about the sinful deed of his son. In order to expiate the sin of his son, the minister issued out of his home on a pilgrimage to the holy river Ganges. But his pilgrimage was only a pretext. Having bathed in the Ganges he went to Gauḍa, the capital of Husain Shah and informed him of the weakness of the king of Kamatā. Hussain Shah sent a large army against the king of Kamatā. The war that ensued lasted for twelve years, but neither side could win the victory. At last Hussain Shah sent word that he would no longer continue the fight, but would go back to his own place; before however he did that the ladies of his harem would be glad to see the

Nīladhvaṇa
founds
Kamatā
assuming
the title of
kamatēsvar

queens of the king. Nīlambara complied with this respect. The next day a number of armed warriors entered the city in palanquines, took possession of it and also took the king a captive.¹

Gunābhira
Barua's
Buranjī
lacks
support of
contem-
porary
history. His
Nīlambara
appears to
be a myth.

That Durlabhanīrāyana was a historical person appears from the accounts given in the works of Sankaradeva and other writers. But no such authentic account of Nīladvaja or his grandson Nīlambara is to hand. In the Ms. of Assam Buranjī there is indeed an account of a dish of human flesh. Gunābhirāma's work gives only an echo of this in connection with the story of Nīlāmbara.* While there are many books containing an account of the invasion of Kamatā by Husain Shah, none of them has got a word to say about king Nīlāmbara. The Muhammadan historians while describing the conquest of Kamarūpa or Kamata by Hussain Shah, have given some accounts of the chiefs of the locality; but even they are silent about Nīlāmbara. The following extract taken from the Riyaz-us-Salatin will speak for itself:—

Riyaz-us
Salatin on
Husain
Shah's
invasion
of Assam.

"And subjugating the Rajas of the environs and conquering up to Orissa he levied tribute. After this he planned to conquer Assam, which is North-East of Bengal. With an overwhelming army consisting of infantry and a numerous fleet, he marched towards that kingdom and conquered it. And conquering the whole of that country up to Kāmārūpa,

(2) Gunābhirāma Barua's Buranjī, 4th edition, pp 47-49

* This name is mentioned as a priest of the king in ancient Buranjī.

Kamatā and other districts which were subject to powerful Rajas like Rup, Nārayanpal, Kumār Ghosh, Lakkhan and Lachhminarayan and others, he collected much wealth from the conquered tracts and the Afghāns demolishing these Rājās' buildings erected new buildings. The Raja of Assam not being able to oppose him, relinquishing his country, fled to the mountains. The king, leaving his son with a large army to complete the settlement of the conquered country, returned triumphant and victorious to Bengal. After withdrawal of the king, his son devoted himself to the pacification and defence of the conquered country. But when the rainy season set in, owing to to floods, the roads and tracks became closed; and the Raja with his adherents issued from the hills, surrounded the royal army, engaged in warfare, cut off supplies of provisions, and in a short time put all to the sword."³

Sir Gait, relying upon Gṛnabhirāma Baruā has described Nilāmbara as belonging to the Khen Dynasty, although in contemporary history there is utter absence of proof of this line ever exercising the royal power in Kāmata. It has previously been suggested that Kāmatapur was built in the tenth century A.D. long before the date of Nilāmbara even if he had actually lived.⁴

Most of the powerful Rājās mentioned in the Muhammadan history seem to be descendants of the Kṣayasthas brought to Assam

Sir E.A.
Gait's mis-
take on
point

Bhuiyas
became in-
dependent
only after
Durlabha-
narayana's
death.

³ 3. Vide Riyāz us Salatin, translated by Manly Abdus Salam, pp. 182-183, and Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1894, p. 179

⁴ 4. See Vol. I. p. 214.

by Durlabhanārīyana, or of their kinsmen. A description of them has been given in the proper place. Under these circumstances the reasonable conclusion is that all the Bhūiyās had asserted their independance only after the death of Durlabhanārīyana.

The following account is given by Raghupati in his Gamathā-Vāṁśavali:—

Raghupati's
Gamathā-
Vāṁśavali.

"At one time the Bhūiyās were mightily exercising their authority with the help of the sword and the pen, enjoying the confidence of the king. All on a sudden the Muhammedan king took possession of Kanaujanagara with a vast army resembling a swarm of locusts. Loud wailings rose all over the country. The Muhammedans made havoc of the people. The king and his subjects were all brought to the same level. The Musalmans killed hundreds of cows and Brāhmanas. The wicked Muhammedan king, holding the banner of religion, committed horrible atrocities in the kingdom. The Bhūiyās became depressed, unable to make their position better in any way. They were now like serpents without poison. Unable to bear it any longer, some fled to Gauḍa and some to the mountains and lived there with their families. But the Muhammedans pursued and plundered Gauḍa. At last all the Bhūiyās assembled at Kamatā and, by their united valour driving the enemies, established themselves as rulers of the land."¹

(১) "কলৌজনগর দ্বাৰা, শত্ৰু সংখ্যে অসুখান, বার ভাৰা আহিলা কৰাওঁ।
সবে হস্তে ব্ৰহ্মভেজী, হাৰাৰ সিংহভৰা, অসি হাৰি উঠেৰে লাপট।"
অৰুণো পাইলাকি, কনকনৰ মহাপাল, কলৌজাৰী কলৌজিন্দৰ।
গোশু কলৌজাৰীক, কলৌজাৰীক, কলৌজাৰীক, কলৌজাৰীক, কলৌজাৰীক।

It has been noticed before that Husain Shah took Kāmarupa and Kāmata after a siege lasting for twelve years. In 1498 A.D. he completed the conquest of the country and placing his son Nasarat Shah in charge of the administration of the conquered territory, started for Gauḍa. The river Bara Nadi separated the Muhammadan territory from the regions of the Ahom King which lay to the west of the river. When after a short time, the Muhammadan prince made an attempt to conquer the land of the Ahoms, he received no support from the people of Kāmarupa as he had already alienated their sympathy by his mis-rule and oppression. And the result therefore was that the whole Muhammadan army perished. It has been shown before that the king of Kāmata was put in possession of his father's lost throne by the Ahom king. But on account of the protracted Muhammadan invasion, both Kāmata and Kāmarupa were very soon shorn of their glory. The Bhuiyās also had lost much of their power and influence. With the change of their fortune, there

Collision
between the
Moslem ruler
of Kāmarupa
and the
Ahom King

Decline of
the power &
influence of
Kāmata &
Kāmarupa ;
formation
of a Bhuiya
league

শত শত গো বধ, ভূঁঞাৰি ব্ৰহ্মবধ, করে যোৱা বন বৰ্ষৰ ।
 বৰ্ষৰ ধৰিৱা জালা; পাবন্ত বন ৰাজা, করে ৰাজ্যে যোৱা অভ্যাচাৰ ॥
 ভূঁঞা সব বিমৰিষ, না পাবন্ত একোঁৰিষ, সবে তৈল চৌড়া সাপেৰ সতন ।
 পৰিত্যগি আৰজ্জন, নগে মৈৱা পৰিজন, গৌড়দেশে কৰিল গমন ।
 না পুৱাতে কাল ৰাতি; হৰি হৰি কি কুখ্যাতি, পিছে পিছে হাইল বন ।
 গেল গৌড় হাৰে ধাৰে, বনৰ অভ্যাচাৰে, ভূঁঞা সব কৰতা আইল ।
 আপনাৰ বাহু বলে, বনৰে খেদালে চলে, বাহু ভূঁঞা সবে ৰাজা তৈল ।
 আপনাৰ বধ্য হতে, শিৱোদপি ভূঁঞা পাতে, বুদ্ধ কাৰ্য্যে তাঁৰ আঁজা পান ।
 ইছানত ভাঙে পাতে, ৰাজা সব জয়ে জনে, কিন্তু গৰ্ভা সখাৰ অখান ।”

Gamathā Vangāvali by Raghupati.

arose internal dissensions among them. At this stage, the weak ruler of Kāmatā appointed Nārāyana as the 'Siromani Bhuiyā' and made him his Gamathā or representative. Nārāyana formed a league of all the Bhuiyās and with their united effort, tried to recover their lost power and prestige.

CHAPTER II.

Down-fall of the Baro-Bhuiyas and Rise of the Mech Power.

The Mlechchha dynasty that had ruled Prāgyotisha for four thousand years was indeed shorn of its royalty towards the end of the 11th century. The power and influence, however which its long rule in the country had conferred on the house were not likely to go all at once. Though they had been reduced to poverty on account of foreign invasions and civil strifes yet the manners and customs introduced by them in the country had already struck too deep roots. It has already been observed that the society of Kāmarūpa bears unmistakable testimony to the influence of the Mlechchha rule. Though the power of the Mlechchha king came to an end here, yet his kinsmen and relatives were not exterminated. It does not appear probable that the descendants of those who during the Mlechchha supremacy wielded power as chieftains or generals in different parts of the country could all be at once removed from the position of honour occupied by their forefathers. Some of them acknowledged the authority of the newcomers, while others fled to dense forests and hilly tracts of difficult access, and thus maintained their nationality, family traditions and faith far beyond the conqueror's men, awaiting all the while the advent of happier days.

The last days
of Mlechcha
influence in
Prāgyotisha

The close of the 15th century of the Christian era marks the beginning of the ascendancy of

Rise of the
Mechas as
told in the
Daranga-
Raja-
Vansavali

the Mechas. The following account is given in Daranga-Rāja-Vaṇṣāvali of Śūryakhari Daivajña ;—

“When Sahasrārjuna was killed by Parashurāma twelve princes of his line saved themselves by taking refuge in Chiknābāri. Being afraid of Parasurāma they ate fermented liquor and rice and lost their caste on account of their connection with Mecha women. They begot countless sons by these Mecha women. After many years of peaceful life anarchy prevailed. About this time twelve families of Mechas of the Haihaya line rose into prominence. Their names were ;—Panabar, Bhedela, Guābara, Phedā, Phedo, Barihāna, Kāthiyā, Baihagu, Megha, Juddhābara, Gaḍakata, Jagāi and Bhokharā.¹ Hariyā Maṇḍal became the chief over these twelve.”²

১ “তাহে বান জনাবাজপুত্ৰ পলাই গৈলা। চিকণাবাৰীতে গিয়া সোমাই বহিলা।
নামে পিতৃশির লৈয়া গৈলন্ত গৃহক। রেণুকাৰ হাতে দিয়া জীয়াইলা পিতৃক ৷১৭
পৃথিবীক বিচাৰিলা তিনি সাতবার। ক্ৰন্দী সকলক কৰিলেক ব্ৰূন্যাব ৷
সহস্ৰার্জুনৰ পুত্ৰ বিতো বান জন। নাম ভয়ে মন্ত ভাত কৰিলা ভোজন ৷১৮
ভয়তে থাকিলা যেচনীত মিলা জাত। তান বীৰ্য্যে পুত্ৰগণ ভৈলা অনাধ্যাত ৷
অনুক্রমে বাঢ়িলেক তাহাৰ সন্ততি। পাচে বেন কথা ভৈলা শুনিবো সন্ততি ৷১৯
কতো দিন অনন্তরে অবাকক হৈলা। হেইব সন্ততি বান বন বেচ ভৈলা ৷
তাসবার নাম কহে। তোমাৰ আগত। মহাপৰাক্ৰমী সব শিবৰ ভক্ত ৷
গানবৰ ভেদেলা আবব শুবাবৰ। বেদা বেদো বৰিহনা নেট জেঠতৰ ৷
কাঠিয়া বৈহাঙ মেঘা বুজাবৰ নাম। গড়কাটা জগাই তোখোয়া অনুগাৰ ৷
এই বান জন নেচ পৰম এবল। সবার উপরি জেঠ হাৰিলা সঙল ৷”

Darang Rāja-Vaṇṣāvali, edited by Hem Chandra Goswami,
published by the Govt of Assam, p. 8.

২. পৰ্বতৰ মধ্যত ঢাকলা জে নাম। খুঁটাখটি সনেজাত বান থান ঐম।
তাৰ পূৰ্ব ফালে আঁহে বনাই গ্ৰহণ্ড। খবল পৰ্বত উত্তরত সীমা বণ্ড।
পশ্চিমত জাগীৰবাী গলা বহিছৰ। দক্ষিণত ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ একাশি আঁহৰ।

The origin of Hariya Maṇḍala has not been traced to the Haihaya dynasty in books like the 'Rāja-vaṇṣabali' of Rājā Harendranārāyaṇa or of Upendra Sinha. Indeed it is found afterwards that Sūryakhari, Rājā Harendra and others have all acknowledged the above twelve families of Mech-Sardars as descended from the highest Mech-family³.

Twelve
Mecha fami-
lies rose into
prominence

It is also found that Hariyā Maṇḍala has been described as "Hariya Mech" in the aforesaid 'Rāja-Vaṇṣavali' as also in all the ancient historical record of Kuch Behar. Hariyā Maṇḍala married two sisters Hirā and Jirā, daughters of a Mech Sardar of the name of Hājo. Each of them bore a son—that of Hirā being named Bisu, and that of Jirā being named Sisu. They were born a few years before the invasion of Husain Shah. The Muhammadan invasion had dispersed the Bhuiyās. When the power of the Muhammadans were at an end, they established themselves as lords of villages. In this period of struggle for supremacy Bisu showed courage and skill and was recognised as a powerful leader. The Mechas or Mlechchhas, who had ruled the country of Kāmarūpa for thousands of years and been eclipsed only on account of repeated invasions by the Pāla and

About Hariya
Mandal, their
over-lord

Hariya's son
Bisu con-
solidated the
Mecha
power.

ইহান যথাক গ্রাম আছে বার খান । জুকিলা তখাত আছে বার গিরি জে গ্রহান ।
হারিয়ার খানি সবো মণ্ডল পাতিলা । সেই দিনা খরি তৈতে অধিকারী তৈলা ।
বার জে গ্রামের লোক বশ করি লৈলা ।"

Vide Rājā-Vaṇṣāvali (Compiled under the auspices of Rājā Harendra Narayana) Verses 485-490 (Assam Government Collection, Darrang No. 2, 1st part, leaf 29B.)

3. "স্বৈৰ্য্যবশে লক্ষ বিহো মেচ বার খর ।" (সরস-পালবংশাবলী, p. 34.)

Sena kings of Bengal and the rule of the Soma-vaṁśa and Kāyasīha dynasties, now raised their heads again and gathered round the standard of their leader Bisu. Though they had been subjected to an alien rule for four hundred years, yet they had not forgotten their ancient glory and the story of their lost power. They were known as devoted votaries of the god Siva like the Mlecchha kings of old. Seeing that through the grace of the god Siva their glorious days of old were returning, they called their leader the son of Siva and gave him the name of Visvasīha. They related wonderful tales relating to the birth of their hero.

His struggle with
Phulguri.

Hariā Maṇḍala had made an unsuccessful attempt to subdue the Bhuiyās. He was defeated by the Bhuiyās of Phulguri who took him a captive. He purchased his liberty by agreeing to pay tribute to his victors. Bisu was highly incensed to hear of his father's defeat and humiliation. He discontinued the payment of tribute to the Bhuiyā of Phulguri and attacked him with the twelve chiefs mentioned before. But he too was defeated and was forced to retreat. He was convinced that an open war could never be advantageous to him. He was very courageous and fearless and left the battle field without any companion. He came to a forest where he got no food to eat for three days. At length he found a Mecha house where he got food and shelter. This took place in the month of Fālgun. In the month of Chaitra, the Bhuiyā of Phulguri disbanded his troops. One day in the month of Vaiśākha, at the end of night, Bisu alone entered the capital of Bhuiyā, asking his men to wait outside.

The Bhuiyā was fast asleep. Bisu stole into his bed-room and cut off his head with one blow of his sword. Then he gave his signal and his men at once fell to looting the house. In this way he got vast wealth and became master of that place ⁴

Bisu soon became known as a very powerful *Maṇḍalesvara*. He demanded tribute from the Bhūiyā of Karnapur. The Bhūiyā refused payment and made preparations for war. The Mechas too got ready for the struggle when this news came to them, and advanced towards the enemy. The battle that ensued was a furious one and Visvasiṃha, with one blow of his sword, cut off the head of the Bhūiyā of Kanaujapur. The army of the Bhūiyās was then easily defeated and Bisu became master of their territories.⁵ Next Vaisākha,

Subsequently he crushed Karnapur, Kanaujapur, Bijeni, Pāṇḍanatha, Bhati and Bihar, made Bihar his seat

4- কতিপয় মান দিন রক্ষে নবে আছে । ফুলভরি ভূমাক বে বৃদ্ধ দিল গছে ॥১২৪॥

নৈমন্ত সহিত বিস্ত খেলিয়া গৈলন্ত । কান্তন মানত আই বুক করিলন্ত ॥

ফুলভরি ভূমাক বলে তুনা সৈন্তগণ । যন্তনর গুণে মোক খেলি দিলা বণ ॥১২৫॥

বার জে গ্রামর ধন যন্তনে নবন্ত । কোনো ভূমাক ন লবা কাহাকো নেদন্ত ॥১২৬॥

ফুলভরি ভূমাক সনে বুক করিলন্ত । বুদ্ধে পরাজয় হবা বিস্ত শলাইলন্ত ।

... ... লবরিয়া একেখরে বনে গশিলন্ত ॥

তিন দিন অনাহারে রনচ অসিলা । এক রবি মেহ বন ব্যাক্ত দেখিলা ॥১২৭॥

... ... অনন্তরে বৈশাখর বিহু আসিলেক ॥

ভূমাক সকলর সৈন্ত ঘরা ঘরি গৈলা । একেবর হরা ভূমাক নগরিত রৈলা ॥১২৮॥

... ... ত্র্যম্বকগে ভূমাক নগরে পশিলন্ত ॥

অস্বাস্তিত পশিলেক কোহো না দেখিলা । নগর জন্তেক সৈন্ত বাহিরে থাকিলা ॥১২৯॥

আশপিত বনে ভূমাক হস্তিরা আহন্ত । খজা হানি পিবপুজে শির ছেবিলন্ত ॥

পুছে সৈন্তগণে আই বেরিয়া ধরিলা । বর বাড়ী লুই লুই সমস্তক দিলা ॥১৩০॥

সি সব লোকর বিস্ত ভৈলা অবিকারী । বিস্তর লজিলা তথা ভূমাক জে মারি ॥

5. Vide *Bṛhat Bṛjavarṇanāśi*, edited by Rājā Harandra-nārāyaṇa, Verses 718-722. (Annam Govt. Coll. Daranga, no. 2, Part 1, 1st 40)

when the soldiers were, as usual, resting in their homes, Bisu availed himself of this opportunity and attacked the Bhuiyā of Bijeni like a tiger falling upon a deer and killed him with his army. Thus Bijeni was annexed to his territories. Then Bisu marched against Pratāpa Bhuiyā, the foremost of the Bhuiyās of the time, when he was in residence at Pāṇḍunātha. Here also Bisu did not like open warfare, but adopted a crooked policy. He was informed that Pratāpa's youngest brother who was very dear to him used to bathe in the Brahmaputra every day. He lay in ambush close by the bathing ghat and when Pratāpa's brother was getting up after finishing his bath, he fell upon and slew him. Pratāpa was greatly agrieved and unnerved to hear of the sudden death of his brother. He threw his belongings into a boat and went to Assam on board the same.⁶ Now Bisu made a very easy conquest of the country up to Gauhati. Then he took Bhāṭi and defeated Chāru Bhuiyā and got himself installed as king at Bihar which place he since made his Capital.

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6. বেজেনি ভূঁৱাক লাগি সবে গৈলা ধাই । নারিলেক শিববতে একেলা যে জাই ।
 সিৰো খান দেশ বশ করিলা লৈলন্ত । তার এজাগণ জাই বিজিত খাটন্ত ॥৭৫৩
 বড়-ভূঁৱা এক জন গারত আছিল । মহাক্ৰমে সবে ভূঁৱাক খাটিল ।
 তাহার প্রতাপ নাম অতি বীরমতি । রক্তে লোহিত্যর তীর করিলা বসতি ১৭৫৪
 তান ছোটে তাই আছে নামে যেতখান । লোহিত্যত নিতে সিঙো করে গৈলা দান ॥
 অন্ন খনি শিবপুত্র লুকাই আছিল । দান আছারন্তে পাছে তাহাকে কাটিল ১৭৫৫
 জাতুবধ শুনি ভূঁৱা মহাতর পাইলা । নার ভয়া দিয়া পাছে অসমক গৈলা ।
 মহাক্ৰমে আহমর দেশে পশিলন্ত । সিংহাখান দেশ বিজিত বশ করিলন্ত ॥৭৫৬
 হুজি পাছ ভূঁৱা নারি দেশ সবে লৈলা । রাজা হৈবো বুঝি বিজিত সমস্ততে বৈলা ।

Rājavarṇanāvalī, edited by Rāja Haradranāśyana

Now Bisu began to make preparations for the conquest of the whole of Kāmarupa. Nārāyana Bhuiyā was at that time the Gamathā or representative of the king here and as such was regarded as the head of the Bhuiyās. We learn from the Gamathā-Vāṁsāvali that Gandharva Bhuiyā of Bajali, the Bhuiyās of Bāusi, Rājendra Bhuiyā of Kshetri and many other Bhuiyās were all assembled at the capital of Nārāyana. Their common object was to devise a means for saving their territories from the hands of Bisu. It was decided at the meeting that they would never submit to the Mech chief even if it cost them their territories, wealth and life. They also signed a covenant to the effect that none of them would desert the league. After this, the Bhuiyās began to guard their respective forts. Nārāyana then informed the other Bhuiyās that half of their elephants, horses, boats and warriors should be kept for the protection of their own forts and that they should be present at his place with the other half. It is recorded in Raghupati's Vāṁsāvali⁷ that after the Bhuiyās had gone away Nārāyana held a secret conference with his younger brother Rājendra and his eldest son Harendra.

Bhuiyās
combined
under
Narāyana
to resist
Bisu's
attempt
upon
Kamarupa

He said to them,—“Brother Rājendra and my dear son Harendra, this place has been the happy seat of our family for two generations. All the Mechas have now joined hands with Bisu who is abroad to ruin us. He has also

7. Quotations from the above work have been given in the Kāyastha Patrika, new series, vol XII. pp 5-6

under him men belonging to many other castes. Chāru Bhuiyā is a deadly enemy of mine. He also has joined Bisu. Had Chāru been on my side, I could have easily driven away Bisu. We have lost our ancient power and influence. Now tell me the means of deliverance from this danger."

Narayana's
plan of
battle

Rajendra replied,—“Brother, think no more of getting any help from Chāru. He is an enemy and is sure to do mischief. I, for one, declare that I will never give up fighting as long as I live.” Nārāyana said, “Well said, my brother. Start with your army and select a central position for the fight. You may lie encamped three crores down the river Brahmaputra. Harendra will guard the right wing and Gandharva Bhuiyā will protect the holy places on both sides. I shall myself guard the family-seats of the Bhuiyās. My uncle Haridāsa will be in charge of the fort while Lakhāi Mājhi will take charge of the boats.”

In despair
Visvasinha
resorted to a
subterfuge

According to this programme, the Bāro Bhuiyās armed themselves with guns and other weapons and marched against Visvasinha. The fight lasted long, but neither side yielded to the other. The fight continued day and night. Visvasinha wondered at the tactics of the Bhuiyās. He had fought many a battle; but he had never been so hard pressed. He knew that if he turned his back, the enemy would pursue him. Knowing however, that his force would no longer do, he made up his mind to apply a crooked policy. False adherents are to be met with everywhere. He now devised a plan to secure the death of Nārāyana by making friendly overtures to the other Bhuiyās.

Chāru Bhuiyā had already come over to his side. Nārāyana was now attacked simultaneously by Chāru and Visvasiṅha from opposite sides. Both sides lost heavily in men, but still the fight continued. When three months had rolled away in this manner, Visvasiṅha hit upon a plan. He got a letter written in the following words:—

“O you Bhuiyās, pay goodly heed to what I say. Never fail to fulfil your promise by killing Nārāyana. Nārāyana envies you for your possession of ~~land~~ and money. I have come to fight only ~~according~~ according to your invitation. But your conduct now puzzles me. One should stick to one's resolution. But I witness the reverse of it in the present war. However, when Chāru Bhuiyā will commence his attack from the east I hope you will now have the goodness to leave the coast clear to him. I shall march my army on the night of the New Moon. We all shall combine to make Nārāyana a captive. We shall kill his brother Rājendra. Thereafter we are to sacrifice his son Harendra on the field of battle. We shall exterminate the very line of Nārāyana. And then I will make over to you the kingdom of Bhāṭi.”

Writing many things of a similar nature, the king convened an assembly in the morning. He put the above letter inside a packet in the presence of the persons assembled and having nailed down the lid of it made it over to a messenger who looked stout and strong with instructions to fly away leaving it on the ground in case he was stopped by any body. In obedience to the orders of the king, the messenger started with the packet. When the sentinels of the other side caught sight of him they made a

How the
Suktaifuge
succeeded

dash at him. Thereupon the messenger threw the packet down on the ground and fled away. Then the sentinels picked up that nice packet and sawed it open in order to find out its contents. They had expected to find money inside the packet, but saw that it contained only a letter. They took out that letter and hastened to their chief. What has been ordained by God is sure to come to pass. Thus the letter reached the hands of Nārāyana. He was inflamed with rage to know its contents. He could not at all see through the ruse of Bisu. His end being near, the Gamathā was demented and did not care to show the Bhuiyās the letter in question. Though the Bhuiyās were his staunch friends he now regarded them as so many traitors and put them in chains. He installed as Bhuiyā a man of the name of Jīudharāma and began a terrible fight with Visvasiṁha. He marched to the field with his brother and son. The fight continued day and night. Noticing this change in his attitude, the Bhuiyās began to hatch a plan for securing the death of Nārāyana. Gandharva Bhuiyā addressed the others in these words :—

Like
Nārāyana
the Bhuiyās
also play
into the
hands of
Visvasiṁha,
although in
a different
way

“Friends, see how ungrateful this wicked Nārāyana is. We never thought of injuring him even in dream. Yet he has been insulting us in this way before our enemy. There is no sin in injuring one who does mischief to his benefactor. Therefore, O brothers, let us think how to effect his capture by Visvasiṁha.” All the Bhuiyās approved of the idea and a man was sent to Visvasiṁha with a letter containing the following news :—

“We shall remain inside the fort. The waters

of the two tanks called Suā and Duā will be poisoned to the great inconvenience of Nārāyana. An assassin will secretly make away with Rājendra, then Nārāyana's son Harendra will be offered as sacrifice. Thus shall be easily effected the capture of crippled Nārāyana."

Visvasiṅha was in great glee to receive this letter. Nārāyana's son and brother were both secretly assassinated. The soldiers suffered excessively by drinking of the poisoned water. At this juncture Visvasiṅha sent a man to Nārāyana asking him to surrender as his brother and son were dead. Nārāyana however flew into a rage getting this news. He worshipped the goddess Goshāni and issued out to fight. Prior to this he had sent his youngest son Bhagīratha to his maternal uncle's house for the preservation of the line. The battle raged furious. Nārāyana sacrificed his life in the battle-field. All the members of his family were put to the sword. Even women, aged persons and children were not spared. In this way Visvasiṅha rooted out the line of Nārāyana and took possession of all his wealth. Thus the Bhuiyās sacrificed their independence and were now compelled to submit disgracefully to Visvasiṅha. Thus the Kāyastha Bhuiyās who at one time commanded so much respect and had so much prestige both in Gauḍa and Kāmata brought about their own humiliation and downfall.⁸

Narayana
died in har-
nesses; the
Bhuiyas were
paid back
in their own
coin

From the above description it appears that the Bhuiyās had been greatly weakened by

8. Vide Kāyastha Patrika, (new series) Vol. XII, pp. 6-7 for original.

Internal
dissension
the real
cause of the
downfall of
the Bhuiyās

the repeated invasions of the Muhammadans. When their power declined they grew jealous of one another and began to quarrel among themselves. They lost their long enjoyed power simply on account of their want of unity and their internal feuds. Visvasiṅha was not able to defeat them by force of arms. He had to adopt wicked tricks from the very beginning to accomplish his object. The down-fall of the Kāyasthas came about chiefly as they were too noble and too liberal-minded to see through the wicked designs of Visvasiṅha. Though this victor had crushed the power of many of the Bhuiyās and killed many of them with their families, yet he had spared some of them whom he thought to be his allies. Chāru Bhuiyā of Kanujapura was the most prominent among these.⁹

Risu was installed king
of Kamata
and became
Visvasinha

Bisu was installed king at Kāmata with great pomp and assumed the name of Visvasiṅha. In contemporary records, he has been described as the lord of Kāmata.¹⁰ On account of the protracted siege by the Muhammadans and their repeated invasions, Kāmata had partly been in ruins and had been totally shorn of its past splendours. To Visvasinha belongs the credit of rebuilding the city. The Muhammadans did not spare the temples of the goddess Kāmatesvari. Visvasinha built a new temple to the goddess with brick and

9. Manu Rāy, the son of Chāru Bhuiya, became the commander-in-chief of Chāla Rāy, the son of Visvasinha. He subsequently became the Baruk of Rangamati.

10. "কমতা ঈশ্বর বন্দো বিশ্বসিংহ নৃপবর।

আটচল্লিশ বহিৰী বন্দো ওঠর কোবর।"

বহুলা উপাখ্যান by Durgāvar.

stone.¹¹ He established various images all over Koch Behar and brought learned Brāhmanas from Mithilā for conducting their worship. The chief of these Brāhmanas belonged to the gotra of Vasistha. For this reason Visvasinha himself took the gotra of Vasistha. About that time a staunch Śākta, Narahari Dāsa by name, and a descendant of Śrīdhara Thākura, the minister of Mithilā, was living incognito at Kāmākhya. As advised by the royal priest, Visvasinha appointed him to the post of the prime-minister.

The Pani-chief of Sindhu-Sauvira, of whom mention is made in the Srimad Bhāgavata, himself worshipped the goddess and sacrificed the victim with his own hands.¹² Visvasinha too did the same thing. Though learned Brāhmanas versed in the Vedas and the Purānas, from various places flocked to his court, yet this ancient custom continued unchanged. The Brāhmanas of Kāmṛpa, could not affect this peculiar custom of the Mecha and the Koch tribe. The people of the country, however, had grown favourably inclined towards them when during the ascendancy of the Bhuiyās the influence of the Brāhmanas had already spread in Kāmrupa. Visvasinha too had great regard for the Vrahmanic faith. But still he clung to the time-honoured custom of his race. That he was influenced by Brāhmanism is shewn by the fact that he sent two of his sons Naranārāyana and Sukladhvāja to Benaras for studying the Hindu scriptures

While retaining family traditions Visvasinha came under Brahman influence

11. Vide Daranga-Rājavanśāvalī by Suryā Kharī-dāivajna, Verses 208-215.

12. Vide Vol. I. p. 23-24.

written by Brāhmaṇa teachers. A detailed account of this will hereafter be given.

Viśvasiṃha
attempted a
revenue
settlement

Viśvasiṃha appointed some men as Chaudhuris and some as Pātwaris and asked them to make a revenue-settlement of the country. But all these officers informed him that they were unable to carry out his orders as they had got no records with them. The "Perākākata" of Kāmarūpa had been in the possession of Nārāyaṇa Bhuiyā. And that was not available as he was dead with his family. Hearing these words the conqueror grew penitent and gave his officers to understand that if they might bring to him the heir of Nārāyaṇa he would certainly confer high honours on him.

Bhagīratha's maternal uncle was present in that assembly. He brought Bhagīratha before the king with three baskets of papers. Then king was very glad to get the records. He gave Bhagīratha the highest seat to sit on. Then he appointed Bhagīratha to the post of the Gamathā or representative of the king. He also married him to his damsels. He also gave him two thousand māṭi. Bhagīratha became the "Viśhayapati" of the land between Burādīa in the east and Kaladīa in the west. Besides this, he issued a copper-plate, grant giving unto him free of rent, the four mauzas of Pāni Khāiti, Sati, Chāulkhoā and Burādīa situated within their boundaries. The rank of Bhagīratha was above all the officers of the king including the Bara Baruā. Viśvasiṃha further declared that from that day forward Bhagīratha was exempted from payment of any additional tax. He became the head of the eighteen Chāudhuris. To speak the truth,

Bhagiratha was now the favoured child of fortune. It was the king Visvasiṃha alone to whom he was subordinate. He was not inferior to any one else. When coming back after having received high honours from the king, Bhagiratha paid his respects to Harideva, one of the then Vaishnava teachers of Assam. Bhagiratha was a Sakta. The Vaishnava teacher initiated him into Vaishnavism. The patronage of this new convert greatly facilitated the preaching of the doctrines of Vaishnavism by Harideva.

From a book, entitled *Govinda-vaṁśāvali* by Bhogadatta, we learn that Govinda, one of the Bhuiyās of Assam, settled at Bāligāon with the permission of the king. He became known as *Dighalapuriyā Giri*. He had two sons named Kānāi and Balāi. Kānāi became known as *Dekāgiri*. Very soon he rose to importance on account of his courage and heroism. Bhagiratha tried to assert his independence with his help. In the above work, Bhagiratha has been called the lord of Kāmarupa. Though Dekāgiri was at first on friendly terms with him, yet he became his deadly enemy in the end. In consequence of his enmity with Bhagiratha, he had to flee from his family-seat to Bhāṭi.¹³ It also seems probable that after

Govinda-
vaṁśāvali's
account of
Bhagiratha
and
Dekāgiri

13. "ভূঞা বার জন পোছিল প্রধান আছিল ভূঞা মানে ।

বাগিনীও মানে তেহে বর মানে অনুমতি পাইয়া মানে ।

রাজ আজ্ঞা মানি বাগিনীকে আনি সান্নিধ্য বর বাবী ।

আহান সনয় কানাই বলাই শিবলপুরিয়া গিরি ।

পুত্র সহায় বাগিনী গীয়ে ছাড়ি কালে বাকি হাটি ।

শিবলপুরিয়া ভৈল্য ভৈল্য ভূঞা ছাড়ি গীয়া ভৈল্য গাতি ।

this Bhagiratha made an unsuccessful attempt to become independent.

Bhuiyas
in the Ahom
land

When the power of the Bhuiyās came to an end in Kāmrup, they left the country to settle in the land of the Ahoms. But here too they could not live in peace. We learn from the Assam Buranji written under Ahom patronage that a little before the year 1463 of the Saka era the Bhuiyās crossed Baṭā-Temuni and established themselves near Kalang. In 1465 S.E. the Ahom king Svargadeva ascended the throne. He put to the sword all the Bhuiyās and kept their brothers and nephews as his attendants.¹⁴

At first
persecuted,
the Bhuiyās
were after-
wards
allowed to
settle.

In the year 1560 (S. E.) Buḍā Rajadeo went to catch elephants in Uttarakūla. The Bhuiyās presented him with one hāṇḍī (Cooking pot) of gold and one hāṇḍī of silver. Thereupon the king asked them why they had never given him such a rich present. They said in reply that year after year, they had been sending such presents to him through their superior Tāmuli Gohāin; but they were not aware whether their presents

ছাড়ি গাও লৈলা দিবলপুৰিমা নামত উজ্জলি আছে ।
ভগীৰথ রাজা দেখি মহাতেজা ইহাকো যাতিলা পাছে ॥
হ'ল দীবলপুৰী তু'হা ডেকাগিৰি কাষলগেবৰ আৰি ।
তুনি আৰি দুই মন বিলি হুই রাজাকো বৃথিব আৰি ।
ভান দুই পুত্ৰ মাধব দানোবৰ অন্ন বরস আহিলা ।
সেহি সবসত্ত ভগীৰ লাগত তেহে ন তে নিজ করিলা ।
কেজি রাজার কৰি অত্যাচাৰ ভৈলা মহাপত্ন জন ।
শত্ৰুকাব কৰি নৈলা হতভী ভিত্তিতে ন বৈলা থান ।
কিটকো এড়িলা তৰাতে ন বইলা ভাটনে মেলিলা নাও ।
কয়েক আহিলা কইতে ন পারিলা দিবা ত পাতিলা গাঁও ॥

গোবিন্দ-বংশাবলি ।

14. Vide Assam Buranji (Assam Govt. Col. Granthak, no. 75.)

had reached the royal treasury or not. The king became highly satisfied with them and granting them some degree of independence allowed them to settle in Dakshinakūla.¹⁵ Here however they did not pull on well with the officers of the king. After this the Muhammadans made an attempt to conquer the country of the Ahoms. Fearing that the Bhuiyās might join the invaders, the king kept the sons of four Bhuiyas at his gate.¹⁶ When the troubles due to the Muhammadan invasion were over, a new settlement with the Bhuiyās took place, the following twelve Bhuiyās being established in Uttarakūla, viz Utai, Tamāi, Rāi, Sakāi, Kausika, Ujira, Laskara, Chomadar, Kehor, Sanātan, Rāma Bhaṭṭa and Bhakata Bhuiyā. These twelve were the principal Bhuiyās. Each of them had under him four Sarumuria Bhuiyās. The number of this latter class of Bhuiyās thus became forty-eight. Lāchāma Kolita became the head of these men. The Ahom king took him to his palace and made him settle in the country by making him a grant of land. He had three brothers, one of whom was made to settle on the banks of the river Sonai and one on the mountains. The third brother was appointed 'Khangia' or manager of the property of the queen. After expelling the Kachāris from Sarengi, the Ahom king made Lāchāma Kolita the ruler of the place under the name of "Turpāla" giving him presents of golds, men and many other things.¹⁷

The twelve principal & forty-eight subordinate Bhuiyas under Ahom patronage

15. Vide Assam Buranjī (Assam Govt. Col. Gauhati, no. 78) p. 49

16. Do Do pp. 74a.

17. Do Do Leaf 97a and 97b.

CHAPTER III.

Mech Rule and Social Reform in Kamarupa.

“Dharmaraj”
Narasimha,
eldest son of
Visvasiṅha
settled in
Bhutan

Visvasiṅha had eighteen sons of whom three were note-worthy.¹ Of those Narasiṅha the eldest was very pious and learned. He was a Brahmachāri.² The second son was called Malla or Naranārāyana and the youngest Sukladhvaja or Chilā Raya. Visvasiṅha died about 1540 AD.³ At that time Naranārāyana and Sukladhvaja were learning Sanskrit at Benares. As Narasiṅha was a Brahmachāri and had renounced the world, it was settled that Naranārāyana would be king after his father's death. But as he was away from the capital at the time of his father's death, Narasiṅha was installed on the throne of Kamatā. When the news of the death of the king reached Malla and Sukla, they both hastened to the capital. On their arrival Narasiṅha abdicated the throne in favour of his brother and went to the land of the Bhūṭiyās. It is recorded in Rājavaṃśāvali compiled under the supervision of Rājā Harendra-nārāyana that he became the king of this country and came to be known as Dharmarāja. The people still remember his name. It is said that he received the boon of immortality from the god Siva. It is further said that he lived for one hundred and

1. Vide *বৈষ্ণব-উপাখ্যান* by Durgāvara.

2. Vide Harendra-nārāyan's *Brihat Rājavaṃśāvali*.

3. A detailed account of Visvasiṅha is not given here as it is to be found in Gal's *History of Assam* and Harendra Nārāyan Chaudhury's "The Koch, Bikan State."

twenty years when he died to be born again, that in this second birth he had full memories of all the incidents of his previous existence and that he again became king through the favour of Siva.⁴ Naranārāyana became the king of Kāmātā after his abdication and Sukladhvaja the commander-in-chief. Soon after his accession, Naranārāyana had to engage in a war with the Ahoms. Sir E. A. Gait gives the following description of the struggle :—

“A petty chief conspired, it is said, against Naranārāyana and on detection, fled to Suklengmung, who gave him shelter and made an unsuccessful attack on the Koch king. However that may be, in 1546, (A. D.) an expedition under Sukladhvaja ascended the north bank of the Brahmaputra as far as the Dikrai river, where a battle took place. The Koches, who were armed with bows and arrows, succeeded in killing some of the Ahom leaders, whereupon the common soldiers fled and were pursued with great slaughter.”⁵

After this, Chila Rāya issued out on a conquering expedition accompanied by Kavindra Pātra and Rajendra Pātra. In the book called

Visvanintha's
second sons
successor
Naranara-
yana's
encounter
with the
Ahoms ;
Gait's
account

4. "পাঁছে নরসিংহে বাজা ভোটদেখে আইলা ।

সমহরে অধিপতি ধৰ্ম্মরাজা ভৈলা ।

অজ্ঞাপিষো জার নাম হেলিলা আহন্ত ।

উত্তর দেশে লোকে তাহাতে খাটন্ত ॥ ১২১

শিববর দানে ভৈলো তৈলেক অমর ।

জীবন-বনস ছয় বিশপতি বৎসর ।

বহু লতি পুন জন্মি পূৰ্ব্ব কথা স্মরে ।

পুনরপি নরপতি হৈবে শিববরে ॥" ১২২

(Bṛhat-Bhāvaśāstrī)

5. Sir E. A. Gait's History of Assam, pp. 49-50.

Nara-
narayana's
brother &
commander-
in-chief
Chila Rāya's
adventures

'Daranga-Raja-Vaṇisāvali' a detailed account of his conquests has been given. The conquests extended to the distant land of Manipur in the east and Tippera in the south. At last he invaded Gauḍa where the Pādshāh of the country defeated and took him a captive. It is recorded in the above book that the Pādsāh built a new jail for the imprisonment of Chilā Rāya. There his sufferings knew no bounds. Though he was awfully oppressed with thirst yet no body gave him water to drink for fear of incurring the displeasure of the Pādshāh. The priest of Pratāpa Bhuiyā happened then to be present at Gauḍa. He managed to see Chilā Rāya in the prison with a pot of copper full of water and gīving it to him to drink saved his life. Chilā Rāya became highly pleased with the Brāhmana and promised to do a good turn to him if he could but come back to his own country.⁶ About this time the mother of the Pādshāh was bitten by a

6. "এতেকে পাঁৎছার হাতে তৈলেক বন্ধন ।
আপুন গৃহত বৈলা নরনারায়ণ ।
ধরি দিরা চিলারায়ক বন্দি করিলন্ত ।
লোহা লগাইবক ডাক আদেশ দিলন্ত ॥৫০৩.....
নব কারাগার বাকি খেলা বন্দী করি ।
কষ্ট মনে রৈলা তৈতে পৌসানীত সবি ।
তুবারে গীড়িত হরা জল খুজিলন্ত ।
ডরত থাকিরা কোহো জল দে দিলন্ত ॥ ৫০৭
অতঃপুঁয়ার পুরোহিত বিশ এক ।
ভাইর বটত জল দিলন্ত এতোক ।
সেহি জল পানে বালা সন্তোষিত তৈলা ।
বিকক সবুজি বাক্য দুনিবাক লৈলা ॥ ৫০৮
মজি যদি রাষ্ট্র পাণ্ড বেশ আপোনার ।
ভেবে সত্যে সত্যে ভাল সাধিবে তোমার ॥ ৫০৯
(বরদ-রাজবংশোদ্ভূত)

snake. No one could cure her and her life was despaired of. Chila Rāya heard of this from his prison and gave the Padshāh to understand that he knew how to cure snakebites. The mother of the Padshāh was now placed under his treatment and was perfectly cured. At this the Padshah was highly pleased with his captive, set him free and offered him a number of presents. It is recorded in Harendra-nārāyana's Brihat Rāja-vaṁśāvali, that he refused every offer praying for to be provided with two learned Brāhmanas only. The Padshah said that he had no hold on the Brāhmanas. But Chila Rāya was allowed to take with him any Brāhmana if only the latter was willing to go with him.⁷ In compliance with the earnest request of Chila Rāya two Brāhmanas, one called the 'Siddhāntavāgisa' and the other called the 'Vidyāvāgisa' went to Kāmata with him. They settled in the country and were each given a grant of nine villages.⁸

By the example and influence of these two great Brāhmana scholars the social and religious

৭. "মোৰ দেশে ভট্টাচাৰ্য নাহিকো পণ্ডিত ।

যত যত লোক আছে মোছৰ চৰিত ॥

হেন শুনি গৌড়েশ্বৰে বচন বোলয় ।

ভট্টাচাৰ্য দিব মোৰ শক্তি নাহি হয় ॥

বিশেষত জা সমাধি নাহি অধিকাৰ ।

কিবা হেতু আজ্ঞা তাৰা মানিবে আমার ॥ ১৫৮৪ "

Raja Harendranarāyaṇa's Brihat Rājavāṁśāvali

৪. "সিদ্ধান্তবাসীৰ আৰু বিজ্ঞা জ্ঞে বাসীৰ ।

দুয়োজন ভট্টাচাৰ্য আইলা মোৰ দেশ ॥ ১১৩৫...

ভট্টাচাৰ্য দুহস্তক সমান কৰিলা ।

দুই নব খান আৰু দুহস্তক দিলা ॥ ১১৭২ Do "

life of the then Mech society was thoroughly changed. The following extract from first volume of this work may be interesting in this connection—

"It has been previously noticed that in ancient Assyria Melchidezek was both the king and the high priest. In the same way, as found on many occasions, the Mlechchha kings of Kāmarūpa also officiated as high-priests. This custom seems to have come down even to the days of Rājā Visvasiṅha of the Mech family, who founded the royal house of Koch Bihar." (p. 128).

Visvasiṅha
worshipping
Durgā

In Rājavaṁśāvali there is a detailed account of the worship of the goddess Durgā by Visvasiṅha on one of his marches against the Bāro Bhūiyās. The following lines from Daranga-Rājavaṁśāvali may bear quotation here :—

"Then the hero Bisu went on leisurely thinking of the feet of Durgā. He came to the vicinity of a mountain and saw an image lying (on the ground). The great king took it in his hand and saw that it was the ten-handed goddess Bhagavati. He was in an ecstasy and took it on his head and showed much of devotion. He went to his house, installed it in the temple of Gosāni and worshipped it with sacrifices."⁹

৯. "অনন্তর্বে বীত বীর, চলি যাত বীরে ধীর, হুগাঁও ভরণ বনে ধরি।
পার্বত্যের সন্নীপত, তৈলা পৈরা উপগত, দেখে এক মূর্তি আছে পরি।
সাম্বন্ধে বহিরাই, হাতত তুলিয়া চাই, দেখে দশভুজা উপবতী।
পদম ধরিব তৈলা, পিরোপত করি লৈলা, করিলন্ত অনেক ভক্তি।
অপোদিত বন্ধক পৈরা, পৌরাণী মরত পৈরা, বলি দিরা করিলাক পূজন।"
(দুর্গা-বংশাবলি)

Some scholars are inclined to think that the quotation given above does not prove that the Mech kings had the right to offer worship to the goddess Sakti. They explain it away saying that before marching against the Bāro Bhuiyās Visvasinha simply followed the practice of the robbers to worship the goddess Kālī just before setting out on their marauding expeditions. But the lines quoted above show that he worshipped the goddess Durgā according to ancient customs. There is also no lack of evidence to show that subsequently to his coming to the throne he himself offered Pūjā to Durgā.

The influence of the two Brahmanas, (Chula Ray brought from Gauda) upon the social and religious life of Mech society

As we have seen before, Naranārāyana and Sukladhvaja were brought up at Benares after the ideal of high-caste Hindus. Therefore a deep sympathy for Hindu manners, customs and ideals was rooted in their hearts. This is why they made an attempt to introduce those ideas and customs among their people after their accession to power.

At that time most of the people of Kāmarūpa followed the religion of the Mlechchha, *sadāchāra* and *brahmacharyya* being unknown there. Though the rule of the Kāyasthas had lasted in the country for a long time before the rise of the Mechas and though the Bhuiyās had followed to a considerable extent the manners and customs prevailing in Gauda, yet they never dared interfere with the manners and customs and religious beliefs of the people. We have said before that the Mech Chief Bisu followed the traditions of his family before his occupying the throne of Kāmarūpa. When he became the king of the country he came to be known to

Naranarayana and (Chula Ray education at Benares also contributed to the spread of Hindu manners & rites among the Mechas

the Brāhmanas as the son of the god Siva. From that time forward he came to have great regard for the Brāhmanas and their religion.

Different
versions of
the
Brahmana
settlement

He also brought from Mithilā a Brāhmana of the name of Sārvabhauma belonging to the Gotra of Vasishṭha for the worship of his tutelary deities. It is mentioned in Rājā Harendra-nārāyana's Brihat Rājavañśāvali that Siddhāntavāgisa and Vidyāvāgisa first came to Kāmarupa on pilgrimage, that the king Naranārāyana received them cordially and made to each of them a grant of nine villages and that thereafter both of them settled in the country. They became the advisers of the yal broothers and set about the work of social reform. Just as in Bengal Raghunandana compiled 28 codes on Smṛiti for the guidance of the Hindus of the province, so too in Assam Siddhāntavāgisa acquired fame for himself as the writer of 18 books on the same subject all known by the name of Kaumudī. The names of these works are :—

Siddhanta-
vāgisa the
Raghu-
nandana
of Assam

- (1) Daṇḍa Kaumudī
- (2) Preta Kaumudī
- (3) Vṛishotsarga Kaumudī
- (4) Pramāṇa Kaumudī
- (5) Śrāddha Kaumudī
- (6) Durgotsava Kaumudī
- (7) Ekādasi Kaumudī
- (8) Suddhi Kaumudī
- (9) Pratishṭhā Kaumudī
- (10) Sañkalpa Kaumudī
- (11) Prāyaschitta Kaumudī
- (12) Tirtha Kaumudī
- (13) Kala Kaumudī
- (14) Dikṣā Kaumudī

- (15) Sambandha Kaumudī
- (16) Tithi Kaumudī
- (17) Dāya Kaumudī
- (18) Achāra Kaumudī¹⁰

These works are paid the same respect in Assam as those of Raghunandana receive in Bengal. Through the efforts of the king Nara-nārāyana and Sukladhvaja Varnas and Asramas in keeping with the Kaumudis of Siddhānta-bāgisha were established in Kāmarup. At this stage the people of various persuasions in the country came to be known as Brāhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sūdras.¹¹ Thus there came into existence here different gradations of rank some of them became superior to others and some of them were regarded as forming

Spread of
Brahmanic
culture, and
creation of
a new order
of the
Varnas
through
his efforts

10. “ভট্টাচার্য্য ভ্রমো জনে মনে রজ করি ।

ধর্ম চলাইবাক লৈলা শাস্ত্র অনুসরি ॥ ১১৭০

সিদ্ধান্তবাগীশে রচিলা হরিসে অষ্টাদশ কোমুদীক ।

অষ্টর পুরাণ শাস্ত্র চাহি আন এণবিরা দেবতীক ॥ ১১৮৭

জি সব দোষত দৃষ্টিবে জি মত গ্রহ করি লেখিলন্ত ।

কবির ভাবিত করি এমণিত শাস্ত্র চালিলন্ত ।

কোমুদী নামত অষ্টাদশ শাস্ত্র বিরচিলা মহামতি ॥ ১১৮৮

এখমতে দশকোমুদী প্রচণ্ড রচিলা করি জতনে ।

এতকোমুদীক মতে রচিলেক বুঝোৎসর্গ তাঁত পত্রে ।

এমণি নামত এক শ্রীক মত দুর্গোৎসব অনুত্তরে ॥ ১১৮৯

একাদশী শুদ্ধি প্রতিষ্ঠা-কোমুদী মঙ্গল প্রতিষ্ঠা নাম ।

তীর্থ নাম এক কাল কোমুদীক পঞ্চ দীক্ষা অনুপার ॥

সংখ্য তিথিক দার আচারক বহু করি বিরচিলা ।

কহি গো অষ্টর নামক শাস্ত্রর দোষ সবে এবর্জিলা ॥” ১১৯০

11. “বিদ্য কত্রিগণ বৈজ্ঞ পুত্র জন আনো নানি জাতি চর ।

করিয় বিভেদ বিলা পরিচ্ছেদ ভাগে ভাগে অতিশর ॥ ১১৯১

সংখ্য জাতিক জির করিলেক উত্তম ব্যবহার করি ।

কল্পে সকলক ইন করিলেক শাস্ত্রবাক্য অনুসারি ॥” ১১৯২

the lowest stratum of the Society. Siddhānta-vāgīsa now became the social dictator. He prescribed the rites and ceremonies to be observed by the various classes of the people and his voice was supreme in matters relating to the social position of each class. In those days if anybody had the audacity to violate the rule promulgated by Vidyāvāgīsa he was punished by the king and in serious cases even banished with his family.¹² In this way the Brāhmana authority was established in the whole of Kāmarupa. According to their respective traditions the kings or tribal chiefs of the Koch and Mech tribes would first worship their deities in all religious ceremonies. Now, however, with the ascendancy of the Brāhmanas this ancient custom was abolished. In Siddhānta-vāgīsa's Smritikaumudī Brāhmanas alone have been allowed the right of worshipping Sakti. To prevent the Mecha kings from breaking this new injunction it was laid down that neither the king nor a vile Sūdra should have a look at the goddess Kāmākhya. Even Brāhmana widows were debarred from

12. "জগদ্বন্ধু নাম ভৈল্য অমুপাম এহি হেতু কহিলন্ত ।

বাগীশর মতে সমস্তে অবর্ত্তে করে ধর্মকর্ম হয় ।

আচার বিচার জাতি ব্যবহার তান মতে অবর্ত্তয় । ১৭৯০

মত বাগীশর এরি জিতো নর বলাৎকার অবর্ত্তয় ।

তাক নরপতি করে দণ্ড অতি বহুলে তাক ভেজয় ।

বিন্ধ্যবাগীশের কথা শুন্য নর জি মতে শাস্ত করিল্য ।

মল্ল নর রাই শুক্লকল আই হুয়া সে বকে আঁটিল্য ।" ১৭৯৯

Bṛhat Sajaranaṣavali by Raja Harendranarayana, padas 1761--1794, (Vide Assam Govt. Collection, Darang, No 2, 1st part, Leaves 92--93.)

seeing the Devi. Women in general, especially young ladies, were declared unfit to touch the image of the goddess.¹³

It is doubtful whether all persons now follow the injunctions laid down by Siddhāntavagīsa in as much as many Rājās and Mahārājās are now found to visit the shrine of Kāmākhyā. The Rāja families of Koch Bihār, Bijni and Darang, however, have been scrupulously following these rules from the time of Naranārayana and Sukladhvaja and no member of these families ever undertake any pilgrimage to the shrine of Kāmākhyā or Goshāni of Kāmata. The two brothers Malla and Sukla consecrated the present temple of Kāmākhyā at an enormous cost and put up stone-tablets on the walls recording their own deeds. Of course they were deprived of the right of seeing the goddess but they managed to immortalise themselves by establishing their statues at the door of the temple.

Laxity in the observance of the shrine rules

But though in the time of Malla-Sukla the ancient customs were fast changing in Kāmarupa yet outside its border the ancient customs still held sway. Sūrya Khari-Daivajña gives the following account in his Rājavanśāvali :—

“The king proclaimed to all with a vow that it was his royal command that in all temples lying to the north of Goshāni Kamala’s *Ah* which was the line of demarcation between

13 “ব্রাহ্মা ন বীক্ষয়েজ্জাতু শূদ্রো রূপাচ্চ এব চ।

বিধবা ব্রাহ্মণী বাহু সর্বাঙ্গো ন বীক্ষয়েৎ।

ন স্ত্রী দেবী পুণেজ্জাতু যুক্তী চ বিশেষতঃ।”

(কামৰূপ-ব্রাহ্ম-পদ্ধতি)

Social and
religious life
continuing
in old
channels
in eastern
Assam

western and eastern Assam the Kochas and the Mechas would continue to perform the worship, while in the south the Brāhmanas would officiate. This law was to hold good in all places. The Bhoṭas and the Kachhāris would eat fermented liquor and rice. They shall have to give me gold and horse for the enjoyment of their lands"¹⁴.

