

**A CRITICAL APPRECIATION**

OF

**KĀLIDĀSA'S**

**MEGHASANDĒŚA**

A LECTURE DELIVERED

BY

**Rao Bahadur, M. Rangacharya, M.A.,**

*Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology,  
Presidency College, Madras.*

PRINTED BY M. C. N. AT

THE BRAHMAVADIN PRESS, MADRAS.

FOR THE SANSKRIT ASSOCIATION,

*Presidency College, Madras.*

PRICE 8 As.

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION

OF

**KĀLIDĀSA'S - -**

**MEGHASANDEŚA**

A LECTURE DELIVERED

BY

**Rao Bahadur, M. Rangacharya, M.A.,**

*Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology,  
Presidency College, Madras.*

---

PRINTED BY M. C. N. AT  
THE BRAHMAVADIN PRESS, MADRAS.

---

FOR THE SANSKRIT ASSOCIATION,  
*Presidency College, Madras,*

PRICE 8 As.

## Preface.

This criticism of Kālidāsa's *Meghasandēśa*, has been reproduced mainly with the aid of the short hand notes taken down by one of the members of the Sanskrit Association. At the request of the Association, it has been revised and expanded in places, to make the criticism as nearly complete and comprehensive as possible. The Association cannot feel too thankful to its President, Rao Bahadur Professor M. Rangacharya, M.A., for the great kindness with which he delivered the address, and also for the still greater kindness in his having so readily undertaken the task of revising and expanding it. The Sanskrit Association has, with pardonable pride, felt anxious to have it printed, and has got it published in the belief that it will surely help to make the readers of Kālidāsa's *Meghasandēśa* understand and appreciate well its high artistic excellence.

PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, }  
MADRAS. }  
5th December, 1910. }

M. VEDANTACHARI,  
Hon. Secretary,  
Sanskrit Association.

## A CRITICAL APPRECIATION

OF THE

### MEGHASANDEŚA.

At an ordinary meeting of the Presidency College Sanskrit Association, after congratulating the essayist upon his having dealt with many of the vital points bearing upon the beauty of the *Meghasandēśa* and thus eulogising the power of poetic appreciation so well displayed by him, and after congratulating also the several speakers upon the critical aptitude which they exhibited in their remarks, the Chairman, Professor M. Rangacharya, spoke as follows on the subject of the essay, namely, the merit of the *Meghasandēśa* as a poem :—

Gentlemen,

To start with, let me give you in one sentence my own idea regarding the literary merit of the *Meghasandēśa*. I consider it to be one of the most perfect products of the poetic art known to human culture and civilization. When I say this, it is certain to appear to those people, who are not inclined to agree with me

in thinking so highly of that poem, that I am indulging in unjustifiable exaggeration. I know that there are people, who, without the ability to place themselves in the position of the poet, without understanding what we in Sanskrit speak of as कविहृदय, try to judge the production of the poet; and if the mind of the critic is not in sympathetic attunement with the mind of the poet, the criticism cannot be just or accurate, as it cannot be characterised, owing to his very want of sympathy, by unerring insight or by comprehensive grasp. That must be to you quite clear; and the judgment of such a critic is therefore bound to prove unworthy of acceptance, when viewed from the standpoint of what may be called the science of literary criticism. To be able to judge any poem aright, we have to make out first of all its motive, and then the plan adopted by the poet to give that motive its most appropriate expression. To know this is to know the कविहृदय or the heart of the poet. This need to know the heart of the poet does not mean that we are called upon to identify ourselves with the poet to the extent of becoming blind to his faults; for then there would be no judging other than as one might judge one's

self. We are all apt, howsoever wise or howsoever learned or howsoever thoughtful we may be reputed to be, to judge ourselves rather leniently, that is, to consider our faults to be excusable and not very objectionable, and our merits to be generally of an extraordinary character. Even poets, I think, are apt to judge themselves in that lenient manner in many respects.

To make myself distinctly understood in respect of this need to know the heart of the poet, let me illustrate what I mean with the aid of the pictorial art. In that art, as indeed in every other fine art, there is what they speak of as "realism," and there is also what they speak of as "idealism". Realism in art is, as I daresay you know, based upon the belief that all art has to be an endeavour to produce an accurate image or record of nature, while idealism in art aims at depicting beauty in what may be conceived to be ideal as opposed to actual conditions. Harmony with human experience thus forms the basis of realistic art, even as constructive imagination happens to be the life-principle of idealistic art. True art is, as I conceive, an appropriate combination of both

realism and idealism so understood. There can be no realistic art which is altogether lacking in idealism, nor again can there be any idealistic art which is altogether lacking in realism. Such idealistic art as happens to be altogether lacking in realism is certain to be something which is unrealisable by the human mind, as indeed there can be nothing corresponding to it in human experience. Consequently, such art cannot have anything like a firm mental or moral basis on which it may rest. Similarly, pure realism without the admixture of idealism will make the pictorial art degenerate into mere portrait-painting, and may even turn it into something akin to photography. Therefore, realism without the touch of idealism cannot make art alive artistically, nor can idealism in art embody positively telling or lasting beauty without the aid of the elements of realism. When, therefore, we speak of certain kinds of poetry as being realistic, what we intend to convey thereby is that the elements of realism are more dominant in it than those of idealism. When, in the same manner, we speak of certain other kinds of poetry as being idealistic we mean that in it the elements of idealism are more dominant than those of realism.



If you bear this in mind, it will at once become clear to you that by the *kavi-hṛidaya* of Kālidāsa in relation to his *Meghasandēśa* we have to understand the nature as well as the amount of artistic idealism which he has put into the poetry in that poem. If we do not make this out well, it is impossible for us to judge that poetry aright; and in any critical examination of the *Meghasandēśa*, it is particularly necessary to take a peep into the heart of the poet who created it, because in this poem there is a deliberate display of a charming idealism which is almost entirely responsible for its unique beauty of conception as well as execution.

The plot of the poem is quite simple. A Yaksha, in authority under Kubera, the Lord of Wealth and King of Alakā, misconducts himself through pride of power, and is banished by his royal master and sent down from the Himālayas to the plains below to spend the appointed year of exile there. He takes his abode during the exile in the hermitages close to mount Rāmagiri in Central India, and naturally finds it hard to bear calmly the keen heart-pang caused by his separation from his beloved spouse in Alakā. On the nearing of the rainy season, he



sees a cloud hanging upon the slopes of Rāmagiri; and probably knowing that its journey is northwards, he addresses it in meltingly plaintive language and requests it to be kind enough to convey a message of love and hope from him to his beloved away in Alakā. To enable the friendly cloud-messenger to go easily to Alakā, the route from Rāmagiri to this capital of Kubera is described in detail, then the beauty of Alakā is portrayed in highly pleasing poetic language, the topography and artistic loveliness of his own mansion therein are thereafter clearly pointed out, the fancied condition of his spouse at the time of the arrival of the cloud-messenger in Alakā is then painted with all the lively glow of a powerfully creative imagination, and then the heart-enthralling message itself is dictated, the poem being made to end at last with an appropriate benediction pronounced in sincere thankfulness upon the magnanimous cloud-messenger for his ready and willing service in consoling the afflictions of troubled love.

Now let me tell you here that I am in fact among those who believe in the probability of Rāma's message to Sītā in Laṅkā, sent through Hanumat, having suggested to Kālidasa the

creation of his lovely *Meghasandēśa*; and a comparison of the condition of Rāma at the time as described by Vālmīki in his famous *Rāmāyaṇa*, with the condition of our Yaksha as he sends to his beloved in Alakā his encouraging message of love through the friendly cloud, is very well calculated to show to us some of those touches of idealism which have made the *Meghasandēśa* so choicely artistic. To those who carefully try to understand the situation, it ought not to be difficult to make out that Rāma was at the time subject to a great complexity of emotions. The perfection of the love between Rāma and Sītā is shown in the *Rāmāyaṇa* to have reached the highest Indian ideal of excellence, even before it could be tested by the trials and hardships of their exile into the forest ; and the highly happy language of Vālmīki in describing that perfection gives us a really beautiful picture of the supreme felicity of their life of mutual love and confidence. Here is the well-known description as given at the end of the *Bālakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* :—

प्रिया तु सीता रामस्य दासः पितृकृता इति ।

गुणाद्रूपगुणाच्चापि प्रीतिर्भूयोऽभ्यवर्धत ॥

तस्याश्च भर्ता द्विगुणं हृदये परिवर्तते ।

अन्तर्जातमपि व्यक्तमाख्यति हृदयं हृदा ॥

It is this love which made Sītā so strongly and so warmly insist upon going into exile with her husband Rāma ; it is this love which made her think lightly of that splendid royalty and all its attractive accompaniments which they had to give up in allowing themselves to be banished into the forest for fourteen long years ; and again it is this same love which induced her to court so willingly the fearful dangers and unimaginable trials, naturally associated in those days with life in the forest, under the unshakable conviction that, whether in weal or in woe, the place of the dutiful and loving wife is always by the side of her husband. And who among us does not know that this love of theirs became day by day strengthened and exalted by the very trials and troubles of their unaccustomed forest-life, and that in the delightful calm and glowing sunshine of that love their happiness in their exile was unbounded and indescribably blissful ? Then suddenly came the catastrophe : Sītā was stolen away, and poor Rāma could know nothing of her whereabouts and felt immensely

troubled and puzzled as to what had become of her. Please think of his agony in this condition ; and you will see at once what a complexity of emotions there is in it. The great grief due to the thoughts of the perils to which his beloved Sītā in her absolutely helpless condition would be surely subjected—that was of course the predominant feeling in his mind. But we cannot say that his mind was in any manner free from the typical Kshattriya's sense of wounded honour and pride. That he must have been at the time very powerfully impelled to find out the wrong-doer and to take revenge upon him is also quite natural. Moreover, it cannot but be plain to you all that he must have been in that crisis as agitated about Sītā's honour as about her safety and welfare. Grief, pity, indignation, anger, martial revengefulness, and withal a sense of hopeless forlornness were all there working vigorously in his mind.

Further you may notice that, like all loving husbands in his situation, he was also actuated by the very natural desire for re-union with his beloved Sītā, who was to him such an ideal wife and companion in life. It is almost impossible for us to analyse well the perplexing complexity

of his emotions. But the case of the Yaksha in the *Meghasandēśa* is very different. It is pointed out by many critics of the poetic art that the natural gift of the poet and his skill as an artist are often brought out exceedingly well by the very manner in which he chooses his theme. Kindly observe that in this poem, the *Meghasandēśa*, the Yaksha's mind is most skilfully isolated from all other emotions than love, in as much as the one all-absorbing emotion in his mind is shown to be his pathetic longing for re-union with his beloved in Alakā. In fact it is the intense pathos of the anguish of the lover, on his having been inevitably separated from his beloved, which is painted in elegant and highly melodious language in this strikingly beautiful poem. The Yaksha exhibits no resentment at all against his lord and master Kubera, for his having banished him from Alakā for one whole year ; nor does he indulge in any sort of self-censure for having brought upon himself the dire displeasure of his master. The poem is made to start with the assumption that the Yaksha has somehow come to believe in the inevitability of his painful separation from his beloved spouse, and that he is therefore prepared to live

out uncomplainingly the whole period of his banishment, in spite of the great keenness of his anguish owing to his having to be away from his beloved. This skilfully accomplished isolation of the emotion of temporarily troubled and disunited love, and the artistic way in which it is made to work out its own course quite logically to its natural culmination, altogether unaffected by strange and extraneous circumstances,—in both these we see the workmanship of the master-hand; and the inspiration of the genius for idealism in poetry, which Kālidāsa must have had, becomes thereby distinctly revealed to us in this poem

