In Hindu philosophy of Vairagya, Gyana and Bhakti, the works of Adi Sankar particularly, Bhaja Govindam, Bhattruhi's Vairgaya Satakam, Vyasa's Srimad Bhagabatam, Mahabharat and Srimad Bhagabat Gita and Tulsi Das's Sri Ramacharita Manas have played effective and tremendous role among the learned scholars, pundits and devotees. But the 'Manobodha Chautisa' written in Oriya by Bhakta Kabi, Bhakta Charan Das has exerted the same and somewhat more influence among the illiterate, literate, semi-literate common people all over Orissa, to make them conscious of immortality of name of God and the impermanence of other worldly name, fame, wealth, body, appearance etc. There were days, when, the students in Chatasalis before introduction of school system, used to get by heart this Manobodha Chautisa and recite with fine tone in chorous like in Gurukula system of study. The chanting and learning of Manobodha Chautisa was able to bring proper religious bent of mind among small children leading them to go for religious life, devotion and chanting of name of God in the midst of hurry activity. The thought power was directed to wards God instead of making them materialistic. The poem starts with each alphabet of Oriya language and ends covering almost all alphabets in Oriya. It has been written in simple language with words used in common talk and has been more thought provoking and piercing to mind being based on actual observation of the happening taking place day to day and depicting universal truth to be imprinted in the brain both in conscious, subconscious and superconscious mind of children, youths, adults and elders. It teaches the life management and man-making and human resource development. Bhakta Kabi Madhusudan Rao's 'Barnabodha' written in Oriya deals with some stray poems, having theme and direction to lead children to religious life. But Bhakta Charan Das, deals systematically, methodically, stage by stage relying on actual observation of situation in real life. This work is immortal though written in Oriya, but has not been rendered to foreign languages to attract due attention of readers of other languages.

In brief, 'Manobodha' means 'to coax mind properly' and to accept some thought without hesitation. Poet asks the readers to have Darshan of black face of Lord Sri Jagannath as life is short, and nothing will go with man when the life departs from his body. The body to which, he dresses, with which he sleeps on decorated beds, will one day be food of jackals and vultures after death. Foul smell will come out from dead body. Many persons being your known ones, have already left the world being dead, but none of them have been able to take with them a single dust what to speak of other valuable riches. You are not chanting the name of Guru and Govind through your tongue, instead you are engrossed in earning riches. You will no more be owner of the said property after your death in respect of whatever you have acquired by earning and stored in the shape of house and within the house. You instead of being...
considered their owner and their own will be declared as ghost. Your own wife will be protecting herself from the fear of your ghost, by taking means to tantrik tricks. After death, your family with other relatives will be purified by Suddhi Kriya. To cross the ocean of the world, you arrange and make time to serve and approach your Guru, i.e. religious teacher. Your life time is decreasing day by day. Your time to remain in life is becoming less and less and it is not known, when death will snatch you away. You make your appearance like beautiful doll, but look inside your body, you can see what wastes, horrified things are there inside your body, which looks beautiful outwardly being decorated by the covering of skin. Hence divert your mind from such horrible body and concentrate on Lord Sri Jagannath. Your mind instead of beautifying your body and outward appearance should get rid of conceit tricks and cunningness and chant name of Govind. After death, your body will be dead one and none will touch it as it will be treated as untouchable. Six sticks will be necessary customarily to make a carrier to bind the Dead body on it for being carried to burial/burning place. The Lord of death Yama does not have any sympathy for young boy, when he approaches to make a person on death. Hence, you should not be confident that you will live long. You must know that not a single man is immortal in this world. You can be saved from the worldly worries by chanting name of Lord Sri Jagannath. You are attracted towards Jhula, (shoulder bag) Kantha (thick cloth knit wrapper), towel and wearing clothes. You dash and jump to worldly activities like a mad man. But when you would stumble, you may face fatal death. You cannot get up to stand erect. Once you face death, you cannot rise to survive. Once a dry leaf falls down from tree, it can never be joined to the living tree to remain afresh again. You are restless day and night and plunged in worldly activities. It is all as good as day dream. Nobody will go with you, you alone has to depart from your body after death. Only name of God will accompany your journey after death. You think very strongly and confidently that all belong to you, but at death when you will become lifeless, nobody shall be yours. Like a beautiful young lady is carried in a palanquin covered by the screen and doors, your inside body contains an altar quite sacred on which has been seated the invisible, all-pervading God. You will be cheated and repent at the time of death, unless prior to coming of your death you devote yourself to the service of Sadguru and worship, remember the name of Govind. You, call the name of Govind, which will remove fear and anxiety from your mind altogether. God has always set his ears alert to respond to your sincere call. He is like a boatman, who looks behind to take any other traveller who wants to sit on the boat, before sailing of the boat to cross the river. The body covered by beautiful skin has all nasty materials inside. It is like a drum which is empty inside, and your inside body is filled with emptiness. The bodily materials will be nothing and will be treated as waste material to be eschewed when life departs from it. If you give something in benevolent charity here during your life time you will get the same in your after life, in return. So liberally give charity as you can take nothing with you, when your body is in critical death bed and dying condition. You will feel breath less and then lifeless. You have to face the abode of God of Death and reap sorrow in many ways.