From the above account it appears that the supremacy of the Brāhmanas was established in modern Koch Bihār and in the modern districts of Goālpāra, Kāmrup, Nowgāon and Darang, while in the north of Goshāin Kamal's Ali¹⁵ i.e. in Eastern Assam comprising the districts of Lakhimpur, Sibsāgar, and Nāgā Hills and the adjoining places, the ancient customs continued to be in vogue. The spread of Sanskrit learning was necessary in

14. "শপত খুই বাজা বুলিলা বচন। শুনিয়া সমস্তে মোর বাক্য নিবন্ধন।
গৌহাটী-কনল-মালি মধ্যে সীমা করি। উত্তরর ফালে আছে বতক কছারী ॥৩৬৬
সেহি ফালে মেবালর আছে বত বত। কোচে মেচে পুজিবেক মোহোর বাক্যত।
দক্ষিণর ফালে পুমা ব্রাহ্মণে করিব। এহি নিবন্ধনে সবে ধর্ম প্রবর্তিব ॥৩৬৭
ছোট কছারীয়ে তক্ষি মস্ত ভাত ধাবি। মাটির কারণে মোক মোণ। বোড়া দিবি।
এহি নিবন্ধন বাকি পাচে নরেশ্বর। শিকরিত বৈল গই মজাই বাসর ॥৩৬৮

Daranga-Rājavansāvali by Śūryakharī.

15, Sir E. A. Gait thus writes about the Goshāin Kamal's Ali—

"Nara-nārāyan soon came into conflict with the Ahoms in 1546 an expedition under Sukladhvaj ascended the north bank of the Brahmaputra as far as the Dikra river, where a battle took place.....In the course of these operations, the Kochas constructed an embanked road the whole way from their capital in Koch Bihar to Nārāyanpur, in the south-west of what is now the North Lakhimpur Subdivision, a distance of some 350 miles. The work was carried out under the supervision of Goshāin Kamal, the King's brother; parts of it are still in existence and are known to this day as "Goshāin Kamal's road." History of Assam, p. 49-50. Vide also Daranga-Rājavansāvali, verses 319-322.

order to introduce among all classes of men the manners and customs of the Brāhmanas. It was also necessary to write books on Hindu religion in the language of the people. For this purpose the king brought learned Brāhmanas from Gauḍa and Kāmarupa and made arrangements for the publication of religious books in the popular dialect. Sūryakhari says that at the command of the king Naranārāyaṇa Rāma Sarasvatī composed padas (verse) simplifying the Mahābhārata, the Rāmāyaṇa and the eighteen Purāṇas. In obedience, to his royal behest Saṅkaradeva too wrote the padas of the Bhāgavata consisting of twelve Skandhas in the language of the people in order to spread the cult of Hari. So also Śrīdhara wrote his book on Astronomy and Bakula Kāyastha his Līlāvati in the popular language.¹⁶ In Rāja Harendranārāyaṇa's Brihat Rāja-Vaṁśāvali it is recorded that Bhānumatī the queen of Naranārāyaṇa made the following request to Vidyāvāgīsa :—

“O preceptor, would you please write a book on Sanskrit Grammar following up Pāṇini and

To facilitate
the spread
of Brah-
manic
culture
Sanskrit
works were
translated
into the
popular
dialect

16. “গৌড় কামরূপে যত পণ্ডিত আছিল।। সমস্তকে আমি সজ দেখান গাতিলা।।
বোলে বিপ্র পণ্ডিত সমস্তে শুনিয়োক। কলির যুগত বুদ্ধি হৈব ভয় শোক। ৬০৪
অন্ন আয় অন্ন বুদ্ধি হৈবেক নিশেব। লোপ হৈব পূর্ব শত্রু গ্রহাদি বিশেষ।
শুনিয়ে পুস্তকোত্তম শুটীচাৰ্য্য দিহ। করিয়োক রত্নমালা ব্যাকরণ বীজ। ৬০৫
সম্প্রতিকে জীয়ে শূন্যে গড়িব বতনে। কিছু শেব ভৈলে গঢ়িবেক বিপ্রগণে।
শুনিয়েক আজ্ঞা বোর বাব সরস্বতী। ভারতর গদ ভূমি করিয়ে সম্প্রতি। ৬০৬
আজ্ঞা আছে সন্তকান্ত রায়ারণ বত। যৌকক ভাঙ্গিয়া গদ করিয়ে সম্প্রতি।
অষ্টাধিপ পুরাণর করিয়োক গদ। তাকে জুনি নরলোকে পাইব পরমুগণে। ৬০৭
শুনিয়ে শকর ভূমি ভক্ত মহাজন। বাচর কদর গদ করা নিবন্ধন।
হরির ভক্তিক ভূমি করিয়ে প্রচার। হরি ভাঙ্গি নয়ে হৌক সলোৱণ পার। ৬০৮
শুনিয়ে জীৱর ভূমি বোর বাব্য ধরা। জ্যোতিষক ভাঙ্গি ভূমি সাধ্য বৎ করা।
বকুল কাহর ভূমি ভাঙ্গা দীল্যাবতী। অল্পতে বৃদ্ধ বৈদ্য কাহয়ে সম্প্রতি। ৬০৯

/ Daranga Rājāvaṁśāvali.

Mahesvara's Kalāpa and call it Ratnamālā after me." Vidyavāgisa could not disregard such a request and wrote Ratnamālā.¹⁷ A famous work on Grammar called Prayoga-Ratnamālā is still taught in many tols in Koch Bihar and Assam.

Evidence
of female
interest in
Sanskrit

From the above fact it may be inferred that in those days the ladies of the royal harem were versed in Sanskrit. They even evinced great interest in the publication of religious books. Just as Malladeva came to be known as Naranārāyana at the time of his coronation, so Bhānumati too got the name of Ratnamālā when she became the chief queen.

Hard lot of
the Bhuiyās
in Upper
Assam,
at the hands
of the
Ahoms.

It has been said before that all the Bhuiyās on being defeated and deprived of all their possessions by Visvasiṅha fled to Upper Assam in order to save themselves. But here too they were not quite safe. Upper Assam was then under Ahom rule. As long as the Bhuiyās were united, all the attempts of the Ahoms to injure them proved fruitless. But now hearing of the defeat of the Bhuiyās at the hands of Visvasiṅha, they commenced hostilities afresh. We learn from the old Assam Buranji that the sons of the Bhuiyās were taken in chains to Sadiā and were sacrificed before the goddess. Under such oppression some of them sacrificed the glory of their birth and saved themselves

17. "রত্নমালা নামে গ্রন্থ গ্রহণ করিয়োক। আমার নামক সেই গ্রন্থে লেখিবোক।
দুঃখতির শ্রিততয়া ভানু পাটেশ্বরী। ভট্টাচার্য্য আগে কথা কহিলা সাধরি। ১৮২৫
পাণিনির বর্ণমালা গ্রন্থে যে লেখিবা। মহেশ্বর কৃত কলাপির নাম দিবা।
সমস্তে আদেশ ভেদে হেলা না করিলা। আশ্রিতে রত্নমালা শত্রুক নির্মিলা ॥
বিত্তবাসীশর পুত্র সার্কর্জের নাম। পরর পণ্ডিত তানি নাহিকো উপার।"

Raja Harandra Nāṭhyana's Brihat Rajavamsavali, padas
1826-1827,

by becoming the attendants of the Ahom kings. Many of them, however, preferred to maintain their liberty and honour by taking refuge in mountain caves or dense forests. An account of those who submitted to the Ahoms has already been given. But those who did not yield to them had to move from place to place and pass their life in misery. Pratāpa Bhuiyā was the foremost among them. They were dragging on a miserable existence when his priest who had saved the life of Chilā Rāy in Gauḍa came to them and informed them of the promise made by him. Then they all waited on Chilā Rāy with the priest and were accorded a very kind reception. It is recorded in Durgādāsa's Koc'ia-Rāja-Vaṁśāvali that on the 21st day of Vaisākha, in 53 Rājasaka, the fourteen Bhuiyās viz (1) Bhavānanda, (2) Bibhu Bisvāsa, (3) Bisārada, (4) Hari Chaudhuri, (5) Gaurīpati, (6) Bhīmasena, (7) Subhankara, (8) Divākara, (9) Meghanātha, (10) Narahari, (11) Tantesvara, (12) Bhabesvara, (13) Dhanesvara and (14) Pratāpa Rāy presented themselves at the court of the king. They had with them some devout Brāhmanas. They all knew that the king Naranārāyaṇa was a pious and popular ruler. He appreciated merit wherever it was found. His brother Chilā Rāy was his right hand. He was not only a great hero and a man of profound learning, but also a just prince. He knew how to show respect to those who belonged to the upper classes. Seeing those respectable guests at the court of the king he received them cordially. The following account of the reception accorded to them is taken from the book of Durgādāsa mentioned above :—

Kocha-Raja-
Vamsayah
of Durgadasa

The persecu-
ted Bhuiyas
at length
seek the
protection
of Narayana
through his
brother
Chilā Rāy

How thy
were
received
as related,
by Durgā-
dasa

"In obedience to the order of the king, his younger brother then said to all the Brāhmanas,—'If you go with me you will get grants of land; but if you do not go, you will fall into danger.' Hearing the words of Chila Rāy all of them agreed to accompany him. Now the brother of the king asked the fourteen Kāyastha Bhuiyās to follow him. But they said 'O, younger brother of the king, we the Kāyastha Bhuiyās have come to your door leaving our county through the fear of the king of Assam. Seeking your protection for fear of life why should we go elsewhere leaving the king?'

"The king, however, made no reply and having dismissed his courtiers went inside the palace. Then, one day, desiring to bathe in the river Brahmaputra he asked his brother to go ahead to Asvakāntā with the fourteen (Bhuiyās), and to build a city there. Upon this prince Sukladhvaja went there with the fourteen Bhuiyās. He built there a city like the city of the gods. The sight of it was enough to dispel sorrow from the mind of the afflicted. Sukladhvaja then stepped down into the river and when the water had reached upto his navel he had the Kāyastha Bhuiyās brought there. Now he asked them to go with him again, giving them to understand that he would solemnly pledge his word of protection to them. On this they gave their consent saying that they would accompany him if a solemn assurance was given. Then these fifteen men built the city and coming to the king bowed unto him. They spoke to him of every thing about the city. His Majesty was highly pleased to hear all this. Then

he got ready with his chieftains and soldiers and, knowing that there was holy water there, went to the place. The king went merrily with the queen to bathe at Asvākrāntā. It was the month of Chaitra. The sun was shining very bright. He started on his journey at noon. The fourteen Kāyastha Bhuiyās went with him. He looked bright as he was going to take his bath. A lac of mighty soldiers went with him. He reached Asvākrāntā and looked like the god Indra. Sukladhvaja had preceded him and put up a fencing around the bathing ghat.

"The king entered the city and his soldiers lay encamped there. The Mahārāja who was the ornament of the earth spent that night at Asvākrāntā desiring to bathe there the following day which happened to be the eighth day of the bright half of the month. The subjects slept happily after finishing their supper. When the day dawned and the sun rose, the king went to the bathing ghat. He bathed there and performed the worship of the gods and *tarpana* and then propitiated the three worlds by his gifts. At this stage Sukladhvaja put his cloth round his neck and with folded hands said, "O king, the Kāyastha Bhuiyās not being willing to go with me, how am I to take them with me?" The king asked him to bring them before him so that he might talk to them from the holy water. Receiving the orders of the king, his younger brother told his man to bring the Bhuiyās there. As soon as the messenger got the order he hastened to them and saw the fourteen men standing at the gate. He informed them of the stern behest of the king

and asked them to go to him saying, quickly, 'The king is bathing and making gifts at Asvakrāntā ; you fourteen have to hurry up. Upon this order of the king all the Kāyasthas arrived at Asvakrāntā with expectant hearts. They saluted him covering their right-hands with the left and stood before him with folded hands. The king said, 'O chief Kāyasthas, hear me. You should go with my brother without hesitation. He will think well of the matter and give you stipends and grants of land. Go there obeying my order and you will flourish. I shall go there after some days'. So saying, the son of the great Visva held his tongue. Hearing everything, the Kāyasthas dropped their hands and bowed unto him with these words, 'O king, we are ready to go wherever you may be pleased to order us ; but we have only one prayer to make. We shall leave this kingdom O king, if we are given a solemn pledge.' Hearing this the king promised to give them a solemn pledge. The fourteen men then respectfully bowed to the king. He had freed them from poverty by bestowing gifts on them. The king was then glad to partake of *páyasa*, sweets and *pañchámrita* which was delicious to taste. The fourteen men also had the same fare. The king then proceeded to his own home. The cry of the elephants, the neighing of the horses and the sound of various musical instruments filled the air. The king Naranārāyana came back to his palace after finishing his bath and gifts. Then one day Śuklādhvaja bowed his head before the king and said, 'The fourteen men that are to go with me

do not agree to go unless they are furnished with a document containing the pledge.' The king then ordered that a document containing the solemn pledge should be given to them. On receipt of this command, Sukladhvāja got the solemn promise inscribed on a copper-plate and made it over to the king. The king having immersed his body up to the navel in the waters of the river Brahmaputra reads it out and thus makes this promise :—

"You may take possession of as much land of my dominion as you can during one day leaving out eight dandas of time. Whether the plots you thus occupy are Devottara or Pirapāla, under cultivation or not, and no matter who-ever may be the landlord, you are sure to have them. Only you will have to pay that homage which you do to-day from generation to generation, and you are to tell me on oath that your lines will never desert mine. If in the line of any one of you there is a son, who may be blind, lame, haunch-backed or dumb or mad, even such a son will enjoy the land granted. There will be no difference even if he be blind of one eye or of both the eyes. In autumn, the worship of the Goddess Durgā will take place. If you can, you should present yourself at my place on the occasion'. The fourteen Bhuiyās took the following vow, 'We shall take food in your house on all the days. We promise that we shall not leave your kingdom,' and the promises of both the parties were embodied in a document.¹⁸

King
Narayan's
solemn
pledge to
the Bhuiyas
on a copper-
plate

18, "বুগ আসা শিরে লরা কপিত ভূপাল । ব্রাহ্মণ সবাক লিখানিল ভৎকাল ।
সেৱ লগে লাবে সবে বুদ্ধিভূমি পাবে । লগে নাহি লাবে ভব বিগতি বচিবে ।
মহাসিহে বাক্য শুনি ব্রাহ্মণ সকল । লগে লকি হবে তাঁরা আসিল কহুল ।

From the above account we learn that through the efforts of Chilā Rāy, the king Naranārāyana had established fourteen Bhuiyās in his kingdom by making grants of land to them. The land that they got was situated by the side of the river Brahmaputra.

অনন্তরে ভূঞার কার্যস্থ চৌদ্ধ জন । সন্মতে আসিতে বলে কনিষ্ঠ রাজন ।
 গলে বস্ত্র গুট পানি চৌদ্ধ জন কর । হজুর সাক্ষাত বলি শুন ছোটরায় ।
 আসাম রাজ্যের ভয়ে ভূঁয়ার কাবস্থ । মূলক ছাড়িয়া হৈল ভোমার দ্বারস্থ ।
 ঐশ্য ভয়ে ত্রস্ত হইল লৈলোক শরণ । ভূগতিক ছাড়ি কেন ভাব অস্ত্র জান ।
 ভূগতি সৌনেতে বৈল না করে উত্তর । সভা বিসজ্জিয়া ভূপ গেল অভ্যন্তর ।
 অনন্তরে নরপতি চিন্তি একদিন । ব্রহ্মপুত্রে নান করিবার করি মন ।
 জাতকে বলিল তুমি লয়া চৌদ্ধ জন । অধিকান্তে জায়া কর পুত্রীর নির্দোষ ।
 নৃপতির আজ্ঞা পাঞ শুদ্ধকাজ রায় । চৌদ্ধ জন সঙ্গে ঘরা চলিল তথায় ।
 নির্দোষ করিল পুত্রি জেন সুরপুর । পুরি দেখি পলিতেব হুংখ জার ছুর ।
 অর্ধনাভি নীরে নহি শুদ্ধকাজ রায় । ভূঞার কার্যগণ ডাকিয়া তথায় ।
 বলিলেন সম সঙ্গে করহ গমন । ভালাকি প্রতিজ্ঞা দিব শুন চৌদ্ধ জন ।
 চৌদ্ধ জন শুনি তারা দিল অনুমতি । ভালাকি প্রতিজ্ঞা পাইলে হইব সঙ্গতি ।
 পঞ্চম দিনে পুত্রী করিয়া নির্দোষ । ভূপের সাক্ষাতে আসি বসিল চরণ ।
 পুত্রীর বৃত্তান্ত জ্ঞাত করিল গোচর । শুনি অতি তুষ্ট হৈল রাজরাজেশ্বর ।
 আগুন নামন্ত সৈন্ত লাজি নরবার । বধা পুণ্যলীর আছে চলিল তথায় ।
 অধিকান্তে নরনাথ করিবার নাম । রাণী সঙ্গে সম সঙ্গে করিল গমন ।
 একে মধ্যাহ্ন ভাতে রৌদ্র অভির্শর । মধ্যাহ্ন সময় বাজা করে নরনার ।
 ভূঞার কার্যস্থ সঙ্গে গেল চৌদ্ধ জন । মান হেতু চলে ভূপ উজ্জল বদন ।
 একে লক্ষ সৈন্ত সঙ্গে বলে মহাবল । অধিকান্তে গাঁহিল যেন অশ্বতল ।
 শুদ্ধকাজ জায়া বাট করিল বেরণ । বাঘাতি আঙাশ বাড়ী করিল নির্দোষ ।
 সে পুত্রীতে প্রবেশ করিল নরনার । ছাড়িল করিয়া হৈল সৈন্ত সমুদার ।
 জায় পর দিব শুদ্ধা অষ্টমীত মান । করিবে করিয়া মনে পুণ্যবীজবন ।
 সে দিল বাকিল অধিকান্তে মহারাজা । ভোজন করিয়া সুখে মিষ্টা গেল প্রজা ।
 প্রজা হইল নিশি রবির উদয় । আগ করিবারে খাটে গেল নরনার ।
 দান পুণ্য তর্পণ করিয়া বিধিকতে । দান দিয়া সন্তুষ্ট করিল ত্রিলোকতে ।
 হৈল নরনার শুদ্ধকাজ নরনার । পুণ্যত মন বাকি লোভে করে মন ।

It is recorded in Rāja Harendra Narāyana's 'Brihat Rāja Vaṁśāvali' that the king Nara-nārāyana had married Bhānumatī, the daughter of the Bhūiyā Pratāpa Rāy and that his brother Chila Rāy had married Chandra-prabhā the daughter of Pratāpa's youngest

ভূঞার কাবছ সঙ্গে না জাবে আর্য্য । ককণে লইব সঙ্গে মল রাজ্যেশ্বর ।
 ভূগতি বলেন তাই আনহ তাহারে । আগনে জিজ্ঞাসা আশি করি পুণ ন্যার ।
 নৃপের আবেশ গারি কনিষ্ঠ ভূগাঙ্গ । কারহ সকল আনি গারি পাঞ্জা দিল ।
 আজ্ঞা পাৱা হুত ধার্য্য করিল গমন । দ্বারে ত দেখিল দাঁড়া আছে চৌদ্দ জন ।
 নৃগতির আজ্ঞা প্রকাশিল খবর । হুত বলে শীঘ্র চল ভূপের গোচর ।
 অবক্রান্তে রাজ্যেশ্বর করে মান দান । শীঘ্র চৌদ্দ জন তথা হও অধিষ্ঠান ।
 ভূপের আবেশ শুনি কারহ সকলে । অবক্রান্তে জায়া পঁচছিল কুতূহলে ।
 দক্ষিণ হস্তক আঁচা দিগা বায় করে । সেলাম করিয়া অগ্রে রথে লোড় করে ।
 নৃগতি বলেন শুনি কাবছ-প্রধান । জাতার সঙ্গেতে চল মা ভাবিয়া আনি ।
 বিচারিণী বৃত্তি দিবে আর ভূমিদান । আমার আজ্ঞার চল হইবে কল্যাণ ।
 কিছু দিনান্তরে আনি বাইব তথায় । এই বলি মৌন শ্রেষ্ঠ বিবেচনায় ।
 কারহ সকল শুনি ন,মাইয়া কর । সেলাম করিল বহু হাজারে গজায় ।
 যে স্থানে পাঠাবে ভূগ করিব গমন । কিন্তু একখানি বোরা করি নিবেদন ।
 তালুক-প্রতিজ্ঞা পত্র হজুরেতে পাঠ । এ রাজ্য ছাড়িয়া ভূগ তবে মেরো বাট ।
 চেন শুনি নরপতি করে অস্বীকার । তালুক-প্রতিজ্ঞাপত্র হইল স্বীকার ।
 স্বাক্ষর করি চৌদ্দ জন সেলাম করিল । দানতে দরিদ্র দোষ মূগ খণ্ডাইল ।
 পায়স মিষ্টান্ন সরস পকান্ন । ভোজন করিয়া ভূ । হরষিত চিত্ত ।
 সেহি রস ভোজন করিল চৌদ্দ জন । নিজ নিকটমে বলি চলিল রাজন ।
 গজের গর্জন আর শরের চেহরী । দোভাঙ্গা সেহারা বাজে গোমুখ থণ্ডরী ।
 মহানন্দে নরপতি নরনারায়ণ । মান দান কার গুণে আসিল রাজন ।
 অবশ্যে একদিন গুরুদ্বন্দ্ব রাব । ভূগরু নামার মাথা লোড় করে কর ।
 চৌদ্দ জন মের সঙ্গে জাবে নরপতি । পত্র না পাইলে তার না হরসজতি ।
 তালুক-প্রতিজ্ঞা-পত্র দিতে আজ্ঞা দিল । আজ্ঞা শুনি গুরুদ্বন্দ্ব সোণার আনিল ।
 ত্রিপুরায় বসে পত্র করিয়া খোঁসন । ভূগক ওয়ার গুরুদ্বন্দ্ব বিচরণ ।
 অর্ধ শতাব্দীয়ে ব্রহ্মদেবে নরপতি । প্রতিজ্ঞা করিয়া সত্য কথ্যাহে সত্যতি ।

brother. The learned lady Bhānumati became the principal queen of Naranārāyaṇa.¹⁹

While giving an account of Chandivara and others, it has been shown that the Kāyasthas of the time were erudite sanskrit scholars. Their ladies also were highly educated. The queen Bhānumati was a brilliant product of female education among them. From the Rājavanśāvali we learn that she was well versed in Pāṇini and Kālapa-Vyākaranas ! It was under her order that

অষ্টমঙ ধারিবেতে বত দণ্ড আঁর । আশম এলাকা মধ্যে নিজ অধিকার ।
 জেখানে করিয়া বাহা কর চাব ভাল । দেবত্তর হয় কিবা হয় পীরপাল ।
 যে ভদ্রদায়ের জমি হজুরে আনার । নজরা পাইবে বলিলাস সজ্ঞাসার ।
 জাক জে খেদমদে অজ্ঞ করিলে অর্পণ । পুরবাহুক্রমে কর করিয়া অর্পণ ।
 ভোমরা পণথ করি কহত আশারে । আমার বংশক তব বংশ নাতি ছাড়ে ।
 চৌদ জন নরপতি প্রতিজ্ঞা করিল । উত্তর সত্তর করি পত্র এক রচিল ।
 ভোমার বংশত কালা খোড়া কুজা হয় । বোঁবা বা পাগল হয় বংশ মধ্যে রয় ।
 সেই জন বৃত্তি ভূমি পাবে সাহিরানা । চুনরন অজ যদি এক চকু কাণা ।
 শরৎ সময় হবে দুর্গার পূজন । যদি শক্তি থাকে যারে হবে অধিষ্ঠান ।
 সব বিন খাইব বরে যদি আগনার । তব রাজ্য না ছাড়িবে হৈল অঙ্গীকার ।”

Koch-Raja-Vaṇśāvali by Durgadasa.

19. “ঐতাপ নামক ভূঁয়া জিতে জন রাজ্যত আসি খাটিল ।
 কজা হুই জনী পরব শোভনী বোঁহর গৃহে আছয় ।
 ইকনে আদিবা বিবাহ করায়, নাথিয়ো দুয়ো নিছয় ।
 ছোট সে জাঁড়র কজা মনোহর চন্দ্রপ্রভা নাম আতি ।
 মোহর কজার রূপ মনোহর ভানু হেন বার খ্যাতি ।
 শুনি দুয়ো ভাই দিলন্ত নির্ভর কজাক গৃহে আনাই ।
 করাইলা বিবাহ মনত উৎসাহ আনন্দর পার নাই ।
 ভানু সে হিন্দুরী ভৈল্য পাটেশ্বরী মুখা ভাৰ্যা বৃণ্ডিত ।”

Rājavanśavali compiled under Rājā Harendranārāyaṇa (Vide Assam Govt. Col. Darrang No 2. 1st part, leaf 66)

Purushottama Vidyāvagīśa wrote the *sanskrit* grammar called *Ratnamālā*.²⁰

Within a short time Naranārāyaṇa came to have a high regard for Bhānumatī's father Pratāpa Rāya. He did not forget the defeat of the royal army at the hands of the Ahoms. Now Chila Rāya led an expedition into their country with a large army under the leadership of Pratāpa Rāya. The Ahom king fled from his capital for fear of defeat and capture by the enemy. Pratāpa Rāya was now appointed Governor of the conquered territory. Under Pratāpa Rāya the Bhūiyā rule revived in Upper Assam. But fate was against the Bhuiyās. Some of Pratāpa's kinsmen grew jealous of him and began to hold secret conference with the Ahom king to secure his downfall. The Ahom king attacked Pratāpa Rāya in order to feed fat his ancient grudge. But the Ahom Buranji gives a slightly different version. According to this work it was Pratāpa Rāya's grandson who attacked the Ahom king with the other Bhuiyās.²¹

Revival of
Bhuiya Rule
under Pra-
tapa Rāya

২০. "হৃগতিৰ প্ৰিয়তমা ভাৰু পাটেশ্বৰী।
ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য আগে কথা কহিলা সাধৰি। ১৮২৫
পাণিনিৰ বৰ্ণমালা এয়ে সে লেখিবা।
বহুধৰ কৃত কলাপৰ নাৰ দিবা।
সমস্ত আদেশ ভোহে হেলা না কৰিলা।
আনন্দতে বহুবালা শাস্ত্ৰক নিৰ্দ্ধিলা।" ১৮২৬

Bribat Rajavaliṣavali.

21. "In 1560 a Chief who is described as the grandson of a Bhuiyā named Pratap Rai, rose against the Ahoms and was joined by some local chiefs, but he was defeated and slain in a battle fought near the mouth of Dihnu river."

Gait's History of Assam, p. 77.

Eclipse of
the politi-
cal life of
the Bhuiyas

ara Bhuiya
of Maniari—
Pratapa
Ray's son.

With the fall of Pratāpa Rāya fell the last hope of the Bhuiyās. Thereafter there is no evidence of the activities of the Bhuiyās in the sphere of politics. Pratāpa Rāy lived at Baḍa-nagara. So his descendants came to be known as Baḍanagarīā Bhuiyā. A son of Pratāpa was known as Baḍa Bhuiyā. He removed to the village of Maniāri in Darang in order to make himself safe against the attacks of the Ahoms. When Raghudeva's son Parikshitanārāyana (Chila Rāya's grand-son) was captured by the Mughals and taken to Dacca, his younger brother Balinārāyana fled to the east leaving the capital. It is recorded in Daranga-Rājyañśāvalī that he went to the village of Maniāri in Darang with 120 queens of the late king Raghudeva as well as his own wife and children and lived there for one year in the house of Baḍa Bhuiyā.²² This took place about 1616 A.D. After this Balinārāyana took shelter with the Ahom

22. "জেহি দিন রাজাক বঙ্গালে নিল ধরি ।

রইল বলিনারায়ণ মনে দুঃখ করি ॥

সাপ্ত মহাজন পাইক রাজী সব লই ।

রঘুদেব রাজার ছয় কুড়ি মহাশেই ॥

আগনার পুত্র পরিবার সমসিতে ।

সমস্তকে লইলা রাজা না থাকিবে চিতে ॥

বঙ্গালত না থাকিল মান বে বর্ষাদ ।

কামরূপ চলি গৈলা ভাবিলা এমাদ ॥

দরঙ্গ দেশত রৈলা মণিয়ারী গ্রাম ।

বড় ভূঁয়া গৃহে পাচে করিলা বিজ্ঞান ॥

এক বর্ষ থাকিলত ভূমার গৃহত ।"

Daranga-Rājyañśāvalī

king Pratāpa Siṅha.* The Mughals had terrible fighting in various places of Assam, first with Balinārāyana and then with the Ahoms. As a result of this Mughal invasion the majority of the fourteen families of Kāyasthas who had been established in various places in Assam lost all their possessions and sank into poverty. In Durgādāsa's 'Koch Rājavanśavali' we get the following account of the Mughal invasion and of the downfall of the Bhuiyās :—

"The illustrious Rāpanārāyana became king. His rule was such that it seemed that Indra had come down to the earth. Darpa-nārāyana had three sons to each of whom a duty was assigned. Then there took place a wonderful event. The Mughals made their appearance and the king fled away. They took away gold, silver, bell metal, copper and all the records. On account of this plundering raid the fourteen Kāyastha Bhuiyās fled away and hid themselves here and there. A plague broke out and three families became extinct. Eleven of them lived in the king's realm. After some days the Mughals went home. Then they assembled in Behar. Those respectable Kāyastha Bhuiyas presented themselves at the door of the King Rāpa-nārāyana. The king saw their plight and suppressed his grief and ordered them to take their seats. The eleven men then made obeisance to the king and spoke of their troubles thus 'O king, all our records have been taken away. We

Koch Rāja-
vanśavali of
Durgādāsa
narrating
the downfall
of the
Bhuiyas

Extinction
of three
Bhuiya fami-
lies by pla-
gue.

* With the help of the Ahoms he defeated the Mughals and ascended the throne of Darrang as a feudatory ruler under the Ahom King.

have somehow managed to keep the body and soul together.. We again pray for the document containing the solemn pledge. O king, be gracious enough to pass orders for its speedy execution.

"The Mahārāja Rūpanārāyaṇa again gave in the year 201 Rāja-Saka a document containing the solemn pledge to the eleven men,—Bhavānī-nātha Khāsnabis, Narahari Tāsanabis, Hari-nanda Bhāṇḍāra-Kāyastha, Devidāsa Ukīla, Śrī Krishna Khās-Dewaniā, Jagatpati Daptariā, Prānanātha Mazumdār, Sivadāsa Mazumdār, Lambodara Bara Kāyastha, Dharmadeva Bara-Kāyastha and Sivanātha Baksi.

"In obedience to the order of the king Narahari Dāsa wrote out the sanad and making it over to them went home. The eleven men were glad to get the sanad and went away to attend to their respective duties."²³

23. 'ভূপতি হইল ত্রীকুপনারায়ণ ।
 ভূমে ইল হৈল যেন এমনি শমন ॥
 দর্পনারায়ণের তনয় তিন জন ।
 তিন জনে তিন কর্ম অশিল রাজন ॥
 অন্যতরে তন এক দৈব বিবরণ ।
 মুগল আসিবা দেখি পলায় রাজন ।
 সোণা রূপা কীসা ভাসা দলিল সকল ।
 লুটিয়া লইয়া কাক করিল কড়ল ।
 সেই বুটে ভূইয়ার কারয় চৌদ জন ।
 পলাইয়া স্থানে স্থানে হইল গোপন ॥
 মহামারি হইল তিন ঘর ব্যশপাত ।
 একাদশ জন রৈল ভূপের রাজ্যত ॥
 কিছু দিনে নিজ জনে চলিল সকল ।
 পূৰ্বাপর বেহায়েতে মিলিল সকল ॥
 একাদশ জন শাস্ত্র ভূইয়া কারয় ।
 ভূপতির দ্বারে আসি সেই জন দারয় ॥
 ভূপতি দেখিল ভূপের রূপ গোচর ।
 ব্যসিত করিল মুখ না কুণ্ঠিত-ভয়ন ॥

The king Rūpanārāyana ascended the throne of Koch Bihar in 1693 A. D. He was put to troubles on account of repeated Mughal invasion and removed his capital from Atharakoṭhā to a place called Guriāhāti on the eastern bank of the river Torshā. The descendants of the Bhuiyās came to Koch-Bihār in 201 Rāja-Saka i. e. 1710 A. D. and placed themselves under the protection of the king Rūpanārāyana. It is strange that though these eleven persons filled several posts under the state yet their descendants have now got no influence in the court of Koch Behar. The greater portion of the land granted to them by Rūpanārāyana has now been either confiscated or transferred. Only a family or two are now in enjoyment of the said property.

King Rupa-
narayana of
Koch Behar;
the Bhuiyas
come over
to seek his
protection,

সেলাম করিল বৈসে একাদশ জন ।
অতোক দুর্গতি হৈল করে নিবেদন ।
লুটেস্তে সর্ব্ব গেল দলিল সকল ।
প্রাণে মাজ বাঁচিয়া এসেছি মহীপাল ।
তালুক-প্রতিজ্ঞাপত্র চাহি পুনর ।
কৃপা করি আজ্ঞা হুপ হউক স্বর ।
কারহু সবার হেস শুনিয়া উত্তর ।
সেইক্ষণে আজ্ঞা দিল রাজরাজেশ্বর ।
পূর্বের নকল বই করি নিগ্রক্ষণ ।
সমন লিখিয়া শীঘ্র করহ অর্পণ ।
ভূপের আজ্ঞার গরে মরহবিদাস ।
সমন লিখিয়া দিগা গেল নিজ বাস ।
সমন পাইয়া ভুট একাদশ জন ।
বার বেহি কর্দ সেহি হৈল নিয়োজন ।

ভবাবীনাথ খাসনবীস ও নরহরি ভাশনবীস ও হরিনন্দ ভাওয়ারকারহ ও দেবীদাস উকিল ও শ্রীকৃষ্ণ খাসদেবানিঞা জগৎপতি দত্তব্রিরা ও প্রাণনাথ মজুমদার ও শিবদাস মজুমদার ও লম্বোদর বরকারহ ও ধর্ম্মদেব বরকারহ ও শিবনাথ বকসিক এহি একাদশ জননি নামে মহারাজা রূপনারায়ণ ২০১ শকে পূজ্যোত্তমশিখর অর্পণ করিয়াছেন ।"

(Koch-Nijayansavali by Durgadina)

Old and
new lines of
Bhuiyas
crushed by
Visvasinha
and
the Ahom
King
respectively

The whole of Assam still bears testimony to the power and glory of the Bhuiyās who ruled the country for upwards of a century in the capacity of independent monarchs. These ancient Bhuiyās had no connection whatever with the later twelve principal Bhuiyās and forty-eight minor Bhuiyās created by the Ahom King. Visvasinha dealt the death blow to the power of the older Bhuiyās living in western and central Assam, while those in Upper and Eastern Assam were crushed by the Ahom Kings. Many of these Bhuiyā lines have become extinct. Some of them however subsequently took service under the Mech Kings of Koch Behar and the Ahom Kings of Assam and thus preserved their existence. The genealogy of some of these families are now to hand. ²⁴.

Why there
is so little
historical
evidence
of the rise
and
fall of the
Bhuiyas.

It is said that they had a history of their families, 'the Perākākata' and many copper-plate grants issued by the different kings at different times. But on account of the invasions of the Muhammadans and the Māns as well as out-break of fire and the removal of the family from one place to another due to vicissitudes of fortune, the greater portion of these records have been destroyed. The few that were left were filed in the English Courts towards the beginning of the British rule in the country for the establishment of their title to their landed properties. It is to be regretted that the majority of those records were not returned. Hence we had to depend on a very meagre evidence to write an account of the rise and fall of the Bhuiyās.

~~For their Genealogical Tables vide Appendix-L.~~

CHAPTER IV.

Rise of Vaishnavism in Assam,

The Kāyastha Bhuiyās of Assam had exercised political and administrative authority over the country for a pretty long time. Gradually however, they began to lose ground in all the fields of their ancient supremacy. Indeed, they were not destined to enjoy their power any longer. We have clearly seen how they fell from their high political pedestal. In the palmy days of their political supremacy the Kāyasthas of Assam had enjoyed great social honour also. But with the fall of the Bhuiyās their social position also dwindled away. A time, however, soon came when the Kāyasthas again succeeded in regaining their former social status and exercising considerable influence over society in matters social and religious. But their political power was gone never to return. Let us now see how they succeeded in winning back their former position in matters religious and social.

About the time we are speaking of as well as before it, the worship of Sakti and Śiva was prevalent in Assam. Kāmarupa was then known far and wide as the greatest centre of the Śāktas. The following picture of the then Hindu Society of Assam has been taken from the *Brihat Rājavalīkāvālī*, a work compiled under Rājā Harendra-nārāyaṇa of Koch Behar :—

“The good-looking Brāhmanas of Kāmarupa, live merrily at home performing the customary

Revival of
Kāyastha
supremacy
in matters
social and
religious

Social
picture of
Assam as
depicted by
Rājā Haren-
dra-nārāyaṇa
of the Koch
Behar

rites prescribed in the Vedas. Even when travelling from one country to another they perform their ceremonies without caring to bathe in holy waters. They also perform the Vedic ceremonies like *pumsavana* and others and are attentive to their time-honoured customs. They have taken to agriculture and partake of fish, and flesh and chew betel leaves. In Kāmarupa Brahmacharyya has not to be practised through life and no vow of Ekādasi has to be observed. They gain as much religious merit by observing the single vow of Suklāshtami as by observing a crore of Ekādasi vows."¹

From the above account we may very easily form an idea of the condition of the society of the time. The vedic Brāhmanas had become staunch Sāktas and Brahmacharya had become a thing of the past. This being the condition of the religious life and faith of the Brāhmanas, the topmost class in Hindu Society and custodian of Hindu faith, the religious life of the other classes may be better imagined than described.

It is remarkable that the great social and religious reformer Saṅkaradeva was born in the family of Chandīvara who was himself a devout Śakta and was known in political circles as

১. "কামৰূপী বিষ্ণুৰ পৰম শৌভৱ । বেদাচাৰ কৰি গৃহে থাকে ব্ৰহ্মন ॥
 বিনা তীৰ্থযাত্ৰা শুদ্ধ কৰি সংস্কাৰ । দেশ দেশান্তৰে অৰ্থি হুকুমে বিচাৰ ॥
 গুলেবল আদি কৰ্ম বেদ ব্যবহাৰ । ব্ৰহ্মত্ৰাৰ্জপণে আচাৰ বিচাৰ ॥
 কুৰিকৰ্ম কৰাই বিষ্ণুৰ প্ৰবৰ্ত্তন । যদ্য মাংস জাহ্নলক ভোজন কৰ ॥
 টিকাল জ্ঞানচাৰ্য নাহি কামৰূপে । একাদশীত নাহি কহিল ব্ৰহ্মণে ॥
 বোহি একাদশীতে হয় বত কল । এক শুক্লশ্ৰী ব্ৰহ্মে পুত্ৰে লবক ॥"
 Bhai Hariendrabharayana's 'Bhai Hariendrabharayana's', p. 104.
 (See also 'Vide Assam Govt. Col. Darang, No. 2.)

'Devīdāsa' and 'Śiromaṇi Bhuiyā'. In Prasiddha-nārāyaṇa's Puruṣanāmā, it is said that Kusumavara was one of the Bhuiyās that were defeated by Viśvasiṅha. This Kusuma was the father of Śaṅkaradeva. All the other Bhuiyās were reduced to poverty in consequence of their defeat at the hands of Viśvasiṅha. Kusuma, however, saved himself from the clutches of poverty by leaving the territories of the conqueror, and settling down in the modern district of Nowgaon. We learn from the several biographies of Śaṅkara that many elephants and horses were kept tethered at his gate, that hundreds of men were fed by him, that he had no want of men and money and that he was regarded as the first man in society by virtue of his personal charms, the qualities of his head and heart, his character and the respectability of his family. It cannot but strike one as curious that out of all persons the great Vaiṣṇava teacher Śaṅkara who was a thorough vegetarian, should come of wealthy Śākta parents fond of fish and flesh. During the time we are speaking of, even the higher-caste widows of Assam could not observe *Brahmacharyya*. All the people of the country, male and female, young and old alike had taken to eating fish and flesh of not only goats, but also of a variety of other animals and birds. The birth of a reformer like Śaṅkaradeva in a country where the manners and customs of Mlechchhas had taken deep root and spread far and wide was really a very wonderful thing. His teaching ushered in a new era in the social history of the Aryans and Non-Aryans of the country. He is still being worshipped as the full incarnation of God by twelve lakhs of men in Assam from exalted Brāhmaṇas down to the lowly hill tribes.

Sankara
Deva's
parentage
and ances-
tral faith.
His personal
charms.

He was really a great man of extra-ordinary personality. His timely appearance saved the fallen Kāyastha Bhuiyās from the grip of impending ruin. We think it will not be out of place to give here an account of this great hero.

Sankaradeva.

Traditions
about San-
kara's birth,
his early
years.

According to Daityāri Thākura, the 1st biographer of the reformer, Kusumavara Bhuiyā is said to have been a devoted votary of the god Śiva. He had long worshipped the god with the object of being blessed with a male child. Through the favour of Śiva he at length got a son who was named Śaṅkara and was believed to be an incarnation of Kṛishṇa himself.

Kaṇṭhabhūṣhaṇa, the other biographer, says that the God was so much pleased with Kusuma for his devotion that he incarnated himself as his son.

The child grew day by day and filled with joy the house of his father. The parents gave him great indulgence with the result that the boy was not sent to school up to the age of ten or twelve years. Daityāri Thākura says that he lost his mother and afterwards his father in his infancy and that his paternal grand-mother Buri Goṣāin Kherāsati had since brought him up. He was so very fond of sports that he forgot to eat and sleep when engaged in them. He would often be missing at dinner time and it was not very easy to find him out.

There was no boy in the locality who could beat him in swimming and running. He used to catch the young ones of birds and beasts for the fun of it, but he treated them very kindly and tenderly.

Kusuma Bhuiyā was very much concerned at his son's neglect of study. One day he called Śaṅkara to him and admonished him saying, "My boy, I thought myself to be fortunate when you were born. The Brāhmaṇas and the astrologers prophesied that you would be vastly learned. But now I see that you hold but little promise of that. My ancestors were all men of deep learning. I am afraid that you, a member of such an illustrious family, bid fair to win notoriety by your ignorance." These words touched young Śaṅkara's heart and he promptly replied with a grave face, "Send me to school and I will show you whether I can learn or not." Hearing such an unexpected reply from his son, Kusuma burst into tears of joy and taking the boy in his arms kissed him again and again. He then himself took Śaṅkara to the place of the school-master. He began his student life on a very auspicious day. The teacher was struck with wonder to see the intelligence and sagacity of the boy. Śaṅkara learnt much more than his daily task. None of his class-mates could keep pace with him but lagged far behind. He was so attentive that when engaged in study he forgot himself. He would pass many a sleepless night poring over the pages of his book. In this way he mastered many Kāvyaś and many Kōśhas as also the fourteen Śāstras. He also commented upon the Purāṇas, the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa. Indeed his teacher soon felt that he had nothing new to teach him.

Śaṅkara was no longer a boy. He was now a handsome youth and an erudite scholar. On account of his striking personality and his uncommon scholarship no one chose to call him by his name, but they all gave him the title of

How Sankara began his student life, his career.

Sankara obtains the title of Dekā-giri.

Sankara
practises
yoga.

Dekāgiri. Rāmarāma Guru, his family priest, and fellow-student was his constant companion. Both of them passed their time happily in study and learned discourses. After a short time Śaṅkaradeva took to practising *yoga*. He brought under control the five kinds of air that constitute life viz, Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna and Vyāna and learnt Dhyāna, Dhāraṇā, Samādhi, Āsana and Prāṇāyāma. It is said that he had attained so much success in *yoga* that he could hold his breath continuously for three or four days. He could remain under water for a long time. He could stand long resting the whole weight of his body on the great toe of his left leg. His strength and the beauty of his frame increased on account of the practice of *yoga*. The playfulness of his younger days did not, however, leave him. One day while bathing in the Brahmaputra with Rāmarāma Guru and others he proposed that they would swim across the river. At once a boat was got ready and they all started swimming. The boat followed them. One by one all his companions except Rāmarāma Guru became tired and got into the boat. Śaṅkara and Rāmarāma alone got to the other side without the help of the boat. Rāmarāma, however, felt too tired for the return journey and came back by boat. Śaṅkara alone swam back to the place whence they had started.

Sankara's
marriage.

Seeing that he was arrived at manhood his grand-mother arranged a suitable match for him. The marriage was safely over and Śaṅkara began to feel himself happy in his married life.

Śaṅkara now grew very popular. When he went out dressed in silk and with his body besmeared with sweet sandal-paste and his head

decked with a wreath of *mālati* flowers people approached him with reverence and saluted him by touching his feet. Even the learned Brāhmaṇas held him in awe for his vast learning and his influence over the people. But Śaṅkara was not vain. He showed due respect to the Brāhmaṇas and met all people with kind words and a smiling face.

Sankara's hold over society.

Śaṅkara was noted not only for his vast learning but also for his wonderful physical strength. His mind and body were equally strong. The following anecdote shows how strong and courageous he was :—

Sankara's physical strength and courage.

One day he was going along a certain path with his servant behind him, carrying his *kaṇṇaḍaḥ* and blanket. After they had got to some distance he took to a short-cut. The servant objected to it saying that it was infested by a terrible bull who attacked whomever he met on his way. Dekāgiri, however, knew no fear. Nothing daunted, he went on and soon saw the animal fiercely rushing towards him. He braced his nerves and muscles and seized the beast by the horn. He then wrang its neck so violently that it dropped on the ground in extreme pain. The bull had thus learnt the lesson of its life and from that day forward ceased troubling passers-by.

Thus Śaṅkara had a very happy time of it for some years. Then when his grand-mother died, it gave him the first great shock of his life and told very heavily upon him. Though he was wise and had a very calm disposition yet he could not help giving himself up to sorrow. After he had performed the funeral obsequies of his grand-mother in a befitting manner, he began to brood over the

A change in Sankara's outlook of life, inclining him towards Sannyāsa.

vanity of human life. The world now appeared to him to be only the abode of misery. It seemed to him to be a stage where each man had a part to play and was finished as soon as he had played his part. Thus philosophising, it was very likely that he would leave his home and become a Sannyāsi. He had, however, one tie still to hold him back. His devoted and faithful wife was still living and her loving tenderness did not allow him to renounce the world. He now began to pass his days in study and in the performance of the religious duties prescribed in the Sāstras. After some time a daughter was born to him. When she came to be of marriageable age he married her to a suitable Kāyastha bride-groom of the name of Hari.

Sankara
becomes a
Sannyāsi.

Śaṅkaradeva had not now to remain long tied to the world. After a few years his wife died and he made up his mind to take to the life of a Sannyāsi'. After performing the Śiāddha ceremony of his wife he disposed of all his worldly possessions. He gave away his three hundred milch-cows to the cowherds who used to tend them and his sixty teams of oxen were also given away. He bestowed all other properties on Jayanta and Mādhava who were the brothers of his paternal grand-father.

His
pilgrimage.

Śaṅkaradeva was now as free as air and set out to visit holy places. His pilgrimage lasted for twelve years.

The Vaishnavas of the Mahāpurushī'ya sect believe that during this time he visited the principal holy places of India such as Navadvīpa, Puri, celebrated shrines of the Deccan, Gaya, Benāres, Prāyāga, Brindāvana, Haridvāra and others. Orissa and the Deccan were then under the

rule of Hindu kings. So Hindu pilgrims would generally visit the sacred places in these parts of the country. It is said that Śrī Chaitanya had taken only one year, eight months and twenty-six days to visit the chief holy places of India. We may not be far wrong if we conjecture from this that Śaṅkara-deva must have visited other places than Puri and that he must have stayed for a considerable time in each of these places.

It is very important to know the places which Śaṅkara visited and the time he spent in each place. Because it was his pilgrimage that awakened a religious fervour in his mind ; it was the experience which he gained during the course of his wandering that shaped his future life.

On his return home from his pilgrimage Śaṅkara began to teach the people the doctrines embodied in the Gītā and the Śrīmadbhāgavata. His teachings were written in the dialect of the country so that they might appeal direct to the people. From his drawing upon these two works it may safely be said that he had made a special study of them during his pilgrimage.

In those days Navadvīpa in Bengal was a great centre of learning. But the Vedānta and the Nyāya were the favourite subjects of study here. Mādhva-vendra Puri, the then chief Guru of the Madhvāchāryya sect had come to Sāntipur and initiated Advaitāchāryya into the tenets of Vaishnavism. It was due to his teaching that the doctrines of Vaishnavas spread in Bengal. From the literature of the time we learn that this Advaitāchāryya had a disciple of the name of Śaṅkara. His name, however, occurs only once and it cannot be definitely said whether this Śaṅkara was the Śaṅkara-deva of Assam or not. It is said that owing to

On his return home, Sankara preaches the Gita and the Śrīmad-Bhagavata.

Sankara's discipleship of Advaitāchāryya of Sāntipur discussed and dismissed.

difference of opinion with the preceptor, Saṅkara and some other principal disciples left Śāntipur, went to East Bengal and other distant places and preached their doctrines there. Some of the writers go so far as to say that a disciple of Advaita called Ṣaṅkara went to Assam and there preached the doctrine of Śrī Gaurāṅga. But all these accounts do not seem to be true. The biographers of Saṅkaradeva never make mention of his stay at Śāntipur nor of his learning the tenets of Vaishnavism from Advaitāchāryya. From this it appears that Advaita's disciple Ṣaṅkara was a different person from Ṣaṅkaradeva of Assam.

Saṅkara's
reception
on his return
home.

It has already been said that Ṣaṅkaradeva passed twelve years in the holy places of India. At the end of this period he returned home. His younger brother Banagayā Giri was besides himself with joy to hear of his return. With Hari he came out of the house to welcome Ṣaṅkaradeva. The brothers of his grandfather also came to see him. When he was going to salute them by touching their feet they did not allow him to do so for they thought that his visit to the holy places had made him worthier than themselves. He now distributed among the people that had gathered to see him, the *prasāda* that he had brought from Puri. They gave loud cheers for him as they partook of this *prasāda* and listened to the glory of Lord Jagannātha from his lips. Indeed, his majestic appearance glowing all the more with the light of virtue and wisdom commanded the respect and admiration of all.

Banagayā Giri had so long passed his life under the roof of Hari, his brother's son-in-law. As we have seen before when Ṣaṅkaradeva left

home he had given away all that he had possessed. On his return home Banagāyā Giri thought of starting a new house for themselves and began to collect domestic utensils and other household necessities and also take back some of the cows previously given away by his brother. The cowherds opposed him and this enraged him so much that in a fit of passion he put one of them to death. For this heinous deed he was seriously reprimanded by Śaṅkaradeva. When his father's uncles came to know of this, freely and gladly they presented the brothers with many such things as they stood in need of. And they also requested Saṅkara to marry a second time. He complied with their request, married again and got vast wealth as dowry.

Sankara
marries and
becomes a
householder
again.

Saṅkara's father's uncle Jayanta had a grandson of the name of Jagadānanda. He was younger than Śaṅkara. Himself an erudite scholar, he took delight in learned discussions. One day he proposed to Śaṅkara that he would build a holy temple inside the compound of his house where they might pass their time in study and in holding religious discourses. Saṅkara heartily approved of the idea which was soon materialised. Here they were joined by Rāmarāma and all the three passed their time very happily in religious conversation.

He passes
his time in
study and
holding
religious
discourses.

The next convert was Mādhava, the greatest of the disciples of Saṅkara and the founder of Mahāpuruṣhiya Vaiṣṇava sect of Assam. He was the son of Govindagiri of Bāndukā, who inherited the Bhuiyāship of the place, but came to and settled in Tembuānibandha where he married a second time and lived with Rāma Rāy, Ketāra-Khān and other relatives. On account of the

Mādhava
the greatest
of Sankara's
disciples and
founder of
the Maha-
puruṣhiya
Vaiṣṇava
sect.

persecution by the Ahoms he had to leave Tembuānibandha with his wife. On the way he was robbed of all his wealth and had for some time to be a dependant on Harasiṅha Bāiā at Letupukhuri near Nārāyaṇapur. Here a son was born to him (in Śaka 1411). This child was Mādhava. Subsequently he had a daughter also. When she grew up she was given in marriage to Gayāpāni whose account has been given before. Govinda left his wife with his son-in-law, took Mādhava with him and went back to his ancestral home Bāndukā.

The boy Mādhava had so long found no opportunity of receiving any education. At Bāndukā Govindagiri himself taught him all that a Kāyastha was required to learn in those days. Thus Mādhava was now made to study Sanskrit works on rhetoric, poetry and Hindu religious rituals and also philosophy and politics. Govinda was himself a staunch follower of the Tantras and the son also naturally imbibed the religious ideas and belief of the father. After his father's death Mādhava came back to Tembuānibandha to live with his mother and sister. Some time after this, unable to bear the oppression of the Ahoms, the people of Tembuānibandha had to flee to Belāguri and Mādhava followed suit with his brother-in-law. Once he went to Bāndukā in the hope of recovering his paternal property. It was during his absence that Gayāpāni became converted to Vaiṣṇavism by Śaṅkaradeva. On his way back from Bāndukā Mādhava heard that his mother was dangerously ill. He prayed to goddess Kāmākhyā for his mother's recovery and offered in return to sacrifice to her a pair of he-goats when she was all right. When he reached home he saw his mother comparatively well. So he began to make

How
Mādhava,
a staunch
Śakta
becomes a
leading
Vaiṣṇava

preparations for offering the promised sacrifice to the goddess. A date was fixed and he requested his brother-in-law to purchase a pair of goats for him. Gayāpāni, however, was now a devoted Vaishnava, averse to animal sacrifices, and deferred the purchase from day to day. At length it could no longer be put off and Mādhava pressed him very hard. The conversation that took place between them on the occasion will be found interesting.

Mādhava—Two goats must be had now.

Gayāpāni—Well, what do you propose to do with them ?

Mādhava—What do I propose ! Don't you know that they have to be sacrificed before the goddess ?

Gayāpāni—Yes, I know. But why do you so propose ?—Ah ! if you would but care to know the consequences of goat-sacrifice !

Mādhava—Well what are they ?

Gayāpāni—He that sacrifices the goat becomes a goat in his turn in the next birth and the goat is born a human being to offer him as sacrifice in his turn,

Mādhava—But I don't care if the table will be thus turned. Just tell me plainly whether you mean to purchase the goats for me or not.

Gayāpāni—But why should you be so impatient ? There can be no harm if you will take time to pause and consider what I have just said.

Mādhava—I do not like to pay heed to your words.—Pray, where did you learn all these things from ?

Gayāpāni—Why, all these are in the scriptures,
Mādhava—But I have studied the scriptures,
Do you venture to throw a new light
on them ?

Gayāpāni—No, that I can't. But if you would
like, I might take you to one who
is competent to do so.

Madhava
and Sankara
—the first
contest
between
Saktism and
Vaishnavism
and
triumph of
the latter.