Regarding the plastic art of the statuary and the nature of what constitutes the ideal in his art, it has been said that the “ideal is to be attained by selecting and assembling in one whole the beauties and perfections which are usually seen in different individuals, excluding everything defective or unseemly, so as to form a type or model of the species,” and that, accordingly, “the Apollo Belvedere is the *ideal* of the beauty and proportion of the human frame”. I mention this to you now to enable you to see how the chief merit of the idealistic artist is to be found in his

power of selection and synthesis. He has to select the elements of beauty from nature, and has to synthesise them so as to give them a strikingly natural and ideally expressive embodiment. Therefore another touch of the hand of the master-artist that you may see in this poem is in the poet having made the hero—I would rather call him the sufferer in the poem—a Yaksha. This Yaksha does not resemble any ordinary human being ; he represents in Sanskrit poetry an ideal of life which is in many ways other than purely human. Rāma, for instance, was a truly human prince, who felt very humanly and acted very humanly in the situation which we have been considering. That Rāma indeed felt then very humanly and also acted very humanly comes out most clearly from the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki, although it is that same *Rāmāyaṇa* which has made our people look upon Rāma as a divine incarnation. The way, in which he at once agreed to the terms of alliance proposed to him by Sugrīva, and through his alliance endeavoured to find out and regain his Sītā, shows to us how Rāmā, like most of us, was, in the extremity of the great agony to which he had been driven, ready to take advantage of any help that was



offered to him under any condition, so that he might see if thereby he could come to know the whereabouts of his dear Sītā and be in a position to recover her. In the course of his painful and weary wanderings subsequent to her loss, he was able to learn that she had been forcibly carried away by some wild barbarian chieftain to the south of the country. Then he met Hanumat, who took him to his chief Sugrīva, from whom Rāma obtained more information regarding who it might be that had stolen away Sītā. Rāma was afterwards shown the jewels which Sītā had thrown down as she was being forcibly carried away by Rāvaṇa. Imagine how Rāma must have felt when he looked at those jewels, and to what extent the shock of his grief must have been intensified by his looking at them. When he was in this condition of intense agony, there came to him the offer of Sugrīva's help. He said in effect—"I shall be your ally and give you my help as against your enemy, provided you will be my ally and give me your help as against my enemy"; and according to the precepts of the *Nitiśāstra* known to our ancients in this country, that is, according to their rules of polity

internal as well as external, to enter into an alliance under such circumstances on those terms was considered to be perfectly legitimate. "If you render help unto me in the matter that I have nearest my heart, I will render help unto you in the matter that you have nearest your heart"—is further a form of agreement which is certainly very common among men and quite as appropriate as it is common; and when entering into such an alliance with Sugrīva, Rāma did not and could not take the trouble of going through a careful consideration of the moral worthiness or otherwise of what he was asked to perform for Sugrīva as an ally of his. Whether Rāma's killing of Vālin, for instance, was just or good or appropriate in itself is a question which, if we are to judge Rāma from the standpoint of a divine incarnation, he should have taken into very serious consideration before readily assenting to the proposed terms of his alliance with Sugrīva. Nevertheless, he did not at all consider that question, and acted on the other hand very unchivabrously and at once so as to make sure that he positively secured the proffered alliance of Sugrīva.

In so representing Rāma, Vālmīki has,

I believe, exhibited to very great advantage his own mighty and wonderful genius as a perfect master of the poetic art. It is true that he has made Rāma altogether human in the situation ; and in not lifting him above the common weaknesses of suffering and sorrowful man, which ordinarily make him quail under the agony of all the great trials of life, the poet has represented Rāma in such a strikingly realistic style as at once compels us to fix our attention on the depth of his despondency and at the same time commands our sincerest sympathy in his behalf. This touch of realism in the depiction of Rāma truly shows to us the very great depth of the forlorn hopelessness into which he had fallen in consequence of the loss of his dear Sītā. In that condition it was not really possible for him to calmly consider delicate questions of morality so as to determine deliberately whether he might or might not take advantage of what of itself turned up in his way as a helpful means for recovering his lost Sītā. You or I or anybody else placed in such a situation under such circumstances could not have acted differently from Rāma ; and in fact it is in this thorough humanness of Rāma here that we find

the real merit of the poetry describing him as he was in that trying crisis. The pathos of the grief of Rāma and the utter forlornness of his highly pitiable condition would not surely have been brought out so well, if only Rāma had been made to indulge even for half a minute in weighing the morality of the course proposed to him by Sugrīva.

While Rāma is thus represented as having been in that crisis quite human by Vālmīki, we find that Kālidāsa has made the hero of his *Meghasandēśa* notably non-human from the very beginning. It is a well understood fact in the Sanskrit language that, like the Gandharvas and the Kinnaras, the Yakshas are believed to be non-human beings of a more or less celestial type. Corresponding to them there may be or there may not be real beings in actual life. The probability is that no such beings actually exist ; and their non-existence in real nature tends, I believe, to enhance the aesthetic idealism which pervades the whole of the *Meghasandēśa*. And in the same manner in which excellence in the art of music as well as in the power to enjoy music exceedingly well is considered to be the peculiar feature of the

Gandharvas, the peculiar feature of the Yakshas is considered to be in their wonderful fitness and opportunities and ability to enjoy well the pleasures of life. Kubera is, as you know, the Lord of Wealth ; as such, he is the master of all the *nidhis* or treasures of wealth hidden within the bowels of the earth. They are all of them at his disposal ; and what is at his disposal is rightly held to be available for his subjects, the Yakshas, to enjoy. I may remind you here of how Kālidāsa speaks of these same subjects of Kubera as *Yakshēvaras* and *Villeśas* ; and this way of speaking about them cannot fail to impress us with the idea that, with the immensity of the wealth at their disposal, it must have been very easy and natural for them to make their lives as full of pleasures and enjoyments of all sorts as possible. Such being the case, it is of course very natural that there should be a large amount of what may be called sensuous colouring in the poetry of the *Meghasandēśa*, for the reason that a Yaksha happens to be the central figure in that poem. If, after having introduced a Yaksha as the central figure into the poem, Kālidāsa had not made the poetry of it really as sensuous as it is, there would have been a self-con-

tradiction in the plot as well as in the execution of the poem ; and surely no work of art in which there is an incompatible combination of contradictory elements can long continue to be free from well-deserved condemnation and consequent oblivion. Such a work of art is bound to condemn itself as a matter of course.

Accordingly, the commonly observed dominance of the sensuous element in the poetry of the *Meghasandēśa* is in full keeping with what we may take to be the intention of the poem, and does not in any way mar its higher purpose. Nevertheless, I feel I must tell you in passing that the poetry, which is so wholly sensuous as to be altogether devoid of supersensuous elements, is apt to be uninspiring, howsoever beautiful it may be in its setting and expression and life. However, I consider Kālidāsa's art to be peculiarly excellent in respect of the way in which he makes the supersensuous blend in beautiful harmony with the sensuous : and for an illustration of this in the *Meghasandēśa*, let me draw your attention to this stanza :—

संतप्तानां त्वमसि शरणं तत् पयोद प्रियायाः

संदेशं मे हर धनपतिक्रोधविश्लेषितस्य ।

गन्तव्या ते वसतिरलका नाम यक्षेश्वराणां

बाह्योद्यानस्थितहरशिरश्चन्द्रिकाधौतहर्म्या ॥

I have no doubt that you can all see in the last line here a beautiful blending of the super-sensuous with the sensuous, in as much as it is mentioned therein that the moonlight which whitens the lustrous appearance of the many mansions in Alakā proceeds from the head of Śiva Himself, who, as the friend of Kubera, is considered to be residing generally in the outergardens of that city. That the grandeur of the appearance of royal mansions beautifully built becomes intensified by their being viewed in the soft white light of the shining moon is fully capable of being borne out by the seeing vision itself. But, when we are told that such soft white light proceeds here from the moon worn as an ornament on the head of the Great God Śiva Himself, our mind cannot fail to perceive at once an enhancement of that same beauty on our coming to know and admire in this way the delight which even such an austere God as He takes in residing in the outer gardens of that grand and magnificent city. More than even this, does not the presence of Śiva there tend to



give to Alakā the character of a holy place of pilgrimage, so as thereby to make it easier for the Yaksha to induce his cloud-messenger to go there on his nobly beneficent journey ? To go to where love in affliction suffers, with a view to offer to it solace and encouragement and hope — is it not equivalent to going on a really holy pilgrimage ? At any rate, this stanza makes me feel that Kālidāsa must have believed that to go on such a journey with such an errand was equivalent to going on pilgrimage to a place nearest to the heart of God himself.

A careful student of Kālidāsa's poetry may easily make out many such instances of the blending of the supersensuous with the sensuous in his writings ; and I shall now point out to you that his very ideal of love as embodied in this poem is highly spiritual and supersensuous, resembling in many respects the selfless longing of the *bhakta* or divine devotee for the attainment of the love of God and the consequent union and oneness with God. There is, as I daresay you know, a lower kind of love based on the seeking of selfish satisfaction ; and this kind of low love is quite obviously too animal in character to deserve to be illuminated by the

glorious halo of ennobling and exalting poetry. This poem indeed starts very well, as you know, with a hero who is a Yaksha, isolated in mind from all other emotions than love in affliction in consequence of his inevitable separation from his beloved ; and therefore it is very necessary that, to be able to judge the poem aright, we have fully to bear in mind what that ideal of love is which has won the hearty approval and admiration of Kālidāsa. His is in fact an ideal of love which appears to me to be characteristically Indian. I do not of course mean to say by this that the working of the poet's constructive imagination in other literatures than Indian has not given us striking embodiments of the ideal of love admired by Kālidāsa. What I certainly mean is that this ideal of his is markedly in keeping with the genius of Hindu civilisation and its peculiar potency to enjoy all the higher privileges of life through the virtue of self-effacement. According to the psychology accepted in Sanskrit poetics, the delectableness or *rasa* of that aspect of love which culminates in the coming together of the lover and the beloved is held to be different from the *rasa* of that other aspect of love which ardently longs for re-union

during the painful continuance of an enforced separation between the lover and the beloved. Sanskrit writers on poetics call the former of these *rasas* by the name of *sambhoga-śṛīṅgāra* and the latter by the name of *vipralambha-śṛīṅgāra*; and thus we are led to distinguish the love which yearns for and culminates in union from the love which longs passionately for re-union. Of the love which culminates in union, Kālidāsa has described what he considers to be the ideal in a notable stanza in his *Mālavikāgni-mitra*, which runs thus :—

अनातुरोत्कण्ठितयोः प्रसिद्धयता  
समागमेनापि रतिर्न मां प्रति ।  
परस्परप्राप्तिनिराशयोर्वरं  
शरीरनाशोऽपि समानुरागयोः ॥

If there be a lover and a beloved, only one of whom is really and intensely in love while the other is not, then Kālidāsa would say—"To me there is no delight in seeing them come together". If, however, there be a lover and a beloved who love each other really and intensely, and if, in spite of this real and truly mutual love of theirs, it turns out, owing to the adversity of fate or any other unfavourable circumstance,

that they cannot be brought together, then he would say—"Even if they die through the despair due to the impossibility of their coming together at all, it is far better." How, in such death befalling the lover and the beloved, we may appreciate better the delectableness of the passion and pathos of love, I need not tell you, who are acquainted with Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

It is quite true that Kālidāsa himself has not given us a tragic drama like that. Nevertheless, we know that his heart warmly cherished that ideal of the love longing for union, which Shakespeare has so splendidly embodied in his *Romeo and Juliet*. It is evident from the general spirit of the poetry of Kālidāsa that he could not command the requisite sternness to create a love-tragedy similar to *Romeo and Juliet*; and in the *Meghasandēśa*, there is indeed nothing that is in any manner dramatic. As a matter of fact, in the love that longs for union, it is the looking forward to the happiness of the future companionship that forms the active force operating within the warm heart of the lover as well as of the beloved. And when what has been so longingly and so anxiously looked

forward to is actually realised, it happens quite frequently enough that the wished-for ideal ceases, through its very realisation, to be the ideal. The charm of the ideal is much like that of the horizon. It always seems to be sufficiently near to evoke the desire to approach it ; but it is soon found out that the nearer we try to go to it, the farther away does it move from us, so that we can never reach it in actuality. The ideal is an ideal, only so long as we do not approach it too closely. Once the ideal has become transformed into the actual, it can no longer have about it the charm of the ideal. If you know that this kind of disenchantment is in fact a thing of very common occurrence in human experience, you may easily see how,—when all the longing and the anxiety due to the love between the lover and the beloved is ultimately rewarded with the bliss of their union and happy companionship,—very soon the ideal glow of their life of happiness may begin to pale and may even gradually wear away so as to disappear altogether. For instance, those that marry each other because they love each other, may not and frequently enough do not go on loving each other because they have married

each other. Moreover, it is inevitable in the very nature of things that, in the love that longs for union, there should be a certain amount, howsoever small, of selfishness on the part of both the lover and the beloved. In the higher forms of such human love as constitutes the basis of *sambhoga-śṛīṅgāra*, this selfishness cannot evidently be of the grosser kind. But however much we may have it etherialised, we cannot altogether get rid of the main fact that it is there. In the love that longs for re-union, there is always a much greater scope for self-effacement, so much so that the lover, in the keenness and the intensity of his sympathy for his suffering beloved, may well feel that he is completely merged in the beloved, even as the beloved may then equally completely feel that she is merged in the lover. In the *bhakti* religion of love and devotion to God, of which Śrī-Kṛishṇa is known to have been the most famous and the most authoritative expounder among all our ancient teachers, the longing of aspiring human souls for re-union with God is represented like the love which underlies *vīpra-lambha-śṛīṅgāra* ; and it is held that, as this longing grows more and more in intensity, the

self-effacement of the devotee becomes more and more complete, so that in the end he realises that he has actually become one with his God. Thus it ought to be clear to you that, when viewed from this stand-point, the perfection of love lies in the completeness of the self-effacement which it produces in the lover as well as in the beloved. The contemplation of the pathetic and lovely self-effacement of Śakuntalā as painted by Kālidāsa in his deservedly famous drama, is certain to show to us how much he must have valued this way of judging the real perfection of love. His very aim in cleverly combining in the drama of *Śākuntala* the love that longs for union with the love that yearns for re-union seems to be to obtain the needed scope for the exhibition of that self-effacement which forms the true index of the ideally perfect love. It is in fact in Hindu religion and Indian literature that we see so much importance attached to self-effacement looked upon as the natural and necessary result of godly devotion as well as of perfected human love. If we fully understand that, it will in no way be difficult for us to see what great artistic effect the love that longs for re-union



may be made to have in poetry—when it happens to be depicted by the hand of a master poet.

