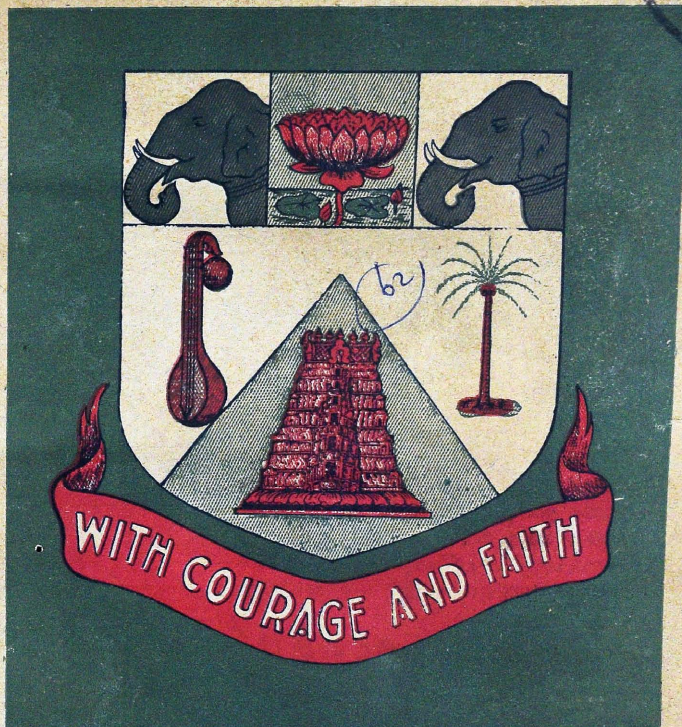


ANNAMALAINAGAR  
MISCELLANY



No. 2

FEBRUARY 1942

Vol. XII



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# ANNAMALAINAGAR

## MISCELLANY



No. 2

FEBRUARY 1942

Vol. XII

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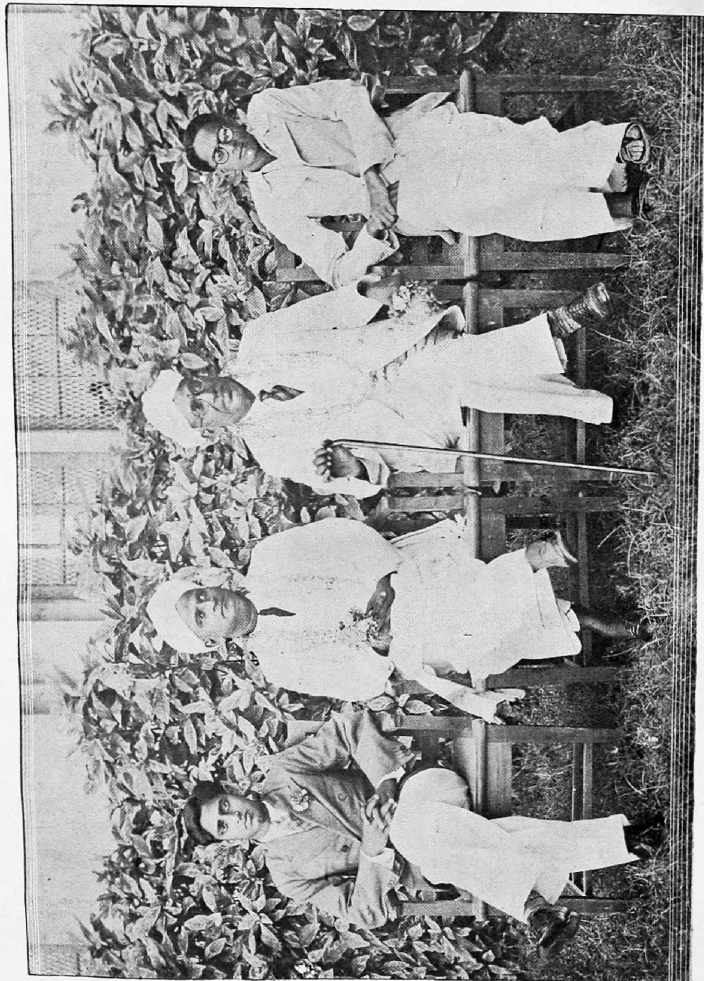
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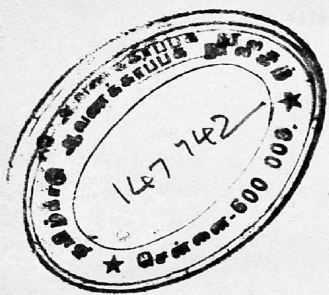
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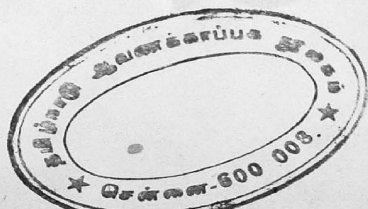
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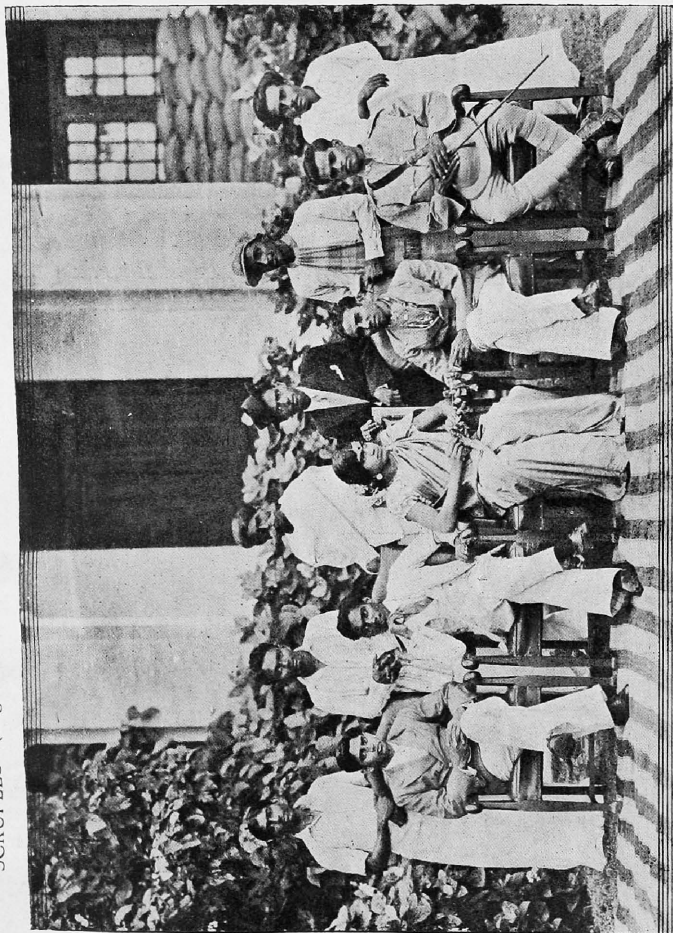
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# THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB

Valedictory address 13th Feb., 1942. *Variety entertainment*  
 "SCRUPLES" (English Drama) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
 "LOVE LOST" (Tamil Drama)



*Sitting* :—S. Damodaran, R. Muthukumaraswamy, P. Paramaguru, K. P. Abdul Hameed, K. R. Kothandaraman,  
*Rejoicing.* *Jagadish—Villain.* *Prem @ Humsa.* *Japal.* *Police-Officer—Secretary.*  
*Standing* :—N. S. Periaswamy, G. Sreenivasan, D. Sreenivasadesikan, S. Chidambaram, Janikiram,  
*Venu.* *The Victim.* *Somanatham Pillai.* *The thief.* *The idiot.* *Make-up artist.*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

THE English Literature Society held a symposium on Tagore last Saturday. "Better late than never," it perhaps thought. The University Union had duly met and mourned the departure of the great soul from our midst on the very day of its departure. The Literature Society, it would appear, was intent, last Saturday, on making amends for the unconscionable delay. It made arrangements for the great poet being considered from four different points of view. Rao Sahib Prof. C. S. Srinivasachariar, M.A., Head of the Department of History, led the proceedings by speaking on *Tagore and his Age*. Mr. N. Lakshminarasimha Rao, B.Sc., of the IV Hons. Class, followed with a short speech on *Tagore as a writer of short stories*. Mr. C. R. Myleru, M.A., then spoke on *Tagore as a dramatist*. Lastly, Prof. P. A. Subrahmanya Ayyar, M.A., showed how the poet asserted the self-respect of India. These four speeches are, with the permission of the speakers, brought out in this Number.

Dr. Sir K.V. Reddi Naidu, K.C.I.E., D.Litt., occupied the chair. The sentiments he expressed on the occasion, when concluding the proceedings, deserve to be printed in letters of gold. He said: "The fact that Tagore wrung high eulogy from the West and, as a mark of the sincerity of that eulogy, the great Nobel



Prize, has added a cubit to the stature of his country. It has shown to the world that there should be no more talking lightly of India. Tagore's championship of the dignity of India is an epoch in Indian History that his contemporaries and posterity will ever remember with pride."

Yes. India shall ever remember Rabindranath with pride. It will also ever cherish the names of those who show who her true heroes are, and how truly to worship them.

*15th Feb. 42.*

---

# THE SYMPOSIUM

## I

### TAGORE AND HIS AGE

*by*

*Rao Sahib Prof. Srinivasachariar, M.A.*

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE Tagore family was one of the original Kulins that had settled in Bengal in the days of the half-mythical King Adisura and had been ennobled in the reign of Akbar, with the title of Thakur, corrupted into Tagore in usage. The family claims, amongst its ancestors, Dhananidhara, author of a commentary on the Institutes of Manu, Dhananjaya who served king Ballala Sen, Halayudha, minister of Rai Lakshman Sen, Jagannatha Pandita-Raja and Purushottama, author of *Prayaga Ratnamala* and other works. Jayaram Tagore was Amin of the District of the Twenty-four Parganahs at the time of Clive's recovery of Fort William (1757) and the new Fort was built on his ancestral land. His two sons, Darpa Narayana and Nilmani became the respective heads of the senior and junior branches of the Tagore family. The former branch claims Prasanna Kumar Tagore and Maharaja Sri Jotindra Mohun Tagore, the great musical composer among its descendants.

The latter has produced Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, the great philanthropist and reformer and collaborator with Raja Ram Mohun Roy, his son, Maharishi Devendranath Tagore, the "first lawgiver" of the Brahmo Samaj, and his sons, Dwijendranath, Rabindranath, the poet, Satyendranath, the first Indian to enter the Civil Service; and of the next generation are Abanindranath and Gaganendranath, "the great Twin Brethren of Bengali, or indeed Indian, Art." As Thompson has expressed, Rabindranath was of a house where "all the surging tides of the Indian Renaissance might flow round his daily life and fill the air he breathed with the exhilaration of their fresh airs."

Rabindranath was encouraged to write verse almost as soon as he could walk; and "music and drama were the air he breathed" from infancy. Rabindranath breathed and absorbed into his mind the Bengal of the Ganges, "with its life of steady flow and sudden storm and flood" and only to a much lesser extent with the upland country of sandstone and laterite and jungles of *sāl*, *palās*, datepalms etc.—the knowledge of which came late to him, after his settlement at Bolpur. He had a genuine love of Vaishnava lyric poetry and tradition that have formed one of the strongest cultural strands of Bengal, as well as of folk-verse to whose simpler melodies he was exceedingly susceptible.

Tagore's 'Sadhana' period, so-called from its close connection with the journal of that name "incomparably the best periodical that Bengal has ever known" was perhaps "the most prolific period of his amazingly prolific career", abounding in short stories, dramas, letters etc.,—was succeeded by some years of uncertainty that preceded the next epoch of many-sided activity, marked by an emergence into politics, a change in religious attitude and by an output of serious novels like *Gora* "the greatest novel



in Bengali." The founding of the *Shantiniketan* the brief endeavour to reorganise the Adi Brahma Samaj, the sudden meteoric shooting into international fame and the consequent translations of his works, his reflections on the European war and the Punjab troubles, his later activities—these have for every Indian an absorbing interest in a many-sided genius of intellect, poetic fervour, aspirations of reconciling east and west and bringing about an international *sadhana*. That he was the ideal embodiment of the surging spirit of Indian Renaissance and that he has abundantly helped to Indian values in the international scale should be impressed deeply on all minds.

---

## II

### **RABINDRANATH TAGORE, THE SHORT STORY WRITER**

*by*

*N. Lakshminarasimha Rao, B.Sc.*

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I DO not intend to give you a life sketch of Dr. Tagore before I embark on that particular aspect of literary talent, namely that of writing short stories, which was present in an abundant measure in India's first Nobel Laureate. For, if I do that, I shall only be carrying coals to Newcastle. So, without any more ado, I shall speak to you

of Tagore, the short-story writer—a short-story writer of the highest merit.

At the present day it is the short story that has the greatest vogue and this is on account of the rush of modern life, when people wish to read something gripping and at the same time good, requiring them to spare only a short interval of time. The short story may be defined as a story that can be read at one sitting and occupying not more than an hour of the reader's time. The short story may be an anecdote worked into literary form or may deal with some one phase of character or experience or with a detached critical scene. It should impress us as absolutely clear in outline, well proportioned, full enough for the purpose, without any suggestion of overcrowding and complete within its own frame work. To try the value of a short story as a piece of art, the two points that have to be noted in it are singleness of aim and singleness of effect. The scope of the short story is very vast: It may depict a dramatic incident or situation, a telling scene, a closely co-ordinated series of events, a phase of character, a bit of experience, an aspect of life, a moral problem, to name only a few of the themes of a short story.

Now Rabindranath Tagore has exhibited his genius as a short story writer by utilising the whole field of his branch of literature, for conveying his ideas. He has made use of the short story to its maximum extent in depicting Indian life, character and manners, in a masterly way and there is no avenue of the short story that he has left unexplored. He is as great a short story writer as he is a poet and it was to the medium of the short story that he resorted to in the beginning of his literary career. And it will only be proper if I give you brief summaries of the principal short stories in order to show Tagore's range of vision.

In a story called 'In the night', the condition of mind of one Dokhan Babu is depicted. This Dokhan Babu pretending to show affection to his wife, who is on her death bed, is all the while loving another woman, whom he marries immediately after his wife's demise. When the other woman had once come to his house during the wife's illness, the wife asked him 'ओ कि, ओ कि' meaning 'who is that,' 'who is that.' Now after his wife's death, when he is alone he hears a bird making a noise in the night resembling 'ओ कि, ओ कि'. Hearing the bird, he remembers his wife's question and this makes him feel that he has committed a great mistake and hence he is afraid of the night.

In another story called 'The Editor' an incident in the life of a father and his young daughter is portrayed. The child, who had lost her mother, was acting as the house-keeper and though the father had great affection for his child, he was not caring much for her, being busy with his editorial duties. Once when the editorial tasks were ill done, the child tried to converse with him but his mind was pre-occupied. Still on account of his affection, he was touched by the sight of the young child and later he observed that the child was suffering from fever. He immediately cast off his duties and looked after his child.

The story of 'Giribala' treats of a rake and his wife. This rake without showing proper affection to his beautiful wife runs after women on the stage. In spite of Giribala's entreaties he does not desist from his bad practices. When she finds that her words are of no avail, Giribala runs away and her husband knows not where she has gone. One day when he goes to witness a drama, he sees his wife acting on the stage and he makes a huge hubbub there.

In the 'Hungry Stones' a person of today lives in a palace of the Moghuls and his experience of how he felt the shadow of sorrow and love that were actually present in Moghul times is pictured. In the 'Victory' an artificial poet, so to speak, who has the casque of learning comes to the court of a king and challenges a real and simple poet of the king's to a competition of composition. The king's poet sings from the heart and his chief desire is to please the king's daughter, whereas the other's wish is to show off his 'book-learned skill.' Yet it is the artificial poet that triumphs. The defeated poet is about to die and before he dies he has an experience that the princess whom he adored and whom he wanted to please has come and crowned him with the laurels of victory. In this story the difference between tinsel and real gold is brought out and the story further shows how in this unjust world more often than not it is the tinsel that catches the eye and not the genuine gold. We can read a world of meaning into it and many themes from actual life can be taken to illustrate this maxim of the genuine thing suffering. But all cannot present the same subject in the manner Tagore has done.

The 'Home Coming' depicts a naughty boy who is taken to his uncle's home in order to minimize the responsibility of the boy's mother. The boy thinks his own home no good at all because his mother is gruff. But he is absolutely wretched in his uncle's house and wants to go back to his own home; he is however unable to do so and consequently falls ill. When he is about to die he remembers his home, and his mother witnesses with sorrow the tragic end of her son.

Tagore's satirical vein can be seen in his story 'The Kingdom of Cards'. Here he criticizes some of the social conditions and reforms of our country, giving to them the



various names of the cards. This is a very delightful story. The part that fate or chance plays in our lives is very well brought out in 'The Vision'. A husband, who is a medical student, treats his wife for some eye disease and on account of his inefficiency the wife loses her sight. The devoted wife however does not mind losing her eyes and feeling that she will be of no use to her husband advises him to marry again. He swears an oath that he will never marry a second time. But later on he tries to marry another girl; when however he wants to go to the girl's house to do the wedding, he is stopped by a storm and fortunately the girl marries his brother-in-law and thus his oath is not broken.

The vanity of people, who boast about their pedigree even though they are poor as the proverbial church mouse and how easily they may be made the victims of practical jokes is illustrated in the 'Babus of Nayanjore.' The last of the Babus of Nayanjore, who is a poor man, lives in Calcutta in a small room making a show of being a wealthy man. He is very vain and a youth of his acquaintance tries to make him the target of a practical joke. But the youth sees the grand-daughter of the old Babu in distress because of his practical joking and marries her.

- The fear of ghosts that is present in most of us, even though we are ashamed to admit it, is very well pointed out in 'Living or Dead?' A widow whom every one supposes to be dead recovers consciousness and walks away from the cemetery. Though she is alive people believe that she has given up the ghost and that it is her wraith that has returned. When she returns home, people say, 'you have left this world; break these bonds of मया. We will perform all funeral honours.' Unable to convince them that she is not a ghost but a living human being she in dejection falls in a well and kills herself.

Though it is said in the Bible that God says 'Vengeance is mine' people always want to wreak their vengeance upon those who have harmed them. This is very well shown in 'The Renunciation', where an orthodox person causes his neighbour to be ostracized, though in reality the neighbour has done really nothing to deserve the punishment. The neighbour in order to revenge himself manouvers to see that the orthodox person's son marries a woman of a low caste. The orthodox person does not know in the beginning that his daughter-in-law is a low caste woman, but when he comes to know it he is furious with his neighbour and asks his son to renounce his wife. The son refuses to do so, seeing the condition of his wife and is consequently himself renounced by the father. This story further illustrates the might of love transcending caste.

The feelings of young children, say, at the age of seven, are depicted in the story 'Once there was a king.' A young boy of seven delights in hearing a story narrated by his grand mother and feigns a headache when his tutor wants him to read his lessons. The boy wishes it rained in torrents so that his tutor might be prevented from coming to teach him his lessons. All these feelings especially the last two, I am sure, all of us have experienced at that age, though we may not own it now. But can we bring out such sentiments in a short story as Tagore has done? Tagore in the words of the boy says "I had a straining hope, which was almost a certainty that my tutor would be prevented from coming that evening. I sat on the stool in the far corner of the verandah looking down the lane, with a heart beating faster and faster. Every minute I kept my eye on the rain and when it began to grow less I prayed with all my might: 'Please, God, send some more rain till half-past seven is over'. For I was quite ready to believe that there

was no other need for rain except to protect one helpless boy one evening in one corner of Calcutta from the deadly clutches of his tutor.

"If not in answer to my prayer, at any rate, according to some grosser law of physical nature the rain did not give up.

"But, alas! nor did my teacher.

"Exactly to the minute, in the bend of the lane, I saw his approaching umbrella. The great bubble of hope burst in my breast, and my heart collapsed. Truly if there is a punishment to fit the crime after death, then my tutor will be born again as me, and I shall be born as my tutor."

Tagore's subtle humour is also well brought out in these sentences. In this story Tagore also criticizes the modern critics and says that they may be easily hoodwinked. Take this for instance: "But the readers of this modern age are far more exact and exacting. When they hear such an opening to a story as 'Once there was a king', they are at once critical and suspicious. They apply the searchlight of science to its legendary haze and ask 'which king?'

"The story tellers have become more precise in their turn. They are no longer content with the old indefinite 'There was a king', but assume instead a look of profound learning and begin: 'Once there was a king named Ajatasatru.'

"The modern reader's curiosity is not so easily satisfied. He blinks at the author through his scientific spectacles and asks again: 'Which Ajatasatru?'

"Every schoolboy knows' the author proceeds, 'that there were three Ajatasatrus. The first was born in the

twentieth century B. C., and died at the tender age of two years and eight months. I deeply regret that it is impossible to find, from any trustworthy source, a detailed account of his reign. The second Ajatasatru is better known to historians. If you refer to the new Encyclopædia of History...

"By this time the modern reader's suspicions are dissolved. He feels he may safely trust his author. He says to himself: 'Now we shall have a story that is both improving and instructive.'

"Alas! how we all love to be deluded! we have a secret dread of being thought ignorant. And we end by being ignorant after all, only we have done it in a long round-about way."

It may rather be a bit difficult to gauge the full character of Tagore's stories by these summaries. But one thing is certain, namely, the world of Tagore's stories is very great. It is populated with all sorts of people from the highest to the lowest: rich Babus, poor beggars, happy people, people in distress, ascetics, actors, songsters, poets, pundits, children, youths, maidens, all abound in his short-story world. Tagore was accustomed to see all kinds of people and he believed that every one was worth noticing. He mingled with them in a kindred spirit and was able to unearth all their secrets. To a person of Rabindranath's calibre, no life is trivial, and no subject too low to be made the basis of a short story. Even as Wordsworth found matter enough for his poems in 'the meanest flower that blows' Tagore finds material for his stories even in the smallest matters and in the meanest people. Even the stones of the steps speak to him and the skeleton seeks his friendship. In 'The Home Coming' we find the ordinary day-to-day affairs of family life, in 'The Hungry Stones' the actions and



speeches of bygone glories reflected in a magic mirror and in 'The victory' the boastful voice of the artificial poet and the sweet voice of the genuine one. Every incident is depicted in a bewitching manner. His capacity as a short story writer is immeasurable. Many of his stories have been printed; but it is not possible for all of them to be at the same high level of perfection. Yet even in a story which we might feel is hollow, the matter is perfectly in order. There is great beauty in the delineation of the characters and the scenes. Of course in the best stories his ability rises to its zenith and Tagore's best stories may be counted among the best stories of world literature. For example take his 'Cabuliwallah.' I am sure every one here has read that story. Some years back, about three or four, this story was included in the English Selections for the S.S.L.C. Examination. I shall not give you a summary of it, for the whole charm of the story may be lost in the summarizing. It is best appreciated in its entirety. The innocence of a child, her love to talk to others, even though they may be strangers, her bashfulness, her strange and mirth-provoking questions, the tender feelings of a parent towards another are all excellently brought out in this story. For a sample :

"I remembered the day when the Cabuliwallah and my Mini had first met, and I felt sad. When she had gone, Rahman heaved a deep sigh and sat down on the floor. The idea had suddenly come to him that his daughter too must have grown in this long time and that he would have to make friends with her anew. Assuredly he would not find her, as he used to know her. And besides, what might not have happened to her in those eight years ?

"The marriage pipes sounded, and the mild autumn sun streamed round us. But Rahman sat in the little Calcutta lane and saw before him the barren mountains of Afghanistan.

“I took out a bank-note, and gave to him, saying: ‘Go back to your own daughter, Rahman, in your own country, and may the happiness of your meeting bring good fortune to my child!’ Having made this present, I had to curtail some of the festivities. I could not have the electric lights I had intended, nor the military band and the ladies of the house were despondent at it. *But to me the wedding feast was all the brighter for the thought that in a distant land a long-lost father had met again with his only child.*”

In literature, a well written short story is a gem. Tagore is by nature a poet who excites the emotions. His short stories excite the emotions most. He has translated sentiments into story by means of his unsurpassed imagination. Just as “ऊर्वशी” is great among his poems so is “Cabuliwallah” among his short stories. In this story the beauty of the emotions and the skill of the arrangement of the words together make it what people feel is a jewel without any blemish.

By his abundant writings, which are permeated by a sense of the beauty of the universe, by a love of children and simplicity and by a consciousness of God, Tagore has done much to interpret to every one, especially the Westerners, the more serious, why all, the reflections of the people of India, particularly of the people of Bengal. But for him modern India would never have been able to be on a par with the best nations of the world in the field of literature. He was a poet, a patriot, a politician, a playwright, a short-story writer and one who interested himself in various other fields and shone with magnificent brilliance in all of them. We can say of him what Dr. Johnson wrote on Goldsmith's tombstone “He has touched on almost every subject of literature, and touched nothing that he did not adorn.”

## III

## TAGORE AS A DRAMATIST

*by**Mr. C. R. Myleru, M.A.*

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

**T**HIS aspect of his work has not been sufficiently recognised and appreciated even by his own countrymen of Bengal. It is easy to explain it; his great work in restoring Indian self-respect among the nations of the world, his poetry which opened the eyes of humanity to the wonderful spirituality of our country as a token of which he was given the Nobel Prize for his *Gitanjali*, his activities as an educationalist at Santiniketan, and his contributions to the field of fiction and short story, all these have to some extent hidden from our view his equally great and abiding work as a dramatist. Even as a young man Tagore was attracted to this form of literature. Later, when he established his "Viswa-bharati" University, he made plays and play-acting, occupy an important place in the regular work of the boys and girls studying there. Every evening, just before retiring to bed, the scholars spent an hour in histrionics. "When the meal is over the scholars have an hour of story-telling, acting dramatic scenes, singing, and so on".<sup>1</sup> He himself used to take an active part in their theatricals, and other artistic activities. "In every branch of art he is their inspirer; at the end of each term the boys in general produce

<sup>1</sup> Ernest Rhys: Rabindranath Tagore.

and act one of his plays. He himself joins them and takes a part in the play, whatever it may be. When latterly "The King of the Dark chamber" was produced by the school, he himself took the part of the king, and his superb rendering of it will long be remembered by those who acted with him and by those who witnessed it."<sup>1</sup> His interpretation of "Raghu-pati" in "Sacrifice" was long remembered as his greatest success in the field of acting.

Thus he was a keen student of Drama, both in writing and producing his plays. He also took his troupe of Santiniketan artists round our country once or twice and gave some of his plays, which were of course much appreciated.

His plays fall under three main groups. First: the early ones. These are mostly non-symbolic, and in blank-verse except "Malini." When we go through them carefully, we realise that they have been inspired by Shakespearean models. Usually there are two or three plots in the story, one main, and the others subsidiary. There is a lot of declaration; any number of scenes which are not really necessary from the point of view of the action of the plays is another feature of these dramas. The blank-verse used is also the result of the study of Elizabethan models. Tagore does not seem to have mastered the form of drama quite well in these plays. This group includes plays like:—"The Sannyasin," "Malini," "Sacrifice" "The King and Queen" and "Chitrangada" or "Chitra" as it is better known. As I have no time to go into details regarding each play which I would like to do very much, I shall content myself with saying a few words about one or two of them. I shall try to give detailed studies of Tagore's plays in another paper. Of these dramas "Chitra"

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<sup>1</sup> Ernest Rhys, quoting from an account of Santiniketan by an old student of the institution.



and "Malini" contain some of Tagore's loveliest poetry. It does not mean that his other plays are deficient in this respect. Poetical imagery is to Tagore what a quibble was to Shakespeare according to Dr. Johnson. If there is a chance, Tagore simply lavishes and luxuriates in his grand poetic conceits. As a matter of fact what is a virtue in some respects, becomes a vice sometimes. All characters indulge in poetic imagery! In other words Tagore speaks through them, and not they in their character. Fine nature-descriptions, beautiful similes and metaphors are found everywhere. The last speech of 'Chitra' to "Arjuna" where she reveals herself as the boyish-daughter of the King of Manipur is a fine instance of Tagore's writing at its best.

"I am a traveller in the great world-path, my garments are dirty, and my feet are bleeding with thorns. Where should I achieve flower-beauty, the unsullied loveliness of a moment's life? The gift that I proudly bring you is the heart of a woman. Here have all pains and joys gathered, the hopes and fears and shames of a daughter of the dust; here love springs up struggling toward immortal life. Herein lies an imperfection which yet is noble and grand. If the flower-service is finished, my master, accept *this* as your servant for the days to come."

This play of Tagore's was misunderstood by many people when it was published. They thought it was a plea for sensuality which is quite unwarranted. The point in it comes later, where Chitra reveals herself to Arjuna as she truly is more boyish than girlish, one who would keep company with him in all his manly enterprises; she is finally accepted when Arjuna says:—

"Beloved, my life is full," which means that he wants his wife to be his companion and helpmate in all his work.

This play is undoubtedly one of Tagore's masterpieces, and it is popular both with Eastern and Western audiences.

"Sacrifice" is a great play on a lower level though, than his masterly "Karna and Kunti" and "Kach and Devajani" which came later. From the point of view of drama, with great dramatic situations which could be well interpreted "Sacrifice" is without doubt a fine work. The plot is unusually good for a Tagore play, usually he does not worry himself about giving a good plot. For once he has woven a good story, with a main plot, and two subsidiary ones. There is some comic relief also provided, following the example of Elizabethan plays. Some good characterisation also is seen here. Raghupati the crafty, but devoted priest of Kali, is portrayed wonderfully. It is also one of the bestactable parts in all Tagore's plays. Jaising too the poetical, weak-minded disciple of the masterly priest is painted well. We get many samples of his magnificent poetical imagery in the speeches of Jaising.

"Where do you go my brothers? (to same passers-by). To the fair at Nishipur? There the women are to dance? Oh this world is pleasant. And the dancing limbs of the girls are beautiful (this sentence is almost verse; the cadences and vowels are so perfectly placed). In what careless merriment the crowds flow through the roads, making the sky ring with their laughter and song. I will follow them." Or again:

"The road is straight before me, with an alms-bowl in hand and a beggar girl as my sweetheart I shall walk on. Who says that the worlds ways are difficult? Anyhow we reach the end,—the end where all laws and rules are no more, where the errors and hurts of life are forgotten, where is rest, eternal rest".....

The suicide of Jaising, Raghupati's vain appeals to his Kali to bring him back to life, his final realisation that he has been worshipping merely a block of stone and no goddess, and the consequent disillusionment, his seeing in the beggar-girl Aparna a human sweetness which he missed in the horrible stone, and their going away together he calling her "You are my mother, I have found thee," all this is superb, which Tagore has never surpassed in any of his other plays. Incidentally there is a moral enforced in the play; that animal sacrifices are inhuman, and that neither man nor god wants them. The other plays in the group do not come up to this level. There are dramatic possibilities in "Malini" and "the King and Queen," which the playwright does not make proper use of. The 'Sannyasin' is an idea-play, which he was to develop and perfect later. Its purpose is to prove that renunciation of the world is no good; only mixing with it, and enjoying its joys and sorrows is the proper way of life.

Now we come to the second group. This consists of short plays, the themes taken from Samskrit sources, mostly from the "Mahabharata" that great store-house of story and wisdom. They are in rhymed couplets. To this group belong "Karna and Kunti," "Kach and Devjani" or the "Curse at Farewell," "Gandhari's prayer," etc., and also "Sati," where he condemns that ancient, and luckily no more existent practice of compulsory self-immolation. These short plays remind us of London's "Imaginary Conversations," but they are certainly more dramatic. It is here that we see Tagore at his best as a dramatist. A possible objection that could be taken against them is that they are short. But we must take what the playwright gives, and not wish for what he has not given, and thus criticise him. These brief studies capture life itself, with all its troubles and conflicts, which is the stuff of which drama is made.

