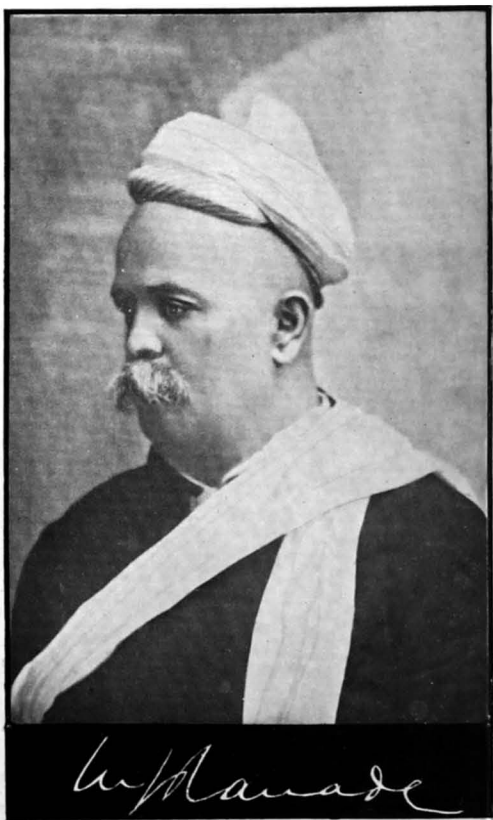


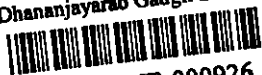
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BORN, 18TH JANUARY 1842.

DIED, 16TH JANUARY 18

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A SKETCH
OF THE LIFE AND WORKS
OF THE LATE
Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade,
M.A., LL.B., C.I.E., &c.,
JUDGE OF HER MAJESTY'S HIGH COURT
OF JUDICATURE, BOMBAY.

BY
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DEDICATION.

To the revered and cherished memory of my beloved father, Amritrao Vishvanth Mankar, who departed this life on the 10th July, 1894, in his 80th year, I dedicate this, my first and last work, as a small token of affection, esteem and reverence I entertained towards him who performed the dual duties of both father and mother most affectionately and zealously towards me and my sisters ever since the early death of our saintly mother, who was my truest friend, best counsellor, and most unfailing guide in this vale of tears, and to whom I owe a deep debt of gratitude, which it is difficult for me to discharge adequately.

G. A. M.

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VOLUME I.

ERRATA.

At the dedication page for "Vishvanth" read
"Vishyanath."

At page 44 for "evidences" read "evidence."

At page 50 read "of" before "1881."

At page 96 for "Hindos" read "Hindus."

At page 99 for "marriage" read "marriages."

At page 108 for "Melanchthon" read "Melanc-
thon."

At page 140 for "is based" read "should be
based."

At page 173 remove inverted commas after "wor-
shipped."

At page 173 remove comma after "Waman."

PREFACE.

PERHAPS it may be asked why have I undertaken to write a life of The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, however brief and sketchy it may be? What is/in him which can justify the writing of his life? An answer to this question will be partly found in the following extract from the speech of the Hon'ble Mr. Macdonald, who was one of the leading merchants of Bombay, Chairman of the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, and a Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. The speech was delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Macdonald at an entertainment, held in his honour on the eve of his retirement from India, in 1891. Referring to Mr. Ranade, whom he did not know personally, he says in the speech in question, "I have not the honour of knowing that eminent man, but a perusal

of the addresses which he has delivered occasionally during the last year or two at the Social Reform Congress have been revelations to me. He exhibits all the qualities of an ideal reformer; a profound sympathy with the victims of social injustice, sobriety of statement, enthusiasm, energy, above all, a spiritual fervour, and along with it a persuasive reasonableness which must strangely move his hearers. Fortunately for us, Anglo-Indians, he is master of an admirable English style. I venture to say that these speeches are a mine of ideas and absolutely essential to every one who would know the India of to-day in its higher aspirations." The justification of my writing a life of Mr. Ranade will then be found in the above extract from the speech of the Hon'ble Mr. Macdonald. It may be remarked that Mr. Ranade was not only an ardent, thoughtful, and persuasive reformer, but was also one of the first and best graduates of the University of Bombay, so much so, that he was styled by the *Hindu Patriot*, one of the leading Indian journals in Bengal, as the