So saying Gayāpāni took Mādhava to Śaṅkara so that he might discuss these things with the great Vaishnava reformer. Now a heated and lengthy discussion took place between these two learned men. This was the first contest between Śaktism and Vaishnavism in Assam. Mādhava also was a great scholar, well versed in the scriptures. The combat raged long and furiously, Śaṅkara succeeding at length in refuting all the arguments put forward by his adversary in favour of Śaktism. Though he was able to establish the superiority of the Bhāgavata, yet he had to acknowledge that Mādhava was not second to him in point of learning. It is said that when Mādhava had admitted the superiority of the Bhāgavata, Śaṅkara read out to him a couplet from it an English rendering of which is given below :—

‘Just as all the branches of a tree are served when water is poured at the foot of it, just as all the senses are gratified at the gratification of life, so all the gods are worshipped when Lord Krishna is worshipped’.*

A-seeker-of-the truth Mādhava was not the man to persist in error or superstition. As soon as he felt the force of Śaṅkara's reasoning he made up his mind to accept and follow his religious views. So he dismissed the thought of sacrificing

* “কি অমৃতকুনিবেচনে তুমি তৎকালকালোপাখ্যায় : ।
কীৰ্ত্তিপাদকৃতকথোক্তানাম্ তথা চ সৰ্বকৰ্মব্রহ্মভোজ্যঃ ॥”

goats before the goddess as nonsense and started worshipping Lord Krishna in his house instead. When Śaṅkaradeva came to know of the change that had come upon Mādhava, he felt he had scored a great victory and asked Rāmarāma and some others to accept Vaishnavism. They now promptly and eagerly responded and very soon the initiation took place and Mādhava, Hari and many others became Vaishnavas. The initiation ceremony over, Śaṅkara gave Mādhava the following valuable advice :—

Sankara's
advice to
Madhava.

“Devotion is not possible without association with the good. It requires special cultivation and you should be mindful of what is said here. At first you are to wait upon the Great. When you have attained purity of heart, you will enjoy Lord Krishna’s favour. Your main talk should be religion and you must be of pure mind. You should feel a strong inclination for hearing about Hari. Your love towards Hari should be broad based on deep devotion. Know him as soul and different from the body. He who can do all this in the good grace of the Lord being endowed for the present with omniscience and such other powers.”*

*“শঙ্করে বোলন্ত মাধবের মুখ চাই ।
ভকতির সাধন সংসঙ্গ যিনে নাই ॥
ভগবতি নিগুনীর পুঙ্খ সাধন ।
সংসঙ্গ ভক্তির কথা শুন দিয়া মন ॥
প্রথমতে মহন্তর হৃদয়া করিবেক ।
শুদ্ধ ভাব দেখি তান কৃপা মিলিবেক ॥
কহিবন্ত ধর্ম ধরিবন্ত শুদ্ধমতি ।
হরিকথা প্রসঙ্গত উপজিব বতি ॥
কৃষ্ণ হৈবেক প্রেম দৃঢ় ভক্তিজাত ।
দেহ ব্যতিক্রমে আত্ম জানিবা সাক্ষাত ॥
কৃষ্ণর পরম কৃপা হৈবে তাক প্রতি ।
সর্বস্বত্যা আদি গুণ মিলিবে সম্ভতি ॥” (Daityāri Thākura)

Effect of
Madhava's
Conversion.

The news of the discomfiture of Mādhava and his subsequent conversion spread on all sides like wild fire. The Śāktas of Kāmarūpa felt themselves greatly shaken and out of fear for their future the leaders Śrīdhara Bhaṭṭāchāryya, Kavirāja Miśra, Vāmanāchāryya and Ratnākara Kandali called a conference of the Śāktas with a view to devise effective means and ways for preserving the integrity of their creed. All present were unanimous in holding that they would have to take prompt steps to prevent Vaisnavism from spreading further and striking deeper root in this stronghold of Saktism. Śrīdhara Bhaṭṭāchāryya who was a student of Nyāya, proposed that he would hold a debate with Śaṅkara, defeat him in argument and thus nip his movement in the bud. Brahmānanda Bhaṭṭāchāryya, who was present said that it would be unwise to enter into a debate with Śaṅkara as that would only bring him into undue prominence and importance. He therefore proposed that they had rather let Śaṅkara alone so that his movement might in due course die a natural death. Kavirāja Miśra who knew Śaṅkara more than any one present said that they must not trifle with Śaṅkara. Ratnākara Kandali suggested that the best course to adopt would be to subject the Vaishnavas to ridicule. He assured them that if they could do this the Vaishnavas would only be too glad to bid good bye to their new faith and return to their old fold. And it was the proposition which was ultimately accepted by the Śākta conference.

The Śākta
leaders
decide on
starting a
campaign of
boasting
and
taunting.

Vaishnavism began to make rapid progress in Assam after the conversion of Mādhava. The Śāktas also started their campaign of taunting and persecution in right earnest. Whenever the

Bhaktas were seen along the streets their opponents taunted them in all possible ways and heaped all sorts of insult and abuse on them. The Vaiṣṇavas however silently bore all these acts of insult and humiliation. When the matter was brought to the notice of Śaṅkara, he felt greatly aggrieved at this conduct of the Śāktas and in a fit of passion took a vow that to establish the superiority of the doctrine of Bhakti, he would enter into a debate with his opponents the next day and crush them by arguments.

He fixed the next day for his purpose as on that date a Śrāddha ceremony was to be held in the house of Buḍhā Khān, the Bhuiyā of Gāng Mau and a relative of Śaṅkara and all the Brāhmaṇas of the country were invited to attend the ceremony. Śaṅkara's followers had already heard of his vow and so they were ready to go to the house of Buḍhā Khān to witness the battle of words.

When the fit of the passion had died down, Śaṅkara found himself in an unenviable position. Of course he must maintain his own creed and in its interest must bring all his opponents to their knees. But then his opponents were all Brāhmaṇas and he could not shut his eyes to the fact that since the dawn of civilisation the selfless Brāhmaṇas had held aloft the bright torch of religion in India. However degenerate his present opponents were, he, of all persons, could ill afford to humiliate them. At length he hit upon a nice plan whereby he would make his opponent Brāhmaṇas themselves sing the song of Bhakti and thus gain his own point and yet save them from humiliation. Thus determining his line of action, Śaṅkara with his followers presented himself at the house of Buḍhā Khān.

How
Sankara
maintains
Bahman
supremacy
and yet
skins his
own point.

Of all the Brāhmanas present there Ratnākara Kandali was the haughtiest and most intolerant. He was really the leader of the campaign of persecution. Saṅkara approached him and most politely said, "Sir, will you please explain what appears to be a puzzle to me?" The courteous and humble way in which the challenge was offered highly pleased the man. As he was a little vain he thought Saṅkara had surely regarded him as the most learned of the assembly and so had addressed him first. Therefore he replied that he would be too glad to solve his problem for him. Saṅkara now asked, "Is a sinful man entitled to perform any sacred ceremony prescribed in the scriptures?" Kandali replied, "No, certainly not." Saṅkara then cast a significant look on the other Brāhmaṇas of the assembly. They all nodded their approval of what Ratnākara had said. Saṅkara asked again, "Is a sinner entitled to take the name of Hari? Does not uttering, reciting and contemplating the name of Hari purify a sinner?" Ratnākara replied that any and every sinner would be purified by taking the name of Hari. This also had the approval of the assembled Brāhmaṇas. Then Saṅkara put his third question, 'May a man take with impunity the food given by a sinful-man?' The Brāhmaṇa replied and the assembly agreed that the man who took such food, would be tainted with sin. Thereupon Saṅkara called Budhā Khān before them and asked him whether he was righteous or sinful. Now this oldman was a Hindu of orthodox views. Lest it should take away from his hard earned merits he would never say that he was virtuous. So he modestly replied that he was not at all righteous,

Now Saṅkara addressed the Brahmanas thus,—
 “Sirs, this man admits that he is a sinner, and thus according to you, has no right to offer oblations to his ancestors. But you all have partaken of the food offered by him. So according to you, again, you must have become tainted with sin. Now I see, as you yourselves have admitted, that uttering the name of ‘Hari’ only can save you. So please call out the name of Hari, and get yourselves] purified.” He ended with a loud shout of ‘Hari, Hari.’ His followers joined him and rent the sky with the sacred name of ‘Hari’ The glory of Lord Krishna was thus established in Assam.

After their discomfiture at the house of Buḍha Khān, the Saktas were convinced that the opponent they had to deal with was no ordinary man. They now realised more than ever that their religious beliefs and practices would soon cease to be observed unless prompt measures were adopted for the suppression of Vaishnavism. They now went in a body to the Ahom King Suklenmung and complained to him that Saṅkara was doing immense mischief to the kingdom by preaching heresy among the subjects. Though Ahom Kings of the time had not as yet accepted Hindu manners and customs, yet they acknowledged the superiority of Brāhmanas. So the Ahom King ordered Saṅkara to be brought before him. When the reformer was produced the complainants were asked to state their case against him. They said that Saṅkara was asking men not to perform the Srāddha ceremony. The king could not understand the meaning of the word “Srāddha” and so he discharged Sankaradeva.

Last stand
of Saktism

At last Sankara wins over the Brahmanas and converts them to Vaisnavism

On account of their repeated defeats at the hands of Sañkara, Saktas began to relax their hatred for Vishnavism. Sankara also devised a means of winning the Brahmanas over to his side. He asked Rāma Rāy to have an image of the god Jagannātha made for him. Then he made it known that at the time of the anointment of the idol he would make rich gifts to Brāhmaṇas. This offer attracted many a Brahmana to the ceremony. Sankara showed the idol to the Brahmanas and asked them if that was not an image of God. They all replied that it was, having been set up by a Śaḍhu Mahānta. He then asked them what was their definition of a Śaḍhu and the Brāhmanas unhesitatingly replied that those who were devoted to Hari were Śaḍhus. Now Sañkara asked them why then they were so hostile to the devotees of Hari. Having now no answer to give to this point-blank question they all felt so non-plussed that they could not now help singing the glory of Hari. Nay, they went to the length of reciting the holy name of Hari before they left for their respective places.

Though the Brāhmanas were thus made to accept the name of Hari yet they had no sincere devotion for Him. Sañkara now began to think how he could turn them into staunch devotees of Hari. One day he met Brahmānanda Bhaṭṭa-chaṛyya and requested him to read out the Gita to the Vaishnavas. The Brāhmanas agreed. Sañkara then asked his disciples to collect a sum of money to remunerate Brahmānanda. This was done and Brahmānanda read out the sacred book to the Vaishnavas. Other Brāhmanas also came there to hold discourses on the Gita and the

Bhāgavata. Saṅkara honoured all of them with money. In this way he bought off his formidable opponents.

When the opposition of the Brāhmanas had been lessened Saṅkara directed his attention to the propagation of the doctrine of Bhakti. He made arrangements for holding religious discourses and for singing songs about Lord Krishna. The treatises on Bhakti were all written in Sanskrit and so they were sealed books to the masses. He now tried to bring religious works within the reach of the people. So he began to write books in the dialect of the country embodying in them the teachings of Vaishnavism. He also induced some other writers to publish translations of the works on Bhakti in the language of the people. Of all these books the Rāmāyana and the tenth and eleventh books of the Bhāgavata were the biggest. It must have taken pretty long to compose them. Sankara had a wonderful poetic faculty and passed almost the whole of his life in writing books. His writings were very vigorous as he had added earnestness to his poetic ability. Hence his writings touched the heart of the people. When citing the narratives described in the Purāṇas he faithfully translated the original texts. He also collected the parables told in the various Purāṇas. No one could accurately translate the Sanskrit slokas like him. All these contributed to the popularity of his works.

How
Sankara
propagates
the doctrine
of Bhakti

The doctrines of Vaishnavism now began to spread very rapidly in Assam. The books written by Sankara and his followers became very popular and the Vaishnava songs also did much for the

propagation of the doctrine of Bhakti in the country.

Saṅkara passed some time at Barapeta and the neighbouring places. It was during his stay in these parts of Kamrup that his doctrines made a rapid progress among the people. He also lived for some time in Upper Assam preaching his religion there. But he could not live there in peace. He had to face a number of dangers and difficulties for the sake of his faith.

Opposition
offered by
Ahom
kings

The Saktas were not the only enemies that Saṅkara and his followers had to take into account. The Ahom kings of the place also were not friendly towards them. Indeed on one occasion Sankara himself narrowly escaped death only by jumping over a ditch fourteen cubits wide, his followers Mādhava and Hari being captured by their pursuers. The Ahoms set Mādhava at liberty but put Hari to death. It is said that the head of Hari when severed from the trunk uttered the word 'Rama'.

How far
Sri-
Chaitanya
have
influenced
Sankara

Almost all the biographers of Saṅkaradeva say that he had seen Sri-Chaitanyadeva the great Vaishnava reformer of Bengal. Some of the later writers hold that a conversation took place between the two teachers. Kaṇṭhabhaṣaṇa, Daityari, and Rama Rāya who were the principal biographers of Saṅkara are however unanimous on the following point —

1. That Saṅkaradeva met Sri Chaitanya.
2. That no conversation took place between them.
3. That Saṅkaradeva did not receive any direct teaching from Sri Chaitanya.

According to the narrative of Ātā-bhakta-Sambad Saṅkara met Sri-Chaitanya at Nadia

before his Sannyasa. There is no proof however of his taking lessons in Bhakti from Sri-Chaitanya. Even the writers of Bengal have never asserted that Sri-Chaitanya taught Saṅkara the doctrine of Bhakti.

Daityāri Thākura says that Saṅkaradeva was so devoted a Bhakta that on many occasions he would be beside himself with devotion. The religious songs introduced by him wrought a miracle in the country. Even the illiterate peasants came to feel their holy influence. It was gratifying to Saṅkara to learn that even the 'Chāṇḍālas' and cowboys of Assam sang songs of Sri-Krishṇa.

It has been mentioned before that Saṅkaradeva had to leave Dhuārōla on account of the persecution of the Ahoms. He went to Barapeta with some of his disciples. Subsequently many of his followers left their homes and went over to him. Mādhava at first lived in the house of Budha Dalai in the village of Barādi and then settled at Barapeta. Saṅkaradeva changed his residence twice or thrice and at length set up his residence at a place called Pāṭabāusi. Here he became very widely known and the number of his followers increased day by day. Every day lots of people came to him and accepted his religion. Rāmarāma Guru and many an old associate of Sankara also came to join him here. And here he made some new converts, the most important being Narāyanadāsa. The original name of this Bhakta was Bhavānanda and he lived in the village of Baḍanagara. He heard of the name of Sankara from Bhaskara of Palandi who had already been converted to Vaiṣṇavism. He was so moved when introduced

Sankara's
disciple
Narayana-
dasa
the Prahlad
of Maha-
purushiya
literature.

into the presence of the great reformer that he literally prostrated himself before him. Sankara treated him very kindly, initiated him into Vaishnavism and gave him the name of Narāyaṇadāsa. In the Mahāpurusa literature he has been described as an incarnation of Prahlāda, the great Bhakta of Lord Krishna, Sankara owed a large number of converts to the influence and exertions of Narāyaṇadāsa. Through the medium of Narāyaṇadāsa many people were converted by Sankara, the chief among them being Madhava of Jayanti, Paramānanda, Srīrāma of Simulā, Balarāma, Mukunda and Gopāla. Another important conversion that took place about this time was that of Chakrapāni. This Brāhmaṇa was the family-priest of Narāyaṇadāsa. Once his infant son Rāma became very ill, so he took the boy with his wife to the house of Narāyaṇadāsa for treatment. Here the lady heard about Lord Krishna. When she came back home she asked her husband why he did not take the name of Hari. It was a pity she said that a Brāhmaṇa should not sing the glory of Hari, while that was being done by others. He replied that if he became a votary of Hari men would no longer employ him as their priest and he would be left without any means of maintaining his family. At one time he even made up his mind to defeat Sankaradeva in a religious debate. But Narāyaṇadāsa persuaded him to become a Vaishnava and he was at length initiated into Vaishnavism by Rāmārāma Guru. During Sankaradeva's stay at Pātāhausi two other men became his disciples. They were Dāmodara and Harideva. The former latterly founded the Dāmodariya sect of the Vaishnavas

Some very
important
converts

of Assam. In this way the number of Sankara's followers went on increasing. With their best efforts the Saktas could not stay the progress of Vaishnavism.

The Sakta Brahmanas of Assam grew greatly alarmed at the rapid progress made by Vaishnavism. As Sankara was more intelligent and more learned they could do nothing to check its forward march. The Ahom kings bore no personal hatred towards Sankara. They did not interfere with the Vaishnavas in the pursuit of their religion. When, however, the sovereignty of the country passed from the Ahom to the Koch Behar kings who were staunch worshippers of the goddess Sakti, the Saktas tried to instigate the ruling chief Naranarayana against Sankara with the object of thus dealing a death blow to the religion preached by him. Naranarayana himself was a devoted votary of Kamakhya. It was during his reign that the existing temple of the goddess Kamakhya was completed. This King has also made rich endowments for the worship of the goddess. The Saktas now approached Raja Naranarayana and complained against Sankara saying that he was persuading men not to worship the goddess Kamakhya. The king was very angry to hear this. He at once sent his men to arrest the Vaishnava teacher.

The king's brother Chila Raya, however, was favourably inclined towards the Vaishnavas. He was indeed a well-wisher of Sankaradeva. It was through his interest that Sankara's son Ramananda was appointed to a Government post. When he heard of the King's order for the arrest of Sankara he sent secret information to him.

Forced to
yield inch
by inch,
the Saktas
at last
seek the
protection
of Koch
Behar
kings.

Raja
Nara-
narayana
set against
Sankara.

King's
brothers
Chila Roy
saves
Sankara.

For him
his followers
Narayana-
dasa and
Gokula-
chand
are most
cruelly
persecut-
ed-

Thus Sankara had time to hide himself. Unable to find out the Vaishnava leader the king's men arrested two of his followers Narayana dasa and Gokulachand in the hope of getting from them information as to Sankara's whereabouts. When taken before the king, the two Bhaktas began to sing the name of Hari. The king asked them where Sankara was. The king asked the same question again and again ; but in vain. Now Naranarayana was convinced that they were concealing the truth and ordered his men to put them to the severest torture. Four men with swords in their hands held out severe threats to them and tortured them in very many ways and yet no information about Sankara could be had from them. Then these men were convinced that they really knew nothing about their leader and informed the king accordingly. The king's anger was now a little abated and he ordered them to be brought before him. He then put to them a number of questions about Sankara and his religion. When he came to know that they did not worship Durga he was inflamed with rage and ordered them harshly to bow to the Goddess. The Bhaktas however remained obdurate, nay, they spoke to the king's face that they worshipped Krishna and Krishna alone and would never bend their knees before any other divinity. The king was now beside himself with rage and ordered his men to give them sound thrashing. His orders were literally carried out and the two innocent Vaishnavas were mercilessly belaboured. Narayanadasa was so severely beaten that one of his arms was fractured, still the Bhaktas behaved themselves in a dignified manner. Unmindful of the physical

torture they were put to, they continued singing the name of Hari. Astonished at this the king now ordered his men to cease torturing and to sell them to the Bhūṭias instead.

Both Nārāyanadāsa and Gokūlachand were very strong and stout. So the Bhūṭias bought them gladly. The two Bhaktas followed the Bhūṭias singing the song of Hari. The latter were so much impressed with the religious ardour of the Vaishnavas that they felt that the two men had something more than human in them. They also noticed many omens on the way. Therefore they returned them to the King's men and went away. Two guards Madhu and Hari were in charge of them. They had to pass the night with their charge at a Bazar. At dead of night the shackles fell off from the feet of Nārāyanadāsa. He then awaked Hari and asked him to bind him again. The guard was deeply impressed by the honesty of the prisoner. During his sleep he dreamt that Lord Kṛishṇa with the conch, the discus, the mace and the lotus flower in his four hands had come there to rescue his votaries. Madhu the other guard also dreamt a similar dream that night. The next morning both the guards took off the chains of the Vaishnavas, fell at their feet and begged to be excused for what they had done

Miracles
save the
Bhaktas.

Saṅkaradeva had not so long appeared in public for fear of the king. But how long could he pass in this way? So he left his family in a safe place and himself appeared before Chila Raya. Chila Raya told him that he would try to pacify the king if Saṅkara could only manage

Sankar
surrenders.

to check the Brāhmanas. Saṅkara submitted that he would see to it although he did not at all fear the Brāhmanas. He only feared the King as he might unjustly punish him.

Sankara
interviews
Nara-
narayana
and wins
him over.

Very soon it reached the ears of the King that Saṅkara had been secretly putting up with Chila Rāya. He then asked Chila Rāya to produce the reformer before him. Rājā Naragrāyana was not only a mighty king but also a learned scholar. He was a patron of learning and showed great respect to the learned. When the Vaishnava reformer was brought to the court, he was so much struck by his calm and peaceful appearance that he got down from his throne and entered a special chamber desiring Saṅkara to be conducted there so that they might have a talk between them. Now this chamber had a very high plinth and there was a great stair leading to it. Saṅkara recited a sloka describing the glory of the king as he ascended each step of the stair, and when he stood in the presence of the king, he recited in a most charming way a hymn in praise of the Almighty. The king was highly pleased, talked with him for some time and then dismissed him with kind words. Next day the Brāhmanas were summoned to hold a debate with Saṅkara. No reliable account of this debate is available. It is only said in one of the Vaishnava books of Assam that Sankaradeva was able to defeat his adversaries in the debate. The king now highly admired his learning and asked him to compose as many verses as he could using certain words selected by him. Sankara composed seven different slokas with the words so selected and explained them to the satisfaction of the king.

After some days, a learned man from the

western parts of India came to the court of Raja Naranārāyana. The king told him that he counted it little credit to himself if the learned Brahmanas of his court defeated him. He said that it would be congratulatory to him if any man of his kingdom might defeat him. Upon this it was settled that the scholar should engage in debate with Saṅkara and a day was fixed for it. Some pupils of this Pandit went to Sāṅkaradeva before the appointed day and told him that non-Brahmanas were not entitled to read the Bhāgavata. Saṅkara did not agree. On the contrary he affirmed on the authority of the Bhāgavata itself † that by reading this book a Brahmana might acquire the status of Brahmana, a Kshatriya might extend his dominions upto the sea, a Vaisya might increase his wealth and a Sudra free himself from all sins. Saṅkaradeva then quoted another verse and said that it was only the Dvija-vandhus who might not read the Vedas. The pupils admitting this point, he asked them for the meaning of 'Dvija-vandhu'. They thought for some time and told him what they thought it meant. Sankaradeva then said that it bore another meaning also. They however could not give any further meaning. So they went back to their preceptor to ask the different meanings of the word. The scholar however could not add to the knowledge of his pupils, and thinking 'Prudence is the better part of valour', left the place in secret. The king was highly amused and pleased to receive the news of his flight.

The king now came to have so much regard for Sankaradeva that he wanted to be initiated into

† Srimadbhagavata, 11th Skandha, 12th Chapter, Verses 65—66,

A clear
coast for
Vaishnavism
the Kachari
Raja
embraces it

Vaishnavism by him. But the learned reformer did not agree to this as he had *made it a rule not to accept as his disciple a king, a Brahmana, or a woman.*

The coast was now all clear for Vaishnavism in Assam and the doctrine of Bhakti now rapidly spread throughout the country. It is said that Herambaraja (Kachari Raja) sent a messenger to Saṅkara intimating his willingness to accept Vaishnavism. Mādhavadeva and Nārāyanadāsa were sent for his conversion. And the *king was initiated* into Vaishnavism and the doctrine of Bhakti spread in his kingdom also.

Another
humiliation
of the
Brahmanas
at the hand
of
Sankara

The Brāhmanas got alarmed at the influence of Sankaradeva in the court of the king Naraṅgarāyana and tried their best to do him harm. But all their efforts proved abortive. One day the king called an assembly of the Pandits and asked them whether they could prepare a summary of the Bhāgavata in the course of a day and explain it to him. They however gave him to understand that they might do it if they were allowed eight to ten days' time. Then the king put the same question to Sankara whose answer was that he would try his best to carry out the royal behest. Then the reformer came home and rested for some time after taking his meal. After this he began to write a synopsis of the Bhāgavata. The work was finished a few hours before day-break. This book was called 'Guramālā.

The following day he duly performed his devotional duties and presented himself in the royal court at the proper time. There he read the book 'Guramālā' with the permission of the king. Every one present there was charmed at the simplicity and elegance of his style and the ~~sonorous music~~ of his composition. Their wonder

knew no bounds when they learnt that such an excellent book was composed in a single night. The king too was highly pleased and gave him valuable presents. He also appointed him as Gamthā or Viceroy of Patabāusi and the neighbouring places. Thereafter Sankara returned to Patabāusi. There his fame began to spread far and wide. Thousands of men came to him daily and took the 'Saraṇa-mantra' from him. Pandit Kanthabhūshana, who had gone to Benares to study the Bhagavata with the object of defeating Sankara in religious discourses, came to him and saluted him touching his feet. Even Ananta Kandali who was so widely known for his erudition came to him as directed in a dream and partook of his leavings. About this time Damadadeva, Harideva, Kavi Karnapur, Madhavadeva, Mādnai of Jayantia, Kavilā Bāḍhai, Krishna Teli, Sivananda, Budha Gopala, Haridāsa Atai and Chānd Shah who was a Muhammadan by birth as well as other disciples of Sankara lived with him spending their time in discussing the doctrine of Bhakti, singing the name of Hari and in the performance of dramas relating to Bhakti which greatly helped the propagation of the new religion.

Sankara did not at all like the duties attaching to the post of the Gamthā, having a special leaning towards spiritual subjects. Therefore, after some time, he removed to Koch Behār so that he might be relieved of his official duties. He knew that he was finally leaving his home. So he assigned specified duties to his principal disciples and gave unto Mādhava the charge of maintaining his family. Durgāprāsāda writes in his Kocha Rāja-Vaṇśāvalī that Sankara went to Koch Behār in a boat and settled in the village of Kagacha-

At length
Sankara is
appointed
a Gamthā
or viceroy

Sick of
Gamthā-
ship,
Sankara
removes to
Koch-
Behār

kuta. Thence forward this village came to be regarded as a holy place.

Fresh
humiliation
of the
Brahmanas

One day the Śāktas who were his avowed enemies informed the king that he used to eat the flesh of many animals without sacrificing them before the deities. Hearing this the king became angry and sent his men to bring him to the royal court. These men brought him to the king together with the vessels containing flesh. The king then said to Sankara—

“You are a devoted votary of Hari. Why do you then eat goat’s flesh and thus fall off from righteousness?”

In reply Sankara said that he never ate goat’s flesh. Thereupon the king ordered his men to show him the flesh in the vessels brought by them. As ordered by the king they went to the place where the vessels were, but to their great astonishment they found in them sugar, honey and ripe plantain. Some of them contained rice, milk and other things of the like nature. They then put their cloth round their necks and said to the king that they had themselves put flesh into the vessels. They also asserted that Sankara was not a man but a god, as whatever he had said turned out to be true. Hearing these words of his men, the king gave a seat to Sankara to sit on. Sankara sat on it and held a debate with the Brahmanas in Sanskrit. In this debate he defeated his opponents. The king gave him rich presents in consideration of his vast scholarship.

Durga-
prasada on
Sankara.

The above description of the superhuman power of Sankara is taken from the book of Durga-prasada. This Royal ballad-writer further says:

‘Sankara said’ “O king, I see that you have no temple of the god Vishnu, I do not even drink

water with the end of the Kusha grass at the place where there is no temple of Vishnu. If you consecrate an image of Vishnu, then I shall take food and reside here". So saying he took leave of the king and went to Kāgajakuta. The king then engaged goldsmiths and workers in bell-metal and got made a metal image of Hari called Vāṇsidhara. In order to perform the ceremony of infusing life into the idol he invited Pandits living in different places. The king made up his mind to perform this ceremony on the Uttarayana Saṅkrānti day of the month of Magha which also happened to be the day of the full moon. He also sent for Saṅkara who forthwith came to the king. The king gave him a seat to sit on and asked him to perform the ceremony. Hearing the words of the king, Saṅkara said slowly and sweetly—

"I have with me a Brahmana of the name of Ananta Kandali who is highly learned. O king, get this ceremony performed by your priest engaging this Pandit to watch his work."

Durgaprasāda says that both Naranarayana and Sukladhvaja worshipped the Goddess Devi and were staunch Śāktas. Both came to have regard for Vaishnavism through the influence of Saṅkara and established the idol of Vishnu. The goddess Kātyāyāni was highly pleased at this and sent Virabhadra from Kailasa to present a Salagrama stone to the king. Virabhadra came to the king in the garb of a Sannyasi and gave him the holy stone which is still being worshipped under the name of Lakshminarayana.

Saṅkaradeva lived in Koch Behar for two years and a half. Everyday he used to go to the court of the king who loved to hear from him religious talks. Now all men of Koch Behar from the

Sankara's
life at
Koch Behar

Naranarayana resolves to take initiation from Sankara.

highest Brāhmana to the lowest Chandala came to regard him as an incarnation of God and followed his doctrine. The Yuvarāja Chila Ray and his daughter Bhuvanesvari had been devoted followers of Sañkara from before. Now the king Naranārāyaṇa also came to have great regard for him. One day he told Sañkara that he would take '*Sarana-mantra*' from him. The reformer had previously told the king that he could not initiate the Brāhmaṇas and the king into his religion as they were obliged to be polytheists. This time too he informed the king that those who did not believe in the unity of the godhead and worshipped a number of deities were not entitled to get '*Sarana mantra*'. But the king was resolved to be his follower. He said in reply that he would worship no other god or goddess than Hari. He was even ready to abdicate his throne to satisfy his religious hankering. So he most earnestly entreated the reformer to give him the '*Sarana mantra*'. Sañkara could no longer help complying with the request of the king. He said to him, "O king, if you are bent on taking the *Sarana mantra*, please observe the requisite vows and fasting to-morrow. I shall give you the *mantra* day after tomorrow if Heaven does not will it otherwise."

So saying he returned to Kagajakutā with a heavy heart. Hearing that Sañkara would become the 'Guru' of the king, the joy of Chila Ray knew no bounds. His followers too hailed the welcome news with loud demonstrations of joy. The following day the king observed fasting and performed the necessary ceremonies. He also built a nice house for the purpose. On the appointed day he observed *Samyama* and sent for the reformer. But when the royal messenger came to Sankara he found him

suffering from a boil on the thumb. Therefore he sent information to the king that he was not in a position to go to the royal court.

When the messenger was gone, Saṅkara called his disciples and said to them that his end was near. He then washed his face, wore a piece of new cloth and sat under *Tepar* tree (*Garcinia xanthochymus*) in the posture called '*padmāsana*.' This cast a gloom over the mind of his disciples. Ramananda Thākura fell at his feet and said, "Father, I have got nothing from you." Saṅkara said, "My child, your mother has got enough of gold and silver. The vast wealth conferred on me by Sukladhvaja and the Princess Bhuvanesvari is in your possession. You need not be so anxious." Ramananda said in reply, "Father, I have got nothing that may help me in the next world. I am in quest of such a thing." Hearing this Saṅkara was in an ecstasy of joy and held him in his embrace. He said, "This day I learn that you are a worthy son of mine. But my body is now being subjected to the faintness of death. I have no more time to live. I give unto Mādhava the whole energy of my soul. There is no distinction between myself and him. You will get spiritual teaching from him."

Death
of
Sankaradeva.

Thereafter Saṅkara recited religious songs and hymns and resigned himself unto God. In this way the great reformer, the very incarnation of Bhakti in Kāmarupa, passed away.

When the news of Saṅkara's death was known, cries of lamentation rose all over the country. Ramananda duly performed the funeral obsequies of his father and then came to Patabāsi in order to give consolation to his mother and the principal disciples of his father.

Here we propose to give a brief account of the way in which Saṅkara propagated his doctrine of Bhakti.

Saṅkara's
doctrine of
Bhakti is not
Buddhism
as some
suggest

Some scholars are inclined to hold that the doctrine preached by Saṅkara was really Buddhism in disguise. Rajavamsavali and Gurucharitra however go to show that Saṅkara combated Buddhism in the court of king Naranārayana and established the superiority of the doctrine of Bhakti. The consequence of this was that the Buddhists were compelled to leave the royal court. * Under these circumstances it cannot be said that Saṅkara's religion was but another form of Buddhism. The Buddhists call^{ed} their religion 'Saddharma' and at the time of initiation into it the formula used runs thus—

Buddhism
is Saddha-
rma, while
Saṅkara's
cult is styled
Mahadharma

‘বুদ্ধঃ শরণং গচ্ছামি ধর্মঃ শরণং গচ্ছামি সত্ত্বং শরণং গচ্ছামি’
‘I seek the protection of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha.’

Saṅkara's disciples also call the religion preached by him Mahadharma or Mahapurushadharma. † Initiation into this religion is called

* “গাছে নারায়ণ রাই ।	বোলে শয়নক তাই ।
ভল বিএ নিরন্তর ।	বুলিলেক অনন্তর ।
তোমাং, করিলা হোই ।	তু পুজিল সবোই ।
গোচর, করিলা আচে ।	ই কথা হুনিবো গাছে ।
পতিতক বাদ বরা ।	ভক্তিপথ রসা করা ।
শুনিয়া শকর হরি ।	ব্রাহ্মণ বান করি ।
ধর্মপথ রাখিলেক ।	বৌদ্ধবাদী ভাবিলেক ।
হেবি সরসারায়ণ ।	পরম সত্যের মন ।”

Vide Gurucharitra (Assam Govt Col. Gauhati No 7)

† “শকর ধর্ম ইতো অগত প্রবর্তিল ।
মহাধর্ম ধরি লোক সংসায়ে তারিল । ১২৯
মহাপুরুষের ধর্ম অনেক ধরিল ।
মানবিক বাস সরে দুর্গকি তারিল” (Gurucharitra

'Sarana' and the convert is called a 'Sarania.' The mantra that is given to the convert is this "শরণে নে অগরাধ শ্রীকৃষ্ণ পুরুষোত্তম" i. e. Lord Krishna, the best of all *purusha* and lord of the world, is my 'shelter'. Just as Chaitanyadeva is regarded as 'Mahāprabhu' (Great Lord) by the Vaishnavas of Bengal, so the Vaishnavas of Assam look upon Sankara as a Mahapurusha (Great personage) and an incarnation of God.

Some modern writers are inclined to hold that the teachings of Mahāprabhu Chaitanyadeva influenced the religion of Sankara. Some of them even go so far as to say that Chaitanyadeva went to Kāmarupa to preach his religion there. As a matter of fact the Great Bengal reformer never went to Kāmarupa. None of his disciples in Bengal ever allude to his ever having been there in their writings. Most of the followers of Chaitanyadeva adopt the four modes of worship—Dāśya, Sakhya, Vātsalya and Mādhurya which have no prominent place in the religion preached by Sankara. The mantra preached by the former consisted of sixteen letters, whereas that of the latter consisted of the four names, Rama, Narayana, Krishna and Hari.

Chaitanya-
deva could
not have
influenced
Sankaradeva

Mahāprabhu was the preacher of the doctrine of Prema and Bhakti, Sañkaradeva, on the other hand preached the doctrine of Nishkāma Bhakti. The songs composed by him are saturated with Bhakti towards God. He worshipped Lord Krishna as Pūrṇa Brahma. He forbade the worship of any other deity than Lord Krishna. He used to say, "God is one, worship

Him alone. There is no other god but Him." * The religion of the Great Bengal reformer recommends the worship of Rādhā and Krishna. But Rādhā has no place in the Sarana-dharma of Saṅkara. He was an advocate of the worship of Purna-Brahma Sri-Krishna of the Srimad-bhagavata.

Effect of
Sankara's
religion in
Assam,

However, as a result of the preaching of Vaishnavism by Saṅkara and his followers, the influence of the Saktas greatly diminished in Kamarupa. Saṅkara's religion came to be respected by all classes of men from the throned monarch down to the poorest beggar. During his long life the people of Assam honoured him as a great religious reformer. There was no schism among his followers. Madhava, Damodara, Harideva and other principal disciples of Sankara regarded him as an incarnation of God. Seven Mahantas, viz. Madhava, Damodara, Ramarama Gurn, Harideva, Manuhari, Hara and Narayana were given chiefship of *Satras* and were also appointed as Acharyyas by Sankara. Of these seven Bhaktas Madhava was the foremost.

Places
visited by
Sankara.

From a book called 'Āta-Bhakta-sambāda' the following record is gathered about the different places Sankaradeva had visited and the period of his sojourn in each,—

- * “কুব হেন শব্ব ইটো, পৃথিব বাকে হৈল, ‘ন’ আনলত এবৰ্ত্তন ।
দুইয় একপৰ হৈল, পয়ন ব্ৰহ্মৰূপ কুক নাম আনলক মাত্ৰকর ।”
- “তুমি সত্যবাক, তোমাতে একালে, জগত ইটো অনন্ত ।
জগততে লগা তুমিও একাশা অমৰীমো ভগবন্ত ।
তুমি আৰ্জা হেন জানিয়া ভোঁৱাক চিত্তে ভগ্নে বিটো জন ।
তুমি পুত্ৰ দায় বিবৰ ভোগত নাই তার প্রয়োজন ।”

Namaghosha, by Sankara

Place	Period of stay
Alipukhuri	13 years,
Baradoa	21 years,
Pilgrimage to various places	12 years,
Baradoa	21 years,
Komaracheda	6 months,
Gangmau	5 years,
Belaguri or Dhuianhata	15 years,
Kapala	6 months,
Palandi	6 months,
Kumarakuchi	1 year, and
Patabausi	16 years,

Sankara's
birth and
death.

According to this work Sankaradeva died at the 'age of 105. Ramacharana Thakura however credits him 107 years. According to others again his lifetime extended over 118 years and 6 months. These writers again are not unanimous as to the date of his birth. From an examination of the accounts given by the various biographers of Sankaradeva it may be said that the approximate date of his birth was the year 1371 of the Saka era (1449 A. D.)

According to tradition Madhavadeva passed away in the year 1490 of the Saka era (1568 A. D.). Hence it is clear that he preached the Mahapurushiya religion for more than 20 years after the death of his great Guru. Damodaradeva was a Brahmana by caste. He was moreover known as a great Bhakta and one of the principal followers of Sankaradeva. He was also in no way inferior to Madhavadeva in point of age and wisdom. Hence he was greatly aggrieved at the appointment of Madhava as the head of the Vaishnavas in supersession of his claims. He led

Some of
the principal
disciples of
Sankara.

the life of a house-holder. Mādhava was a Brahmachāri from his boyhood. This is why Sañkaradeva had given him preference and had nominated him as his own successor.

Internal
dissension
breaks out
resulting in
Madhava's
going over
Koch Behar.

Though Dāmodara was highly erudite and a great Sādhu, yet he could not help being jealous. This jealousy led to dissensions among the followers of the two Vaishnava leaders. This matter will be fully dealt with in a subsequent chapter in connection with the description of the Dāmodariya sect. During the life-time of Dāmodara his followers could not do any great harm to Mādhava. After his death his Brāhmaṇa followers strained every nerve to drive him away from Kāmarūpa. Matters then came to a head and Chilā, Rāya's son Raghudeva, who was then ruler of Kamarupa, as well as his officers, began to persecute the Vaishnava preacher in very many ways. Mādhava found the place too hot for him and took refuge under king Lakshminarayana of Koch Behār. Here he lived for some time and then passed away as his Guru had done.

Before his death, he had given Achāryyaship to twelve of his principal disciples. Among these twelve persons—Mathurādāsa Ātā of Barpeta satra, Vishnu Ātā of Madhupur, Baduā Ātā of Kamalābāri satra in Ujāni, Kesava Ātā of Bhāto Kuchhi satra, Baḍa Vishnu Ātā of Chāmariya satra, Narayanadeva Thakura of Jania, Rama-charana Thakura of Dalagoma, Pariā Madhava Ātā of Baḍa Heramada and Lakhmikaṇṭha Ātā of Dhopargudi in Hājo had got chiefship of satras.

Spread of Vaishnavism in Assam.

The following account of the spread of the doctrine of Sañkaradeva and Damodaradeva and of the establishment of Satras or religious monasteries all over Assam was taken from a book of Govindadasa called 'Santa Sampradaya':—

There was a certain Brahmana called Harivara who was Bhuiya or landlord of the village of Vyaghrapinda. He had three sons named Karmai, Dharmai and Paramai. When a great war broke out between the Ahoms and Kochas, the people of Tembuani allied with the Bhuiyas of Baradoa and fought with the king Svarga Narayana. Countless men died in that war. At that time Karmai Guru went to Manipur. Sankara lived for some time in the villages of Dhuarola and Belguri. Here he had to suffer great hardships. During this time of danger, the daughter of Karmai Guru took shelter with him. He married her to a Brahmana who lived hard by. On an auspicious day and at a lucky moment Yamuna-devi gave birth to a son. The sooth-sayer made calculations from his horoscope and gave him the name of Gopala. The boy began to grow day by day like the moon. Shortly after this Karmai Guru shuffled off the mortal coil. His wife, too, followed him through the funeral pyre. Now, his sister brought up the infant Gopala. He was in due time invested with the Sacred-thread and was also given a little schooling. Then his brother-in-law made up his mind to marry him and sent him to a merchant with the object of getting money. Gopala got on board a boat with the merchants and went to Dakshinakula taking with him pepper, cloth

Govinda
Dasa's Santa
Sampradaya
on Sankara
and
Damodara's
doctrine and
establish-
ment of
Satras,

and other commodities. He landed at a place called Dhuarola, the seat of the great reformer of Assam. There he saw the illustrious Sankara. His complexion was fair and his face resembled the moon. His eyes were like lotus and his hands reached down to his knees. He was sitting in a posture called Padmasana in the temple of Hari, having wrapped himself up in pure white and holding the prayer-beads in his lotus-like hand. Gopala was in an ecstasy of joy to see such a holy man and bowed to him along with the merchant. In a deep voice the illustrious Sankara said to Gopala, 'Who are you? Who is your father? Where do you live and whom have you to call your own?' Hearing the sweet words of Sankara, Gopala became very glad and gave an account of himself making a reference of his grandfather Harihara. Sankara requested him to stay with him; but he told him of his inability to comply for the sake of his companion. Sankara said that he would become a noble Mahanta, that he bore auspicious signs on his person and that he had never seen such a Brāhmaṇa. Gopala too found it hard to leave Sankara. He was distressed at heart and remained silent. Sankara then said to him "My boy, you may go now, But come to me again, if you can not on any account remember me and hold firmly to the path of devotion to God." As Gopala was unable to take himself off from him, he burst into tears. The merchant took him away from the place.

After this Madhava heard of Sankara from Chagakina and came to him to hold a discourse. After this he became a follower of Sankara.

Soon after this Saṅkara fled to the west with Madhava for fear of the Ahom king. Latterly he established a *Satra* at Barapeṭa, and began to spread the doctrine of Bhakti. After a short stay at Barapeṭa Saṅkara appointed Madhava the religious leader of the place.

Saṅkaradeva had three sons, Ramananda, Kamalalochana and Haricharana. Ramananda's son was Purushottama Thakura. Kamalalochana died a premature death and Haricharana too did not live long. Saṅkara established a *Satra* at Pāṭabausi and asked the devotee Damodara to settle there with the object of making the Brahmanas devoted to Hari by reading to them the doctrine of Bhakti as recorded in the Bhagavata. Damodara expressed his readiness to comply as it was he who had given him food and clothing and through whose favour he had learnt the doctrine of Bhakti. Upon this Sankara gave him a copy of the Bhagavata and conferred upon him religious leadership of the place. He had also made Madhava the head of the *Satra* at Barapeṭa. Then Sankara shuffled off the mortal coil and went up to heaven. Madhava then began to preach his religion. As Ramananda met a premature death, he took upon himself the duty of maintaining the old Lakshmi Aī together with her daughter-in-law. The work of the propagation of Vaishnavism was being carried on by him with the help of religious songs.

It has been said that Gopala was taken away from the presence of Sankara by the merchant with whom he had gone there. He came back

Gopala's
conversion
to Vaishna-
vism

to his brother-in-law's house and told him all about the Vaishnava teacher. His brother-in-law now set his heart upon getting Gopāla married. One night Gopāla dreamt that God Hari had come to him in the guise of a Brahmana and was exhorting him not to marry. He advised him to take to the path of Sankara as that would do him good. Gopāla then became a Brahmachari. He took one meal a day, consisting of boiled sun-dried rice. He gave up all the vanities of existence and always sang the name of Hari. One day he got on board a boat sailing to the west and came to Mādhava. Mādhava received him hospitably and asked him who he was. In reply Gopāla said that he was the grand-son of Vipra Harivara and that his name was Vāṁsigopāla. He stayed there for some days and passed his time in talking of the glory of Hari and then, with the permission of Mādhava, he went to Damodara. Dāmodara saw Gopāla and asked him questions regarding his particulars. Gopāla passed some days here. One day he bowed unto Damodara and said, "Venerable sir, be gracious enough to tell me how to attain Saraṇa, Bhajana and Bhakti and how to deliver myself from the bondage of birth. Hearing these words of Gopāla, Damodara advised him to follow the footsteps of Saṅkaradeva and take to Saraṇa and Kīrtana according to the teachings of that reformer. So saying, the venerable Vaishnava gave him instructions regarding Saraṇa, Bhajana and Bhakti. He also gave him mala-mantra. Gopāla then acknowledged Dāmodara as his Guru and bowed unto him and respectfully walked round him. After a few days' stay there, he went back to Mādhava. He lived with this sage for seven

years. One day Madhava told him that it was a special command of Lord Sankaradeva to spread Vaishnavism in the land of his nativity. Hearing this Gopala said, 'O Madhava, in that country I was grossly insulted. In that land there is no piety, there is no scruple about taking food and having sexual intercourse. The people worship strange deities. There is no distinction between men of higher castes and lower castes. They beget children on widows. Bastards born of widows are swelling in number there. Why shall I go to such a land of fallen men?' On a subsequent date Gopala saw Damodaradeva. His master made it clear to him that there was no difference between him and Madhava. Hearing this Gopala came back to Madhava and said to him, "O Āta Madhava, if you give me a Vaishṇava, I may go to Assam to carry out the sacred behest of Saṅkaradeva." Hearing these words Madhava had Jadumaṇi brought here and said to him, "You are to accompany the master. The venerable Gopala has renounced the world. You are a householder. The Guru will get you married." Then he made Gopala the Adhikari and Jadumaṇi the Medhi. This Jadumaṇi was a descendant of the Kayastha chief Ritai Maṅgala of Mallabichhi. The son of Ritai was Ananta, Ananta's son was Janardana. Jadumaṇi was the son of Janardana.

Gopala and Jadumaṇi came to upper Assam and established a Satra there. Then they spread the doctrine of Krishna Bhakti among the people. Following the direction of Madhava, Jadumaṇi married Hari Ai. Then Tamuli Dalai, Beja Dalai and the other Bhuiyas established a Satra at Kalabari for them. Here also these Vaishnavas spread the

Gopala goes back to Assam to propagate Vaishnavism.

Gopala helps the cause of Vaishnavism.

doctrine of Hari. Then they took leave of the Bhuiyas and, keeping Harideva in charge of the Satra, went to the west. First, they entered the satra at Barapeta. Sankaradeva's grand-son Purusottama Ata was residing at this place. Madhavadeva had given him Dharma and had made him Varnasrami or house-holder. Both Purushottama and Lakshmi Devi received Gopala with due hospitality. After this Gopala sent Hari Bapu to Orissa and through him brought the image of Govinda from the seat of Jagannatha and worshipped the divinity. In the village of Dhuarol there was an idol of Madana-Gopala established by Sankaradeva. Gopala placed Govinda on the same seat with Madana Gopala and worshipped both the gods. After this Purushottoma Thakura appointed Chaturbhuja Thakura as the head of the Satra at Baradoa. He also appointed thirteen Medhis who were to be with him. The names of these thirteen Medhis were as follows :—

Kunqui Chuñgia Keshava Ata, Bara Sanatana Ata, Haladibaria Bara Mukunda Ata, Bihinpuria Madhava Ata, Ohhekeratuliya Gopinatha Ata, Benagaya Madhava Ata, Raghupati Ata, Karaimaria Govinda Ata, Nalatalia Rama Ata, Gharakatia Jayakrishna Ata, Bali-katiya Jayakanai Ata, Haraichhia Srihari Ata.

The Medhis
carry on the
work in
Upper Assam;

These holy men came to Upper Assam to spread the religion of Sankara. Subsequently, Gopala established a Satra at Kuruabari and gave unto Niranjana Deva the charge of it. Niranjana kept the Satra going. The Ahom King Jayadhwaja established a satra at Auniati for their use. Here the king brought Lakshminarayana Gosain, a devoted follower of the Bhagavata.

This Vaishnava, after consulting his followers, made over the Satra to his grandson Kesava and shuffled off the mortal coil.

The king Jayadhvaja, fearing the curse of Lakshminarayana Gosāin, brought the idol of the god Bāṣivādana from Jagannātha through a pilgrim and established the deity in a Satra that was made at a place called Garamura.

A list of the Medhis that were appointed in the various Satras by Gopala is given below :—

Nityānanda Bapu of Belasidhi, Bhārati Bapu of Devaragaon, Bara Mukunda Bapu of Dhavakota, Jayarama Āta of Jiamaratali, (He was the son of Jadumani. He married Durva Āi. On the occasion of this marriage, Gopala is said to have called him his own son.) The names of other Medhis are :—Krishna Khaoni at Kariabaha, Narayana Āta at Kukrakata, Vishnu Āta at Salguri, Govinda Āta at Tipam, Chaturbhujā Bapu at Chatan, as also Kamadeva Bapu, Dvaraka Āta, Chirannaṇḍa of Kalabaria, Bhavananda of Tapulia, Nityananda at Paṭakata, Manohar at Dulijan, Purnananda at Ratanpur, Kamalalochana at Dirhai, Hari Misra at Tapuria, Lakshmana at Tamolbari, Karuna Āta at Kaupari, Hari Bhagavati at Barekhela, Bara Āta at Rupalia, Arjuna Āta at Dhakuakhana, Kalki Āta at Karai-khoa, Ananta Kandali Rama Misra, Gadadhara Āta and Govinda Āta at Kabinchakuchi, Bama charana Āta at Kakaial, Raghupati Āta at Dikhaimukh, and Dhemaji Haricharana Āta at Kokili.

Names of
the Medhis
with the
Satras ap-
pointed by
Gopala

An account of the spread of the Satra of

How the
different
Satras spread

Damodara is given below :—

Balarama, a Brahman living in the village of Beherua, got disgusted with a house-holder's life and came to the Satra of Damodara to hear the Bhagavata. Deva Damodara gave unto him the chiefdom of the Satra and shuffled off the mortal coil. Balarama's grandson was Lakshmideva whose disciple was Jachatkal Banda Bapu. His disciple again was Jadu of Kalabaria. His son Banamali established a Satra at Dakshinapaṭa. The Ahom king Chakradhvaja was his disciple. From him the Satra of Deva Damodara is known to us.

First, Damo-
dara's and
second,
Andhara
Gosain's
satras.

Satananda, the eldest son of Jadumani, became the head of the Satra at Mahari. The second son established a Satra at Paṭia. The third brother Ramananda established a Satra at Dikhumukh, while the youngest son had his Satra at Kamalabari. In this way the Satra of Andhara Gosain spread in the country. He appointed fourteen Medhis. Their names were as follows:—

Andhara
Gosain's
Medhis.

Haricharana at Naparidia. Kamalalochana at Kokala, Ratikanta at Pubiala, Narayana at Mayarapur, Madhu Misra at Tipana, Kamalalochana at Kopili, Narottama at Jalakuria, Arjuna at Bhaṭia, Paṭhaka chandra at Gumbhiri, Murari at Dvarika, Ratulacharana at Pakaria, Padma Paṭhaka at Jisaiwala and Kanu Ata at Ujani.

Further
spread of the
Satras

An account of the spread of this religion is given below :—

Ramakanta, who is known as Kagatia Ata, had four sons. Their names were Ramacharana, Abhayacharana, Krishnacharana, and Hari-charana. Kanuchandra Ata took Abhayacharana

as his son and bearing to him the Satra breathed his last. Abhayacharana had ten sons. Their names were Achyuta, Amharisha, Ananta, Aravinda, Aruna-charana, Ajita, Abhimanyu, Purushottama, Padmanābha and Vaikuntha. They established Satras in different places.

Gopāla had told Jajarāma that of his four sons, Krishnacharana, Haricharana, Ratulacharana and Vijayucharana, Krishnacharana would hold *Thālu bāta* or his family seat, Haricharana would settle at Nabnagrāma, Ratulacharana would be given his religion and that Vijayacharana would become a good preacher of the Bhāgavata. Subsequently Jayarāma established a Satra at Jāmarā.

The son of Kesavapriyā's co-wife was Nirāñjana Āta. His sons were named Chakrapāni, ārangapāni and Padmapāni. Chakrapāni's satra was at Chamāguri, and Sāraṅgapāni's at Dighali. Kesavapriyā had no male issue. Their satra was called Gabharugiri Satra.

As ordered by Mādhava Deva Sri-Gopāla of Bhanipura established a satra at Kāljhār. He ordered Jadumañi, the Bhuiyā of Hengali to establish a Satra at Bahabari. The son of Jadumanī was called Sanātan Thakura. He had a Satra at Mañikuya. Similarly Rāmadeva had his Satra at Mairāmora, Bara (elder) Krishna at Chhamuka, Saru (younger) Krishna at Ekatanipara, Maharia on the bank of the Gobru Kahara and Sudarsana at Saiguri. His son Srimanta had his Satra at Sapakhoa, Vijayananda at Mudbari and Ramadeva at Sarela. Sanatana Thakura's Satra was at Silikhatala. The names of his other

Satras] were Rabara, Sonariparia, Thalabaria, and Khakarapura.

The following Satras were established at the command of Jadu Thakur—Ratigaya, Sauna, Kajania, Baliparia, Korekhanja, Ahataguria, Kadaiguria and Badagolia. Sri Gopal's grandson had established a Satra at the mouth of the Kalakaṭa. Those who, following the order of Madhava deva, had established Satra at Madhupur, came to be known as Madhupuriyas. These were Bhuiya Ballabha Raya and Haladhara Dasa. Madhavadeva breathed his last giving his parting injunction to Padma Āta and Kesacharana Āta. Padma Āta settled at Badala and Kesacharana at Bhatokuchi. As ordered by Padma Āta, Niranjana Āta, Jayarama Āta, Krishna Āta, Jadu Āta, Kanu Āta and Narahari Dasa established satras at Ulutali. Then Krishṇahari Āta and then Vijaya Āta established satras. Narahari Āta's satra was at Ujani, Gopal Āta's at Maukhoa, his grandson Sarvananda's at Deverapar and Padma Āta's at Habunga. At his command Govinda Āta and Rama Āta had established a Satra at Tipama. Subsequently, at the command of Kesacharana Āta, other Satras were established by Jaya Āta, Dandapani Satananda Āta, Manajay Āta, Bhabananda Āta, Gokul Āta and Damodara Āta. All these Satras were established at the command of Deva Gopal.

At Koch Behar there is the satra of Dharma-deva Mahanta, at Madhupura of Jayarama Mahanta, at Paskaltiya of Haridasa Mahanta, at Barapeta of Krishṇa Misra, at Locha of Arjuna Mahanta, at Patabausi of Bhattadeva, at Bhogapura of

Santadeva, at Ulubāri of Ādhāra Gosāin, at Khelti of Jayadhara Gosāin, at Baranagara of Jajñapati Bhuiyā and at Srivāṭi of Rūpanārāyaṇa.