For my having said that, in all probability in this manner, Kālidāsa *chose* his theme, his hero and his ideal of love, some one may, in the way of taking objection to it, ask if genius is not really unconscious and spontaneous. These things like conscious choice and purpose are, I am aware, what we generally attribute to the poet as the result of our critical analysis of what he has more or less spontaneously produced. Because the poet is born a poet, writing poetry may very well be to him quite as natural as living in water is to the fish. There is no doubt therefore that it is in response to the inner promptings of his genius that he produces poetry; and it is we, who afterwards study it and feel pleased with it, that wish to understand particularly the reason why we are so pleased. The intention and the motive and the choicefulness, which we see in the artistic productions of poets, are therefore not what they must have been themselves aware of as such, while producing their poetry, but are as a rule what we rightly or wrongly attribute to them as the result of our

critical study of their poetry. I cannot of course say that there is no truth underlying a contention of this kind. Even Sanskrit literature is not unaware of the gurgling flow of beauty proceeding freely and spontaneously from the fountain of well-endowed genius. I may, for instance, draw your attention in this connection to the tradition which says that the grief of Vālmīki, on seeing a hunter kill the male bird out of a pair of loving *krauñcha* birds, worked itself out into vocal expression quite spontaneously in the form of a *śloka* : शोकः श्लोकत्वमागतः —that is how it is put in Sanskrit. And the *śloka* so uttered is this, as I am sure many of you know :—

मा निषादं प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।

यत् क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥

Thus the great fountain of the mighty genius of Vālmīki began to overflow in spontaneous streams of epic beauty and excellence so as to give us our immortal *Rāmāyaṇa*, and thereby exalt us to a very high place of honour in the hierarchy of culture and civilisation and make of us a worthy people with divinely noble ideals of truth and goodness and beauty. Whatever may be the value we are prepared to attach to

the tradition so current in our country about the sudden and spontaneous manifestation of the great poetic gift of Vālmīki, to such, as have studied the *Rāmāyaṇa* with any sense of real discernment, it cannot but be almost self-evident that the magnificent flow of poetry in that great poem is altogether natural and unpremeditated. Indeed no serious student of the *Rāmāyaṇa* can fail to see that its poetry is really the outcome of the gifted poet's inspiration and poetic passion. All this does not, however, imply that there can be no such thing as self-conscious art in the production of truly charming poetry. As a matter of fact much of the poetry, that is to be found in what is known as *kāvya* literature in Sanskrit, happens, for various reasons, to be of the self-conscious kind ; and the self-conscious literary artist need not be looked upon as an inferior poet, simply for the reason that he is self-conscious, although it may be observed pretty frequently that his self-consciousness as an artist makes his art notably conventional. The success of the self-conscious artist is indeed quite conceivable ; and it is invariably more difficultly won than the success of the poet

who always works in the frenzy of poetic passion. I consider Kālidāsa to be one of the most excellent examples to illustrate the great possibility of success which self-conscious art can command in poetry ; and when I therefore speak of his intention and purpose and choice in relation to the creation of the *Meghasandēśa*, there will be no mistaking me, I hope.

It is in fact *vipralambha* or enforced separation between the lover and the beloved, which enables true love to be tested well. It is only in such separation that we can find out the reality or otherwise of love. That love, to which the maxim—out of sight, out of mind—is applicable, cannot certainly be true love ; for, in the case of what we may look upon as ideal love, it is evidently necessary that the emotion must be unshakable and enduring. That is the first requisite of true love ; and its existence in relation to love in any case can be tested and established beyond doubt only by means of an enforced separation between the lover and the beloved. The second thing needed to make love true is this—that on both sides, that is, on the side of the lover and also on the side of the beloved, there must be an unconscious self-effacement, a self-efface-

ment which follows as a matter of course from the very existence of the love itself. The sincerity of the lover and of the beloved and also the genuineness of the love they feel for each other are determined entirely by the unconscious character of the self-effacement, which becomes clearly visible in each of them in relation to the other. It appears to me that this sort of self-effacement which follows from love is so natural and so spontaneous that to be conscious of it is certain to amount to a self-contradiction. To talk at all of a conscious self-effacement is to give expression to what is almost a contradiction in terms. If we try and succeed in understanding the psychology of love, we shall find that perfect love is wholly incompatible with selfishness. If you happen to be a man caring solely for yourself, for your own pleasures and your own personal delights and conveniences, you are by that very fact shown to be incapable of loving any person other than yourself. When you love, you show, in the very act of loving, that you are willing and able to undergo troubles and annoyances, and the pangs of suffering and even great sacrifices, for the sake of the person whom you love, so

that, if possible, you may thereby bring comfort and convenience and joy and happiness to your beloved. Wherever and in whatsoever relation of life there is this feeling of love, we may make out clearly that it rests everywhere on the basis of ever willing and ever ready service and sacrifice intended for the benefit of the beloved. An enduring attachment between the lover and the beloved, which is capable of spontaneously evoking ready and willing service and sacrifice on the part of each for the good of the other, is, as you may easily see, the same thing as the love from which self-effacement follows quite unconsciously and as a matter of course. Such being the ideal of love entertained by Kālidāsa, we are naturally called upon to expect that the sorrows and the sufferings of the Yaksha, who is the hero of the *Meghasandeha*, should in no way arise out of thoughts concerning himself, but should on the other hand be entirely due to his anxious concern regarding the welfare of his beloved.

In proof of this being really so in his case, let me at once draw your attention to the stanza, wherein the poet gives the reason why the Yaksha offered a loving and respectful welcome



to the cloud, as it appeared on the slopes of mount Rāmagiri at the gradual approach of the rainy season :—

प्रत्यासन्ने नभसि दयिताजीवितालम्बनार्थी

जीमूतेन स्वकुशलमयीं हारायिष्यन् प्रवृत्तिम् ।

स प्रत्यग्रैः कुटजकुसुमैः कल्पितार्घाय तस्मै

प्रीतः प्रीतिप्रमुखवचनं स्वागतं व्याजहार ॥

Observe that the Yaksha is here described as दयिताजीवितालम्बनार्थी, that is, as one who is highly anxious that his beloved should be enabled to support her life somehow during the remaining portion of the period of his exile from Alakā, so that they may come together again at the end of it and be as happy as before. We are further told, as in the second line of the stanza, that the means by which he tried to make it possible for her so to support her life was by sending to her through the cloud a message conveying encouraging news regarding his own welfare. Thus we are led to gather that all his anxiety at the time was about her welfare, which itself was known to him to be completely dependent upon her assured knowledge of his welfare. What care for the welfare of the belov-



ed, and what confidence in the love of the beloved, this really indicates ! These things are indeed very beautifully expressed in another stanza which is even more pathetically poetic. Let me quote that stanza also :—

तां चावश्यं दिवसगणनात्परामेकपत्नी-  
 मव्यापन्नामविहतगतिर्द्रक्ष्यसि भ्रातृजायाम् ।  
 आशाबन्धः कुसुमसदृशः प्रायशो ह्यङ्गनानां  
 सद्यःपाति प्रणयि हृदयं विप्रयोगे रुणाद्धि ॥

How well it comes out from this, that during the trial of separation, the beloved lives, according to the lover himself, on the hope of reunion with the lover, and that it is then the bond of hope alone, which, though tender and delicate like a flower, is able to prevent from failing altogether the loveful and otherwise at-once failing heart of woman in the trying times of separation from her lord and lover ! Surely it cannot be that in the agony of the separated lover his heart knows no pangs of its own. But his own heart-pangs are nothing to him, when weighed against what he, through the eye of love, perceives to be the agony torturing the tender heart of his beloved. Therefore it is that the he feels

more keenly the pangs and pains in the heart of the beloved than those that are in his own, and is wholly forgetful of himself and of all his own troubles and trials. Presently, I shall speak to you about the lovingness of the message, which he dictates to the friendly cloud to be conveyed to his beloved spouse in Alakā; and then also you will be able, as I believe, to see and to appreciate in the right manner the self-forgetfulness of the Yaksha amounting really to self-effacement. The power, which the loving union of heart to heart has in transforming the two hearts into one, is quite magical in its character ; and the spell of that magical power is able to enthrall all hearts. Do we not know that even the heart of God is prone to be influenced by love ? And can we not see that Heaven's light is for us indeed in Heaven's love ?

If I am to offer anything like an adequate justification for my opinion that the *Megha-sandēśa* is one of the most perfect products of the poetic art known to human culture and civilisation, I am certain you will all naturally expect me to show how it is possible for any sane person to believe that the cloud can carry a message, even though it happens to be one of love

and hope. "Fantastic, the whole thing is ; and it is all so unreal and unnatural"—is what some of you may very well say. That is a criticism which it is very possible to level at the *Megha-sandēśa*. Now, before answering such a criticism, I may perhaps tell you that the Yaksha, as he is presented to us in this poem, is very far from sane in the sense in which sanity is ordinarily understood. May I ask you to think and find out for yourselves how far it is actually possible for one to love and to be sane and wise at the same time ? But there is even better justification, than this want of sanity, for the Yaksha to have chosen the cloud to be the carrier of his message of love and hope to his beloved. I remember having read a European critic of poetry say that the essence of poetry largely consists in making Nature human, in putting into the world around us human sympathies and human antipathies, so as to make the lovely things of Nature respond in agreeable harmony to the lovely things in the human heart, and so as to make also the ugly things of Nature quite as disgusting and repellant as ugly things in the human heart. The way in which the man of science studies nature is recognised to be different from the way

in which the poet studies Nature. The poet puts himself into the Nature around him; and after so putting himself into Nature, he evolves out of her all his glowing picture of the good and the beautiful which at once pleases us, catches hold of our hearts, and lifts us up from the level of the human to the sublime level of the divine. Such indeed is the function of the true poet in relation to Nature. The function of the man of science, however, consists in analysing and examining nature as something which is altogether outside the sphere of his own sympathies and antipathies. He is not permitted to put his own human nature into the things that he examines and analyses. If he put his human nature into them, he would be doing serious harm to his function as a man of science.

Since the worthiness of true poetry is in its power to elevate us by appealing to our hearts through the joy which instinctively arises from the apperception of beauty in Nature as well as in things human and things divine, it follows as a matter of course that in all forms of poetry this end has to be attained to a marked extent either by direct personification or by indirect suggestion and implied personification. Therefore in making

the cloud serve as a messenger, by looking upon it as a being possessed of human feelings, of human sympathies and human antipathies, the poet Kālidāsa has done nothing unusual or inartistic. He has done in fact what every true poet is more or less expected to do. I am sure you will not consider it out of place if I point out to you that this way of looking at the true nature of poetic workmanship may be seen to have the support of no less an authority on Sanskrit poetics than Daṇḍin, the author of *Kāvyaadarśa*. In dealing with the *alaṅkāra* known as *svabhāvokti*, he says—

जातिक्रियागुणद्रव्यस्वभावाख्यानमीदृशम् ।

शास्त्रेष्वस्यैव साम्राज्यं काव्येष्वप्येतदीप्सितम् ॥

It cannot but be clear to you from this, that, according to him, that kind of description of things, which is accurately in keeping with what they are actually in nature, holds its sovereignty in the sciences, although it is desirable also in the *kāvya*s. Other writers on poetics in Sanskrit have declared that the description of things as they actually are in nature is permissible in *kāvya*s, only if the things so described are intrinsically beautiful. Otherwise, such a descrip-

tion of things is certain to strike all critical readers as being quite out of place in poetry. Again, in dealing with the *kāvya-guṇa* known as *samādhī*, he defines it as consisting in the superposition, within the limits of human cognisance, of the attributes of one thing upon another ; and the examples he gives in illustration of this *guṇa* are such as have their poetic value in implied personification. After thus defining and illustrating *samādhī*, he extols its poetic value in this manner :—

तदेतत्काव्यसर्वस्वं समाधिर्नाम यो गुणः ।

कविसार्थः समग्रोऽपि तमेनमनुगच्छति ॥

Accordingly, the opinion of Daṇḍin is that this literary attribute of *samādhī*, which mainly consists of personification, forms the whole of the artistic wealth to be found in *kāvyas* and is widely adopted by the entire fraternity of poets. In the *Meghasandēśa*, we have evidently a poetic display of what in the language of Daṇḍin would be a well sustained *samādhī* ; and this has, in my opinion, remarkably enhanced the richness of the poetry in that poem.