Of these "Karna and Kunti" is beyond doubt the best. It is only an episode, and just a dialogue between the mother and her first-born, but abandoned son Karna. "Yet such an episode as makes the brain work with compassion, with the old-Norses' pity for human beings at odds with each other, slaying each other with sorrow of heart, yet helpless to do otherwise, for Fate would have it so..... Nothing can surpass the tenseness of this picture, of two souls, one agonizing for the love which her act had forfeited, and which she would give everything, even her reputation to recover, the other poised and prepared for the finish he knows at hand. It is framed in such an atmosphere as the poet loves, of spreading darkness and of lights one by one sprinkling the night. In this pause of world's effort everything can be weighed; not one pang is spared to either sufferer."<sup>1</sup>

The story of "Karna" is one of the most tragic in the whole world of dramatic themes, and the very choice of this subject for dramatic treatment shows Tagore's unerring insight in these matters.

"The Curse at Farewell" deals with the story of "Kacha and Devajani." It is also a most moving theme, especially towards the end, where Devajani reveals her love to Kacha, and requests him to stay with her and not to go back to his father. Her appeals, her passionate outbursts, and finally her curse that what he has learnt from her father should prove unavailing to him are wonderfully dramatic. In the passages, where the playwright describes their affection and love-escapades in sylvan surroundings, we are reminded of Miranda and Ferdinand.

In the plays of this period, Tagore shows a masterly understanding of a playwright's duty, and does his work in

<sup>1</sup> E. J. Thomson : Rabindranath Tagore.

his best manner. As dramas, these short plays are the most successful among his works.

Let us consider his later plays which come under the third group. Among them are "The Post Office" "The Cycle of Spring" and "the King of the Dark Chamber." These are in prose, and symbolical in significance. Human interest which plays a greater part in the plays of the middle period fades away, giving place to ideas, which gain mastery, gradually.

In this respect he is in a line with recent developments in Drama in the west, where ideas have gained great prominence. But we should not think that he has copied any English models. His plays are of native growth; they are children of the soil. His ideas are the common heritage of our land, and they form the traditional background of our mental make-up. These ideas, with some changes he gives in his plays. Important among them are, that we get liberation of spirit only if we cast off the sense of "I" and "my," the "aham" in us, which forms the main theme of "The Post Office;" that just as among the seasons of the year, there are human seasons in man's life, old age giving place to youth and so on, which is the point in "The Cycle of Spring;" that if one wishes to know and become one with the lord one must go in a humble and contrite spirit, which is stressed in "The King of the Dark Chamber." This last idea is seen in the usual "Nayaka-nayaki bhāva" which is one of the usual themes of writers in all languages in our country. Thus these later plays have a lofty attitude towards life, and reveal a mind moving on the highest planes of thought and feeling.

These plays have been acted in London and Berlin, and they were successful. In London "The Post Office" was played by some Irish players, who could enter into the spirit



of an Indian piece more easily than others except of course Tagore's own players. The late W. B. Yeats who saw a performance of it, and has given an introduction to it says: "The little play is perfectly constructed, and conveys to the right audience, an emotion of gentleness and peace." But that audience is necessarily limited; only when plot, characterization, dialogue and idea are found together, would plays prove popular with all manner of audiences. In these later plays there is an allegorical vein also to be found, which requires careful attention to be pieced out. "The Cycle of Spring" was a favourite play of Tagore's, and every year when the season of Spring came round, he would produce it in Santiniketan, he himself taking a leading part in it. It is somewhat unequal in merit, the first introductory part being a little too long, and not all of the same order. Another characteristic of these plays, as also of all Tagore's plays is the presence of a large number of songs by girls and boys and poets and minstrels. These songs are as important as the dramatic part of his plays. In this respect also his work is eminently Indian, because we are not aware of dramas without songs in our ancient literature.

About Tagore's place as a dramatist there can be no question. His work in this field is as important as his work in other fields, though it has not been recognised yet. The influence of Elizabethan models is clear in his early plays, and the influence of Ibsen and his school of "idea-dramatists" in the later plays. But all these influences he has assimilated, and made his own. He interprets our life and ways and tradition in his plays as in his other works. Plot construction, characterization, dialogue are not observed by him in the well-known orthodox style. But that some of his characters, like Raghupati, Karna, Kunti and Devajani would live as long dramas are read or acted, there is no doubt. It is a

pity he did not devote as much attention to this aspect of his work as to the other aspects, and that he did not give full length five act plays in his middle period. But, we must take what he gave and not cry over what he did not give. And what he gave is noble enough. No one would claim a place for him among the greatest writers of drama. But among stars of the second magnitude, that Tagore will shine we need have no doubt.

## IV

**TAGORE'S POETRY AND INDIAN  
NATIONAL SELF-RESPECT***by**Prof. P. A. Subrahmanya Ayyar.*

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

**T**AGORE was a poet. He was a poet, first and last. He was more. He was also a philosopher. Well, all poets are, in a sense, philosophers; just as all of us are, in a sense, poets. But Tagore was a philosopher in another sense, in a far higher sense. He had a system of philosophy to teach to men. The West called him a poet-philosopher. It called him so on the occasion of hailing him a Nobel Laureate. The name has been his since. That, by the way, shows that the West can discern well, and, if and when it likes, speak candidly.



Tagore then was a poet-philosopher. He wrote poetry. He often spoke poetry. It came to him as ordinary speech comes to us all. And then he taught a philosophy. It came to him as an inheritance. It was there in all his poetry. I am sure you can see it if you read his poetry. I am sure you read it and, as Indians, feel that your bosoms swell with pride. This philosophy of his is clear and complete, even as his poetry is delightful. It was not with him as, if Matthew Arnold is to be believed, with Wordsworth: it was not with him that the poetry was the reality and the philosophy the illusion. Both were living realities. Harvard in the extreme west and Tokio in the extreme east both vouch for that.

I must here give my audience a caution. They must not suppose that Tagore wrote poetry only when he wrote verses. When did he *not* make poetry? He made it when he spoke in the drawing room. He made it when he addressed audiences. He made it always, and all that he uttered was poetry. His prose works and his addresses and talks had indeed not the verse form. They had still the soul of poetry all right. Their substance was highly poetical.

Take this piece—that, with your leave, I shall read. You will see that it is not verse; but it is not prose; it is prose-poetry, if you like, such as Dickens wrote when he described the end of Little Nell.

It will be difficult for others than Indians to realise all the associations that are grouped round the word *asram*, the forest sanctuary. For it blossomed in India like its lotus, under a sky generous in its sunlight and starry splendour. India's climate has brought to us the invitation of the open air; the language of her mighty rivers is solemn in their chants; the limitless expanse of her plains encircles our homes with the silence of the world beyond; then the sun rises from the marge of the green earth like an offering of the unseen to the altar of the Unknown and it goes

down to the west at the end of the day like a gorgeous ceremony of nature's salutation to the Eternal. In India the shades of the trees are hospitable, the dust of the earth stretches its brown arms to us, the air with its embraces clothes us with warmth. These are the unchanging facts that ever carry their suggestions to our minds, and therefore we feel it is India's mission to realize the truth of the human soul in the Supreme Soul through its union with the soul of the world. This mission had taken its natural form in the forest schools in the ancient time. And it still urges us to seek for the vision of the Infinite in all forms of creation, in the human relations of love; to feel it in the air we breathe, in the light in which we open our eyes, in the water in which we bathe, in the earth on which we live and die. Therefore I know—and I know it from my experience—that the students and the teachers who have come together in the *Asram*, are daily growing towards the emancipation of their minds into the consciousness of the Infinite, not through any process of teaching or outer discipline, but by the help of an unseen atmosphere of aspiration that surrounds the place and the memory of a devoted soul who lived here in intimate communion with God.

And again :

We have for over a century been dragged by the prosperous West behind its chariot, choked by the dust, deafened by the noise, humbled by our own helplessness, and overwhelmed by the speed. We agreed to acknowledge that this chariot-drive was progress and that progress was civilization. If we ever ventured to ask "Progress towards what, and progress for whom?" it was considered to be peculiarly and ridiculously oriental to entertain such doubts about the absoluteness of progress.

Well, here you have Poetry shaking hands with Philosophy before the very eyes and with the very sanction of Bharata Mata asserting her dignity against the thoughtless taunts of the commerce-ridden and blinded West. It was in this poetry which expounds a philosophy that Tagore told the West to stop speaking to and of the East arrogantly.

Perhaps I do not make myself clear when I speak thus. I shall try to make myself understood.

When Tagore was a boy, the West dominated the East—I do not mean, politically. That it had done long before and has done ever since. But she dominated the East in another, and more important, sense. Every thing Western was the cry of the India of Tagore the boy; everything—thought, emotion, customs and manners. But luckily men were already taking the cudgels up against this denationalization. Tagore's own father, the Maharishi, (as discerning men called him) was among them—perhaps the most active. But perhaps never did he serve the cause so well as when he begot Rabindranath. And Rabindranath served the cause not a quarter so well by any other means as by being born. Rabindranath's voice was in this matter a clarion. No, it was thunder, heard alike at Sanfrancisco and at Yakohama.

Tagore expounded the East to the world—expounded in especial, India to Europe. He told them some home-truths and made them blush and made them also give him a prize for it—a transaction that does credit alike to the courage of the speaker and the honesty of the listeners. He told them that their civilization was economic, commercial, sordid and therefore, in the extreme, humdrum—even as their persons were tailor-made. In many of his verses in the *Gardener* and in the *Crescent Moon* he sang the glory of the Indian sky and the Indian forest, of the Indian's life of honest conformity to Nature. He sang the East in its glorious aspiration to get merged in the Infinite, in its endeavour, amidst obstacles and obloquy, to spread among men a sense of the essential oneness of the human race, the realization of the oneness of man in the unity of the Infinite. Take any random verse of his. Take, say, verse No. 28 in the *Gardener*. I presume you all know it by heart. All lovers of Tagore's poetry do. Yet I shall read it here :



I have bared my life before your eyes from end to end, with nothing hidden or held back.

That is why you know me not. If it were only a gem I could break it into a hundred pieces and string them into a chain to put it on your neck.

If it were only a flower, round and small and sweet, I could pluck it from its stem to set it in your hair.

But it is a heart, my beloved. Where are its shores and its bottom?

You know not the limits of this kingdom, still you are its queen.

If it were only a moment of pleasure it would flower in an easy smile, and you could see it and read it in a moment.

If it were merely a pain it would melt in limpid tears, reflecting its inmost secret without a word.

But it is Love, my beloved.

Its pleasure and pain are boundless, and endless its wants and wealth.

It is as near to you as your life, but you can never wholly know it.

You call it love poetry, don't you? Yes. It is love poetry. It depicts the love of man to woman. But pause a while and understand the Infinite in the place of the woman and you will read in it the hunger of the human soul to be merged in, and be one with, the Infinite—the hunger of the human soul to be rid of all fear and doubt and become part of that Bliss from an attempted description of which the tongue returns ineffectual and an attempted analysis of which the mind comes backbaffled!

यतो वाचो निर्वर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह । आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो  
विद्वान् । न विभेति कदाचनेति ।

Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, it is like that in all true love poetry. It is like that in the love poetry

of Shakespeare. When Florizel gives up his claim to the Bohemian throne and flies away with Perdita, he is like the human soul shaking the dust of the world from its feet and merging in the Infinite. It is like this in all Tagore's poetry—in all his utterances which, I need not now repeat, are all of them truly poetical, whatever their form.

Friends, Indians, Countrymen, India did in old times produce poets and philosophers, and got her mead of praise from outsiders. They all made their country great in the eyes of the world. All honour to them ! But we justly glory in the latest of her poet-philosophers whom Providence gave us at a time when to be an Oriental was to be degraded, who told the world to learn that to be born a true Oriental was to teach the world and whose life's study was to show arrogant foreigners their place in the scheme of things and sing in a voice audible to all the world,

Where the mind is without fear and the head is high,

\* \* \* \* \*

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

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## ALLAN MONKHOUSE

**A**LLAN Noble Monkhouse was born at Barnard Castle, Durham, on May 7, 1858. He was the third, and only living son of Mr. J.W.S. Monkhouse. He had his early education in private schools, and after leaving studies, went into business in Manchester, at which he worked patiently for more than twenty years. But his passion was for literature, and during the leisure hours he could snatch from his business preoccupations, he worked at literature. He had a great love for games, in several of which he distinguished himself, though not as a player of the first rank. He occasionally contributed articles of wonderful literary merit for an ordinary businessman, to the "Manchester Guardian." These contributions attracted the attention of the late Mr. W. T. Arnold, who was the first-leader writer for the paper in those days. He naturally thought that a man like Monkhouse who could write with such elegance and distinction was wasting himself in the dull lifeless routine of the stock exchange. In 1902, he quitted commerce for ever, luckily for readers of English Literature, and joined the regular staff of the "Manchester Guardian." At the beginning he was put in charge of the 'daily cotton market report,' and, needless to say, he did this soulless, statistical work with a literary grace and finish, which attracted a number of readers to it who did not care much for the trade part of it. Of course, from the commercial point of view also it was of first rate value and importance, since he had been in the line for a score of years and more. He was such a master of the subject of cotton trade, in all its aspects, that he was invited to contribute the article on "Cotton" to the Seventh Edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica."

But his real love was for the theatre and books. In those years the Manchester Repertory Theatre was at the height of its power and prestige, mainly owing to the work of Miss A. E. F. Horniman. Very often there would be two or three "first-night" performances of great interest and value which newspapers could not afford to neglect. The problem of dramatic criticism came to the forefront, for the newspapers. A number of dramatic critics came up then, chief among them being Harold Brighouse, James Agate, Stanley Houghton, and of course, Allan Monkhouse. But Monkhouse was far and away the most distinguished of them, respected and admired by for his earnestness, probity, candour and his power of being exacting and generous at the same time. But after the war, the competition of the Cinema reduced the theatre to comparative oblivion. And, moreover, Monkhouse was then first attacked by an illness from which he never completely recovered till the end, so that he entirely gave up attending theatres.

Monkhouse was thrice married. His first wife, Lucy, the daughter of Mr. James Muir Davie, died childless in 1893, the year after their marriage. In 1902, he married Elizabeth Dorothy, daughter of Mr. James Fildes Pearson. He left behind two sons and two daughters, when he died in January 1936.

He had from the beginning evinced a great interest in books and their reviewing. He was gradually put in charge of the difficult but important task of selecting and distributing new books for review; and more important than that, of maintaining a form of mild discipline over the reviewers, which is dangerous in the extreme since individual liberty of opinion and judgment would be interfered with if this is not done properly. But Monkhouse was so tactful in the discharge of this rather unpleasant and irksome duty, that,

without in any way impinging upon the personal views and attitudes of the reviewers, he maintained a certain standard for the review columns of the "Manchester Guardian," which became the object of envy of other papers. He made the art of reviewing novels as correct and efficient as possible. It is a work of stupendous magnitude and immensity, the task of reviewing novels in a popular and widely circulated paper. Every post would bring in hundreds of novels by writers well-known, and unknown. It would be obviously unfair, if only the works of master craftsmen were read, and the others by young aspirants to renown, were thrown into the waste-paper basket. Again, one could never be sure, if even the older writers were keeping up their old standard in their new books; and then the voluminous nature of these books of fiction! It was work, which would stagger any one, even a reader of Herculean efforts, and earnestness. Monkhouse did not fight shy of it. He organized the whole work very efficiently and made the two or three columns of weekly novel-review as good and effective as possible. Besides these book-reviews, he contributed a series of articles on suburban life, which appeared under the title of 'Suburb.' He also wrote the weekly literary causerie: "A Bookman's notes" which was very popular. He also contributed occasionally one or two of the sub-leaders, but never the first-leader. Though warmly interested in politics, he never wrote the main-leader, and never touched upon politics in any of his other leaders either.

He never stopped with writing these small or long articles for the paper. He found time in the midst of his arduous duties as a newspaper man, to write a number of novels and plays. His earliest work was one entitled "Books and Plays," consisting of a number of essays on several books and plays which impressed him. This was followed by a number of



novels, all of them placed in or around Manchester, and dealing with the lives and aspirations of people whom he knew best, newspaper men, men of letters, or businessmen, or people belonging to the theatre. Very important among them were :

“Men and Ghosts,” “A Deliverance,” “My Daughter Helen,” “Marmaduke,” “Alfred the Great,” “Farewell, Manchester.”

The opportunities offered by the Manchester Gaiety Theatre, which was very popular in the pre-war years, made Monkhouse turn his attention to the writing of plays. Moreover, since he was the dramatic critic then to the Manchester Guardian, he had to attend all the new plays produced. Their success might have induced him to try his hand at play-writing. He began with “Reaping the Whirlwind,” a one act tragedy. He did nothing of the sort; luckily he achieved considerable success as a dramatist, on the other hand! In 1911 he published “Mary Broome,” a four-act comedy, which was also produced at the Gaiety. Then followed “The Conquering Hero,” “First Blood,” “The Great Cham’s Diamond,” “Sons of Fathers,” “The Rag,” and “Cecilia.” Among these of course, the most successful was the “Conquering Hero,” which proved very popular in London also. His name came to be associated with those of Harold Brighouse and Stanley Houghton, who also wrote plays. It was usual to refer to them as the “Manchester School of Dramatists;” but really there was no school to which they belonged, and there was nothing in common among them beyond a real desire to do well in their plays and a common artistic ambition.

A word or two here on “Monkhouse as a dramatist” may not be out of place. He had the good fortune in his outlook on letters as also in his work as an author, and particularly

as a dramatist, to bridge the transition between the Victorian age and our own. His career and success as a dramatist closely followed the rise and progress of the Repertory Theatre movement in England, especially in Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham. In this sense, he contributed his quota which was by no means negligible, to the rebirth of English Drama in modern times. As a dramatic critic of the 'Manchester Guardian,' he welcomed many new plays, and introduced the playwrights to the public, and created the necessary atmosphere for the writing, the production and appreciation of good plays. He did not stop with this, but followed it up by writing plays himself and having them produced at the Gaiety Theatre in Manchester. Luckily for him they had at the helm of the Repertory Theatre movement in Manchester the famous Miss Horniman, who had a great admiration for Monkhouse as a playwright and dramatic critic. She produced all his plays, soon after he wrote them. She commenced her experiment with one of his plays: "Reaping the Whirlwind;" fortunately she did not have to do anything of the kind. She reaped a rich collection at the gate on the other hand! This was followed by "The Choice," both one-act plays. Next was produced "Mary Broome," in which he gave a new turn to realistic comedy, by combining with it an element of fantasy, which he presented in an ironical spirit. The situation in the play is this. There is a middle-class father who by the threat of cutting off supplies to his son, compels him to offer marriage to a lower-class girl, the house-maid, which the girl also accepts. Leonard Timbrell, (that is the son's name) is a conscienceless artist, who never earns anything, and he is always indulging his talent for saying smart and unexpected things. The marriage with Mary Broome makes no difference in his case. The fun in the play consists in the contrast between the clever epigrams and aphorisms of the young artist husband on the one hand, and

the matter-of-fact, bald speeches of the simple-minded servant-girl-wife on the other; the pompous conventional platitudes of the father add to the enjoyment further. Mary's baby dies while Leonard is away somewhere, and he doesn't turn up even for the funeral. Mary immediately declares her intention to 'go off' to Canada, with the milkman who was courting her before her marriage with Leonard. When this is made known to Leonard, he accepts it with his usual airy irresponsibility which scandalises his Victorian-minded parents. The father 'goes at' Mary like anything, in the best-Victorian manner, but she pays no attention to all his storming; she says very coolly that she is afraid to miss her train. He turns desperately to his son and asks him whether he intends to submit to all that, without demurring. Then follows a very interesting and amusing conversation between the irate parents, devil-may-care minded son, and Mary in the best manner of Monkhouse. Though it is all very cleverly done, one is all the time conscious of the fact that all the characters are there only on paper, the mere mouthpieces of the author, and not real people in flesh and blood.

Of the other plays the most important among the shorter ones is the "The Great Cham's Diamond." It is the most brilliant, though perhaps, the most extravagant in fantasy of all his smaller plays. It is full of the lighter vein of Monkhouse, which he exhibits in his longer plays also occasionally. The neat blend of humour, drama and surprise in this little play has made it a great favourite with all producers and theatre-goers, from the date of its publication and production until the present day.

"The Conquering Hero," is a more serious play, which some of his friends consider his best. In this drama he portrays the conflicting loyalties and ideals of an English

family, during the period of the Great War. The problem of the play is whether in war it is the artist's duty to fight for his country, and get himself killed for the sake of his country. Chris Rokeby is the hero, a young novelist, who is yet to publish his first work, and who does not want to enlist, and fight for his country. He thinks that it is not his duty; and that his duty is to stand up for his artistic creed and faith and spread it among the people of his country. He considers that it is his duty to keep the "eternal" going, being an artist. But he is the son of a Colonel and the brother-in-law of a Captain, and all the family press him to enlist. At first he resists and the dialogue at this point is extremely spirited, interesting and dramatic. And in the end he has no other alternative but to go to the field, and serve in the army. He is not killed luckily, and when he returns home, the village people meet him with a brass-band, and acclaim him as the "Conquering Hero"; but his family even then continue to think that he would have done something on the field unworthy of their name and tradition.

His last play—"First Blood," has been compared with Galsworthy's "Strife," but there is no great resemblance really speaking between the two. The characters in Monkhouse's play are exaggerated, the situations are unreal and hypothetical, and the ending is too melodramatic to be convincing.

His plays afford excellent reading and the speeches are very often extremely witty. In almost every one of his plays he has a character who always indulges in witty epigrams and aphorisms. He doesn't strike the deeper note, nor portray great conflicts of the mind except perhaps in his "Conquering Hero," and there too only to some extent. But his plays are very popular with amateurs and Repertory Theatres in all English speaking countries.

In his works he employed a prose-style which could be easily recognised as his. Frequently he qualifies in the latter part of his sentences, the statements he makes in the former part. This was a fundamental quality of his mind as also of his writing. He was always against any kind of flashy window-dressing, or inflated manner of utterance. He was a Greek by instinct and refused to overstate his things, or to pretend that his goods were of greater worth than they actually were. It was natural therefore that, he did not attract a wider public than he did, to go through his writings, in these days of high-pitch and almost screeching journalism. He appeared to most people to be every now and then reaching the verge of eloquence, but somehow or other to be fighting shy of it, at the last moment. But the effect of his writing on quieter minded and more sensitive readers, is very different and they adore him, greatly as a contrast to the deafening shout provided by the ordinary workaday journalistic writing. Monkhouse was witty, but after the manner of Goldsmith or Lamb. It was never broad in its effects and it never became rough horse-play. It was quiet and gentle, as the man himself was. Another quality which appeals to the gentler and more sober minded among readers but which is a vice according to others is his lack of high animal spirits and gusto. If one wants roaring vitality and vague enthusiasm one should not go to Monkhouse. Dickens would provide the fare necessary. He always wrote with that 'high seriousness' which Matthew Arnold thought was necessary for all real writing. His mind and spirit could be truly said to have been aristocratic. He never suffered anything common or hackneyed to escape from his pen. He lived on the heights and exacted much from himself as also from others. He made his friends feel that friendship with him was "something of a sacrament." It appears it was very frequent among his friends to ask one another or themselves



"whether anything they had written was good enough to be shown to Monkhouse," because they did not want to show him anything unworthy of him.

Though he was a journalist, in the ordinary sense of the term, yet, his productions were as unlike the usual level of journalistic work as it is possible to imagine. Professor Alexander in presenting him for the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters, which was conferred upon him by the Manchester University in 1929, said of him, that he truly proved in his writings "how empty is the antithesis that is commonly drawn between journalism and literature." That summarises the man and his work, wonderfully, that Monkhouse was no mere journalist, but was a 'litterateur' through and through.

C. R. MYLERU, M.A.

## THE AHMADNAGAR FORT

(A study, with extracts taken from the "Short History of Ahmadnagar and the Western Decan" by Lieut. Col. H. G. V. Roberts, M. C.; Royal Tank Corps;—compiled with the permission of Major A. Fortescue, Officer, I/c Supplies, Ahmadnagar Fort.)

**T**HE Mahommedans of Northern India first invaded the Deccan at the end of the thirteenth century, and after considerable fighting the rule of the Emperors of Delhi was established throughout the area. Some forty years later, the Emperor Mahommed bin Tughlaq decided to remove his capital, lock, stock and barrel, from Delhi to Deogiri which lay some seventy miles north of the present town of Ahmadnagar. He renamed his seat of government, Daulatabad—"the city of Wealth." When the inhabitants of Delhi demurred at being asked to leave their homes, they were driven like cattle across India to the new capital over a distance, as the crow flies, of six hundred miles. Even the aged and the sick were forced to comply with the Imperial order, and the city of Delhi was left so utterly deserted that "no sound was heard in it except the cries of wild beasts.

So great were the cruelties and extortions practised by the Emperor and his followers that serious revolts resulted, which finally culminated in a rebellion led by an Afghan soldier, by name Hassan Ganga, who, after freeing the Deccan from its dependence on Delhi, established the Bahmani Dynasty, which endured for nearly a century and a half.

The Bahmani Kings encouraged the entry of foreigners into the country, employed them in large numbers in the

Army and in other departments of the state. Arabs, Abyssinians, Persians, Turks, Tartars and Afghans, attracted by love of adventure and hope of profit, swarmed into the land and these foreigners intermarrying with the indigenous Mah-ratta inhabitants formed the main stock of the Mohammedan portion of the present population of the Deccan. Bolder, hardier, and more intelligent than the original Mohammedans who had accompanied the imperial court, they stirred up almost a continuous series of intrigues and strifes. This was accentuated by the fact that with the exception of the Abyssinians, most of the immigrants belonged to the Shia sect, whilst the Indian Mohammedans were generally orthodox Sunnis. Time and again during the history of the next two hundred years, we find the Deccani Mohammedans and the Abyssinians ranged against the rest of the foreigners—a state of affairs which frequently resulted not only in plots and counter plots, but also in violent blood shed.

Gradually the power of the Central Government diminished, largely owing to the weakness of the later rulers, while the power of the Governors of the provinces increased, until finally they assumed independence as the rulers of five kingdoms, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Berar, Golkonda and Bidar. The history of these five Mohammedan Kingdoms is mainly concerned with their struggles against each other, varied in earlier years by wars against the neighbouring Hindu empire of Vijayanagar, and later by their attempts to avoid absorption into the Empire of the Moguls.

### **History of the Founder of the City :**

Ahmad Nizam, the Founder of the city was the governor of the province of Daulatabad. He was one of the instigators of revolt against the Bahmani dynasty. He himself was of Brahmin descent, for his father was the son of a Brahmin

village accountant who lived on the banks of the river Godavari. When the village was raided by Bahmani troops, Ahmad's father, then a boy, was captured and brought to the king as a slave. Brought up as a Mohammedan he displayed such excellent qualities that he was made the companion of the heir to the throne. Later he was made a minister of state when the boy-king became the ruler. Ahmad Nizam was appointed Governor of Daulatabad. He was a man of outstanding ability and in a short period became very popular with his subjects. His reputation as a ruler made it difficult for the Bahmani Government to find a leader prepared to march against him when he raised the flag of revolt. His first victory against Bahmani troops was the result of a night attack, and ever after, he displayed a tendency to make use of methods similar to those which had given him his initial success. Next Ahmad had to fight with an army of some eighteen thousand men despatched against him by the Bahmani Government. He moved out and occupied the Jeur hills, about eight miles north of Ahmadnagar, but he was outflanked by his opponent who encamped near the village, Bhingar. It was the monsoon season and, thinking that Ahmad would not move during the rains, the Bahmani general relaxed his precautions and devoted himself to pleasure and ease. However Ahmad seized this opportunity and displaying his love of night operations, moved on Bhingar under cover of darkness and attacked the camp in the half light of the early dawn. The Bahmani army was completely routed. Ahmad now assumed the title of Shah and the dynasty of Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar was established. Four years later, on the left bank of the river Sina, Ahmad founded the present city which he called after his name Ahmadnagar. Within two years after its foundation it excelled Cairo and Bagdad in splendour. In 1499 A.D. Ahmad found himself opposed by a coalition of his enemies whose number vastly exceeded his own.

Ahmad Nizam Shah, the founder of the city and the great warrior died in 1508 A.D. His greatness cannot be disputed. Besides his courage as a warrior he proved himself a man of virtue and modesty—qualities which were rare among Eastern rulers in those days.

### **Ahmadnagar after Nizam Shah :—**

Hussain Nizam, the grandson of Ahmad Nizam, after acknowledging the supremacy of Rama Raja of Vijayanagaram in a treaty with him, returned to his fort, which was then only built of mud, and at once he rebuilt it on strong foundations and surrounded it with a deep moat. To-day the mighty fort stands upright, “four square to all the winds that blow,”—a wonderful source of inspiration to all those who visit it.

After Hussain there was no peace in the dynasty of Nizam Shahis of Ahmadnagar. There were bitter quarrels among the members of the royal family in connection with the succession to the throne. At the end of the sixteenth century, Mian Manju, one of the claimants to the throne, made the fatal error of inviting prince Murad, son of Emperor Akbar, for his help against Chand Bibi, a heroine and regent to the infant Bahadur King. .

### **The Regency of Chand Bibi, the heroine of Ahmadnagar :—**

Chand Bibi did not hesitate to seize her opportunity. Having assassinated the general commanding the fort who was an adherent of her enemy, she herself assumed the leadership of her troops against Prince Murad. By this time the kings of Bijapur and Golkonda, alarmed lest they should be the next victims of the imperial greed, sent their armies to join Chand Bibi against the prince. But the prince promptly



decided to assault Ahmadnagar before the allied forces came to its help. He made tunnels beneath the bastions on one face of the fort and laid mines in them. But before these mines began to operate Chand Bibi got scent of her danger, and she personally directed the countermining operations. She succeeded in destroying two of the mines but the third was sprung successfully and it effected a breach in the mighty stone walls. As soon as the queen saw the consequent panic among her men she clad herself in armour, and sword in hand, dashed forward at the head of her troops to defend the breach. She checked the assault by bringing up the guns to cover the point of danger. But the respite was only temporary. The attack was intensified, heavy casualties were caused and the defenders were engaged in a hand to hand struggle at the foot of the breach until the moat was almost filled with the dead and the dying. Even at night the assault continued and it was not until midnight that the wearied garrison were given some breathing space. But with the personal supervision of Chand Bibi, whose gallant conduct excited the admiration of both friend and foe alike, the breach was closed with a wall some eight feet high. Meanwhile the allied forces came to help Chand Bibi. Prince Murad who was by now troubled by shortage of supplies saw that discretion was the better of valour, and wisely agreed to withdraw his troops on condition that Berar must be ceded to the Mogul Empire. Chand Bibi consented to the condition. She was accorded the title of Sultana. Thus Chand Sultana succeeded finally in establishing her authority as Regent to the child, Bahadur.

Chand Sultana's name is still revered throughout the Deccan and many stories of her exploits survive. It is said that during the siege of Ahmadnagar when there was a shortage of ammunition she loaded the guns with copper, silver

and gold coins and when those valuable coins were exhausted, she did not hesitate to use her personal jewels as ammunition. A Persian artist depicts her as a woman, very fair in complexion with light blue eyes, a thin aquiline nose and a light and graceful figure. But in spite of her attractive physical features and her ability as a great leader and administrator, she was murdered by her own officers who justified themselves on the ground that she was about to betray the fort. In actual fact however she was swayed by grave fears of a mutiny amongst her troops, and therefore was ever disposed to surrender herself to the Moguls. After Chand Bibi there were no good rulers to occupy the throne of Ahmadnagar. Again domestic quarrels followed in the royal family until, in the middle of the seventeenth century, the kingdom of Ahmadnagar came to an inglorious end.