The following account is taken from Nīlakanṭha Dāsa's Dāmodara-charita :—

‘There was a well-to-do Kāyastha of the name of Venkaraṅgiri. He became the govern r of Phulguri Bejani at the command of King Naranārāyaṇa. He had both men and money and was endowed with all necessary qualities. He was a favourite of the king and was wise and exceedingly handsome. He performed a Putreshṭi with the object of getting a male child. As a result of this he was blessed with a son of the name of Manohara. Manohara became governor after the death of Venkaraṅgiri. At first he was a Śākta. A man called Bhagavān became a Bhakta in the district under his possession. He brought information to Dāmodara that there was interruption in the observance of Vaishnava rites as the persecution of Manohara was intolerable. Dāmodara sent a string of prayer-beads through him. Seeing this string the memory of the past flashed into Manohara's mind. He went to Dāmodaradeva with Bhagavān. Seeing him Deva Dāmodara smiled and said, “The flower Ketaki is born in the midst of thorns ; but when it blooms its fragrance spreads on all sides.” Hearing these words Manohara threw himself at the mercy of Dāmodara. Dāmodara gave him instructions regarding Bhakti. A close friendship was now established between him and Bhagavān. After this both of them, as commanded by Dāmodaradeva, established two Satras called Vedabārī and Phulguri. Then Manohara took all that the king had given to him and

Dāmodara-
charita by
Nīlakantha
Dāsa

established a big Satra at Kapotakhānā. He no longer served as the governor. He devoted his time to the work of spreading the doctrine of *Bhakti*.

**Brahma-Vai-
varta Purāṇa
by Balarāma
Dvija**

Balarāma Dvija in his *Brahma-Vaiivarta-Purāṇa* while giving an account of himself towards the end of the book says that Paraśurāma with the object of establishing Brāhmaṇas in Brahmakuṇḍa had brought Brāhmaṇas of seven Gotras to a place called Hābunḡa in Uttarakūla. Then he built houses for these Brāhmaṇas in Brahmakuṇḍa and came to Hābunḡ in order to take them to that place. But to his great astonishment he could not find them there. Enraged at their conduct, he cursed them all and went to the west. The Brāhmaṇas began to live there under the curse of the Brāhmaṇa warrior. In a later age Deva Gopāla, anxious to bring about their emancipation, established a Satra at Deberā-pāra and made Hari Bhārati the Mahanta of it.

**Keṣavadeva
Charita by
Padma-pāni-
deva**

The following account is taken from Padma-pānideva's *Keṣavadeva-Charita* :—

Miśradeva was the disciple of Deva Gopāla. After he had gone up to Vaikunṭha Jayaharideva began to spread his religion. In obedience to his orders Nirañjanadeva maintained the Satra with great care. Who is able to describe his greatness adequately? The king Jayadhvaja himself sang his glory. It was through his kindness that the people were free from the customs of the Mlecchhas and the doctrine of *Bhakti* was preached throughout the length and breadth of the country.

**The line of
Kantakia
Guru**

A devout Brāhmaṇa was born in the Gotra of Kātyāyana. When the Ahom king was returning after making conquest he went to the king in order to bless him holding *Kapṭaka* or *thorn* in his hand. The king addressed him as

Kaṇṭakīa Guru. He came back after pronouncing benedictions on the king and came to be known as Kaṇṭakīa Guru. He had a son of the name of Gopīnātha. Gopīnātha's son was called Kṛishṇānanda. The famous Keṣavadeva was the son of this Kṛishṇānanda. Kṛishṇānanda lost his mother when very young. He removed to a place called Baligāon. Kesava was brought up by his maternal grand-mother. One day Kṛishṇānanda took Keṣava to Nirāñjana Ātā during this teacher's stay at Āuniāṭi. The Vaiṣṇava preacher was so much struck by the auspicious signs on the person of the boy that he held him in his embrace. Within a very short time Kesava became an erudite scholar and came to be known as a great Bhakta.

Kesavadeva
and his
satras

He became a disciple of Deva Nirāñjana. Subsequently he lived in the ātra at Āuniāṭi and began to preach the doctrine of Bhakti. About this time a war broke out between the Muhammadans and the king of the Ahoms. The Muhammadans won the victory and the king fled from the battle-field with his officers and lived at a place called Nāmarūp. About this time Keṣava Gosāin established a satra at Lengāri for fear of the Musalmans. In obedience to the orders of the king two heroic officers of his Ghorākumāra and Laohida Phukan stood in battle array on the banks of the Lauhitya. The Muhammadans did not dare face them. After some days the Muhammadans left the country. Thereafter the king Jayadvaja died and his brother Chakradhara became king. He established a Satra at Āuniāṭi and thereby honoured the Vaiṣṇava preacher Kesavadeva. Though the king had bestowed a large property on Kesava yet the Vaiṣṇava did

not enjoy anything himself. He applied the whole of the gift to the maintenance of the Vaisnavas attached to the satra. Subsequently he established another satra in the village of Kānti in the north.

Afraid of the Muhammadans, Keṣavadeva removed to Govindapur and established a satra there. In this way he had established satras in several places. His mode of preaching the religion was so very good that within a short time he came to have a large number of followers. Subsequently Gadādhara Siṅha ascended the throne of the Ahoms. He brought Keṣavadeva to his place with great respect and made two of his sons his disciples. Then he sent away the Vaishnava teacher with rich presents. Banamālīdeva went up to Vaikunṭha. Agreeably to his last wish, Keṣavadeva came to the satra at Dakṣiṇapāṭa. Thereafter he effected the improvement of the satra at Āuniāṭi.

Deva Gopāla's grandson Lakshminārāyaṇa built the satra at Gaḍamura. After his demise Keṣavadeva made Dekā Balarama the head of that satra.

After this, the king Gadādhara got demented. He sent his men to the satras at Dakṣiṇapāṭa, Āuniāṭi, Govindapur and other places and began to harass the Bhaktas. As a result of this great consternation prevailed. The prince Rudrasīṅha secretly sent a messenger to Keṣavadeva and thus saved his life. But as many as eight of the principal Bhaktas were taken to the temple of the goddess at Sadia where they were sacrificed. After some days Keṣavadeva too came to Sadia. A few days after his arrival at this place the water of the river began to swell unusually, as happens at the time of the deluge. Elephants and ceroses,

buffaloes and many such big animals were carried away by the current and countless men found a watery grave. But the place where Keṣavadeva was living was not under water. Every body was struck with wonder at this. Gradually the matter came to the notice of the king who honoured him with rich presents. He also sent a messenger to Śadīa requesting the Vaiṣṇava to come over to his place. The king Rudrasinha personally went to the satra at Koāmārā and took Keṣavadeva to Āpabārīā. He then took him to Biṣvanāth and installed him as the Āchārya of the Court. Then he went over to a place called Bayābali with his Bhaktas. As ordered by the king the Bara Phukan made a satra there. In obedience to the orders of the King Gandhīā Barua dedicated this satra. Thereafter Dihīngīā Bara Barua made another satra to the west of the old one. In pursuance of a royal order Duāri Barua dedicated this satra. Keṣava lived for some time in this satra and preached the doctrine of Bhakti there. After this some more satras were established under the patronage of Sivasinha, the son of Rudrasinha.

Besides those mentioned above a number of satras were established by the descendants of the great-grand daughter of Śaṅkaradeva.

Śaṅkaradeva's grandson Purushottama Thākura had a daughter of the name of Līlāvati. Her sons Chakrapāni, Gadāpāni and Śaraṅgāpāni established satras known as Chāmāguri satra, Dighalisatra and Samantari satra respectively. Dāmodara the son of Govindapriyā, the grand daughter of Śaṅkara and the daughter of Haricharaṇa Thākura established a satra called Baradoa-naroa-satra. A satra called the Ghilajari satra was established at

Satras founded by the descendant of Līlāvati, great-grand daughter of Śaṅkaradeva

Vishṇupur by Vishṇupati Thākura, the son of Sumitra Āi who was the daughter of Chaturbhuja Thākura, a grandson of Śaṅkaradeva.

Their descendants are still the heads of these satras. The descendants of the great grand daughter of Śaṅkara are still Mahantas in the satras at Viṣṇupur, Ujāni, Salyaguri, Āirbhiṭi and many other places.

Ancestry of
the heads of
the different
satras

The present head of the satra at Barpeṭa is a descendant of Rāya Baruā, the son of the paternal uncle of Śaṅkaradeva. A descendant of Banagayāgiri, the younger brother Śaṅkara is now the head of the satra at Pāṭabausi. The descendants of Rāmācharaṇa Thākura, a scion of Sarasvatī Bhuiyā's family, established Satras at Sundaradiā, Bāmunā, Guāgāchhā, Kaddaiguri, Bāmāgāta, (in Tejpur district), Debechhariā, Dalagomā, Jāmālā, Dipalā and many other places. Rāmācharaṇa had three sons, the oldest of them being Daityāri Thākura, the author of Śaṅkara's biography. He founded a Satra in the village of Bāmunā. The second son Tripurāri Thākura founded the Satra called Guāgāchhā. The third son's name was Narahari Thākura. He was the founder of the Satra of Mālachā on the right bank of the Brahmaputra and situated in the district of Goalpara. Rāmācharaṇa Thākura had established Vikrama Thākura the son of Tripurāri in his own Satra at Sundaradiā. Again Tripurāri made Vikrama Thākura's second son Bhogadatta the head of the Satra of Guāgāchhā.

We also learn that Manohara Deva had in the year 1590 of the Saka Era brought Jayahari and Madhava Datta from the village of Dibrū in Barpeta Pargana and had established them in

the Satra of Kāpalā. Jayaharī's descendants still hold the office of the Mahanta of this Satra. Mādhava Datta subsequently became the Mahanta of nine satras. His descendants still hold this office.

*

In later days a number of satras were established in various places in Assam in consequence of the conflict between the two Vaishnava sects; the Mahāpurushīya and the Dāmodariya or Bāmuniya. At present there are more than four hundred Satras in Assam, those in Upper Assam in number predominating. In these satras the number of the Mahāpurushīyas is greater. In the whole of Assam the percentage of the members of this sect is 63. When one visits the most important of these satras one is naturally reminded of the āśramas of ancient days or the Buddhistic Saṅghārāmas of the Middle Ages.*

* "A sattra is a religious College which is in some respects not unlike a mediaeval monastery."

Vide Allen's Assam District Gazetteers. Vol. VII, Sibsagar P. 97.

Chapter V

The Damodaria sect

During the long life of Śaṅkara men of all castes, from high class Brahmanas down to Chapdālas were initiated into his religion. All the Bhaktas regarded him as the incarnation of God. During his life time there was no schism among his disciples. But signs of differences sprang up on the occasion of his monthly Śraddha ceremony. Mādhava declared to the followers and Bhaktas of the great reformer that the

The split in
the camp.
The rise of
Damodaria
sect.

monthly Śrādh of their Guru should be performed in a befitting manner and directed them to issue invitations on a wide scale. In response to his invitation a large number of men, Brāhmaṇas, Kayasthas and others attended the ceremony, only Dāmodaradeva being conspicuous by his absence. On the occasion of his Guru's Śrāddha he had sent a boat-ful of the necessary articles. Mādhavadeva sent a man to Dāmodara to know the reason why he had not attended the ceremony. Dāmodara sent word to the effect that as Śaṅkaradeva had conferred upon Mādhava religious headship in supersession of his superior claims he could not respond to the invitation in question.

Ramananda Thākura was beside himself with anger to hear this reply. He could not bear that the Brāhmaṇa Dāmodara would make any distinction between the departed reformer and Mādhava. So he threw away all the things sent by him into the river. From this time began the quarrel between these two great Vaishnava teachers.

Daityāri Thākura gives the following account of a conversation between them :—

Mādhava :—Well, Dāmodara, why do you give shelter to a man whom I drive away ?

Dāmodara :—Do I ever forsake any one ? None is a stranger to me ?

Mādhava :—You are the Āchāryya of a Satra. Will it not reflect discredit on you if you do not take steps for the eradication of heresy.

Dāmodara :—Every body is answerable for his fault. I need not trouble my head about it.

Mādhava :—Sankaradeva made you a guardian of religion. It is your duty to correct others.

Dāmodara :—Sāṅkara Deva did not trust any such duty to me.

Mādhava Deva then made a reference to the story of king Satadhanu. Dāmodara explained it away as an anecdote in the Purāṇa. Then the former quoted an extract from Śrīdhara-Svāmin's commentary. Dāmodara said that he could not accept the commentary as authoritative, the only book for which he had any respect being the Bhāgavata. Then Mādhava quoted Slokas from the book Ratīākara, a work of Sāṅkara Deva. Dāmodara, however, was bent upon not to be convinced. He said that he would not pay any heed to such things even if they were spoken by God himself. Hearing him say so Mādhava stood stook-still. He forced Dāmodara to take his food there and then sent him away with kind words. From that day he got highly dissatisfied with Dāmodara. ¹

১. "আমি একদিন, সৈন্স ক'রে, কহে গুনিযোক ভাব।

দামোদর ভক্ত অংগ দবে আমি বুলিবন্ত বাব ॥

আনি যান হুঁ কপো তান কোন দিবা ঠার দামোদর।

তেহে বো ॥ মই কাহাব খেয়ি কেহো নোহে মোর পর ॥

মাববে কোনন্ত সত্ত গণিতাছা আচার্য স্বরূপ হই।

বিবর্জ দেবিবা শিখা নোদিবাস তে হাব দুষণ হুই ॥

তেহে বুনি স্ততি ৭ত কবে করে যিতো আপনাক।

তান দেবিবাব আমার নাশব শিবা হেতু দেবিবাক ॥

ভোমাক শঙ্করদেবে আশ্পদত তুমি দে পারা দেখিবে।

দোষগুণ যত তুমি সি শকত বাধিবে জানা খেদিবে।

আমাক শঙ্করদেবে কুপা নাই এতেকে জানা আমার।

রাখিবে খেদিবে দোষক দেখিবে নাহি কর অধিকার ॥

অন্তে শক্তধনুবাঞ্জা কথা তুলি মাধবদেবে কহিল।

পুনাগর বধ। লি দামোদর গুণ তাঁক মাধবদেবে ॥

The secret
of Madha-
va's suc-
cess.

Chaturbhuja Thākura, the grandson of Śaṅkara Deva, was alarmed at the boundless influence of Mādhava Deva and grew hostile towards him. It is written in Vidyānanda Ojha's 'Thākura Āta Charita' that he said to the Bhaktas that those who were the disciples of Śaṅkara Deva should, on no account, regard Mādhava as their Guru. He is also said to have given them to understand that he would have no connection with those men who would not obey his mandate. What with the enmity of Dāmodara and what with the hostile attitude of this young man the task before Mādhava proved a very hard one. But nothing daunted, he went on preaching the doctrine of Bhakti upto the last moment of his godly life. As a matter of fact his Brahmacharyya, liberality, erudition and the charm created by his songs overflowing with devotion enabled him to over-

মাধবে বোলন্ত ঐধব স্বামীয়ো পুৰাণৰ উক্তি তুলি ।
টীকা কৰিলন্ত এহেনা মানন্ত পুৰাণৰ কথা বুলি ॥
দামোদৰ গুৰু বুলিলন্ত টীকা কৰন্ত ঐধৱস্বামী ।
ঐভাগবত বিনে পুৰাণৰ কথাক না মানো আৰি ॥
অনন্তৰে দেব মাধবে বোলন্ত ৱতাকৰ এহুখান ।
পুৰাণৰ লোক তুলি কৰিলন্ত শত্ৰুদেবে নিৰ্মাণ ॥
তুমি বোলাইতো পুৰাণৰ কথা আবে আক কি কৰিব ।
কহিও সত্ৰব এহু ৱতাকৰ মানিবা কি না মানিবা ॥
শুন দামোদৰ গুৰু বুলিলন্ত চতুৰ্ভুজ ৰূপে য়েবে ।
আনি ভগবন্ত আপুনি কহন্ত না মানিবোঁ আৰি তেৰে ॥
শুনিলো মাধবে সজ সজ বুলি আৰি কিছু হু বুলিলা ।
চিৰা বুৱাই ছলি কোঠা কোঠা দিয়া এবোধি বিদায় দিলা ॥
বোলন্ত তোমাৰ আশায় আনিবা পৰিচ্ছেদ এহিমাননে ।
পূৰ্বেই এহে এত থানিকো কথাক পুছিলা আমাৰ থানে ॥”

(Śaṅkara-Charita by Ditya, i Thākura)

come all oppositions. None could pull him down from the lofty status given unto him by his Guru. In fact his achievements were greater than those of Śaṅkara Deva in as much as he had been able to spread the doctrine of Bhakti throughout the length and breadth of the land of Assam.

But soon after the death of Śaṅkara the Brāhmaṇa Vaiṣnavas of Assam grew very influential. The king Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa, son of Naranārāyaṇa, was initiated into Vaiṣnavism by Dāmodara. The Ahom kings of Śaṅkara's time were not favourably disposed towards the Vaiṣnavas, but their descendants were initiated into this religion by Gopāladeva and other Brāhmaṇa disciples of Dāmodara. The Brāhmaṇas thus became Gurus of the kings ruling the country from the eastern border of Assam to the further end of Koch-Bihar and as such their power became very great. Though Dāmodara and Gopāladeva were staunch followers of Śaṅkara and looked upon him as an incarnation of God, yet his Brāhmaṇa followers were not disposed to show him so much honour and respect. Though all the Vaiṣṇava sects of Assam regarded Śaṅkara, Mādhava and Dāmodara as equal—nay, as the manifestation of the same personality in three distinct forms—yet Dāmodara's followers have given him the highest place among the Vaiṣṇava teachers of Assam. One of them, Kṛṣṇācāryya, the author of Santa-Charitra, has gone so far as to maintain in this work that Dāmodara was one of the 64 disciples of Śrī Chaitānya² and that he was the incarnation of

Ascendancy
of Brāhmaṇa
Vaiṣnavas.
Dāmodara
extolled to
Second Chai
tanyaship.

Santa Cha-
ritra by
Kṛṣṇa-
chāryya

2. "চৌবটি মহন্ত শিষ্য কৈলেন" ভক্তচরিত্র।

কামরূপ দেশে এক ভৈল দাসো,

Puspadanta in the face of the unanimous testimony of Rāmacharṇi Tī ākura, Daityāri Tī ākura, Kāṇṭha Bhūṣhaṇi and other contemporary writers to the effect that he was one of the principal disciples of Saṅkara Deva which is amply corroborated by the writings of Nīlakaṇṭha Dāsa and other biographers of Dānodaya. In Santa-Charitra we find the following account :—

King Maladeva's agent, Sankari, was the son of Kusuma and the grandson of Śh ṇḍivara. Being disgusted with the king's service Saṅkara sent his brother RāmaRāya to the king and himself went to Mount Maṇikūṭi, leaving his wife and son behind. There he heard a recital of the Bhāgavata from RatnaPāṭhaka and enquired of him as to whence did he learn the Sāstra. Thereupon the Brāhmin Ratneṣvvara told him slowly and gently, "Listen Saṅkara ! I heard of this Śāstra from the great Chaitanya who taught me the Bhāgavata in a cave situated on the Varāha Kuṇḍa. He is now observing a vow of silence in a *matha* in the city of Orissa." * Hea -

পুষ্পদন্ত নামে জিতে হবির কিস্কর ।

দামোদর নামে তিহো ভৈল্য অবতার ।” ৯১

(Sant.-Charitra by Kṛishṇ āchāryya)

* Slokas 93-96 of Kṛishṇachāryya's Santa-Charitra say that Chaitanyadeva went to Behar after revealing himself as a four-handed being to the Badshah. On his arrival there he was worshipped by all the learned men there. Thereupon he went to Kamarupa and lived for some time in a cave situated on the Varaha-kunda in Mount Maṇikūṭa. Here he gave Sarana-mantra to Ratna Pāṭhaka and taught him the Bhāgavata. Thereupon he distributed the name to Kāṇṭhabhūṣhana, Kāṇṭhahaṇ, Kāṇḍali, Kāṇḍevindra and Kāṇḍālekharā in the village of Maguri. Thus at the great festival of his going to Maṇikūṭa he spread the doctrine of

ing these words Saṅkara was beside himself with joy at the thought of seeing Chaitanya, and after visiting many sacred places with Rānarāna Guru entered at last the city of Orissa. After bowing before the God Jagannātha they proceeded to Chaitanya's *matha*. There they met Brahma Haridāsa at the gate, bowed before him and asked him how could they have an interview with Chaitanya. Thereupon Haridāsa said,—“Listen you, the son of Kusuma (Saṅkara), I am telling you the means of seeing Chaitanya. Spend some money and hold a Kīrtana of Lord Hari. None can have a view of Him except through Kīrtana.” Thereupon Saṅkara spent a portion of his money on *Kīrtana*. Now at the time when *Kīrtana* was going on, Chaitanya, unperceived by others, came dancing into the cave of the *matha*.⁸ Thereupon coming to know of their

KIRTAN. Afterwards he came to Orissa and took to a vow of silence.

It is superfluous to mention that all these are nothing but imagination by the fanatical brain of the modern poets.

3. “মল্লদেব নৃপতির গোবস্তা শঙ্কর ।

চণ্ডিবর বহু লাভি পুত্র কুহবর ॥ ৯৮

রাজার সেবাত ভান বিরকত ভৈল্য ।

রায়রায় ভায়েকর রাজাত ভেটাইল্য ।

রায়রায় গুণ নবন মনে আলোচিল্য ।

ভার্যাপুত্র এড়ি দ্রমো মণিকুটে গৈল ॥

ইয়গ্রীব-মাধবক নাম প্রসঙ্গক ।

রক্ত পাঠকর মুখে শুনি ভাগবত ॥

কোনে ঐক এহি শাস্ত্র অবলম্বাইল্য আনি ।

এই প্রসঙ্গ করিলন্ত গোবস্তা ন জানি ॥ ১০০

শঙ্করর বাণী শুনি বিপ্র ব্রহ্মবরে ।

কহিবাক্ত দৈল্য কথা তাম্র ধীরে ধীরে ॥

শুনিলো শঙ্কর কহো ইহার কাহিনী ।

Puspadanta in the face of the unanimous testimony of Rāmacharaṇa, Tī ākura, Dītyāri T ākura, Kāṇṭha Bhūṣhaṇa and other contemporary writers to the effect that he was one of the principal disciples of Saṅkara Deva which is amply corroborated by the writings of Nilakaṇṭha Dāsa and other biographers of Dānodara. In Santa-Chaitra we find the following account :—

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পুষ্পদন্ত নামে জিতো হবির বিজয় ।

দায়োদর নামে তিহো ভৈল্য অবতাব ।” ৯১

(Sant.-Charitra by Kṛishṇ āchāryya)

* Slokas 93-96 of Kṛishṇachāryya's Santa-Charitra say that Chaitanyadeva went to Behar after revealing himself as a four-handed being to the Badshah. On his arrival there he was worshipped by all the learned men there. Thereupon he went to Kamarupa and lived for some time in a cave situated on the Varaha-kunda in Mount Manikūṭa. Here he gave Sarana mantra to Ratna Pāṭhaka and taught him the Bhagavata. Thereupon he distributed the name to Kanthabhushana, Kanthaha, Kandali, Katesvinda and Kayishekhara in the village of Maguri. Thus at the great festival of his going to Manikūṭa he spread the doctrine of

ing these words Saṅkara was beside himself with joy at the thought of seeing Chaitanya, and after visiting many sacred places with Rānarāna Guru entered at last the city of Orissa. After bowing before the God Jagannātha they proceeded to Chaitanya's *matha*. There they met Brahma Haridāsa at the gate, bowed before him and asked him how could they have an interview with Chaitanya. Thereupon Haridāsa said,—“Listen you, the son of Kusuma (Saṅkara), I am telling you the means of seeing Chaitanya. Spend some money and hold a Kīrtana of Lord Hari. None can have a view of Him except through Kīrtana.” Thereupon Saṅkara spent a portion of his money on *Kīrtana*. Now at the time when *Kīrtana* was going on, Chaitanya, unperceived by others, came dancing into the cave of the *matha*.³ Thereupon coming to know of their

KIRTAN. Afterwards he came to Orissa and took to a vow of silence.

It is superfluous to mention that all these are nothing but imagination by the fanatical brain of the modern poets.

3. “সন্ন্যাসেব নৃপতিঃ গোমুখা শঙ্কর ।

চণ্ডিবর বর নাতি পুত্র কুহবর ॥ ৯৮

রাজার সেবাত ভাস বিরকত ভৈলা ।

রাসরায় ভাস্করক রাজাত ভেটাইলা ॥

রাসরায় গুণ মনে মনে আলোচিল।

ভাৰ্যাপুত্র এড়ি দ্বয়ো বণিকুটে গেল ॥

হয়গীৰ-বাসবক নাম প্রসঙ্গ ৷

রত্ন পাঠকর মুখে শুনি ভাগবত ॥

কোনে ঐত এহি শাস্ত্র প্রবর্তাইলা আনি ।

এই প্রসঙ্গ কবিলন্ত গোমুখা ন জানি ॥ ১০০

শঙ্কর বাণী শুনি বিপ্র রত্নেশ্বরে ।

কহিবান্ লৈলা কথা তাত্ত ধীরে ধীরে ॥

শুনিয়ে শঙ্কর কহে ইহার কাহিনী ।

intention from Brahma Haridāsa Chaitanyadeva told them through Haridāsa,—“You should hear the Bhāgavata from Kāṇṭhībhūsaṇa and recite the *padas*. You should popularise the seven hundred Ślokas composed by Gajapat-irāja. I tell you of this that pride and love of God cannot dwell side by side. You have received a *mantra* of four words.¹¹ Stick to it and recite it always. Dāmoḍaradeva is the grandson of Śatāranda, the spiritual guide of Kuṣuma. You should im-

ইতো শাস্ত্ৰ কৈলা মোত চৈতন্ত মহামানী ॥ ১০১

বরাহকুণ্ড উৰ্দ্ধ গোবাতা বলিয়া ।

মহাভাগবত মোক পড়াইলা আসিবা ॥

ঔরেশা পুৰিত তেহে মঠর ভিতরে ॥

মৌনব্রত ধরি তেহো আছে একেশ্বরে ॥ ১০২

এতেক বচন শুনি কুহুমনন্দন ।

চৈতন্তক দেবিবাণ উজ্জাসিত মন ॥

রামরাম শব্দ সনে তীর্থক্ষেত্রে ঘূবি ।

পাছে আই এবেশিলা ঔরেশা নগরী ॥ ১০৩

অগরাধ ঠাকুরক করি নমস্কার ।

চলি গেলা চৈতন্তর মঠর ছয়ার ॥

ঘারে বসিয়াছে গিয়া বন্ধ হরিদাস ।

দেবিতাক প্রণামিলা বান্দিলন্ত পাশ ॥ ১০৪

চৈতন্তক দেবিবার উপায় পুছিলা ।

শুনি বন্ধ-হরিদাসে কহিতে লাগিলা ॥

বোলন্ত উপায় শুন কুহুমনন্দন ।

কিছ বিস্ত ভক্তি করা হরির কীৰ্তন ॥ ১০৫

কীৰ্তন বিনাইলা প্রভু কীৰ্তনক ধাবে ।

কীৰ্তন বিলাই মোকে তাহাক নপাবে ॥

এই কথা শুনি পাছে কুহুমনন্দন ।

ঘান ভক্তি আরভিলা হরির কীৰ্তন ॥ ১০৬

সেই কীৰ্তনতে নৃত্য করি অলক্ষিতক ।

চৈতন্ত শ্রীনিবাসি মঠর প্রহাতে ॥¹²

part to him the *mantra*. He is a follower of Lord Krishna; the Purāṇas bear testimony to this. This book 'Śarana Paṭala' is composed of thirtytwo ś'okas and it contains a description of the face of Lord Rāma. You should hand over this book to him and learn therefrom the deep secrets of Sāstra." So saying he passed over the "Nā namā'ā" to him. Being beside themselves with joy, Rāma and Śankara circled round the *matha* twice and afterwards falling on their limbs worshipped the Lord. (After leaving Oṛissā) they took a bath in the Ganges and entered Kāmarupa, where they told everything to the king with joyful heart. Afterwards they settled in the village of Pāṭabāusi, brought Kaṇṭhabhūṣaṇa there and began to hear the Bhāgavata from him. Then they brought up Dāmodaradeva there and handed over the "Śarana-Paṭala" to him. Dāmodara looked at the book and bowed to Chaitanya again and again. Dāmodara turned, as it were, a second Chaitanya and converted many people afterwards as his followers. 4

4. "কণ্ঠভূষণ যুখে ভাগবত শুনি ।

পদগীত করিবাঁক দিছে আজ্ঞা বাণী ।

গল্পগতিলাজকৃত সাতশত শ্লোক ।

তারো থোবা করিবাঁক বলিছে তোমাক ।

এহি নির্দশন করে বুঝিবা শব্দ ।

দাস্তিকত হরিতক্তি অতি অগোচর ।

রাস বিপ্র তুমি শড়িয়াছ চারি নাম ।

ভাটক নার করি জপি থাকি অবিলম্ব ॥ ১২১

শতানন্দ বিপ্র জিতো গুপ্ত কুমর ।

তাহান পুত্রর পুত্রসেব দাবোধর ।

সিঙ্গেশত দিনে তেহ নাম ব্রহ্মদান ।

কুক গাঙ্গিবৎ তেহে পুরাণে প্রমাণ ॥ ১২২

Sankara
could never
be Sri Cha-
itanya's dis-
ciple.

The above account given by Krishnāchārya is not to be found in the works of ancient biographers. Dāmodara Deva himself had nowhere preached the doctrine of Sri Chaitanya.

It has already been said that when Śaṅkara Deva came to Navadvīpa in the course of his pilgrimage, Chaitanya Deva was a mere boy. At that time he was not a *Sannyasi*. Hence all of the ancient biographers say that Śaṅkara Deva saw Śri Chaitanya but had no conversation with him. Hence it is proved that the account given

বতিশ মৌকর এহি শরণ-পটল ।
অভুব যুথব আছে নির্ণয় সবল ॥
এহি পুথি রায় তুমি তান হাতে দিবা ।
রহন্ত ণীরের তুমি হুজনে মিলিবা ॥ ১২৩
এহি আজ্ঞা করি দিলা দেব নামমালা ।
রায় শঙ্করেবা পাছে আনন্দ লভিলা ॥
অভুর মঠক দুই করি প্রদক্ষিণা ।
হুঙ-তে পড়ি পাছে করিলা বন্দনা ॥ ১২৪
গদানান করি ছইয়ো কামরূপ পশি ।
অশেষ কহিলা ছুট রাজ্যক হরিষি ॥ ১৫
চৈতন্যর আজ্ঞা মানি তাহানু ত কহিলা ॥
পাট হাউসি এবে পাচে নিবাস কবিলা ॥
কঠভূষণক আনি প্রসঙ্গ পাতিলা ।
ভাগবত শুনি পদ কবিত্তে লাগিলা ॥ ১২৬
অনন্তরে দামোদর দেবক আনিলা ।
শরণ-পটল রায়ে তন হাতে দিলা ॥
মুখ মেলি পুথ চাই দেখ দামোদর ।
চৈতন্যক প্রণাম করিলা বারংবার ॥ ১২৭
দিক্টীয় চৈতন্য বেন ভৈল দামোদর ।
জুয়াইলন্ত তেহে পাছে লোক বিরহর ॥ ১২৮

the two sects and devotees to the sect. It is said before that the Brahmins Vairavās had established their influence in Assam and Koch-Bihar after the death of Śaṅkara Deva. Though there was disagreement between Mādhava and Dāmodara yet the latter had never raised his voice against the teaching of Śaṅkara. According to Nilakānta Dāsa, Dāmodara was born in 1410 Śaka year and passed away in 1504 on the 1st day of the moon in the bright half of the month of Viśākhā. Mādhava Deva passed away 14 years after this *i.e.* in 1518 Śaka year. These fourteen years witnessed hostilities between the followers of the two Vaishnava teachers. Dāmodara was succeeded by his chief disciple, Bhaṭṭa Deva. He was the first man to proclaim Dāmodara Deva as a separate incarnation. Though there was no direct connection between Śrī Chaitanya and Śaṅkara Deva yet he spread a report that the former had come to Kānarupa Manikūṭa and had there infused his energy into Dāmodara's person. As a matter of fact all the biographers of Dāmodara have held that he was a disciple of Śaṅkara. Nilakānta Dāsa says that his father Śaṅkara had come to Śaṅkara with his son with the object of studying the Bhāgavata. Seeing each other Śaṅkara and Dāmodara were in an ecstasy of joy and their hearts melted away on account of the excess of *Prema*. Both of them shed tears of *Prema*. Then Dāmodara expressed a desire that he too would study the Bhāgavata. The father relished the idea and left his son with Śaṅkara. ⁵

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5. "তনয় আমার এহি দামোদর নাম।

শরদে বোলন্ত হামি পূর্ব মনকাম।

Later biographers, however, say that Dāmodara had got the book "Nāmamālīka" from Śrī-Chaitanya. But none of them assert that he was one of his 64 disciples and that the great Bengal reformer had infused his energy into him. It has already been said that Śrī Chaitanya had not become a *sannyāsi* at the time of Śaṅkara's pilgrimage to Navadvīpa and Puri. Under these circumstances it cannot be said that the Bengal reformer exercised any influence over the religion of Śaṅkara or that it was in accordance with his directions that Dāmodaradeva preached Vaishnavism in Assam. Dāmodaradeva was highly learned in the doctrine of Bhakti. He was not a bit inferior to Śaṅkaradeva or Mādhavadeva in point of intelligence, knowledge and scholarship. His disciple, Bhaṭṭadeva, has recorded in his books the doctrine of Bhakti and the religion of the Bhāgavata as taught by him. The Vaishnavas of Assam following his religion are known as the Dāmodariya or Bāmuniya sect. A book called Ghoshāratna gives the following account of the early Āchāryas of this sect :—

সান্নবে দুই আক আনাই আসন দিলন্ত ।
 পরম কোড়ুকে দুয়ে তাতে বসিলন্ত ॥ ১৮৩
 পরম প্রেমত দুইর স্বদর জ্বলিলা ।
 দুইকো দুই দুইরো নেজে পোতক করিলা ॥
 দানুদর বোজে পিত্ত পরা ভাগবত ।
 আদিও পরিব বোলি তোমার লগত ॥ ১৮৫
 বাসোদর বাক্য শভাসন্ধ দানিলন্ত ।
 শবরের হাই ভাগবত পড়িলন্ত ॥ ১৮৬

(Dāmodara-Charita by Nilakantha Dāsa)

Gurudeva Dāmodara looked like the golden Meru. In the east Vaṇṣideva is his Sevaka or follower. In the south Santadeva serves him always. In the west Baladeva is ever faithful to him. In the north there is Bhagavān who resembles Mount Supārṣva. On this side Śrīmanta Paramānanda is cutting asunder the bondage of birth. ⁶

Ghosharatna on the Damoda-
117a sect
and Achar-
yyas.

The Bamuni-Sect.

Harideva was one of the principal disciples of Śaṅkara like Dāmodara. He was vastly learned. His father's name was Ajanābha. He belonged to the *gotra* of Kāṣyapa. According to tradition he was born at Nārāyaṇapur near Pāṭabāusi in the year 1415 Śaka Era (*i.e.* 1491 A.D.) on the 5th day of the moon in the dark half of the month of Bhādra. During Śaṅkar's stay at Pāṭabāusi he used to come to him to hear the recitation of the Bhāgavata and his exposition of religious matters. In course of time he became a staunch Bhakta of Śaṅkara. In a very short time he was able to meditate upon Hari as Nirguṇa Brahma. He used to enjoy Brahmānanda when engaged in Sankīrtana. Śaṅkara was charmed to see his uncommon intelligence and profound learning and

Harideva—
a promi-
nent discip-
le of San-
kara like
Dāmodara,
entrusted
with the
task of pro-
pagating
Vaishnavism
in Ahom
kingdom.

6. "সেব দামোদর গুহ । হুবর্ণি তৈলা মক ।
পূর্বদিশে বংশীদেব । সঙ্গি থাক করা সেব ।
দক্ষিণত সন্তদেব । অনিরতে কলা সেব ।
বলদেব পশ্চিমত । সঙ্গি তৈলা অমুগত ।
হুগাৰ্শ গিরির সম । ভাগবতে নিরুপম ।
ভগবান্ উত্তরত । দামোদর অমুগত ।
ঈশ্বর পরবিশ্ব । জীদেব হরত বক ।"

(Ghosharatna)

Harideva
in Kama-
rupa.

gave him the charge of propagating Vaishnavism in the Ahom kingdom. A large number of the people of Assam gave up *Kadāchāra* and accepted *Sadāchāra* and *Saddharma* from him. When this news reached the ears of the Ahom king, he sent his men to bring Harideva to him in chains. In order to escape persecution, the Vaishnava teacher had to go without food for 12 days. He, however, managed to cross the Brahamputra in a raft made of plantain trees and came to Kāmarūpa. Here he saw Hayagrīva Mādhava at Maṇikūṭa and then partook of the leavings of the God. Here he converted a large number of the people. About this time Bhagiratha, the son of Nārāyaṇa Bhūiyā, was appointed the Gaṁṭhā or Viceroy of Kāmarūpa by Viṣva Sīṁha. He was returning home when he saw Harideva on the way. The bright appearance of the Vaishnava teacher and his impressive religious instruction produced great influence on his mind and he was initiated into Vaishnavism by him. He rendered valuable help to Harideva in the work of preaching Vaishnavism in Kāmarūpa. Harideva passed a very long time in wandering over many parts of the land with the object of propagating his religion and at last settled in the village of Bahari near Barapetā. Here he established a *Satra*. Śaṅkaradeva and Mādhava-deva attended this ceremony with their Bhaktas and played religious dramas for seven days. This *Satra* got the name of Māneri Satra as it brought *māna* or honour to Harideva. This was the first and the greatest *Satra* of Harideva. After this a large number of *Satras* were established by him and his disciples at Mahān, Kaihatikulla, Bīla Nāpatipārā, Khānapatā, Beja-kuchā and other places. He used to practise

Yoga and was² known as a Siddha Purusha. Before his death he conferred the headship of the *Sāṭa* and Dharmamālā on his learned daughter Bhuvanesvari. It was from this time that women began to exercise their influence in Assam in the domain of religion. After his death his disciples, like those of Dāmodara, strained every nerve to establish the influence of the Brāhmanas in the country. This sect came to be called the Dāmuniā sect. Though at first there were some distinctions between this sect and the Dāmodariya sect, yet latterly both were united together.

Haridev's
followers
to be known
as the
Dāmuniās

Moayamaria or Moamaria Sect.

Another sect called Moamāriā or Mataka grew very influential among the lower classes of Upper Assam. Aniruddha Bhūiyā was the founder of this sect. He was a scion of the Ādi Bhūiyā family of Upper Assam. His father's name was Pōndā Bhūiyā. When quite young, he took the *Sarana mantra* from Saṅkaradeva. Having studied books on the doctrine of Bhakti with Saṅkaradeva, he conceived the idea of setting himself up as a great man. At first he stole a book called Kalpataru which was in the custody of Saṅkaia. His followers hold that this book was given by the sun-god and that it deals with mysterious things. It is written in Ādichaitra, a book of this sect :—So great is the virtue of this book that its possessor has nothing to fear from either fire or water and that whenever a single *Biṇa-mantra* of it is uttered, the fathomless deep becomes easily fordable. Saṅkaradeva had tried his best to get back this book. But Aniruddha would not be prevailed upon to part

The Mataka
sect found-
ed by Anir-
uddha
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Bāmuniās

Moayamaria or Moamaria Sect.

Another sect called Moāmāriā or Maṭaka grew very influential among the lower classes of Upper Assam. Aniruddha Bhūiyā was the founder of this sect. He was a scion of the Ādi Bhūiyā family of Upper Assam. His father's name was Poṇḍā Bhūiyā. When quite young, he took the *Sarāna mantra* from Śaṅkaradeva. Having studied books on the doctrine of Bhakti with Śaṅkaradeva, he conceived the idea of setting himself up as a great man. At first he stole a book called Kalpataru which was in the custody of Śaṅkara. His followers hold that this book was given by the sun-god and that it deals with mysterious things. It is written in Ādiccharitra, a book of this sect :—So great is the virtue of this book that its possessor has nothing to fear from either fire or water and that whenever a single *Bya-mantra* of it is uttered, the fathomless deep becomes easily fordable. Śaṅkaradeva had tried his best to get back this book. But Aniruddha would not be prevailed upon to part

The Maṭaka
sect found-
ed by Ani-
ruddha
Bhūiyā

with it by any means. He told a world of lies in order to keep this book to himself and at last went away from the place.⁶ Saṅkara was grieved at his conduct and sent a man to bring him to his place. But Aniruddha could by no means be persuaded to come back. Then the great Vaiṣṇava-guru assembled his Bhaktas, and referring to the unseemly conduct of Aniruddha said,—

“Aniruddha has left me in order to avoid returning to me the book Kalpataru written upon copper plates. Hence he who will mix with him shall be expelled from the community. He shall never have my grace. I tell it for certain that whoever will follow his behest, whoever will hear the doctrine of Bhakti from him, whoever will take the *mantra* from him, shall not be regarded by me as a friend etc. He has left us having stolen a holy book, and he should be called ‘Maṭaka’ by all. All connexions of our families with that of Aniruddha should be cut off.”⁷

7. “কয়তক শীজখান নামে তামাকব ।
এহি শাস্ত্র পায়ালান এয়িলে আমাব ॥ ৪০০
অনিকঙ্ক তাক গড়িক আমাক না পাউক ।
হেন জানি সৰ্ব্বজনে শুনা য়োর বাক ॥
অনিকঙ্ক সমে সিটো আলাপ করয় ।
জাতিভট্ট হৈবা সিটো মোক না পাবায় ॥ ৪০১
তার আজ্ঞাকারী হৈব সিটো লোকার ।
তাহার সহিত সিটো আলাপ করয় ॥
সিটো জনে কদাচিত্তে না পাইবে আমাক ।
সিটো জনে তাব যুগে ভক্তি লভিবেক ॥ ৪০২
তার লগে ভক্তি কবি আমাক ন পাইব ।
ইষ্ট মিত্র লোক তার শিষ্য যত হইব ॥
সোহি সব য়োর লগে না পাইবে নিশ্চয় ।
সত্যে সত্যে কৈলো শুনা সাধু সমস্তর ॥ ৪০৩
শাস্ত্র চুবি কবি গুৰু এয়িলে সবাক
শিকারণে সৰ্ব্বজনে বুজিবে সটক ॥”

Adi-charitra by Sadānanda.

Saṅkara's words could never fall upon deaf ears. All the Vaishnavas of the Mahāpuruṣīya sect ceased to have any connection with Aniruddha.

Aniruddha at first converted a number of Kaiartas who were struck with wonder witnessing his wonderful deeds. With their help he soon came to Rāmpu and told his friends and relatives of the success achieved by him. Here some men who were hostile to Saṅkara sided with him. One night he stealthily left this place with his boys and baggages and accompanied by his own folk, started for Saumāra (upper Asam). He went to a place called Holāṅgāguri between the rivers Brahmaputra and Tengāpāni and built a very big *Satra* there. He could perform wonderful deeds through the possession of the book, Kalpataru. So the people in the neighbourhood thought him to be endowed with divine power and became his Bhaktas.

The Ahom king heard of all this and came to his house to test his power. He placed a jar before him and asked him to say what it contained, giving him to understand that in the event of his giving a wrong answer a terrible punishment would be inflicted upon him. Aniruddha uttered the *Bijamantra* and said that it contained a deadly snake called *Petigoma*. Strangely enough, when the king's men took away the lid of the jar, a snake of the above name was found in it. At the sight of this snake everybody got terrified. The king himself was seized with panic and fell into a swoon. Aniruddha took away the snake from the jar and put it to death. From that day the Ahom king and his subjects came to have the highest regard for him. That *Satra* got the name of Māyamarā as Aniruddha had killed the

Māyā snake before the king. Soon after this, Aniruddha became a very influential man with a large following and vast wealth. The Hidis, the Domas and other lowclass men living in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur have all along been recognising him and his descendants as their Guru. His descendants were separated from the *Samāja* of their ancestors and came to be known as Kolitā. They are still known by that name and have nuptial relationship with the Kolitā families.

This community grew very powerful in Eastern Assam. The later Ahom king made an attempt to crush them and the result of this was a fiction between the two parties. At last the Matakas got highly exasperated and took up arms against the Ahom king in 1776 A. D. At that time the Ahoms were being initiated into the newly introduced Sakta religion. So they attempted to convert their opponents into their own religion. But all their attempts ended in smoke. The rebels defeated the army of the Ahom king again and again and forced him to flee for his life to Gauhati. In the history of Assam there is mention made of three such rebellions of the Moāmāiyas. The last of these rebellions took place in the year 1787. The Ahom king in his distress sought the help of the East India Company. Lord Cornwallis, the then Governor General of India sent an army for his assistance under the command of Captain Welsh. It is with the help of this army that the Ahom king Gaurināth was able to defeat the rebels and to restore his own kingdom.

CHAPTER VI.

A Brief History of the Gauripur Raj.

The Rāṅgāmāti Baruas who now enjoy a respected position among the landed magnates in the province of Assam and were once held in high esteem in the courts of Bengal, Mithilā, and Kamarūpa, can boast of an historical and ancient lineage. From the genealogical and family history derived from ancient chronicles, inscriptions and early records not only of Assam but also of Bengal and Mithilā, the rise of the Baruas of Rāṅgāmāti can be traced as far back as the 8th Century A.D.

The founder of the family was Mankha Dasa. Both his son, Tankapāni, and his grandson Chakrapāni Dasa were known to the Tibetan Buddhistic scholars as the "Jyestha-Kāyastha Tankapāni" and "Chākādāsa" respectively. They had a wide reputation for learning and adorned the court of Dharmapāla—the king of Gauḍa. The Tibetan work entitled the "Tdanjur" makes mention of many Buddhistic works composed by both the father and the son.¹ In the 'Adi Dhākur' or the genealogical ballads of Kāsi Dasa, it is stated that the venerable Kāyastha Mankha Dasa

The founder
of the
family.

I. Vide Cordier's Catalogue du fonds Tibetan de la Bibliothèque Nationale, p. 67 and হাজার বৎসরের বৌদ্ধ দেশ (ed. by M. M. Haraprasad Sastri), index.

Chakrapāni
or
Chaka Dasa.

was an inhabitant of Rāḍha country and that the family of which he was a representative was widely known. His favourite son Tamkapāni was compelled, on account of the intrigues of the Brāhmanas, to leave his paternal home and came to Pātāliputra, the capital of Gauḍa. Dharmapāla, the king of Gauḍa, welcomed him to his court and employed him as his Chief Secretary. He rose to be a great favourite of the king. In his old age he renounced the world and embraced asceticism. Thenceforth he was called Mahāsiddhācharya. He was the author of several commentaries on the Tantras and of some original Tāntric works in Sanskrit. After him, according to the same Tibetan authority, viz. the Tdanjur, his son Chakrapāni succeeded to his father's post at the Court of Dharmapāla and also rose to be a great favourite of the king. Indeed, it is a noteworthy point that this illustrious family was a recipient of royal patronage for several generations. Chakrapāni Dasa had also the reputation of a great poet. His two sons, Śara Dasa and Dhira Dasa also enjoyed the sunshine of royal patronage. They left Pātāliputra for the Varendra country in North Bengal. Rājyadhara, the great grandson of Śara Dasa, settled in Kuvacha or Koch Behar. His son, Ārya Śrīdhara, known as Lakshmīkara, accepted service under the king of Kamarupa and on defeating an army of the Karmāṭas was rewarded with the feudatory Government of Koch Behar.

Ārya
Śrīdhara

The son of Ārya Lakshmīkara was Ślapani, *alias* Vansī Dāsa, who again had two sons named Pinākapāni and Chakradhara, *alias* Suryadhara respectively. Suryadhara is said to have even defied Yaduvīra.² Who the latter was is not known to us from the family genealogies of the country. He was probably identical with Jatavarma of the Vādava family—father of Sāmalavarmā or Harivarmā.³

Tankapani, the son of Pingkapani, was a great warrior. He acquired great fame by helping the king of Gauḍa in war for which reason the Minister of the latter conferred the hands of his daughter on the powerful

2. "দাসবংশে মধ্য নাম, রাজা ভরি বশোগান, তার পুত্র নাম চক্রপাণি ।
 ব্রাহ্মণচক্রপাণি গড়ি, পিতৃবাস পরিহারি উপনীত পাটলী রাজধানী ।
 মহারাজ চক্রবর্তী, তাঁহাক করিলা ভক্তি, নিজস্থানে রাখিল হরবে ।
 রাজার হইল সখা, দিলা পদ প্রদান লেখা, উচ্চ ভাবি সন্তে পরিতোষে ॥
 তার পুত্র চক্রপাণি দেবের প্রদান গণি মহামানী রাজকাৰ্য্য পাই ।
 বিজ্ঞা বুদ্ধে বৃহস্পতি ব্রাহ্মণ শ্রবণে ভক্তি মহাকবি বলি বশ পাই ॥
 বীর শূর হই পুত্র, রাজার হইল শ্রিষপাত্র ভাগ্যদোষে ব্রাহ্মণের যোবে ।
 ছাড়ি গৌড়রাজপাশ, বারংদ্রে করিল বাস, ধনরত্ন আদিল বিশেষে ॥
 সমাজে হইল খ্যাতি, পুত্র শ্রীধর মহামতি, তার পুত্র ভুধর গদাধর ।
 ভুধর হইল রাজধানী কাশীপুরী অধিবাসী, গদাধর রহিল নিজঘর ॥
 তার পুত্র রাজাধর গৌড়ে বিদ্রব অভঃপর পলাইয়া গেল উত্তর দেশে ।
 কামাখ্যানাতার সন্ন্যাসে, কুবচে বাস সগলে রাজ্যলান্ড দেবীর আদেশে ॥
 তার পুত্র বীর শ্রীধরাই, কাঙুর রাজার ঠাই পূজা পাইল সামন্তপ্রদান ।
 বহু বশ উপাভয়, কানড়ার পরাজয়, ধরাধর তাহার সন্তান ॥
 তার পুত্র শূলপাণি পুঞ্জিরা শিলাকপাণি কুবচেতে হইল স্থপাত ॥
 পুত্র তার মহামানী, পিণাক আর চক্রপাণি, বহুবীরে কৈল উৎকণ্ঠিত ॥"

Dhakur or the genealogical ballads, by Kasi Dasa.

3. Vide *Banger Jatiya Itihasa, Rajanya Kanda* or the *Royal Dynasties of Bengal*, p. 280-81.

Inter-
marriage
between
the Deva
and the
Dasa.

ally of his master. Kāsi Dāsa says that this union inaugurated for the first time inter-marriage between the Deva and Dāsa families and was the first bond of union between the Kāyastha communities of the North and the South. From the account of Kāsi Dāsa, it appears that the Minister of the Gauḍa king belonged to a Kāyastha family designated as the Deva.⁴

From the Belabo inscription¹ of Bhojavarman, we learn that his grandfather, Jatavarman of the Yādava dynasty, had invaded Kāmarupa.²

Rāmācharita by Sandhyākara supplies us with useful information that Vīgrahapāla III, after having defeated Karmadeva, the king of Chedi, married his daughter,

4 "পূর্ব পুরুষ ছিল অদে, একদেব আইল বদে, তার বংশে বোণদেব নাম।

বিজ্ঞা বুকে বৃহস্পতি, মহামন্ত্রী মহামতি, বাজবংশ সর্বত্র ছনাম ॥

তাহার নন্দন চারি, সঙ্গে অস্ত্র শস্ত্র ধাবী বোণি জ্ঞান মধু জীঘর।

বোণিদেব জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্র সেই হইল মহাপাত্ত পিতৃনাম করিল উচ্চল ॥"

Dhokur or Genealogical Ballads, by Kasi Dasa
Also compare with the plates of Vaidya Deva—

“यस्य वंशक्रमेनाभूत् सचिवः शास्त्रवित्तमः ।

योगदेव इति ख्यातः स्फुरद्दोर्दण्डविक्रमः ॥”

(Kamāuli copper-plates of Vaidyadeva, 3rd Sloka)

Vide also Royal Dynasties of Bengal, p 225-227

5. “जातवर्म्मा सतो जातो गाङ्गे ये इव शान्तनोः ।

दया वृत् रणः क्रीडा त्यागो यस्य महोत्सवः ॥

गृह्णन् वेण्यपुत्रुश्रियं परिणयन् कणोस्य वीरश्रियं

पौन्द्धेषु प्रथयन् श्रियं परिभ्रमन् सदा कामहवश्रियं ।”

(Belabo copper-plates of Bhoja Varman, Sloka 8)

Yauvanasri.⁶ The minister of Vighrahapala III was Yogadeva.⁷ It is very likely that when the festivities on account of the king's wedding with the Princess of Chedi were going on, the king might have exerted his personal influence with his minister to bring about the marriage of the daughter of Yogadeva with Tankapani, the feudatory chief of Koch Behar, who had earned his gratitude by his timely assistance in the war. At this marriage were assembled in due social form, befitting the occasion, the chief Kāyasthas of the South and the North Bengal.⁸ In the Social History of the Kāyasthas of Bengal it must have been a memorable day.

Yogadeva
and
Tankapani.

Ratnapāni, the son of Prince Tankapani, lost Koch Behar at the hands of the Mlechchhas. In the copper-plate inscriptions found in various places in Kāmarupa occur the names of Śālastambha, Vighrahastambha and others as Mlechchha kings who are said to have descended from Bhagadatta. The Mlechchhas are now known as Mech. From this stock has sprung the present Raj family of Koch Behar.

6 “हरिणोपासितधामा विग्रहपालः किलाभवद्राजा ।

सतभूभूतपङ्क्तिरथो गोनरत्नाकरेऽमुस्मिन् ॥

सहस्रावितरणजितकर्णः क्षौणी यौवनश्रियोदुहे ।

अश्रान्तदानवारातिशयो योभूद्वृषानुचरः ॥”

(Ramacharita, 1st chap. 8 and 9 stanzas)

7. Consult 4th foot-note stated above

8. “পূত্র তাঁর টকপাণি খেটে বীর মধ্যে গণি নৌড়নাথে করিয়া মহার ।
মহাবলে লতি বণ, বাটে নৌড়ে রূপকাণ মল্লিকজা কৈল পরিণয় ।
সেব হালে করণ হৈল, মহাবলে মাজ পড়িল, উত্তর দক্ষিণে হৈল মিল ॥”

(Genealogical Ballads by Kasi Das)

Narasinha Dāsa, the son of Prince Ratnapāni bears the title of Thākur in the genealogical records of the Varendra Kayasthas. In the published edition of the work called "*Varendra Dhakur*" by Jadunandana, he is styled as the ruler of the Kuvachas or Kochas.⁹ The title Thakur which Narasinha Dasa held was in accordance with the usual practice among the descendants of the feudatory princes to style themselves as Thakurs.

After having lost his principality Thakur Nara Dāsa must have most probably left Koch Behar and lived in the North Bengal with his maternal grandfather¹⁰ the fame of whose valour and high position resounded throughout the country and on whose death the succession to his vast property devolved on Thakur Nara Dasa.

The Pala king Ramapala had taken no small pains to make Mahasthāna the foremost sacred place in Bengal. Here came Narasinha Dasa and spent a few days. On the upper portion of the framework of the gate of the fort erected by Shah Sultan is inscribed the name "*Sri Narasinha*"¹¹ which common people take it to be Rāja Narasinha and this is most probably due to the fact that Narasinha Dasa was the son of a Raja who had lost his kingdom.

9 "নরসিং ঠাকুর দাস, কুব্জ নগর দাস, আছিলেক স্বরাজ্য আশ্রয়ে।"

10 "বাতাসহ পৌরব, পৃথিবীতে দার কপ, অভাববি মহিমা ঘোষণে।"

(*Dhakur*, by Jadunandana, published by Krishnacharan Mazumdar, Saka 1812)

11. *History of Bogra*, part II, p. 71.