It is also worth noting further that the poet has thrown open to us the interior of his heart



and thus enabled us to know the motive why he has made the Yaksha here choose the cloud for his messenger, in that he has distinctly told us—  
 कामार्ता हि प्रकृतिकृपणाश्चेतनाचेतनेषु—that those who suffer from affliction in consequence of troubled love are apt to be suppliant in their attitude in relation to all beings, animate as well as inanimate. One, who is subject to the anguish of separation from his beloved and in whose case the love between him and her is of the ideal kind as understood by Kālidāsa, is naturally not inapt to choose even a cloud to be the bearer of his message of love and hope to his beloved. To my mind there is really nothing surprising or unnatural in this. If indeed there is nothing surprising or unnatural in Rāma having killed Vālin in the hasty and unchivalrous manner in which he killed him, for the reason that, in the forlorn hopelessness of Rāma's situation then and in the intensity of his complex and many-sided agony, it is but human for any one to act in the manner in which he acted,—surely there can be nothing surprising or unnatural in Kālidāsa's Yaksha having thought in earnest that even his cloud-messenger was quite capable of conveying his message of love and hope to his beloved.



I told you a little while ago that the touch of realism, displayed in the unfair and unchivalrous destruction of Vālin by Rāma, is calculated to present to us a tellingly pathetic picture of the great intensity of his agony, as also of the utterly dark cheerlessness of his keenly suffering heart. Similarly, the touch of idealism in the *Megha-sandēśa*, which we cannot fail to observe in the manner in which the Yaksha is made to choose a cloud for his messenger, is well calculated to show to us distinctly the concentrated intensity of that Yaksha's anguish of heart and anxiety for the welfare of his beloved in distant Alakā. He was intensely कामार्तः, and had consequently become प्रकृतिकृपणः; that is, his very nature had become weakened in consequence of his anguish and anxiety, so that his very nerves had lost all their force. When, in this manner, the very nature of a person becomes altogether enfeebled in consequence of the anguish of his separation from the beloved, and the resulting break-down of his heart colours and obscures the vision of his mind, what wonder is there if he then thinks that even a cloud may very well convey from him a message of love and hope to his beloved?

Moreover, it has to be remembered that

Kālidāsa, along with many other poets of note in Sanskrit literature, holds that the coming on of the clouds at the approach of the rainy season is in itself prone to put thoughts of love into the hearts of young men as well as of young women. The cloud, which thus ordinarily affects the heart of youth so as to arouse in it the all-enchanting emotion of love, must surely appear to the lover, who is compelled to be away from his beloved, in the light of a friend who is fully worthy of sincerely trustful confidence. Please try and see how beautifully this idea of the power of the cloud to put thoughts of love into the hearts of youth is expressed by the poet in the very third stanza of the poem :—

तस्य स्थित्वा कथमपि पुरः कौतुकाधानहेतो-

रन्तर्बाष्पश्चिरमनुचरो राजराजस्य दध्यौ ।

मेघालोके भवति सुखिनोऽप्यन्यथावृत्ति चेतः

कण्ठाश्लेषप्रणयिनि जने किं पुनर्दूरसंस्थे ॥

Thus the very appearance of the love-evoking cloud was in itself enough to make him get into a reverie ; and then in that reverie his thoughts turned naturally towards his beloved in Alakā. Therefore almost in the very beginning of his address to the cloud he says —

त्वामारूढं पवनपदवीमुद्गृहीतालकास्ताः

प्रेक्षिष्यन्ते पथिकवनिताः प्रत्ययादाश्वसस्यः ।

कः सन्नद्धे विरहविधुरां स्वय्युपेक्षेत जायां

न स्यादन्योऽप्यहमिव जनो यः पराधीनवृत्तिः ॥

The idea here is that the rousing of the thoughts of love in his heart, caused by the appearance of the cloud, made him feel at once that it was grievously wrong on his part to be regardless of the troubles and trials of his beloved due to his having been compelled to be away from her. To know the cloud to be in this manner कौतुकाधानहेतुः and also सन्तप्तानां शरणम्, and then to think of the troubles and trials of his beloved away in Alakā—are these not surely enough to make it quite reasonable that he wished such a cloud itself to be his messenger? The peculiar logic of the lover is not of course like the usual logic of the dry unenthused intellect. The opinion कामी स्वतां पश्यति, which Kālidāsa has given expression to in his *Śakuntala*, clearly shows to us that he was aware that the logic of the lover was generally apt to be unique. If, as Kālidāsa has told us, the love that longs for union is apt to make the lover see in every

gesture and movement of the beloved reasons to believe that she is willingly handing over her heart to him, the love that, suffering from enforced separation, longs for reunion is also equally apt to make the lover see—illogically, it may be, according to those who are not actuated by such love—agencies in all things around him, which he may utilise for comforting and consoling his beloved so as to lighten the burden of her misery during her painful separation from her lover and lord. If such logic is reasonable and natural from the standpoint of the lover—let me tell you parenthetically that to grant this will in no way affect injuriously the intellectual eminence of any one who grants it—then even the dry and mechanically correct logic of the unenthused intellect is bound to tell us that, in depicting the lover's mental condition and processes, the poet can have no other alternative than to adopt the lover's ways of thought and reasoning. If any poet did otherwise, you would say—and say very rightly—that his portraiture of the lover is entirely unnatural and therefore altogether untrue and inartistic.

If even after this explanation and justification which I have given, there happens to be any

one amongst you, who still persists in thinking that, owing to the unreality of the cloud-messenger, the whole of the *Meghasandēśa* is unnatural and fantastic, we need not feel disheartened by it, nor need we give up his case as that of one who will not be convinced. The fact of the matter in regard to the plot of the poem is, that the author of it has not intended that the cloud should actually carry any message from the love-lorn Yaksha on Mount Rāmagiri to his spouse in Alakā. Just a little careful thought will make it evident to you that what the poet has aimed at is to give us and other readers of the poem an idea of the mental condition of that Yaksha in the situation described in the poem. We may well suppose that the Yaksha told the cloud all that the poem says he did. There can certainly be nothing unnatural or unreal or fantastic in that, so long as it is granted that he was then really capable of feeling and acting as described in the poem. We may also suppose that, carried by the monsoon current, the cloud moved from Central India northwards in the direction of Alakā situated near Kailāsa on the Himalayas. Our over-realistic critic surely will not object to this supposition; and here is

obviously another reason why the cloud was asked to be the bearer of the Yaksha's message of love and hope to Alakā. But what we are not entitled to suppose is, that the cloud did really convey any message from him to his beloved in Alakā. Therefore the poem does no violence to truth by deliberately ignoring the inanimate character of the cloud. On the other hand the poet has openly recognised that it is inanimate. Has he not, as you may remember, said distinctly—

भूमज्योतिस्सलिलमरुतां संनिपातः क्व मेघः

सन्देशार्थाः क्व पटुकरणैः प्राणिभिः प्रापणीयाः ?

Nevertheless, the poetry of the poem largely lies in the poet having made the Yaksha deliver to the inanimate cloud the message intended to be conveyed to his beloved. I am sure you will see there is nothing unnatural or fantastic in his having got into a reverie on seeing the cloud, or in his having become in that state of reverie oblivious of every consideration other than that relating to the welfare of his beloved. How natural and how true to the character of ideal love it is, that in that

reverie his one thought must have been about enabling his beloved, who, according to him, was certain to die otherwise, to live on through hope by at once sending to her encouraging news regarding his own welfare ! In fact the whole of the *Meghasandeha* is an intensely interesting poetic description of how the Yaksha, who is the hero of the poem, felt and acted in his state of reverie in the presence of the cloud ; and if the poet has not made him feel and act otherwise than in a reverie, it is because he has evidently been desirous of maintaining uninjured the hero's reverie of love throughout the whole poem. That the reverie has been so maintained to the end comes out quite clearly from the very last stanza of the poem, to which I may now draw your attention.

एतत् कृत्वा प्रियमनुचितप्रार्थनावर्त्मनो मे  
 सौहार्दाद्वा विधुर इति वा मय्यनुक्रोशबुद्धा ।  
 इष्टान् देशान् जलदं विचरं प्रावृषा संभृतश्री-  
 मां भूदेवं क्षणमपि च ते विद्युता विप्रयोगः ॥

I have no doubt at all that every one of you will agree with me in thinking that the play of the spell of the Yaksha's reverie is distinctly



discernible in this stanza ; and I need not tell you that in the very act of wishing happiness to the cloud just before parting—in wishing that it may never become separated from its spouse the lightning—the Yaksha makes it plain to all of us that the charming spell of his love-reverie is still unbroken.

None can deny that the condition of consciousness in the state of reverie is different from what it is in the state of open wakefulness. It is no fault in any poet, if, in describing the consciousness which is found in the state of reverie, he does not choose to attribute to it those characteristics which belong to it in the state of open wakefulness. Indeed, if any poet did so, he would thereby make himself liable to the criticism that his poetry is as unnatural as it is unreal. I am sure I may now ask you, in fairness to Kālidāsa, to tell me, whether, under the circumstances to which I have drawn your attention, the criticism that the *Meghasandēśa* is fantastic can be considered to be just and well deserved. That the Yaksha got into a reverie on seeing the love-inspiring cloud of the rainy season ; that in that reverie he became almost entirely oblivious of the outside world and of

its many similarities and dissimilarities and laws ; that then his thoughts were all concentrated upon his beloved, the loveful softness and tenderness of whose delicate womanly heart made him keenly anxious about her welfare ; that in this condition of the concentrated agony of the lover, arising out of his intensely lively and all-absorbing sympathy with the beloved, he was led to believe that the northward-moving monsoon-cloud could be made to convey his message of love and hope to his beloved up in the north at Alakā ; that in full earnestness he did deliver the message to his cloud-messenger, feeling certain that it would be conveyed to her and would enable her to sustain her life and to hold on somehow till the happy day of re-union ; and that even after this his reverie seemed to linger on ; — what is there unreal or unnatural in all this ? These things, on the other hand, cannot fail to show to us how sincere and real, how intense and enduring, how truly lively and selfless, and altogether how ideally perfect in character, the love between the Yaksha and his beloved must have been, as painted by Kālidāsa in this poem.

Now imagine yourself in the situation of this Yaksha. From the standpoint of the splendid poetry of the *Meghasandēśa*, it is indeed a lovely thing to imagine one's self to be in such a situation. But if you took the keenness of his anguish into consideration, I am sure very few of you would like to be that Yaksha. But then to conceive one's self to be the hero of a fine poem is more easily possible than to go through his love-agonies, however poetic they may be. Therein is perhaps one of the privileges of students of beautiful and inspiring poetry. If you imagine just for a while that you are yourself that Yaksha, and grant that there is nothing wrong in his having personified the cloud into his messenger and in his having delivered his touchingly pathetic message of love to this poetically conceived cloud-messenger to be conveyed to his beloved, it naturally follows that you too, like that Yaksha, are certain to take that cloud-messenger into your close confidence, and look upon him as an intimate and valued friend of yours, such a friend as you rightly delight in honouring with the friendship of your beloved. That is in fact how the cloud is treated by the Yaksha.

The Yaksha's beloved is spoken of by him as the friend of the cloud, and the cloud is therefore very naturally conceived to be the friend of the Yaksha's beloved. That being the kind of feeling which is shown to exist between the Yaksha and the cloud in the poem, the question is whether, in case you send such a friend of yours with a message of love to be carried to your beloved who is far away, you will not give him detailed instructions regarding the route to the place where your beloved lives, and regarding also the stages in the journey which you ask your friend to undertake for the good of yourself and your beloved. Let us note that the feeling of friendship which the Yaksha feels in relation to the nobly generous and instinctively benevolent and obliging cloud-messenger makes it necessary that, even apart from the consideration that this messenger has to convey a message to his beloved, his welfare must be as near to the heart of the Yaksha as he expects his own welfare and happiness, equally with those of his beloved, to be near to the heart of this friendly and obliging messenger. That the Yaksha thus lingers long over the route, describing each stage of the

journey, is therefore what it is but proper that he should do. Again in the then hypersensitive consciousness of his love to the beloved—which hypersensitiveness was the result of the mental abstraction and concentration due to his reverie—this lingering on the route leading to the home of the beloved must certainly have been as delightful to him as if he were really going back along that same route to Alakā to rejoin his beloved there. Here therefore are two reasons to justify the rather lengthy and detailed description of the route of the cloud to Alakā, as given by the Yaksha in the poem; and both of them are, as you may well see, based upon the condition of thought and feeling which the Yaksha naturally had in his glorious reverie of love. Surely you do not require to be told that the geographical accuracy of this route is very marked, and that, nevertheless, it does not in any way tend to impress us that his reverie was at all other than rael.

