

A SPECIMEN OF THE KUMAUNI LANGUAGE.

*(Extracts from the Compositions of Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍé.)**(Translated by Ganga Datt Upreti.)**Communicated by G. A. Grierson.)*

Introductory Note by G. A. Grierson.

THE three great administrators of Kumaun were Mr. Traill (1815-1835), Mr. Batten (1848-1856) and Captain (afterwards Major-General, Sir Henry) Ramsay, all of whom are remembered with affection by their whilom subjects. After the conquest of Kumaun by the English, there were several short settlements of the land-tenures, the first being in 1815-16, the second in 1817, and the third (for three years) in 1818. Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍé, the author of the following verses, was a contemporary of Mr. Traill, and shared with his fellow-countrymen of those days a strong dissatisfaction at the new English regime. In some of his poems he fiercely attacked the new rulers and Mr. Traill, the first chief of the district. Mr. Traill, nevertheless, patronized him and, it is said, used to go unattended to the village assemblies and hear the songs sung in his presence. Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍé's more political songs are not here printed. What are now given, are his verses lamenting the condition of his country, and attributing its state to the evil influence of the *Kali Yuga*, or Iron Age. They have been collected by Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti, and are published with his introduction and translations as taken down by him from the lips of villagers of the present day. A few notes on the grammar of the Kumauni language have been added by me and are enclosed in square brackets. Another poem by the same author will be found in *J. R. A. S.* for 1901, p. 475 ff.

Introduction by Pandit Ganga Datt Upreti.

A few verses of the poem of Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍé, resident of village Patiyā, Mallā Syūnarā, Zillakā Almora, in the hill dialect known as Kumaun, have been collected by me from the lips of people, owing to my having been unable to obtain them from his descendants or the members of his family. The poet is said to have died some sixty years ago, but there are many people who still remember some fragments of his poem. When a boy, I saw him singing his *Pahārī Songs* (*Baiñās* and *Bhagnaulās*) and these verses of his at fairs, in the company of hundreds of villagers. The villagers were very fond of him, and crowded round him wherever he went, owing to his being very dexterous and well-versed in extemporising new *Pahārī* songs of various sorts and descriptions. It is a pity that we cannot get them now from his family. He was a good Sanskrit scholar of his time, and was also of a very frolicsome disposition. He used to dance with the villagers to the beat of drums, sometimes beating drums himself, a conduct which did not behove a person of the Brāhmaṇa caste. I believe his talents, songs, and conduct were not unknown to the British officers of that time. In reality he did not seem to have ever intended his verses for sedition or dissatisfaction against Government, but sang them satirically to make his audience laugh. All his predictions are based on those in the Hindū Scriptures in regard to the whole world, and he translated them rhetorically into attractive *Pahārī* verses referring to the state of Kumaun only, to please the illiterate people of these hills.

1.

मुलकिया यारौ कलि युग देखौ ।

घर कुड़ि बेचि बेर¹ इस्तफा लेखौ ॥ १ ॥

O my countrymen, see the approach of the Kali Yuga. Sell off your houses and land. Write out deeds of relinquishment (and leave the country).

¹ *Bér* is the suffix of the conjunctive participle. *Péchi-lér*=*béçh-karhé*.

2.

(The fertility of the soil is decreasing day by day).

मुलक कुमाऊँ मेँ बड़ो भारि चैन ।
नौ नालि ब्वे बेर छै नालि भैन ² ॥ २ ॥

There are a good many agricultural operations going on in the land of Kumaun, the result of which is that if nine *nālis* (18 seers) are sown, the yield is but six *nālis* (12 seers).

3.

(Interest on a loan of grain, paid in kind, is exorbitant. The principal is increased at compound interest, by a third every year, so that after a few years a loan of a small amount of grain becomes an amount large enough to purchase a girl for marriage.)

द्वी माणा धान मेँ धनुलि अँ छ ।
एक माणा मडुवा मेँ मनुलि अँ छ ³ ॥ ३ ॥

Two-half seers of paddy procure a (high-caste) Dhanuli, and a single half-seer of millet gets a (low-caste) Manuli.

[Dhanuli and Manuli are the names of castes. The former is high-caste, while a Manuli is a girl of the Dūm caste.]

4.