### **The influence of the Mahrattas over Ahmadnagar:—**

A succession of claimants backed up by the chiefs continued to hold the shadow of authority for some time. Finally a Mahratta, Shahaji Bhonsla made one final attempt to preserve the Nizam Shahi dynasty by nominating a prince of the royal blood the ruler. Thus the Mahratta power began to spread over Ahmadnagar. Shivaji, the son of Shahaji Bhonsla, had an intense hatred for the religion of Islam. He believed that he was born to free the Hindus from their Mohammedan overlords. When Shivaji was twenty years old he collected a band of adherents and began to seize fortress after fortress. From 1659 A. D. when Aurangzeb had just established himself on the throne of Delhi, the existence of the Mahrattas as a nation may be considered to begin. In fact in 1668 A. D. the Mahratta power became supreme under Shivaji who was now at the pinnacle of his greatness. Ahmadnagar and Aurangabad suffered severely from his depredations. In 1674 A. D. he was crowned king with every solemn Hindu rite.

He continued to extend his power till, at the age of fifty three, in the spring of 1680 A. D. he died of fever. The great Mogul Emperor Aurangazib himself acknowledged him to be a great captain and declared "My armies have been employed against him for nineteen years, and none the less his state was always been increasing."

Soon after his death, Aurangazib himself led an invasion against these "Mountain Rats" a nickname given to the Mahrattas by him. But the Emperor could not succeed in punishing them on that occasion; afterwards however the Mahrattas were defeated and Sambaji, son of Shivaji, was taken along with his son as a prisoner to Delhi where he was tortured to death. At last in 1707 A. D., Aurangazib died at the age of eighty-nine at Ahmadnagar, and with his death, as is well known, the glory of the Mogul Empire passed away.

In 1708 Shahu, son of Sambaji and the grand son of Shivaji, was released from the Mogul prison and was crowned the king of the Hindus at Satara. Shahu's reign saw the rise of the Peshwas, a community of Brahmins whom the Mahrattas were obliged to employ as their ministers on account of their own illiteracy. Soon after the death of Shahu, in 1749 A. D., practically all power passed into the hands of the Peshwa. The Peshwa enormously increased the Mahratta power and even attacked Delhi and killed the ruling emperor. The Mogul Empire had, to all practical purposes, ceased to exist. Then the Peshwas had to meet the Afghans who were also equally ambitious of extending their dominion to the North. The issue had to be decided at Panipet in the Punjab where the Peshwas sustained a heavy defeat from the Afghans under Mohamed Sha. Thus the Supremacy of the Mahrattas in the Deccan came to an end.

**Ahmadnagar and the British Supremacy in the Deccan:—**

Civil war followed among the Mahratta rulers, and at all times, the East India Company joined one of the chiefs against another thereby becoming possessors of some territories bestowed as a reward for their services. In the first half of the nineteenth century the East India Company became powerful and was awaiting an opportunity to crush the Mahrattas. In 1803 General Wellesly was ordered to march against Sindhia and Bhonsle. Wellesly moved from Poona towards Ahmadnagar but he could not reach his destination since there was rain on that day. He halted at a town six miles from Ahmadnagar in the South. Then after three days he advanced towards Ahmadnagar. After a preliminary reconnaissance he ordered two regiments to seize part of the glacis on the eastern front and to cut an opening through it, so as to expose the masonry to the fire of his guns. Soon the Mahratta commander offered to surrender on condition that Wellesly should allow him to go out of the fort with his troops. Wellesly agreed to this and the fort was evacuated. On 12th Aug. 1803 Wellesly with his men entered the fort and found many valuables including a variety of treasure and rich clothes. Thus Ahmadnagar was captured by the British. Then Wellesly went further on with his campaign. Owing to these incessant wars famine began to reign in Ahmadnagar. Wellesly the '*Saviour of the poor*' fed about four-thousand poor people daily in the city; and able-bodied men were employed in constructing the fort and rewarded with a daily issue of grain for their food in place of money.

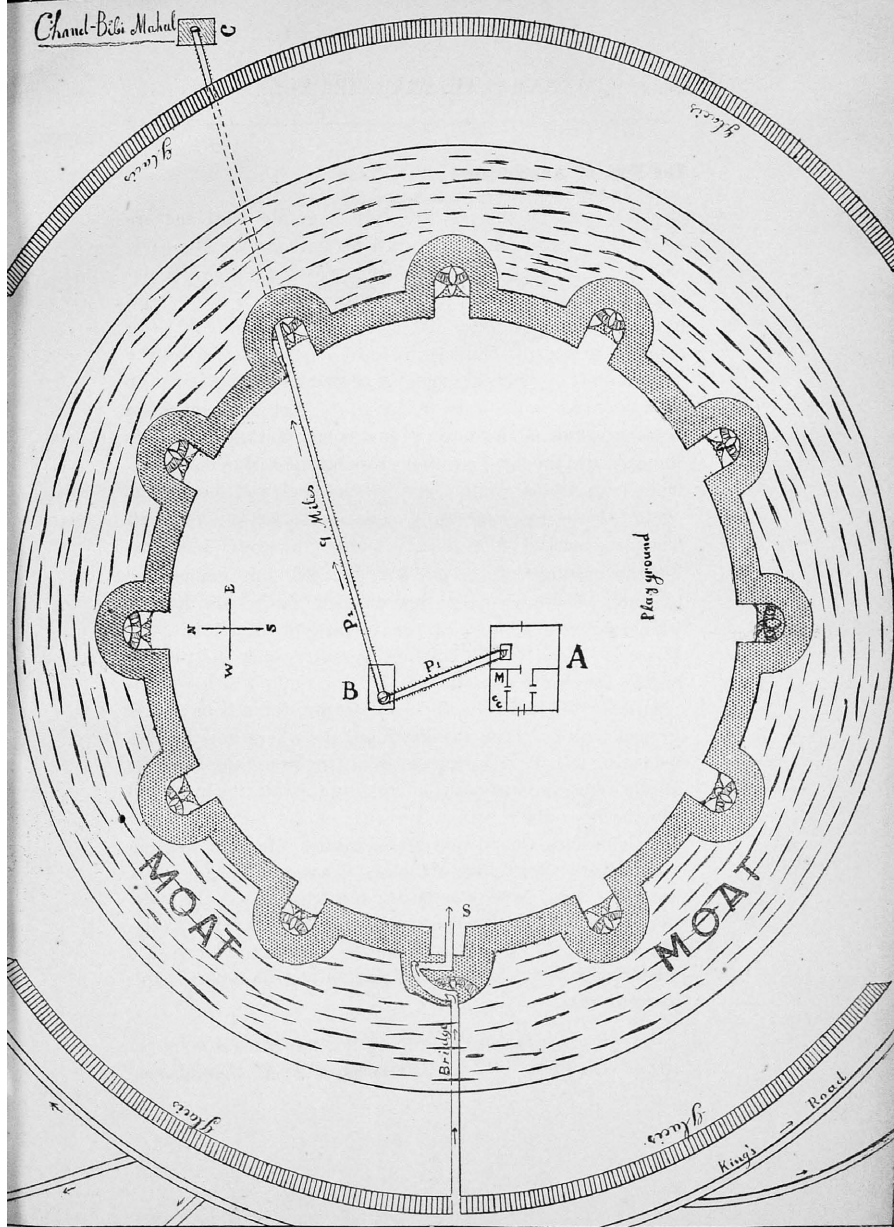
As time passed, the Mahrattas became loyal to the British and gave a good account of themselves in many campaigns not only in India, but in Burma, China and Somaliland, in the great war (1914-1918) and last, but by no means the least, in the various theatres of operations in the present war against Germany and Italy.

### The Fort of Ahmadnagar:—

The walls of the fort are very strongly built and are about 30 ft. high; and they form a regular circle. The parapets are 5 ft. thick and the lower masonry gradually increases in thickness to 12 ft. Its circumference is over a mile in length; and a dry moat 100 ft. in width and about 20 ft. in depth, surrounds it. Outside the moat a steep glacis hides the walls almost to their parapets. A permanent bridge is put up over the moat on the western side of the fort while the main entrance gates of the fort are just facing the North. Thus the way into the fort just after crossing the bridge turns left, leads towards the South about twenty feet and then turns again towards the East as the final entrance into the fort. The place marked 'S' is the place where the sentry is guarding the entrance of the fort with a loaded gun and pointed bayonet. There are only a few old buildings inside the fort which throw a glimpse of the civilization of those days. There is a tank in the building 'A' where now the Central Supply Depot office is situated. To the tank, which was intended for the ladies in the royal family, there is an underground path ( $\rho_1$ ) from the building 'B' where now articles belonging to I. T. group are stored...; from the same building another underground path ( $\rho_2$ ) crossing the fort, the moat and the glacis at their bottom goes out of the fort to another building called Chand-Bibi Mahal named after the heroine Chand Bibi; Chand-Bibi Mahal is situated nine miles east from the fort. Now this gigantic fort forms one of the chief supply depots of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps. (R. I. A. S. C.). It is in the fitness of things that such a historically famous fort should play an important part in this present war.

JAMADAR P. R. P. RANGA, B.A. (HONS.),  
*Ahmadnagar Fort, Ahamadnagar.*





## FAIRY CHILDREN IN COUNCIL

Whereat 'Whither Shall We Go' is Resolved to be.

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### 'WHITHER SHALL WE GO?'

'Whither shall we go?' 'My companions dear,  
Shall we to the river-bank repair  
As 'ts to all of us near,  
Where each other our mirth could we share?'

Spake one loud and lusty voice,  
'It is a clear clear bright morn,  
Wherever we eye there is joyance  
There is no fear of being forlorn.'

Then up rose a plump figure  
And in feeble voice piped forth,  
'What lack we in this wide sphere  
While birds and beasts dance for mirth?'

A third stood up in dignity high  
And spake in a voice subdued and sweet,  
'Should we not set out the wild shrubs to spy?  
It is sport indeed to move from spot to spot.

'The woods abound in shrubbery thick  
And blossoms there are of many kinds;  
Tho some with thorns our hands do prick  
Many harmless there are blown by the winds.

The bees in swarms are hiving thereat,  
To suck honey and fatten with speed.  
Wherefore should we linger about ?  
There is plenteous scenery our eyes to feed.'

Then another stood up and preached  
In a tone commanding and audible,  
'Is there not the sea-shore for us to wend  
And sea-crabs all a-tremble ?

'The breakers dash against the shore  
The sea shells lie scattered on the sand  
The ships are yonder at anchor sure  
It's the season for us to start in a band.

'Shall we clutch at the manes of wind,  
And rush all road-ward impish  
To see pedestrians up and down bound  
Growing at the fury of wind peevish.

'The wind without is raging wild  
Delighting in mischief-loving wiles,  
Now she blows the wagon off the load ;  
Now she makes the traveller seek for stiles.

'Shall we up climb the mountain peaks steep  
And romp about on the snowy tract  
Which the recluse often seeks  
The earth's ills and sufferings to subtract ?

'Shall we with the winged creates mingle  
And hop from bough to bough  
And their joyous notes warble  
Or together in the blue heavens fly above,

'Where the kite and the eagle of the feathered kind  
Are ever in flight near the summit,  
Vie in potency with the god of wind,  
And survey regions etherial in a circuit ?

Now rose up one and spake in accents measured,  
'Could we not with the Sun, the Moon and the Stars race,  
Ascending high the realm of cloud,  
Where from the world all down could we gaze ?

'How we should joy and dance we should all  
In ever-ending circles of mirth,  
As the Heavenly Father doth all to us call  
Into the charming region of his birth !

'Should a ladder we have for aid to ascend,  
How I wish we were up in the sky  
Leaving brother and sister behind  
Into the mysteries of Heaven to pry !'

Now uncles and aunts to the place did throng ;  
To see the children all back home.  
One and all ran off shouting a song  
And in the place of noise and bustle, there was calm.

Call this wax-work if you will,  
Or earth-made dolls by sea waves washed.  
Fairies' heads with fancies are full  
Tho hesitate, you might, to credit what's said.

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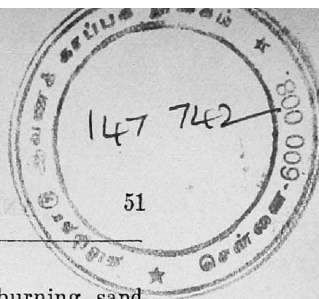
## LYN-WOOD

'HURRAH'! shouted a chorus of merry voices as I conveyed to my friends the welcome piece of intelligence that the professor had agreed at last to take women students too along with the boys for the Botany tour to Pamban, Krusadai Island and Kodaikanal hills. Every wind that whistled, every bird that sang, every face that I met, heralded the coming joys. Our spirits were elated and nothing could hamper our joy. The days passed swiftly and the time came when my companion Miss Balambal and myself were to start for the station. We, I mean girls, were like two free birds sportive and merry, and quite care-free, for our friends had taken charge of our luggage.

Our kind teachers had hesitated for a long time to take us with them, and had raised ever so many objections which in my opinion were quite surmountable. They thought that our small group of botanists was going to those places just to court dangers and troubles which we, girls, in their opinion, could never dream of coping with. But our two days' stay at Pamban blew a fresh and cheerful blast of hope which uprooted the shadows of our former fears and anxieties and filled our hearts with 'wild ecstasies'.

Only one day could we spend in Krusadai Island—the mere mention of it makes me afraid and brings into my mind the memory of a scorching day on a white sheet of burning sand. Here only did we feel out of place, for our friends with our learned teachers went deep into the water to collect sea weeds. We were just walking on the sea-shore





watching our friends, out in the sea. The burning sand below and the scorching sun above very nearly killed us and quite robbed us of our lively spirits and at last forced us to seek shelter wherever we might find it. Our mid-day nap however under the big dry palmtrees enlivened our drooping spirits and gave us enough life to welcome our friends back to the shore after their dip in the sea, carrying coral stones cloked with green velvet, the 'famous algae,' the pretty wee brothers of the wide vegetable kingdom. How glad our teachers were to treasure those curious priceless specimens stolen from the bowels of the sea, in small glass jars and tubes!

The bungalow at Pamban where we stayed had its own charm and attractions, for just behind the house there lay the wide stretch of sea, now and then its small wavelets smoothly and softly coming forward and kissing the shore and then gently receding. The famous Pamban Bridge could be viewed from our abode. All day and night we could enjoy the gentle breeze. But all the time, I was longing for the hour when we could bid good-bye to Pamban. Perhaps it was due to the inactive part we played, for most of the collections were from the sea, and we girls were thought not "manly" enough to brave the deep. I felt like following our "manly" colleagues wherever they went, for I panted to show them that in no way were we weaker than or inferior to them. We could walk as great a distance as they could; even the topmost hill we could climb as even they; and this fortunately we could show them during the three days we spent at lovely Kodai.

It was with a sigh of relief and eagerness to lay our heads somewhere undisturbed that we got down at the Kodai-kanal Road station from an overcrowded railway compart-

ment. It was midnight, and the thought that we were starting for lovely Kodai only the next morning lulled us to sleep. Ah, we enjoyed a sound sleep in the Ladies' Waiting Room at the station.

A wink of sleep—it was dawn. Who would believe it? But the bright and glorious sky welcomed us and infused sufficient spirit into our limbs and soon we got ready for our exciting journey by bus up the hills. Straight ran the bus at the beginning, over the good tarred roads through the crowded streets. The massive hills looming at a distance caught my eyes and my soul began to sing into my ears. The very sight of the distant hills lightened my heart and, to my exultant joy, I found the bus ascending the zigzag narrow ghat-roads—for now it had begun climbing the hills. How I screamed at every turn when we were pushed forward and side ways, knocking our heads and hands! I looked in front at the welcoming mountains, and back at the small hillocks we had left behind, the sides of which the blooming and fragrant flowers had adorned with their diverse and beautiful colours. I admired the bright and glorious sunbeams that painted the dew-drops deposited on the flowers. The soft breeze with its enchanting music was murmuring very low in the boughs of the trees and in the clusters of flowers. What a lovely scene! Yes, the soft breeze with its minor music breathed into my soul and the magnificent scene touched my heart with glad inspiration. I forgot the world outside with its busy and overburdened life—for we were hurrying into the bosom of nature. As we left the low hills, valleys and rivers behind, the huge hills with tall trees on their crests and sides tempted and welcomed us from the distance. On the way the great natural scientist was attracted by even the most insignificant, minute, microscopic green brothers of the much advanced vegetable kingdom. "Oh

yes', come on, I say,' 'Plenty' were some of his exclamations whenever his keen eyes sighted some of these strange specimens in some dirty places. Like a flock of sheep we followed our guide who after seeing us all together gave the final order 'collect'. Before the word had escaped his lips, our friends climbed up the hills or down the slopes scrambling and crawling to collect the specimens. By the time we reached our destination every one of us had an ample collection.

At last we reached 'Lyn-Wood'. What sweet memories and welcome recollections flit across my mind when I just utter that name 'Lyn-Wood'—the cosy cottage where we all, a big family, sojourned during our excursion at Kodai-kanal—Kodaikanal, the most lovely and enchanting spot that I have ever visited, a veritable paradise on earth guarded all round by the majestic hills, robed in emerald green kissing the blue heavens! Their crests surrounded by the halo of the morning mist, the brooks rolling down the slopes in cascades, their foam presenting a silvery streak, hundreds of such sights so captivated my fancy that even on arriving at the place, I began to fear the day on which I should have to leave the lovely hills.

'Riccia, Anthoceros, Maschantia' were the first curious specimens that caught the keen eyes of our learned lecturer. Who ever would search the dirty regions especially near the kitchen and bath rooms, but the eager eyes of the curious, the true children of Nature? What grand titles! How proud we were to possess such grand names! Yes, we were living in the heart of the hills breathing the same air that the hills breathed, watching and studying them at very close quarters. How we scrambled over the steep sides of the hills, to the tops, imagining ourselves to be true naturalists—with

bags hanging down our shoulders, with note books and pencils to write down the long and strange names of the plants that we collected ! The tall trees in the green wood, on the sides and tops of the hills which were legion, were basking in the bright sun-beams, and were really selfish and step-motherly in their behaviour towards their young and pigmy companions.

The first after-noon it began to drizzle but we naturalists, unmindful of such slight obstacles, could not help being obstinate and we started once more for collection. We girls covered our perones with gay-coloured shawls. Soon the drizzle gave place to a downpour which deadened our cheerful spirits and plunged us into deep disappointment. But still on we tramped. Soon however we found that we could not compete with the mysterious obstinacies of nature for no signs could be seen of the sky clearing. The pelting rain forced us to take shelter in some house which was locked. Most reluctantly our professor gave up hopes of collection that evening. Soon we were back on the way to our home—Sweet Home ‘Lyn-wood.’ For my part I felt that I was in Nature’s bosom unburdened by an umbrella, wrapped only in a blanket and also bare-footed. How we went ‘splash, splash,’ in the rain stepping over the smooth surface of the road ! The road beneath our feet shone as beautifully as though it had been polished with a lustre-producing polish, as we lapped up the sweet drops of the rain that fell on our face and scurried down our cheeks.

It was really biting cold. We were dressed in silk to keep ourselves warm. How we used to cheer away the dull and darkened hours of the evenings when we were shut up in the rooms, by singing songs and acting farces. How we used to roll with laughter at poor Mr. Panchapkesan’s expense ! Yes Mr. Panchapkesan was the hero of all the evenings, amusing

us with his funny songs and odd gestures and postures. The gathering in the dining hall, some with turbans, and all in coats and woollen things was indeed a pleasant sight. The food was inviting but the chill wind that incessantly blew into our ears, especially when we sat down on the ice-cold wooden planks, was very hard to bear. The chill water could even choke the blood in our veins.

Sometimes we used to take evening strolls, unburdened with bags and books. Twice we went to a spot, Croaker's Walk, which was several thousands of feet high from sea-level, to view the distant Periyakulam on the plains. The lovely scene struck us dumb with wonder and delight. Yes, its beauty is beyond expression and description. The flickering lights from several houses grouped together, in the misty horizon, looked like a big ship in a vast sea. The town was quite lively and attractive. We could see many European ladies and children. I admire their true love of Nature, their sense of beauty, which alone made them spot out such lonely yet lovely places where the beauty of nature is revealed in marvellous splendour. The bangalows surrounded by lovely and well-kept gardens, the beautiful cottages on the slopes and the tops of the hills, and the neat tarred roads presented a delightful scene. In spite of our long and tedious walk, up the hills and down the dales, we never felt tired or drowsy. We were as lively and brisk as little children. What a marked contrast was this to the burning heat of Krusadai !

Ah, only three days could we spend at Kodai and when one evening the Professor conveyed to us the unwelcome piece of information that the next day we were to bid good-bye for ever to the lovely 'Kodai' and 'Lyn-wood', my spirits vanished and I was plunged in despondency. 'Au Revoir' lovely Kodai and not 'Good-Bye' I cried from the bus. How I wish I could go over to the enchanting 'Paradise on Earth' once again !

SERENA. V. E. MARTIN, *B.Sc.*



## THE "ESSENTIAL-OIL" INDUSTRY IN INDIA

**F**ROM very ancient times India has been famous for the wealth of her odoriferous materials—materials like Sandal and Eaglewood that were highly prized in the courts of mighty emperors and the temples of the great divinities of antiquity. It is an undisputed fact that the trans-Himalayan Caravan route which existed in olden times and extended in one direction towards China and in the other towards Western Europe, was responsible for the distribution of many a precious spice to the then civilized countries of the East and the West. Vast changes have occurred since then both in the manner and in the method of utilization of the perfume-yielding materials; and artificial products have to a considerable extent usurped the place of natural perfumes. Nevertheless the cultivation of plants for the extraction of essential oils and the collection of raw materials of perfumery from animal and vegetable sources have on the whole increased with the advance of time. The use of scents in various forms is not now the privilege of the upper class few as in the ages gone by; in modern times it has spread amongst almost all classes of people and the enormous demand thus created has stimulated the production of essential-oils throughout the world.

The original home though she was of many essential-oils of world-wide importance, India has unfortunately not been able to keep pace with the times in the matter of their production. Thus we find that countries like the Dutch East Indies, East Africa and so on, have made a greater progress than India in the culture of essential-oil crops, stocks for some

of which were at first obtained from this country. India does not figure at all, or only to a very slight extent, in the world-trade in the most important oils, e.g., Citronella, Citrus and Peppermint oils. As a matter of fact India imports a good quantity of essential oils from other countries for various purposes such as the preparation of perfumes, essences, flavours, cosmetics and so on. It is difficult to get an estimate of the area under essential-oil crops in India, these being cultivated in small patches and classified under drugs, spices and miscellaneous crops. Some oil is no doubt obtained from spice-materials like Cinnamon, Cardamom and Fennel by crude country methods but the quantities are insignificant.

The Indian essential-oils that figure most conspicuously in trade are the Sandalwood and Grass oils. Sandalwood is found in Mysore, Coorg and certain other parts of the Madras Presidency, but it is only in the first named place that the wood is utilized for oil. It is a matter of regret that all attempts hitherto made to work out the whole of the wood in India have met with failure. Three-fourths of the total annual production of Sandalwood is the produce of Mysore. Outside India some quantity of Sandalwood is found in the Dutch East Indies. The greatest rival of E. I. Sandalwood is however the West Australian oil, which though not the product of true Sandalwood, has found a ready market. The three Governments of Mysore, Coorg and Madras having failed to agree to the distillation of the whole crop of Sandalwood within the country, some quantity of wood remains over after being used for distillation in the Indian factories at Mysore and Bangalore, and foreign distillers are thus enabled to secure a supply and hence some quantity of oil is also produced in France and Germany.

The Grass oils produced in India comprise Lemon, Palmarosa, Citronella and Ginger Grass oils. The main cen-

tres of production of Lemon Grass oil are Cochin and Malabar. Palmarosa oil is produced in the Central Provinces, the total annual production reaching to an appreciable quantity. A good amount is annually exported to Europe, Japan and U. S. A. Attempts at the cultivation of Lemon and Palmarosa Grasses are being made in Italy. The production of Citronella oil, although very small in India in comparison with what it is in Ceylon is still of some importance in South India. Ginger grass is mainly confined to Northern India.

Very small quantities of oil are prepared from some materials of wide reputation, most notable among them being Eaglewood, Vetivert and Jasmine. But such oils are mostly consumed within the country. As at present prepared, these oils are only suitable for the old style. Indian perfumery, the main seats of production of which are in Kanauj and Oudh, with the utilization of these materials on a large scale by modern methods, may be developed, and oils may be easily obtained that will have a fair chance of standing competition in the world's market.

India yields to no other country in the richness of her natural resources in odoriferous materials. But as in other fields of industry, in essential-oil production too, there has been a lamentable lack of enterprise in the past. The establishment and successful working of Sandalwood oil factories in Mysore, is one aspect of this industry, of which it is our privilege to be proud. But like Sandalwood there are many other perfume-yielding plants in India, the bulk of which are rotting away in the hills and forests unutilized and this is matter for regret. A few noteworthy instances may however be made mention of. Rose may be mentioned first in this connection. Since the time of the Moghul emperors essential-oil is being produced out of roses in India. But the cultivation of the Damask rose from which the essential-oil is obtained,

is still confined to a small tract of land in the United Provinces. There is no want of localities in Northern India suitable for rose cultivation. The percentage of oil however in this variety of rose is comparatively low ; but the oil-content could be appreciably improved and raised by our cultivating it under different soil conditions in different places. As regards wild roses there are lots of them in the Himalayas. Only a small fraction of them is collected and sold in the market. Nothing has as yet been done to utilize this enormous natural crop.

There are few scents in the world to match the exquisite fragrance of the Screw-pine or Keya flowers. Keora oil has long been used in India to flavour drinks and the bracts employed in perfuming catechu. No attempt has however been made to introduce this unique odour in the wider field of perfumery. Besides certain localities in the interior of the country, places near the sea coast, abound in Screwpine. In fact there are impenetrable thickets of this plant covering immense areas in the Sunderbans. By installing a suitable portable still in a central place there one can distil a fairly large quantity of oil within a short time.

Drug, perfumery and spice plants are closely allied as regards their use. There are many plants which yield more than one class of these products. Spice-grinding is an industry of considerable importance in the West. Powdered and graded spices fetch much higher value than the raw spices now exported. The next step in the utilization of spice materials is the distillation of oil therefrom. There is no large factory in India at present to discharge this duty. It is almost certain that there would be no want of a market both at home and abroad for such oils, if manufactured in India. The arrangements made by the Gwalior State for this purpose have come to nothing.

For the all round development of an essential-oil industry in India it is necessary that measures should be taken for the production of some oils of the utmost importance to trade. With proper energy and enterprise this should not be a difficult matter either. For the plants concerned are in some cases natives of India ; in other instances, they are fully capable of being naturalized in a country which presents almost every sort of soil and climatic condition.

Oils obtained from plants of the Citrus genus including Orange, Lemon, Lime and their allies, occupy a prominent place in the rank of essential oils of great commercial importance. At present Italy is the leading producer of these oils. Sweet Orange is widely cultivated in certain centres in India, while Bitter Orange is wild in the Nilgris. The production of Lemon either in the wild state in the hills or as cultivated plants in the plains is restricted, but its area may be easily extended with every chance of success. In the West Indies a large variety of products are manufactured with profit from Lime. They yield two kinds of oils both from peel and from pulp. Although not cultivated in India in large plantations, it will not be impossible to organize the manufacture of lime-products in the more important centres of supply in Bombay, the United Provinces and Bengal.

One of the valuable essential oils of modern times is Peppermint. It is a fact, strange and regrettable, that this oil is not produced in India in commercial quantities. There is a large number of localities where Peppermint can be grown successfully. *Mentha Arvensis* and *Mentha Piperata* and their varieties yield peppermint oil in different countries. The former variety grows in abundance in the North West Himalayas. Peppermint plants could be introduced from other countries and cultivated here profitably. In introduc-



ing foreign peppermint plants it would be better to make some preliminary experiments with different varieties and forms in different localities. Then the cultivation of this plant could be managed with more success than otherwise.

Most of us at this stage, and also from what little has been said above, will be able to realize that this country affords ample scope for the establishment, growth and development of an essential-oil industry that may vie at no distant future with the same industry of other civilized countries both in importance and in dimension. So it remains the duty of all students of Botany, who are eager to become Indian Economic Botanists, to find a proper solution to this problem.

S. A. SUBRAMANIAN,

*III Class*

## MY FAIRY PHANTOM

( *contd.* )

WELL, the year came to a close with my Prelim. I returned to my native village. I felt lonely and deserted, bored to death by monotonous inactivity. I was a Robinson Crusoe left on the island, inhabited, of course, by men, but men who seemed incapable of sympathizing with me or even understanding me. Three long months dragged themselves on to their close, and I was glad to get back to my college. One month passed. I had not seen Rajam. What had happened to her? Was she not there? But who was to enlighten me?

I summoned all my courage, and asked Thangam where Rajam was.

"Oh, I see, your bird has flown off!" And then she kept a stolid silence. I stared at her for further news, but I was disappointed, and I never broached the matter again. Are these girls so utterly heartless?

Rajam had been probably in the Senior Intermediate Class; she might have discontinued her studies, or gone to some other college. Or was she already married? Where was her place? Who were her parents? Well, who was to answer? I was left to myself with my queries and conjectures. I drifted into an indifference born out of despair. I retired more and more into myself. The world was to me nothing better than a piece of barren earth, "stale, flat, unprofitable." In course of time, the jovial, laughing Divakara Menon of the High School, dwindled into a pensive,

melancholy scholar buried in abstruse and metaphysical books. He did not much care for "Society, friendship and love" divinely bestowed on man." A thick piece of paper hung in one part of his room, exhibiting two lines from Tennyson

'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.

I got a First Class in the Final Honours, but what did a 'First Class' or a super-distinction mean to a man who had no ambition, no hope, for the future? I never applied for any post in any college, but simply stayed at home in the retired quiet of my village. A premature twilight had settled over my life.

It was in 1904 that I determined to accept some job and shake off from my mind the *ennui* that I had been long beginning to feel. But I had no liking for any profession other than that of a teacher. The manager of a private High School in Kottayam had advertised for a Mathematics graduate. I applied for the post, and was appointed without any reluctance on the part of the manager. My salary was just Rs. 40, but I did not care for the salary. I wanted no luxuries, no smoke, puff and powder or scent, and for a simple life in Kottayam Rs. 40 would more than do. The manager was a polite, cultured man, aged about 45, and the Head Master was a very well-informed man of the world, at once efficient and benignant. The atmosphere on the whole was quite congenial, and I felt that I should be able to do something with the unmoulded souls entrusted to my care. I had a particular liking for the little ones. They seem to hang upon your lips ready to catch every word that escapes you; the peculiar pleasure that they exhibit at every new word that they study has a unique reaction in your mind.

You must have their mind and heart, and your feeling is one of elevated joy. I insisted, therefore, that I should be given some work in the Preparatory Class. Since I had to coach up the Sixth Form students that were to take the Public Examination, I could be given only two periods of Geography in the lowest class.

A young sprightly girl of about nine attracted my immediate attention. She had an intelligent look and was extremely pretty. The little girl was almost all the time staring at her new teacher. I put some test questions in all subjects, and from the quickness of comprehension and promptness of reply, I was confirmed in my opinion that she was really an intelligent girl.

One day I committed a psychological blunder. I am ashamed to record it, but I must. I sketched the map of the Madras Presidency on the black-board and asked the students to copy it down in their note-books. Ramu transcribed the map quickly and showed it to me. It was fairly well done. I showed it to my intelligent disciple and asked her to evaluate it. She examined carefully and declared quite seriously that six marks could be given out of ten. Exactly, that was what I had felt. It was all too insignificant an incident, but I was perplexed to see that from that day onwards, the two looked at each other very often and smiled. There was nothing wrong, of course, in it; they were innocent little creatures. But had I been instrumental in rousing up a liking, which might develop and show infinite possibilities—good or bad?