In spite of these justifying reasons, a reader of the poem may, from his own experience, be led to think that Kālidāsa has overstepped the due limits of pleasing art by trying to be strictly true to the exaggerated hypersensitiveness of

the Yaksha in his state of reverie. This criticism grants by implication, as I daresay you see at once, that the critic is incapable of imagining himself to be in the position of the hero, so as to be animated by a full and lively sense of sympathy in relation to this hypersensitive condition of his mind. Thus the critic loses to a very large extent his title to be a critic at all; and it is impossible for him under the circumstances to be a just critic. Nevertheless, there seems to be some meaning in such a criticism; and that meaning, as I understand, is that artistic workmanship suffers in true excellence if the product of art is made to be too good for the common cultured taste. In this connection it has to be, however, borne in mind that what appears too good for one cultured taste need not be, and very often is not, too good for another cultured taste. So, some one may say, as it has been said here this evening, that, judged from the standpoint of the ecstasy of the hero, the detailed description of the route to be taken by the cloud from Rāmagiri to Alakā may be quite appropriate, but that it palls, in spite of this, on the mind of the unecstatic reader. I do not know how far you are willing to take me as a satisfactory

representative of the ordinary cultured taste. Whatever may be your opinion in regard to that, I feel I must tell you that the description of the cloud-messenger's route in the *Megha-sandēśa* has not struck me as being in any way unpoetic or uninteresting. One of the most striking aspects of the beauty of Kālidāsa's poetry, to which I have referred already, is distinctly visible in this description of the route to Alakā ; and that aspect consists in the harmonious way in which he blends the beautiful things of Nature with beautiful human and divine things. Here, for instance, is the well-known stanza, wherein the Yaksha asks his cloud-messenger not to miss going to Ujjein, even though it is not directly on the way to Alakā :—

वक्रः पन्थास्तव भवतु च प्रस्थितस्योत्तराशां  
 सौधोत्सङ्गप्रणयविमुखो मा स्म भूरुज्जयिन्याः ।  
 विद्युद्दामस्फुरितचकितैस्तत्त पौराङ्गनानां  
 लोलापाङ्गैर्यदि न रमसे लोचनैर्वञ्चितोऽसि ॥

Who indeed can deny that, even when taken in itself, there is such charming poetry in this stanza, as compels our admiration and makes



us ponder on it with continued delight ? How lovely is the blending here of the physical beauty of the city of Ujjein with some of the fascinating elements of human beauty ? What a great rapture of joy, derivable from things of beauty simply in consequence of their beautiful-ness, the Yaksha is offering here to his friendly cloud-messenger, to make him feel evidently that the journey proposed to him is quite as full of beauty to be seen as of good to be done !

Let me now draw your attention to what I consider to be another equally beautiful stanza given in connection with mount Kailāsa :—

हिवा तस्मिन् भुजगवलयं शम्भुना दत्तहस्ता  
 क्रीडाशैले यदि च विचरेत् पादचारेण गौरी ।  
 भङ्गीभक्त्या विरचितवपुः स्तम्भितान्तर्जलौघः  
 सोपानत्वं कुरु मणितटारोहणायाग्रयायी ॥

None can fail to observe and to enjoy in this stanza the highly artistic blending of the beauty of Nature with the beautiful in the divine. The display of the tender considerateness and magnanimous chivalry of Śiva, the Father of the Universe, in relation to Gaurī, His Divine

Spouse and the Mother of the Universe, is indeed as charming here as the suggested beauty and splendour of the crystalline Kailāsa ; and it is no less charming to observe the scope and manner of the service which the moving cloud-messenger is directed to render with religious devotion and reverence to the Great Parents of the Universe. How valuable an acquisition of the supreme good there is in thus being enabled to render such service in such a situation to the Great Parents ! Here again is another stanza which brings to light another reason why the route, by which the noble and naturally beneficent cloud-messenger had to go to Alakā, was certain to prove attractive to him :—

तं चेद्वायौ सरति सरलस्कन्धसंघट्टजन्मा

बाधेतोल्काक्षपितचमरीवालभारो दवाग्निः ।

अहस्येनं शमयितुमलं वारिधारासहस्रै-

रापन्नार्तिप्रशमनफलाः संपदो ह्युत्तमानाम् ॥

To be thus able to save the beauty of the forest scenery as well as of the animal life on the mighty Himalayas from the black ruin, which the forest fire may so easily cause, is

indeed a privilege of which even the noblest of all benefactors may well be proud. Thus in the splendid description of the route to Alakā, which the hero of the *Meghasandēśa* gives to his cloud-messenger, we are evidently expected to see, even as he saw, how in the course of that journey his messenger may have fascinating visions of beauty and admirable opportunities of doing great good, together with no less admirable opportunities for accomplishing the supreme end of life by means of deeply religious devotion and humble self-forgetful service laid at the feet of the Great Parents of the Universe. How can the poetry in such a description of the cloud-messenger's route to Alakā be tiresomely monotonous and unadorned by beauty so as to pall on the mind of a truly cultured and critical reader? There are even more things in this poetic description of the route to Alakā, which make it delightfully pleasing and attractive: these the discerning reader of cultivated taste will do well to make out for himself and appreciate as they deserve.

One thing, however, is quite clear to my mind in this connection; and that is that the poet, while creating the magnificent magic of

his poem, had the Yaksha more in his heart than any reader of any kind of cultivated taste. Therefore, it is not simply to enable us, you and me, to understand how he could describe Nature that he lingers so long on the beauties and on the many varied and worthy possibilities of doing good arising in connection with the route from Rāmagiri to Alakā. If that had been his motive, he would thereby have shown himself to be utterly unworthy of being a truly creative artist; and the design of his poem would surely have lacked in unity, and in compactness and proportion. I have been trying to show to you that, judged from the standpoint of the design of the poem as a whole, its planning and execution are both faultless, and that, in the description of the Yaksha's reverie as well as of his doings therein, there is nothing that is unreal or unnatural. When the poet makes the hero of the poem say to his cloud-messenger—

मार्गं तावच्छृणु कथयतस्त्वप्रयाणानुरूपं  
सन्देशं मे तदनु जलद श्रोष्यसि श्रोतृपेयम् ।  
खिन्नः खिन्नः शिखरिषु पदं न्यस्य गन्तासि यत्र  
क्षीणः क्षीणः परिलघु पयः स्रोतसां चोपभुज्य ॥

—do we not see that the description of the route to Alakā was fully intended to be a part of the design of the whole poem, and that the execution of this part of the design aimed at making the route suitable firstly to the character of the messenger going on the long and laborious journey and secondly to the delicately affectionate nature of the errand which he was so generously to carry ? For the cloud-messenger going along his path in the sky, mountain-tops are the natural resting places ; and when from time to time he would become tired by the journey, he must have light and wholesome river-water with which he might refresh himself. Thus arises the abundant reference to mountains and rivers in the description of the route ; and the enumeration in connection with it of the opportunities to do good, to engage in worshipful divine service, and to enjoy the lovely fascination of the vision of the beautiful throughout, is in full keeping not only with the noble and spontaneously beneficent nature of the chosen love-inspiring and heart-comforting messenger, but also with the loftily loveful purpose of the message which he has to carry. All these things enable us, as it were, to get into the very life-

centre of the mind of the Yaksha, so that thereby we may understand and appreciate aright the ideal perfection of the love which he feels for his beloved. I am accordingly of opinion that the description of the cloud-messenger's route from Rāmagiri to Alakā is charmingly beautiful in itself, and forms at the same time an appropriately well adjusted part in the artistic design of the poem as a whole. Therefore, according to me, the criticism, that this description is tiresome, inartistic and overdone, fails to tell. In it I see a well conceived and effective presentation of a striking panorama of varied and wonderfully suggestive scenic beauty, which makes the whole poem shine from within with a lambent glow of artistic loveliness which is certainly nowhere excelled.

In answering at some length the objection, which has been raised against the artistic excellence of the *Meghasandēśa* on the ground that the description of the cloud's route is overdone therein, I have, I believe, answered another objection which has been put forward here this evening, namely, that the description of Alakā is also overdone in the poem. Out of a total of about one hundred and fifty

stanzas in the poem, no less than fifty are devoted to the description of the route from Rāmagiri to Alakā, while the stanzas devoted to the description of the city of Alakā itself are at the most not many more than a dozen. Therefore, even if merely mechanically considered, it is rather hard to see how one may be led to hold that the description of Kubera's capital city is overdone in the *Meghasandēśa*. From this I do not of course mean to suggest that this wholly mechanical way of judging the appropriateness or otherwise of the length of a poetic description is in any manner satisfactory. On the other hand I am positively of opinion that it is an utterly unpoetical way of measuring the merit of poetry. However, I have no doubt that all those, who say that the description of Alakā is overdone in the *Meghasandēśa*, do not possess poetry enough in them to understand how the lonely presence of the Yāksha's beloved spouse in that city is in itself fully competent to make it appear to him as a place worthily beautiful in every way, for the simple reason that otherwise it cannot deserve, according to him, to contain the home of such an excellent and lovely lady. Nay more ; her lonely presence



therein with all its associated prayerfulness and religiously ascetic observances due to her separation from her dear lover and lord—all of which he sees quite distinctly with his mind's eye—cannot fail to hallow the city and make it for him a sacred place with a holy shrine having an auspicious goddess within. Therefore no description of Alakā, as given by the hero of the *Meghasandēśa*, can be looked upon as being really overdone. Our Yaksha in his reverie could indeed never have felt that he was spending too much time in describing the beauties of Alakā to his magnanimous and obliging cloud-messenger.

It seems to me that there are also two other reasons why Kālidāsa has made the hero of this poem describe Alakā to his cloud-messenger in the way in which it is actually done. One of these is obviously to show to us that the Yaksha is representative of a certain peculiar class of beings, who are very unlike and apart from man, in the manner of Gandharvas and Kinnaras. In fact, if we are to understand from the *Meghasandēśa* the characteristics of that type of beings which the Yaksha represents, where else can we gather our knowledge

of them than from this description of Alakā ? All its excellence is no doubt depicted in highly glowing colours, and it is shown to be a place of great beauty and great wealth, full of the youthful enjoyment of all forms of the pleasures of life. Although every one of the stanzas given here in description of the city of Alakā is either directly or by suggestion capable of bringing into our view these important characteristics of that city, I draw your attention to these four stanzas which appear to me to be the best among them : and they are—

विद्युत्स्वन्तं ललितवनिताः सेन्द्रचापं सचिताः  
संगीताय प्रहतमुरजाः स्निग्धगम्भीरघोषम् ।  
अन्तस्तोयं मणिमयभुवस्तुङ्गमम्रंलिहाग्राः  
प्रसादास्त्वां मुलयितुमलं यत्र तैस्तैर्विशेषैः ॥

यस्यां यक्षाः सितमणिमयान्येत्य हर्म्यस्थलानि  
उ्योतिश्छायाकुसुमरचितान्युत्तमस्त्रीसहायाः ।  
भासेवन्ते मधु रतिफलं कल्पकृक्षप्रसूतं  
त्वद्गम्भीरध्वनिषु शनकैः पुष्करेष्वहतेषु ॥

मन्दार्कन्याः सलिलशिशिरैः सेव्यमाना मरुद्भि-  
र्मन्दाराणामनुतटरुहां छायया वारितोष्णाः ।

अन्वेष्टव्यैः कनकसिकतामुष्टिनिक्षेपगूढैः  
संक्लीडन्ते मणिभिरमरप्रार्थिता यत्र कन्याः ॥

अक्षयान्तर्भवननिधयः प्रत्यहं रत्नकण्ठै-  
रुद्रायन्निर्धनपतियशः किन्नरैर्यत्र सार्धम् ।  
वैभ्राजाख्यं विबुधवनितावारमुख्यासहाया  
घट्टालापा बहिरुपवनं कामिनो निर्विशन्ति ॥

What things here in these stanzas indicate the great grandeur and beauty of Alakā, what things the unlimited scope that there is in it for the free and full enjoyment of the pleasures of life, I leave it to you to make out, encouraged by the belief that it is impossible for you not to be carried away by the luxuriance of the poetry which they contain. And do we not gather from this very luxuriance of the poetry to be found in Kālidāsa's description of Alakā that the Yakshas are obviously a class of beings specially created, and blessed with all the requisite materials and opportunities, for the free and full enjoyment of all the innumerable pleasures of life? You can not but know now, of what great artistic importance it is in the plan of this poem that the suffering hero of it is a Yaksha.