As the old Nara Dasa Thākur took the side of the Pala kings of Bengal, he did not acknowledge the suzerainty of Ballāla Sena, and so great was his loyalty to the losing side that of his three sons, Baṭudāsa, Paṭudāsa, and Bhuvana, he disinherited the first for having joined Raja Ballala Sena. But though disavowed by his father the Sena King conferred on Baṭudasa the Viceroyalty of Eastern Bengal.¹² Sṛidhara, the youngest son of Baṭudasa acquired fame by compiling an anthology entitled "Sṅktikarnamṛita" which besides giving some of his own excellent verses contained many precious poems of the most celebrated Sanskrit poets and of the members of the Royal Sena family.

Baṭudasa
the viceroy
of
East
Bengal.

Devadhara *alias* Sṛidhara Thakur was the son of Chakrapani Saryadhara, the vanquisher of the Yādavas. The rise of Samanta Sena who belonged to the branch of Karnaṇḍa Kshatriyas, the great grandfather of Ballāla Sena, however belongs to a period earlier than that of Sṛidhara. The Karnata Kshatriyas were the most powerful supporters of the emperor Karnadeva of the Chedi dynasty. At the time when the emperor, having conquered Gauḍa, advanced to spread his power in the country, the

Sṛidhara
Thakur

12. "তার পুত্র নরসিংহ, সদায়ে বহুত সর্জন, বাকি গ্রামে করিলা আশ্রয়
নরদাসের দুই পুত্র, বহু পটু কুলহর বহু করিল বঙ্গ সংগঠন ।
বত ছিল জাতিগোষ্ঠী, নরদাসে পরিভূটি, ইষ্ট বন্ধু সদায়ে গঠন ।
জুড় মুহুরে লয়ে উজ্জয়েতে নাগালয়ে বঙ্গালয়ে করিল বর্জন ।
বহু গেল বঙ্গালপক্ষ তেই সে পিতার উপেক্ষ বঙ্গদায়ে হইল আশ্রয় ।
গৌড়াদিপ পুত্র কৈল সামন্ত অঙ্গগণ্য হইল পুত্র তার ঐহিকী ঐশ্বর ।"

Dhākūr by Kasidāsa.

Karnataka
Nanyadeva.

Karnāṭa Kshatriyas had been established as feudatory chiefs on the banks of the sacred Ganges in Raḍha or West Bengal. After the emperor had left Bengal, they began to usurp the power of the Pala and Varma kings. With a view to open a prosperous career for himself Suryadhara was determined to sail in the same boat with the rebellious Karnāṭa Kshatriyas. He probably took part in their wars with the Yadava kings, and be it said to his courage that he did not quail before the great power of the latter. His favourite son Sridhara Thakur had noticed from his boyhood the rising power of the Karnāṭa Kshatriyas and he too like his father stood from his youth in the forefront of their victorious banner. Gradually Vijaya Sena the grandson of Samanta Sena spread his authority over the whole of Raḍha country ousting that of the Pala and Varma kings. About this time his kinsman Karnataka Nanyadeva trying to found an independent principality was defeated and taken prisoner by Vijaya Sena who, on his acknowledging his allegiance gave him an army with the help of which he occupied the territory of Mithila.¹³ He was accompanied to his new kingdom by the brave warrior Sridhara Thakura.¹⁴ In the history of Mithila Nanyadeva figures as the founder of the Karnataka house and Sridhara Thakur

13. Vide রাজবংশ or the Royal Dynasties of Bengal, P. 304.

14. "জ্ঞেপাণি দেশান্তর, পুত্র তার দেবধর, মহামাতা বলিরা হুখাত ।
বঙ্গবাসে ছাড়া হৈল, পিনাক সমাজে হৈল, তার বার সর্বত্র আখ্যাত ।"

as his chief minister.¹⁵ The statement of the local chroniclers that Lakshmikara, the great grandfather of Śrīdhara had come from Karnāta and settled in the village Balain in Mithilā cannot be accepted as true. It conflicts with the sense of the inscription incised at the foot of the image of Vishnu set up by Śrīdhara at Andhrādhari, a village 3 miles from Jhanjharpur Station. It runs thus "the image is installed in the reign of the victorious Nānyadeva by Śrīdhara the effulgent sun among the lotus-like Kshatriyas of Bengal."¹⁶ The fact that Śrīdhara the chief minister of Mithilā was a Bengalee belonging to the caste of Kāyastha Kshatriya is thus indisputably established from a contemporary inscription. The village from whence the inscription has been discovered is still inhabited by the descendants of Śrīdhara. It was probably because he came to Mithilā with Nānyadeva of the Karnāta Kshatriya line and as the people of this province became acquainted from the frequent mention at the funeral oblations and other religious ceremonies with the names of three generations in the upward line from him; that the chroniclers of Mithilā connected his great-grand-father with Karnāta. It appears that Nānyadeva and his successor did not enjoy an uninterrupted

Śrīdhara
Thakur
the chief
Minister of
Nānyadeva.

15. Vide Mithila Darpan, Part I. p. 181.

16. The Andhra-tharhi Inscription of Śrīdhara runs—

श्रीसन्नान्यपतिर्जिता गुणरत्नमहापतिः ।

यत्कौर्त्तिल्लितं सिद्धं द्वितीयो श्रीपथो वरः ॥

सन्निष्ठा तस्य नान्यथा चक्षवद्भानुभासुना ।

देवोयं कारितो श्रीमान् श्रीधरः श्रीधरेण न ॥

possession of their newly acquired kingdom. The Pālas of Magadha were making strenuous efforts to recover their lost province. It was then that Ballāla Sena the son of Vijaya Sena marched at the head of an army to the help of his kinsmen in Mithilā. According to the tradition current in Bengal two circumstances of great importance took place during the expedition viz, the rumour of his death which was spread in the country and the birth of his son Lakshmana Sena in Vikramapur. It is obvious that Lakshmana Era was inaugurated in Mithilā to commemorate the second event.

Bodhi Rao
the gr eatest
poet in
Mithila.

It was not only in the reign of Nānyadeva but also that of his successor and during the long ministry of Śrīdhara that many Kāyastha from Bengal, either on official business or induced by the ties of relationship settled in Mithilā. In the local chronicles they are said to have come from Karnāta¹⁷ and occupied like the descendants of Śrīdhara a very high position in the Kāyastha Community of that country. Bodhi Rāo or Bodhi Dāsa, the son of Śrīdhara, acquired the fame of being the greatest poet in Mithilā at his time.¹⁸ His son Ānanda-kara was the chief minister to the king and one of the best politicians of his time. Sūrya-kara Thakur, his son, is known to all the students of the social history of Mithilā. He was the chief minister of Rājā Hari-

17. This Karnata was no other than the Karnata Settlement in the Rarha on the bank of the sacred Ganges.

18. Vide Mithila Darpana, pt I, p. 182.

sinhadeva. It was he who through his great influence introduced the custom among the Brāhmanas and Kayasthas of preserving their family genealogy.¹⁹ It is stated in the family records of the Brāhmanas of Mithilā that in the 32nd year of the reign of Rājā Hari-sinhadeva i. e., in 1246 S. E. (1324 A. D.)²⁰ the custom of recording the genealogical accounts and measures to preserve them in the family, was instituted. The task of keeping the records of the Brāhmana families and those of the Kāyasthas was entrusted to scholarly Brāhmanas and Kayasthas respectively. Their descendants are still faithfully discharging their duties. In Mithilā they are honoured as *Panjār*.

The Maithil
Panjars.

In the family history which was composed in the reign of Rājā^F arisinhadeva the line of Suryakara Thākur of Balāin had the first place and was esteemed as the leader of the Kāyastha community.

It was because he was a Kāyastha holding the family surname Dāsa the name became a distinction and he and all his relatives who owned it became "Kulinas" among the Kāyastha community of Mithilā. Some of them obtained the title of "Mallika". After the Dāsas come the Devas and after them come

The
Maithil
Kulinas.

19. Vide Mithila Darpana, pt. I. p 184.

20. "बाबाबिराजसहितयाज्ञवल्क्ये पौषस्य शुक्लदशमी चतुर्विंशत्यदि ।

याज्ञा खपद्वयपुरी' इतिदि' इदेवो दुर्दे'व द्विद्वयपथे विदिमाविनेयः ।"

the *Kan̄thas* and *Daitas* in point of honour among *Kāyasthas* of *Mithilā*.²¹ It is a curious phenomenon that the social heirarchy with its carefully regulated marks of honour apportioned to each family prevails in *Mithilā* just as it existed in the time of *Sūrya-kara Thākur*.

Post
Amrita-
kara the
Chief
Minister of
Raja Siva-
sinha.

Pratikara Lakshmidāsa, the son of *Sūrya-kara*, neglected the affairs of the world and devoted himself exclusively to the study of scriptures and the observance of religious ceremonies. His favourite son, the famous *Amrita-kara Thākur* was the chief minister of the celebrated *Rājā Sivasinha* of *Mithilā* and was a great patron of pious and learned men. Of his two sons, *Vijaya-kara* and *Nitya-kara*, the grandson of the former *Krishna-kara Thākur* was the minister of king *Kansanārāyana* of *Mithilā*. Of the two sons of *Nityakara*, *Velu* and *Narahari Dāsa*, the latter was a *Sākta* of the highest type and used off and on to come over to *Kāmākhyā*. At the time when the Mech chief *Visvasinha* flourished *Narahari Dāsa* was passing a secluded life in a solitary cottage at *Kāmākhyā* worshiping the goddess *Mahāsakti* there.

Surva-
bhauma
Pandit.

According to the *Brihat Rājavansāvali* of *Rājā Harendranārāyana* of Koch Behar *Visvasinha* at the time of his accession to the throne brought over a few scholarly *Brāhmanas* from *Mithilā* among whom the name of *Sārvabhauma* is famous in the old chronicles

²¹. *Mithilā Darpana*, Vol. II. p. 27.

of Koch Behar. This Sārvabhauma Thākur was latterly appointed by the king as the royal priest and it is from him that he received information about Narahari Dāsa. He was told by Sārvabhauma that the ancestors of Narahari Dāsa had been the successive prime ministers of the rulers of Mithila and that if he appointed an experienced man of such a family as his minister his newly acquired territory was very likely to be governed efficiently. Thus instructed by Sārvabhauma, Visvasinha sent an invitation to Narahari Dāsa who at first did not agree to accept the ministership of the king, but was at last prevailed over by the learned Sārvabhauma.

Narahari as
prime
Minister of
Visvasinha.

Narahari came over to Kāmarūpa leaving his family at home. His spiritual tendency did not abate even after his acceptance of this ministership. In order to fasten his mind to worldly affairs Sārvabhauma Thākur brought over his family there. But the attempts of this learned Brāhmaṇa failed. Neither his acceptance of the responsible ministerial post nor his close contact with his family could produce in him any great attachment for the world. It was through his advice and effort alone that the government of Visvasinha's kingdom was based on religion and justice. And it was also according to his advice that the king Visvasinha sent his dear sons Malla and Sukla to Benares to study Sanskrit.

Narahari Dāsa had two sons, viz, Rāma Dāsa and Payonidhi. Rāma Dāsa was employed

Kavikarna
pur.

in the state service of Mithilā. Two sons were born to Payonidhi after his arrival at Kāmarūpa. Of these two the elder was Kavikarnapura and the younger Vāninātha Kavindra Pātra. Some say, Vāninātha was elder and Kavikarnapur his younger son. These two brothers got acquainted with many Śāstras from their grand-father and Sārvabhauma Pandit. Struck by the poetic faculty of these two scholars the society of the learned conferred upon them the titles of Kavikarnapura and Kavindra respectively. Now Kavikarnapura was a great favourite of Narahari whose spirituality produced a deep influence upon his mind. From his very childhood he always lived by the side of his grand-father and noticed carefully the daily religious functions performed by him. Hence with the growth of his knowledge he too became very religious, so much so that after the death of his grand-father he embraced Sannyāsa.

Payonidhi.

After the demise of Narahari the learned Sārvabhauma Thākur as the priest of Payonidhi performed the Śrādh ceremony of his father. Narahari belonged to the Kāsyapa gotra, whereas Sārvabhauma was of the Vasishtha gotra. Now the gotra of the Kshatriyas was ascertained by the gotra of their priests and as such Payonidhi according to the advice of Sārvabhauma accepted the Vasishtha gotra at the time of the Śrādh ceremony of his father. And from that time the descendants of Kavindra Pātra the son

of Payonidhi, have been known as belonging to the Vasisṭha gotra.²²

Being greatly impressed with his intelligence and his proficiency in scriptures, the king Visvasinha appointed Payonidhi to the post of his Court Pandit and minister. Through his influence, the king became a great devotee of Siva-Sakti, and exerted himself to the spread of the worship of Kāmākhyā Devī.

At the time of Visvasinha's death, the two sons Malla and Sukla were absent in Benaras with Kavindra.

Malla or Naranārāyaṇa ruled over Koch Behar from 1534 A. D. to 1587. All along his long reign Kavindra Pātra acted as his minister. From the genealogical history of the Darangarāj we learn that the prince Sukladhvaja accompanied by Kavindra Pātra reduced to submission, the whole of Kāmarupa, Manipur, Jayanta, Tipperah, Heramba, Ilajo and Sylhet. His reign is remembered as the golden age in Koch Behar which attained great fame in religion, literature, industry and social matters. Visva Sinha tried to enlarge his kingdom and so came in conflict with the powerful Kāyastha Bhūiyās who held sway over the surrounding countries. He at last succeeded in overthrowing their power. When their influence was totally destroyed, Kavindra Patra caused fourteen Kāyastha families to be brought from Mithila, Jessore and other

Kavindra
Pātra.

22. According to *Asvalayana Śrauta-sūtra* (12. 15 5) "কুরাদিত্ত এবরো রাজার" i. e. the Kshatriya should have a gotra prapara of his priest.

places of Bengal to supplant them and thus to build anew the power and prestige of the Kāyasthas in this part of the Country. It was about this time that Sankara Deva, the great Kāyastha saint, who is believed to be an incarnation of Vishnu was born and preached his religion.

Kavindra
and social
reform.

Kavindra Pātra, (like his forefather who by introducing the custom of keeping genealogical registers had kept an authorised record of the status of the Kāyasthas of Mithilā) reconstructed on lines similar to those of his ancestor, the Kāyastha community of Kāmarūpa. As in Mithilā, so in Kāmarūpa the Dāsas are regarded as "Kulinas", then come the Devas and Dattas in point of honour in the social hierarchy. This order even now obtains among the Kāyasthas of Kāmarūpa.

Mahārāja Naranārāyana partitioned his extensive dominion into two parts assigning the territory which lay to the east of the river Sankosh to his brother Sukladvaja and retaining that on the west for himself. Thus the river Sankos was regarded as the boundary between the two kingdoms.

In 1587 A. D. the king Naranārāyana died and his only son Lakṣmīnārāyana ascended the throne of his father. He was a weak minded and vacillating prince and having been misled by the counsel of designing people, he dismissed Kavindra Pātra, but Raghudevānārāyana who had succeeded Sukladvaja to the throne of Kāmarūpa welcomed him to his Court and appointed

him to the post of the Chief minister to his State. At this, Rājā Lakshminārāyaṇa was very angry and began to consider and develop a design by which he would rob Raghudeva of his possessions. The latter however died and was succeeded by his son Parikshit. On the receipt of the news of the death of Raghudeva Lakshminārāyaṇa forthwith invaded his kingdom. Not thinking it proper to take up arms against his uncle to resist his encroachments, Parikshit started for Agra accompanied by Kavindra Patra to lay the case before the Emperor. In the book entitled "Rāja-Vaṁśāvali" i. e. the Royal genealogical Record by Birupāksha Pandit it is stated that Rājā Parikshit-nārāyaṇa accompanied by his chief minister Kavindra Patra had audience at Agra of the Mughal emperor who being acquainted with his case honoured him with a *Khelat* and granted him a *Sanad* empowering him to be restored to all the possessions of his father. Before returning he left Kavindra Patra at Agra as his agent. On his way back Parikshitnārāyaṇa unfortunately died of small-pox. Kavindra Patra informed the Emperor of his death and on his representing to him that the late Parikshit had left no fit successor to occupy his place Kavindra Patra was appointed to the post of the Kānūngo of the four Sircars (as we learn on the testimony of the "Burañji" of Guṇābhīram Barua, under a nominal Nawab whose installation in the place of the late Rājā he secured from the Emperor. It was at that

Kavindra
and the
Mughal
emperor

time, that for the first time, this portion of Kāmarupa came under the Mahomedans. Rāngamati became the headquarters of the Kanungo and Kavindra Pātra began to acquire by diverse means, landed estates, and thus became a powerful Zemindar.

Names of
four
Sircars.

The four Sircars of which Kavindra Pātra became a Kanungo were the Sircar Kāmarupa, the Sircar Dakshinakāla, Sircar Dhekri and Sircar Bāngāl-bhum. These comprised the extensive territory between Rangpur and Gauhati over which Kavindra Pātra got the right of exercising his power. The *Smals*, which he and his descendants received from the Emperor conferred on them the right of exercising extraordinary jurisdiction in criminal, civil as well as revenue matters of the province. In 1606, Kavindra Pātra started for Delhi and it is probable that next year he came back invested with the office of Kanungo of the four Sircars. It was through his efforts that Mahārāja Lakshminārāyana was forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Delhi Emperor.

In 1621, Rāja Lakshminārāyana died harbouring to the last day of his life ill-feeling towards Kavindra Pātra. His successor Rāja Viranarayana began slowly to lose many of his possessions owing to internal disturbances in the State.

Kavindra had six sons namely Raghunath, Kavivallabha, Vishnudeva, Mahadeva, Niranjan and Nityanand. Raghunath for

his wide education and scholarship, obtained the title of Kavi-sekhara.

The name of the second is not expressly mentioned in the genealogy but from the title of Kavivallabha by which he was known it is clear that he too was famous as a scholar and a poet. In the time of Viranarayana, the king of Koch Behar, Kavisekhar was slowly rising into prominence. The *Sunad* which he received from the Emperor Jahangir in 1029 H. (1620 A.D.) after the death of his father is still preserved among the archives of the Gauripur Estate.

Kavi-
vallabha.

It may be inferred from this document that Kavindra died sometime before 1619. One of the many *Sunads* of which Kavisekhar was a recipient at the hands of Jahangir reconfers on him those revenue-free lands which were bestowed on his predecessor by the previous Emperor. Greatly pleased with his administrative skill the Emperor Jahangir further granted him a *Sunad* in 1045 H. (1635 A.D.) by which extensive revenue-free estates were added to his already considerable possessions. In some of the *Sunads* received by him, he is even mentioned as the Kanungo of the Subah Koch Behar from which it may be inferred that he got himself connected with Koch Behar. This view receives support from the State-papers of Koch Behar from which we learn that during the reign of Raja Prānānārayana, Kavisekhara was associated with the administration of his kingdom. According to the author of Assam

Kavisekhar.

Buranji Kavisekhara was a court Pandit of Rājā Prānanārāyana.

Of the three sons of Kavisekhara, Śrināth, Kusānāth and Harinandana, the eldest was known by his title "Kaviratna Barua". He received from the Emperor Shāhjahān and Aurangzeb *Sanad* which confirmed him in the Kanungoship of the aforesaid four Sircars. Besides this he was the recipient of various other *Sanads* in recognition of his good services and from one of which we learn that Kaviratna (the son of Kavi-sekhara) who was appointed to the post of the Kānungo, having disobeyed the orders of the Emperor in conjunction with Prānanārāyana and thereby committed the crime of treason is deposed in favour of Jayānanda the son of his brother Kavivallabha. Thus the two most powerful men of the North Bengal viz, Rājā Prānanārāyana and Kaviratna acted in close agreement even against the Emperor. The title of Rājā by which Kavisekhara was decorated by the Imperial *Sanad* is still used by his successors. Devarāja the son of Kaviratna was able to restore himself to the favours of the Emperor and receive from him a *Sanad* in 1665 A.D.

Kaviratna had three sons named respectively Devarāja, Gokulchānd and Hariharu. After the death of Devarāja Gokulchānd held the post of the Kānungo for some years. During his time he endeared himself to the people of the province by many a meritorious acts. He made endowment at his

head-quarters at Rāṅgāmīti, in a large scale for religious institutions which are recorded in his various *Sanads* and grants.

Gokulchānd was succeeded by his nephew Deviprasād the son of his eldest brother Devarāja. From the several *Sanads* granted to him we find that he was confirmed as the permanent Kānūngo of the four Sircars. In the *Sanad* of 1667 A. D. he was assigned all *Dastur* and *Nankar* fees from the Choudhury &c of the four Sircas. By the *Sanad* dated the 25th year of the reign of Aurangzeb granted to Deviprasad Deviprasad. Kanungo of Vilayat Koch, he was given the power to collect *Dastur* and *Nankar* of the Pergana Bahirband, Daki and Bari. Thus we find that the power, influence and fortune of the house had by this time risen to a great height.

The line of Devarāja having become extinct with Gaurīprasād, the son of Deviprasad, who was childless, the succession to the vast estate of the family devolved upon Sūryachandra the eldest son of Gokulchānd. In 1774 Bul Chandra Barua, the son of Bāl Chandra the brother of Sūryachandra succeeded to the *gadi* of the family after him. He acquired the Zamindari of the five parganas of Ghurā, Aurangābād, Makrāmpur, Jāmīrā and Gole Alamgaṛj. From the Deva-Hara-Patra of Balaram Choudhury in the Bengali year of 1159 we learn that for the maintenance of the worship of Goddess Durgā he gave away some rent-free estates to Bul Chandra Surya-
chandra.

Bul
Chandia

Baruā. We further know from the circular of the Calcutta Board of the Hon'ble the East India Company that owing to the failure of Balarām Chaudhuri and subsequent Zemindars to submit their revenue at the proper time, some arrangements were made about their estates with Bul Chandra Baruā. From this it may be inferred that he came into possession of several new properties. In the time of his son Vira Chandra Baruā the decennial settlement was made by the East India Company. About this time, Balitanārāyana, the Rājā of Bijni was subjected to considerable ill-treatment at the hands of the officers of the East India Company. Through the efforts of Vira Chandra Baruā, the oppressions from which the Rājā of Bijni was suffering, were put a stop to by the then Governor General in Council. In recognition of the services of Vira Chandra, the Rājā granted him many rent-free lands.

It has been previously mentioned that Rāngāmāñi was the seat of this family from the time of Kavindra Baruā. In the documents during the Mahommedan time and the rule of the East India Company, the head of the family was styled as the Rājā or Baruā of Rāngāmāñi. In the beginning of the Company's rule in Bengal, the Zemindar of Rāngāmāñi had to send in to the Collector at Rangpur 21 elephants as his portion of the revenue. But the expenses of maintaining these animals were so great, that the Company did not derive any profit by selling them. It was

for this reason that in 1784 the Company's annual revenue from the Zemindars was assessed at a cash sum of Rupees 3101 which was subsequently raised to 4221. On the death of Vira Chandra his widow Jay-Durgā adopted Dhirachandra, son of Gunānanda, 7th in descent from Kavi-vallabha brother of Kavisekhara. He was fond of living in princely pomp and splendour. He opened a *Sabharat*. His wife the late Tarinipriya Barua was a pious lady. To encourage Sanskrit learning she opened a *Chatuspāthi* at Gauripur.

Dhir
Chandra
Barua.

Dhirachandra was succeeded by his son Pratāp Chandra. He shifted his residence from Rāngāmātī to Gauripur in 1850. Here he opened free Middle English School and a charitable Dispensary. He was a great patron of learning. The cost of publishing an edition of Yogavāsista Rāmāyana was entirely borne by him. In 1863, he made a free-gift of Dhubri to the Government for the headquarters of the district when it was transferred from Goalpara. But the most eminent of his public services was the help which he rendered to the Government during the Bhutan war (1865). Probably it was in recognition of this service that the title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on him. It was apparent that the representative of the Rāngāmātī Baruas who enjoyed the distinction of the title of Raja from the time of Jahangir could hardly look upon a Rai Bahadurship with anything like a mark of honour befitting the traditions of his family. For this, he did not attend the Darbar held to confer honours, but

Pratap
Chandra.

Free gift of
Dhubri.

when Mr Campbell the Deputy Commissioner came to Gauripur to personally present the Sanad to him he had to accept it, to avoid being misrepresented as disloyal and discourteous. It is a well-known fact that Mr Campbell was no friend of the Zemindars and this is amply borne out by Government records as well as several measures that he initiated which ran against the interests of the Zemindari during his administration. This led to an unfortunate misunderstanding between Mr Campbell and Pratāp Chandra. He had always felt that Mr Campbell had hardly been fair in his dealings with him and this well-meant action of the Government Viz:—the bestowal of Rai Bahadurship was taken rather as an affront under which he smarted to the last day of his life. He died without heirs in 1880 and Kumar Prabhāt Chandra Barua was adopted by his widow, Rānī Bhabāni-Priyā.

Rānī
Bhabāni
priyā.

Rānī Bhabāni-priyā was a lady of pious and benevolent disposition. The most notable of her many beneficent public acts was the opening of a *Sura* at Benares Gangāmahallā. Here 25 Brahmins are fed daily free of cost. She died in Benares in 1900 at the ripe old age of 77.

Rāja
Prabhāt
Chandra.

Rāja Prabhāt Chandra Barua attained his majority in 1896 and received the title of Rājā as a personal distinction in 1901. He raised the Middle English School founded by his father to the status of a High English School in 1899. He founded a public library

at Dhubri and named it after the Hon'ble Sir H. I. S. Cotton, C. C. of Assam.

His numerous public activities and the improvements effected in his own Estate are too well-known in Assam. He was married to Rāni Saroj-Bālā Baruāni in 1896. The Rāni comes from the well-known *Mahāpurushīya* family of Sankaradeva and is herself a well-educated lady of remarkably pious and charitable disposition and has also fully kept up the orthodox religious tradition of the Gauripur family. Her untimely death is mourned by all. The Rājā has 3 sons and 2 daughters :—

Kumar Pramathesh Chandra Barua, B.Sc. born in 1903 and graduated in Science from the Calcutta Presidency College in 1924. Married to Badhūrāni Mādhurīlata, daughter of Bābu Birendra Nath Mitra of the wellknown Kāyastha family of Simla, Calcutta.

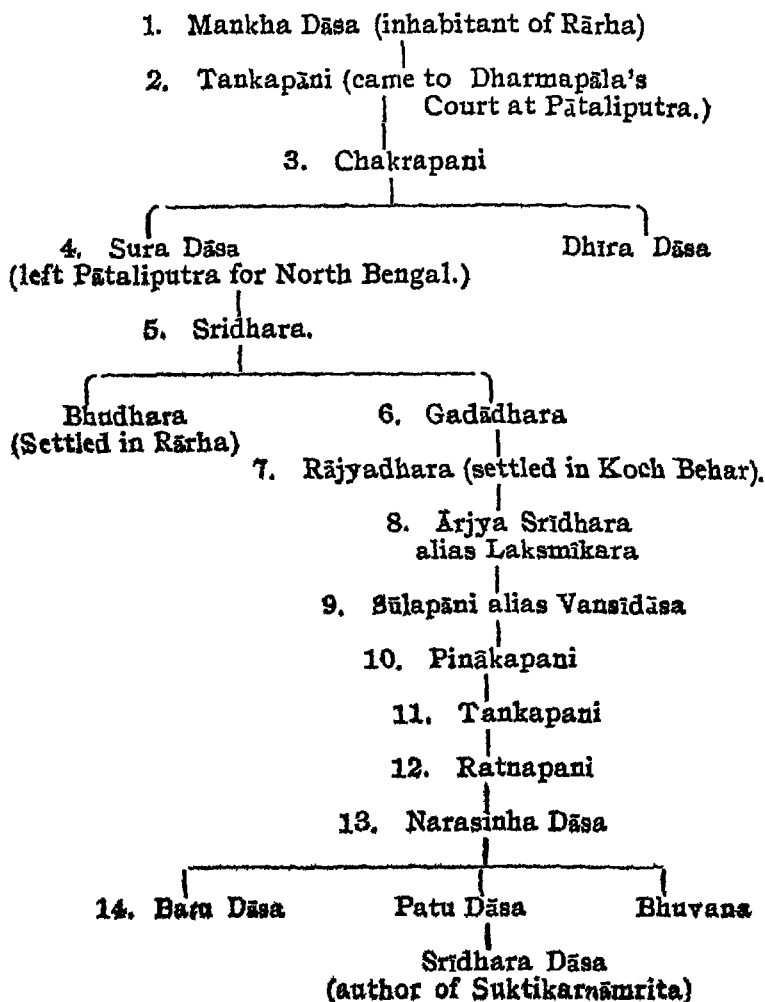
Rājkumari Nihār Bālā born in 1905 and married to Srijut Mukunda Nārāyana Barua, B. A. in 1917.

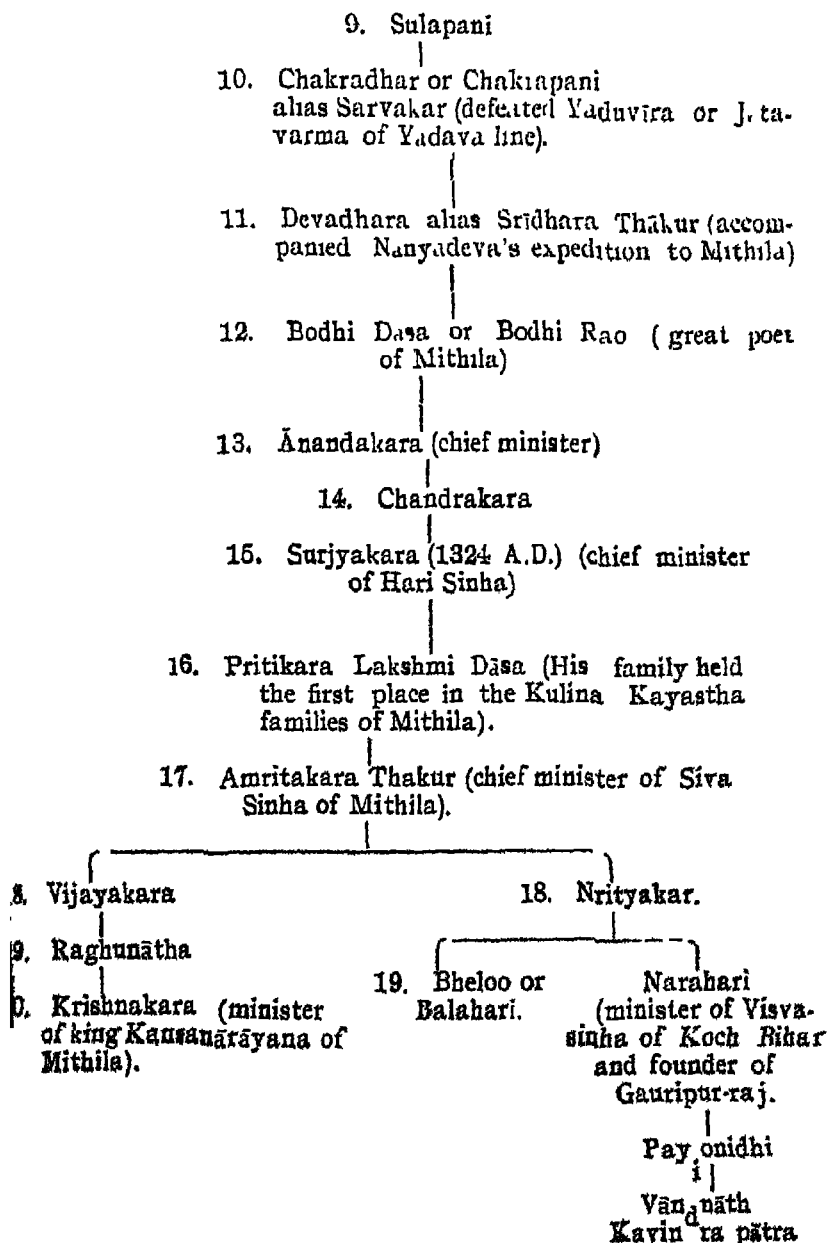
Rājkumārī Nilimā Sundari born in 1910 and married to Srijut Santosh Kumar Barua, B. A. in 1922.

Kumar Prakritish Chandra Barua born in 1914 and is educated at home.

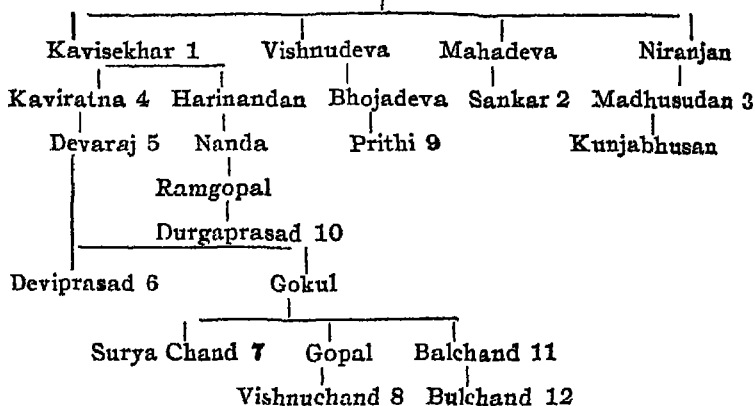
Kumar Pranabesh Chandra Barua born in 1918.

Pedigree of Gauripur Raj.





Kavindra Patra (Vide Appendix II, p. 66-80).



(1) Kavisekhar—received grant from the Emperor on the 19th Rabiya Sani, 1035 Hijree. He was a favourite of the Emperor and had been allowed the Dastur and Nankar charges for his loyalty and for carrying out the orders of the officers.

(2) Sankar—was made Kanoongo from the beginning of the Rabi season of 1083 Perganati. He was also allowed the Dastur.

(3) Madhusudan—Who was a Kanoongo, was murdered by Diljit Chaudhury. His son Kanjwan received a grant from Alamgir Badshah on the 5th Safar 43 corresponding with 1108 Bengali, and was made Chaudhury in place of Diljit, the murderer of his father.

(4) Kabratana—(1059 H) held the post of Kanoongo for a long time.

(5) Debraj—Son of Kabratana received a grant from Nawab Baburimal on the 8th Phalgun, 1203 B. S. He was an able young man and a great favourite of the tenants. He was made Kanoongo after his father's death.

(6) Deviprasad—received a Sanad from the Emperor on the 6th Phalgun, 1205 H. S. which confirmed him in the post of the Kanoongo already held by him.

(7) Suraj Chand—received a Sanad from the Emperor on the 25th Ramzan, 39th year of His Majesty's reign which conferred upon him the post of Kanoongo that was formerly held by Deviprasad.

(8) Bisai Chand—received a Sanad from the Emperor on the 13th Aswin 1144 B. S. which conferred upon him the post of Naib (agent) to the Kanoongo.

(9) Prithi Das—received a Sanad from the Emperor on the 9th Phalgun 1205 B. S. which conferred upon him the post of Chowdhury of Perganas Jamra, Sarkar Dekhri belonging to the Thana Rangamati.

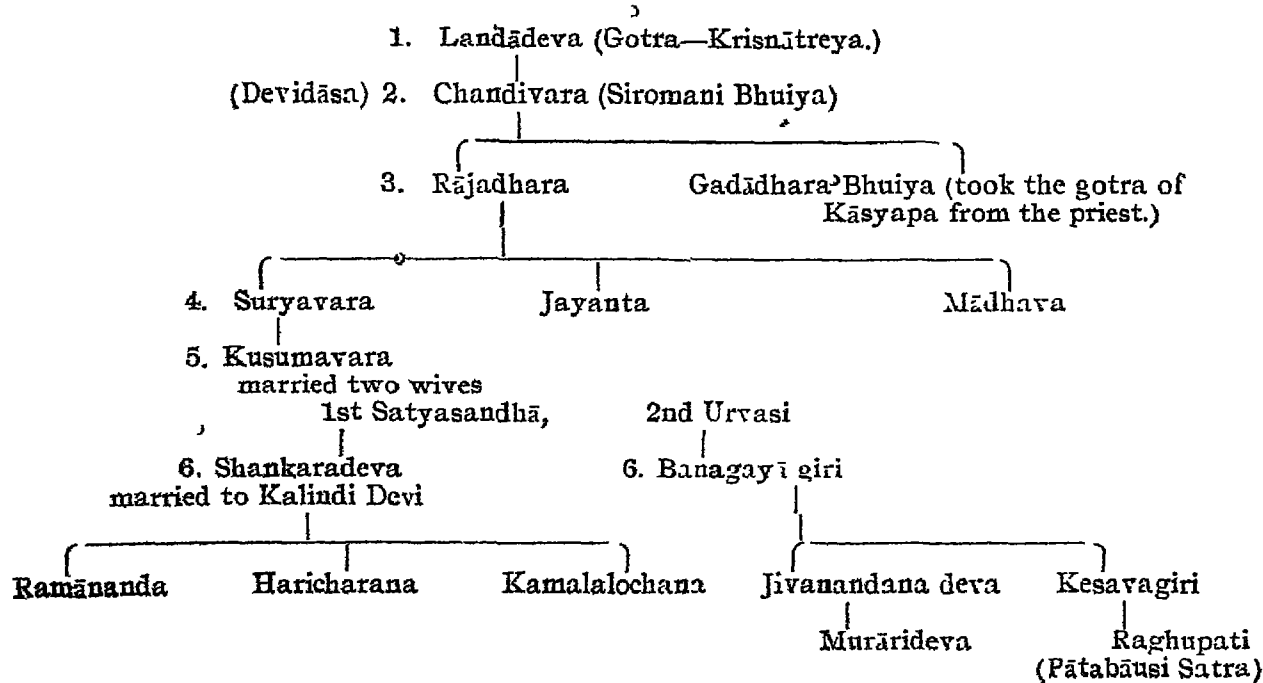
(10) Durgaprasad—received a Sanad from Emperor Shah Alam (181 H) on the 17th Jamadiul awwal 12th Jaloos, which conferred upon him the post of Kanoongo. On the 17th Rabiul awwal, 6th year of the reign of His Imperial Majesty, he received a Sanad which conferred upon him the post of Ohddar of the Pergana Aurangabad.

(11) Bal Chand—received a Sanad from Mahmud Furrakh Siyar on the 2nd Rabiul awwal 17th year of His Majesty's reign, which conferred upon him the post of Chaudhury of the Pergana Ghorla, Sarkar Dekhri, appertaining to the Thana Rangamati.

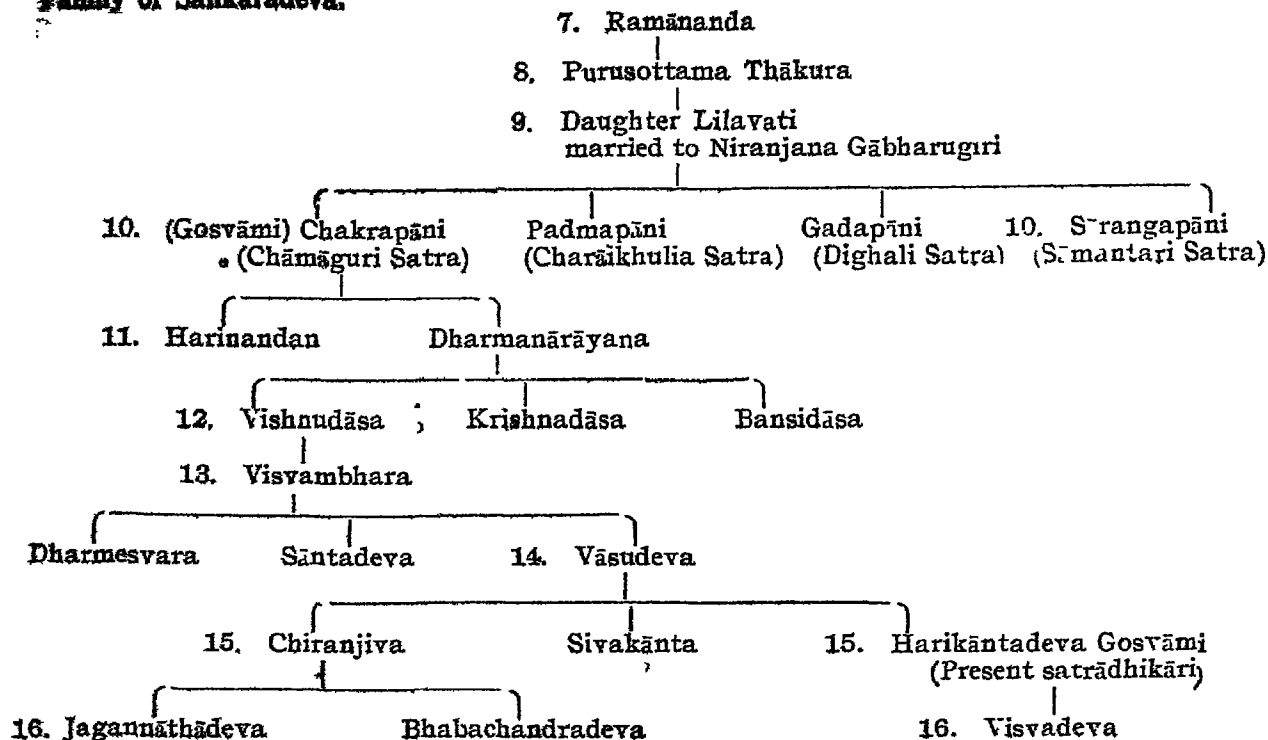
(12) Bul Chand—received the post of Kanoongo (6th Phalgun, 1205 B. S.) and that of Chowdhury of Perganas Ghorla, Jamra etc.

APPENDIX—1.

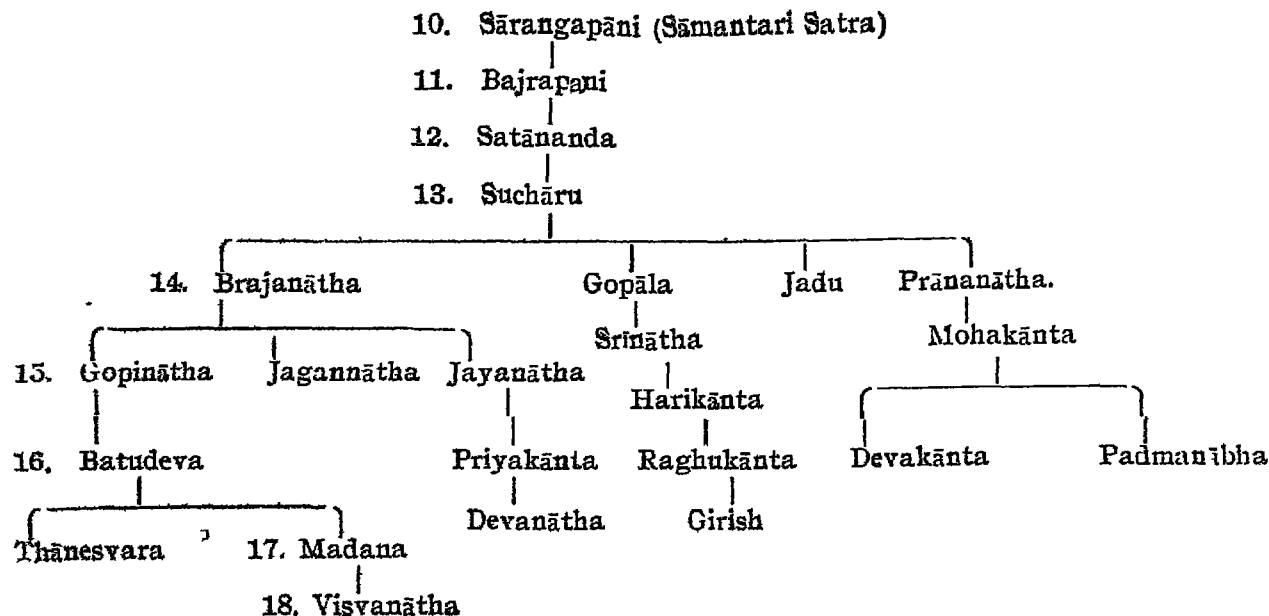
Family of Sironani Bhuiya Chandivara and Sankaradeva.



Family of Sankaradeva.

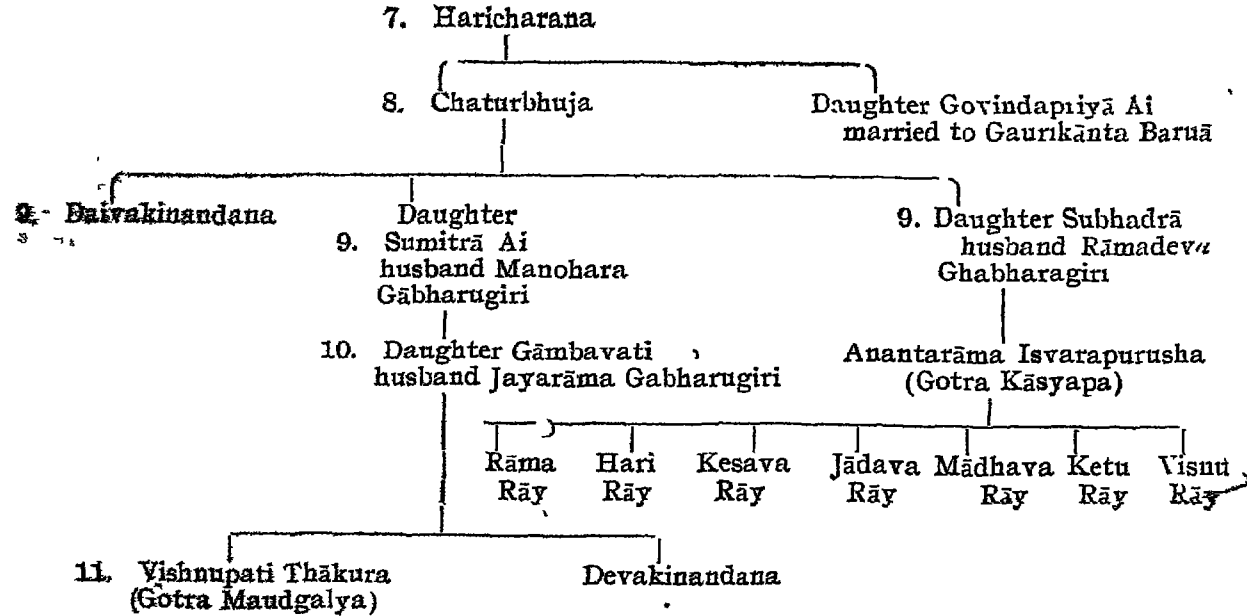


Family of Sankaradeva.



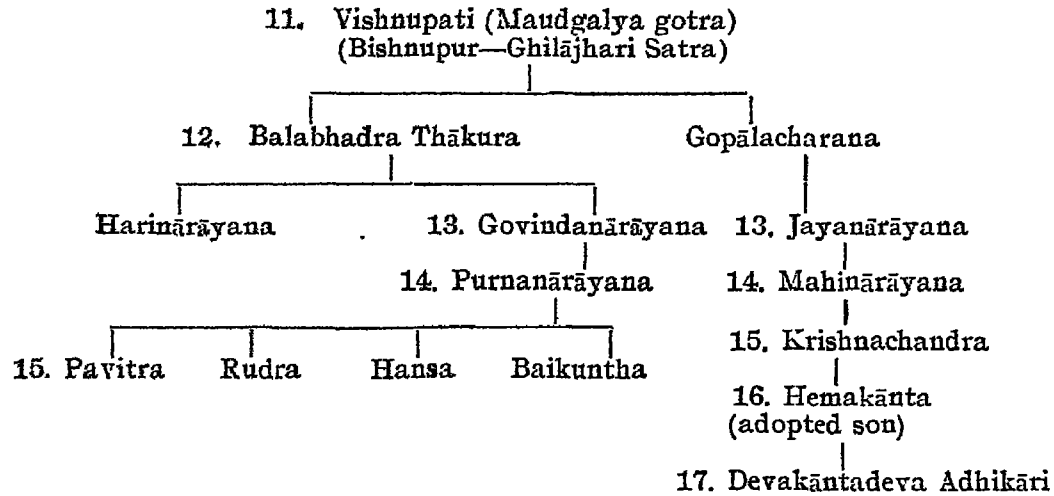
(
c
)

Family of Devakīdeva.

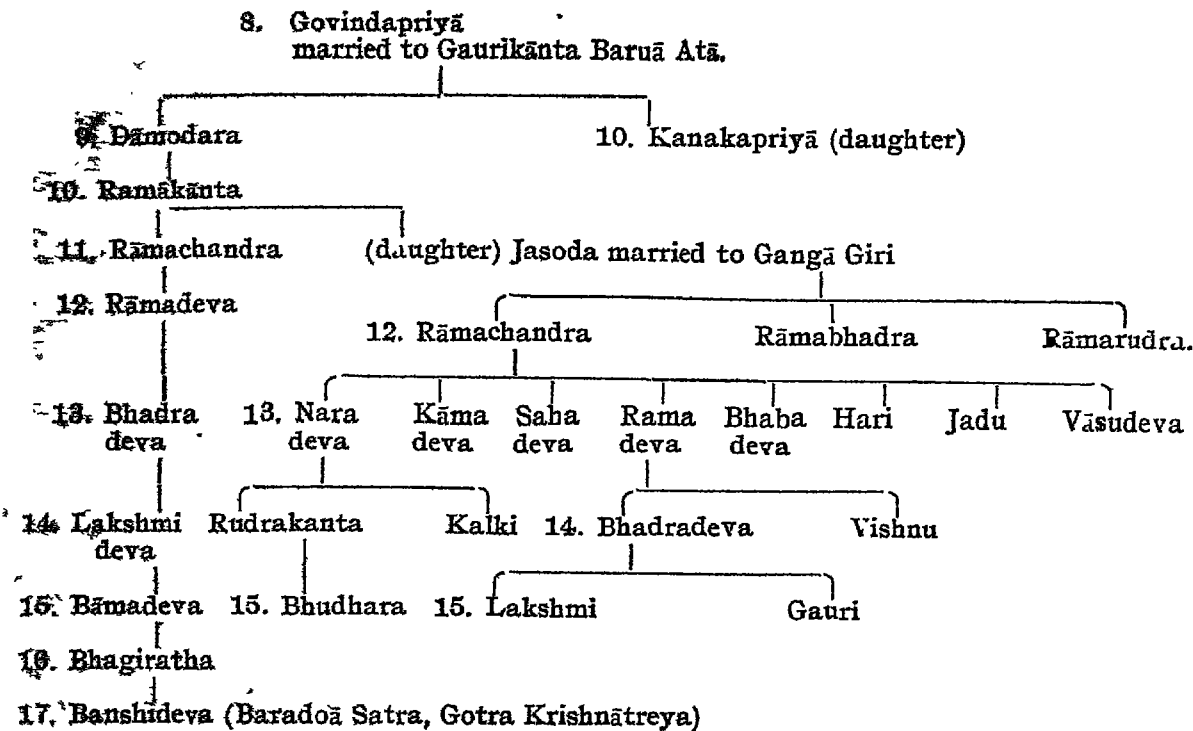


(4)

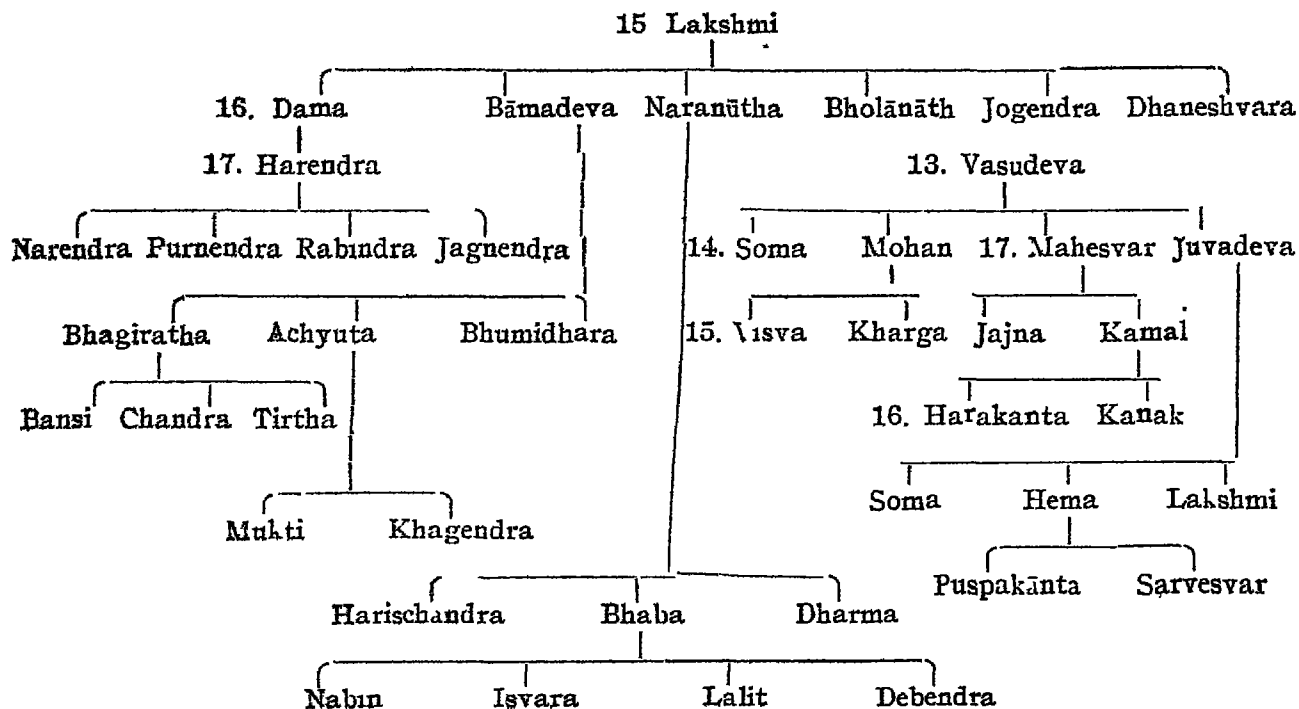
Family of Sankaradeva.



Family of Sankaradeva



Family of Sankaradeva.

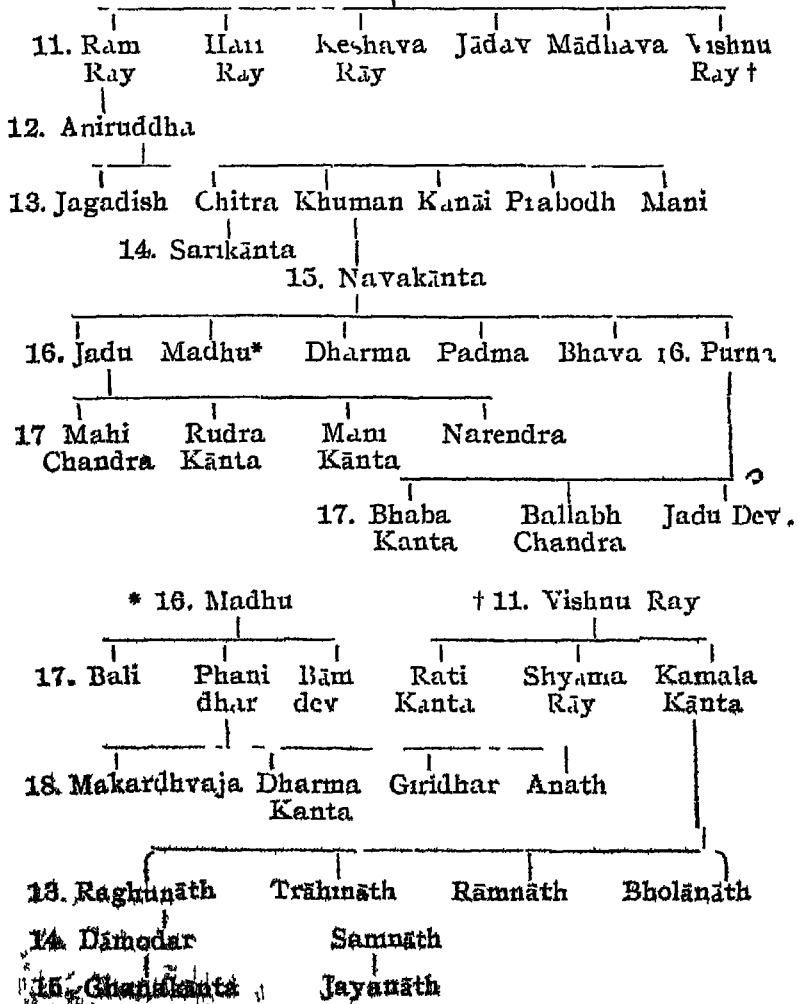


Family of Subhadra Ai, the great grand daughter of Sankaradeva.

