

traditional centres of Sanskrit learning and culture. In the first decade of the present century Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri conducted a search of palm-leaf manuscripts in Orissa. He made the following observation on the district of Puri.

“In the district of Puri, there are thirty-two Sasanas or villages granted to Brahmans in perpetuity by the Hindu Rajas of Orissa. In 1908, I went there with Professor Mac Donell and we calculated that the number of palm-leaf manuscripts (for all Orissa manuscripts are written on palm-leaves with a style) in these Sasanas is nearly two lakhs. The Gobardhana (Bhogabardhana) Matha alone contains more than two thousand manuscripts written in various characters *”.

The earliest available Sanskrit work in the district of Puri is a drama Anargharaghava Natakam (ଅନର୍ଗରାଗହାବ ନାଟକମ୍) written by Murari Mishra (9th century A. D.). This drama was staged before an audience of learned people at the time of a festival of Purusottama (Jagannath).

Sanskrit **
Literature

SATANANDA ACHARYA of 11-12th century A. D. was a resident of Purusottama or Puri and is known for his famous work on astronomy called ‘Bhasvati’. He was also the author of *Satananda Ratnamala* and *Satananda Samgraha* which are considered to be the earliest Smriti works written in Orissa.

JAYADEVA—The famous poet Kaviraj Jayadeva Goswami flourished in the 12th century A. D. and produced his immortal work *Gitagovinda* (ଗୀତଗୋବିନ୍ଦ). Jayadeva was born at Kenduli on the river Prachi, a village located under the Baliana police station of Puri district.

GOBARDHANACHARYA and his brother UDAYANACHARYA were noted Sanskrit scholars of the last part of the 12th century. They are supposed to be the residents of the area comprising the present district of Puri. Gobardhana wrote ‘Aryasaptasati’ (ଅର୍ଯ୍ୟାସପ୍ତଶତୀ) a Sanskrit poem in 700 stanzas and Udayan wrote ‘Bhabavibhinitika’ (ଭବବିଭିନିତିକା) in Sanskrit, the first commentary on the ‘Gita Govinda’ of Jayadeva.

SAMBHUKARA VAJAPEYI AND VIDYAKARA VAJAPEYI—Sambhukara Vajapeyi (13th century A. D.) and his son Vidyakara Vajapeyi are the two noted Smriti writers who

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** This account of the Sanskrit Literature of Puri district is chiefly based on the prefaces to the Descriptive Catalogues of Sanskrit Manuscripts prepared by the Manuscripts Section of the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneshwar, and other books of reference.