(The wretched poverty of the Brāhmaṇa caste, of which the poet was a member.)

बामण यारोँ को यो बड़ो ज्ञान ।
मडुवा मानिर दिन घर घर चान ⁴ ॥ ४ ॥

The mighty knowledge of my friends, the Brāhmaṇas, has come to this, that they are begging and seeking for millet (a coarse and cheap grain) from every house.

5.

(The poet refers to the present bad times. The most unnatural and impossible things are taking place.)

तल घर खिमदा को बहड़ बिनार ।
मला घर गोपिदा कि ब्वे लागि धार ॥ ५ ॥

In the lower house the bullock of my elder brother Khimā has become pregnant, and in the same way, in the upper house, the wife of my elder brother Gōpi has flown away to the mountain-ridge.

6.

(The poverty of the people is due to their sins.)

मुलक कुमाऊँ मेँ बड़ो भयो पाप ।
घर कुड़ि बेचि बेर इटाम छाप ⁵ ॥ ६ ॥

There is much sin in the land of Kumaun, in consequence of which everyone has to sell his house and land on stamped paper.

² *Bhain* is 3rd plur. masc. past of *hōnd*.

³ *Āi-āih* = *āti-hai*.

⁴ *Chān*=*dākhit* *hāi*.

7.

(Indifference of people towards God and religion).

किष्णा पाँडे ड्यू कोलेखणा को काम ।
हर नाम लीणा की नै रुनि फाम⁵ ॥ ७ ॥

It is the duty of Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍê to write down (exhortations), but no one cares to take the name of God.

8.

(The neglect of religion, virtue, and honesty, these being superseded by belief in the great shrines of Badarînâtha and Kêdâranâtha.)

बद्री केदार बड़ा भया⁶ धाम ।
धने कर्म कि कै न्हाति 'फाम ॥ ८ ॥

Badarînâtha and Kêdâranâtha are (supposed to be) great shrines, but no one has any notion of virtuous deeds.

9.

बद्री केदार द्वी छन⁷ धाम ।
कलि युग भै गोछ⁸ कै न्हाति फाम ॥ ९ ॥

Badarînâtha and Kêdâranâtha are two (famous) shrines, but no one knows that the Kali Yuga has come.

10.

(The selfishness of bad people.)

पातर भोजि को बड़ो भारि ज्ञान ।
घर कुड़ि ठगि बेर मुख नि बुजान¹⁰ ॥ १० ॥

My elder brother's friend, the harlot, has great cleverness. She robs a man of his house and chattels, and then does not speak to him (*i. e.*, becomes cool and indifferent).

11.

(The perversion of the times.)

मुलक कुमाऊँ भे⁹ कपुवा¹¹ बासो ।
डवे कन है-गयो खसन को सौंसो ॥ ११ ॥

The cuckoo sang in the land of Kumaun, and the husband has become a nuisance to his wife.

12.

(The world is topsy-turvy, and there is no respect for elders.)

हौसिया¹² थारौ कलियुग आलो¹² ।
ब्याला का हाथ ले बाप मार खालो¹² ॥ १२ ॥

My jolly friends, the father will be beaten by his own son when the Kali Yuga comes.

13.

(Family dissensions.)

भाइ बिरादर घर घर मार ।
मुलक कुमाऊँ भे⁹ पडि गयो छार ॥ १३ ॥

Brothers and kinsmen assault each other in every house. Ashes and dust are cast upon the land of Kumaun.

⁵ *Fām* = *fahm*.

⁷ *Chham* = *hā*.

⁸ *Ai gā-ohh* = *ā gayā-hai*

⁶ *Bhayā* = *huṣ*. *Nhāti* is the negative verb, substantive, 'is not.'

⁹ *Kai* = *kis kō*.

¹⁰ *Eulān* = *bulāt-hā*.

¹¹ The *kapuwa* is a kind of pigeon. It is an omen of evil to hear its song.

¹² *Hausiā* seems to be a corruption of *hāvāshā*. *Ālō* and *khālō* are futures, equivalent to Hindi *āwēgā* and *khāēgā*.

14.

भाइ बिरादर घर घर मार ।
भद्व्यालि ली बेर उवे लागि धार ॥ १४ ॥

Brothers and kinsmen assault each other in every house. The wife has flown away to the mountain top, taking the iron pot (the only cooking-vessel of the family) with her.