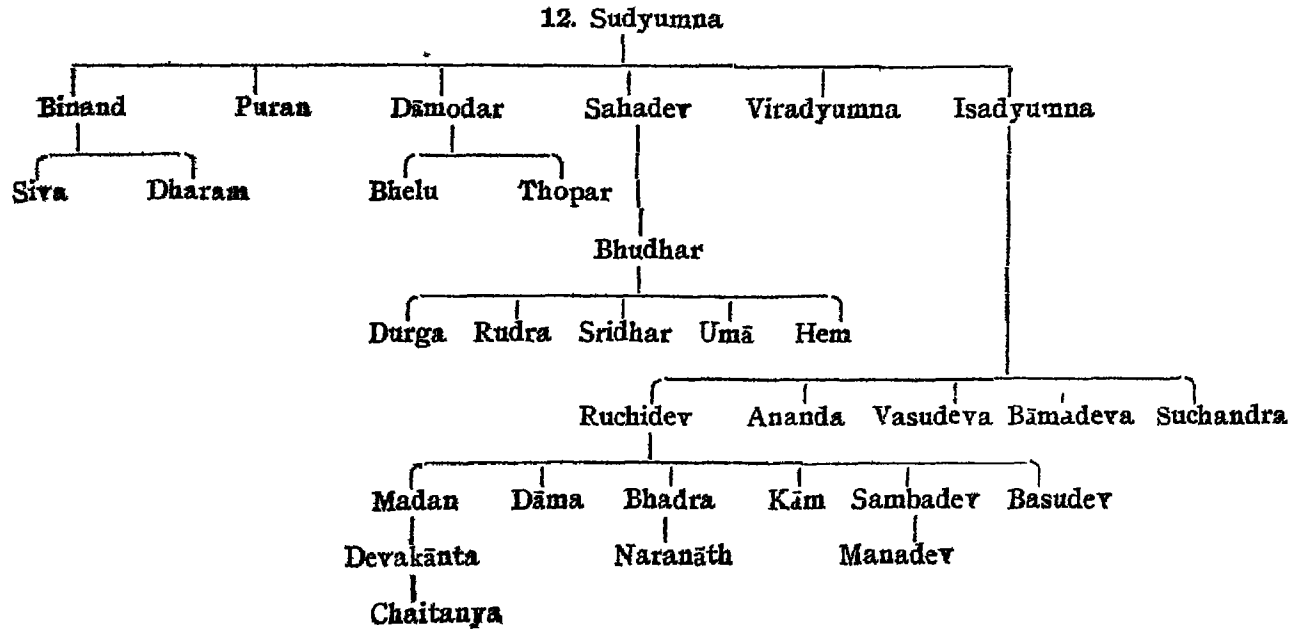
Rāmdeva Gābharu-gui (Kāsyapa gotra)

9. (Married Subhadriā, daughter of Chatubhuja Thakur and great grand daughter of Sankaradeva)

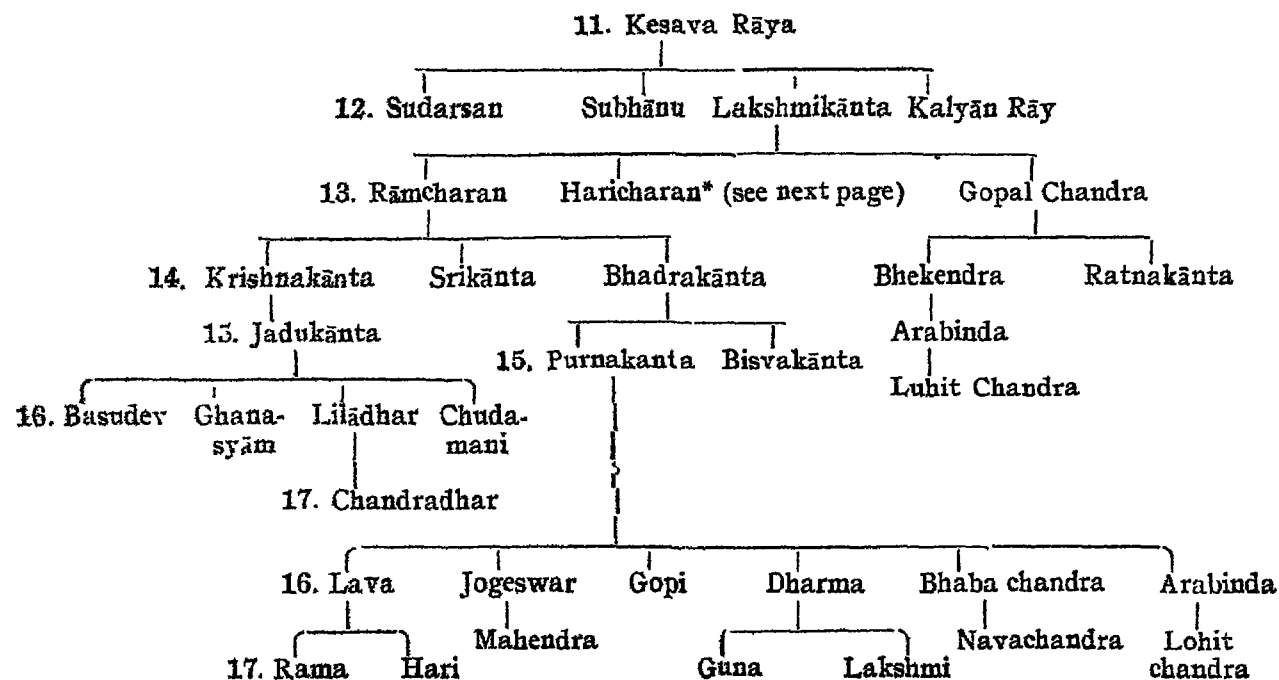
10. Ananta Rāya



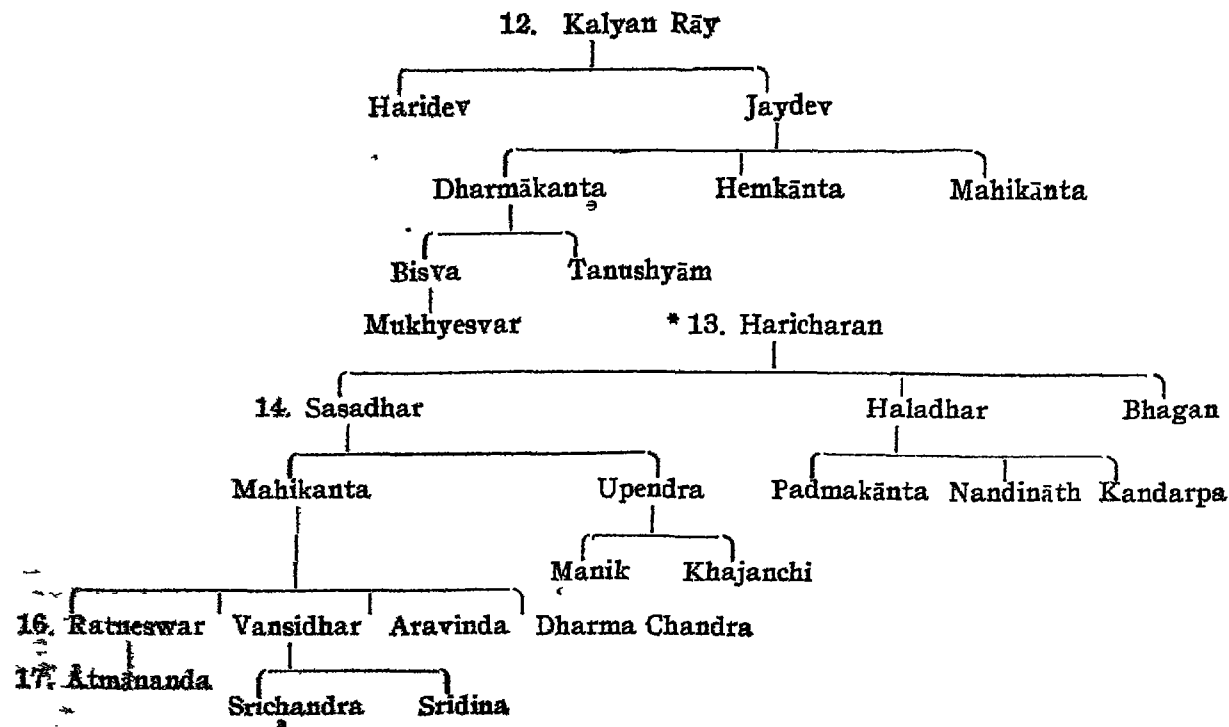
Family of Subhadra Ai, great-grand daughter of Sankaradeva.



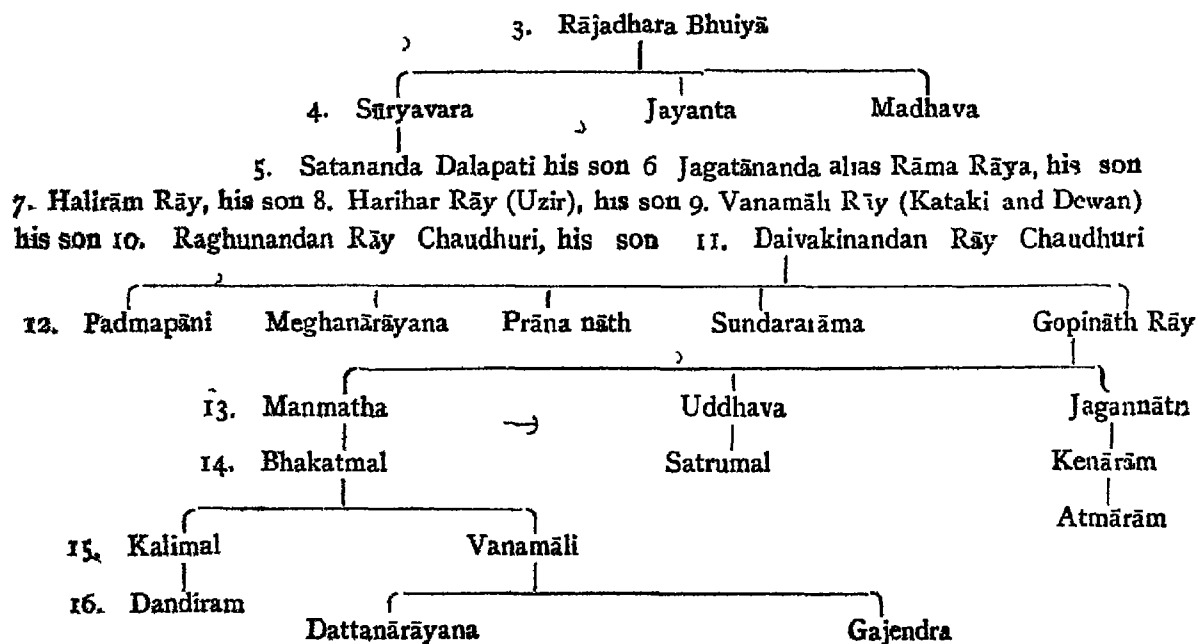
Family of Subhadra Ai, great-grand daughter of Sankaradeva.



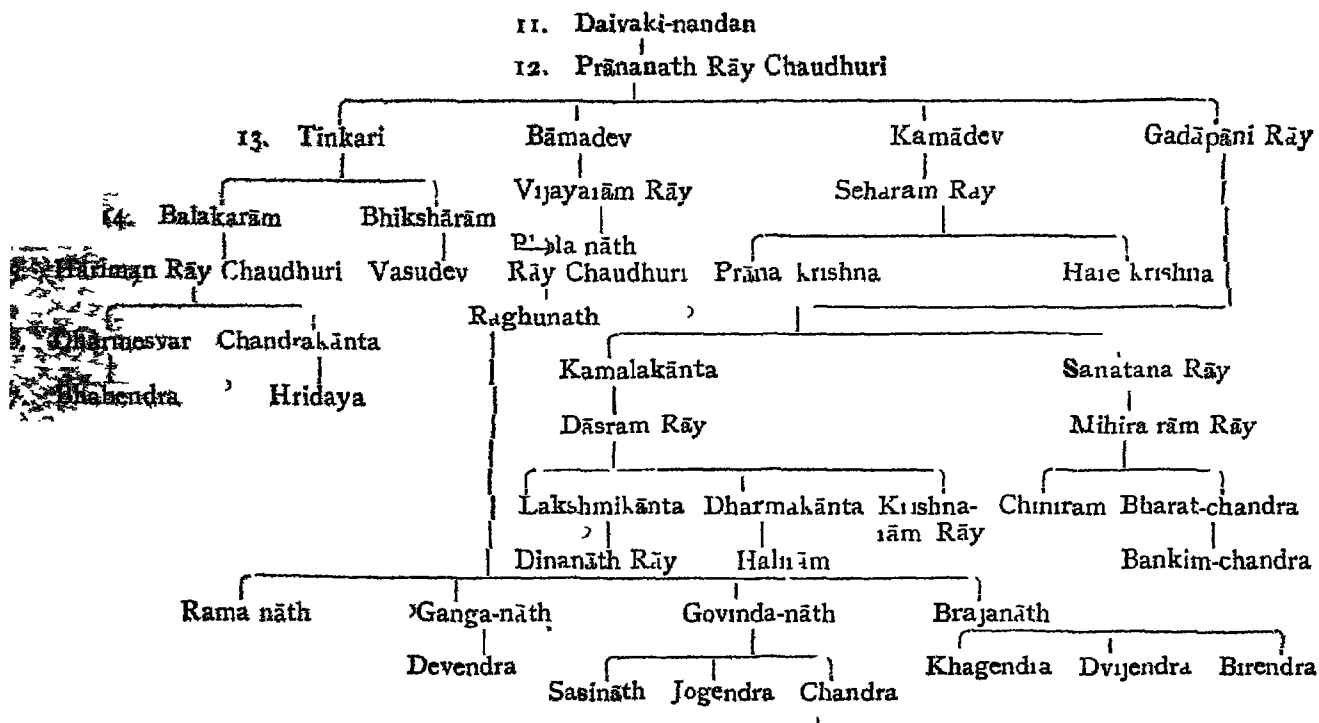
Family of Subhadra Ai, great-grand daughter of Sankaradeva.



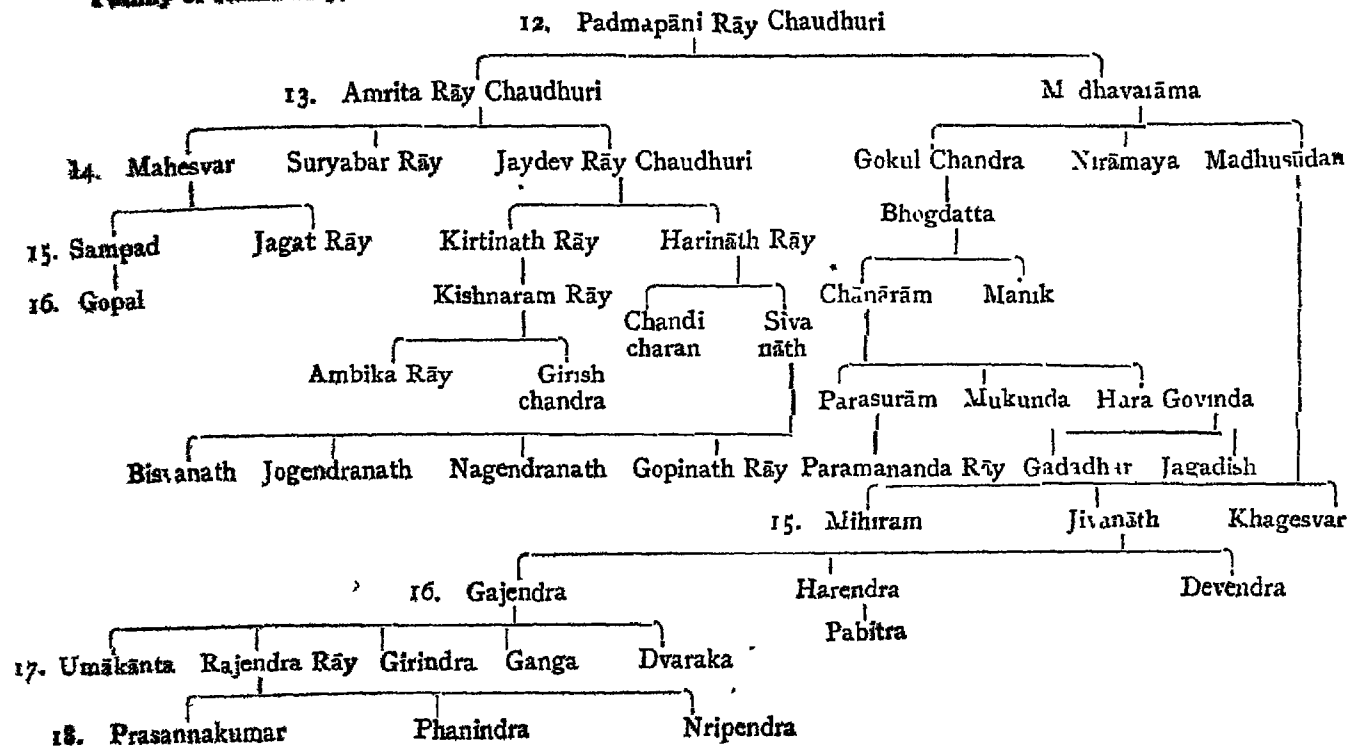
Family of Rama Raya, cousin of Sankaradeva.



11. Daivaki-nandan
12. Prānanath Rāy Chaudhuri

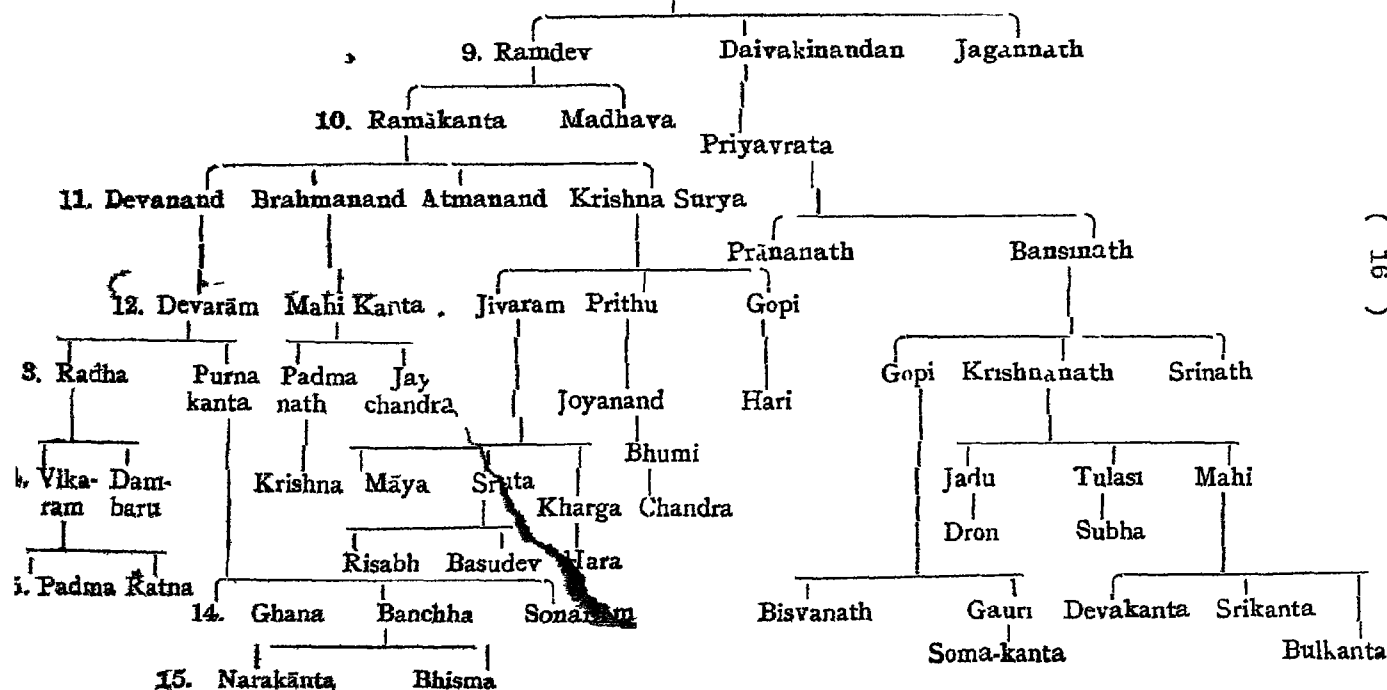


Family of Rama Ray, cousin of Sankaradeva.



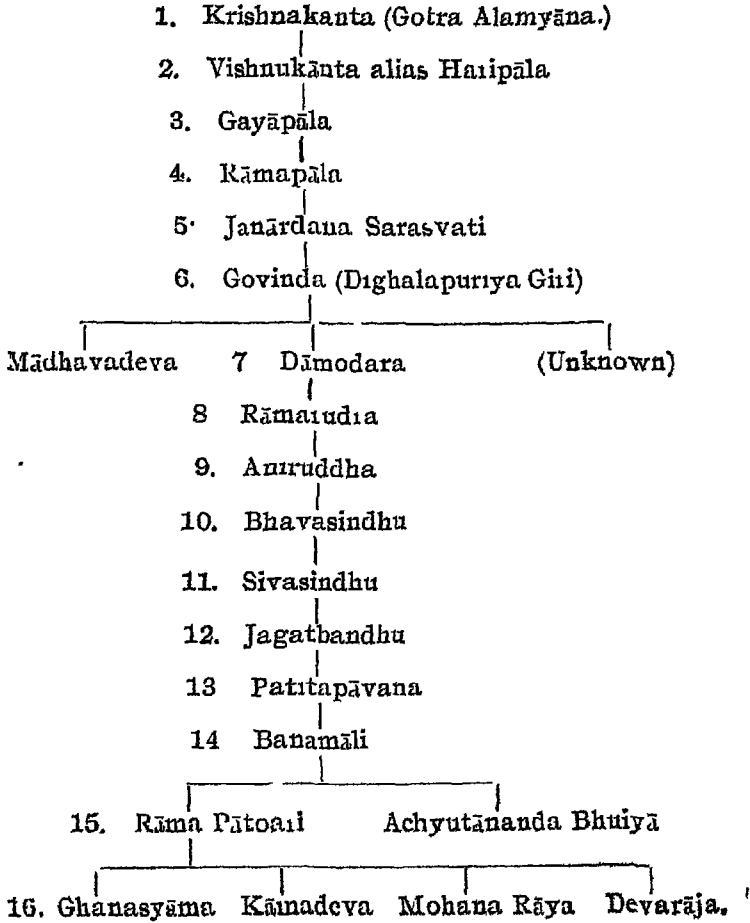
uncle of Madhava, grand-father's brother of Sankaradeva

4. Mādhava, his son 5. Ratikanta, his son 6. Ramchandra Dalapati or Hātin Dalai, his son
7. Anantaram, his son 8. Bhubanesvar

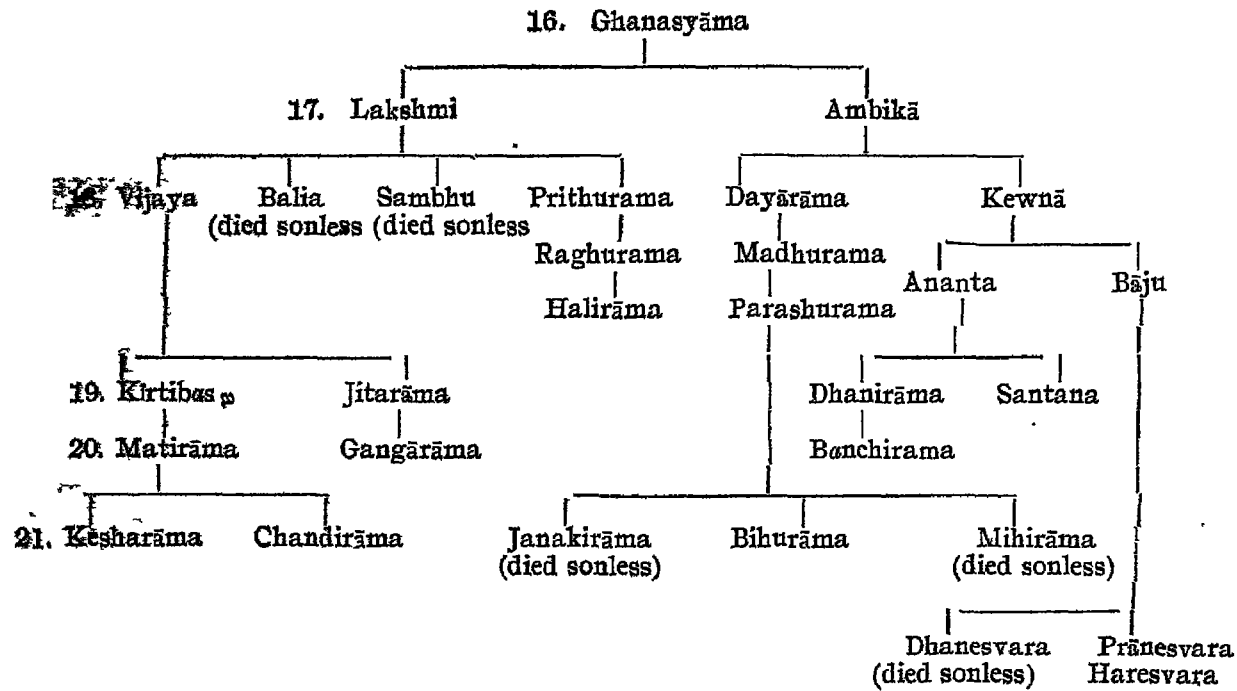


Family of Haripala Bhuiya.

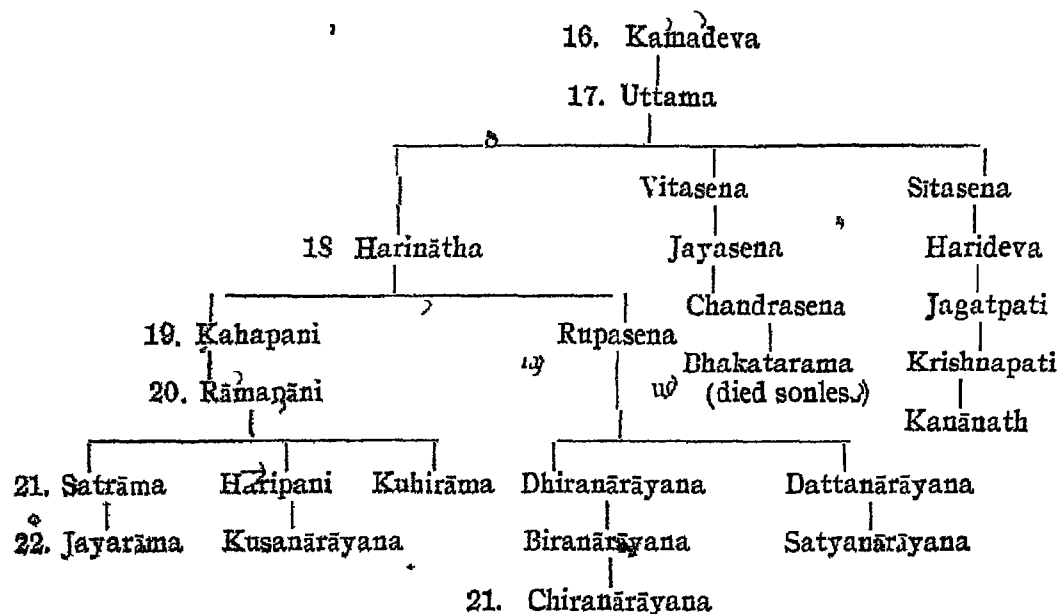
(Zilla Kamarup—Village Pakoa.)



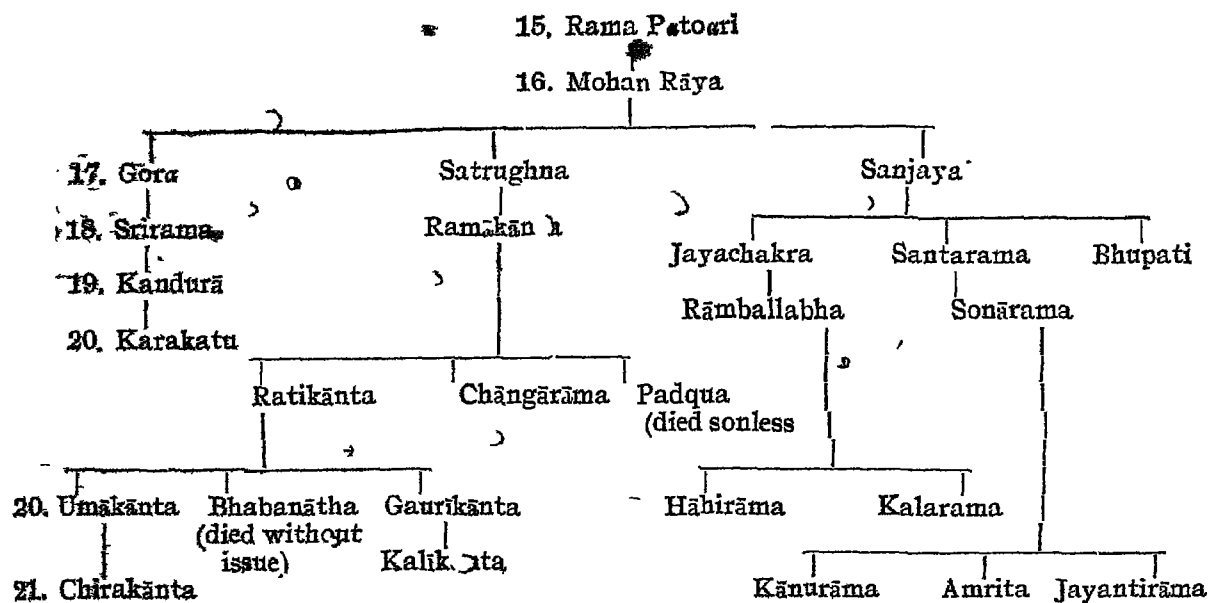
Family of Haripala Bhuiya.



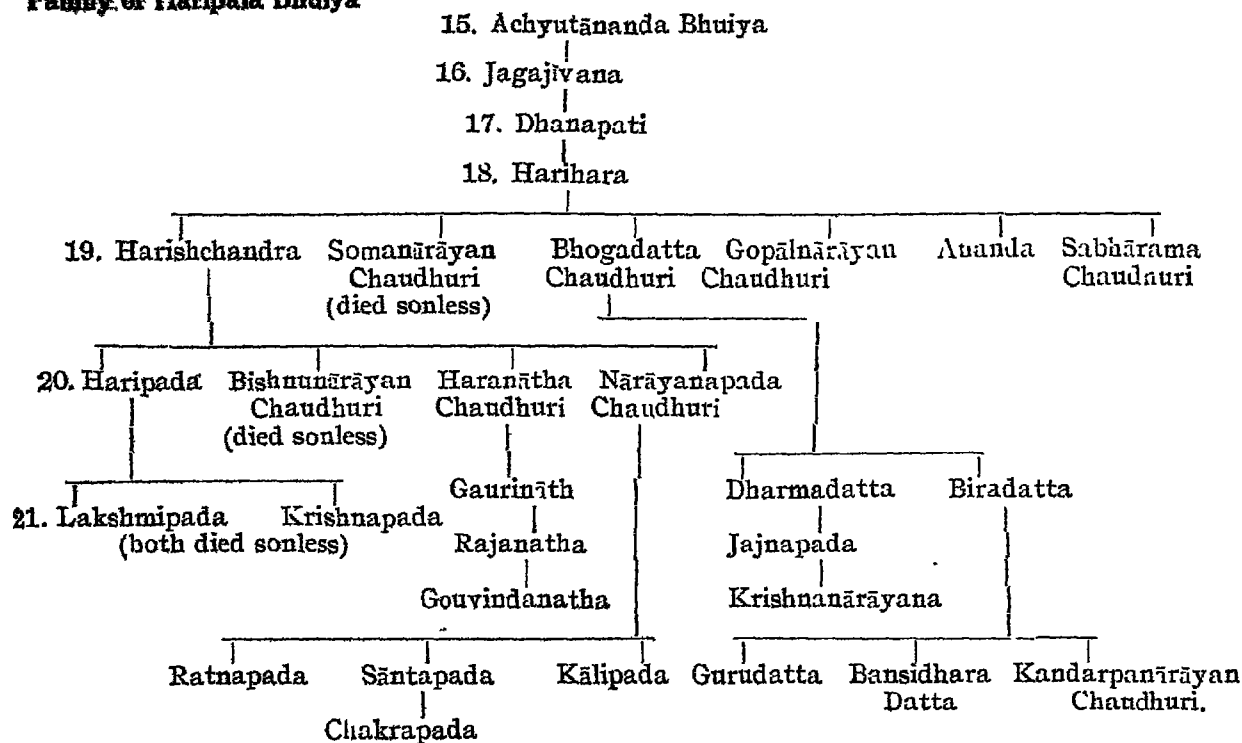
Family of Haripala Bhuiya



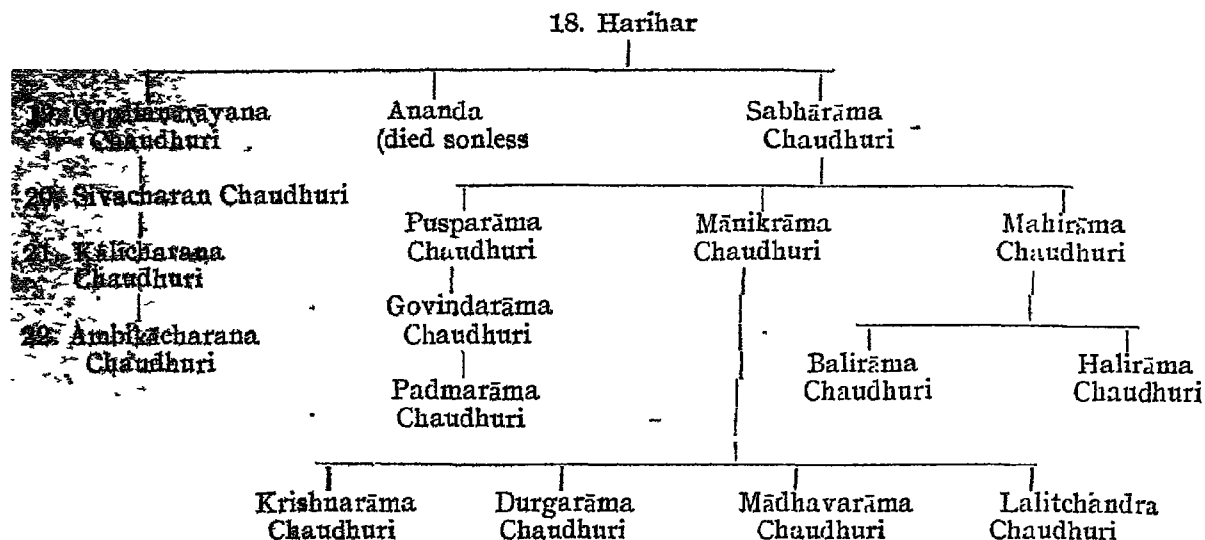
Family of Haripala Bhuiya.



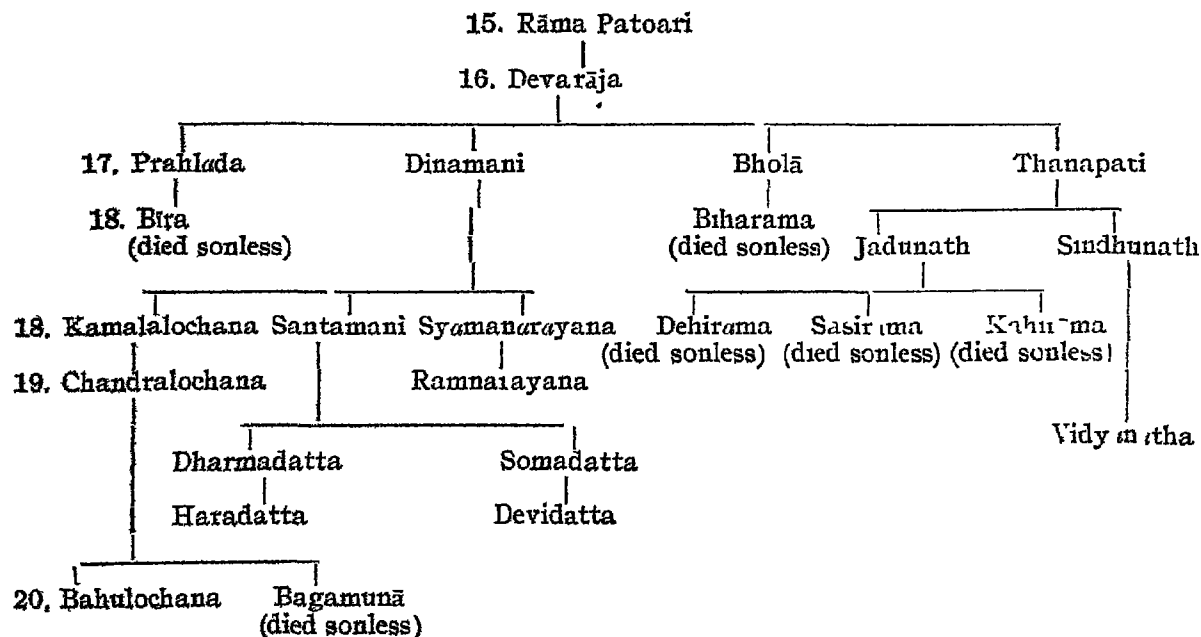
Family of Haripala Bhuiya



18. Harihar Bhuiya.



Family of Haripala Bhuiya.



Devanagari of **Rāma-charan Thakur**, (Kāsyapa gotra then Alamyāna gotra.)

Sahayya of **Bhuiya** his son 2. **Sripati** Pala or **Jayapala Bhuiya**

3 **Kripala**

4. **Ramapala**

5. **Bhupala**

6. **Gayapala Bhuiya** or
Rāmadasa Ata

7. **Mahatma Rāmacharana Thakuradeva** .
(**Sundaridia Satra**)

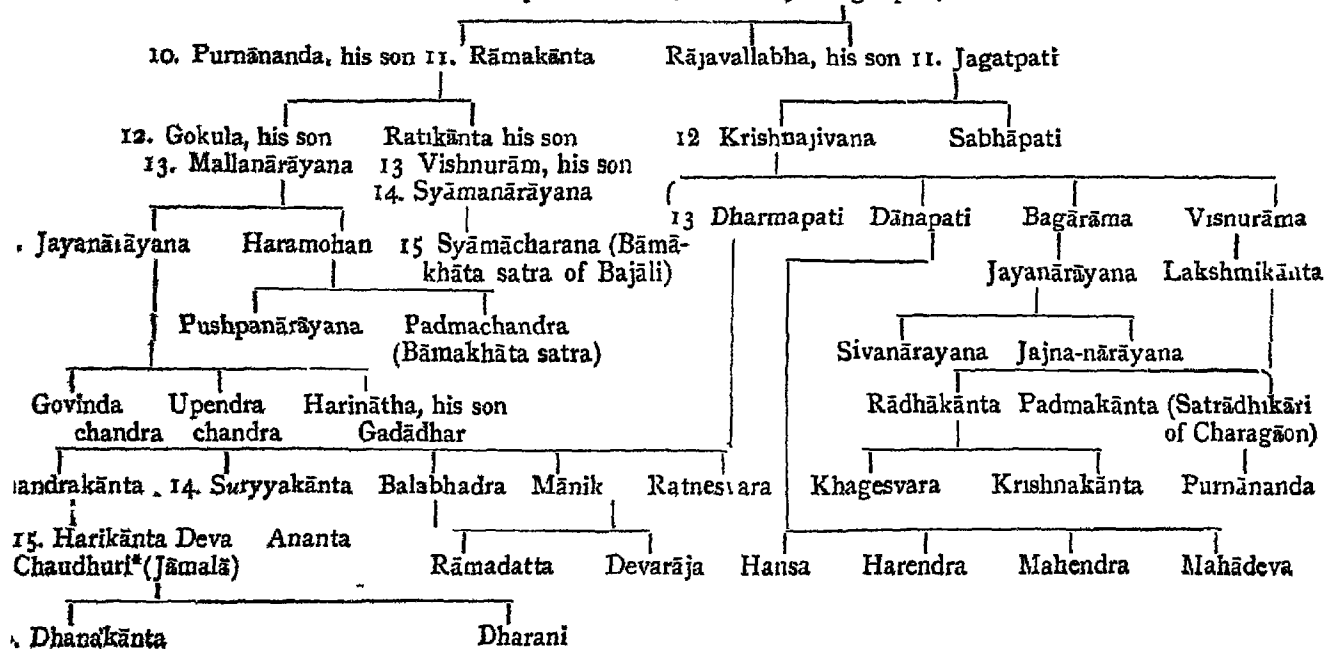
8. **Daityari Thakura** (Bamuria Satra)
8. **Tripurari Thakura** (Guagachha Satra) **Narahari** (Malocha Satra)

9. **Raghupati**
9 **Vikramadeva Thakura** (Sundari Satra)

He was the author of **Sankara-Madhava Chaitra** and **Dekabhai**. His dramatical work, **Irakha** (Lanti and Navasmbhala) is staged at **Barpeta**. He established setras at **Jamala** and **Tpala** (Goal, ara) on the southern bank of the **Brahmaputra**. He had many disciples.

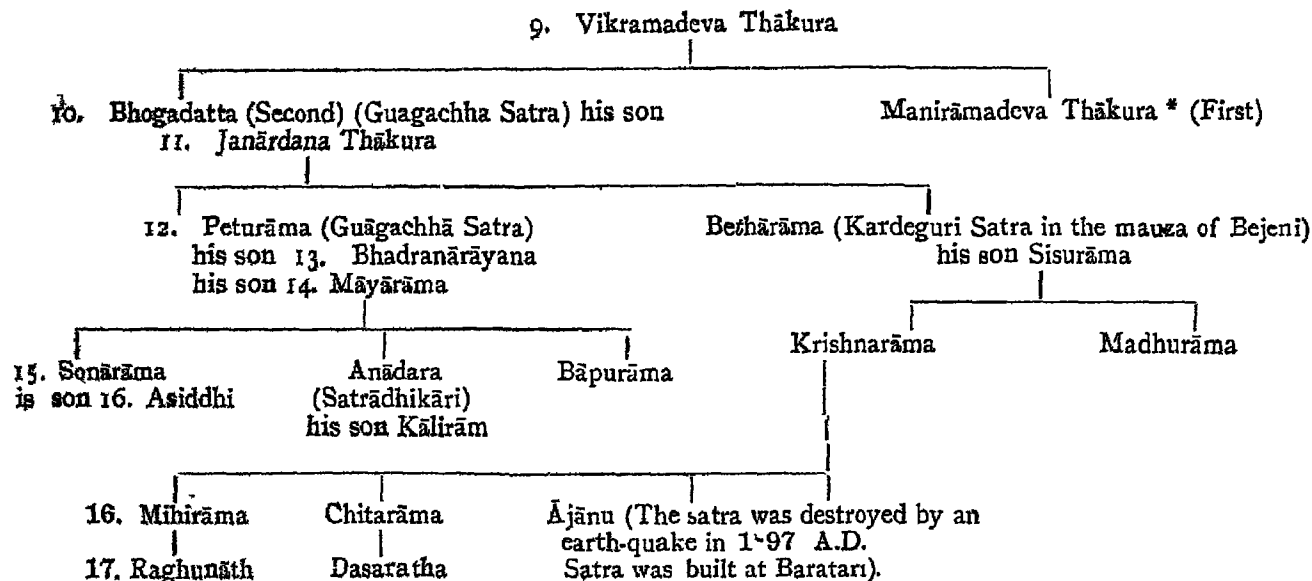
The family of Ramacharana Thakura.

8. Daityāri Thākura, his son 9 Raghupati, his son



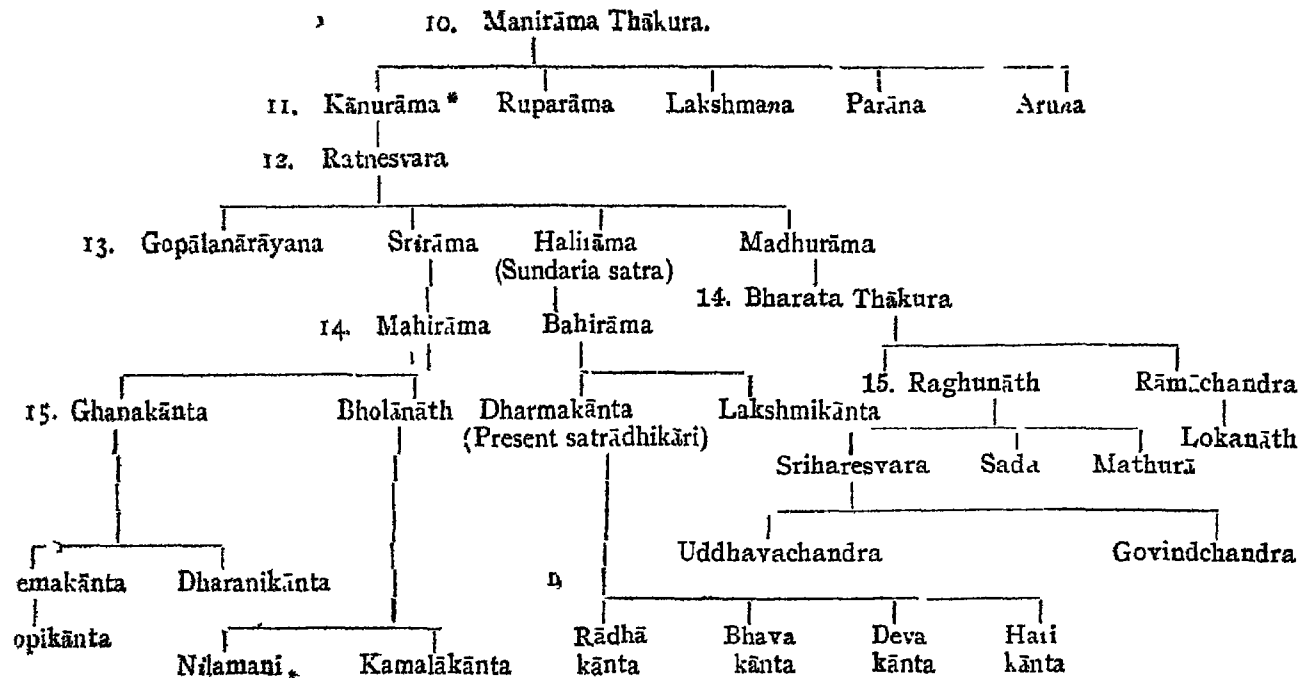
* He was the Satradhikari of Jamala. He initiated many men into Vaishnavism there.

Family of Ramacharana Thākura



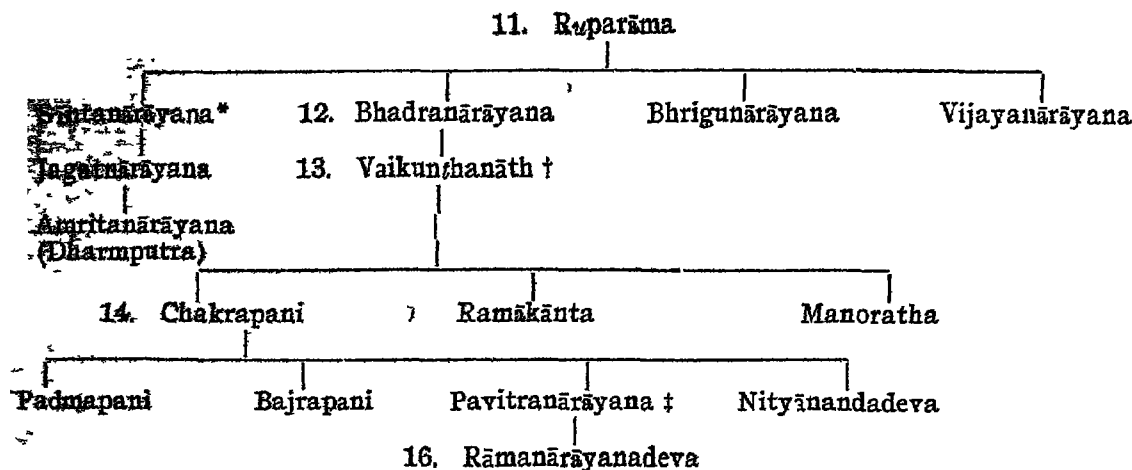
* He was the eldest son of Vikramadeva. He got the headship of his father's Satra. He also got grants of land from the king of Assam. Descendants are now enjoying the land granted by the king.

The Family of Ramacharana Thākura.



* Sivasinha, the king of Assam, gave him 90 pacca mati of land by means of a copper-plate grant. He also gave him a large number of followers. The descendants of his brother's son are now enjoying the property.

The Family of Ramacharana Thakura.

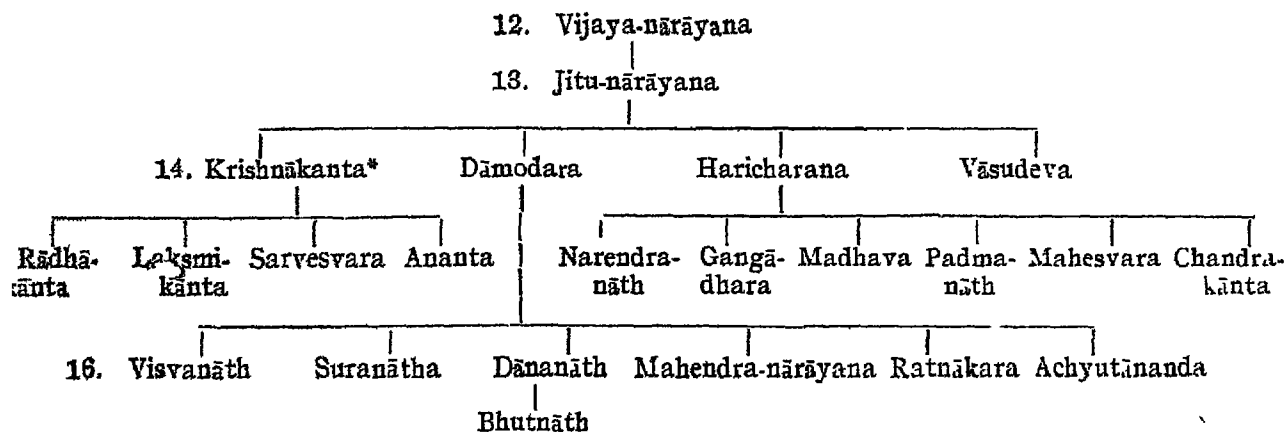


He was an erudite scholar and a man of calm temperament. Summoned by the Ahom king, he went to his court and solved a question which none there could solve. So he became a favourite of the king. He established a number of *Satras* near Garhgaon, the capital of the Ahom king. He had a large number of followers. He established a *Satra* at Naharguri and made a man named Baduli the *Medhi* of it. He made new rules for the management of the *Satra* of Sundardia. That rules are still being followed.

He was a great scholar. Whatever he said was sure to come to pass. He preached Vaishnavism through out the country and established *Satras* in several places of Assam. Many men became his followers.

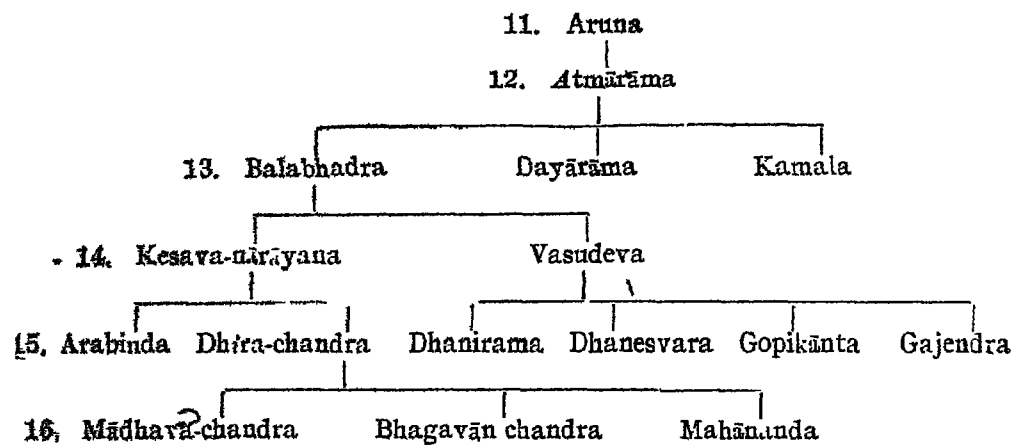
He got the post of the *Deka Adhikari* of Sundari *Satra* in 1813 B. S. on the 16th *Jyaistha*.

The Family of Ramacharana Thakura.