Really, unless we allow ourselves to be carried away by the luxuriance of the poetry which we find in the description of Alakā, it is not possible for us to assign to the continued prayerfulness and religiously observed asceticism of our hero's beloved lady their true value, and the other reason for the poet giving such a description of Alakā in the poem is to enable us to obtain an appropriate measure of the joylessness of what the hero in his heart conceived to be his beloved's life of sorrow and suffering and renunciation in Alakā, by contrasting that life of hers with the common life of unstinted pleasure and unrestrained joy prevailing there all around. To those, who are accustomed to live the free and pleasant life of unlimited enjoyment, the hard life of ascetic renunciation and religious self-restraint is certain to prove very painful ; and when in fact every one, other than our Yaksha's beloved, was happily and wholly absorbed in Alakā in the keen enjoyment of the pleasures of life in all their variety and completeness, to her it must have been harder and more painful than ever to live there the life of self-mortification and ascetic joylessness. The great intensity of her sorrow consequent upon

her separation from her lover and lord is thus at once brought home to us very vividly ; and we see the depth of that great grief even more fully, when we read further the description of our Yaksha's mansion in Alakā as given in the poem—a mansion which is shown to be so full of things of beauty and so well equipped with all the requisite means for the enjoyment of the pleasures of life. In an atmosphere of pleasures and overflowing enjoyments, and in a mansion of inviting loveliness filled with luxuries of all sorts, it requires no small strength of will to forego all the inviting pleasures of life. And indeed we are left in no doubt about the opinion of the Yaksha regarding the kind of life that was being lived by his wife in Alakā during his absence from there. For instance, when he tells his cloud-messenger that he would see her as described in this stanza—

आद्ये बद्धा विरहदिवसे या शिखा दाम हित्वा  
 शापस्यान्ते विगलितशुचा तां मयोद्वेष्टनीयाम् ।  
 स्पर्शविलिष्टामयमितनखेनासकृत्सारयन्तीं  
 गण्डाभोगात् कठिनविषमामेकवेणीं करेण ॥

—we at once realise that to her lover and lord it must have appeared that in his absence

her life was certain to be ascetically joyless and altogether uncomforted and unbeautified. This imagined lustrelessness of her lonely and love-lorn life and its contrast with the freely pleasurable life of the Yakshas there are brought out even more effectively in this other stanza—

तां जानीथाः परिमितकथां जीवितं मे द्वितीयं  
दूरीभूते मयि सहचरे चक्रवाकीमिवैकाम् ।  
गाढोत्कण्ठागुरुषु दिवसेष्वेषु गच्छासु बाला  
जाता मन्ये शिशिरमथिता पद्मिनीवान्यरूपा ॥

It is worthy of note that her lover and lord, in describing all the other manifestations of her heart-ache, such as her daily prayerfulness, constant tearfulness, nightly anxiety and sleeplessness, and unbroken meditations and musings and countings of days—to all of which he very naturally relates himself—does not keep his kindly messenger long in the dark as to the source of his knowledge of the condition of his beloved, even when she happened to be separated from him by such a great distance ; for, as you know, he tells him very soon—

जाने सख्यास्तव मयि मनः सम्भृतस्नेहमस्मा-  
द्विस्थंभूतां प्रथमाविरहे तामहं तर्कयामि ।

ब्रह्मालं मां न खलु सुभगमन्यभावः करोति  
प्रत्यक्षं ते निखिलमचिराद्भ्रातरुक्तं मया यत् ॥

What an impressive picture we have in all this of the infinite confidence of the lover in the love of his beloved ! And may I now ask you if the exuberant and glowing description of Alakā and of its atmosphere, laden with the electricity, so to say, of endless pleasures and unending joys, does not, by its very contrast, deepen the darkness of the misery of the life of our heroine as imagined by the hero, so as thereby to give to her love of her lover and lord an unquestionable reality and an unbounded power ? In so describing her love of him and giving to it such reality, such fullness and such power, is not our Yaksha making it plain to us that his own love of her is no less real, no less full, and no less strong ? How then can the artistic skill of Kālidāsa be considered to have in any manner failed in this poem owing to his having embodied in it such a sensuous and gorgeously coloured picture of Alakā, when by means of that very same picture, we are led to understand and appreciate aright the intense reality as well as the complete mutuality of the



love between the hero and the heroine, unless it be that we have ourselves failed to enter into the heart of the poet ? After all, as Carlyle, I believe, has said, he, who understands and appreciates good poetry well, must himself be a poet at heart ; and this same idea is frequently given expression to by Sanskrit writers on poetics and criticism in the very commonly current critical dictum that the beauty of a poem or of any other product of literary art is ultimately ascertained by knowing how far it gives rise to what is spoken of as *सहृदयहृदयाह्लादः* in Sanskrit—that is, by knowing to what extent it does really give rise to joy in the hearts of all those persons whose hearts are like unto the heart of the poet himself. The power to appreciate the beauty of art rarely comes of itself to any one ; it has to be cultivated. Moreover, it is not every one that can succeed in acquiring the delicately balanced and sensitive artistic temperament of the good critic through cultivation. In fact the good critic of poetry may be said to be nearly as much *born* as the poet himself.

At last we come to the separated lover's message itself ; and there is no doubt that, as

intended by the poet, this message is श्रोत्रप्रेयः in a remarkable degree. It is really a message that deserves to be listened to with great interest and even avidity by every hearing ear which at all has any power of perceiving the beautiful as embodied in artistic language. Though the message is intended for the hearing of his beloved, our hero seems to tell his cloud-messenger that to him also it is certain to be delightfully pleasing to hear. He very naturally feels confident that his message must be pleasing to her ; and what is pleasing to her--how can it be other than pleasing to others ? Is there not here an instance of the common delusion of the lover due to his proneness to see all things in the light of his love ? Whether this be so or not, the poet seems to mean distinctly that the message sent by the hero of the *Meghasandeha* to his beloved in Alakā is well worthy of being listened to even by unconcerned persons like ourselves. And the power of truth and beauty to tell upon the human heart is thus obviously shown to be very largely incapable of being affected by extraneous considerations of all sorts. Otherwise, the artistic creations of all artists would be quite insipid and uninspiring

to all those who had no direct concern with those creations. Such, however, is not the case in human experience ; and the message which our Yaksha gave out to his cloud-messenger, so as primarily to delight the ear and the heart of his beloved, is clearly felt to be positively delightful to our ears and hearts as well. There are certain authors of works dealing with poetics and criticism in Sanskrit, who have declared that the depiction of the hero or the heroine or any other character in a poem or a drama deserves to be considered good and praiseworthy, only when the power of aesthetic fascination possessed by the poetic picture in question is seen to be capable of causing, for the time being, the complete submergence of the individuality of the reader or the hearer in the contemplation of the character so depicted. As they put it, it is the reader's or hearer's तत्तानुभवः which is unfailingly indicative of the aesthetic excellence of the poetic picture ; and that is an अनुभवः, or experience, whereby he loses for the moment the sense of his own personality or 'i-ness', so to say, and becomes aware in relation to himself of the sense of a 'he-ness' or 'she-ness' or even 'it-ness', as the

case may be. This kind of experience of course arises out of the fact that the psychology which holds sway over the minds and hearts of the characters created by the aesthetic imagination of poets is in all fundamentals the same as the psychology which has its sway generally over all human minds and human hearts. Therefore this message of the Yaksha, which is characterised as उत्कण्ठाविरचितपदम् in the poem, must be able to command the attention and win the appreciation of all sympathetic human hearts, if the love which has inspired the message is made distinctly visible in its contents, that is, if we perceive a truly unassailable appropriateness in those contents judged from the standpoint of the science of psychology as appertaining to the emotion of love in the poetic art.

The object with which the Yaksha desires to send a message to his beloved is to enable her to hold on well with her life somehow till the happy day of their re-union, for we know that he is expressly declared to have been दयिताजीवितालम्बनार्थी, when he made up his mind to ask the cloud to convey his message of love and hope to his beloved in Alakā. It is absolutely impossible to doubt, in the light of what is

given in the poem, that the hero's anxiety for the welfare of his beloved is quite real and sincere ; and we know that he is seriously afraid that her heart may break, and that the terrible calamity of death itself may befall her through the grief due to the inevitable misfortune of his having been obliged to be far away from her. This fear of his is chiefly the result of his own personal knowledge and conviction that her love in relation to him is quite full, deep and unique, so that he is to her not merely her dear lover and lord, but is in fact her all in all. Her heart, being a woman's heart, is not tough and hard-grained, he thinks ; and his fear in regard to her welfare is thereby very considerably increased and intensified. Under such circumstances it is not at all unnatural for him to believe that the only thing in fact which will put courage and hope enough into her heart is reliable news conveyed to her regarding his own welfare. That is why, after asking his friendly cloud-messenger, who is कामरूपः, to assume a benignant form of agreeable proportions before presenting himself in front of his beloved, he instructs him to introduce himself to her thus :—

भर्तुर्मित्रं प्रियमविधवे विद्धि मामम्बुवाहं  
 तत्सन्देहैर्हृदयनिहितैरागतं त्वत्समीपम् ।  
 यो वृन्दानि त्वरयति पथि श्राम्यतामश्वगानां  
 मन्दस्निग्धैर्ध्वानिभिरबलावेणिमोक्षोत्सुकानि ॥

The lovingness of the message, to which I have already referred, can be made out even from the order of the words adopted in this stanza, in which the cloud-messenger is told how he is to introduce himself to the Yaksha's beloved. For instance, मित्रं भर्तुः is as good for metrical purposes as भर्तुर्मित्रम्, with which the stanza actually commences; and the poet has evidently taken care to see that the very first word uttered by the cloud-messenger of the Yaksha to his spouse should be in mention of her husband to her, as otherwise the messenger might not be able to catch her attention at all. He is asked to tell her after thus catching her attention, that he is himself a person dear to her husband as a friend, and that her own lover and lord is quite well and alive. That is indeed why he is made to say at first that he is her husband's friend—भर्तुः मित्रम्, and then to address her as अविधवे; and it is natural that these words should make her prone to listen to him with attention as her

husband's dear friend. Then it is that he tells her that he brings to her a well-remembered message from him, and makes himself known to her as one whose most worthy function in life is to hurry on separated lovers to go back to their homes to rejoin there their beloved ones who are anxiously awaiting their arrival.

All this minutely considerate care, bestowed on the nature and the arrangement of the very words to be used by the cloud-messenger in introducing himself to the Yaksha's beloved spouse, cannot fail to show to us clearly that his chief object in view at that time must have been to see that she was subjected to no sudden shock of any kind by that messenger through ignorance or inconsiderateness, for, even the shock of joy, when sudden, might prove fatally dangerous to her tender and delicate constitution. It is undoubtedly the Yaksha's consciousness of the efficacy of this considerate care in composition, which makes him assure his messenger that she would thereafter attentively hear his words with gladness and great expectancy. The stanza in which he gives this assurance is well worth quoting for more reasons than one ; and it runs thus :—



इत्यास्यात्ते पवनतनयं मैथिलीवोन्मुखी सा  
त्वामुत्कण्ठोच्छ्वसितहृदया वीक्ष्य संभाव्य चैवम् ।

श्रोप्यत्यस्मात्परमवहिता सौम्य सीमन्तिनीनां  
कान्तोदन्तः सुहृदुपनतः सङ्गमात् किञ्चिदूनः ॥

Is not this confidence which the Yaksha felt in his heart, that his beloved would hear the words of his messenger quite as gladly and as attentively as Sitā heard of old the words of the messenger of Rāma, full of touchingly aesthetic and highly holy suggestions to us regarding the lofty serenity and entire sincerity and undoubted reality of the love between this Yaksha and his beloved ? And now, in this context also, I cannot refrain from drawing your attention once again to the charming sweetness of the complete and altogether uncalculating trust of the lover in the genuine lovefulness of his beloved.

