



Janubhau Nimkar

Death 1925

Ravji Gopal Mhaskar and Nimkar brothers set up Swadesh Hitachintak Natak Mandli in 1894. The company performed prose as well as musical plays. 'Shakuntal', 'Soubhadra', 'Mruchhakatik', 'Shap Sambhram', 'Gopichand', 'Mudrika', and 'Chandrasah were a few of them.

In 1897, Janubhau successfully produced Baba Dongre's play 'Chandrasena'. Swadesh Hitachintak started competing with Kirloskar Natak Mandli, since then. Swadesh Hitachintak gathered momentum when Keshavrao Bhosale started playing Sharda, in 1902 in the play bearing the same name. The company was perhaps the first theatre group to put up 'Shakuntal' in the Sanskrit language.

After a vertical split in 1907, Janubhau took up Mama Varerkar's play 'Kunjavihari' and produced it with great success. Vishnupant Pagnis, in the Gujarathi garb of Radha and Gujarathi songs literally maddened the crowds. Though Janubhau was not very much

educated, he had studied holy books like Gita, Bhagwat, etc.

He showed due respect for the fine art called 'drama'. He saw to it that all actors did their roles, major or minor, as per decided by the director. He never played to the gallery. His performances were sleeks, the actors' diction perfect and there would be no prompter. Janubhau himself gave rigorous training to his actors in speech and diction.

He never got carried away with excessive craze for music and nor did he let his troupe do so. He certainly did have drawbacks, such as impatience, adamance and irascible nature. In 1912, Swadesh Hitachintak Natak Mandli came to an end.

It enjoyed lime-light with its two hit plays 'Sharda' and 'Kunjavihari' for about a decade and a half. The company must be given credit for introducing a unique singer-actor like Keshavrao Bhosale onto the Marathi stage.