Prince of Bombay Graduates. It will be seen from his life that the reputation he acquired at College by his superior mental calibre, original turn of mind and indefatigable industry, has not only been maintained but enhanced throughout his career, whether we consider him as a professor, a Subordinate Judge, a Special Judge, or a Judge of the High Court, a social and religious reformer, or a political and economical writer. Standing head and shoulders above his contemporaries, he was the best representative of modern India educated according to the requirements of the University, and possessing all the merits of the graduates in the highest degree, and the fewest of their faults. The life of such a man, then, will not fail to throw light upon the history of the educated India subsequent to the establishment of the Indian Universities, upon the period of transition through which India is now passing, upon the character, aspirations and achievements of young men passing through such a period. We have noticed the Hon'ble Mr. Macdonald observing in his speech: "I venture

to say that these speeches (of Mr. Ranade) are a mine of ideas absolutely essential to every one who would know the India of to-day in its higher aspirations." The life of such a man would still better serve the purpose. On these grounds I have undertaken to write a short biography of Mr. Ranade, with what success I leave my readers to judge. My theme is a noble one. If I have failed to do justice to it and to treat it as it deserves, the fault is my own. I am fully aware of the shortcomings of this work. If this is the case, why should I, it may be asked, have rushed into print? But I would request my readers to bear in mind that I have done this not to acquire any reputation or fame as a biographer, but simply to render my humble tribute of admiration, esteem, and affection to one whose brilliant talents, many-sided activity, and saintly character have excited these feelings in me.

I also thought that some record of the life and doings of one of the very few men who are distinguished from their contemporaries by

an original turn of mind would not be undesirable. For it would show that though our times manifest almost all the defects of an age of transition, such as the servility attaching to the spirit of imitation, and others so graphically described by Gibbon towards the end of Chapter LXVI. of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," yet it does not exhibit one dead level of mediocrity, of commonplace men, chained to the earth, earthy. For here and there it is relieved by a spark of genius. It must, however, be admitted that even the best type of our educated men, not only in this Presidency but throughout India, have as yet done "nothing of permanent literary interest." This is indeed a regrettable fact which is accounted for by Mr. Pillai in his biographies of representative men in Southern India by the supposition that "Indians generally, however highly cultured, are wanting in system and method in their work, and do not utilize their leisure in the proper manner." I fear it is not a satisfactory and sufficient explanation of the phenomenon. For it will be

extremely incorrect and unjust to say of Mr. Ranade, for instance, that he was wanting in system or method in his work, and that he did not utilize his leisure in the best possible manner, as those who knew him are perfectly aware that he was most systematic in his daily life and employed his leisure hours in the most profitable way. I think the proper explanation of the fact will be found elsewhere. Gibbon, noticing a similar state of things at the revival of classical literature in Europe in the 15th Century, says at the end of Chapter LXVI. of the "Decline and the Fall of the Roman Empire": "but in that era of learning it will not be easy to discern a real discovery of science, a work of invention or eloquence, in the popular language of the country. But as soon as it had been deeply saturated with the celestial dew, the soil was quickened into vegetation and life; modern idioms were reformed; the classics of Athens and Rome inspired a pure taste and a generous emulation; and in Italy, as afterwards in France and England, the

pleasing reign of poetry and fiction was succeeded by the light of speculative and experimental philosophy. Genius may anticipate the season of maturity; but in the education of a people, as in that of an individual, memory must be exercised before the powers of reason and fancy can be expanded; nor may the artist hope to equal or surpass, till he has learned to imitate, the works of his predecessors." I think in our country the soil is not yet sufficiently saturated with the celestial dew to yield a harvest of original works of permanent interest. We are still passing through the stage of imitation which, in the nature of things, must precede the age of authors of original ideas and thoughts. Just "as the study of the ancients" (in the language of Gibbon) "had given fetters, rather than wings, to the human mind" in Europe in the 15th century, the study of the best English authors and of the ancients either directly or through the medium of the English by the Natives of this country appears to have a similar effect upon them, to have

resulted only in the growth of imitators, translators, commentators, annotators, and makers of school books in this, the first century of English Education, on this side of India at least. This is inevitable; for it is what history teaches us to expect. It cannot, therefore, be well complained of. The merit of men like Mr. Ranade lies in this, that they, rising head and shoulders above the host of imitators, and translators, and petty story-tellers, who figure not very creditably in the half-yearly reports of the Government Reporter on the Native Press, appear to be animated with a spark of genius, and to herald the dawn of better times when under the liberalizing and elevating influence of Western civilization, original thinkers and men of genius may appear amongst us, who may produce works of a lasting character in every department of literature and science.

The sources from which I have derived the materials of this biography may be mentioned here.