I feel certain that you are all by this time prepared to be told that the first item of news in the message must be concerning the welfare of the Yaksha himself away at Rāmagiri, as we know that his chief anxiety in his reverie before the cloud was to send to her news reporting that he is well, so that she might thereby be enabled to withstand her grief and to live on in hope

till the happy hour of her re-union with him. To feel that it was his most essential duty in the situation to encourage her so as to strengthen the tender bond of hope which still kept her attached to life, and that he could discharge this duty satisfactorily only by sending to her a message which would make her feel certain of his welfare—what does this show ? It shows, paradoxical though it may seem, the completeness of his self-effacement, because it is nothing other than his anxious concern for her welfare that prompted him to send to her news to the effect that he was himself quite well at Rāmagiri. This stanza, which contains the very beginning of the message, fully bears out what I have said :—

तामायुष्मन् मम च वचनादात्मनश्चोपकर्तुं  
 ब्रूया एवं तव सहचरो रामगिर्याश्रमस्थः ।  
 अव्यापन्नः कुशलमबले पृच्छति त्वां वियुक्तः  
 पूर्वाभाष्यं सुलभविपदां प्राणिनामेतेदेव ॥

When, as here, the lover tells his messenger that the best thing to be said at the very commencement of the delivery of his message to the beloved is to give her at once an assurance of his welfare and then to make enquiries regarding her welfare, it is possible for hasty and unpoetic

critics to observe that this Yaksha, who forms the hero of the *Meghasandēśa*, is depicted as a being characterised by too much self-esteem and self-adulation consequent upon an abnormally strong sense of his own self-importance. It, however, does not take very long to make out that this criticism is unjustifiable. When we know how emphatically this same hero of ours has fully disavowed all such sense of self-importance by saying वाचालं मां न खलु सुभगमन्यभावः करोति, and know also that his excuse for mentioning in the message his own welfare before the enquiry after her welfare is his strong conviction that she is so tender and delicate in constitution as to be easily upset by mental shocks and be thus overtaken even by the calamity of death itself, then the rule—पूर्वाभाष्यं सुलभविपदां प्राणिनामेतदेव—acquires a meaning which can not be rightly lost sight of by any of those critics who are prone to see in this message of the Yaksha more of his self-love than self-effacement. What I mean is that it is the genuine reality of his love for her which is responsible for this manifestation in him of what is apt to seem like the sense of self-importance ; and as if to make this reality of his love clearer still, the message goes on to say —

अङ्गेमाङ्गं प्रतनु तनुना गाढतप्तेन तप्तं  
 सास्त्रेणाश्रुद्धतमविरतोत्कण्ठमुत्कण्ठितेन ।  
 उष्णोच्छ्वासं समधिकतरोच्छ्वासिना दूरवर्ती  
 संकल्पैस्तैर्विशति विधिना वैरिणा रुद्धमार्गः ॥

Do we not see here in this stanza that his one aim during his trying and painful separation from his beloved must have been to become, as it were, absorbed in her, limb by limb, with the aid of meditation and mental resolve, so that his whole individuality may become merged in her and he may thereby become the happy recipient of that ineffable joy of complete self-effacement which results as a natural consequence from the mental realisation of oneness between the lover and the beloved ? I ask you to tell me if such an attitude of the mind of the separated lover is at all compatible with any kind of self-adulation or any serious sense of self-importance on his part.

Indeed this attitude of the mind of the Yaksha here is much like that of the *gopīs* or the allegorical cowherdesses of Brindāvana in relation to Śrī-Kṛishṇa, as it is described in the *Śrīmadbhāgavata*: and I shall quote to you just two stanzas from the tenth *skandha* of that

work in proof of the truth of this statement of mine. One of them (x. 29. 15.) is this :—

कामं क्रोधं भयं ज्ञेहमैक्यं सौहृदमेव च ।

नित्यं हरौ विदधतो यान्ति तन्मयतां हि ते ॥

And from this we may well gather that, if a person makes the object of his love the object also of all his thoughts and emotions, then results to him quite naturally the realisation of the sense of his own assimilation with that one object of all his thoughts and emotions. The other stanza (x. 29. 27.) runs thus :—

श्रवणाद्दर्शनाद्यानान्मयि भावोऽनुकीर्तनाद् ।

न तथा सन्निकर्षेण प्रतियात ततो गृहान् ॥

Here you see how Śrī-Kṛishṇa declared to his cowherdesses that the fruit of their attachment to him was realisable by their hearing of him, by their seeing Him, thinking of Him, and singing praises of Him, but not by their being near Him in their physical embodiments. It is obviously intended to be conveyed by means of this stanza, that the lover's physical nearness to the beloved is apt to act as an obstacle tending to prevent the ecstatic realisation of the unity of the lover and the beloved, in as much as such nearness gives no

room for the free play of that kind of meditation and mental resolve by which the lover may become quite completely merged in his beloved limb by limb. We thus happen to understand not only the purely spiritual and religious character of the love of the *gopīs* to Śrī-Kṛishṇa, but also the supreme rationality of the self-effacement which our Yaksha, as the hero of the *Meghasandēśa*, must have been attaining in his mind through continued meditation and constant thought of the beloved when he was so far away from her. To think of her thus constantly, so as to become mentally absorbed in her and unified with her, evidently must then have been to him as good as the veriest essence of his highest conception of supreme bliss.

We know that a good part of the Yaksha's message delivered to the cloud-messenger is occupied with a description of the yearnings and troubles and trials of the Yaksha himself, due to his heart-ache consequent upon his separation from his own beloved spouse in Alakā. It may very well be asked how far such a painting of his distress and mental anguish in the message is in keeping with the ideal of self-effacement in love as conceived by Kālidāsa.

Here also we have to take the motive of our hero into consideration, before coming to any conclusion on the critical question so raised. Please let me point out to you in this connection that, in relation to the love between human beings as also in relation to the love or *bhakti* of religious devotees to their Divine Lord, it is maintained that the manifestation of their love is really perfect only when the lover feels intuitively, under the influence of his love-laden heart, that none but his own beloved deserves to be the object of his love. This is spoken of in Sanskrit as the *ananyārhatva* of the love of the lover ; and what is true of the love of the lover in relation to the beloved has also to be true as a matter of course regarding the love of the beloved in relation to the lover : her love also must be quite as *ananyārha* as his love has to be. In other words, the lover and the beloved have both to feel almost instinctively that the love of each is intended entirely for the other, and that none else can really have the worthiness to command that love. Moreover, this obviously complete confidence of the lover and the beloved in each other clearly implies that the lover must and does



know that the whole of his beloved's love is exclusively bestowed upon him, even as the beloved must and does know that the whole of her lord's love is exclusively bestowed upon her. It is when this sort of mutual confidence is deficient, that jealousy comes into existence between them ; and wheresoever such a want of confidence is felt, whether it be in the lover or the beloved, there it is that jealousy arises. Consequently it will undoubtedly be always an anxious concern in the heart of the true lover to see that he gives no room for the sprouting up of jealousy in the heart of his beloved ; and when the lover is by untoward circumstances forced to be far away from his beloved, his anxiety to guard himself against all possible growth of jealous suspicion regarding him in the sensitive heart of his beloved becomes naturally very much greater than usual, for the simple reason that he is not then in a position to give her direct proofs of his ever constant and unfailing faithfulness to her. Nevertheless, the actual exhibition of jealousy by her in relation to him may very well be pleasing to him under certain circumstances, in as much as it distinctly proves to him that the love of

his beloved in relation to him is so true and so strong that she ardently wishes to have him and his love altogether for herself. Accordingly, while he does not himself want to give any reasonable cause for her suspicion and jealousy in respect of the unfailing faithfulness of his love to her, he is at the same time quite naturally apt to feel delighted with the display of even unreasonable and unjustifiable jealousy and suspicion on her part. A brief and telling description of such a pleasing display of jealousy on her part forms, as you know, an important part in our Yaksha's message ; and it is through the mention of the incident indicative of her jealousy that his beloved has been expected to make sure that the cloud-messenger brings to her a message truly from her banished lover and lord. Here is the stanza which describes an interesting instance of the manifestation of such jealousy on her part:—

भूयश्चाह त्वमपि शयने कण्ठलग्ना पुरा मे

निद्रां गत्वा किमपि रुदती सस्वनं विप्रबुद्धा ।

सान्तर्द्वासं कथितमसकृत्पृच्छतश्च त्वया मे

दृष्टः स्वप्ने कितव रमयन् कामपि त्वं मयेति ॥

Of course this incident of the sweet display of her very genuine jealousy betrayed in dream cannot have been known to any other than the Yaksha and his beloved; and it must have endeared her to him all the more, in as much as we see that, in sending his description of it to her in Alakā, he seems to feel that he will thereby surely awaken in her heart the memory of many fragrant associations of their happy days of undisturbed love and unmixed joy.

It is thus evident that the Yaksha was really anxious that his beloved should be given to understand distinctly that, even though he was away from her, it could never occur to him to transfer his heart's love to any one else who was then near him, and thus make himself happy, if possible, for the time being, ignoring altogether the pitiable and lonely condition of his beloved in Alakā. Think of what might have happened to her, if only she had any reason to suspect even for a moment that, owing to his banishment to a distant land, the love of her lord had ceased to be altogether hers! In fact, if in his message we observe his anxiety to make her know well that his heart has been

true to her throughout, it is because he obviously wanted to save her from the trying shock of even the mere possibility of her being led to think otherwise about his love. It is exactly with this object in view that he is made to paint in such a pathetic fashion, in the message to his beloved, his distress and anguish of heart consequent upon his having to be away from her; and hence, even when speaking about his own trials and anxieties and troubles, he had undoubtedly her welfare and happiness entirely in view. Indeed, there is a very touching pathos in the account which he gives of his own sufferings. Let us look at this one stanza, for instance :—

मामाकाशप्रणिहितभुजं निर्दयाश्लेषहेतो-  
 र्लब्धायास्ते कथमपि मया स्वप्नसन्दर्शनेषु ।  
 पश्यन्तीनां न खलु बहुशो न स्थलीदेवतानां  
 मुक्तास्थूलास्तरुक्सलयेष्वश्रुलेशाः पतन्ति ॥

With sleepless and slowly speeding nights and with uncomforted and woeful days, he somehow manages to see her image in front of him in a dream-vision ; and then, when he instantly throws up his arms to embrace her, the dream

at once disappears, and he finds alas ! that he is trying vainly to embrace the air. To look upon him in that state of deep disappointment is, as the poet says, enough to make even the gods and goddesses of the locality weep so as to load the tender leaves of all the trees around with big pearly drops of their tears. Is it possible to have such a dream-vision of the beloved and such sad embracing of the air in vain, if the love in the heart of the lover is shared to any extent by another than that beloved? All those sufferings of his which he describes so touchingly in his message are therefore well calculated to assure her that his love still continues to be altogether hers, so that she may thereby be enabled to bear up herself calmly and courageously under the keen anguish of her lonely longing for re-union.

But the poet knows that the hero has further to assure her that his love, which still continues to be entirely for her and for her alone, has not, owing to his separation from her, suffered in any manner in its warmth or its intensity. I have mentioned to you already that it is separation which tests the truth of love, in as much as that love alone is true which is under

all circumstances unchanging and enduring. Kālidāsa goes even a step further, and makes the hero of the *Meghasandēśa* say that separation between the lover and the beloved increases and consolidates in truth the love between them, so long as that love happens to be really genuine and sincere. This is how he says it :—

एतस्मान्मां कुशलिनमभिज्ञानदानाद्विदित्वा

मा कौलीनाच्चकितनयने मय्यविश्वसिनी भूः ।

स्नेहानाहुः किमपि विरहे ध्वंसिनस्तेत्वभोगा-

दिष्टे वस्तुन्युपचितरसाः प्रेमराशीभवन्ति ॥

And what evidence does he give of the truth of his love for her having become intensified and consolidated through the inevitable heart-ache of the separation between them ? Indeed, what other evidence can he give to her than the evidence of his continued distress and keen mental anguish ? Surely, therefore, it is not any sense of self-importance which has impelled the hero of the *Meghasandēśa* to send a description of his own yearnings and trials and sufferings to his beloved. It is wholly for her sake, for comforting and consoling her, for putting courage into her heart and strength

into her hope, that he speaks about himself at all in the message intended to be conveyed to his beloved : and this in itself is enough to make me agree with the opinion that the stanza—

आश्वास्यैवं प्रथमविरहोदग्रशोकां सखीं ते  
शैलादाशु त्रिनयनवृषोत्खातकूटान्निवृत्तः ।  
साभिज्ञानप्रहितकुशलैस्तद्वचोभिर्ममापि  
प्रातःकुन्दप्रसवशिथिलं जीवितं धारयेथाः ॥

—is an inartistic interpolation in the poem, for the reason that our Yaksha is made to become here the main object of his own personal concern, and also for the reason that in this stanza he is made to betray an unaccountable and altogether unpoetic want of confidence in his already well-trusted friendly messenger. How this is so, you can all think out well for yourselves.