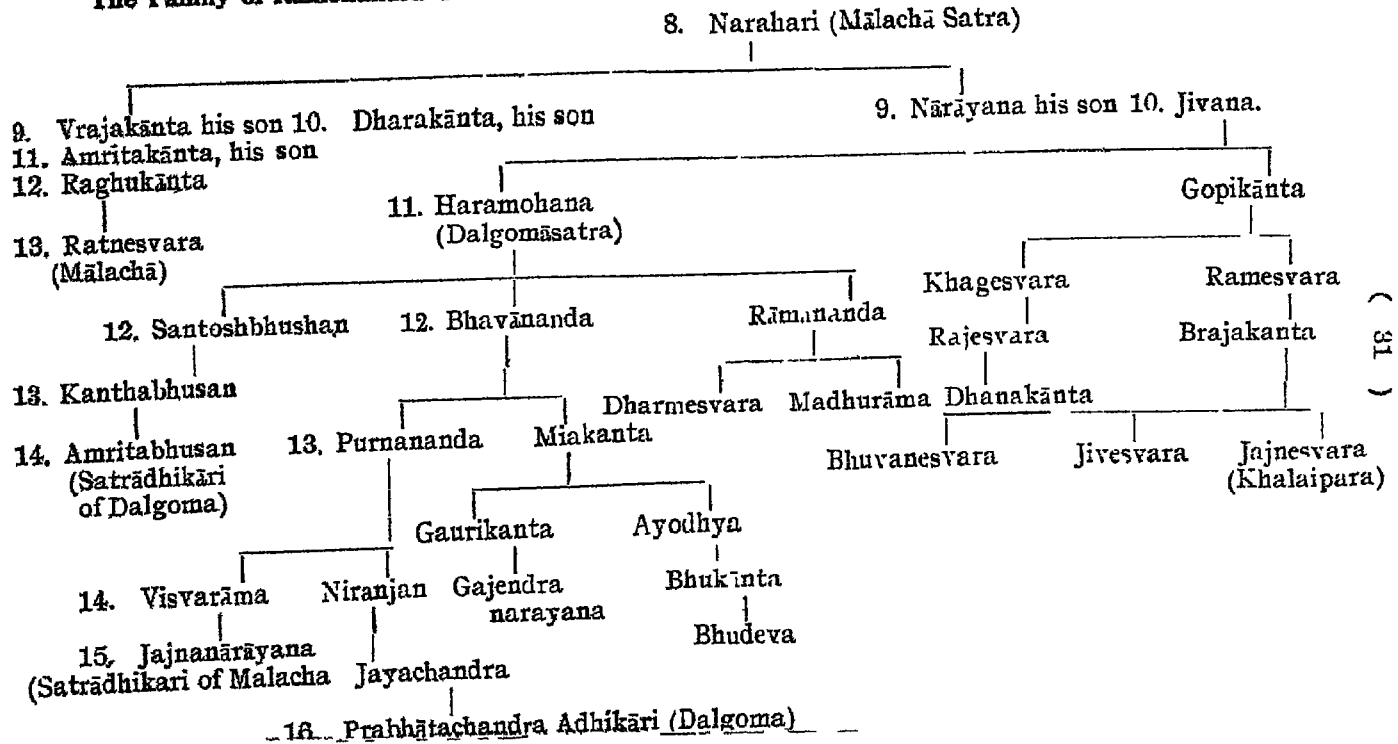


* They were all learned men. Haricharana Thakura established the satra of Sundarīthupī in the mauza of Chacheria in Tejpur District. He converted many Sakias into Vaishnavism.

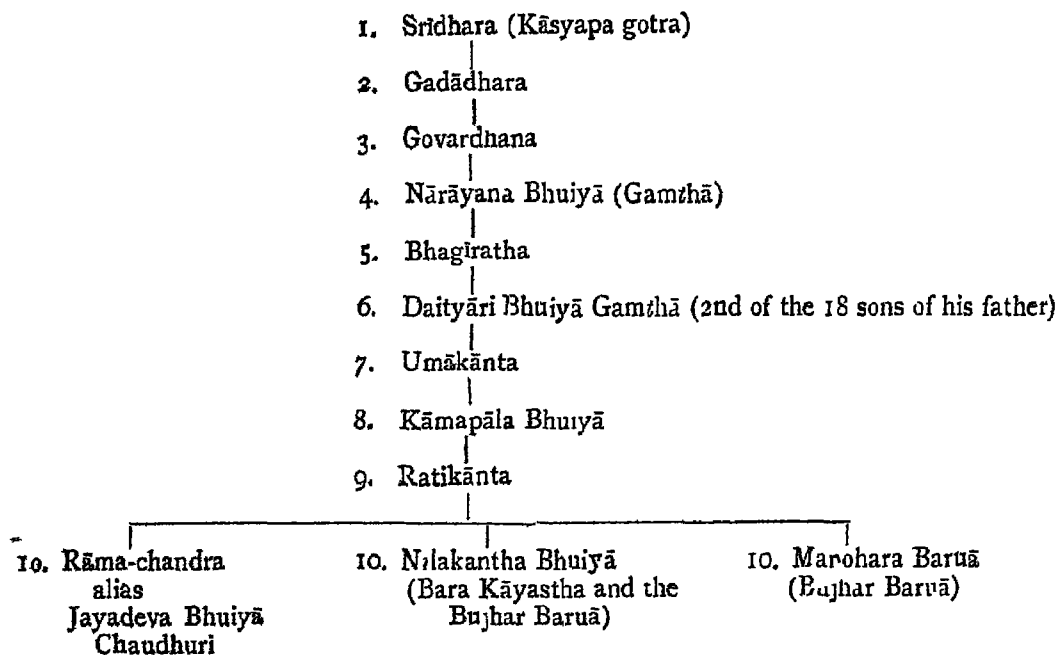
The family of Kāśhācharāna Inakura.



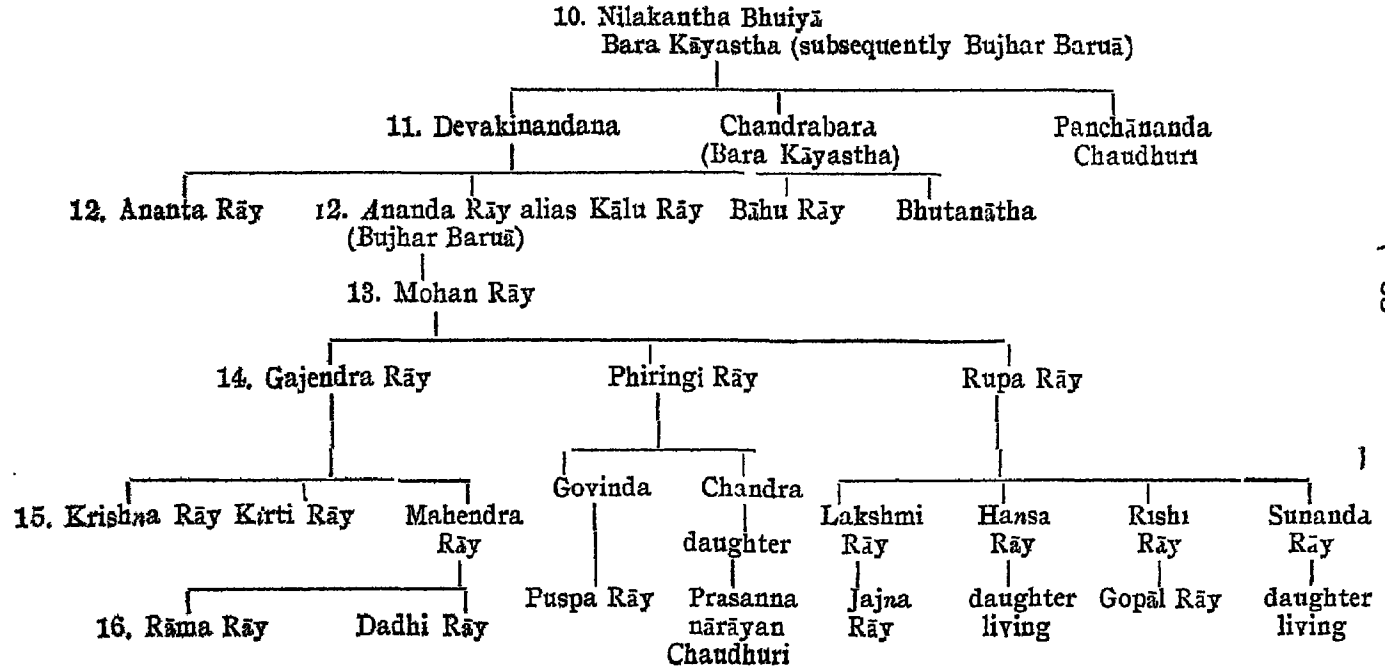
The Family of Ramchandra Thakura-



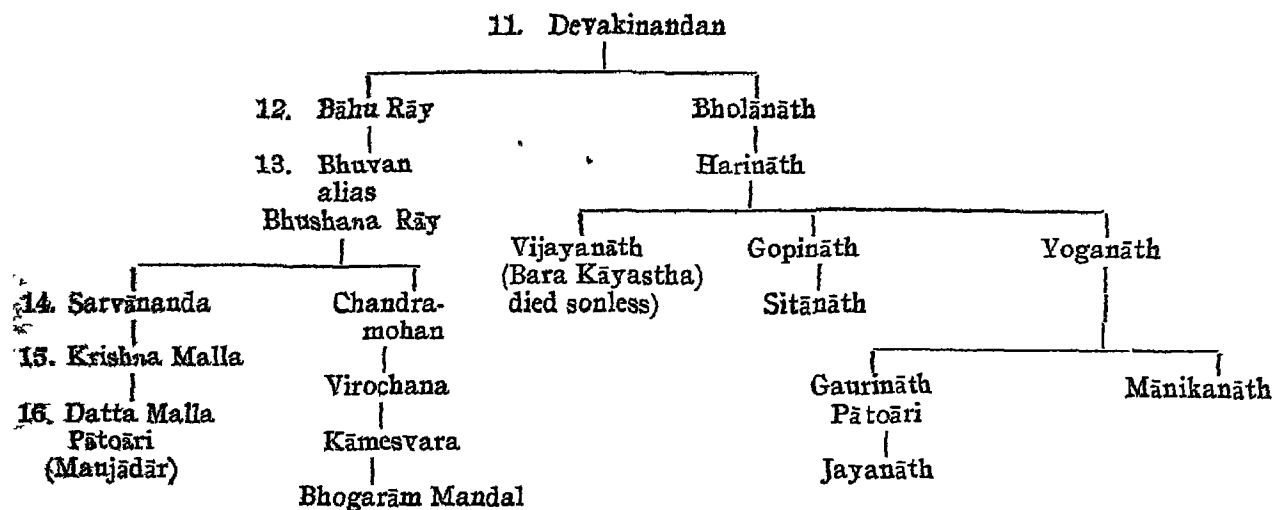
The family of Sridhar Bhuiya and Narayana Gamtha.



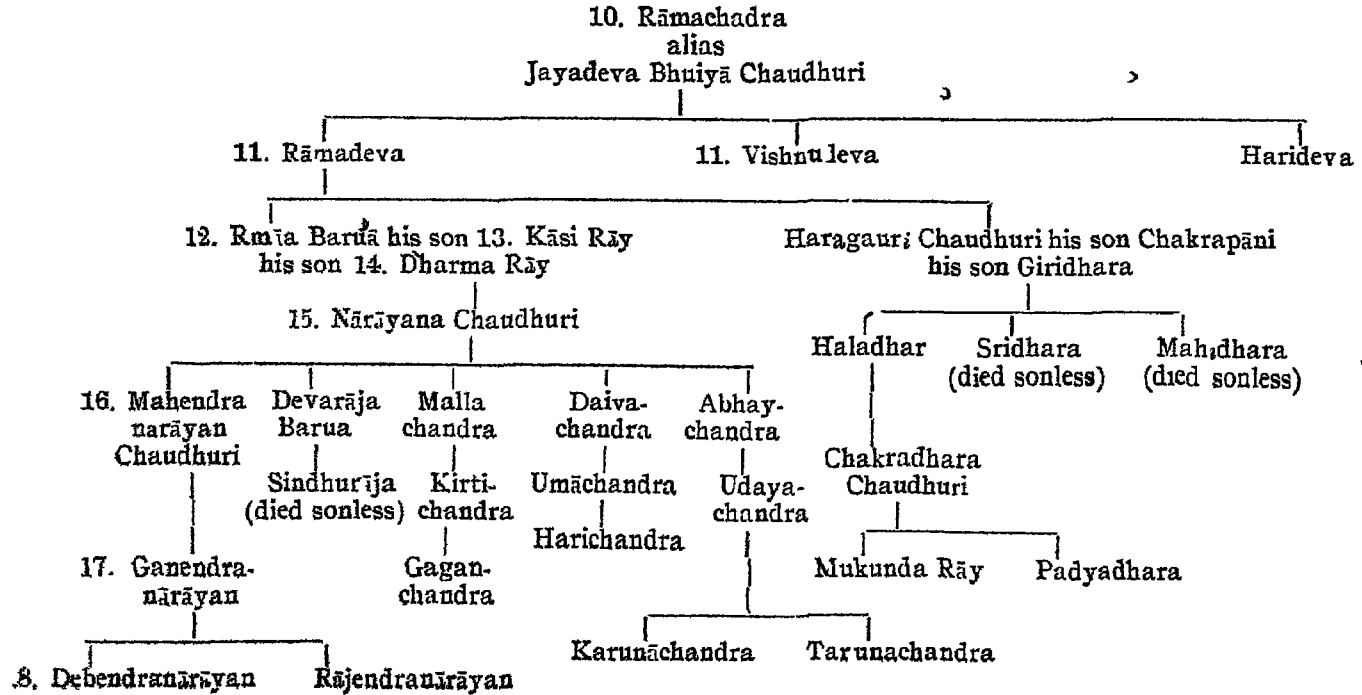
Family of Narayana Gamtha



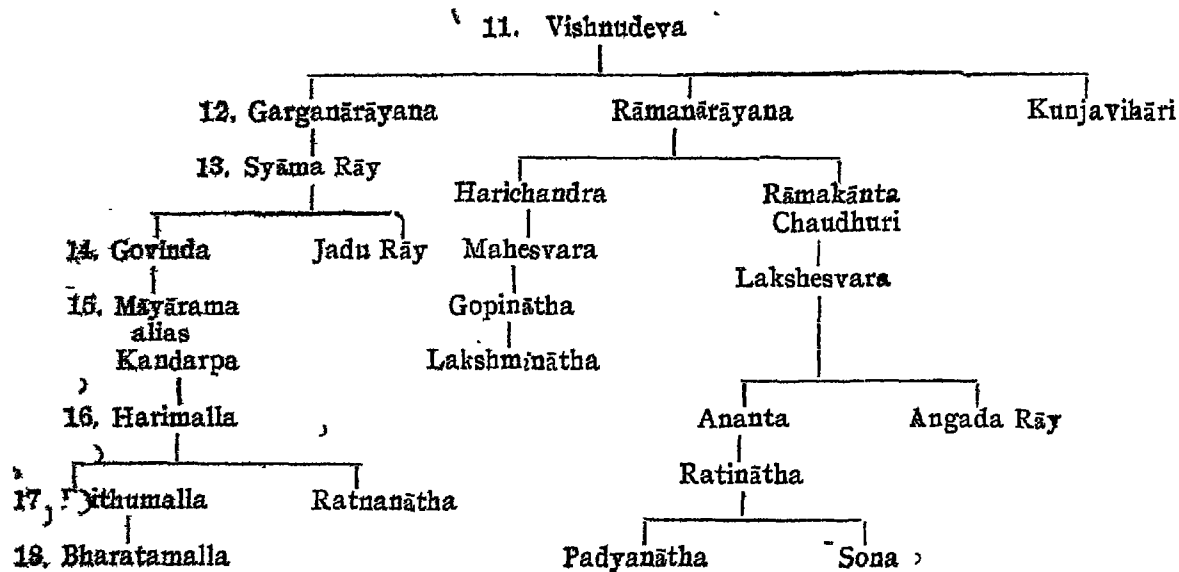
Family of Narayana Gamtha.



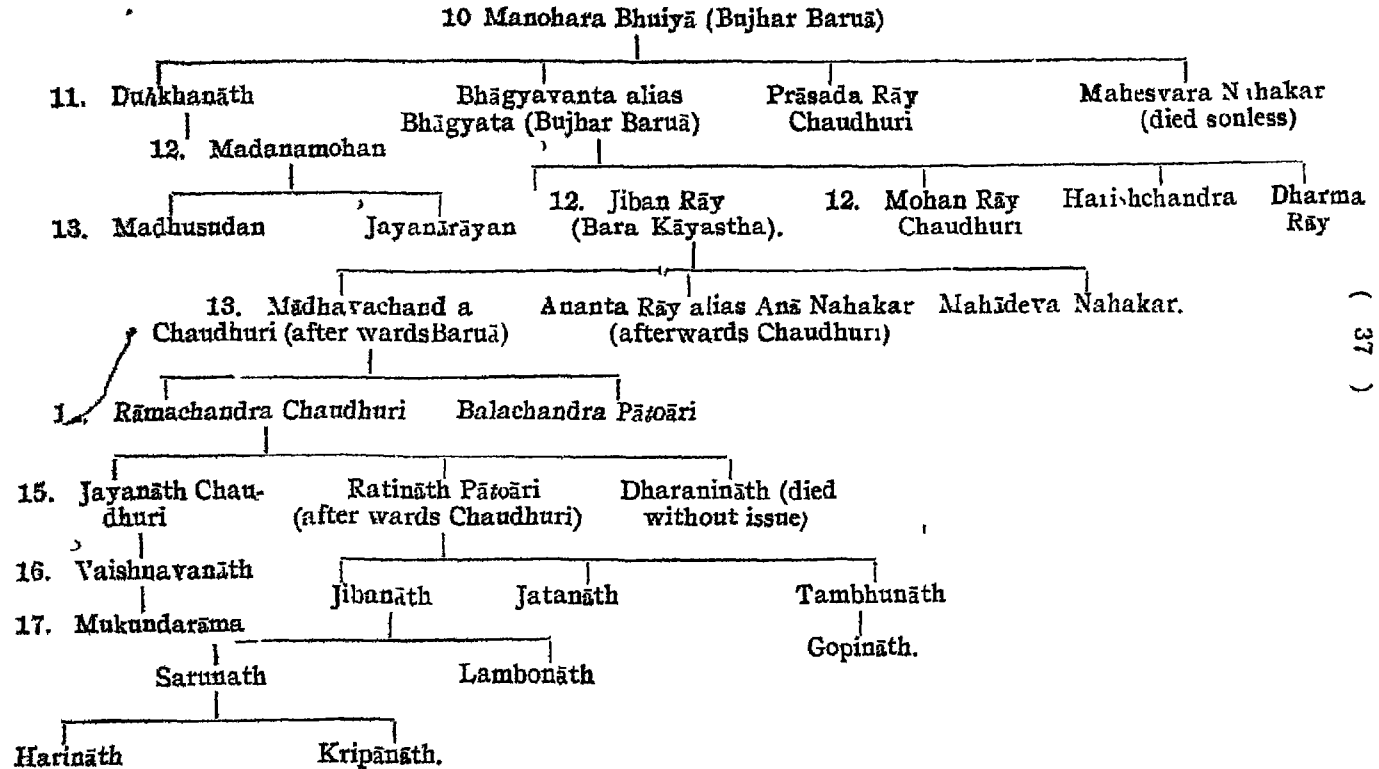
Family of Narayana Gamtha.



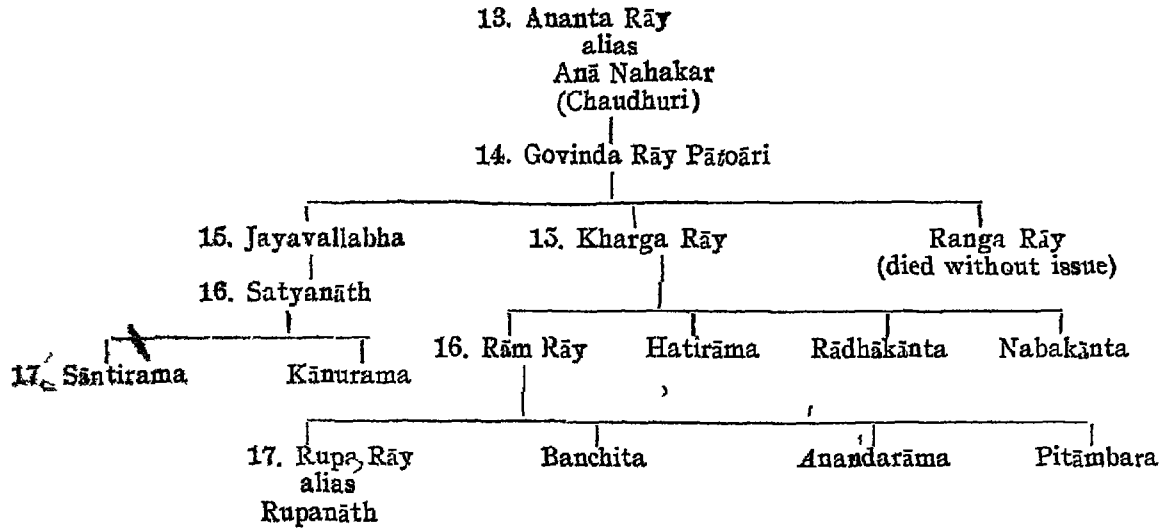
Family of Narayana Gamtha.



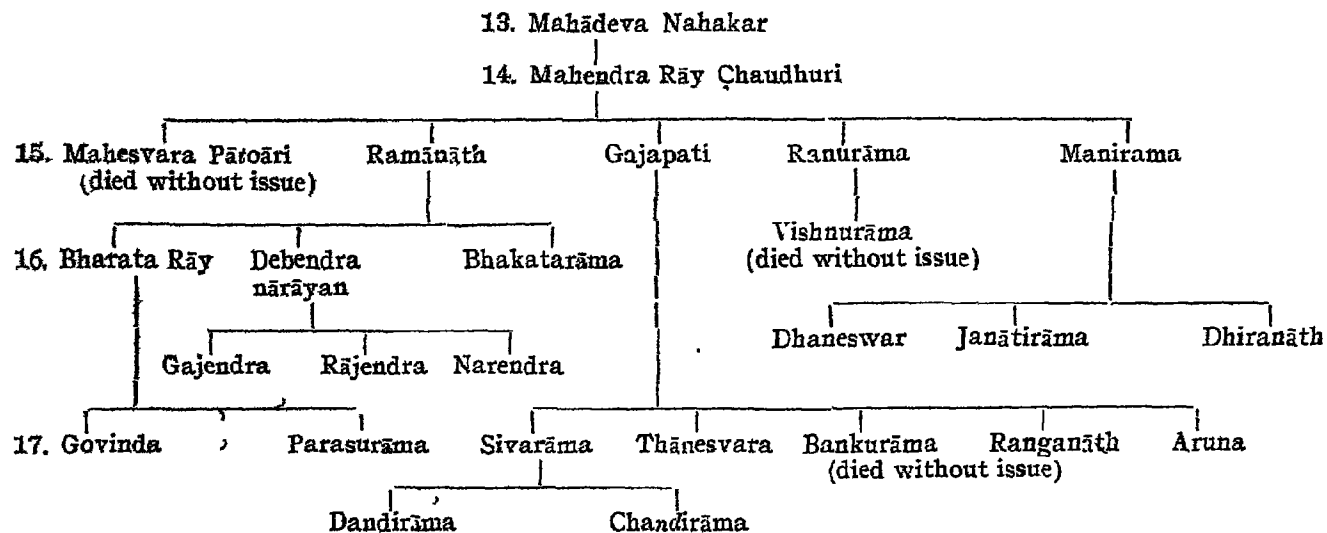
The family of Narayana Gamtha.



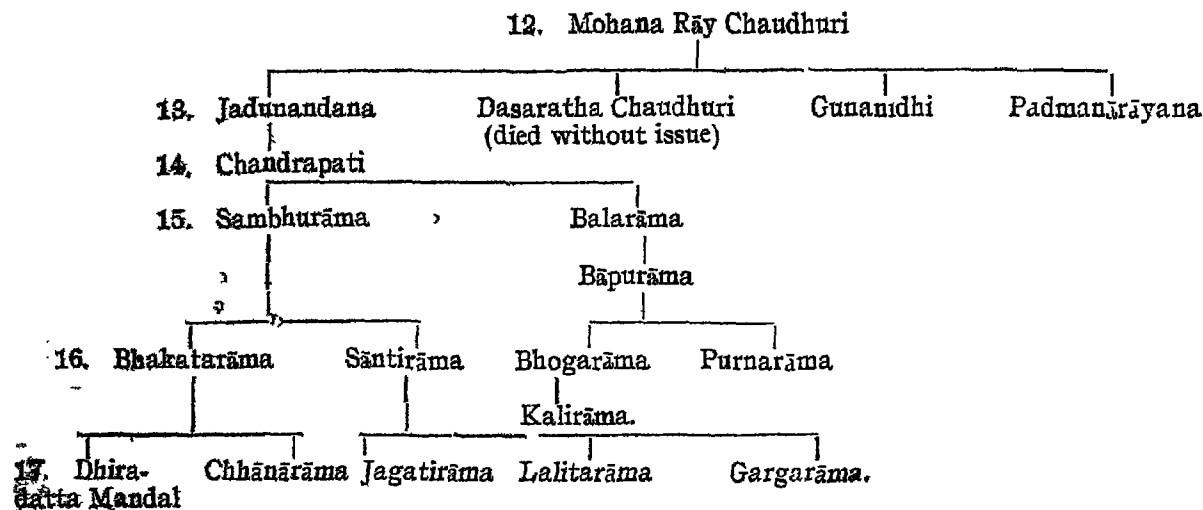
Family of Narayana Gamtha.



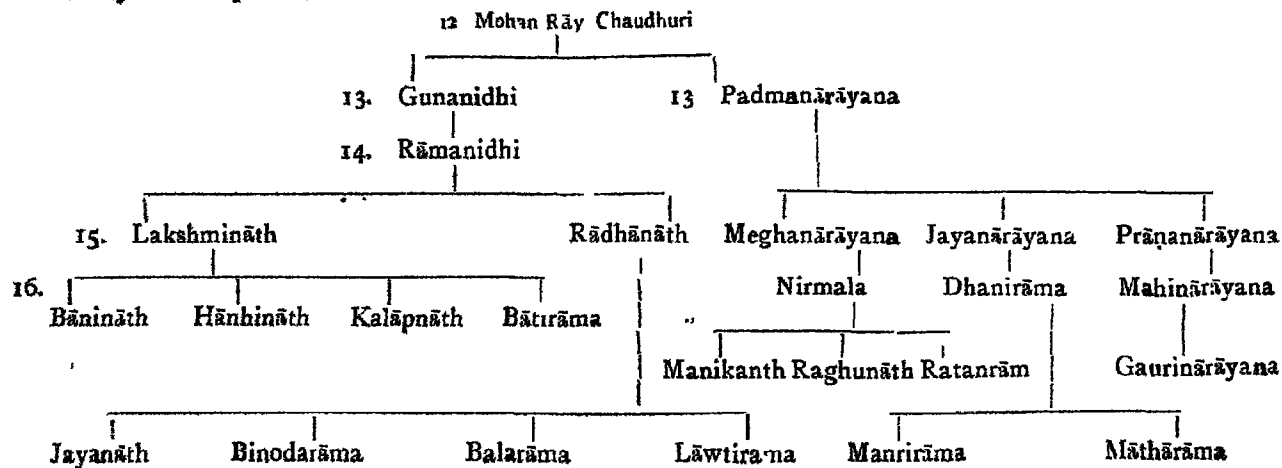
Family of N. rayana Gamtha.



Family of Narayana Gamtha.



Family of Narayana Gamtha



Family of Narayana Gamtha

11. Prasāda Rāy Chaudhuri

12. Rādhāvallabha

Purusottama Chaudhuri

13. Kamala-lochana

alias

Karunāmaya Nahakar
(afterwards Chaudhuri)

14. Padmapāni

Titurāma

Gadāpani.

Bijarāma Pātoāri

Rāmapāni
alias Chhāyārāma

15. Dharmapati Krishnavallabha

16. Narapati

Hānesvara

Dayārāma

Kirtirāma

Anantarāma
(died without
issue)

Bhaktirāma
(died without
issue).

Durgarama

Sādhirāma
(died without issue)

17. Dadhirāma Harirāma
(died without issue)

Chinirāma

Madhava
rāma

Halirāma

Gerārāma
(died without issue)

Lāuserāma

18. Hauserāma Buddhirāma Nidhirāma

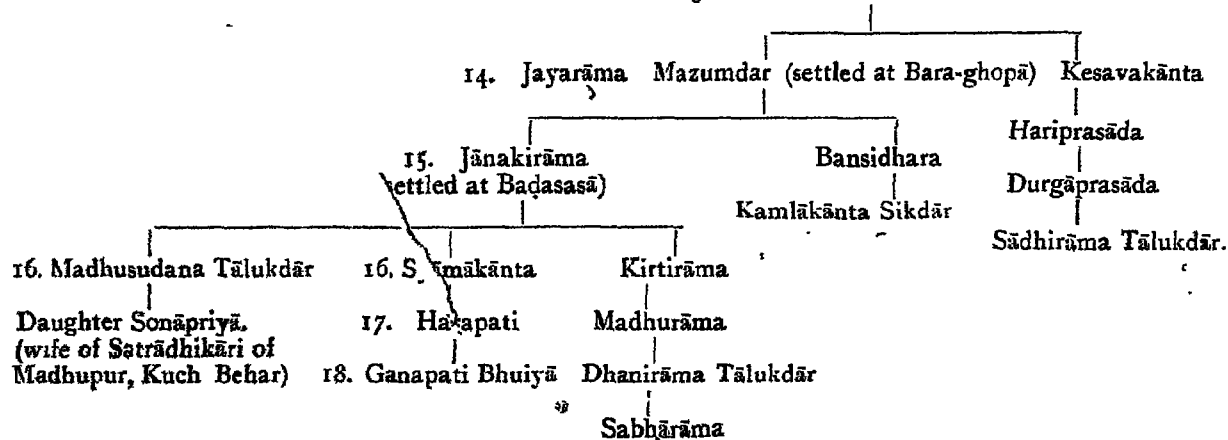
Rādhārāma

Jagatirāma

Family of Sripati Sarasvati

(Subdivision Barpeta—Village Baḍasasā.)

1. Sripati Sarasvati (Gautama gotra) his son 2. Lakshmipati Bhuiyā, his son 3. Jagannāth, his son
4. Prānakrishna (settled at Lohāguri), his son 5. Padmanābha, his son 6. Umāpati his son 7.
Raghupati*, his son 8. Jadupati, his son 9. Ghanasyāma, his son 10. Krishnānanda
Rāy, his son 11. Dayānanda Rāy, his son 12. Jayarāma Bara Kākati (Mazumdar) his son
13. Kāhirāma Sikkār



(43)

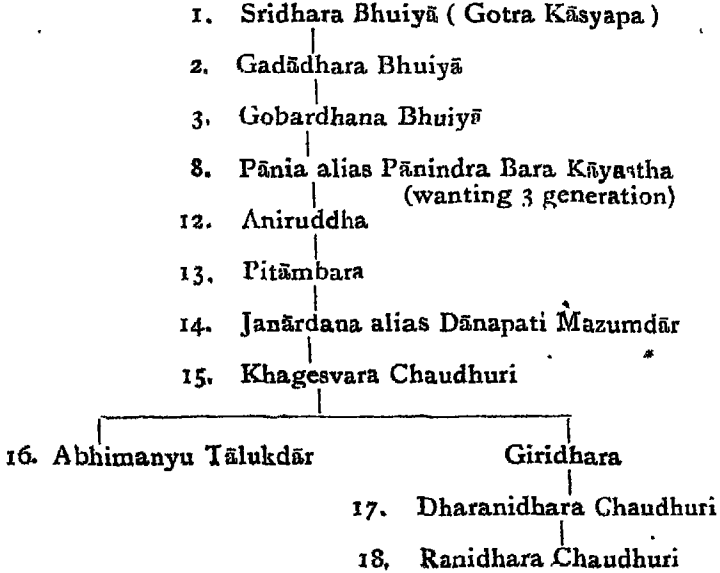
* Raghupati was a desciple of Bhattadeva, who was a foremost desciple of Damodar Deva. Raghupati helped Akbar's general and was made Bhuiya or Zamindar of his motherland.

† Jayrama got title of Mazumdar and 200 *para* of rent free land at Lohaguri.

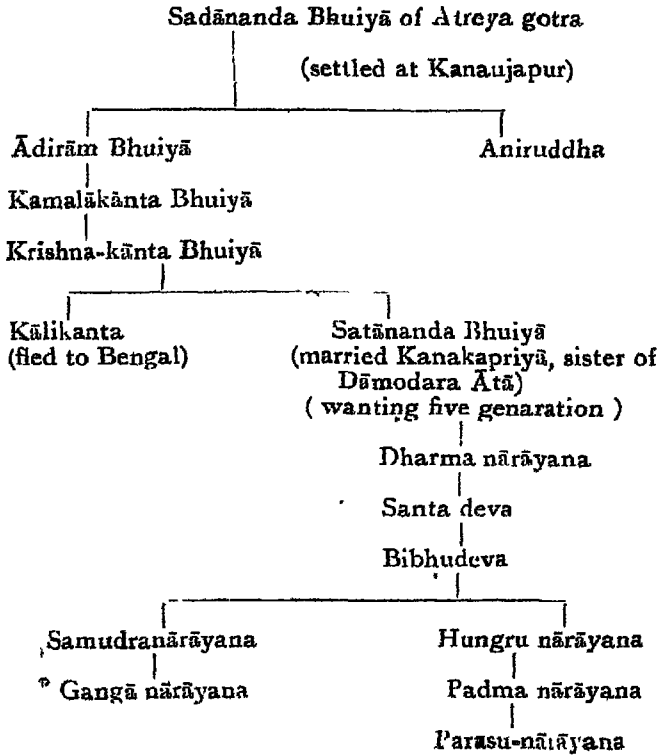
‡ All his properties were confiscated by David Scott.

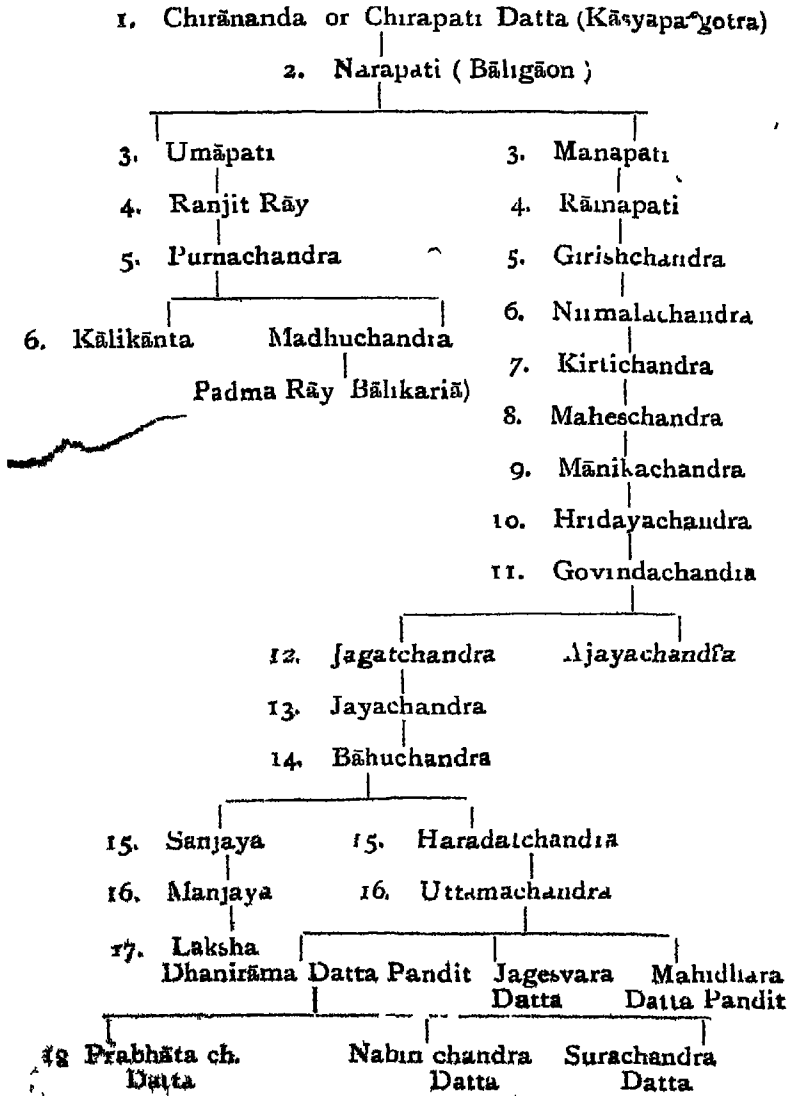
Family of Sridhara Bhuiya

Pargāna Saruksheti—Village Ghilājāri

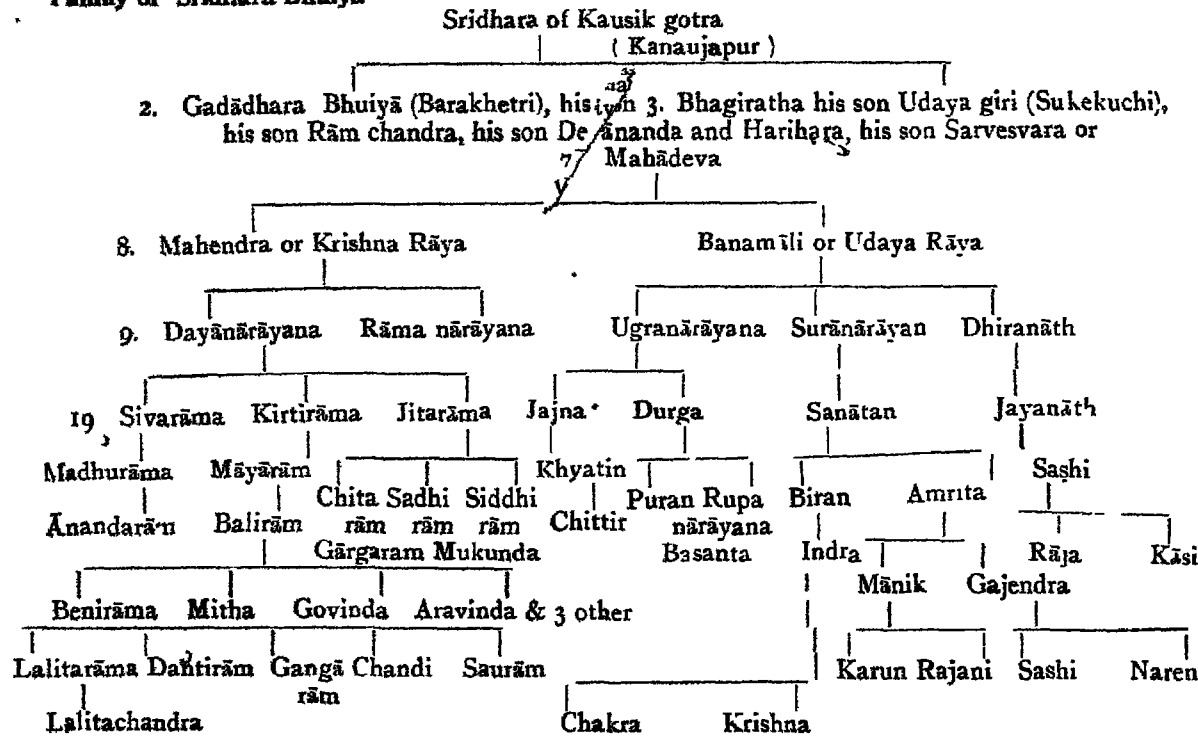


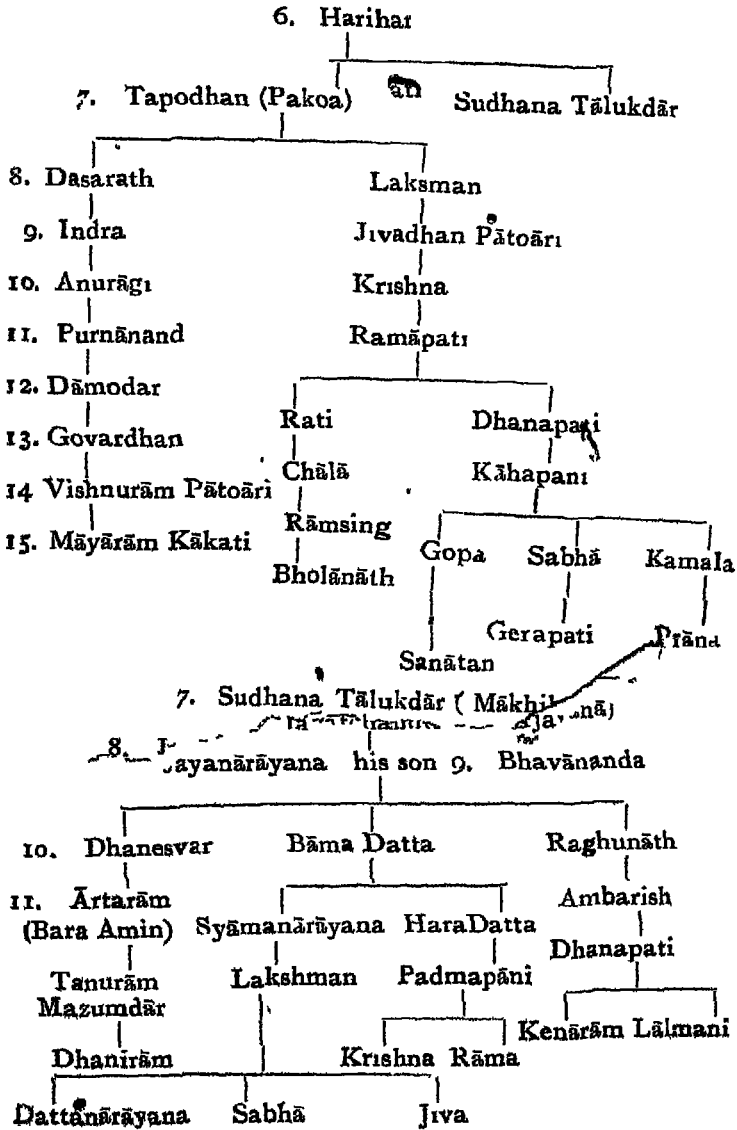
Family of Sadananda Bhuiya



Family of Chirananda Bhuiya (Bāligāon)

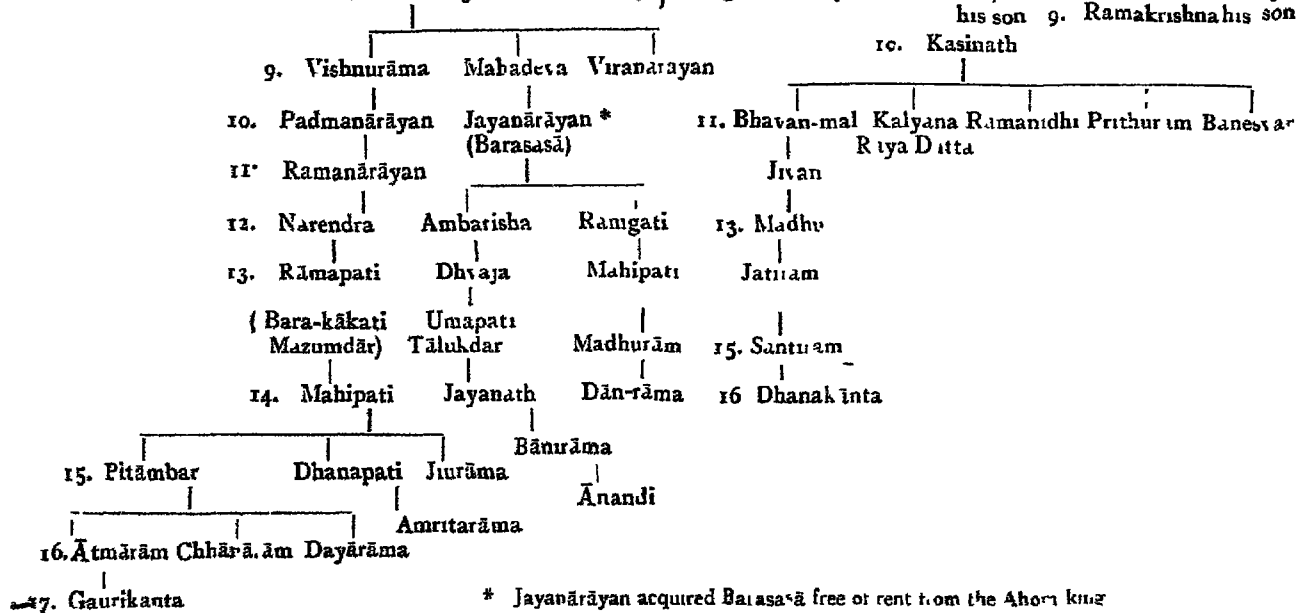
Family of Sridhara Bhuiya



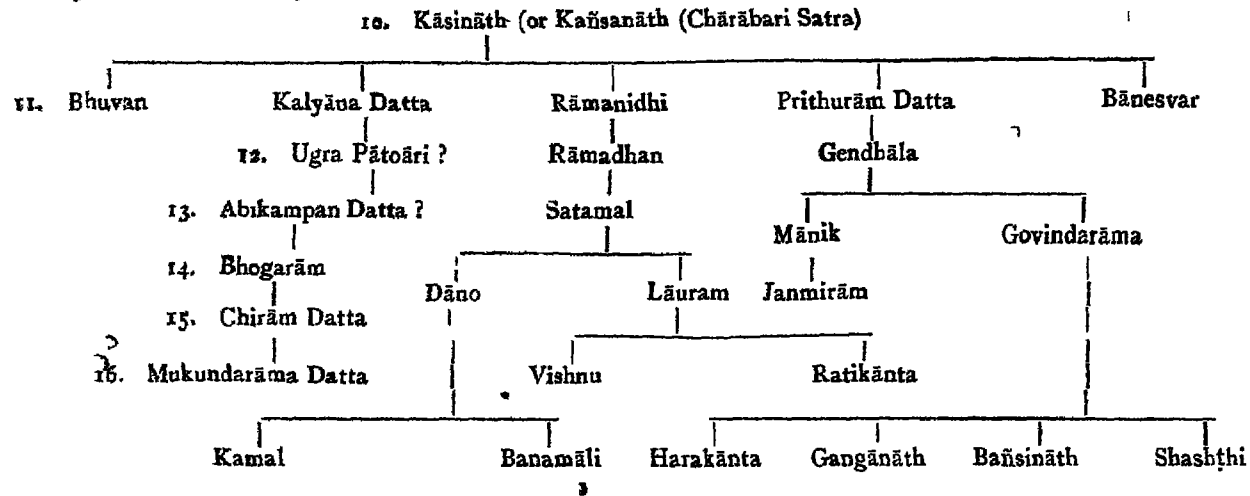
Family of Sridhara Bhuiya

Family of Chandra Bhuiya

1. Chandra Giri Bhuiyā (of Ālamyan gotra), his son 2. Padma Giri, his son 3. Hari Giri, his son 4. Rama Raya, his son 5. Krishna and Gandharva Rāya, Krishnas' son 6. Parama Brahma his son 7. Rajendra Bhuiya (defeated by Visvasiṅha) his son 8. Narottama 5. Gandharva Rāya, his grandson 7. Lakshmana, his son 8. Chandra Bhuiya his son 9. Ramakrishna his son

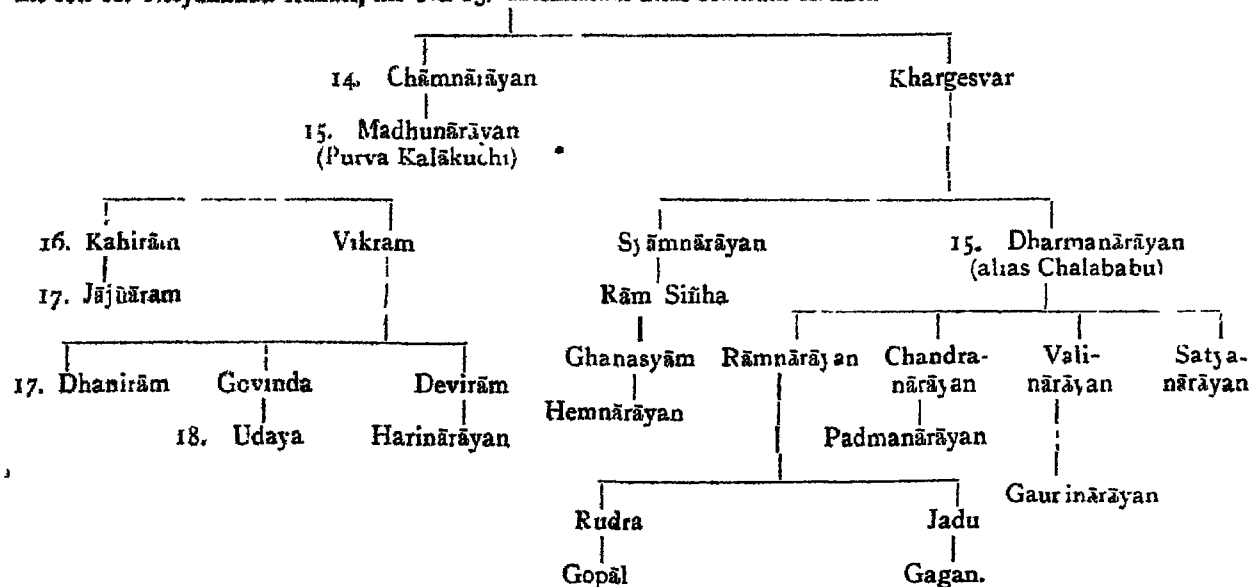


Family of Chandra Bhuiya



Family of Chandra Bhuiya, Mauzā Bahajāni, villages Nandagrām and Purva Kalākuchi.

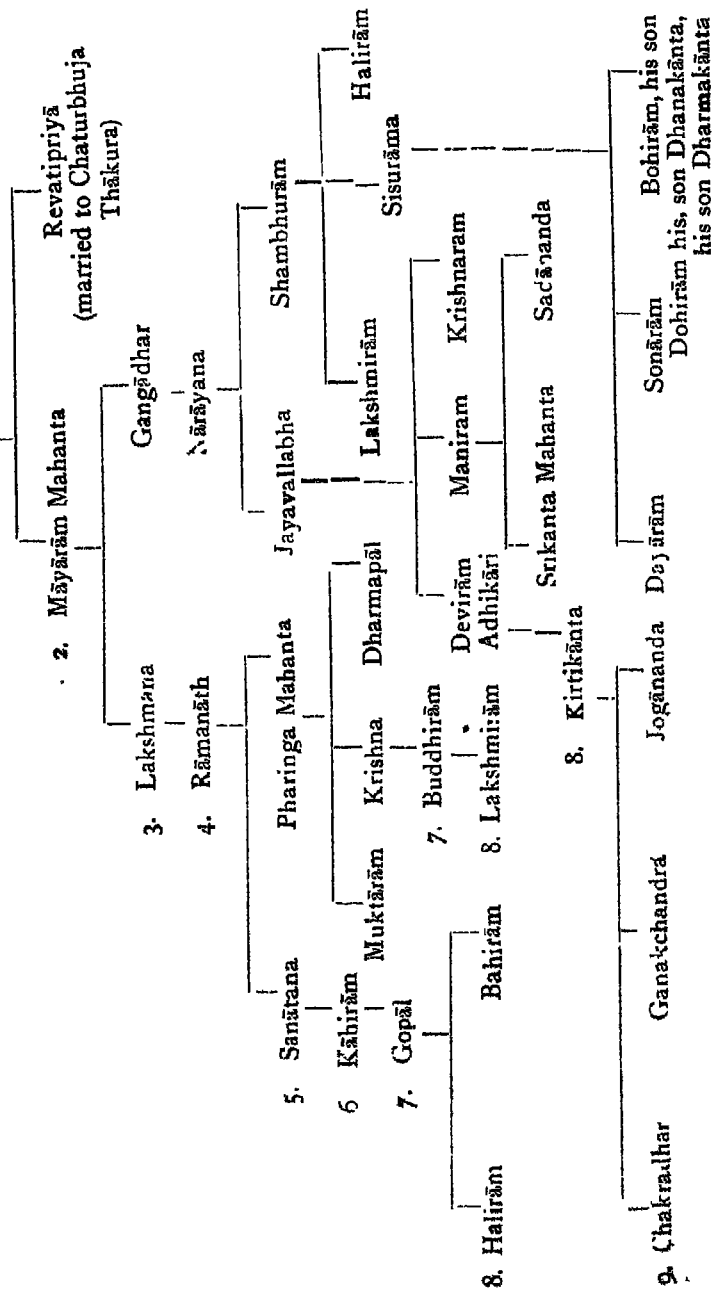
8. Narottama, his son 9. Viranārāyan, his son 10. Harinārāyan his son 11. Rāmadāsa Kākati (Nandagrām) his son 12. Nityānanda Kākati, his son 13. Krishnarām alias Halirām Kākati.



§ Dharmanarayan while serving as the Kākati or Secretary to the Baruas of the Chand-kuti State, was exposed to a decision as to what class of Kayastha he is and how much honour he is entitled to, and after much deliberation by the Baruas it was proved that he belongs to one of the Bāra Bhuiyā families of Assam.

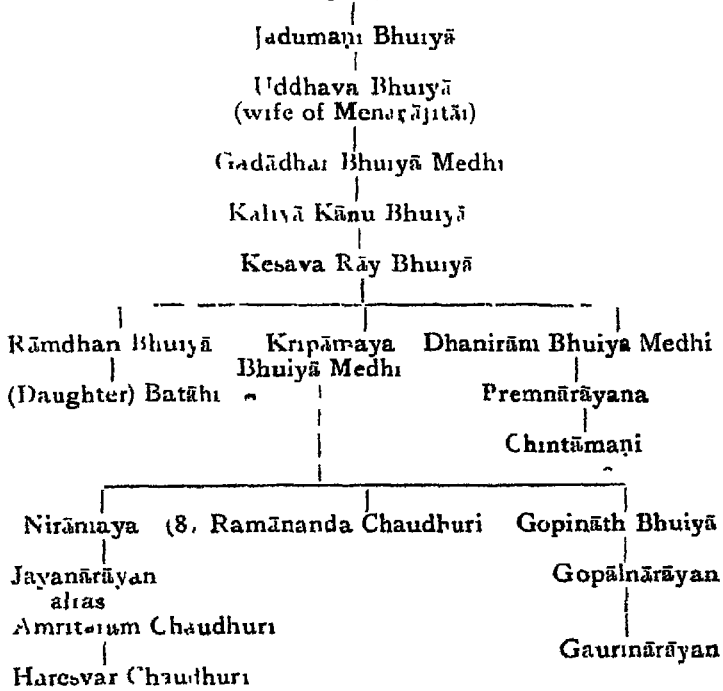
Family of Dinamani Bhuiya, Father-in-law of Chaturbhuja, the grandson of Sankara Deva.

1. Dinamani Bhuiyā (Kausika gotra) (Mauza Dharmapur, Chārābāri Satra.)

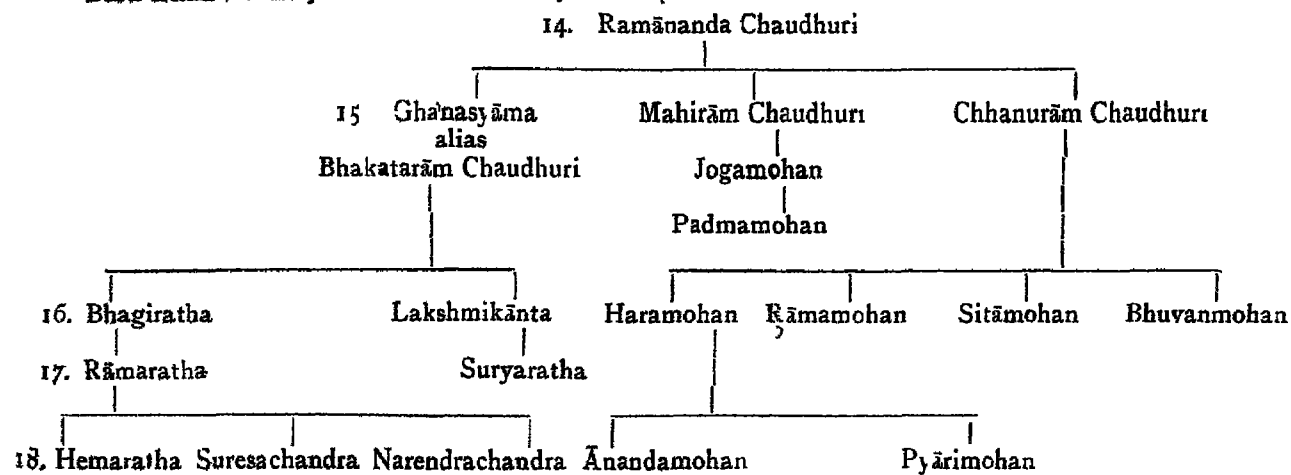


Buda khan's Family or the Kakati Family of Barapeta.