The instinctive affection that I felt for my little disciple, Radhika, grew up with the passage of time. Apparently she was very fond of me and very often used to invite me to her house. I often detained her and asked, "what are you to

invite me? Suppose your father and mother didn't like me?" She would frown as if she could not brook the very thought of an opposition from her parents. It was not easy to satisfy the child unless I promised her that I should go with her the next Friday. I postponed my visit for over six or seven months, and the persistence was more and more frequent and forcible.

It was the School Anniversary. Among the many items of entertainments 'Musical Chair' for girls was of my suggestion. I was one of the umpires. Little Radhika skipping and running like a butterfly in the crowd, filled me with rapturous delight. She stood first in almost all the items of the Juniors Girls' Section. Competitors were announced for the Musical Chair. The little ones were running in a circle, their innocent faces beaming with excitement and pleasure.

"Is it possible," broke forth unconsciously from my lips; the papers and pencil fell down from my hands. In the excitement of the Sports fortunately none but my colleague Mr Srinivasan observed it. I quickly whispered something in excuse, and transferred to him the work of the umpire for a few minutes. Radha running for the Musical Chair had struck me in a new light. A sudden flash of misty revelation crossed my mind. Its unexpectedness quite overpowered me. Radhika was then the exact figure of Rajam in miniature... But after all, people might have resemblances without any relation. Possibly she might be Rajam's sister or so, I concluded. I felt very inquisitive, but how could I make inquiries about it? I did not know whether Rajam belonged to that place or not; her parents and family were unknown to me. My respect for Miss Thankam became rebellious. She was now in the staff of the Womens' College at T—. Why couldn't I write to her for some information about



Rajam? Was there any harm in it? No harm....., but..... I won't. The haughty, imperious woman!

The day was over. The crowd was slowly dispersing, making free comments on the competitors for the day. Radhika came skipping on to me, her face flushed with excitement. I was glad but meditative. She was about to pour out the exuberance of her pleasure when she suddenly relapsed into seriousness and gently queried, "what are you thinking, sir?" I shook myself away from my reverie and congratulated her on the five 'first prizes' that she had won.

A tall, handsome, middle-aged man was looking around as if he were searching for somebody. At last his eyes fell upon Radhika and then on me. He advanced towards us. Evidently he did not know me.

"Radha, aren't you coming home?" he said, still walking leisurely towards us. She spun round and rushed into his arms exultantly uttering the word 'father.' He kissed her affectionately on the head. She murmured something in his ear, and both father and daughter walked towards me.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr Menon," he said in a manly, but gentle voice. He sat near me on the grassy ground with the child on his lap.

I just smiled in reply.

"Mr Divakara Menon is no stranger to the parents of Radha," he continued good-humouredly, "but my whole time is taken up by that bank there, and I have not a minute's time my own. It is mere drudgery. Oh! it is a man-slaughtering affair." He said something about the advantages of being a school-master, and we thus parted.

Next day Radha brought me a note from Mr and Mrs Karunakara Panikkar inviting me to tea at 5-30. Being of a contemplative nature I built a volume of conjectures over it. If Mr Panikkar wanted to invite me why could he not do it the previous day when he met me? He did not even suggest it. Was he really domineered by his wife?

After 5, I started with Radha who had waited for me in the school. On the way I asked her many questions about her house and surroundings. It was two or three minutes to 5-30. The place was sufficiently removed from the hurly-burly of the town. It was a beautiful, little house situated in a fairly big compound full of trees, plantains and vegetables by the side of the river. On the fringe of the yard extending from all the four sides of the house, blossoming plants, notably rose and jasmine, made a glorious sight, and a pleasant fragrance was always in the air. I felt I was transported to a kind of Eden, an earthly Paradise. Mr Panikkar welcomed me at the avenue that led up to the front part of the verandah. I was conducted to an open hall supported on stone-pillars and extended from one side of the main building. The side facing the courtyard was fenced with a kind of wooden trellis-work with creepers climbing across it on to the roof. The other sides were screened by beautifully worked-out bamboo-mattings supported on wooden frames.

A middle-aged, slender woman was coming along the path to the house. Her forehead was smeared with 'bhasma'. Obviously she was returning from the temple near-by. Mr Panikkar stepped aside and the two met in the yard.

"He is come?" she enquired.

"Yes."

Radha suddenly rose up with a jubilant cry of 'mother' and she flitted away to the lady. The mother took her up with both hands and kissed her on the forehead. The trio now came to the hall where I had been left alone by little Radha. The lady was within ten or twelve feet of me, and she stood still with her lips slightly parted as though she were paralyzed with a sudden stroke of lightning. In decency I ought to have stood up but my formalities and etiquette oozed out of me at the overwhelming confusion that took possession of my brain. My eyes like those of a physiognomist, were intently fixed on her face, as though they were eagerly trying to study every lineament and expression thereof. Her slender figure, slightly taller than before, seemed wavering in the wind-waves. A tear-drop started in each eye, trickled along the cheek and silently fell to the cemented floor, making a faint trace of its course. Obviously she was not conscious of it, for she did not wipe it off. Sixteen years had done something, but not much. The serene tranquility that had been held under check in the wild, fairy-like creature of the college, now asserted itself and the sober, gentle Indian womanhood was unmistakably stamped on every lineament of hers. In her *bhasma*-covered forehead three deep ravines had been cut by Time. Except for this she was in blooming health and in very happy circumstances. This meeting was quite unexpected, and I was a little unnerved. But fortunately strength descended on me from somewhere to bear me up at that moment. It seemed an iron case was protecting my breaking heart from absolute collapse. Mr Panikkar did not utter a word. Possibly he could not understand what it all meant.

Rajam was the first to break that distressing silence. Yes, on these occasions, women it is that sooner regain their presence of mind.

"Mr Menon, you know me?" she gently put in with a slight attempt at smiling.

"Yes," I answered with as unaffected a manner as I could command at that instant. "You were at College with me."

"So mother knows my teacher!" chimed in my pretty little Miranda.

"I never for a moment thought" said Mrs Panikkar, "that Radhika's teacher was you: how could I?"

A neat-looking boy came in with some fine grass-mats which he spread on the floor. I got out of the only chair before the table in the hall and we all sat on the mat. I was agreeably surprised to find that there was no tea, nor any of the paraphernalia that we usually associate with a tea-party. On the other hand boiled milk was brought in, in neatly polished, shining bronze "lottas." Some pappadams and bananas (baked in steam) constituted the whole thing. Yes, the meal bespoke the hosts. Mrs Panikkar broached the topic of our college studies. The unexpected death of her father had obliged her to discontinue her studies, and two years later she married Mr Panikkar. With a freedom that was born out of a consciousness of personal virtue, she enquired of me solicitously what I had been doing, where I had been staying, why I preferred a teachership in a private school and so on. The last question seemed to have set her musing for a while, but she again assumed vivacity.

"I shall be very glad to see Mrs Menon," she went on smiling.

"But I don't think of marrying," said I, and suppressed a sigh that struggled forth.

She was thoughtful for a minute, and did not say anything, but kept gazing at me as if she were eagerly looking in my face for some commentary for what I had said. I turned my face from her, and asked Mr Panikkar whether his bank conducted business on a large scale.

We talked of this and that for some time, and it was about 6-30 when I left the place. The road that led to my solitary lodging ran parallel to the river. The gentle evening breeze from the riverside was cool and refreshing. My brain was teeming with a medley of thoughts. My mind flew back sixteen long years, and alighted at the slab in the college garden. I cannot say what emotion was then uppermost in my mind. What was the reaction that my meeting with Rajam produced in Mr Panikkar? But from the impression I had already formed of him and from what I learnt of him subsequently, I realized that he was not, and had never been, a victim to that "green-eyed monster". I was glad that Rajam was in perfect happiness and health. The wildest imaginations of the most romantic college-girl could not have conceived a better bride-groom than Mr Panikkar. My heart was filled with rapturous joy. I had seen the perfect conjugal happiness of an Indian home.

A melancholy after-thought sat lightly over my exultation. It grew in force as I drew nearer and nearer to my bachelor's den. A chronic bachelor of forty! I had nobody to meet in the yard that returned from the temple; no seraph or nymph greeted me when I returned exhausted from my school; no pretty little thing nestled in my bosom. I had a heart capable of intense love, but what good! I had seen the other day while going to my school my friend, Mr Srinivasan kissing his rebellious little boy who held out both his hands to detain the father leaving for his class-work; I felt



an emotional void in my heart. My mother had expressed through several people that she wished to see me with a wife before she died. My friends had frequently told me of the manager's ardent wish that I should marry his only daughter, Ramani, then in the Sixth Form in my own school. She was about 17, very handsome, intelligent and well-behaved. But how could I marry a girl whom I had been accustomed to regard in the double rôle of a sister and disciple! No, I could not marry Ramani,.....nor anybody.....As I entered my dismal cell I muttered to myself,

“Farwell happy fields where joy for ever dwells:  
Hail horrors, hail Infernal world.”

One evening I was returning from the school after 4. Mrs Panikkar was coming towards me. I tried to avoid meeting her, but it was not possible for me to do so without some awkwardness. So I kept on. She drew near. Something of the pitying and the pitiable was in her face. She bade me ‘good evening’ but the sound came indistinctly from a husky throat. She passed me by. Decorum insisted that I should not look back, but the temptation was irresistible. I saw that she was wiping her eyes with the end of her sari. I felt a pang of agony when I realized that I played, quite unconsciously, the serpent in her garden of Eden. With the shrewd insight of a woman she had divined that it was on account of her that I remained a bachelor. Obviously she pitied me, and I was not the person to need any assistance in gauging the intensity of that pity—that pity which sprang up from a pure soul inextricably bound by all the laws of love and devotion to a man intensely loving and instinctively lovable. But what could I do to alleviate her misery? The best thing would be to marry some Miss Somebody and show that I did not care for her. I thought over it

days and nights, and arrived at no conclusion. A bottomless pit lay yawning before me.

The academic year was at an end. I did not go home for the vacation—why should I?... One afternoon the Head Master called at my lodging, and both of us started for the school. It was a pleasure with me to help the good-natured old man (who is now no more) in drawing up the accounts and in other ways. This time he had to prepare the promotion-list. It was about 6-30 when we finished the work. We walked on together until we reached his gate. He invited me in. As we were sipping tea, the Head Master requested that I should give some tuition in Mathematics to his daughter then studying in the Junior B.A. Class in Trivandrum. He told me that he could not trust grown up girls with any other man, and that she was fairly well up in the First and Second Parts. This old man had a winning way of putting things and I had at last to yield. After all it was only for a month.

The next day at 8 in the morning I started for my job. My would-be student was seated in an arm-chair in front of a small round table in a fairly big room. I preferred the verandah, but the girl, (I must say, lady) complained of disturbance from 'the noisy urchins' as she put it. As I entered the room, an intense smell began to assail my nostrils. I liked people using perfumes; it is not only harmless, but would stimulate the intellect, especially when working at Mathematics. But the fragrance that then emanated from the room produced in me a kind of head-ache. I looked round the room, and wondered whether it was a small dispensary; the open shelf was full of bottles and knick-knacks. My student offered me a seat opposite her. She was in a sky-blue sari; her face had a thick layer of powder. Somehow I felt distressed. Her artificial manners and affected airs repelled me. I put some

simple test-questions to be worked out and shown to me the next day, and I escaped from there.

The next day when I went for tuition-work, she was coming along the verandah with a young child, perhaps her sister's son. She bade me "good morning" with a smile. She looked significantly at me, kissed the child on the cheek and again eyed me archly. I was disgusted. In spite of my affectionate admiration for her father, I hated his daughter, perhaps the only one person in the world whom I ever hated. I put a full stop to my tuition work and refused to go to the Head Master's house any further.

Months and years passed. I was known in many quarters as "the cynic". I do not know where the title was first coined for me. But I was no cynic. It is true, the fountain of my love was rudely forced down, but instead of drying up, it diffused through my whole system. I observed the follies and foibles of mankind from a superior eminence and with a forgiving eye as if I myself were far above them and completely immune from them. I was a philosopher at thirty-six. My heart went out in joyous sympathy at the manifestation of sincere affection and love wherever it was to be found.

Five long years rolled down in the abysm of time. I was still a teacher in Kottayam. Mr Panikkar was seriously ill: he was laid up with typhoid. I procured for him the most reliable medical help available at that time. His wife and child were attending on his sick-bed foregoing both food and sleep. Hot tears coursed down the wife's cheeks as she was nursing him with swollen eyes. Radha would look pitiably at the woe-begone mother and burst out into inconsolable weeping. But the patient on the couch was often in a trance.

One day the disease took a more serious turn. I determined to wait there throughout the night. The Doctor came at 9; he felt the patient's pulse and examined him carefully. I followed him to the gate. He whispered to me that the case was really hopeless. I felt absolutely helpless. We were all awake, when at about 4 in the morning, the patient suddenly woke up from his trance and looked wildly round him. Certainly he was able to recognize us all. He caught hold of Radha standing by the bedside and placed her hands in mine. He looked at his wife as though he wanted to say something. She leaned on the couch, her face suffused with tears. With great effort he raised his head a little and kissed her. The next moment I saw both husband and wife on the couch, both motionless, the one dead and the other between death and life. The child broke out into hysterical sobs and tears. I felt myself utterly incompetent to console anybody, for it was too much for me to bear it myself. Some neighbours were attracted by the girl's cry. A stout old gentleman with great difficulty extricated the corpse from the embraces of the wife who had swooned away. Somebody sprinkled some water over her face. The cold drops brought her to her senses, only to plunge her in another swoon. When she woke up, she sat on the floor with a calm face. She was not weeping. As though struck with a sudden idea, she turned back and flew to the corpse on the couch. Before anybody could prevent her, she imprinted a thousand passionate kisses on the pale face. She turned back, looked at us all wildly and was again silent. Radha was near me weeping bitterly. Her mother wrested the girl from my hands, kissed her fervently and hugged her to her heaving bosom. The cries of both were mingled up in a piercing shriek that would melt the stoniest of hearts. I was wrapped in an agony which it seemed would break my heart. No drop of tear escaped me, and the pent-up emotion finding no proper outlet, was causing me unendurable pain.

The cremation and all the subsequent rites and ceremonies were performed. The mother and the daughter then lived alone in their dismal little house. I frequently visited them in their house, and consoled them as well as I could. What had the late Mr Panikkar meant by handing over to me his fourteen year old daughter? That question perplexed me for a time. But I knew him too well to think that he would have had any stupid notion of marrying his daughter to a man of 45. Obviously then he wanted me to act as her guardian. That was a pleasing task. I had no children myself, and probably might not have any.

The mother and the daughter had enough money in the bank to sustain them in their long-accustomed simple life. I too now began to practise a little more economy so that if required, I might be of some use to my ward. When she passed the Sixth Form I insisted on her being sent to college. But the mother was so fond of the daughter that she requested my permission to detain her at home. Well, where the emotion is affection, I am utterly disarmed. But Ramu went to Trivandrum for his studies. Rajam told me that he had come there to take leave of Radha when he went to college, and expressed regret that she was not continuing her studies.

One evening I was seated in that solitary old chair before the table in the open hall with my elbows pressing against the table and my hands supporting my drooping head. Radha was reading somewhere in the room. I don't know how long I had been in that posture for I was absorbed in thoughts which I cannot recollect now. I looked up with a sigh. Rajam was standing at a distance observing me closely. I felt distressed, and muttered, "I was thinking.....something about the.....school." I saw a smile rising and suddenly dying on her lips. I cannot describe the expression



on her face. She seemed to suffer intense agony of mind. Pity and love strove to gain predominance in her look. A slight sprinkling of white was visible in her black, wavy hair. A deep-drawn sigh seemed to shake her whole frame. At last she said in a husky voice.

“It is a pity, Mr Menon,” and she again subsided into a meditative silence. A moment after she burst out into a sudden fit of sobs and tears, and some words came out as if from a hollow chasm. “This.....terrible sinner.....ruined.....the career of a noble soul.” She spun round and went sobbing to her room. I was dumb-founded. I was pinned to the chair motionless like a statue.

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Well, I married Rajam two months later. It was an unostentatious wedding.

After four years Ramu returned from college with a double First Class. He was soon appointed a teacher in our High School. Two years after his appointment he married my ward and lived with us in the same house.

The next year Rajam left me for ever. I had no children of my own... Well, I married a fairy, a soul, a disembodied spirit in flesh and blood!

V. GOPALAN NAIR, B.A. (Hons.)

## LOVE IN DOUBT

[The following story is not fiction, though stranger than fiction. It is the real story of an English youth as narrated to an Indian friend of his, while he, the Indian friend, was in England pursuing his studies.]

“**I**F I had not allowed Ellen to go to London, it would never have happened. But I can't shelve the blame so easily. The whole thing was my own fault, so I may as well admit it.”

Ellen went to London for a perfectly logical reason. She was a teacher in a school in our town, and by taking a summer course she would get into the local high school in the autumn on a much better pay. Besides I was going to have a busy summer, with no time at all for Ellen. I was on my big law case, and, if I won it, it meant my whole future was assured. The whole plan seemed very good, and we considered ourselves two smart young people until I said good-bye to Ellen at the train.

“There had been a party once and the attentions elicited by my beautiful wife was getting suddenly to make me a wee bit jealous. That was the one flaw in the whole thing—Ellen's beauty and personality. What would happen when she was in London and I was not there? I tried of course to put such thoughts out of my mind. But they came back with a bang when Ellen's first letter to me said she had run into Mary Stevans, had taken a small furnished flat with her, and they were sharing expenses.

"Mary had gone to the same college Ellen and I had, but so far as I could see, she had not gone to learn anything. I had heard a lot of fast, wild stories about her, and I knew for certain she had plenty of dash. She was a model now, and the idea of Ellen's spending the summer in her company was not what the doctor had ordered for me. Mary chased men for all she was worth.

"Ellen had been away the entire month of July when Peter Gibbs came back from a trip to London, and clapped me on the back laughing. 'Well, Bill, there's nothing like being a broad-minded husband and letting the little woman have her fling. I saw your gorgeous wife in a London hotel, dining with another gorgeous, red-headed woman and two distinguished looking men. Were they having a good time? I'll say they were' I noticed that although Peter laughed and winked in a joking way, he was watching closely for my reaction. So I didn't move an eyelid—but I was seething inside!

"I had a lot of work, as always, to do on the case that night, but I couldn't keep my mind on the papers spread out before me on my desk. Instead, I kept seeing an hotel dining table with four laughing people around it, and my lovely, vivacious Ellen the centre of attraction as usual. The phrase 'distinguished-looking men' was rather a sore point with me. That meant that they were not what you'd call young men. It meant they were polished men of the world who knew their way about. After all, Ellen was only an unsophisticated girl and I rushed her off her feet before she was fully aware of how popular she could become. She had never really had a fling like other girls. Perhaps she'd grab at this chance now, thinking there would be no harm in it. Then perhaps, she'd be swept off her feet by one of those 'distinguished-looking'

men ; perhaps she would decide she liked a husband who could surround her with luxury and grandeur better than a struggling young lawyer.

"I tried to control the flood of mixed emotions that were taking hold of me by assuring myself that Peter was probably pulling my leg and that Ellen could be trusted, but I wasn't very convincing to myself. The combination of Mary's influence and Peter's report was too much for me. Ellen never knew about the six other men at college who would have given their right arms to have her but who were afraid to go near her because I stood in the way, big and threatening. But this wasn't college, and 'distinguished-looking' men weren't college chaps. I don't think in my whole life I had ever been so on edge about anything. I couldn't work and I couldn't sleep. I felt like packing a bag and rushing to London. But to do that would be to give up the law case when the case was promising. If I gave up the case and it turned out that Peter had been lying, I'd look an absolute idiot. How could I explain it away to Ellen ?

"I finally hit on a despicable scheme. I knew it was despicable even when I hit on it, but I salved my guilty conscience with the conviction that I was doing it to prove Peter Gibbs a liar and that Ellen wouldn't do anything wrong. I engaged a private detective to follow my wife. The first report he sent in, hit me right in the pit of my stomach. His report contained all details except conversations. Ellen had gone out on Friday night to an Art Exhibition with a 'distinguished elderly man,' tall, dark with greying temples, clean-shaven, well-built, grey suit, etc. They had laughed a lot and she had held his arm. They lunched at Hotel St—. To say this report was food for thought in a tortured man's mind is to put it mildly. To add to my misery and suspicion, I received

a letter from Ellen—a short, gay little note, telling me she didn't want to break in on my work with a long letter of detail but that she was having a lot of fun despite the heat, getting a lot out of her course, seeing a lot of London. This short note went to confirm the detective's report. The 'long detail' excuse was too thin for me to swallow. Very clever of Ellen to pretend she was sparing me for my work by making her letters short and telling me practically nothing.

"I went from complete worry to complete anger, then to a mixture of both. But I waited patiently for some more reports from the detective. In the two successive weeks I received two reports from him. In the first he said Ellen had been out with a different distinguished-looking man, in the company of a red-headed girl. The other report was also along the lines of the previous ones, although towards the end of August a third man came into the picture to torment my nights. Ellen's letters remained short and unfathomable. The intense heat made my misery complete, and a more tortured man I hope never to meet. The case I was working on progressed, though I don't know how I was able to put one clear intelligent thought into it.

"Well, the case finally went to the jury, and I wired the detective to stop and send in the bill. Win or lose, as soon as the jury brought in its verdict, I was going straight up to London.

"The case finished suddenly. I won it, but I didn't even wait for congratulations. I thought bitter thoughts at the large cheque in my pocket. I was beginning to be a successful lawyer. For what?

"In my house, I didn't even take time to pack a bag. I tossed a few things into my suit case and dashed off again.



As I hurried down the drive, I nearly ran into the postman who held out my morning mail. I grabbed it and stuffed it into my pocket. I just caught the train, and at last as I sat in the carriage, my brief-case beside me, I mopped my brow. I opened the letters. One was an advertisement, one the bill from the detective and one an official letter. The detective's bill came to more than half the amount of the cheque I had in my pocket. It was outrageous. Enclosed with the bill was the latest report that Ellen had started out with the beautiful woman with the red hair (Mary) and wound up with two handsome men, my wife's companion being about fifty and one she had never been with before. I began to burn. So Ellen had stooped to picking up men. I should have made her come home the minute I heard she was staying with Mary. If only I had my hands round that red-head's throat now—

"All costs were "itemised." Taxi fare alone on that one report was four pounds. I made a bitter mental note to make the detective buy his own cab to start with, the next time I had occasion to use one. It would be cheaper. Then I thought sourly I would never be using a detective again. I had finished with women. By the time I had waded through the bill, the report and the remaining letters, I had forgotten all about the pain I had felt at Ellen's unfaithfulness. Now all I felt was anger—or I might say, fury. I wondered with bitter satisfaction what she'd say, what she would do when I corrected her. And as for Mary, why, I'd slap her face, the brazen little gold-digger, if she as much as opened her mouth.

"In London, I took a taxi to Ellen's flat. I drew up in front of it just as Ellen herself, Mary and two men stepped from a taxi and disappeared into the hall. My eyes almost popped out. I paid the driver off and hurried in. They were nowhere in sight. So I thought they were upstairs in the flat.

This was better than I expected. I was catching her red-handed. Wait until she saw me at the door, just wait!

"I was actually quivering by the time I stood in front of her door. I could hear laughter inside, and the sound made me feel murderous. I put my finger on the bell, then took it away. Perhaps the door was open. That would be better—not to give any warning at all, just suddenly to confront them.

"I flung open the door and stood blinking, while my anger slid down and out through my toes leaving me feeling like a .....Sitting in a chair directly facing the door was Ellen's father. He rose. At the same time Ellen screamed, 'Bill, Oh, darling!'. Mary got up, too, from where she had been sitting and through a daze they all seemed to be coming towards me at once. In a second Ellen had thrown herself in my arms and as her face brushed mine, I felt tears on her cheek. She was so glad to see me that she was crying. For a long moment we clung to each other.

"Then her father was shaking my hand and beaming, and Mary, standing back, watched with satisfaction. The other man was standing up now, too. He had a nice, pleasant face, definitely not the play-boy type. Ellen began talking. Her words, though not connected, made sense. She thought it was grand I had come. She had intended to come home in a few days, but now everything was perfect; she couldn't live until she could see me again; she had so much to tell me; she had not wanted to burden me with long letters; what had made me come like this out of a clear sky? such a wonderful surprise; what had made me come?

"When she was talking in such a way, I was looking at her father and comparing him, in a dazed sort of way, with

'dignified-looking' gentleman, number 2 of the detective's reports. Like a schoolboy I dug in my pockets for the crumbled cheque, and, almost choking in my words, I stammered, 'I.....I won the case. I thought we could celebrate—you know—celebrate before you left London.....' Ellen said a few things about my being wonderful and then things calmed down a little while. Mary introduced to me the strange man as her fiancé, and Ellen stepped in and explained that Mary and the man had just become engaged, and they were about to celebrate the occasion, and now that I had come with my good news, we could make it a celebration indeed!

"Indeed I was beginning to feel ill, Mary had said something about her having met my uncle Jack who is elderly and they had seen a lot of him during the summer—every time he came to London, as a matter of fact. And Uncle Jack fitted perfectly the description of dignified-looking gentleman number 1 of the detective.

"Between questions about my case, Ellen said my father had been in the city the day before yesterday and she had met him and gone shopping with him for a grand piano and for my mother's birth day present. She said it was a secret and I wasn't to let mother know or even dad that she had told me. Then Ellen laughed and told me in glee how they had got tied up in traffic bloc in front of the hotel and had been forced to leave their taxi and run to get another lest dad should miss the train.

"The man in the last report was my father 'my own father.' My father, her father, uncle Jack—and a bill which exhausted practically all my fees. They hustled me out to celebrate. I couldn't read the Wine list in Hotel Richmond. All I could do was to see on it the detective's bill. The figures got bigger and blacker, and then Ellen began to talk about not

going back to teaching now that we had the money in advance that she would have earned in the coming year, and about the baby we were going to have. How was I to explain that we had hardly any money left. If she knew, she would never forgive me, and I couldn't blame her. My God! just because she was beautiful I thought I couldn't trust her the first time she was away from me. Most stupid of me! Mary was telling charmingly how Ellen had been talking of nothing but me all the summer, and her fiancé put a word in there, too, about how even he was anxious to meet the man who knew how to keep his wife crazy about him. I very nearly collapsed at that. Now my only concern was how to keep Ellen ignorant of the whole thing. When we were alone she said, 'Darling, you are behaving very oddly, not like yourself at all.' I was sure the guilt stuck out all over me. Ellen continued, 'You are tired. You have been working so hard all the summer, it is no wonder. I will hereafter devote all my time to you.' She took the cheque out of my wallet and looked at it lovingly. I was restless. I was searching for excuses. But she should not know. She would be humiliated to know detectives had followed her all the summer; she would be furious. But how to make up for the detective's bill? More than half the amount of the cheque belonged to the detective. Ellen would have to work another year. All night long while Ellen slept blissfully, I drove myself into a frenzy with my torturing thoughts. By morning I was worn out, but I had made up my mind to take a long chance and go to Ellen's father for help. I didn't like to do it; he'd probably think I was a fine son-in-law, but I had to do something quickly. My own father was undoubtedly spending all his surplus cash on a piano. Ellen's father was a lot better off financially. I hated to go to him, but I was willing to do anything to keep Ellen from knowing I was a cad. I had to pay the detective immediately before I left London. I didn't want any letters arriving from him after

we got home. I got up before Ellen was awake, and leaving a note to her that I was going down for cigarettes, went over to her father's room and told him the whole story. I didn't spare myself at all and called myself everything under the sun. When I finished he was shaking with laughter, which hurt more than scathing words. I felt like a worm. He lent me the money, and assured dead secrecy. At last somehow, I rounded up the affair.

Now I am seriously considering the proposal that my father-in-law made (was it for joke?) that it would be more profitable and less exacting if I join Scotland Yard.

A. AGILANDAM, IV B.Sc.



## THE NIGHT-ALARM

THE professor was sitting in his deep arm-chair, reading. Just behind him was burning a carefully-shaded electric table-lamp. The time-piece on the table showed 10 p.m.

About an hour passed. The professor rose, closed the book, switched off the table-lamp, and switched on, instead, a dim bed-room lamp. He undressed, put on a pair of loose pyjamas and a long shirt, and prepared to go to bed. Just before getting into bed, however, he went over to his desk, unlocked it, took out a bulky envelope, and looked inside—a bundle of currency notes, which had come into his possession only that morning. The envelope was a bulky one, no doubt, but how long would it last, he thought. Almost the whole of it would have to be spent within a few days, the major portion to go to his son, who followed his illustrious father only in the matter of spending, without earning anything.

With a final look, he closed the envelope, put it back, and carefully locked up the desk. Then—

“There, you, hands up, or I shoot,” came a curt voice. The professor spun round, to stare right into the muzzle of an automatic pistol, held by a tall man, with the conventional mask covering his face.

The professor's hands slowly went up. He was a brave man, but not rash. He did not want to rush in where angels feared to tread. He knew that automatic pistols were dangerous things to toy with, especially when held by such a man as he saw in front of him.

"Keep to the wall, and don't move,"—again that curt voice. The professor obeyed. The man muttered something, went over to the professor, searched his pockets, and asked—"You haven't got any gun with you, have you?" "No." "Then you may put down your hands"—which, the professor found, was a great relief.

"Well, where is the envelope?" the intruder asked significantly. No answer. Again he muttered and after a little searching in the professor's pockets, produced a bunch of keys, with one of which he opened the drawer, took out the envelope, and began to gloat over it.

All this was being watched by a pair of keen eyes—or, so at least the owner of the eyes thought—eyes belonging to the amateur detective upstairs. At this stage, when he saw the intruder looking keenly at the envelope, he could contain himself no longer. With one bound, he reached the room, flung the door open, rushed in, and gave the intruder a knock on the head, which sent him down reeling, senseless.

A moment before, everything had been quiet, but now, lights were switched on, one in the room also, and men rushed in, shouting. From the group of men, a young man in tweed came forward. To him our detective advanced, expecting congratulations. But instead, what he heard was—

"Damn you, why the devil did you rush in like that? Coming and spoiling the scene just when I thought that we were getting along splendidly." He then turned round to the others, and rapped out—

"Yes, come on, quick, start shooting again. Camera-man, be ready!" And then, grumbling—"The whole film to be retaken just because of a damned lunatic amateur detective!"

"I — I — am s—sorry!" This from our detective at the doorway.

"WILL you get out?"

E. S. RANGANATHAN,  
*IV Hons. (Economics).*

### **LITTLE DROPS**

1. "Bachelor— A person who thinks that the only thoroughly justified marriage was the one which produced him."

—Harlan Miller.

2. "When a speaker fails to strike oil within ten minutes, he should stop boring."

—Louis Nizer.

3. "Happiness is like a kiss. You must share it, to have it."

—Olivio Santon.

(From the "Readers' Digest")

4. "The greatest punishment for bigamy is having two mothers-in-law."

—Advocate Norton.

E. S. RANGANATHAN,  
*IV Hons.*



*Standing :* Tirupati,  
R. Sivaramakrishnan.

*Sitting :* R. Sitaraman (Champion for 1941-42),  
C. O. Ninan.

Competitors at the Annual Sports with  
the Vice-Chancellor in the  
centre



The Vice-Chancellor  
among the Spectators.



# STORM IN A TEA-CUP

BY

"KAY YES VEE."

---

## Characters :

1. Theodore—a rich merchant.
  2. Irene —Theodore's wife.
  3. Thomas—Friend of Theodore.
  4. Wilkie—an employee under Thomas's Uncle and lover of Irene.
  5. A servant.
- 

SCENE: *New York—in the mansion of Theodore.*

*Theodore*—Irene, Is it possible? Can I believe it? I am mad, or soon will be. I am desperate. Are you serious? Do you want to drive me mad?