You boast and call your riches which you claim to have earned and therefore it is exclusively your own. But the real life situation shows that your body as a matter of fact does not belong to you after death. Many of your known persons have departed from this world. Still you do believe that your body will not die and you will enjoy your earned riches with immortal body for ever in this world. This is quite false notion ingrained in your mind. Look, many of the great kings were in this world, but ultimately they have left the world. None of them remained for ever in this world to enjoy their riches. The parasites will enjoy your hard earned, and accumulated wealth. They will build their houses in your land after your death.
Your body is the place of origin of many diseases. Such bodily and worldly enjoyment is for quite short period. Nobody can protect you and delay your death for a single moment. After death, you will be tortured in the abode of Lord of Death by Yama's attendants. You are endowed with conscience to distinguish between piety and impiety, and follow peity, but you do not do so. You engage yourself to accumulate riches not withstanding that you for that purpose resorted to sinful acts. If you are bent upon engaging yourself in this way, you cannot escape from this worldly bondage of activity. The world runs by piety. You will incur disrepute by doing sinful acts. The sinful acts will lead you to fall in hell, which will put you into untold miseries. You are not uttering the name Hari for a single moment, using your tongue. You are embracing the activity which will destroy your very purpose of life. You devote on impermanent affairs. Like in morning the Sun rises, so in all your body, the lotus-eyed God is pervading. You take shelter under His mercy. Fix your mind in lotus feet of Lord. Still there is time to change your way of life. Like flowers swim and swing in heavy wind and lose their identity, you engage yourself in rememberance of Lord and that will yield you true and rewarding fruit which is the very purpose of this human life. You should not on your own accord, bind the knotted rope around your neck to hang yourself to death. Repeatedly you are impressed not to go for the worldly affairs, guard yourslef against sorrow of hell, by turning your mind Godwards in time, so that you cannot repent in hell. From the very start, worship and serve God under the guidance of a Sadguru. You take it granted that nobody can cross the vast ocean, when the boat is in broken and leaking condition. You have to be strong by relying on the infallible shelter of God. God is very near to the sincere and devotional thought and is far away from non-devotional thought. This life has no meaning and is spent in wasteful way by engaging in false delusive dream like activity. After death, people will call you dead. You tell others die, but you yourself will one day be dead. An animal once takes birth in the world will sure to meet death one day. To keep your reputation intact, chant and remember Sri Hari. Apprehending the bondage to face from the side of Yama, you think the greatness of Lord Sri Jagannath. The ocean of world looks apparently beautiful but the inner depth is filled with hellish affairs. Never rely on the image of appearance, as neither the king nor the subjects will survive for ever in this world. You are daily seeing in your eyes and hearing through yours ears this reality of life. Still you are tempted to accumulate wealth and riches by hook and crook. Temptation brings ruin. You cannot get human life, when you aspire to have one more life. You are wasting your rare human birth, by engaging yourself in worldly materialistic affairs. You will not benefit out of this, your very capital will be lost in the business, what to speak of earning more profit. Hence remember Sri Krushna, chant His name, serve Him, meditate on His lotus feet, be content on remembering Him.

Somanath Jena is a retired Additional Secretary to Govt. of Orissa and lives at Walliganj, Po-Bhanjapur, Baripada, in the District of Mayurbhanj.