15.

(Ruinous extravagance in dress.)

बिलैति कपड़ा का बणाया कोट ।
रीण करि बेर घर कुडि चोट ॥ १५ ॥

People get their coats made of English cloth, and thus they incur debts and lose their houses and lands.

16.

(Ingratitude for what is now done with toil and expense, contrasted with the simplicity of former times.)

सौन्घाणा जै बेर¹³ आयोड¹⁴ नूण ।
घागरि ही बेर उवे न्हाति गूण ॥ १६ ॥

The salt is brought all the way from the snowy hills (*i. e.*, Tibet), and the wife is not grateful for the skirt given to her (by her husband, though it cost him a good deal).

17.

मुलकिया लीगो कलि युग सूण ।
घागरि ही बेर उवे न्हाति गूण ॥ १७ ॥

My countrymen, listen to the effects of the Kali Yuga. The wife is not grateful for the skirt given to her.

18.

हौसिया यारौ कलि युग सूण ।
लता सेर ही बेर उवे न्हाति गूण ॥ १८ ॥

My jolly friends listen to the effects of the Kali Yuga. The wife is not grateful for the food and clothing given to her.

19.

(Village officials neglect their duties.)

एक गाँव का नौ छिया¹⁵ पधान ।
गाँव बजीगयो के न्हाति फाम ॥ १९ ॥

There were nine head-men for a single village. The village has become barren, and no one heads it.

20.

थेक थेक गाँ का नौ नौ पधान ॥
ग्वाड बणाया कि कै न्हाति फाम ॥ २० ॥

There are nine head-men in each village, and no one takes care for building cowsheds.

¹³ *Jai-bêr = jâ-karkê.*

¹⁴ *Âyô-chh = âyâ-hat.*

¹⁵ *Chhiyâ = ihê.* It is masc. plur. of *chhiyê.*

21.

गंगा मे" है - गोछ तुमडिया तार ।
भाइ बिरादर घर घर मार ॥ २१ ॥

The Ganges can be crossed with the help of gourds (used as floats for crossing narrow streams), and brothers and kinsmen assault each other in every house.

22.

भाइ बिरादर घर घर मार ।
खशम है¹⁶ डवे है-गेछ¹⁷ न्यार ॥ २२ ॥

Brothers and kinsmen assault each other in every house, and the wife has separated herself from her husband.

23.

धर्म कर्म मे" पडि गोछ¹⁸ छार ।
कौण्डि हूँगरो बिन डवे लागि धार ॥ २३ ॥

Religion and virtuous acts are buried in ashes, and, for want of *kauni* and *jhungard* (two coarse grains) the wife has flown away to the mountain top.

24.

किष्णा पौडे ले²¹ कलि युग खोलो¹⁹ ।
मुलक कुमाऊँ को डुंगो डुंगो होलो¹⁹ ॥ २४ ॥

Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍē has disclosed the effects of the Kali Yuga, and warned the people against them. The land of Kumaun will be reduced to a skeleton.

25.

(Exhortation to the people to become devotees.)

मुलकिया यारो हर नाम लीयो ।
डवे चेला बेचि बेर इष्टम सीयो ॥ २५ ॥

O my countrymen, remember the name of God. Sell your wives and children by means of giving a stamped document (and give up all desire for worldly prosperity).

26.

चार दिन मेरि भौजि भज राम राम ।
हर नाम आलो²⁰ परनाम काम ॥ २६ ॥

O my brother's wife, repeat the name of God for a few days (while we are in this world). The name of God will help us in our next lives.

27.

मुलकिया लागो हर नाम लीयो ।
किष्णा पौडे ले²¹ कलि युग कीयो ॥ २७ ॥

O my countrymen, take the name of God. Kṛishṇā Pāṇḍē has warned you against the effects of Kali Yuga.

¹⁶ *Khasam-hai* = *khasam* ṣḍ.

¹⁹ *Kholō* = *khōlō*, but *hōlō* = *hōlōgō*.

¹⁷ *Hai gō-chh* = *hō gai hai*.

²⁰ *Ālō* = *āwōgō*.

¹⁸ *Gj-chh* = *gayā-hai*.

²¹ *Lē* is the postposition of the agent case = *nd*.