So far, I have been speaking to you about what we may call the architectonic unity of the poem, that is, about the artistic integrity and appropriateness of its design as well as of the general impression of idealised beauty which it produces upon the mind of the adequately sensitive and sympathetic reader. It may here



be asked whether beyond leaving this general impression of idealised beauty, which may well be admired and enjoyed by all as such, there is any thing else at all in the design of the poem which calls for any remark, whether, for instance, there is any thing like a moral to be drawn from the poem. One most prominent moral which readily comes out of the poem is that the value and worthiness of life are not to be found in the enjoyment of pleasures, that is, in *bhoga* as they put it in Sanskrit, but are to be found really in the sufferings and sacrifices which are evoked by the loving faithfulness of heart to heart and are quite willingly and even gladly borne by all those who are brought under the magnetic influence of the mighty magic of love. After studying the *Meghasandēśa* with due appreciation, what value will a truly discerning and artistic reader thereof attach to unbounded wealth and unlimited opportunities for the free enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses, if he is led to learn from that same *Meghasandēśa* that life itself is apt to be aimless and uninspired when it is not really blessed with the enlivening sun-shine of absolutely happy and holy love? Love may well be said to be the philosopher's

stone in the alchemy of life ; without the passion and the pathos of self-forgetful love, life can never be made to be really golden. In the friendship, which is conceived in the *Purāṇas*, as existing between Kubera, the Lord of Wealth and King of the Yakshas, and Śiva, the grim God of unbending rigour and unwavering austerity, do we not find a key to the moral that may be gathered from an appreciative study of the *Meghasandēśa* ? However, one does not like to be dogmatic about such points ; and it is good for each reader of the *Meghasandēśa* to make out for himself in what way the fundamental identity of the good and the beautiful is brought to light in that poem. It is because poetry has, as a matter of fact, to give an attractive expression to this fundamental identity, that we are justified in talking seriously of the moral of a poem ; and if, by means of the study of this poem, we succeed in realising that it is love which inspires, illumines and beautifies life, that it is love which also chastens and purifies life and makes it truly virtuous and purposeful, and that it is love again which enables us to arrive at the higher and larger self-realisation through the effacement of the lower and the smaller

self, it does not matter what particular moral we draw from the poem and in what particular form of language we embody it and give expression to it. Let us know that to love is to live, even as to live is to serve and, may be, to suffer in love. Then surely we cannot miss the moral aim and meaning of the *Meghasandēśa*.

The artistic beauty of the *Meghasandēśa* as a whole is as much dependent upon the well-arranged unity of its design as upon the careful execution of the details in its workmanship. In fact in every art there is such a thing as the beauty of detail ; and it is invariably seen that the aesthetic excellence of any good work of art is in the combined effect of the beauty of the general outline and the beauty of detail with which the genius of the artist has endowed that work of art. It is, moreover, generally recognised that, aesthetically considered, the beauty of general outline, as determined by the appropriate adjustment of all the various parts of a well thought out and harmonious whole, is of very much more importance than the beauty of detail. Indeed there may be a beautiful work of art without much beauty of detail ; and it is very often observed that the overloading of a

work of art with too much beauty of detail tends to mar the aesthetic effect of the whole. This does not, of course, justify on the part of an artist any careless execution in matters of detail. Even a truly good work of art, which is devoid of the necessary beauty of detail, is apt to appear rugged and unrefined. What they call elegance in art is frequently the result of careful execution in matters of detail, and means very much the same thing as choice workmanship. Therefore the artist of real genius cleverly combines with the general beauty of the work of art produced by him just as much beauty of detail as is necessary to make it elegant and refined : he will not overload his work of art with too much beauty of detail and spoil its total effect, because to the really discerning artist the beauty of the whole is always certain to appear to be much more important than the beauty of detail. Later Sanskrit poets than Kālidāsa seem to have forgotten this comparatively superior importance of the beauty of the whole in their poetic works. They have gone on loading their works with too much decoration of detail with the inevitable result that the artistic impressiveness and interesting individuality of

their poetic productions—when each of them is viewed as a whole—are in all cases more or less completely lost. But Kālidāsa has not erred so at all. You cannot say that his poetry is rugged and unrefined for want of beauty of detail. The smoothest, the most elegant and the most refined poetry that I have read in the Sanskrit language is undoubtedly Kālidāsa's. I have already spoken of more than one stanza in the *Meghasandēśa* as being a beautifully artistic whole in itself. While it may be said of almost every one of the stanzas in the poem that it is truly a little lovely gem in itself, it is at the same time impossible for us to fail to notice in relation to any of them that it is intended to occupy a distinctly subordinate position in the make-up of a larger and more fully organised thing of beauty. Thus the sense of the necessary subordination of the part to the whole seems never to have been absent from the mind of Kālidāsa; and that is why in spite of the minute and careful chiselling work noticeable in relation to many details in the *Meghasandēśa*, we find the beauty of the whole poem notably asserting itself at the same time that it is seen to be impressively interesting and attractive.

If the essence of poetic workmanship consists, as may very well be said, in making appropriate ideas and sentiments find beautiful expression in appropriately chosen language, good poetry owes its excellence not only to the artistic appropriateness of the ideas and sentiments embodied in it, but also to the suitable choiceness of the language by means of which those ideas and sentiments are conveyed therein. Thus in poetry the choice of diction is quite as important as the choice of subject-matter ; and the refined smoothness and elegance of the poetry of the *Meghasandēśa* is in no small measure due to the fact of Kālidāsa's choice of diction being so suitable and excellent. The question of diction is fully discussed in more than one work on poetics in Sanskrit; and it is distinctly declared in them that there is a close relation not only between the style and the sense but also between the character of the speaker and the style of the language he uses. Indian *alāṅkārikas* generally deal with four aspects of style under the names of *rīti*, *vṛitti*, *śavyā*, and *pāka*. What they call *rīti* mainly concerns itself with what may be looked upon as the sound of the style rather than the sense of it, so much so

that *rīti* has to be judged almost entirely by the ear. The harshness or otherwise of the phonetic elements making up the language actually used, and the agreeableness to the ear or otherwise of the various combinations of those phonetic elements as they occur in the composition—it is in fact these things that determine the character of the *rīti*, although the sparseness or abundance of the use of compound words in the composition is also taken to be a determining factor. According to our *ālankārikas* there is a typical *rīti* in style, which is characterised by freedom from harsh phonetic elements and disagreeable combinations of sounds, and is at the same time remarkable for the very sparing use of compound words : and this they say is the *Vaidarbhī rīti*. The *rīti*, which is marked by just the contrary characteristics, is spoken of as the *Gauḍī rīti*. It is held that there may really be, between these two extreme types, other *rītis*, resulting from the combinations of the characteristics of these *rītis* in varying proportions, the middling *rīti* being generally called the *Pāñchālī rīti*. The idea underlying *vr̥itti*, as an aspect of style, is, however, very different ; because, in determining in what *vr̥itti* the style of a com-



position should be, we have to take into consideration what may be called the poetic pathos of the sense of that composition. I am aware you know that Sanskrit rhetoricians consider the delectableness or *rasa* of literature to be of nine different kinds, according to the nature of the fundamental feeling underlying the poetic pathos that is made manifest therein. Hence nine such fundamental feelings are mentioned ; and they are—love, grief, wonder, comicality, peacefulness, heroism, terror, abhorrence and rage. It is in the very nature of things that some of these feelings find their appropriate expression in soft and gentle language, while others find their expression in strong and forceful language. Thus it is maintained that love and grief are to be expressed in language which is markedly soft and gentle, and that the feelings of comicality, peacefulness and wonder may be expressed in comparatively less soft and less gentle language. Similarly, the feelings of abhorrence and rage demand markedly strong and forceful language for their appropriate expression, while the feelings of terror and heroism may well be expressed in comparatively less strong and less forceful language. Thus they

give four different kinds of *vr̥ittis*, and call them *kaiśikī*, *bhāratī*, *ārabhaṭī*, and *sāttvatī* respectively. Now you must be able to make out for yourselves what relation there is between *riti* and *vr̥itti*; and since in the *Meghasandēśa* the feelings of love and grief are given expression to by a love-lorn Yaksha of mild disposition, the poem is naturally composed in the *kaiśikī vr̥itti*, which is generally based upon the *Vaidarbhī riti*. And, as you know, the word *śayyā* means ordinarily a bed ; in relation to style in literary composition, it means, however, the manner in which the words are set in the composition. The setting of words in an artistic composition may be either smooth and even or rugged and uneven, and there may or may not be any clearly visible aim or designed purpose in assigning the words to the particular places they are made to occupy. In this way the *śayyā* may be good or bad. Let me mention here that the goodness or badness of the *śayyā* of any given style is also largely made out by means of the ear. But the *pāka* of a style relates to its intelligibility, and is made out by means of the ease or the difficulty with which the meaning of the author comes out of his language so as to

enable the reader to enjoy the delectableness of his artistic composition. It goes without saying that in a poem like the *Meghasandēśa*, the *pāka* has to be characterised by easy intelligibility, and the *śayyā* by smooth evenness and melodious setting of words. That all these requisites of the suitable style are to be found distinctly in the *Meghasandēśa*, you are all certain to make out, if you bring your critical intelligence to bear well upon the study of that poem. How the very words that Kālidāsa uses in his *Meghasandēśa* are all so appropriately resonant with the feelings which the Yaksha must have had in his heart ! Even if we change or displace a single word in any stanza, taking care not to do any violence to the metre or the meaning thereby, the beauty of the stanza at once seems to fade away very considerably. Those of you that know how to read the poem well with all its musical rhythm—I know there are only very few among you that can really do so—will be able to judge, from the mere effect on your ears, that its very language is lovingly plaintive and pathetic, being throughout sympathetically attuned to the feelings welling forth from in the perturbed heart of the Yaksha.

Let us now notice the metre which the poet has chosen for this poem. It is called *Śrīdharā* in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*; but its common name is *Mandākrāntā*, which means that it is a metre that advances along slowly. Let us, for instance, take the metre known as *Drutavilambita*, and try to read the *Mandākrāntā* with the rapidity with which we may read the *Drutavilambita*. Or let us try to read the *Drutavilambita* with the slowness with which the *Mandākrāntā* has to be read. In either case we are sure to find that the reading becomes awkward and unnatural. In reading with the proper rhythm द्रुतविलम्बितमाह नभौ भरो, we may very easily observe how this metre seems successively to run and to falter, so as to justify its name as the 'quick-and-slow' metre. Let us again take the *Rathoddhatā* metre defined as रात्ररादिह रथोद्धता लगौ, and find out the nature of the rhythm of its movement. If we have the ear to perceive its peculiar movement well, we cannot fail to be impressed with its galloping character. Indeed its very name tells us that it is a metre which gallops like a horse-chariot. Thus you may see that in the *Mandākrāntā* metre itself there is some device which compels you to

read the stanza haltingly and slowly. This is due, so far as I can see, to the prevalence of long and heavy syllables in the line, to its being split up into three distinct bits of gradually increasing syllabic measure by means of two well-marked hiatuses in addition to the stop at the end, and also to its appreciable lengthiness. Slow and halting movement is in consequence a natural result due to the very structure of this metre. And the separated and sorrowful lover, sending his metrical message of consoling love and hope to his beloved—who is far away—through the love-inspiring cloud, how can he have chosen a more suitable metre? I do not believe that there is any other metre which can have served the purpose so well; and as a matter of fact it has very nearly become a recognised rule among Sanskrit authors that *Sandేశakāvya*s should generally be composed in the *Mandākrāntā* metre. Almost every one of the known imitators of Kālidāsa's *Meghasandēśa* has followed this rule, whatever may be the poetic value of his production otherwise. If in regard to style, there is, as we have seen, an appropriate relation between sense and sound, as well as between the character of the speaker and the manner of his speech,

surely there must also be an appropriate relation between the import of any given poem and the metre in which it is composed. That Kālidāsa had a very fine musical ear to judge the appropriateness of the metres used by him in relation to the context and the subject-matter of the stanzas, is evident in all his writings. And here in the use of the *Mandākrāntā* metre there is undoubtedly an excellent choice of the means to the end; and much of artistic excellence in execution is, as I daresay you know, really dependent upon such choice.

In the language, in the metre, in the descriptions of the city of Alakā and of the route to be taken by the cloud in its journey, in everything, in short, we notice about this poem that complete artistic appropriateness which is the result of the appropriate adjustment of appropriate means to appropriate ends. I believe we have now seen what sort of artistic idealism and what architectonic unity there are in the *Meghasandēśa*, how beautiful its whole design is, how harmonious the adjustment of its parts, and how skilful the working out of all their details. And when it is further seen that the object kept in view by the poet is probably nothing less than

the presentation in all its aesthetic perfection, of the life-giving and life-sanctifying value of true love as tested by the keen heart-ache of separation and as ennobled by the intensified and enduring faithfulness of heart to heart, I am led to believe that there is more than ample justification for my estimate of the poem as one of the most perfect products of the poetic art known to human culture and civilisation.

---



## ERRATA.

Page	Line	For	Read
10	10	all-absoring	all-absorbing
11	9	circustances	circumstances
do	22	spcies	species
14	23	unchivabrously	unchivalrously
do	25	ofSugriva	of Sugriva
30	2	one f	one of
36	19	symapthics	sympathies
47	19	बुद्धा	बुद्धया
48	9	conciousness	consciousness
57	17	turly	truly
58	22	छृणु	छृणु
60	26	fifty	fifteen
63	16	प्रसादाः	प्रासादाः
do	20	आहृतेषु	आहृतेषु
64	7	idicate	indicate
67	4	pleasurful	pleasureful
do	24	प्रथमाविरहे	प्रथमविरहे
70	16	iove	love
do	24	conisderations	considerations
72	16	psychology	psychology
74	5	whch	which
77	13	himsef	himself
80	12	दर्शनादद्यानात्	दर्शनादद्यानात्
88	9	अविश्वसिनी	अविश्वासिनी.