*Irene*—Yes, Theodore, if I can.

*Theo*—Oh you are uncharitable.

*Irene*—Charity is a human infirmity.

*Theo*—Don't be whimsical.

*Irene*—I cannot be anything else.

*Theo*—You have broken my heart.

*Irene*—Hearts are meant to be broken.

*Theo*—Was it for this that I loved you and married you?



*Irene*—For this and something more that is to follow.

*Theo*—My dear, be reasonable.

*Irene*—If I am to be reasonable, I cannot be dear !

*Theo*—Oh ! that is the most unkindest cut of all ! This is incredible. Am I awake or am I dreaming ?

*Irene*—Shall I pinch you ?

*Theo*—(Unmindful of the interruption) How am I to account for this ? How can I believe it ? When two months ago I left you, apparently in good health and sound mind, you protested, your love for me was too great to stand the painful separation. Even a few days ago, you wrote to me an endearing letter. Now, When I rush back, expecting to be welcomed by you with open arms, you assume this strange and cold attitude. Can I not have an explanation ?

*Irene*—Theodore, you do not understand my position at all. I think it is better for you to spare yourself the troubles of prying into my life.

*Theodore*—Oh ! you can't say that.

*Irene*—Why not ?

*Theo*—Our lives were linked together for eternity. You gave me your heart and.....

*Irene*—(Interrupting) I take it back with the same hand.

*Theo*—Oh ! It is cruel, too cruel of you. You can as well tear a limb off my body.

*Irene*—Of what use is that to me ?

*Theo*—My heart bleeds. Is it true that you love him ? Can it be true ?

*Irene*—I hope you understand me.

*Theo*—I have lost the faculty of understanding.

*Irene*—I can't help it. Was there not a tacit understanding, Theodore, that we were to quit when we could not agree..... ?

*Theo*—I was not aware of any such understanding. There is no disagreement between us either.

*Irene*—I don't quite agree with you.

*Theo*—But I can agree with you.

*Irene*—In everything?

*Theo*—Yes, in everything.

*Irene*—Then let us agree to disagree. Agree with me, when I say that we must say, 'quit.'

*Theo*—*Irene*, think over it. I will forget everything that you did.

*Irene*—I have been over-thinking about it. We must part.  
Good bye. (*Exit Irene*)

*Theo*—O Lord, my nerves are trembling. I am broken. All this is unreal. Where am I? Who am I?

(*A tap at the door*)

*Theo*—Come in (*After a pause*). Hullo Thomas, Is it you?  
Old boy, I am broken.

*Thomas*—Oh! Don't worry, I know everything.

*Theo*—What? Know everything?

*Thomas*—Yes, I do.

*Theo*—What is your idea?

*Thomas*—It is a very big idea. What do you propose to do?

*Theo*—I don't propose at all.

*Thomas*—What is your next step? Your future plan of action? You must place and move according to the plan.

*Theo*—I have no future to plan at all and act according to it.

*Thomas*—Don't be silly. Nothing is lost yet.

*Theo*—And that is exactly the trouble. If everything had been lost I would have been mighty glad.

*Thomas*—Listen. What has been lost can't be helped. There is no use in crying over spilt milk. You forget all that has happened, and begin things anew.

*Theo*—Of course I will. I offered to do that, but she would not accept my offer.

*Thomas*—True? I can't believe that. Then, does she really love him? I thought it was only a pleasant pastime. Does he love her?

*Theo*—Perhaps.

*Thomas*—Has she definitely refused to be reconciled?

*Theo*—Yes, she has.

*Thomas*—Do you still love her? Bob, after knowing all this?

*Thomas*—Yes, I do.

*Thomas*—Don't worry, boy. Nothing is lost.

*Theo*—You can keep on saying that till eternity!

*Thomas*—No! Still he may refuse her. Then she will come back to you.

*Theo*—Oh! But his refusal would break her heart. I don't want that. I want her to be happy at any cost. I don't care for my own happiness.

*Thomas*—Let us try. May God help us.

## II

*Irene*—I can't believe that, Wilkie.

*Wilkie*—But you have to.

*Irene*—How very shocking!

*Wilkie*—Not very shocking to me. I expected it. I know it was coming and it has come.

*Irene*—Out of job? What are you going to do?

*Wilkie*—Why, what do I care to do anything? Come with me. We shall go away. We shall leave this land.

*Irene*—And then, where are we to go and how are we to live?

*Wilkie*—Oh! You have jewels, valuable jewels. If we run away.....

*Irene*—(Indignantly) No, I can't do that. They belong to him and when I leave him I have no right to take them.

*Wilkie*—Then I am sorry to leave you. But I am going away leaving the shores of this country, never to return.

*Irene*—Wilkie, Wilkie, how unpitiful, how uncharitable, how unreasonable you are? How can I take his jewels when I abandon him? And you threaten to desert me. What am I to do?

*Wilkie*—Do! Why, go back to him, if you can't come *with your jewels*.

*Irene*—I will come with you even to the ultima Thule. But do not ask me to bring with me what is not mine.

*Wilkie*—Then, I am very sorry, old girl. I must go alone. Good bye, for the present. (*Exit Wilkie*)

*Irene*—Oh! This is terrible. This is simply terrible. My nerves are shivering. I am broken. (*Enter servant*)

*Servant*—Madam, master wishes to see you.

*Irene*—Ask him to come in. (*Enter Theodore*)

*Theo*—Good morning, Irene.

*Irene*—Morning, Bob.

*Theo*—I heard everything. I am sorry for all that has happened. It was his own fault. Thank God, but for Thomas he would have been prosecuted. He has been undermining the prestige of the firm. He has mis-

appropriated large sums of money. Thomas wanted to sack him. But I pleaded with him not to. Destiny has willed it otherwise. What can I do now? I persuaded Thomas's uncle in vain to re-instate him. I will try again for your sake. What are you going to do?

*Irene*—I? Why? I am going back to my mother.

*Theo*—And he?

*Irene*—He is sailing away next week.

*Theo*—And you don't go with him?

*Irene*—Of course not. He does not want me without my jewels. He loves them and not me.

*Theo*—But do you love him?

*Irene*—Yes, I do. But one-sided love is always the cause of pain.

*Theo*—Well said! How well you put what I feel!! Never mind that. You are pulled down. You are unhappy. You can't be happy without him. So go with him. I will grant you divorce. Take all the jewels. All of them, yes, all of them, and I will give you cash too, if you want. Now I go. Ask him to meet me. I will beg of him to make you happy.

*Irene*—Bob, Bob, you don't mean that. You can't. You simply can't do that. I.....don't.....love.....him.

(Exit Theodore)

### III

*Wilkie*—Irene, I am sorry. But I have to confess the truth. I never loved you nor ever shall.

*Irene*—Wilkie, Wilkie, you have dealt me a blow, a terrible blow.

*Wilkie*—I am sorry, lass, but I did not mean to !

*Irene*—Oh ! Why did you ever do that ? Why did you pretend to love me ?

*Wilkie*—Oh ! That was just to make you happy ! You were lovely and pensive ! Your husband was absent. I took pity on you and wanted to give you some mental relief ! I did all that with the best of intentions !

*Irene*—Intentions ? The way to hell is paved with good intentions. You have broken my heart.

*Wilkie*—Hearts are meant to be broken !

*Irene*—How cruel ! I am paid back in my own coin. So, you don't want me ? You.....

*Wilkie*—Irene, I must go. I cannot waste my time in idle talk. If it is true that your husband was responsible for reinstating me in my office I must meet him and thank him ever so much. Good bye ! (*Exit Wilkie*)

#### IV

*Theo*—What more can I do for you, Irene ? I will grant you divorce when you apply for it. Marry him and be happy.

*Irene*—Bob, do not desert me.

*Theo*—I will not.

*Irene*—Take me back. You have been too good, too good for me to deserve you. I won't leave you. I want you. Only now do I realize my folly. I have been foolish. I was mad to have treated you like that.

*Theo*—Don't worry yourself. Irene, you are always welcome. O Lord, speech fails me. After all you are mine again.

*Irene*—(Lowering her voice almost to a whisper) And you are mine too. (*A tap at the door*)



*Theo*—Who is that? (*enter servant*)

*Servant*—Mr. Wendell Wilkie, wants to see you, madam.

(*Exit servant*)

*Theo*—I will get along, Irene. You deal with him as you would like to. (*Exit Theodore, Enter Wilkie*)

*Irene*—Hullo Wilkie, what brings you here?

*Wilkie*—Irene, the matter is urgent, I do not want to break your heart. I have changed my mind. I come back to you. Get the divorce which your husband promised. We shall get married at once.

*Irene*—Wilkie, you are running before your horse. I can't come now. I am sorry to refuse your offer; but I can't help it.

*Wilkie*—Irene, You loved me once. What prevents you from doing so still? I regret, I retract. I take back all that I have said. I will marry you and make you happy.

*Irene*—When did you contract this kind of behaviour? I have no belief in you. You are a rogue, a stealer of hearts and what not.

*Wilkie*—Oh! Don't jeer at me. Don't be derisive. You break my heart.

*Irene*—But I don't want to break his heart—he who proved ever so much nobler than you can ever hope to be. I am unworthy of him; but I don't want to make him unhappy. His happiness is my aim now. I have gone back to him. We will never part till death parts us. Now, out you go, you ungrateful wretch and never turn your face again to me.

BY

K. SRINIVASAN, IV B.Sc. HONS. (Math.)

## REVIEWS

### REALMS OF GOLD

[A history of English Literature by H. A. Treble and G. H. Vallins : Collins clear Type-Press; 320 pages 8 vo : illustrated. Price : four shillings.]

“ A magnificent ‘Pageant of English Literature,’ ”

Here is a clear and thoroughly readable account of the growth of English Literature from the days of him who sang the deeds of Beowulf to those of John Masefield. It does not pretend to be exhaustive. It is certainly no text-book and the student at college has perhaps no use for it. But it can very well serve the turn of the genuine lover of Books and Reading, who after finishing a good book has the urge to know how and in what circumstances it was produced. The last chapter, “Some fire-side books” and the Appendix proclaim this purpose unmistakably. The book is a magnificent Pageant of English Literature.”

It is done on a novel plan. The authors discard the usual chronological order for the logical. The first chapter deals with the growth of English Poetry, the second with that of English Drama and so on. The space devoted to the growth of English Poetry is naturally the largest. The literature of Shakespeare's country is of course great in drama ; but she is in nothing so great as in her poetry.

There is an old saying that a really good thing is the better for a few faults in it. The faults serve to proclaim it human. Of such faults to be found in this book, we may mention a few. Greene's prose romance on which Shakespeare drew for writing the Winter's Tale was *Pandosto*, not *Menaphon*. (See p. 140 of the book). The authors tell us on p. 306, that Hazlitt discusses Keats and Shelley in his *Lectures on the English Poets*; no, he does not. On p. 158, we read “The stage was largely purged of its gross licentiousness, due

(the italics is ours) in no small measure to public opinion .....”  
On p. 164 we have the sentence: “The nineteenth century, at least so far as the first three quarters of it *goes, are* (the italics again are ours) unimportant in the story of the drama. And then, p. 46 contains the sentence: “But it was Nature looked at *through* a townsman’s eyes.....”

The next edition of the book will, we are sure, be free from things of this kind, and the book will have an honoured place in every book-lover’s shelf.

P. A. S.

## **Indian Students Look at World Affairs :**

(Oxford University Press, Indian Branch. 30 pages. Price 4 annas)

Last year the Oxford University Press organized Essay Competitions open to postgraduate students, Degree students and Intermediate students in Indian Universities; and three essays, each of which won the first prize in its class, are printed in this pamphlet. It is a pleasant little book which shows us how Indian students view current questions.

The first essay on *The Position of India in the British Empire* is as long as the other two and presents the case for a free and united India. The author, Mr. Abdulla, describes the constitutional progress of India and holds that reforms have been wrested from Britain by spurts of popular agitation. Yet, according to him, "though Britain has yielded some power to Indian hands, she has withheld far more than she has given." Urging the transfer of the substance of power to Indians, he turns to face the disagreement among Indians as to how that power should be shared. The major difficulty raised by the conflict of Hindus and Muslims, Mr. Abdulla says, will disappear with rapid economic development, and this, only a genuinely Indian Government can achieve. He dismisses much of the present wrangling as the outcome of a job-hunt by middle-class communalists. He quotes the example of Canada and of South Africa to prove that though India may not be culturally one, historical and political reasons compel and make possible her unity. The problem of the Indian states is to Mr. Abdulla one of purely British creation and it is Britain's duty to exercise her Paramountcy to reform the states and pave the road of Indian freedom. Thus the future of India may be assured if Britain understands her duty and does it. On the Indian side, the author thinks that a problem like that of Indian defence, given goodwill, will become a mere matter of detail.

Mr. Romesh Thapar gives a well-informed and clear picture of the principles and methods of contraband control in his essay on *Blockade in Modern Warfare*. He has assessed every relevant factor in the organization of economic pressure on the enemy and has judged correctly the resources needed for a successful blockade. Mr. Thapar understands the real nature of total war and therefore realizes that humanitarian hesitations may prolong the struggle and postpone the defeat of the enemy. Hence he writes, "Those who desire immediate dispatch of food for the hungry people of Europe are defeating the very idea of blockade, for starvation of the occupied territory is necessary to encourage sabotage and resistance from within."

The last essay on *Hitler's Germany* is by Mr. Sadoc. The basic ideas of National Socialism and the current practices of the Nazis are here set forth plainly and precisely. This dispassionate and convincing indictment of Hitler's Germany is written with an admirable economy of phrase and emotion. The young author has lived in Germany some time and his knowledge of the country and its rulers is revealed in this very penetrating essay.

R. B.

147742







## **'UNIVERSITY RAMBLERS'**

**I**T may be astonishing to hear University Students, born and brought up in towns, speaking of going on a hundred mile long walking tour. Yet, we two decided on going a hundred mile walking tour for the purpose of gaining a " Rambler's " badge. The long awaited hour of our journey came off on the 21st morning of April 1940. Three of our brother Rovers, K. V. Achuthan Nair, K. Damotharan Thampan, and P. N. Rajakrishna Menon, accompanied us upto the seventh mile. We five left Annamalainagar at 4-30 A.M. Amidst the barking of dogs we crossed Chidambaram and proceeded north leaving behind the centres of Culture and Pilgrimage. It was 6-30 A.M. when we came to Mutlur for the boat to cross the river, Vellar. Now came the time to leave our brother Rovers behind and to proceed alone on our onward march.

Crossing the Vellar we felt the loneliness very much at first; however the rising SUN took the place of our brother Rovers to cheer us. The clock struck nine when we entered the Puthuchattiram Railway Station. To our utter disappointment we were not given an interview by the Station Master and we found we had walked a mile in vain to the station. Leaving the station we entered the village and we had to convince the inquisitive villagers that surrounded us by explaining to them that we were only students of the Thiruvetkalam College on a walking tour and not pedlars. Crossing a number of villages we entered the Alapakkam Railway Station by 1 P.M. There we took our lunch in a mango grove where we found a number of monkey families in residence. Resting for a while we resumed the journey at

2 O'clock. Though the sun was scorching we proceeded unmindful of it, and reached Cuddalore Old Town to have our well earned cup of coffee. There we searched in vain for our brother Rover, Pattabhi, belonging to that place. We had to cover three miles more to reach that day's destination and we reached it by 6 P.M. Though Jayaraman, another brother Rover was not in his house, we found a duplicate Jayaraman, (his brother) who gave us a warm welcome with a cool lemonade drink. A sound sleep conquered us after our visit to the town.

It was 8 A.M. when we left Cuddalore New Town for Kurinjpadi. Annavalli Railway Station gave us a place to take our mid-day meal in. Crossing Kullanchavadi, of course inhabited by tall folk also, we reached Kurinjpadi by 6 P.M. We never expected our friends Sambandams (Messrs. S. K. Sambandam and Gnanasambandam) to be there. Instead of our meeting them they met us at the railway station and we were given boarding and lodging. Among the places we visited, we found lungi weaving a Cottage Industry thriving in Kurinjpadi.

At 8 A.M. the next day, taking leave of Kurinjpadi, we went to Vadalur to see Ramalinga Swamigal's Sabha. After having a look at it we left for Neivali. We had a nice bath at the artesian well, thinking that we were somewhere near Australia. Aziznagar, the newly formed settlement for the criminal tribes, was the next place we visited. As we proceeded further we were reminded of our brother Rover Fazuluddin's caution that a man-eater (a cheetah) is living in the Kara-sankadu (a forest three miles from Vriddhachalam). Though we fully knew that it was a mere bluff we were a little bit afraid and crossed the forest (which is a mile and a half long) rather quickly. We reached the Manimutha River by six in the evening and had a tub-bath for there was no knee-deep

water. Ramakoti (the name of the house of the District Scout Commissioner of South Arcot) gave us shelter for the night.

On the next day, 24-4-40, early in the morning we left for Kamapuram, which is eight miles from Vriddhachalam. On reaching that place we decided to have our meal near the Sub-Registrar's Office there. But on going there we met the resident Doctor Mr. Ghouse who was very kind to us and wanted to be our host. He gave us a hearty dinner and we enjoyed it well. We left that place by 3 P.M. and proceeded to Sethiatoppu, that day's destination. Unfortunately we were compelled to stay at Erumbur on our way owing to rain. Mr. Guruswamy Iyer the Headmaster of the Board Elementary School provided us shelter. Though he looked harsh at first he was nice to us afterwards!

Taking leave of him in the morning we reached Sethiatoppu by 8 A.M. and proceeded to Annamalainagar 15 miles from it. We reached our final destination by 3 P.M. on Thursday the 25th of April 1940 and thus completed our 100 mile walking tour.

“ All honour to Tramping ”

D. VENUGOPAL,

and

K. ABDUL HAMED.

## THE UNIVERSITY DRAMATIC SOCIETY

1941—'42

### Office-bearers

*President* :—Rai Bahadur Dr. Sir K. V. Reddi Naidu,

B.A., B.L., M.L.C.

*Vice-President* :—Mr. C. R. Myleru, M.A.

*Secretary* :—Sri Taranath Kamath Shibrur.

*Asst. Secretary* :—Sri R. S. Chintamani.

*Treasurer* :—Sri N. K. Nagarajan.

The Dramatic Society, which has been working ever since the inception of the University, has kept up its high standards in its work this year. The Inaugural address of the Society was delivered by Rao Bahadur P. Sambanda Mudaliar, B.A., B.L. of Madras. The veteran actor and playwright gave us an instructive address and told us how to develop our histrionic talents. There was tea in honour of the guest and also a photograph. After the meeting there was a variety entertainment by the members in the Gokhale Hall and it was much appreciated.

On the occasion of the 61st birthday celebrations of the Founder and Pro-Chancellor of the University, the Society put on the boards a variety entertainment in the Srinivasa Sastri Hall. It was attended by a large and distinguished gathering of guests and members of the University. The entertainment was of the usual high order attained by the performances of the Dramatic Society. Special mention must be made of the Tableaux by Mr. T. K. Shibrur (Nataraja and Ardhanariswara) the "Magic Crystal" a skit on beggars and

their ways, written by Mr. C. R. Myleru, and "Honest people" produced by Muttukumarswamy and party. It does not mean that the other items were less entertaining than these. Good dance and pantomime items were contributed by the women students. Three prizes were awarded for the best acting. They were:—

- I Prize : Sri T. K. Shibrur.
- II Prize : Sri Muttukumaraswamy.
- III Prize : Sri S. V. Venkatraman.

The noteworthy feature of the entertainment was that we managed the show ourselves while our Vice-President (who is usually with us during such entertainments) was away from station. That shows that besides learning the histrionic art we have also learnt the art of managing things ourselves. We were helped by a committee of some members of the staff who gave us help and advice whenever necessary.

The Society contributed a very successful pantomime, depicting 'Buddha's Renunciation' in an allegorical form on the occasion of the meeting of the Inter-University Board at Annamalainagar.

We are preparing a few items against the day of our Valedictory Address which is to come off shortly. We hope that it will also be of the same high standard as our usual performances.

T. K. SHIBRUR,  
*Secretary.*

## A DIALOGUE

S'rī Parās'ara Bhaṭṭa, son of the famous Kūreś'a the most devoted disciple of Bhagavān Rāmānuja, lived in the 12th century (1123—1151 A.D.) at S'rīrangam devoting his life to the propagation of Viś'iṣṭādvaita doctrines and composing many valuable works thereon. On one occasion, he went to the famous shrine to worship Lord Ranganātha at the time अभिषेक (holy bath) was being performed. He saw the divine image with but a strip of wet yellow cloth round his waist, a garland of red flowers hanging round his neck and camphor burning in front of his अभयहस्त (the hand that assures protection to the refugee).

This beatific vision aroused his poetic imagination and he poured forth his experiences in the following verse, which is as beautiful as it is sublime.

श्रीः

त्वं मेऽहं मे कुतस्तत्तदपि कुत इदं वेदमूलप्रमाणा-  
देतच्चानादिसिद्धादनुभवविभवात्तर्हि साक्रोश एव ।  
काक्रोशस्तर्हि गीतादिषु मम विदितः कोऽत्र साक्षी सुधीस्स्या-  
द्धन्त त्वत्पक्षपाती स इति नृकलहे मृग्यमध्यस्थवत्त्वम् ॥

Tvam mē' ham me kutas tat tadapi kuta idam veda-  
mūla pramāṇāt  
etaccā'nādi siddhād anubhavavibhavāt tarhi  
sākroś'a eva |



Kvākros'as tarhi gītadiṣu mama veditaḥ ko'tra  
 sāksī sudhis syāt  
 hanta ! tvatpakṣapātī sa iti nṛkalahe mṛgya-  
 madhyasthavat tvam |

This may be rendered as follows :—

*Lord*—Thou art mine.

*Jiva* —No, I don't belong to you. I am independent, master of myself.

*L* —How is that? How could you prove that you belong to yourself (evidently the Lord was greatly relieved to notice that the Jiva did not claim to be master of the Lord and was modest enough to claim to be lord only over himself.)

*Ji* —How is your claim substantiated? On what grounds do you assert that I am yours?

*L* —My claim is backed up by the Vedas, the most important among the sources of knowledge <sup>1</sup>.

*Ji* —Nor is my claim without sufficient authority; it is supported by the powerful fact of possession (of myself) from time immemorial. Prescription is reckoned a greater title to ownership than even documentary evidence <sup>2</sup>. (Though the Vedas declare that Jiva is

<sup>1</sup> प्रधानक्षेत्रज्ञपतिर्गुणेशः ; श्वे. उ. VI 16 ; तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरम् ; श्वे. उ. VI 7.

<sup>2</sup> प्रमाणं लिखितं भुक्तिस्साक्षिणश्चेति तत्त्वयम् ।  
 सर्वेष्वर्थविवादेषु बलवत्युत्तरा क्रिया ॥ याज्ञ. II 22.

dependent on the Lord, Jiva thinks otherwise and considers himself independent. In consequence, he subjects himself to the perennial cycle of births and deaths. The very fact that Jiva gets caught up in samsāra is clear proof that Jiva has so long laid claim to himself without recognising any other Lord's claim).

*L* —But your claim has off and on been disputed. (It is a well-known fact that the possession of property gives one claim to it only if it has not been questioned by the rival claimant)<sup>1</sup>.

*Ji* —Where has it been questioned, pray ?

*L* —That your claim has been condemned as illegal in the Gītā and elsewhere is well-known<sup>2</sup>.

*Ji* —Is there any witness who could testify to this ? (Excepting your own word, is there any one who could say that you ever disputed my claim).

*L* —Good men of unquestionable insight (ज्ञानिनः) such as Vyāsa and Arjuna bear witness to this.

*Ji* —Pshaw ! They are but your partisans. (They are not disinterested witnesses ; they are either your own intimates or kinsmen<sup>3</sup>. No reliance can be placed on their

<sup>1</sup> पश्यतोऽब्रुवतो भूमेर्हानिर्विशतिवार्षिकी । याज्ञ. II 24.

<sup>2</sup> द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च । क्षरस्सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते । उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ॥ गी. XV 16 ; 17.

<sup>3</sup> पतिताप्तार्थसम्बन्धिसहायरिपुत्तरकराः । साहसी दृष्टदोषश्च निर्धूतश्चेत्यसाक्षिणः ॥ याज्ञ. II 73.

words. You have yourself confessed 'I am greatly loved by the learned and they in return are greatly loved by me'<sup>1</sup>.

When all arguments failed to convince Jiva, the Lord unwilling to lose his rights over the self is greatly anxious to get Jiva round at all costs and even prepared to go the length of swearing in order to save his property, namely, finite soul. Clad in wet yellow cloth, with a single garland of red flowers on, the Lord appears to Parās'ara in readiness, to put out the burning camphor with his own right-hand (अमयहस्त).

(It is a common practice in our country for a person swearing to appear in wet yellow cloth with a garland of red flowers round the neck and to put out burning camphor).

Man in his ignorance does verily move away from his Maker. But He, in the inexhaustible abundance of His mercy, is anxious to draw him back to Himself. We see it every day. But only Parās'ra Bhaṭṭa (12th cent) among us and the author of "The Hound of Heaven" (20th cent. i.e. 1859—1907) in the West can say it.

PROF. R. RAMANUJACHARI, M.A.

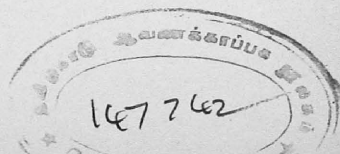
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PANDIT K. SRINIVASACHARYA

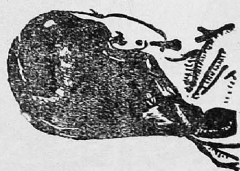
(*Siromani*).

<sup>1</sup> प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥

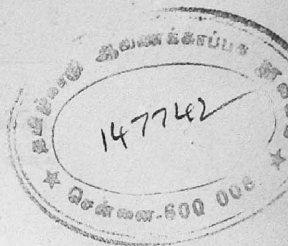
गी. VII 17.







குதிர்



**நாராயணக்** கவுண்டனுக்கு அந்த வருஷம் பூமியில் நல்ல ஏராளமான விளைச்சல். புகையிலையை அறுதூறு ரூபாயிற்கு தோட்டத்தில் பயிர் நிற்கும்பொழுதே, விபாபாரிகள் பேசி விட்டுப் போய்விட்டார்கள். அது அறுவடையானதும் சோளம் விதைத்தான். அதுவும் குறைந்த பசும் நான்கைந்து பொதியாகும். சோளத்தை விற்பால், அந்தப் பணத்தை வைத்துக் கொண்டு எல்லாச் செலவுகளும் பார்க்கலாம். சாப்பாட்டிற்குத் தான் ராசி இருக்கவே இருக்கிறது. இந்தத் தடவை ராசியும் எந்த வருஷமும்ல்லாதபடி அபரிமிதமாய் வளர்ந்து அவனுக்கு வருஷத்திற்குத் தேவையான அளவுக்கு மேலேயே கிடைத்திருந்தது. அடுத்த வருஷத்திற்குக்கூட போதும் போலிருந்தது. அவனுடைய தோட்டத்தில் ராசி போடுவதற்குக் குழி கிடையாது. சாதாரணமாக அவன் பூமியில் குழியில் போட்டுவைப்பதற்கு வேண்டிய அவ்வளவு விளைச்சல் கிடையாது. ஆனால், இந்தத் தடவை அவனுக்கு அதிஷ்டத்தைப் பார்த்தால் ஏன் தானும் ஒரு குழி வைத்துக் கொள்ளக்கூடாது என்று தோன்றிற்று.

“ராசியும்” அறுவடையாகிவிட்டது. வீட்டிலிருந்த சட்டி, பாணை, மிடா முதலிய எல்லாவற்றிலும் தானியத்தைக் கொட்டி நிரப்பியாய்விட்டது. இன்னும் தீர்தபாடில்லே. பெரிய ஓர் குதிர் இருந்தால்ன்றி முழுவதும் வேறென்றிலும் கொள்ளாது போலிருந்தது. யோசித்துப் பார்த்தான் கவுண்டன், உடனே தன் வீட்டில் ஒரு மூலையில் இருந்த ஒரு பழைய குதிரைப்பற்றி ரூபகம் வந்தது. ஆம்! அது தான் நல்லது. ஏன் அந்தக்



குதிரில் பாக்கியிருந்த தானியத்தை யெல்லாம் போட்டுவைத்துக் கொள்ளக்கூடாது என்று எண்ணினான்.

அதை வெளியில் கொண்டு வரும்படி தன் ஆட்களுக்கு உடனே கட்டளையிட்டான். அதை யெடுக்க அவர்கள் உள்ளே சென்றதும் அவனுடைய தாய் இராக்கம்மா சொன்னாள். அந்த எழவு கிரகத்தை ஏனப்பு எடுக்கிறே? அது வாணம். எங்கள் தாத்தா காலந் தொட்டு அதை நாங்கள் யாருந் தொட்டதுகூட இல்லை. அதை எடுத்தால் ஏதாவது பொருட்கேடு வரும். வேறே புதிதாக ஒன்று குயவனிடம் சொன்னால் செய்கிறான் என்று அபசகுனம் மாதிரிக் கூவ ஆரம்பித்தான்.

கேட்டான் இந்த நாராயணக் கவுண்டன். அவனுக்கு இந்த பழைய மூடநம்பிக்கைகளெல்லாம் சிறிதும் பிடிக்காது. அந்தக் குதிரை எடுத்து உபயோகித்தால் தனக்குப் பொருட்கேடு வருமென்று அவன் சொன்னதைக் கேட்டுப் பலமாகச் சிரித்தான். ஆமாம்! ஆமாம்! நமக்கா நஷ்டம். நமக்கு எப்பொழுதும் எதிலும் நஷ்டம் வருவதில்லை. எல்லாக் காரியத்தையும் எவ்வளவு கரெக்கட்டா, கொஞ்சம் இங்கிலீஷ் வார்த்தைகளையு மறிந்திருந்தான் கவுண்டன். ஆனால் ஒன்றும் சரியாய்த் தெரியாது. ஏதோ தெரிந்தவர்கள் பேசும்போது காதில் கேட்டு அறிந்ததுதான். செய்வேன் நானும், என்னம்மா நமக்குத் தெரியாவிட்டால் நமது வக்கிலேயர் கோயம்புத்தூரிலிருக்கிறார். ஒருமுறை போய்வந்தால் சரியாகப் போய்விடும். நஷ்டமாம்! நஷ்டம்! எங்கே? வெளியே கொண்டுவாருங்கள் அதைப் பார்க்கலாம் எவ்வாறு இருக்கிறதென்று எனக் கூறினான்.