Mr. Waman Balkrishna Ranade, Editor of the Poona Dnyàn Chakshu, now deceased, has

written a small biography of Mr. Ranade in Marathi, consisting of 44 pages of his life, in a succinct manner. I have utilized this biography in narrating the principal events in Mr. Ranade's life. ✓

The published writings of Mr. Ranade have been freely drawn upon for illustrating his views and opinions upon different subjects. Where it was possible I have expressed his views and opinions in his own words. This may appear to have resulted in overloading the text with extracts from his writings in places. But the reader perhaps will not object to this, when it has the effect of clearly elucidating his opinions and views.

His letters to various persons would have been of much use in bringing out the main features of his character. But unfortunately I have been able to secure hardly any of much importance, though it is a well-known fact that he was throughout his life a copious letter-writer, keeping up almost a constant correspondence not only with distinguished personages, but with almost everybody.

who invited his opinion or sought his advice on any subject of public interest or private concerns. There was such a constant flow of letters to him from various persons throughout India as required almost a Gladstonian activity to answer them. But he was not found wanting in such activity. For every letter was regularly answered. My only regret is that I have not been able to get hold of a considerable number of his letters, which would have elucidated my subject in a manner better than I have been otherwise able to do. Rao Bahadur V. N. Pathak, M.A., retired Headmaster of the Poona High School, has greatly assisted me in writing this biography. He is almost the only living schoolfellow of Mr. Ranade, and being one of his intimate friends has furnished me with valuable notes regarding some events in his life. He has, besides, willingly and cheerfully undertaken the troublesome task of revising some portions of this work, making useful suggestions on points which otherwise would have remained unnoticed. I therefore take this op-

portunity of thankfully acknowledging my obligations to him. Mr. F. G. Selby, M.A., Principal of the Deccan College, has laid me also under a deep debt of great obligation by revising the whole of this work from the beginning to the end, making valuable suggestions for improving it, which have been acted upon, and which it is to be hoped will make it more presentable to the reader than it otherwise would have been. I, therefore, take this opportunity of expressing my cordial thanks to him.

My personal knowledge of Mr. Ranade and his career was not an unimportant factor in the materials for writing his life. I knew him I may say intimately from 1875, when I was appointed subordinate Judge of Wadgaon and joint subordinate Judge at Poona, to assist him in clearing off the heavy arrears of his Court. Since I came in contact with him, his character and conduct have produced such deep and lasting impressions on my mind as I think neither time nor distance can efface or obliterate. It is no wonder then that I

watched his career with admiring interest. My friend, the late lamented Shankar Pandurang Pandit, who was also an intimate friend of Mr. Ranade, and was one of his most ardent admirers, used to say: "Who will write the life of our grand old man?" The question struck me at the time, and I often thought whether I could answer it. But my onerous duties as a Subordinate Judge allowed me very little leisure to entertain the idea of writing his biography. However, on taking a long furlough in 1894, preparatory to my retirement from the service, the idea again occurred to me. And as the furlough allowed ample leisure to me, I thought to attempt to fulfil the wishes of my friend, Mr. Pandit, and began to collect materials for the work, which was not an easy task, as the writings of Mr. Ranade were then in a scattered state. And, strange to say, Mr. Ranade appeared very little disposed to afford me any information about his life. He rather tried to dissuade me from the attempt, and to induce me to write a history of our times. But on my expressing

my inability to venture upon such a work as a history of our times, he referred me to his Marathi biography for whatever information I wanted for my work. But the Marathi biography hardly contains any information beyond mentioning the bare facts of his life and family. While labouring under such perplexing difficulty my valued friend, Rao Bahadur V. N. Pathak, came to my rescue, and besides supplying me with valuable notes on Mr. Ranade's life, as I said above, tried hard to overcome his unwillingness that any further attempt should be made at writing his biography, and I am glad to say not without success.

I conclude this preface with adding that I have purposely called this work a sketch of the life of Mr. Ranade, as it is merely a skeleton, consisting of bare facts and inferences from them. I hope some future biographer of Mr. Ranade will infuse life and vitality in the skeleton and make it as life-like as possible. The few readers only whom I expect to have the patience to go through

the following pages, more for the sake of Mr. Ranade than from the interesting nature of the work itself, will, I hope, not form very high expectations about it. For they, I trust, will remember that great expectations are seldom fulfilled. And this work, I fear, is no exception to the rule. I at any rate shall not be to blame if those, whom I have warned what to expect, are disappointed because they do not find more.