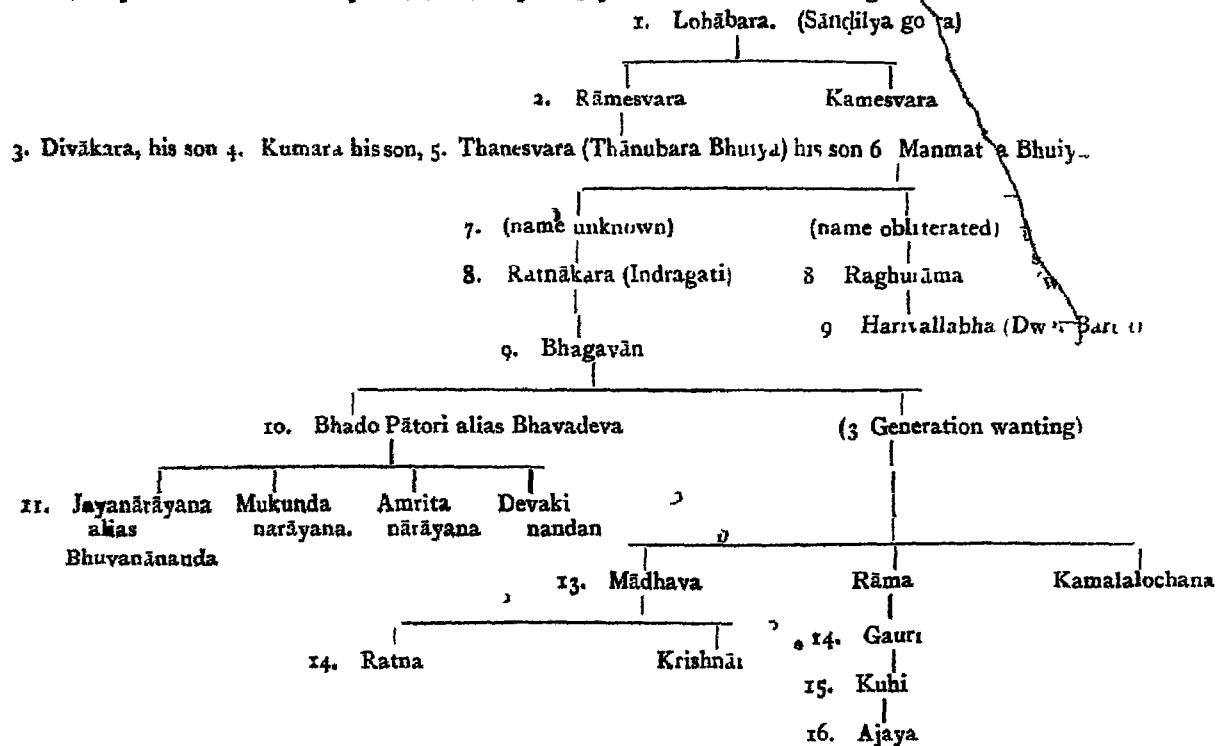
Buḍā Khān Bhuiyā (Parāsara gotra)
(wanting 6 generation)



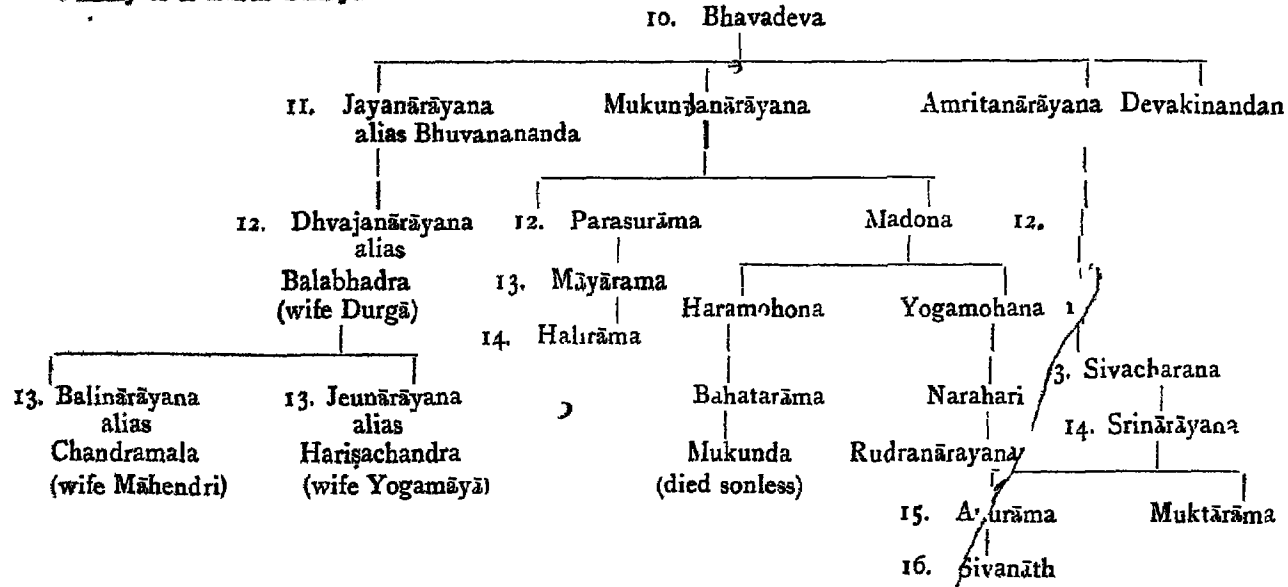
Bura Khan's Family or the Kakati family of Barapeta.



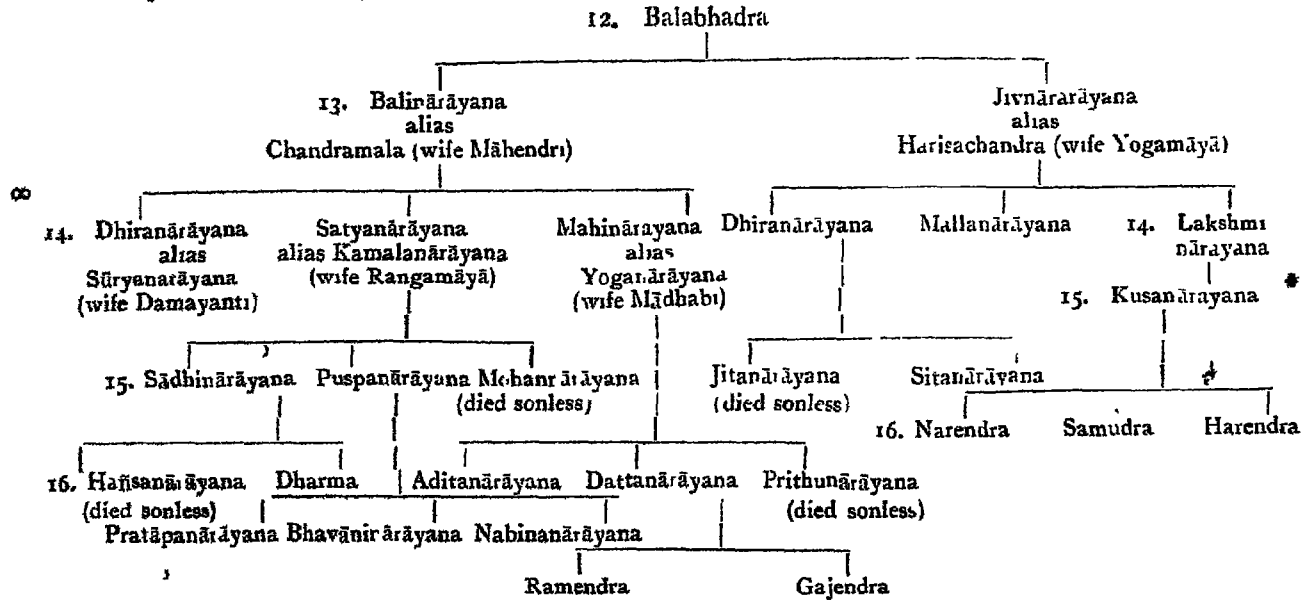
Family of Lohabara Bhuiya—Chaudhury family of Mauza Khāta—Village Khātābārī



Family of Lohābar Bhuiya



Family of Lohabar Bhuiya



The Family of Harivallabh Bhuiya (Dwāra Barua)

(original home Kuyānbhāg) descendant of Lohābara

9. Harivallabh (Dwār Baruā)

10. Vallabh Rāy (Dwar Baruā)

Raghu
Rāya

Kalyān Rāya
(Bujhar Baruā)

11. Bhagavata Rāya
(Bujhar Baruā)

Sundara Rāy Binanda Rāya

12. Vijaya

13. Gaja Rāy

14. Vaṇsirāya

14. Rāghav Rāya

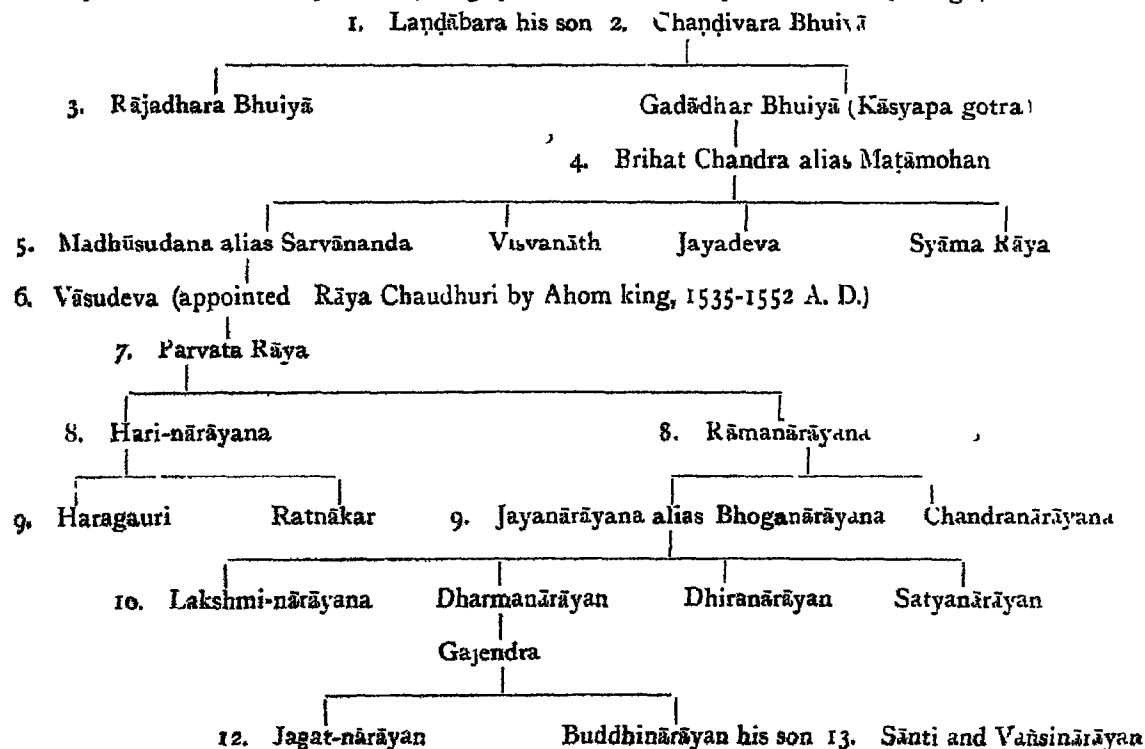
Rudra Rāya

Durjana

15. Lakshmi Rāya

16. Paramānanda

Family of Gadādhara Bhuiyā or Baḍabhaḡiṃ Chaudhuri family of Nāma Baḍabhaḡ (Mākhībāḡ)



Family of Gadādhara Bhūiṣṭha

5. Visvanath, his son 6. Rāmanath, his son
7. Dhanapati, his son 8. Dhanāñjaya

9. Chandranārāyaṇa

10. Ranganāth

11. Vijayanāth his son 12. Sambhunāth

13. Visvanāth

14. Kalināth Mathurānāth

9. Rāṅga Thānu

10. Khargeswar Yajña Rāva

9. Lakshminārāyaṇ

10. Padmanārāyaṇ

11. Vishnunārāyaṇ

12. Mukundanārāyaṇ.

13. Sūryanārāyaṇ

10. Gauranārāyaṇ

Mahinārāyaṇ

Harisanārāyaṇ

Kapindranārāyaṇ

Khyāti

Rudranārāyaṇ

11. Garganārāyaṇ

Gopālnārāyaṇ

Vandhu

Manu

12. Jogendranārāyaṇ

Prasannanārāyaṇ

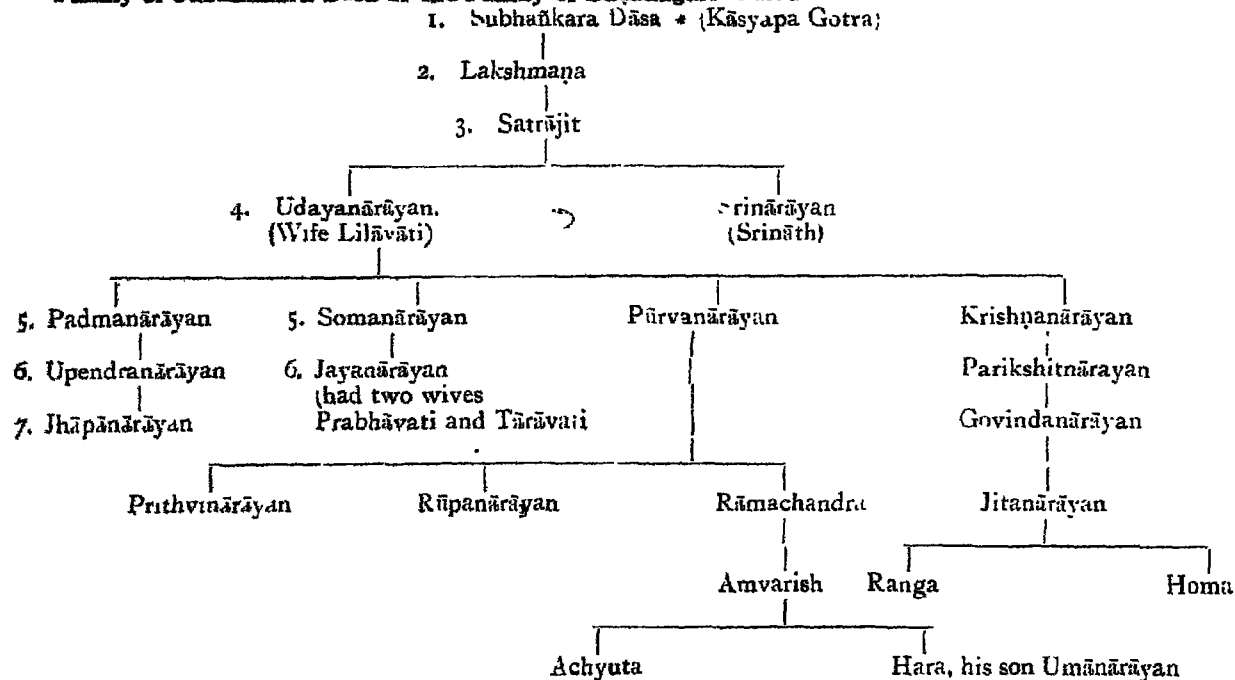
Kesava

Jivana

Balinārāyaṇ.

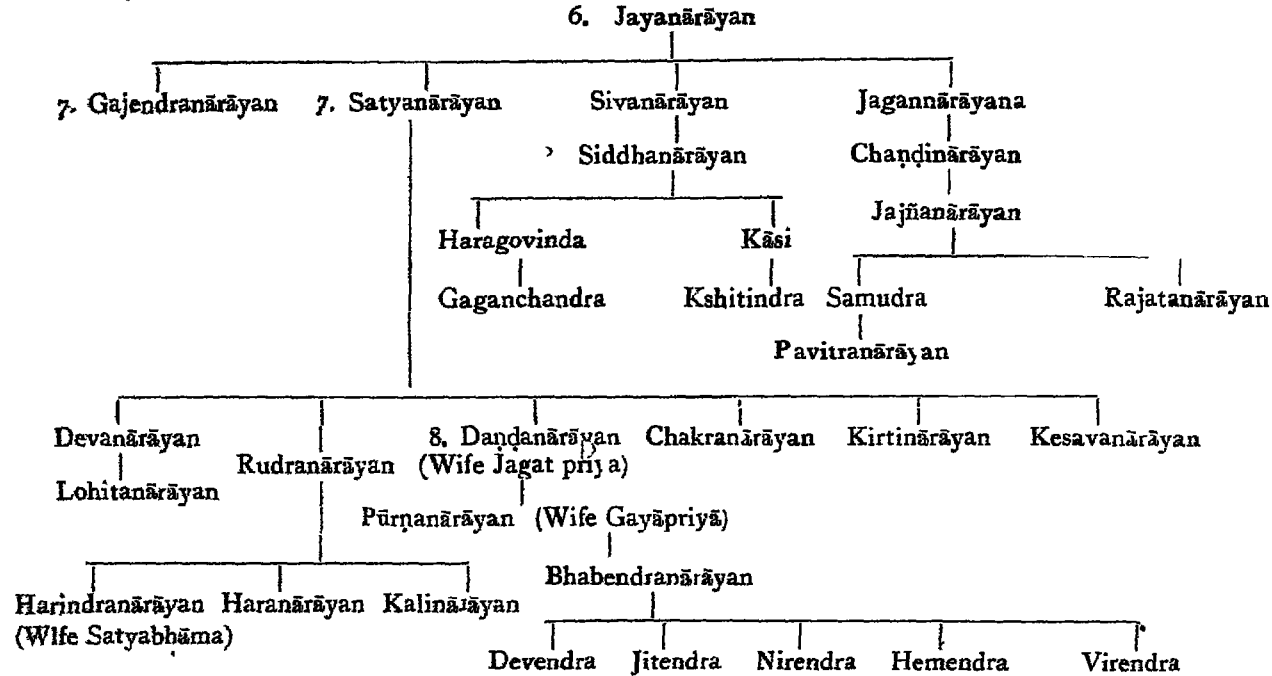
13. Ganesanārāyaṇ

Family of Subhankara Dāsa or the Family of Baḍanagarī Baruā



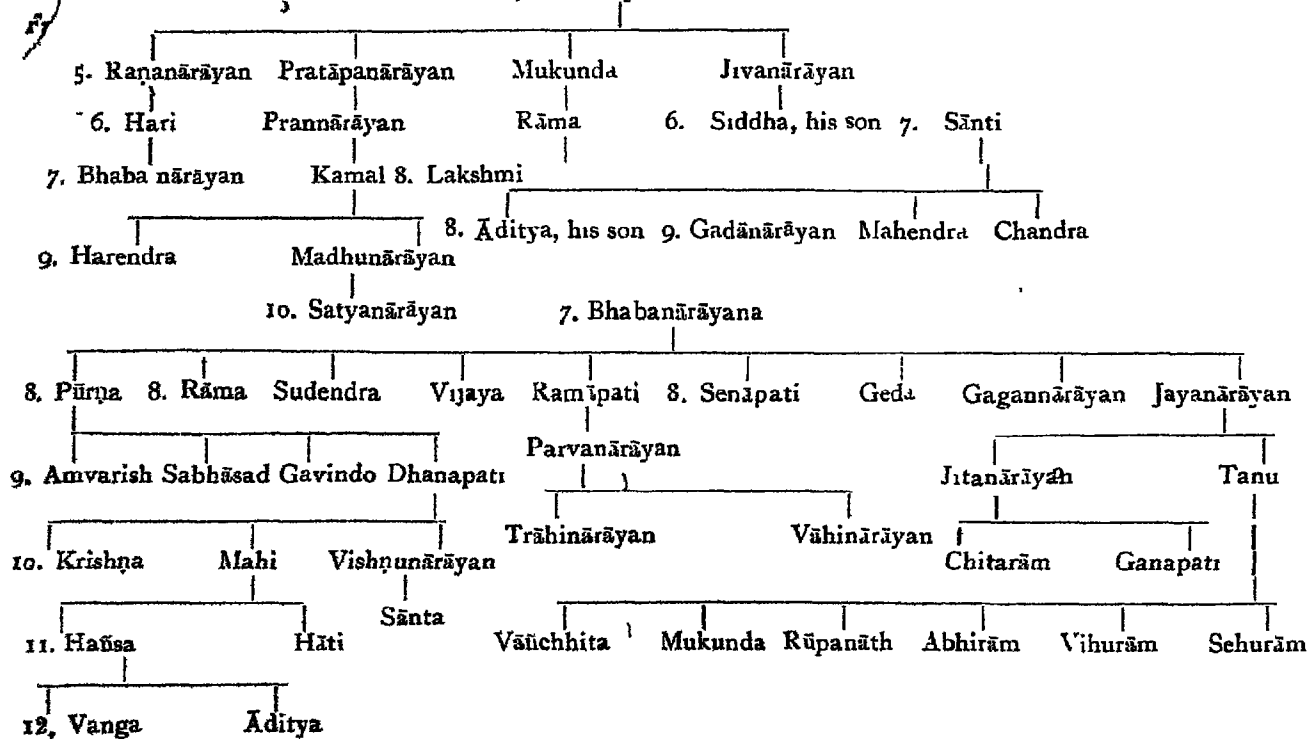
* It seems that he was a descendant of Pratapa Bhuiya.

Family of Subhankara Dasa or the Mazumdār Family of Chāmtā

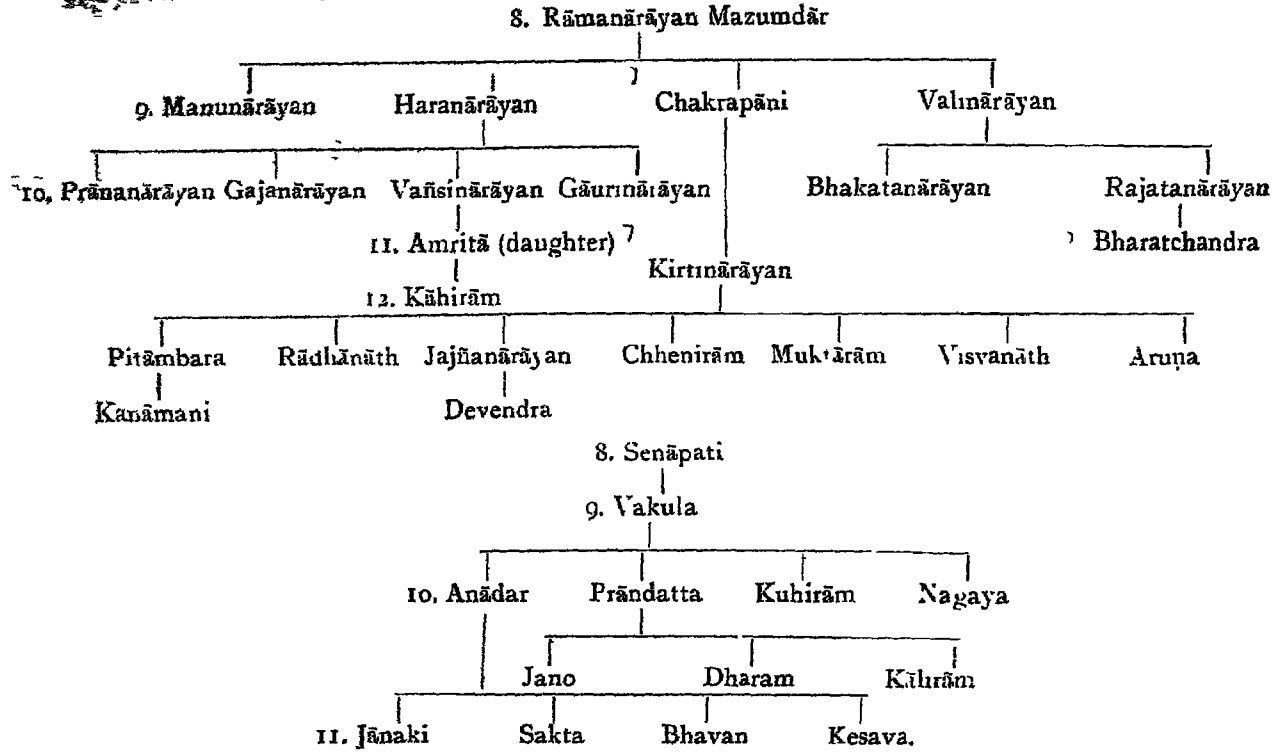


Family of Subhankar Dāsa or the Mazumdar Family of Chāmta

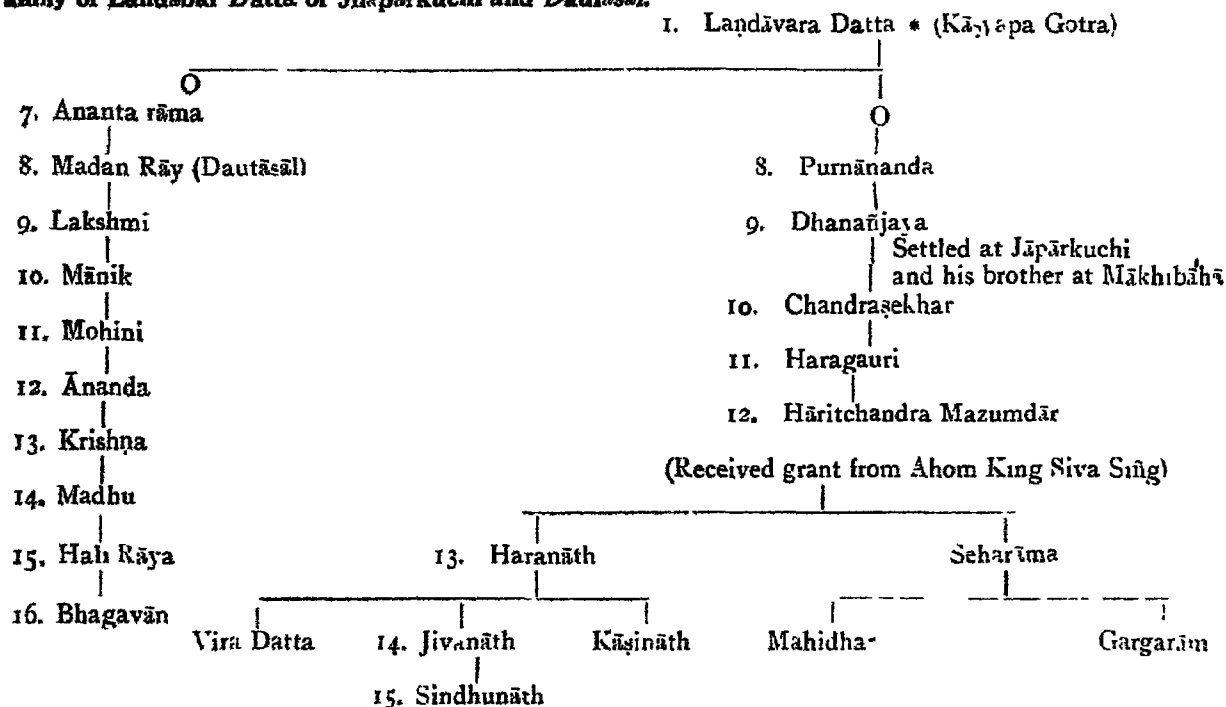
4. Srinārāyan alias Srināth.



The Mazumdar Family of Chamta



Family of Landābar Datta of Jhāpārkuchi and Daulāsāl.

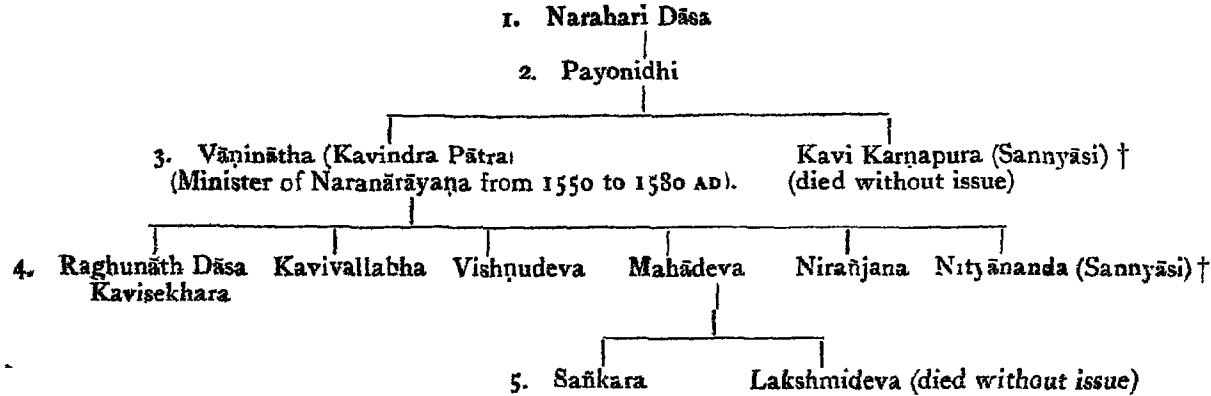


He is said to be a contemporary of Chandivara Siromahi Bhuiyā,

APPENDIX—II.

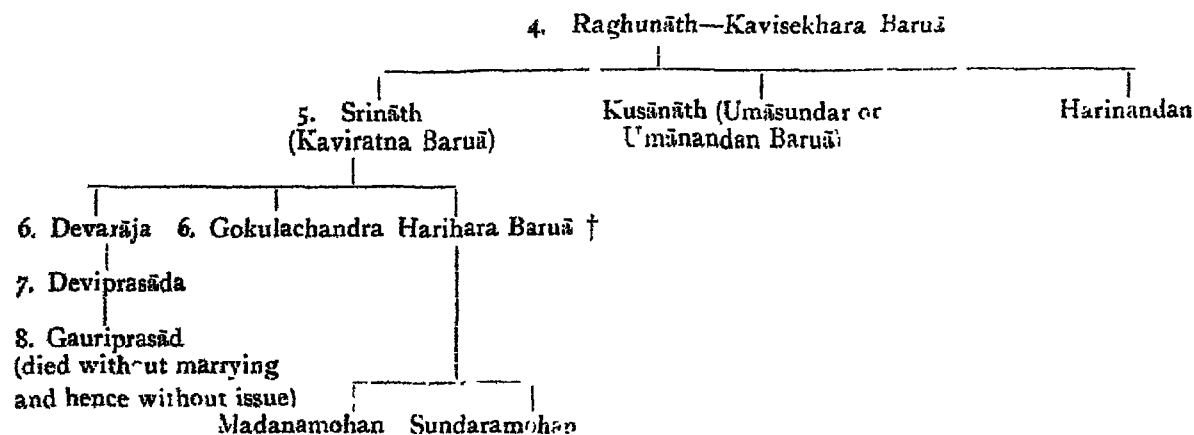
Gauripur Rāj Family

Gotra Vasishṭha—Family title Dāsa.



* His real name is not known. He is generally known by this name.

Gauripur Rāj Family



* He went to Kān arupa

Gauripur Rāj Family,

7. Krishnachandra

daughter Rohini.

daughter Mohini

7. Sivachandra

Lakshmi chandra
Baruā
(left no issue)

Son
(name not
known)

daughter
Chandravālā
(married to
Srikānta Dewan)

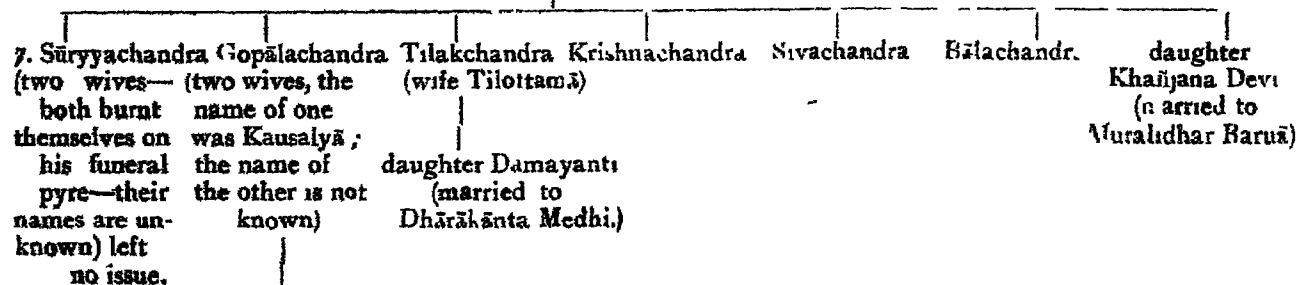
Devi
(married to
Udava Baruā
left no issue)

Badana Devi
(married to
Āditya Chaudhuri
left no issue)

Gauripur Rāj Family.

6. Gokulachandra Baruā *

(Kokilchānd)

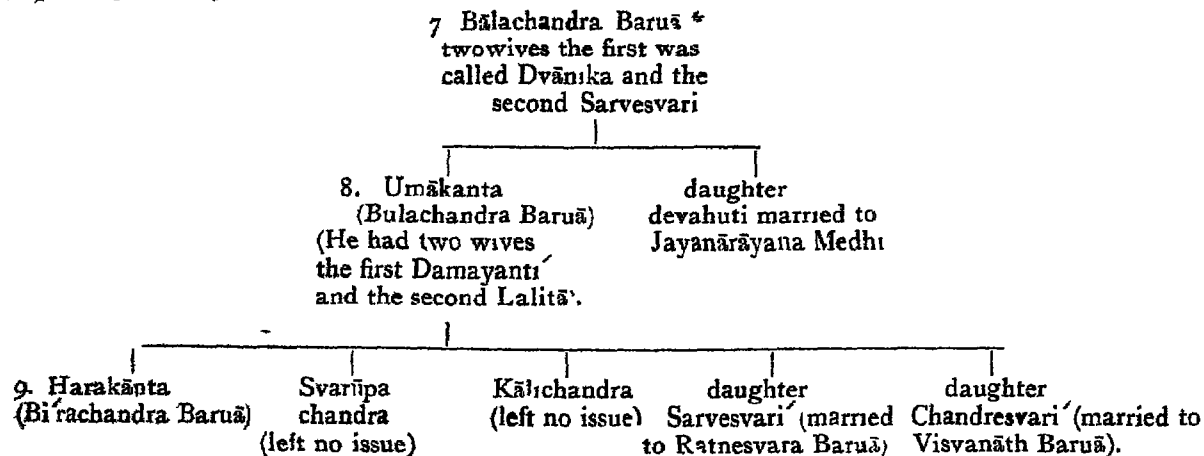


8. Udayachandra (Vishnuchandra) wife Umāsundari left no issue.

Prithvidāsa

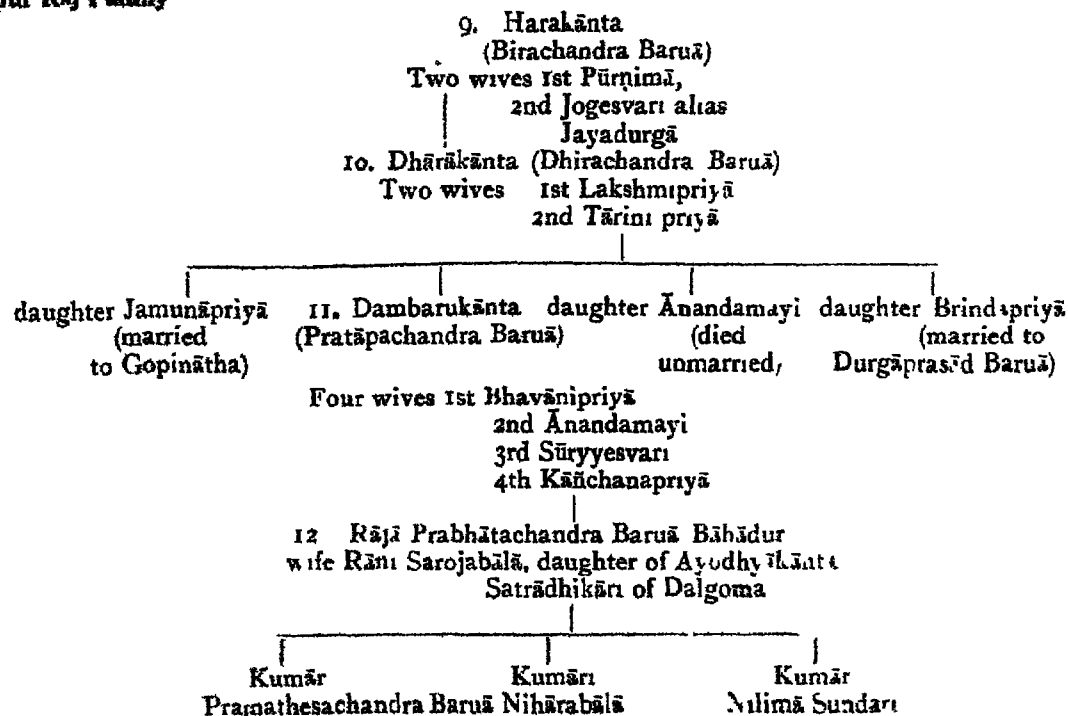
* Ratikānta Chaudhuri, the zamindar of Pargana Ghulla, had on the 2nd day of Bhādra in 157 B S made a grant of 41 ploughs of land together with a plot of homestead land as Devottar property for the worship of the Goddess Matangini at the house of the Kānungui Gokulachandra Baruā.

Gauripur Raja Family.

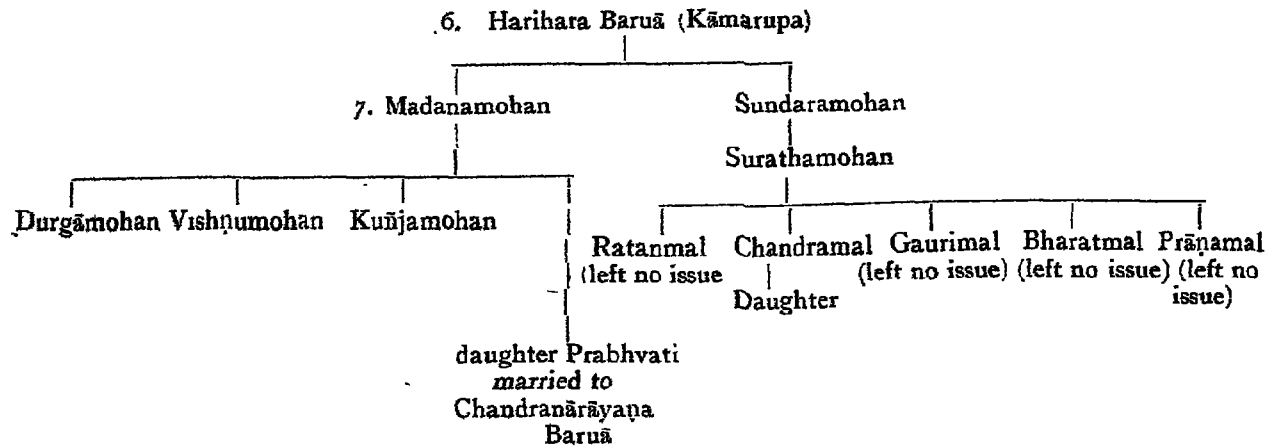


* He got on the 9th Māgha, 1117 B.S., sanad from Nrisīnahadā Neogī and Chandkhan Chaudhuri Datta Zamindars of Paragana Jām ra for building a dwelling house in Mauza Raipur.

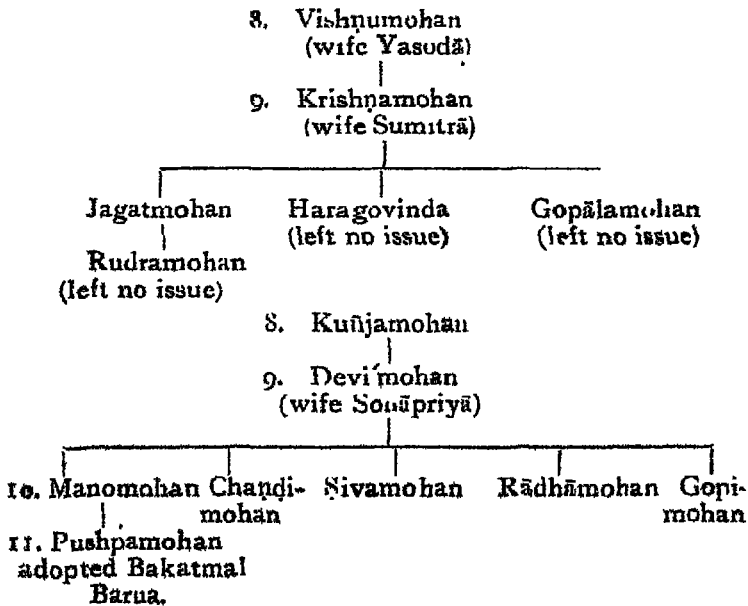
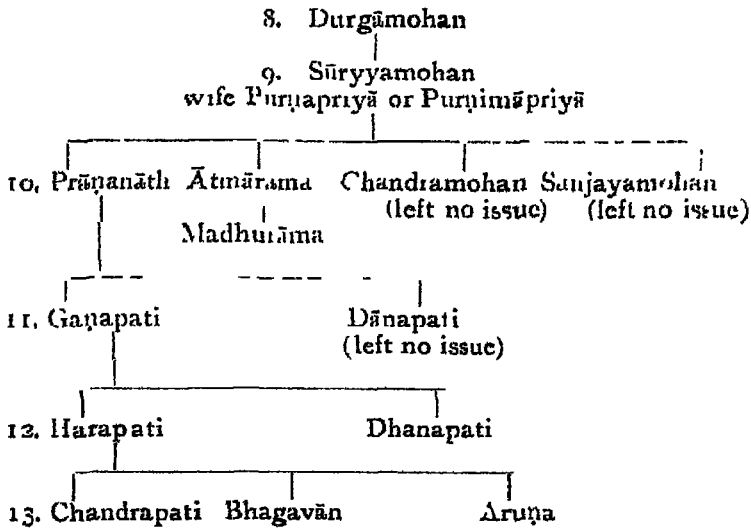
Gauripur Raj Family

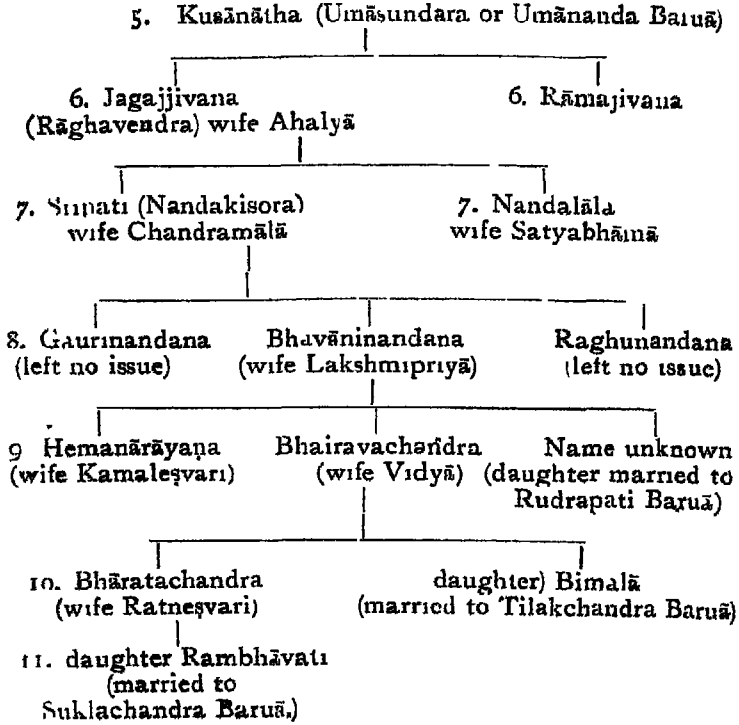


Gauripur Rāj Family

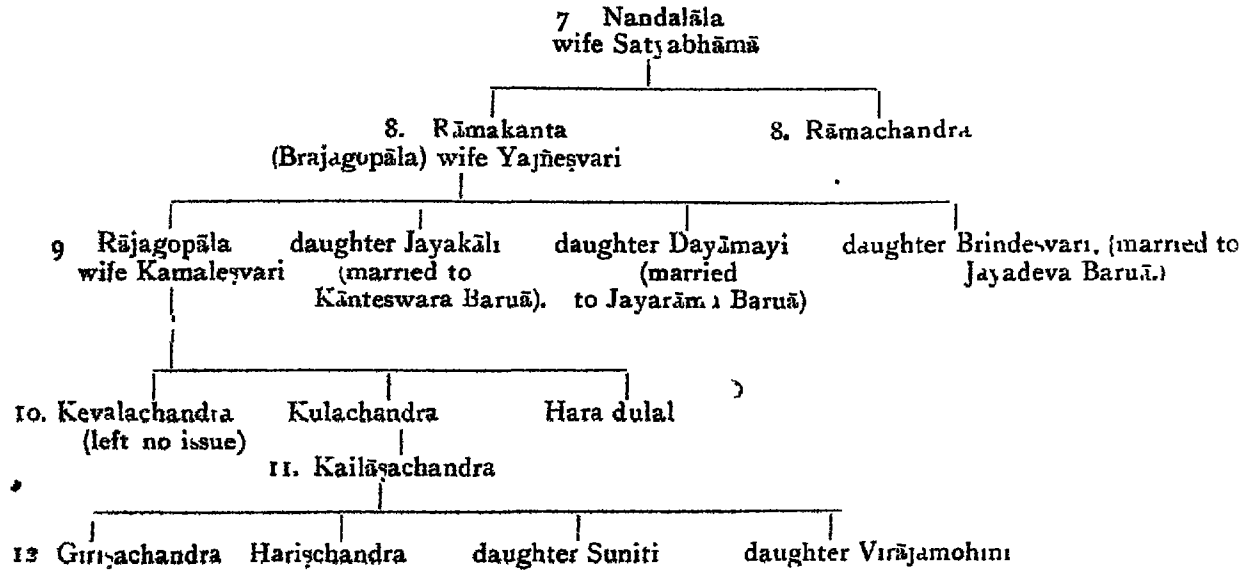


Gauripur Rāj Family

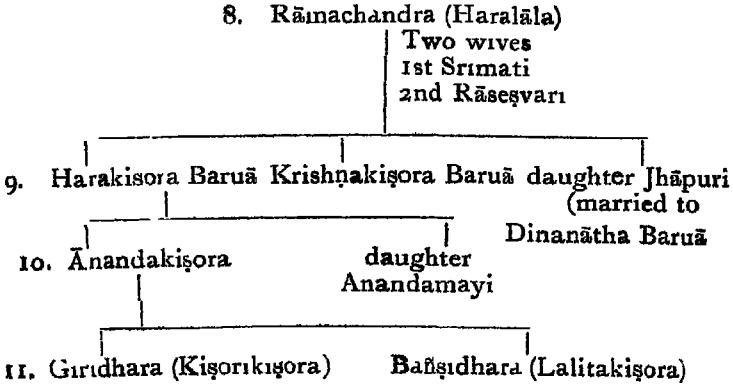


Gauripur Rāja Family

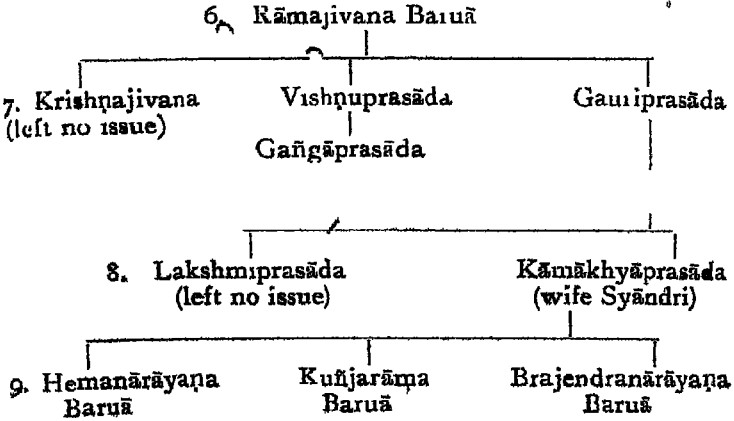
Gauripur Rāja Family



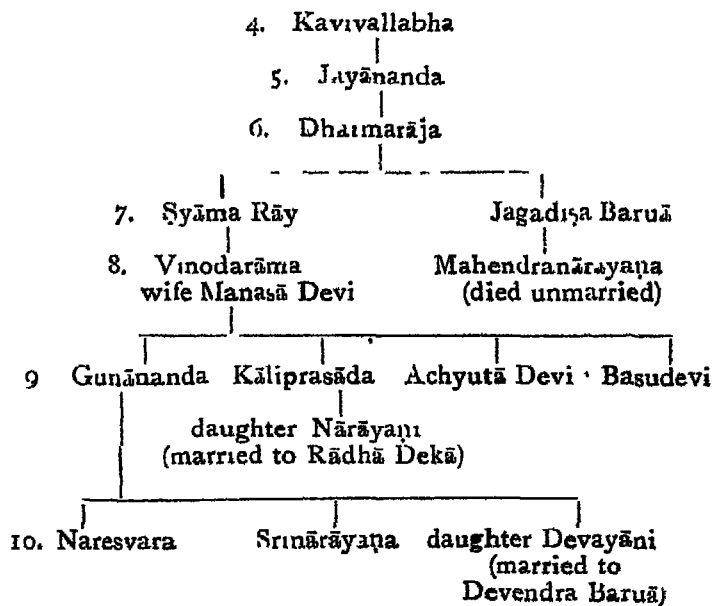
Gauripur Rāja Family

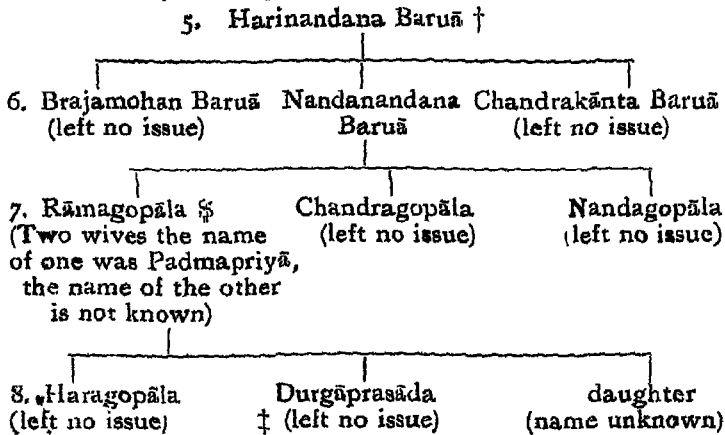


Gauripur Rāja Family



Gauripur Rāja Family



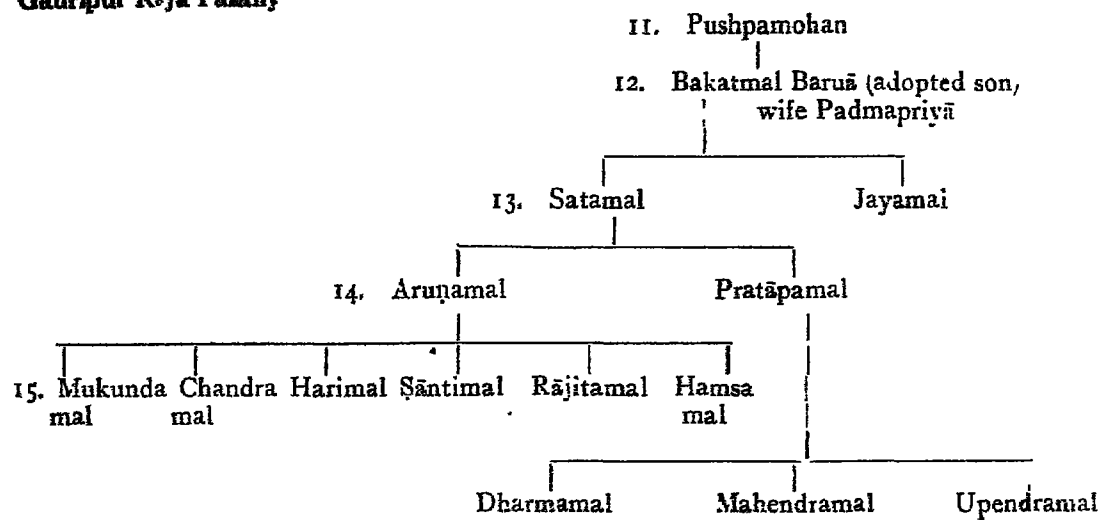
Gauripur Rāja Family

† There is a sanad dated 14th Fālguna B. S. 1112 granted to Harinandan Kānungoi by Rāni Satyabati Debyā giving him free of rent certain Kismats in the Parganas of Bāhirband and Utharband.

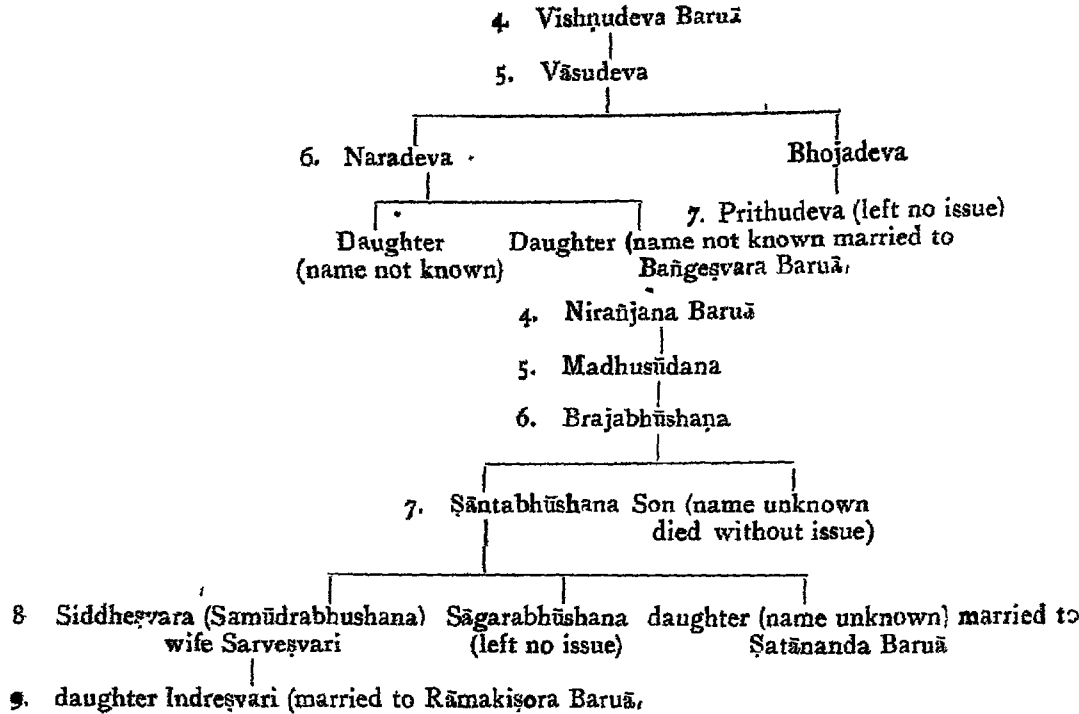
§ He got a sanad from Rāni Satyabati on the 11th Falgoon 1133 B. S. for building a dwelling house. He was also given rent free land in Yabakpur.

‡ On the 5th Agrahayana of 1215 B. S. Durgāprasāda Barū made a gift of his ancestral tanks of Syāmpur, Putimāri and Baniarkuti as well as some *Khamar* land to Dhirachandra Baruā the grandson of Bulchandra Barua by means of a Hebānāma. One of the witnesses attesting this Hebānāma was Gangaprasād Datta the the great-grand father of Satis Ohandra Baruā.

Gauripur Rāja Family



Gauripur Rāja Family



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