நாராயணக் கவுண்டன் தன் மனத்தில் தான் மிகவும் கெட்டிக்காரன், நிபுணன் என்று எண்ணியிருந்தான். தான் எக் காரியத்தை யெடுத்துக்கொண்டாலும் மிகவும் ஆலோசித்துச்

செய்வதாக நினைத்துக்கொண்டிருந்தான். அதெப்படியோ இருக்கட்டும். அவன் தன் கிராமத்தில் சாவணப்பட்டியில் சண்டை போட்டுக்கொள்ளாத ஆட்கள் ஒருவருமில்லை. எடுத்த தற்கெல்லாம் சண்டை, சச்சரவுதான். காரணம் எவ்வளவு அற்பமாயிருந்தாலும் போதும். எல்லாம் கரெக்கட்டாய் இருக்க வேண்டுமென்றால் கரெக்கட்டாய் இருக்கவேண்டும் என்பான். தன் வைக்கோல் போரிலிருந்து பக்கத்து வயலில் கொஞ்சம் வைக்கோல் விழுந்திருக்கட்டும். இல்லாவிட்டால் அடுத்த பூமியின் எல்லைக்கல் சிறிது தன் நிலத்தின் பக்கம் சாய்ந்திருக்கட்டும். உடனே தன் ஆட்களைக் கூப்பிட்டு தன் இரட்டை மாட்டுவண்டியைப் பூட்டு என்பான். எதற்காக? கோயம்புத்தூருக்கு வக்கீல் வீட்டுக்குச் சென்று வழக்குத் தொடர. இதுமாதிரி அடாவழக்குச் செய்து ஆசாமியே இன்சால்வெண்டு ஆய்விடுவான் போலிருந்தது. கோர்ட்டுக்கும் வக்கீலுக்கும்ல்லாமல் அநேக முறையில் இவனுடைய கேசானது தள்ளப்பட்டு, பிரதிவாதிக்கு செலவு பணமுங்கூட கொடுக்கவேண்டி வந்தது. இருந்தாலும் கவுண்டன் விடவில்லை. வக்கீல் வீட்டிற்கு நடந்தது மாதிரி பாதி தடவையாகிலும், கோவிலுக்கு நடந்திருந்தால் பெருத்த புண்ணியம் சம்பாதித்துக் கொண்டிருப்பான் என்பார்கள் ஜனங்கள். அந்த வக்கீலுக்கும் இவனையும் இவனுடைய வழக்குகளையும் பார்த்து போதுமாய்ப் போய்விட்டது. அடிக்கடி வந்து தன்னைத் துன்புறுத்தாமலிருக்கும் பொருட்டு ஒருமுறை (கவுண்டனுக்கு தமிழ் எழுதவும் படிக்கவும் தெரியும் சிறிது.) ஒரு சிறிய தமிழ்ச் சட்டப்புஸ்தக மொன்று இனம் கொடுத்தாராம். அதற்கு அர்த்தமென்னவென்றால், அவன் எடுத்ததற்கெல்லாம் வக்கீலிடம் போகவேண்டியதில்லை. விஷயம் முக்கியமா, இல்லையா என்று தானே புத்தகத்திலிருந்து அறிந்துகொண்டு பிறகு அவசியமிருந்தால் தன்னிடம் வரட்டுமென்று நினைத்து அவ்வாறு செய்தார் வக்கீல் ஐயர். ஆனால், இதுவரையில் அவன் மாத்திரம் வந்துகொண்டிருந்தவன் இதற்குப்பிறகு புத்தகத்தையும்

கொண்டுவந்து, தன் கக்ஷி சாரியென்றும், புத்தகத்தில் இருக்கிற தென்றும், கூறிக்கொண்டுவரத் தொடங்கினான். ஊரில் அவனை இகழ்ச்சி செய்யவேண்டும் என்றால், உடனே வண்டியைப் பூட்டு வண்டியைப் பூட்டு என்று பலமாகக் கூவுவது வழக்கம். அவனுக்குக் கோபமுண்டாக வேண்டுமென்று, இந்தப் புத்தகத்தின் செய்தி யெல்லோர்க்கு மெட்டியதும் சட்ட புத்தகத்தைத் திருப்பு என்று கூவ ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். அதற்கு அவன், ஆமாம்! சந்தேகமில்லாமல் தான் திருப்பிப் பார்க்கப் போகிறேன். பார்த்து உன் முதுகெலும்பை முறிக்கிறேன் பார் என்பான்.

நிற்க ; உள்ளே மூலையிலிருந்த குதிரை எடுத்துவரச் சென்ற ஆட்கள் தங்கள் வேலையை முயற்சியாய்ச் செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தனர். எத்தனையோ நாட்களாய் உபயோகப்படுத்தப்படாததால் தூசியும் புழுதியும் படிந்திருந்தது. எல்லாவற்றையும் நன்றாகத் துடைத்து, பலமுள்ளவர்கள் நான்கைந்து பேர்களாய்ச் சேர்ந்து பெயர்த்தார்கள். துரதிஷ்டவசமாக, பேர்த்த பாகம் கையோடே வந்துவிட்டது. இதைப் பார்த்ததும் அவர்களுக்கு தூக்கிவாரிப் போட்டது. இதைக் கண்டால் நாராயணக் கவுண்டன் எளிதாக விடுவானோ? உயிரையே விட்டுவிடுவானே. அவன் எப்படியாவது போகட்டும். தங்கள் உயிரையும் போக்கிவிடுவானே யென்று பயந்து நடுங்கினார்கள். அந்தக் குதிருக்கு உண்டான விலையைக் கொடுத்துவிட்டு மறுவேலை பாருங்கள் என்பானே. என்ன செய்வோம் கடவுளே யென்று ஏங்கி நின்றார்கள். ஒரு வனும் வாயைத் திறக்கவில்லை. கவுண்டனிடம் சொல்வதற்கும் தைரியமில்லை.

நேரமாகியும், குதிராவது ஆட்களாவது வாராதது கண்டு, கவுண்டனுக்குச் சந்தேகமுண்டாயிற்று. என்ன நேர்ந்தது என்று அறிய உள்ளே சென்றவன் உடைந்த குதிரையும், விழிக்கும் மனிதரையும் பார்த்து, அடங்காத கோபங்கொண்டான். ஏ

பையங்களே எப்படியிருக்கிறது உங்களுக்கு. எங்கள் புத்தாக்கால் தொட்டு இருந்த குதிரை உடைத்துவிட்டீர்களே. இப்போது என்ன செய்யப்போகிறீர்கள்? மரியாதையாக இதற்கு உண்டான பணத்தை வைத்துவிடுங்கள். இது பழையது ஆனதால் இதற்கு விலை மதிப்பு நான் வைத்ததுதான். அதைக் கொடுத்து விட வேண்டியது. இல்லாவிட்டால் உங்களை யென்ன செய்வேன் என்பதைப் பாருங்கள் என்றான். இந்த வேடிக்கையைப் பார்க்க வந்த பையன்களுக்குள் ஒரு சிறுவன், கவுண்டன் என்ன செய்வான் தெரியுமா வண்டியைப் பூட்டுவான். சட்டம் பொய்த்தததைக் காட்டுவான் என்றான். மறு விநாடியே அங்கிருந்து ஒடிவிட்டான். அருகில் நின்றவர்கள் சிரித்தனர். குதிரைப் பெயர்க்கச் சென்ற ஆட்களில் ஒருவனும் சிறிது சிரித்துவிட்டான். கவுண்டனுக்குக் கோபம் மிகுந்தது. அந்த ஆள்மேல் புலிபோற் பாய்ந்து, கழுத்தைப் பிடித்துக்கொண்டு, தலையைப் பின்புறச் சுவற்றில் மோதிக்கொண்டே என்னடா கழுதை! சிரிக்கறாய். சிரிப்புவேறவா உனக்கு. பணத்தை வைத்துவிட்டு மறுவேலை பார் என்று சொல்லிக்கொண்டே கையை அழுத்தினான். கவுண்டன் மிகவும் பலசாலி. நல்ல தேகக்கட்டுள்ளவன். எங்கு கழுத்தை யறுத்துவிடுவானோ என்று மற்றவர்கள் பயந்து, அவர்களே விடுவித்தார்கள். கவுண்டன் தன்னைத்தானே நொந்து கொண்டான். என்ன அரியாயம் ராசியெல்லாம் வீணாகப் போகிறது! அதை யெடுத்து வைக்கலாமென்று பார்த்தால் இப்படியாகிவிட்டதே. என்ன கஷ்டகாலமிது. எங்களுடைய அம்மா சொன்னதை அப்பொழுதே கேட்டேனா என்றான். இராக்கம்மா புத்தாவின் குதிர் போய்விட்டதே யென்று பிரலாபித்தாள்.

சிறிது கோபம் தணிந்திருப்பதைப் பார்த்து, அந்த ஆட்களில் ஒருவன் கவுண்டனிடம் போய், அந்த ஊரில் ஒருவன் வந்திருப்பதாகவும்; அவன் பெயர் கிருஷ்ணபோய நென்றும்; அவன் இதுபோல உடைந்தவை, விரிந்தவைகளாகிய சட்டி,

பாணை, மிடா, குதிர் முதலியவைகளை ஒரு நொடியில் ஆச்சரியமாகச் சீர்படுத்துகிறுனென்றும் ; சொன்னான். அவனை யழைத்து வந்தால் அவன் வைத்திருக்கும் ஒரு பொருளின் உதவியினால் நன்றாகப் பழுதுபார்த்து சரிப்படுத்தி விடுவான் என்று தெரிவித்தான். அவன் அது என்ன பொருள் என்று ஒருவரிடமும் சொல்வதில்லை ; ஆனாலும் அவன் வேலையில் மிகவும் வல்லவன் என்றான். அவனை யழைத்து வரும்படி கட்டளையிட்டான் கவுண்டன். என்னமோ அவன் அழுதுவிட்டு, ஆம் ! ஆம் ! அவனுக்குப் பழுது செய்வதற்குக் கொடுக்கவேண்டிய பணம் இவர்கள் கூலியில்தான் பிடிப்பேன் என்றான். கரெக்ட்டு என்றால் கரெக்ட்டுதான். தலைமுறை தலைமுறையாய் வந்திருக்கும் அந்தக் குதிரை சரிப்படுத்தி வைத்துக்கொள்ள அவனுக்கு ஆசை. அதை அப்படியே உடைந்துபோய் கிடக்கவிட்டால், தனக்கு ஏதாவது கஷ்டம் வருமோ என்று பயம்.

வெகு சீக்கிரத்தில், போன மனிதன் கிருஷ்ணபோயனுடனும், அவன் பை யொன்றுடனும் திரும்பி வந்தான். போயன் வயதானவனாகத் தோன்றினான். சிறிது கூனடைந்து, குறுகி, கைகால்களெல்லாம் வளைந்து, நன்றாய் வளராமல், உலர்ந்துபோன மாதத்தைப்போல் காணப்பட்டான். அவன் மிடா ஒரு வார்த்தை வரவழைப்பதற்குள் ஒரு யுகார்தம் ஆய்விடும்போல் தோன்றிற்று. அவனுடைய பையை மாத்திரம் ஒருவரிடமும் கொடுக்காமல் தானே கையில் வெகு பத்திரமாய் வைத்திருந்தான். யாராவது பிடுங்கிக்கொண்டு போய்விடுவார்களென்று பயந்து எல்லாரையும் முறைத்து முறைத்துப் பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருந்தான்.

கவுண்டன் ; இந்த ஆளை தலைமுதல் கால் வரையில் பார்த்து விட்டு, எங்கே ! பார்க்கலாமா நீ வைத்திருக்கிற சமாசாரத்தை. என்ன அவைகளைக் காட்டு பார்க்கலாமென்றான்.

போயன் ; தலையை, முடியாது என்னும் பொருள்படப் பல மாய் ஆட்டிவிட்டு பையை யெடுத்து கக்கத்தில் வைத்துக்கொண்டிருந்தான்.

போயன்—எப்படி பிடிக்கிறதென்று பார். அப்புறம் மேலே சொல்லு.

கவுண்டன்—எப்படி பிடிக்கிறதென்று தான் கேட்கிறேன் என்றான்.

போயன் ; தன் பையை மெல்ல கீழே வைத்துவிட்டு, அருகாமையிலேயே. தூரத்திலல்ல. சாதாரணமாகப் பையை அவிழ்த்து, அதிலிருந்து ஒரு சிவப்புத்துணி முடிச்ச ஒன்றை யெடுத்தான். எல்லோரும் மிக ஆவலாகக் கவனித்தார்கள். அது ஏதோ பொருளைச் சுற்றி வெகு பலமாகப் பத்திரமாகக் கட்டப்பட்டிருந்தது. துணியை மெதுவாக அவிழ்க்க ஆரம்பித்தான். கடைசியில் அதிலிருந்து ஒரு சிறிய நீண்ட பெட்டியை யெடுத்தான். எல்லாரும் ஆ என்று வாயைத் திறந்தவண்ணம் பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருந்தனர். பெட்டியைத் திறந்தான். என்ன இருக்கிறதோ என்று கவுண்டனுள்பட எல்லோரும் கழுத்தை நீட்டிக்கொண்டு, பார்த்தனர். பார்த்ததும் உடைந்துபோன காது இல்லாத நிக்கல் பிரேம் மூக்குக் கண்ணாடி யொன்றை யெடுத்து, துடைத்து, ஓரத்தில் கட்டியிருக்கும் நூலை யெடுத்து, காதில் சுற்றிக்கொண்டான். உடனே பெரிய சிரிப்பு உண்டாயிற்று. கண்ணாடியை மாட்டிக்கொண்டதும் குதிரை நன்றாகச் சுற்றி முற்றிலும், உடைந்துபோன பாகத்தையும் உள்பட இது நல்லாப் போகும் என்றான். நீ வெளியே மாத்திரம் சிமிட்டு வைத்தால் போதாது. உள்ளும் வைக்கவேண்டும்.

சரி ! சரி ! உன்னிடம் வேலை செய்தாற்போலத்தான் என்று சொல்லிக்கொண்டு, கண்ணாடியைக் கழற்றிப் பெட்டியில் போட்டுப் பையை யெடுத்துக்கொண்டு கிளம்பிவிட்டான் போயன்.



கவுண்டன் இதைப் பார்த்ததும், மேலும் காரியத்தை பிழந்து, அவனுடைய கையைப் பலமாகப் பிடித்துக்கொண்டான். என்கே போகிறாய் போயனே உனக்குப் புத்தியிருக்கிறதா. இல்லையா. நீ உன் மனதில் என்ன நினைத்திருக்கிறாய். பெரிய காட்டீர் மகாராஜா என்று நினைத்துக்கொண்டிருக்கிறாயா. பிச்சைக்கார நாயே! இந்தக் குதிரு புத்தாகாலத்துக் குதிரு. நன்றாகப் பழுது பார்க்காவிட்டால், மறுபடியும் கிழிந்துவிடும். அதற்குள்ளே, என்னவென்று கேட்டால் மிகவும் ராங்கி பண்ணுகின்றாயே. உள்ளும், வெளியும், சிமிட்டு வைத்து நன்றாகப் பிடிக்க வேண்டும் தெரிந்ததா என்றான்.

போயன் கண்களை மூடிக்கொண்டு சற்று யோசித்துத் தலையை தனக்குத் தானே யசைத்தான். ஆம்! ஆம்! எல்லா மனிதர்களும் இப்படித்தான். ஒரு காரியமும் தன்னிஷ்டப்படி செய்ய விடுவதில்லை. தனக்குத் தெரியாதா என்ன செய்ய வேண்டும் எப்படிச் செய்ய வேண்டும் என்று. சிறு குழந்தையா? இங்கே இப்படிச் செய்யவேண்டும்; அங்கே அப்படிச் செய்யவேண்டும்; என்று ஆயிரம் முறை சொல்ல. ஒரு முறை தான் வாயை மூடிக்கொண்டு இருக்கட்டுமே. தான் செய்த பிறகு வேலையைப் பார்த்து, அப்புறம் பேசட்டுமே. ஏது! ஏது! உலகமே இப்படித்தான். முட்டாள்கள் நிரம்பியிருக்கிறது. குதிரு நன்றாக இல்லாவிட்டால் பிறகு சொல்லுங்கள்.

போடா! போடா! உள்ளும் சிமிட்டு பூசவேண்டும். பூச! பூச! என்ன ஆனாலும் ஆகட்டும். அதற்கு என்ன செலவு ஆகிறதோ அதை வாங்கிக்கொள். கூலியுந் தருகிறேன். வெளியே மட்டும் போட்டாலுங்கூட.....என்னடா! நீ பிடித்த முயலுக்கு மூன்று காலென்கிருயே நான் என்னடா சொல்லுகிறேன். உள்ளேயும் பூசவேண்டும். முதலில் செய். பிறகு கூலி செலவு எல்லாம் பார்த்துப் பேசிக்கொள்ளலாம். என்று சொல்லி

விட்டுச் சரேலென்று ராசிக்களத்திற்குப் போய்விட்டான். யாராவது எங்காவது திருடிவிடப் போகிறார்கள் என்ற பயத்தில் போயனுக்குப் பொல்லாத கோபம். உடனே உள்ளே இருந்த குதிரை மெதுவாக ஒவ்வொரு பாகமாகப் பிரித்து எடுத்து வெளியே வீட்டிற்கு எதிரே யிருந்த களத்தில் கொண்டுபோய் வைக்கச் சொன்னான். அந்தக் களம் சிறிது மேடான இடத்திலிருந்தது. சற்றிலும் சற்று பள்ளமாய் பாராங்கற்கள் நிறைந்திருந்தன.

குதிரை களத்தின் மத்தியில் வைத்து, ஒவ்வொரு பாகமாய் எடுத்து ஒன்றின் மேல் ஒன்றைச் சரியாய் வைக்கச் சொல்லி, உடைந்துபோயிருந்ததையும் சரியாய்ப் பொருத்தி வைத்து நன்றாகப் பார்த்துக்கொண்டான். தனது கண்ணுடியை மாட்டிக் கொண்ட பிறகுதான், அவனுக்கு இன்னும் கவுண்டன் சொன்ன பேச்சுக்கு மனதில் எரிச்சலிருந்து கொண்டிருந்தது. அவன் ராசிக் களத்திலிருந்து திரும்புவதற்குள், தன் வேலையைச் செம்மையாகச் செய்து முடித்துவிட வேண்டுமென்று ரோசம் ஒரு பக்கம். மறுபடியும் குதிரைப் பிரித்துக் கீழே வைக்கச் சொல்லி விட்டுத் தனது பைக்குளிருந்த தகரப் பெட்டியை ஜாக்கிரதையாகத் திறந்து ஒருவரும் பார்க்காமல், உள்ளே இருந்த சிமிண்டை தானாகத் தயார்செய்தது அதன் மகிமையைக் காண்பிக்கத்தான். இந்த வேலையை ஒப்புக்கொண்டான் போயன். எடுத்து ஒவ்வொரு விளிம்பிலும் தடவி ஒன்றின்மேல் ஒன்றாக வைக்கச் சொன்னான். உள்ளேயும் பூசவேண்டுமென்று கவுண்டன் சொல்லியது ஞாபகம் வரவே சடாலென்று மேல்முடியை வைக்கு முன்பு, குதிருக்குள்ளே சென்று நன்றாக விளிம்புகளிலெல்லாம் சிமிண்டைத் தடவி, எல்லாவற்றையும் நன்றாகப் பொருத்திவைக்கச் சொன்னான். வெளியேயிருந்த ஆட்கள் அவ்வாறே செய்தார்கள். இன்னும் போயனுக்கு ஆத்திரம் அடங்கவில்லை. மறு

படியும் பாகங்களெல்லாம் வைக்கப்பட்ட பிறகு, அவைகள் சேரு மிடத்திற்கு வெளியேயும் நன்றாகச் சிமிண்டைத் தடவினான். மற்றப் பாகங்கள் உடைந்துபோனாலும் சிமிண்டைத் தடவிய பாகம் விட்டுப்போகாத வண்ணம் தடவிவைத்தான்.

சிறிது நேரம் களைப்பாறிய பிறகு வெளிபேயிருக்கும் ஆட் களைப் பார்த்து, நன்றாகப் பலங்கொண்டமட்டும் அசைத்துப் பார்க்கச் சொன்னான். உடைந்து வருகிறதோ வென்று அறிய எல்லாரும் சேர்ந்து, முயற்சித்தும் அதை அசைக்க முடியவில்லை. சிறு கழியைக்கொண்டு தட்டிப்பார்க்கச் சொன்னான். புதுக் குதிர் முழுவதும் மண்ணால் பிரிவுகளின் றிச் செய்திருந்தால் எப் படிச் சப்தம் கொடுக்குமோ அப்படி வருகிறதா இல்லையா என்று பார்க்கச் சொன்னான். நல்ல வெண்கலம் போல் டிங் டிங் என்று ஒசை கேட்டது.

ஹா! ஹா! ஹா! எண்ணி யென்னவென்று விசாரித் தானே தெரியவில்லை. கவுண்டன் இதை வந்து பார்க்கட்டும். அப்புறம் மேலே பூசிக்கலாம் என்றான் போயன் வெகு ஜம்பமாக குதிருக்குள்ளிருந்துகொண்டே.

வெளியேயும் பூசவேண்டியிருந்ததால், வெளியேவர மேலே குதிரின் வாயைப் பார்த்தான். அவன் ஆசாமி குட்டையாத லால், அந்தத் துவாரத்தைக்கூட தன் கைகளை நீட்டிப் பார்த்தும் எட்டமுடியவில்லை. உடனே ஒரு ஏ னியைக் கொண்டுவரச் சொல்லி, அதன் மேலேறி வெளிவர முயற்சித்தான். முதலில் வலதுகையை விட்டுப்பார்த்தான். ஒரு வேளை துவாரம் சிறிய தாயிருக்குமோ என்று சந்தேக முண்டாயிற்று. அட்டா! முத லில் கவனிக்காமல் போய்விட்டோமே இந்த விஷயத்தை என்று இப்பொழுது யோசிக்கலானான். இருந்தாலுமென்ன? தான் சிறிய ஆசாமி தானே. அவ்வளவு பெரிய தொந்தி தொப்பை

யொன்றுமில்லையே ! தான் சுலபமாக வெளியேறி விடலாமென்று நம்பிக்கை யொருபக்கம். வெளியே யிருக்கும் ஆட்களை தன்னை உள்ளிருந்து இழுக்குமாறு சொன்னான். அவர்களும் இன்னொரு ஏணியைக் கொண்டுவந்து அதன் மேலேறி போயனை வெளியே இழுக்கப் பார்த்தார்கள். முடியவில்லை. ஊக்கியும் முடியவில்லை. கழுத்து, மார்பு, எல்லாம் வருகிறது. வயிறு வரமாட்டேன் என்கிறது. இன்னும் கொஞ்சம் வயிறு சிறுத்திருந்தாலோ அல்லது குதிரின் வாய் அகண்டிருந்தாலோ இழுத்துவிடலாம். இனி இழுத்தால் போயன் கழுத்து கையிலே பெயர்ந்து வந்து விடும்போலிருந்தது. அவன் போட்ட சப்தத்தைத் கேட்டால், உயிர் போய்விட்டதா என்று நினைக்கும் வண்ணமிருந்தது. இதைப் பார்த்து, வேடிக்கை காண கிராம ஜனங்கள் எல்லாம் வந்தார்கள். எல்லோரும் கைகொட்டிச் சிரிக்கலானார்கள். வாண்டுகள் சீட்டியடித்துக் குதித்தன. நாய்களும் கோழிகளுங்கூட ஏதோ விசேஷமிருக்கிறதென்று, அங்கு வந்து, கத்த ஆரம்பித்தன. போயன் குதிருக்குள் சிறைப்பட்டிருந்தான். குதிரை புடைத்தாலொழிய அவன் வெளியே வரமுடியாது.

இரைச்சலையும் சிரிப்பையும், கைகொட்டுதலையும், கேட்டுக் கவுண்டன் பதைக்கப் பதைக்க ராசிக்களத்திலிருந்து ஓடிவந்தான். கவுண்டன் வந்ததும் வெளியே யெடுத்துவிடுங்க ! வெளியே வரணும். சாமி சாமி புண்ணியமுண்டு. சீக்கிரம் ! சீக்கிரம் ! என்று கத்தினான். கவுண்டன் குதிருக்குள்ளிருந்து போயன் குரல் கேட்கவே, முதலில் நம்ப முடியவில்லை. என்ன ! என்ன ! உள்ளே இருந்துகிட்டு வெளியே வரமுடியவில்லையா ! ஆ ! பிறகு ஏணியின் மேலேறி உள்ளே குதிருக்குள் பார்த்து, ஏண்டா ! டே ! போயா ! மடையா ! கொசப் பயலே ! எவண்டா உள்ளே முதலிலேயே அளவு எடுக்காமல் போகச்சொன்னது. வாடா ! இங்கே, கையைக் கொடு ! முடியாது. தலையைக் காட்டு. இந்தா வந்துடுச்சு ! கொஞ்சம் ! கொஞ்சம் ! முடியவில்லை.

கழுத்து பிச்சிக்கும். நீ எப்படியாவது போ. இப்போது நமது குதிருக்கு என்ன செய்வது. ராசி வரப்போகுது. எங்கே போடுகிறது என்று விழித்தான்.

உடனே பக்கத்திலிருந்தவரிடமிருந்து ஒரு சிரிப்பு உண்டாயிற்று. கவுண்டன் அதைக் கவனிக்கவில்லை. தலையைக் கையில் பிடித்துக்கொண்டு, இரு! இரு! கொஞ்சம் இரு! இப்போ என்ன பண்ணுகிறது. எனக்கு ஒன்றும் தோன்றவில்லையே. ஆமா! வக்கீல்யரிடம் போய்வருகிறேன் எதற்கும். டே! எவண்டா! வண்டியைப் பூட்டுடா என்றான். உடனே கூட்டத்திலிருந்து வண்டியைப் பூட்டு! பூட்டு! புத்தகத்தைப் புரட்டு! புரட்டு! புரட்டு! என்று குரல்கள் கிளம்பின. எல்லோரும் விழுந்து விழுந்து சிரிக்க ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். கவுண்டனுக்கு என்ன செய்வதென்று தெரியவில்லை. குதிரின் அருகே போய், கையால் தட்டிப் பார்த்தான். டிங் டிங் என்று சத்தம் வரவே, ஆமாண்டா! நல்லா செய்திருக்கிறான் வேலையை. என்ன பண்ணுவது இப்போது இதற்கு என்றான். இதற்குள் போயன் பேய் போல் கத்தித் தன் பலங்கொண்டமட்டும் குதிரை யசைக்க ஆரம்பித்தான். குதிரை ஒரு பக்கம் சாய ஆரம்பித்தது. எங்கு விழுந்து விடுகிறதோ என்று பயந்து, அதைக் கீழே வீழாமல் சரியாய் வைத்துவிட்டு, போயா! இதோ பாரு! இந்த விஷயம் நாம் வக்கீல்யர்க் கிட்டப் போய்தான் கேட்டுக்கொண்டு வரணும். வரமட்டும் சும்மா உட்கார்ந்து கொண்டு இரு. இப்பொழுதே போய் வந்து விடுகிறேன். நம்ப வேலையை நம்ப கரெக்கட்டா பார்த்துக்கணும். ஆமா! உனக்கு எத்தனையனு கொடுக்கணும். ஒருநாளு வேலையா? இல்லையே அரை நாள் தானே. போனாப் போகுது. ஒரு நாளுக் கூலி இந்தா வாங்கிக்கோ. நம்பமேலே மிஸ்டேக் ஏதாவது வந்துவிடும் இல்லாட்டி என்று சொல்லிக் கொண்டு, பன்னிரண்டனு குதிருக்குள் வீசி யெறிந்தான். பிறகு, உனக்கு ஏதாவது சாப்பாடு வேண்டாமா? டே! யாரடா

அவன்! ஊட்டிலே போய் ஒரு உண்டை களியும், கொஞ்சம் மோரும், ஒரு மிளகாயும் கொண்டா என்றான்.

எனக்குக் காசு வேண்டாம். பணமும் வேண்டாம். சாப் பாடும் வேண்டாம். என்னை வெளியே விட்டுவிடு என்றான் போயன்.

நீ திண்ண திண்ணு, இல்லாட்டி நாய்க்குப் போடு. நம்பு னுக்குக் கவலையில்லை. நம்ப கரெக்கட்டா யிருக்கணும். எது செய்தாலும் அவ்வளவு தான் என்று சொல்லிவிட்டு, நேராகக் கோயம்புத்தூருக்கு வக்கில் வீட்டிற்கு வண்டியை ஓட்டிக் கொண்டு புறப்பட்டான்.

நல்ல வேளையா வக்கில் வீட்டிலிருந்தார். கவுண்டனைப் பார்த்ததும், அவருக்கு எரிச்சலாயிருந்தது. சமாசாரங் கேட்ட வுடன் வயிறு புண்ணாகும்படி சிரித்தார். இது கவுண்டனுக்குக் கொஞ்சங்கூடப் பிடிக்கவில்லை. என்னுங்க சாமி நம்பனைப் பார்த்தா உங்களுக்குச் சிரிப்பு வாறதா. இதிலே என்னுங்க சாமி சிரிக்கிறதுக்கு இருக்கிறது. உங்களுக்கு என்னுங்க சாமி, குதீரு உங்களு துங்கிறே. நம்புளுக்கு அது இல்லாட்டி நம்பு னுக்குத்தானே நஷ்டம்.

வக்கில் இன்னும் சிரிப்பு அடங்காமல், கவுண்டனை மறுபடியும் கதையைச் சொல்லச் சொல்லிக் கேட்டுச் சிரித்தார். ஹா! ஹா! ஹா! பேஷ் உள்ளேயே இருக்கிறான் போயன். நீ என்ன அவனை உள்ளேயே வைத்திருக்கலாமென்று, பார்க்கிறாயோடா கவுண்டா. ஹா! உன்னுடைய குதீரு பத்திரமாயிருக்கட்டும் என்று ஹா! ஹா! பேஷ் நல்ல வழி நல்ல வழி யென்று இடி இடி யென்று சிரித்தார்.

பின்பு, இல்லாட்டி குதீரு நஷ்டமாகட்டு மென்கிறீர்களா சாமி! அது முடியாதாங்க சாமி. புத்தகத்தைப் பாருங்க சாமி.



நாயம் எப்படியிருக்குதுண்ணு. அடே ! அதெல்லாமிருக்கட்டும். அந்த போயனை இன்னும் குதிருக்குள் வைத்திருக்கிறாயே. அது பெரிய குற்றமடா. அதற்கு பெயர் சட்டத்தில் என்ன தெரியுமா ? அக்கிரமமாய்ச் சிறைப்படுத்தியதற்கு சமானம். சட்டப் படி உன்னை அதற்குத் தண்டிக்க அதிகாரமுண்டு தெரியுமா என்றார்.

கவுண்டனுக்கு இப்படிச் சட்டமிருக்குமென்று, கொஞ்சங் கூட சந்தேகமேயிருக்கவில்லை. ஆகையால், தலையில் இடி விழுந்ததுபோலிருந்தது. இருந்தாலும் வெளிக்கு அதைக் காட்டாமல், செயில்லே போட்டமாதிரிங்களா ? யாருங்க அவனை உள்ளே போகச்சொல்லிச்சு. அவனு போய் சிக்கிக்கிட்டாங்க சாமி.

வக்கில் பிறகு, சட்டத்தையெல்லாம் எடுத்துச்சொல்லி, போயனும் முன் எச்சரிக்கையில்லாமல் மடத்தனமாகச் செய்த காரியத்திற்கு, ஈடுபண்ணியாகவேண்டுமென்று சொன்னார். ஆனால் குதிருக்குப் புதிதாயிருந்தபோது, கொடுக்கவேண்டிய விலையில்லை. அவனுக்கு என்ன சரியென்று தோன்றுகிறதோ ; அதுமட்டும் கொடுத்தால் போதுமென்று சொன்னார்.

குதிரின் விலை போயன் இஷ்டத்தைப்பொறுத்தது என்று சொன்னது ; சற்று கவுண்டனுக்குப் பிடிக்கவில்லை. யென்றாலும், வேறு வழியில்லாமல் ஒப்புக்கொண்டான். சாயங்காலம் வீட்டிற்குத் திரும்பியதும், குதிரைச் சுற்றி ஏராளமான ஜனங்கள் குழுமியிருப்பதையும், சிரித்துக் கை கொட்டுவதையும் பார்த்தான். குதிருக்குள்ளிருந்து, சத்தம், பேச்சு, ஒன்றுமேயில்லை.

என்னடா போயா ! எப்படியிருக்குது ; குதிருக்குள்ளே ; போயனுக்கு இதற்குள்ளிருந்த கோபமெல்லாம் தணிந்துபோய், தனது நிலைமையையும், வெளியே உள்ளவர்களின் வேடிக்கை பார்ப்பதையும், அனுபவிக்க ஆரம்பித்தான். தானும் அவர்

களுடன் சேர்ந்து தமாஷ் செய்யத் தொடங்கினான். நல்லாத்தான் இருக்குது இங்கே. என்னடா வீட்டவிடவா நல்லா இருக்குறது. காத்தோட்டமா இருக்குது. பேஷ்! அதிருக்கட்டும். இந்தக் குதிரு என்ன விலையாக இருக்குமென்று நினைக்கிறே இப்போ. இது எங்கம்மாப் புத்தாகாலந்தொட்டு நம்ம வீட்டிலேயேயிருந்திருக்கிறது. அப்போ புதிதாக வாங்கினப்போ என்னாவிலையோ. என்னுமோ. இப்போ நாலணுவுக்குமேலே ஒரு தம்படி கொடுக்கமாட்டாங்க ஒத்தரும் என்றான்.

சரி! சரி! அந்த நாலணுக் கொடுத்துப்போடு. இந்தா ஒரேயடி இந்த கல்லை வைச்சிகிட்டு ஒரு குத்து குத்தினீண்ண குதிர் பிளந்துபோகுது. பிறகு உன்னை வெளியே விட்டுடுறேன்.

என்னுச் சொன்ன என்னுச் சொன்ன எனக்கு ஒண்ணுத் தெரியவில்லையென்றான் போயன். இல்லை! ஒண்ணுமில்லை. வக்கீலய்யரு சொன்னாரு, நீ இதுக்குண்டான பணத்தைக் கொடுத்தாட்டியிண்ண இதை ஒடைச்சி உன்னியே வெளியே விட்டுடுவா மெண்ணு சொன்னாரு.

நானு கொடுக்கிறது. நல்லா சொன்னப்பா. நானிங்கேயே இருந்து சாறேனப்பா. நானு வெளியே போவேண்டாமப்பா என்று சொல்லிக்கொண்டே போயன் இடுப்பிலிருந்து ஒரு கஞ்சா பீடியையெடுத்துப் பற்றவைத்தான். குதிருக்குள்ளிருந்து, புகை குபுக்குப்பென்று வந்தது. இதைப் பார்த்ததும் அடே! அடே! குதிரு பத்திக்கிச்சிரா, பார்ரா பொகைவருது பொகைவருது பாருபாரு என்று கூக்குரல் கிளம்பிற்று. ஒருவன் ஏணியின் மேலேறிப் பார்த்து, டே, டே, போயன் பீடி குடிக்குறண்டா என்றான். உடனே சிரிப்பு. ஏதுஏது அவன் வெளியே வரமாட்டான் போலிருக்குதே. குதிருக்குள்ளேயே இருக்கப்போறும் போலிருக்குது என்றார்கள்.

கவுண்டனுக்கு என்ன செய்வதென்று தெரியவில்லை. முழித்தான். இப்படி போயன் குதிரிவிருந்து வெளியே வருவதற்கு இஷ்டப்படமாட்டானென்று, அவன் நினைக்கவில்லை. வக்கீலும் நினைக்கவில்லை. என்ன செய்வது? மறுபடியும் வண்டியைப் பூட்டச்சொல்லுவோமே என்றெண்ணி, வண்டியென்று சொல்ல வாயெடுத்தான். உடனே குறும்புக்கார பையன்கள் வண்டியைப் பூட்டுடா; புத்தகத்தைப் புரட்டுடா என்று கத்த ஆரம்பித்தார்கள்.

அப்படியா சமாச்சாரம் சரி. வெளியே வரமாட்டாயா நீ (ஜனங்களைப் பார்த்து) இதோ பாருங்க நீங்கள் எல்லாரும். நீங்க தான் சாட்சி இதுக்கு. நானு வெளியேவுடறேண்ணுக்கூட வர மாட்டேங்கிறான். என்டற சொத்திலே பூந்துகிட்டு வெளியே வரமாட்டேங்கிறான்னு கேசுப்போடப் போறேன். பூட்டுடா வண்டியை. எவண்டா அவன்! என்றான் கவுண்டன்.

பூட்டுடா வண்டி! பூட்டுடா வண்டி! என்று இரைச்சல் வழக்கம்போல் எழுந்தது.

ஆனால் அதற்குள், மிகவும் பொழுதாகிவிட்டதால், வீட்டிற்குப் போய் படுத்திருந்துவிட்டு, மறுநாள் சீக்கிரம் எழுந்து போகலாமென்று நினைத்திருந்தான். அதற்குள் போயனுடைய குறும்பைப் பார்த்துக் கோபம் வரவே, அவனை உதைக்க எண்ணி, குதிரை ஒங்கி ஒரு உதை உதைத்தான். கால்தான் சுளுக்கிக் கொண்டது. குதிர் என்னவோ அசையக்கூடவில்லை.

பார்த்தியா! பார்த்தியா! எத்தினி சோக்கா வேலைசெஞ்சிருக்கிறேண்ணு என்றான் போயன் உள்ளிருந்தபடியே.

டேய் படுவா! ராஸ்கோல்! என்னடா நெனச்சுக்கிட்டாய் நீ. இங்கேயே இருந்து, செத்துகித்து கிடக்கலாமென்று நெனச்சுகிட்டிருக்கிறாயா? ஹாம் யாரு ஜெயிக்கிராங்க பாரு கடைசியிலே

யென்று சொல்லிக்கொண்டு வீட்டிற்குள் போய்விட்டான். அவன் போனவுடன் போயன் குதிரினடியில் கிடந்த அவன் வேலைக்குக் கொடுத்த கூலி அணுவை யெடுத்து, நல்ல கள்ளாக நான்கு மொந்தை கொண்டு வரச் சொல்லி, ஒரு ஆளை அனுப்பினான். அரைநொடியில் கள் வந்துவிட்டது. நல்ல நிலாவெளிச்சம் வேறு. முத்துச் சுடர்போலிருந்தது.

போயனும் சுற்றிலிருந்த மற்றவர்களும் கள்ளைக் குடித்து விட்டு, கொம்மாளம் அடிக்க ஆரம்பித்துவிட்டார்கள். போயன் தன் பலங்கொண்டமட்டும் கள் வெறியில், 'தங்கமே தில்லாலேயும் பறிகொடுத்தமேயும்' பாட ஆரம்பித்துவிட்டான். அவன் பாட மற்றவர்கள் ஆட, அவர்கள் பாட அவன் ஆட, பிசாசுகள் போல் கூத்தாட ஆரம்பித்துவிட்டார்கள். அவர்கள் போடும் சத்தம் ஊரையே எழுப்பிவிடும் போலிருந்தது.

தடாலென்று கவுண்டன் வீட்டுக் கதவு திறக்கப்படும் சத்தம் கேட்டது. கவுண்டனுடன் இரண்டு மூன்று ஆசாமிகளும் வந்தார்கள். மதம்பிடித்த காளைமாடுகள் போல, அந்தக் குதிரைமுட்டித் தள்ளினார்கள். அது உருண்டுபோய் கீழே பள்ளத்தில் விழுந்து, அங்கிருந்த கற்பாறையின்மீது மோதி சுக்குசுக்காய் உடைந்து போயிற்று.

ஆகவே, போயன் வெகு சுலபமாக எதிர்பாராத விதத்தில், கோர்ட்டுக்குப் போகாமல் விவகாரத்தில் வெற்றிபெற்றான்.

Mr. C. R. MYLERU, M.A.

## மாலைப் பொழுது

**விருப்பு** வெறுப்பற்ற நிலையை யெய்திய உயிர்கள் பிறப் பொழிந்து பேரின்பம் எய்தும் என்பது சமயநூலுடையாரும் பிறரும் கூறும் உண்மைகளில் ஒன்று. ஆயின் அஃது உலகியலில் அவ்வாறில்லை. விருப்பு வெறுப்பறுதல் என்பது எழுத்து வழக்கில் மட்டுமே இடம்பெறுகின்றது. உலக வழக்கிலோ, ஆட்சியிலோ, செய்கையிலோ நிகழ்வதில்லை.

வானளாவி ஓங்கி எழுந்த குன்றுகள், அவற்றின் சாரலில் உயர்ந்தெழுந்த மராமாங்கள், இடையிடையே முத்துப்போன்ற வெண்ணீரருவிகள், சலனமற்றுறையும் அறிஞரின் கள்ளங்கபட மற்ற உள்ளம்போல் வெள்ளம் நிறைந்த தடாகங்கள், மயில்கள் அக வக், குயில்க ள்கூவக், கிளிகள் பாட, வண்டுகள் பண்ணெய், மான்கள் மருளத், தேன்கள் சொரிய, முல்லைகள் முறுக்கவிழக், காந்தள்கள் கண்போல் மலர, மேற்குவான் பரப்பைச் சென்னிறத் தகட்டால் போர்த்துச் செங்கதிரோன் மறைகின்றான். மாசற்ற மகளிரின் தேசுற்ற செம்முகம்போல் திங்களஞ் செல்வன் கீழ்த்திசையிற் றேன்றுகின்றான். மெல்லென்ற தென்றல் ஜில்லென்று அசைகின்றது. நறுமலரூடு தவழும் மந்தமாருதம் மணத்துடன் வீசுகின்றது. அவ்விடத்தில் ஓர் இளைஞன், “ஆகா! என்ன இன்பம், என்ன சுகம், எவ்வளவு ஆனந்தம். இம்மாலைப் பொழுதில் இங்கு உண்டாகும் மகிழ்ச்சிக்கு ஒரு அளவும் உண்டா? மக்கட் பிறப்பின் மாண்புதான் என்னே! நல்லதன் நலனும், அல்லதன் தீதும் அறிந்துணரும் உணர்ச்சிபெற்றோர் மகிழ்தற்குரிய இட மன்றோ இது!” என்றெண்ணுகின்றான்.

ஆண்டுத் தடாகங்களில் அடர்ந்த மலர்களினுடே அன்னங்கள் கூடித் குலாவி ஊடித் திகழ்ந்து மலிந்தன. மென்மொழிக்

கிளிகள் சின்மொழி பயிற்றித் தத்தம் குடம்பைகளில் ஆணும் பெடையும் அளவளாவின. இவற்றைக் கண்ணுற்ற இளைஞன், 'இவ்வலர்ந்த மலரே அவள் முகமாயும், இவ்வலரி தழிற் படிந்த தேனே அவள் வாழ்றமுதமாயும் இத்தேனையுண்ணும் இவ் ஆண்ணன்னமே யானுமாய் அமைவுற்று இன்பநுகரின் என் மகிழ்ச்சி எத்தகைய தொன்றாயிருக்கும்!' என்று தன் காளைப் பருவத்திற்கேற்ற கருத்துறப் பெற்றானாய்க் கற்பனா வலகிற் கனாக் காண்கின்றான்.

அதே இடத்தை ஒரு துறவி யடைகின்றான். நிலம், நீர், தீ, வளி, விசும்பென்ற அளக்கலாகப் பொருள்களையும் அவற்றா லாகித் தோன்றும் அவ்வியற்கையின் எழிலையும் கண்ணுற்ற அவன் தன்னை மறந்து தனிப்பெரும் பொருளான இறைவனின் ஒப்பற்ற கருணையையும், அவனின் பேராற்றலையும் நினைந்து நைந்துருகிப் பரவசனாய், நிற்சிந்தையனாய் வாழ்த்திப் போற்றி வணங்கித் தொழுகின்றான்.

இன்னும் ஆண்டு ஒரு மருத்துவன் வருகின்றான். "ஓ! இந்த மாத்தில் இன்ன சத்து இருக்கின்றது; இந்தச் செடியில் உடல்வளர்ச்சிக்குரிய அம்சம் காணப்படுகின்றது; அந்தக் கொடியில் அஜீரணத்தைப் போக்கும் குணம் அமைந்துள்ளது; இம் மலரை மணந்தால் ஜலதோஷம் உண்டாகும்; இத்தழையை உண்டால் மேனி மிளிரும்; இவ்விலையைப் பிழிந்து தலையிற்றேய்த் தால் தலைவலி நீங்கும் என்று இங்ஙனமே தன் மருத்துவ அறிவோடும், அனுபவத்தோடும் சிந்திக்கின்றான். இவ்வாறே ஒரு தாவரநூல் ஆராய்ச்சியாளனோ அன்றிப் பௌதிக சாஸ்திர வல்லுனனோ ஆண்டுவரின் அவரவர் மனநிலைக்கும் அறிவுத்துறைக்கும் ஏற்றவாறு சிந்திப்பார்கள்.

ஆனால், ஓர் சுயேச்சை உணர்ச்சியும் தனக்கென வாழாத் தகைமையுங்கொண்ட இளைஞன் இவ்வினிய இயற்கையின் எழிலை



நோக்குவானாயின் மேற்கூறப்பட்டோரின் மனங்களிற் றேன்றிய எண்ணங்கள் அவன் உள்ளத்தில் எழமாட்டா. ஓ! இவ்விடம் மக்கள் மகிழ்தற்குரிய மாண்புடன் திகழ்கின்றது. இத்தகைய இயற்கைநலனையும் பிறவற்றையும் உலகிற் பிறந்த ஒவ்வொரு மனிதனும் தனித்தனியே அனுபவிக்கக் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கின்றான். இவ்வியற்கை உடைமைகள் யாவும் பொதுவானவையே. இவற்றை யாவரும் துகர்ந்து இன்புற்று மகிழவேண்டியதே இவற்றைப் படைத்த ஆண்டவனின் சித்தமுமாகும்.

ஆனால், இவ்வின்பங்கள் யாவற்றையும் சரிசமனாய் உலகிற் பிறந்த மக்களனைவரும் அனுபவிக்க வொட்டாது ஒரு தேசத்து மக்கள் இன்னொரு தேசத்து மக்களைத் தடுக்கின்றனர். ஒரு சமூகம் இன்னொரு சமூகத்தை அழுத்துகின்றது. ஒரு சாதி மற்றொரு சாதியைச் சாடுகின்றது. உண்மையில் இச்செய்கை நீதியற்றது. இது வெறுக்கத்தக்கது. பொறுக்கத்தகாதது. ஒறுக்கற்பாலது என்ற உணர்ச்சிகளே அவன் உள்ளத்திற் கிளர்ந் தெழுந்து பிடர்பிடித்துந்துகின்றன. மனித சமூகத்திலுள்ள முட்டுக்கட்டைகளைத் தகர்த்தெறிந்து மாண்புற்று வாழ்வதே மனிதனின் கடமை. மனிதனால் ஆக்கமுடியாத எவையும் இல்லை, அழிக்கமுடியாத எதுவும் இல்லையென்பதை அறுதியாய் உணர்கின்றான். பகுத்தறிவு படைத்தவொரு மனிதன் இன்னொரு மனிதனால் அடிமைபோல் நடத்தப்படுவதை வெறுக்கின்றான். விலங்கினங்களினும் இழிந்த நிலையில் மக்கள் தாழ்த்தப்பட்டும் நசுக்கப்பட்டும் இருப்பதை உணர்ந்து, இது என்ன கொடுமை என்ன அநீதியெனக் கிணக்கின்றான்.

ஒரு பெருஞ் செல்வர் மகாப்பிரபு, அவர் வீட்டு நாய்க்குக் கிடைக்கக்கூடிய பால், பழம், ரொட்டி ஒரு பகுத்தறிவு படைத்த மனிதனுக்குக் கிடையாமல் அவன் குடலோடு குடல் ஒட்டிக் குழிந்த வயிற்றுடன் சோர்ந்து மடிகின்றான். இது ஏன் இப்படி.

நிகழ்கின்றது? இது யாருடைய தவறு, ஒரு நாய்க்குக் கிடைக்கக் கூடிய உணவுதானாம் தனக்குக் கிடைக்கவில்லையே என்றெண்ணி அங்கலாய்க்கும் மனிதன் அப்பிரபு வீட்டில் நாயாகவாகுதல் பிறந்திருக்கப்படாதா என்ற பேய் எண்ணத்தைக்கூட எண்ணக் கூடிய நிலையில் இருக்கின்றது இன்று நமது நாடு. அண்ணாநேந்தி விரித்த இரு கரங்களுடன் காலணுவை இரந்து நிற்குமோர் ஏழையின் முகம் அதைப் பெற்றதும் மலர்ந்து திருப்பியடையும் கோரக் காட்சியை என்னென்று சொல்வது! மனிதனின் ஒப்பற்ற வீரம், ஆண்மை, அறிவு, கோபம் யாவும் ஒடுங்கிச் செத்த பாம்பைப்போல ஆக்கிவிடுகின்றது யாவற்றினும் கொடிய அவ்வறுமை. உடுக்க உடையின்றி உண்ண உணவின்றிப் படுக்கப் பாயின்றி இருக்க இல்லமின்றித் தெருத் தெருவாய் நாய்களையும் பேய்களையும்போல் அலைந்துலைந்து வாடிச் சோர்கின்றார் ஏழை மக்கள்.

சுயநலத் தடிப்போடுகூடிய வொருசிலரும் அன்புங் கருணையு மற்ற வேறு சிலருமே உலகில் சுகமாய் வாழ்கின்றார்கள். ஏழை மக்களின் வாயிலிருந்தே அன்பு மொழிகளும், அருள் வசனங் களும் காணப்படுகின்றன. அவர்களிடமே தயை உண்டு; பொறுமையுண்டு; பண்புண்டு. அதிகார தோரணையும், ஆங்கார மும், ஆணவமும் தாண்டவமாடுந் தடிச் செல்வரிடத்தில் அன்பை யாவது கருணையையாவது எதிர்பார்க்க முடியுமா? ஆறு நாளாய் அரை வயிற்றை நிரப்ப அன்னக் கஞ்சியின்றி அலைந்து திரிந்து துடிக்கிறார் சில ஏழைமக்கள் அடுத்த வீட்டில். ஆனால் கீழ்ப்புற வீட்டில் மேற்புற மாடியில் கேளிக்கையுங் கூத்தாங் குடியுங் சூதும் நடனமும் நாள்தோறும் நிகழ்கின்றன.

நெற்றி வேர்வை நிலத்திற் சிந்த நித்தம் காலையிலிருந்து மாலைவரை ஐந்தணுவுக்காக அடிவயிறு நோக உழைத்துழைத்து உடலினைத்து மடிக்கின்ற ஏழைகளின் நிலைதானென்ன; துடித்து

வாட்டும் பசிப்பிணியை ஆற்ற வழியறியாமல் மெலிந்து சோரும் பெண்மணிகள் வயிற்றுப் பிழைப்பை உன்னித் தங்கள் நலனைப் பிறருக்கு விற்கவுஞ் செய்கிறார்கள். அவர்களில் என்ன தவறு. இவ்வந்திகளையும், அக்கிரமங்களைபுங் கண்ணுற் கண்டும் இரங்காத சமூகத்தையும் நாட்டையும் அன்றோ குறைகூறவேண்டும். நாட்டு மக்களையும் அவர்கள் வாழ்க்கையையும் பாதிக்கும் கொள்கைகளையும், கொள்கைகளையுடையவர்களையும் நோக்கி எழுந்த வாள்கள் இரத்தங்களுடன் தோய்ந்து மக்கள் மத்தியில் இன்பத்தை நிலை நாட்டின சரித்திரங்களை நினைவுகூர்வது தன்போன்ற இளைஞனின் கடமையென்றுணரவே அவன்தான் ஓர் நெப்போலியனாக ஏன் இன்னும் வரவில்லை என்று துடிக்கின்றான். நமது நாட்டிலே எத்தனையோ நெப்போலியர்கள் இருக்கிறார்கள். ஆனால், அவர்கள் உறக்கத்தை விட்டெழுந்து தங்கள் வீரமுழக்கத்தையும் ஆண்மையையும் காட்ட இன்னும் முன்வந்திலர். சமூக முன்னேற்றத்திற்கும் தேச நன்மைக்கும் தங்கள் உடல் பொருள் ஆவியாவற்றையும் துறந்த அஞ்சா நெஞ்சம் படைத்த ஆண் சிங்கங்கள் அண்மையிலு் மிருந்திருக்கிறார்கள். சேய்மையிலுமிருந்திருக்கிறார்கள். ஒப்பற்ற வீரர்களையும் இணையற்ற ஞானிகளையும் கணக்கற்ற தியாகிகளையும் ஈன்று தாலாட்டிப் பாராட்டி வளர்த்தாள் நமது அன்னை.

“பெற்றதாயும் பிறந்த பொன்னாடும்

நற்றவானினும் நனிசிறந்தனவே”

என்ற இவ்வினிய கூற்றுக்களையும் புறக்கணித்து அடிமைத் தனையிற் கட்டுண்டு பட்ட மோகங்களிலும் பதவி வேட்கைகளிலும் பிணிப்புண்ட தன்னலப் பேய்களாகிக் குலத்துக் கிளைஞ்செயுங்கோடரிக் காம்பு போன்றவர்கள் இனிமேலாவது தலையெடுக்காமல் மூலைகளில் ஒதுக்கப்பட்டும். - மானமிழந்த சீர்கெட்ட அடிமை வாழ்க்கை அறவே ஒழியட்டும். அச்சமும் பேடிமை

யும் அடிமைச் சிறு மதியுங்கொண்டு அசடர்களாய் வாழ்தலினும் சாதல் நன்று.

வீரத்தைப்பற்றியோ அன்றி மானத்தைப்பற்றியோ ஏனைத் தேசங்கள் அறிவதன் முன்னரும் ஏனை மொழிகள் அறிவதன் முன்னரும் நமது நாடும் நமது மொழியுமே அறிந்ததென்று கூறின் அது மிகையாகாதென்றே கருதுகின்றேன். அதற்குச் சான்று நம் பழம்பெரும் இலக்கியங்களே பகரும். புறப்புண் பட்ட மைக்கு நாணி உண்ணுமை மேற்கொண்டு இறந்தானும் ஒரு மன்னன் என்ற உண்மையை வேறு எந்த நாட்டு இலக்கியத்திலாவது காணமுடியுமா என்று கேட்கின்றேன்.

இளைஞர்களே! உங்கள் கடமையை இனிமேலாவது உணருங்கள். தன்னுணர்ச்சியும் வீரமும் தனித்துத் தழைத்தோங்கி வளரட்டும். ஏழை மக்களின் கண்ணீர் இனிமேலாயினும் நிலத்தில் வீழ்ந்து மண்ணோடு மண்ணாய் மாய்ந்து கழியாமற் செய்யுங்கள். எல்லாவுயிர்க்கும் இன்பமென்பது பொது தனக்கென வாழாப் பிறர்க்குரியாளர் உண்மையால் இவ்வுலகம் உண்டு என்ற உயர்ந்த கருத்துக்கள் ஒவ்வொருவர் வாழ்க்கையிலும் இடம் பெறட்டும். பாரந்த நோக்கங்களும் விரிந்த எண்ணங்களும் யாண்டும் யாவர் மாட்டும் நிலைபெறட்டும். நிலைபெற்றால் நாடு தழையும், மக்கள் மகிழ்வர். இன்பம் மலியும் துன்பம் நலியும். அப்பொழுது வாழ்க்கைச் சிகரம் வானளாவிச் செழித்தோங்கும், என்றெண்ணிய இளைஞனின் கருத்துக்கள் ஈடேறுவதாக அவனின் தன்னலமற்ற தூய எண்ணங்கள் தரணி முழுமையும் நிலவுவதாக மலைப்பொழுதில் மனங்கிளர்ந்தெழுந்த அம்மாண்புறு வீரனின் மாசற்ற எண்ணங்களை நாமனைவரும் கடைப்பிடிப்போமாக. அவ்வீர இளைஞனை வாழ்த்துக.

தா. தங்கராசன்,

அண்ணாமலை நகர்

## கிருஷ்ண விக்ரகம்

... ..இந்தப் பாடும் உலகில் யார்தான் உயிர்நரிக்க விரும்புவார்கள்?  
வாழ்க்கை மிகவும் துக்ககரமானது. ஆசையோ, காதலோ, பாசமோ  
வைத்து என்ன பயன், எல்லாம் அவலமே!.....

**குளிர்** காற்று சில்லென்று வீசிக்கொண்டிருந்தது. களங்கமற்ற  
ஆகாயத்தில் பிறைச் சந்திரன் தன் முழுப் பிரகாசத்துடன்  
விளங்கினான். நட்சத்திரங்களும் ஆங்காங்கே காணப்பட்டன. பறவை  
கள் தத்தம் கூடுகளிலே உறங்கின. நர்மதா நதியும் சலசலவென ஓடிக்  
கொண்டிருந்தது. எங்கும் ரிசப்தமே குடிகொண்டிருந்தது என்று  
கூறிவிடலாம்; ஆயினும் தெரு நாய்களின் குரைப் பொலிகள் நடுவே  
ரிசப்தத்தைக் கலைத்தன.

ஊரிலுள்ள எல்லா மக்களும் உறங்கிவிட்டார்கள் என்று சொல்லி  
விடலாம்; ஆயினும் நர்மதா நதிக்கரையில் உள்ள ஒரு சிறு வீட்டில் மட்  
டும் விளக்கொளி காணப்பட்டது. ஆம்! அது ஒரு சிற்பியின் வீடுதான்.  
ஆம்! சிற்பி முகுந்தனுடைய வீடுதான். முகுந்தன் இன்னும் உறங்  
காமல் விழித்திருக்கக் காரணம் என்ன?

அவன் முன் சற்றேறக்குறைய முற்றுப்பெறும் தறுவாயில் உள்ள  
ஒரு கிருஷ்ண விக்ரகம் நின்றுகொண்டிருந்தது. முகுந்தன் அவ்விக்ர  
கத்தின் பல பாகங்களைச் சீர்திருத்திக்கொண்டிருந்தான். விக்ரகம்  
மிகவும் வனப்போடு திகழ்ந்தது. விக்ரகத்தின் வனப்புச் சிற்பியின்  
ஆற்றலை நன்கு புலப்படுத்தியது. முகுந்தனின் முகமோ சோபையற்றுக்  
காணப்பட்டது. அவன் மனத்தின் சஞ்சலத்தை அவன் குழிவிழுந்த  
கண்களே காட்டின. இடையிடையே முகத்தில் உற்சாகமும் காணப்  
பட்டது. நோயினால் வருந்தும் அவன் மனைவி சாந்தாவின் பெருமூச்  
சொலிகள் அவன் காதுகளில் விழாமலில்லை. அவ்வொலிகள் அவன்  
மனத்தில் பெரிய குழப்பத்தை விளைவித்தன. மேலும் பசியினால்  
வருந்தி அயர்ந்து உறங்கும் தன் ஆறு வயது மகன் மோஹனின் எண்ண  
மும் அவன் மனத்தை வாட்டியது.

ஆம்! வறுமையின் கொடுமைதான். முகுந்தன் கைதேர்ந்த சிற்பியா யிருந்தபோதிலும்; அவன் செய்த விக்ரகங்களை விலை கொடுத்து வாங்குவோர் அவ்வூரிலில்லை. சிற்பக்கலையின் துண்மையை ஆராய்ந்து ஆதரிப்போர் அவ்வூரிலில்லைபோலும். ஆகவே அவன் குடும்பம் வறுமை நிலை எய்தியதில் வியப்பொன்றுமில்லை. நோய் வாய்ப்பட்டு மரணப் படுக்கையில் இருக்கும் அவன் காதல் மனைவி சாந்தாவைச் சிகிச்சை செய்யக் கையில் பணமில்லை. சாப்பாட்டுக்குக்கூடப் பணமில்லாத அந்நிலையில், முகுந்தன்; தன் கைத்திறமனைத்தையும் உபயோகித்து ஒரு மிக அழகிய கிருஷ்ண விக்ரகம் ஒன்றைச் செய்து விற்றுத் தன் குடும்ப வறுமையை நீக்க முடிவுசெய்துகொண்டதில் ஆச்சரியமொன்று மில்லை. காலேக்குள் முடித்துவிடவேண்டும் என்ற ஊக்கத்துடன், மேற்கூறிய இரவில் முகுந்தன் அவ்விக்ரகத்தின் எஞ்சிய பாகங்களைச் செய்துகொண்டிருந்தான். அவ்விக்ரகமே அவன் எதிர்கால வாழ்க்கைக்கு அடிப்படை. மறுநாட் காலையில் தன் கஷ்டங்களெல்லாம் தீரப் போவதை எண்ணி, எண்ணி, அவன் மனம் மிகவும் பூரிப்படைந்தது. விக்ரகமும் முற்றுப்பெறும் நிலையை எய்தியது. இன்னும் விக்ரகத்தின் காதுகள்தான் முற்றுப்பெறவில்லை. அவன் மனக்கோட்டைகள் இடிந்து பொடியாகுமாறு, அவன் விக்ரகத்தின் காதுகளைச் சீர்திருத்திக்கொண்டிருந்தபொழுது, அஜாக்கிரதையினால் உளி சிறிது ஆழமாகப்பதியவே, விக்ரகத்தின் ஒரு காது துண்டாகச் சிதறி விழுந்தது.

முகுந்தனின் மனம் குமுறியது. மனத்தில் கடல் அலைகள்போல் எண்ணங்கள் எழுந்தன. அவன் வாழ்க்கையின் வெற்றிக்குக் கடைசி முயற்சியும் பாழ்பட்டது. அவன் மனம் உலகத்தையே வெறுத்தது. பித்துப்பிடித்தவன் போன்ற உணர்ச்சியை அவன் அடைந்தான். அடுத்த வினாடி; கோபம்! குரோதம்! அவன் கைகளால் முயன்று சிருஷ்டிக்கப்பட்ட அக்கிருஷ்ண விக்ரகம் அவன் கைகளினாலேயே தூள் தூளாகப்பட்டது.

அவன் இருதயத் துடிப்புகள் அதிகரித்தன. முகம் சிவந்தது.

மறுபடியும் சாந்தம். யோசனைகள் பல மனத்தில் எழுந்தன. மின்னலைப்போல் ஒரு யோசனை! ஆம்! நல்ல யோசனைதான். சீ! இதைன்ன



கேவலமான யோசனை, என்று அடுத்த எண்ணம். மனத்தில் பெரிய போராட்டம். கோடிச் சணக்கான எண்ணங்கள் தோன்றி மறைந்தன. ஆம்! முடிவான யோசனை அதுதான். பாவமாயினும் பாதகமில்லை.

இரவு முதிர்ந்துகொண்டே வந்தது. நடு ரிசி. ரிலவொளி எங்கும் பரவியிருந்தது. ரஸ்தாக்களின் ஓரங்களில் உள்ள மரங்களில் இருந்த ஆந்தைகள் பயங்கரமாக அலறின. சாலையிலுள்ள நெடிய மரங்கள் அந்தப் பேரிருளில் பெரிய தூண்களென விளங்கின. மரங்களின் நிழலினால் ரஸ்தா மங்கலாகத் தென்பட்டது. அந்த ரஸ்தாவின் வழியாக ஓர் மனித உருவம் முன்னும் பின்னுமாகப் பார்த்துக்கொண்டே மித, விரைவாக நடந்து சென்றுகொண்டிருந்தது. காலடிச் சப்தங்களைக் கேட்ட தெரு நாய்கள் குரைக்க ஆரம்பித்தன.

அவ்வுருவம் நேரே ஒரு பெரிய மாடி வீட்டை நோக்கிச் சென்றது. ஆம்! ஜமீந்தாரின் வீடுதான்; அது. கொல்லைப்புற வழியாக அவ்வுருவம் சந்தடியின்றி வீட்டினுள் சென்றது. அதோ பணப் பெட்டி! மறு நிமிஷம் அவ்வுருவம், கத்தை கத்தையாக ரூபாய் நோட்டுகளைக் கைப் பற்றியிருக்கும்; ஆனால் மனத்தில் மின்சாரம் போன்ற ஒரு புத்துணர்ச்சி.

“சீ! இதென்ன மானங்கெட்ட பிளைப்பு, இதைவிட உயிரைத் துறக்கலாமே.”

முகுந்தனின் உடல் நடுங்கிற்று. உடல் வியர்த்தது. இருதயம் வெடித்துவிடும்போல் துடித்தது. சந்தடியின்றி முகுந்தன் வந்த வழியே திரும்பினான். வழி முழுவதும் மனத்தில் எல்லையற்ற போராட்டம்.

முகுந்தன் தன் வீட்டினுள் புகுந்தான். மனம் நிம்மதியடைய வில்லை. நெஞ்சம் ஊசலாடியது. கடைசியாக ஒரு முடிவு. ஆம்! இயற்கைக்கு விரோதமான, மிகவும் பாபமான முடிவுதான். முகுந்தனின் மனம் சற்று நிம்மதியடைந்தது.

பின் முகுந்தன் மெல்லத் தன் அறையைவிட்டு வெளியில்வந்து தன் மனைவியின் படுக்கையை நோக்கிச் சென்றான். அவன் மனைவி நல்ல நித்திரையிலிருந்தபோதிலும், நோயின் கொடுமையால் அவள்

உதடுகள், அவளை அறியாமலேயே முனக்கிக்கொண்டிருந்தன. ஒரு சமயம் அந்தச் சரீரம் வனப்பு மிகுந்து இருந்து இருக்கவேண்டும். அவளுடைய பழைய அழகை இப்போது காண்பது அரிது. அந்த ஸ்திரீ உடுத்தியிருக்கும் ஆடை கந்தலாகி மலினமடைந்திருந்தது. தலை மயிர் சிக்குப்பட்டு விளங்கிற்று. கண்கள் குழி விழுந்து மூடியபடியே இருந்தன. கூர்ந்து கவனித்தால் மூச்சு விடுவது மெதுவாகத் தெரியும்.

சந்திர வொளி அவள் முகத்தில் பட்டுப் பிரதிபலித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தது. முகுந்தனின் மனத்தில் துக்கம் வீறிட்டு எழுந்தது. கண்களில் கண்ணீர் ததும்பக் கடைசி முறையாக அவளைத் தழுவி முத்தமிட்டு விட்டு அவ்விடத்தைவிட்டு அகன்று தன் பால்ய மகன் மோஹனின் படுக்கையிடம் சென்றான். கவலையற்று மோஹன் நிம்மதியுடன் உறங்கிக்கொண்டிருந்தான். மோஹனின் முகம் நிஷ்களங்கமாகத் திகழ்ந்தது. முகுந்தன் மோஹனையும் கடைசி முறையாகத் தழுவி முத்தமிட்டு விட்டுத் தன் அறையை நோக்கிச் சென்றான்.

இந்தப் பாழும் உலகில் யார்தான் உயிர்தரிக்க விரும்புவார்கள்? வாழ்க்கை மிகவும் துக்ககரமானது. ஆசையோ, காதலோ, பாசமோ வைத்து என்ன பயன். எல்லாம் அவலமே!

இரவின் பிற்பொழுது. முகுந்தனின் கண்களில் கண்ணீரைத் தவிர வேறொன்றுமில்லை. “கடவுளே, இதுதானா என் கதி?” என்று கடவுளைக் கேட்கிறான். அருகிலிருந்த தீபத்தின் ஜோதி அவன் கண் முன்பு சுடர்விட்டுப் பிரகாசித்தது.

“ஆனால் என் துக்கத்துக்கு ஒரு முடிவுண்டோ?” .....மாணம்தான் அதற்கு முடிவு.

முகுந்தனின் கடைசித் தெய்வப் பிரார்த்தனை. “எனக்கு இந்தப் பிரபஞ்சக் கடன் தீர்ந்துவிட்டது. யான் செய்யும் காரியம் பாபமாயினும் என்னை மன்னித்து விடு. அனாதைகளான என் மனைவியையும், மகனையும் நின்மாட்டு ஒப்படைத்துச் செல்லுகிறேன். நீயே அவர்களுக்குக் கதி. இன்று, கருணையில்லாத இந்த ஹிந்து சமூகத்துக்குப் பலியாகின்றேன்; இனியேனும் இந்த ஹிந்து சமூகம் கலைகளையும், கவிதை

களையும் ஆதரிக்கட்டும். என் பவித்ர ஆத்மா திருப்தியடைய அருள் புரிவாயாக!”

மறு வினாடி, “ஐயோ” என்று ஒரு அலறல். முகுந்தனின் இரு தயத்தில் ஒரு கட்டாறி பாய்ந்து நின்றது.

அந்தோ! தற்கொலை!!

முகுந்தனின் உடல் இரத்த வெள்ளத்தில் மிதந்தது.

நதியில் ஜலம் நிறைந்து ஸ்படிகம்போல் ஒடிக்கொண்டிருந்தது. மரஞ் செடிகள் பொலிந்து விளங்கின. புஷ்பங்கள் மலர்ந்து நாற்புற மும் நறுமணத்தை அள்ளி வீசின. பசுக்களை ஒட்டிக்கொண்டு இடையர்கள் தும்புக் கயிறுகளைச் சுற்றிச் சுற்றி வீசிக்கொண்டும், உல்லாசமாகப் பாடிக்கொண்டும் சென்றார்கள். கூடை கூடையாகக் காய் கறிகளைச் சுமந்த ஸ்திரீகள் பலர் மார்க்கெட்டை நோக்கி விரைந்து சென்றனர். விடியமுன் எழுந்து பசுளிகள்கூடச் சுறு சுறுப்பாக அங்கும் இங்கும் பறந்து இரை தேடச் சென்றுகொண்டிருந்தன. கதிரவன் மெல்ல, மெல்ல மேலெழும்பிக்கொண்டே, பொன்னிறமான தனது கிரணங்களை நாற்புறமும் பரப்பினான்.

முகுந்தனின் வீட்டில் ஒரே கும்பல். ஜனங்கள் முகுந்தனின் அனியாய மரணத்தைப் பற்றித் துக்கித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தார்கள். மோஹன் தேற்றுவார் யாருமின்றித் தாயின் தலையண்டை உட்கார்ந்து கொண்டு தேம்பிக்கொண்டிருந்தான். முகுந்தனின் மரணத்துக்குப் பின் அவன் மனைவியின் உயிரும் இவ்வுலகத்தில் பல நாள் தங்கவில்லை. அன்று மாலையே சாந்தாவின் நோய் அதிகரித்தது. சில மணி நேரங்களுக்குள், அவளது உயிரும் முகுந்தனைப் பின்தொடர்ந்தது.

முகுந்தனின் வீட்டில் ஒரே கூட்டம். ஒவ்வொருவரும் பலவாறுப் பேசிக்கொண்டார்கள். அவ்விளந் தம்பதிகளின் அகால மரணம் பொது மக்களின் உள்ளங்களைத் துக்கத்தில் ஆழ்த்தியது. நோட்டுகளும், வெள்ளி நாணயங்களும், தாய் தந்தையர்களை இழந்து, அநாதையாக நிற்கும் மோஹனின் பாதத்தடியில் குவிந்தன. மோஹனே அவற்றை லட்சியம் செய்யாமல் காலால் உதைத்துத் தள்ளிவிட்டு, தன் மாதாவின் மடியில் விழுந்து பயங்கரமாகக் கதறினான்.

## கிரத்தனாரும் அவர் பாட்டுகளும்

**அமிழ்தினும்** இனிய தமிழ்ப் பெருங்கடலாகிய சங்க நூல்களோடு சேர்ந்த வெள்ளமாகிய எட்டுத் தொகை நூல்கள் பெருகுவதற்கு மழைத்துளிகளாகிய பாட்டுக்களைப் பொழிந்த மேகங்களாகிய பல புலவர்களில் கிரத்தனார் என்பவரும் ஒருவர். இவர் குடவாயிற் கிரத்தனார் எனவும் அழைக்கப்படுகிறார். இவரது தாய் தந்தையர் இன்னாரென்று இதுகாறும் தெரியவில்லை. இவரது பாடல்களினின்று இவரது மதம் இன்ன தென்பதையும் அறியக்கூடவில்லை.

இப்புலவரது பெயராலும், இவரியற்றிய அகநானூற்றுப் பாடலில் வந்துள்ள,

“பழம்பல் நெல்லின் பல்சுடிப் பரவைப்  
பொங்கடி படிகய மண்டிய பசுமிளைத்  
தண்குடவாயில்”

என்ற அடிகளாலும் இவரது ஊர் சோழ நாட்டிலுள்ள குடவாயில் எனத் தெரிகின்றது. குடவாயில் என்பது இப்போது தஞ்சாவூர் ஜில்லாவிலுள்ள சும்பகோணம் என்று பலர் கூறுகின்றனர். இவ்வூர், தேவாரம்பெற்ற தலமாகவும், சோழர் தலைநகராகவும் இருந்ததெனத் தெரிகின்றது.

இப்புலவர் பாடிய பாட்டுக்கள் அகநானூற்றில் பதினென்றும், நற்றிணையில் நான்கும், குறுந்தொகையில் மூன்றும், புறநானூற்றில் ஒன்றுமாகப் பத்தொன்பது என்று தெரிகின்றது. இவரது பாட்டுக்களின் உதவிபால் நாம் பல வரலாற்றுத்துறை ஆராய்ச்சிகள் செய்ய இயலும்.

இவரியற்றிய பாட்டுக்கள் இவர் காலத்திலிருந்த பல அரசர் களைப்பற்றியும், குறுநில மன்னர்களைப்பற்றியும் கூறுகின்றன. இவர் காலத்தில் தொண்டி. என்னும் நகரில் சேரன் பொறையன் அரசாண்டான் என்பதை அகநாநூற்று அறுபதாம் பாட்டின்,

“ திண்டேர்ப் பொறையன் தொண்டி யன்ன ”

என்ற அடியில் கிரத்தனாரே கூறியுள்ளார். நன்னன், ஏற்றை, அத்தி, கங்கன், கட்டி, புன்றுறை என்பவர்கள் ஒன்று சேர்ந்து கட்டுர் என்னுமிடத்தில் பெரும் பூட்சென்னி என்ற சோழனை எதிர்த்தார்கள் என்றும், அப்போது அவர்களது படைவீரர்களைக் கொன்று அவரதுடலங்களைப் பருந்துகளுண்ணும்படி செய்தோன் பெரும் பூட்சென்னியின் படைத்தலைவனாகிய பழையன் என்றும், அப்பழையன், கணையன் என்பவனால் கொல்லப்பட்டதை அறிந்து அதனைப் பொறுது, அக்கணையனையும் அவனது தலைநகராகிய கழுமலமென்னும் ஊரினையும் சோழன் கைப்பற்றினான் என்றும் அகநானூற்று 44-ம் செய்யுளில் கூறியுள்ளார். இதே பாடலால் பெரும்பூட்சென்னியின் தலைநகர் அழும்பில் எனத் தெரிகின்றது. சோழரது திரவியசாலை (Treasury) குடவாயிலின்கண் இருந்த தென்பதை “கோற்றச் சோழர் குடந்தை வைத்த” என்ற அடியில் புலவர் குறிப்பிடுகிறார். திரவியசாலை, மிக்க போர்வீரரால் காக்கப்பட்டிருந்ததெனவும், காவல் அதிகமாக இருந்த இடமாகிய குடவாயிற் கோட்டத்தில் சேரன் கணைக்காலிரும்பொறையைச் சோழன் செங்கணன் சிறையிட்டானென்றும் களவழி நற்பதிலும், புறநானூற்றிலும் கூறப்படுகின்றது.

இவர் காலத்திருந்த திதியன் என்பவனும், அன்னி என்பவனும் போர் செய்பத் தொடங்குகையில் வைப்பூரிலிருந்த எவ்வி என்பவன் சந்து செய்வித்தான் என்ற செய்தியை அகம் 366-ம் பாட்டில் சிறப்பித்துக் கூறியுள்ளார். திருக்கோவலூரில் காரி என்ற குறுநில மன்னன் அரசாண்டான் என்ற செய்தி, இவர்

பாடிய (அகம் 35-ம்) பாட்டின், “துஞ்சா முழவிற் கோவல் கோமான் நெடுந்தேர்க்காரி” என்ற அடிகளால் தெரிகின்றது. இக்காரிக்குச் சொந்தமான முள்ளூர் என்ற வேறொரு பெருநகர் இருந்ததென்றும், இவன் கடையெழுவள்ளல்களில் ஒருவனாகிய ஓரி என்பவனைப் போரில் கொன்றான் என்றும்,

“முள்ளூர் மன்னன் கழல்தோடிக்காரி  
செல்லா நல்லிசை நிறுத்த வல்லில்  
ஓரிக்கோன்று”

என்ற அடிகளால் புலப்படுகின்றது. நன்னன் என்ற குறுநில மன்னனைக் குறித்தும், கானமர் செல்வி அவனது எழில் மலைக்குக் காப்புத் தெய்வமாயிருந்து அருள் சுரப்பதால் மிக்க மழை பொழிவதையும், அதனால் அம்மலையில் அருவி பாய்வதையும்

“கானமர் செல்வி அருளலின் வேண்கால்  
பல்படைப் புரவி எய்திய தோல்லிசை  
நுணங்குநுண் பணுவற் புலவன் பாடிய  
இன மழை தவழு மேழிற் குன்றம்”

என்று மிக அழகாகக் கூறியுள்ளார்.

இப்புலவர் பெரும்பூட்சென்னி, நெய்தலங் கானல் இளஞ் சேட்சென்னி, உருவப்படுதேற் றிளஞ்சேட்சென்னி யென்ற மூன்று சோழ மன்னர் காலத்திருந்தவரெனத் தெரிகின்றது. இவரால் பாடப்பட்ட பொறையன் என்பவன் களங்காய்க்கண்ணி நார்முடிச் சேரல் காலத்திருந்தவனென்றும், அக்களங்காய்க் கண்ணி நார்முடிச்சேரல் கி. மு. சுமார் 245 இலிருந்து 220 வரை அரசாண்டானென்றும், அண்ணாமலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத் தமிழ்ப் பேராசிரியாகிய உயர்திருவாளர் கா. சுப்பிரமணிய பிள்ளை முதலிய அறிஞர்கள் ஆராய்ந்து முடிவுகட்டியிருக்கிறார்கள். ஆகையால் இப்புலவரது காலம் கி. மு. சுமார் 245 இலிருந்து 190 வரை என்று கூறலாம்.



இனி, இப்புலவர் காலத்திருந்த வேறு புலவர்கள் எவ்வெவர் என்பதைப்பற்றிச் சிறிது ஆராய்வோம். இவரால் பாடப்பட்ட நன்னன் என்ற குறுகில் மன்னனை அகநானூற்றில்,

“இசைநல் லீகைக் களிறுவீச வண்மகிழ்ப்  
பாரத்துத் தலைவன் ஆர நன்னன்”

என்றும், பழையன் என்பவனை,

“புனமலி புதவில் போக்கிக் கிழவன் பழையன்”

எனவும் பரணர் பாடுவதால் பரணர் இவர் காலத்திருந்தாரெனக் கூறலாம். நன்னன், களங்காய்க்கண்ணி நார்முடிச்சேரலோடு எதிர்த்துப் பொருது இறந்ததையும், இவரால் பாடப்பட்ட காரி என்பவன் ஓரியைக் கொன்றான் என்ற செய்தியையும் கூறுகின்ற கல்லாடனார் என்ற புலவரும் இவர் காலத்திருந்தவராவர். அன்னியும் திதியனும் போர் செய்ததைக் கயமனார் என்ற புலவர்,

“அன்னி குறுக்கைப் பறந்தலைத் திதியன்  
தோன்னிலை முழுமுத றுமியப் பண்ணி”

எனக் கூறுவதால் கயமனாரும் இவர் காலத்தவரே எனக் கூறலாம். இக்கிரத்தனார் காலத்தில் தொண்டியிலாண்ட பொறையனை,

“கோல்லிப்போருந் கோடித்தேர்ப் பொறைய”

எனவும்,

“போலந்தார் யானை யியல்தேர்ப் பொறைய”

என்றும் பதிற்றுப்பத்தில் அரசில் கிழார் வினித்துப்பாடுவதை நோக்கின் அவரும் இவரும் ஒரே காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்தனர் என்பது தெரிகின்றது.

குடவாயிற் கிரத்தனார் தம் காலத்திருந்த மக்களின் பழக்க வழக்கங்களையும் தமது பாடல்களில் கூறியுள்ளார். வில்லேர் வர்ழ்க்கையையுடைய மறவர் வலிய பதுக்கைக் கல்லால் செய்யப் பட்ட கடவுளுக்கும், நடுகற்களுக்கும் பீளி சூட்டி, துடிக்கொட்டி,

நெல்லாற் செய்யப்பட்ட கள்ளோடு செம்மறியாட்டுக்குட்டியைப் பலியிடுவார்கள் என்பதை முப்பத்தைந்தாம் நெடுந்தொகைப் பாட்டில் சொல்லியுள்ளார். இவர் காலத்திலும் கிணறு வெட்டு வோர் தம் வேலைக்குச் செல்லும்போது சோற்று மூட்டையைத் தோளில் தூக்கிச் செல்லும் வழக்கம் இருந்தது. † நெய்தனில மக்கள் சோற்றையும், புளிக்கறியையும் கொழுமீனிறைச்சியோடு கலந்து உண்டனர். \* இவர் காலத்தில் பனங்குருத்தில் மலர்களை வைத்துக்கட்டி ஆண் மக்களும் தம் குடுமியில் அணிந்தனர் என்ற செய்தியை,

“ வேண்மணல் போதுளிய பைங்காற் கருக்கின்  
கோம்மைப் போந்தைக் குமீ வேண்டோட்டு  
அத்தவேம்பின் அமலை வான்பு  
சுரியார் உளைதலை போலியச் சூடி  
.....  
சேன்றனர் கோல் ”

எனக் குறுந்தொகையில் கூறுகிறார். இவர் காலத்திலும் சிறு சண்டைகள் நடந்தன. எவ்வி என் போனது நாட்டில் வயல் களும் உப்பளங்களும் மிக அருகே நெருங்கியிருந்தன. மருத நிலத்திருந்த பள்ளர் தமது நெல்லைப் பொலி தூற்றும்போது உண்டான புழுதியானது காற்று வீசியதால் பக்கத்திலிருந்த உப்பளத்தில் சென்று படிந்ததைக் கண்ட பரதவர் கோபங் கொண்டு மருத நிலத்தாரோடு எதிர்த்து மற்போர் புரிவதைக் கண்ட முதியோர் சிலர் சண்டை யிடுவோரைக் கைபிடித்து நீக்கிப் பரதவருக்கு ஒரு குடம் கள்ளைக் கொடுத்து அனுப்பினார் என்ற செய்தியை இப்புலவர் ஓர் அகப்பாட்டில் அமைத்துள்ளார்.

† அகம். 79

\* அகம். 60.

இவர் பாடிய பாட்டுக்களில் பாலைத்தீணையைப்பற்றிய பாடல்களே அதிகமாகக் காணப்படுவதால், பாலைப்பற்றிப் பாடுவதில் இவருக்கு விருப்பமதிகமென்பது தெரிகின்றது. இவர் தமது பாட்டுக்களில் இயற்கைக் காட்சிகளை மிக அழகாகத் தோற்றுவிக்கிறார்.

பாலை நிலத்தைச் சேர்ந்த காட்டிலிருக்கும் யானை வெப்பத்தால் தாகமெடுத்தபோது ஓமை மரத்தின் பட்டையை விரும்பி உண்ணுகின்றதாம். அதனால் பட்டையின்றிப் பொரிந்த அடிமரத்தையுடைய ஓமையினது, காற்றிலசையும், நீண்ட கிளையினது வாடிய கொம்பில் ஏறித் தனிமையைப் புலப்படுத்தும் குரலோடு 'ஓய்' என்று ஆண் புறாக்கள் தம் பெண் புறாக்களை அழைக்கும் எனக் காட்டை வருணிக்கிறார். \* இவ்வாறே மற்றொரு பாட்டில், பாலை நிலத்திலுள்ள பெரிய இறகுகளையும், வளைந்த மூக்கியுமுடைய பருந்தின் பேடையானது, எயினர் போர்க்குப் போவதைக் கண்டு, தன் துணையை அழைக்கும் என்று கூறுகிறார். பாலை நிலத்தில் செல்லும் மக்கள். அறுத்துப்போட்ட பிரண்டைக் கொடியானது இடியேற்றால் எறியப்பட்டு நலிவடைந்த பாம்பினது தோற்றம் போல வழியின் பக்கத்தே கிடக்கும் என்பதை அகம் 119 ஆம் பாட்டின் அடிகளில் கூறுகின்றார்.

இப்புலவர் ஒல்லையூர் கிழான் மகன் பெருஞ்சாத்தன் என்பவனைப்பற்றிக் கையறு நிலையாகப் பாடிய பாட்டு யாவர் மனதையும் நையச் செய்யும். "ஒரு காலத்தில் தனது ஆண்மைத் தன்மை யாவர்க்குந் தோன்ற, எதிர்த்த வீரரைக் கொன்று, வெற்றிபெற்ற வலிய வில்லையுடைய சாத்தன் இன்று இறந்தான். அவன் இறப்புக்கு வருந்தி அவனது ஒல்லையூர் நாட்டிலுள்ள முல்லை மலர்களை வீரரும் அணிந்துகொள்ள மாட்டார்கள் : பெண்

\* குறுந்தொகை 79.

களும் பறிக்கமாட்டார்கள் : பாணனும் தன் யாழ்க் கோட்டினால் மெதுவாக அக்கொடியை வளைத்துப் பறித்துச் சூடான் : பாடினியும் அணியமாட்டாள். இவ்வாறு அவர்கள் வருந்தும்போது நான் ஒருவனே கொடியவனாக இவ்வுலகில் வாழ்கிறேனென்று எண்ணினேன். முல்லையாகிய நீயுமா கொடியையாய்ப் பூக்கின்றாய்? உனது மலர்களால் யாதொரு பயனுமில்லை” என்று கூறு முகத்தான்,

“இளையோர் சூடார் வளையோர் கோய்யார்  
நல்லியாழ் மருப்பின் மெல்ல வாங்கிப்  
பாணன் சூடான் பாடினி யணியாள்  
ஆண்மை தோன்ற வாடவர் கடந்த  
வல்வேற் சாத்த னிறந்த பின்றை  
முல்லையும் பூத்தியோ வோல்லையூர் நாட்டே”

என்று இரங்கிப் பாடிய பாட்டு யாவர் மனதையும் உருகச் செய்யும்.

இவர் நற்றிணையில், முல்லைத்திணையில், ‘வினைமுற்றி மீளுந்தலைமகன் தேர்ப்பாகற்குச் சொல்லியது’ என்ற துறையமையப் பாடிய பாட்டு அகப்பொருட் சுவை பொருந்தியதாக இருக்கின்றது.

ஒரு தலைமகன் பொருள் தேடும் பொருட்டுத் தலைவியை விட்டுப் பிரிந்து சென்றிருந்தான். தான் மேற்கொண்ட வினை முடிந்தபின் திரும்பி வந்துகொண்டிருக்கிறான். அப்போது தன் தேர்ப்பாகனிடத்தில் முன்னொரு நாள் தான் இவ்வாறு திரும்பி வந்தபோது, தலைவி தன்னிடம் எவ்வாறு நடந்துகொண்டாள் என்பதைக் கூறுகின்றான்.

முதன் முறை தலைவன் பிரிந்த காலத்தில் மழையே இல்லாமையால் உலகத்து உயிர்களெல்லாம் வாடியிருந்தன. ஆனால்

அவன் திரும்பிவந்த நாளன்று பெருமழை பெய்தது. அம்மழை நீர் அவன் வருகின்ற வழியின் இருபுறங்களிலுமுள்ள பள்ளங்களில் நிரம்பிற்று. புது மழை பெய்ததால் உண்டான மகிழ்ச்சியால் அப்பள்ளங்களிலுள்ள தவளைகள் தம் சங்கீதத்தை உரக்கப் பாடிக்கொண்டிருந்தன. இவ்வாறு தான் வந்த வழியின் வருணனையை,

“ பன்னாள்

வறத்தோடு பொருந்திய வுலகு தோழிற் கோளீஇய  
பழமழை பொழிந்த புதுநீ ரவல  
நாநவில் பல்கிளை கறங்க ”

என்ற அடிகளால் கூறுகின்றான், பின்பு, அத்தவளைகள் செய்யும் ஒலியினால் தன் தேரின் மணியோசையைத் தலைவி கேட்க முடியாதென்றெண்ணிச் சில சிறுவர்களிடம், “ நீங்கள் போய் என் வரவைத் தலைவியிடம் கூறுங்கள் ” என்று கட்டளையிடுகிறான். அவர்களும் அவ்வாறே சென்று தலைவியிடம் உரைத் தார்கள் என்பதை,

“ நாவுடை

மணியோலி கேளாள் வாணுத லன்னாள்  
ஏகுமி னென்ற இளையர் வல்லே  
இல்புக் கறியு நராக ”

என்ற அடிகளில் தெரிவிக்கின்றான். அப்போது தலைவியின் நிலை எவ்வாறிருந்ததென்பதை நோக்குவோம். தன் தலைவனைப் பிரிந்திருந்ததால் நல்ல அணிகளை அணியாதவளாயும், கூந்தலைச் சரிவரச் செப்பனிடாதவளாயும் இருந்தாள். தலைவன் வருகிறான் என்ற செய்தியைக் கேட்டவுடனே உண்டான மகிழ்ச்சியால், பலநாள் வாரிச் செப்பனிடாத கூந்தலிலிருந்த மாசு கெடும் படி குளித்துவிட்டுத் தன்னை அலங்கரித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தாள். மலருஞ் செவ்வியிலிருக்கும் புதுப் பூக்களின் சிலவற்றை வைத்துக் கூந்தலில் முடிக்குந் தறுவாயில் தலைவன் வீட்டுக்குள் வந்துவிடு

கிறான். தலைவனைக் கண்டதும் அவன் பாலுண்டான பேரன் பாலும், பெரு மகிழ்ச்சியாலும், கூந்தல் முடிப்பதையும் விட்டுத் தன் மெய்துளங்க நடந்து சென்று தலைவனை அணைந்துகொண்டான் என்பதை,

“மெல்லென  
மண்ணுக் கூந்தல் மாசறக் கழீஇச்  
சில்போது கோண்டு பல்சூர லழுத்திய  
அந்நிலை புதுதலின் மெய் வருத் தூறுஅ  
வலிழ்பூ முடியினள் கவைஇய  
மடமா வரிவை மகிழ்ந்தயர் நிலையே ”

என்ற அடிகளில் கூறி, அத்தகைய நிலையை, பாகனே ! மறத்தல் கூடுமோ? என்று சொல்லுகிறான். இவ்வாறு பாடிய இப் பாட்டினையும் நம்மால் மறத்தற்கரிதாகும்.

இப்புலவர் பாடிய மற்றப் பாடல்களும் அகச்சுவை ததும்பு வனவாக இருக்கின்றன. இவரது பாடல்கள் சிறந்த இலக்கியங்களாகவும், உள்ளத்தை கொள்ளைக் கொள்வனவாகவும் இருப்பதோடு வரலாற்றுத் துறைக்கு வேண்டிய நிகழ்ச்சிகளையுங் கொண்டு மிளிக்கின்றன வென்று கூறி இக்கட்டுரையினை இத் துடன் முடிக்கின்றேன்.

“குற்றங் களைந்து குறைபெய்து பாராட்டல்  
கற்றறிந்த மாந்தர் கடன் ”

T. RAMASUBRAMANIAN,  
V Honours.



## அட பாபமே!

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**கிழக்கே** உதிக்கும் சூரியன் மேற்கே உதித்தாலும்கூடக் காலை ஆறு மணிக்கு எழுந்திருக்காத என் நண்பன் கோபு ஒரு நாள் ஐந்தே முக்கால் மணிக்குப் புதுத்தெரு வழியாகப் போய்க்கொண்டிருந்தா னென்று சொன்னால் உங்களுக்குச் சற்று வியப்பாயிருக்கிறதல்லவா? ஏன், எனக்குக் கூடத்தான் ஆச்சரியமாக இருக்கிறது. அவன் அப்படி அந்த வேளையில் போய்க்கொண்டிருந்ததற்குக் காரணமில்லாமற் போக வில்லை.

கோபு என் அத்தியந்த நண்பன். நாங்களிருவரும் சிறு வயது முதல் ஒன்றாகவே வளர்ந்து ஒரே பள்ளிக்கூடத்தில் ஒரே வகுப்பில் இருந்து வந்தவர்கள். ஆனால் எங்கள் ஒற்றுமைக்கு எஸ். எஸ். எல். ஸி. வகுப்பு முட்டுக்கட்டையாக நின்றது. அவனுடைய தகப்பனர் நாங்கள் வாசித்துவந்த பள்ளிக்கூடத்தின் தலைமை உபாத்தியாயராக இருந்தபடியால் சத்த மக்கான அவன் முதல் ஐந்து பாரங்களிலும் என்னோடு விறுவிடுவென்று தேறி வந்ததின் ரகசியத்தைச் சொல்லவேண்டியதில்லை. ஆனால் அந்தப் பாழாய்ப் போன சர்க்கார் பரீக்ஷை எக் காரணத்தை முன்னிட்டும் அவனை மேலே அனுப்ப மறுத்துவிட்டது. அவனும் பல தடவை பரீக்ஷை எழுதச் சலிக்கவில்லை.

அன்றைய தினசரிகளில் வெளியாகப் போகும் ரிஸல்டைப் பார்ப்ப தற்காகத்தான் அன்று அவன் ஸ்டேஷனுக்குப் போய்க்கொண்டிருந் தான். இது முதல் தடவை எழுதிய பரீக்ஷையின் முடிவாயிருந்தால் போய்ப்பார்ப்பதற்கு அவன் அவ்வளவு அக்கரை எடுத்துக்கொண்டிருக்க மாட்டான். ஆனால் இந்தத் தடவை அவனுக்கு பொறுக்க முடியவில்லை. அதற்காகத்தான் அதிகாலையில் அவன் ஸ்டேஷனுக்குப் புறப்பட்டது.

ஸ்டேஷனுக்குச் சென்ற கோபு எல்லோருக்கும் முதலில் அன் றைய தினசரியை வாங்கி ஆவலாகப் பிரித்தான். ஒரு கண நேரத்தில்

அவன் முகம் மாறுதலடைந்தது. அதில் அவனுடைய நம்பரைக் காணும். பேப்பரைத் தூக்கி எறிந்துவிட்டு வீட்டிற்கு வந்து ஆயாசத் தோடு கட்டிலில் சாய்ந்தான். மனமும் சிந்தனைக் கடலில் ஆழ்ந்தது. ஒரு தடவை; அதைத் தொடர்ந்து மற்றொரு தடவை. என்ன பரீகைத் தொல்லை. மற்றப் பையன்கள்—ஏன், கேவலம் பெண்களும் கூட—(இது கோபுவின் அபிப்பிராயமே ஒழிய என்னுடையதில்லை.) இவனுக்குக் கீழே வாசித்து, கூட வாசித்து, மேலேயும் போய் விட்டார்கள். இவர்களை யெல்லாம் எந்த முகத்தோடு பார்ப்பது? தெருப்பக்கம் தலை காட்டினால் பிள்ளைகளெல்லாம் கஜினி மகம்மது என்று பெயரிட்டு அழைக்கத் தொடங்குவார்கள். வெட்கம் பிடுங்கித் தின்கிறது. படிப்பைவிட்டுத் தலைமுழுகிவிடலாமென்றால் அப்புறம் என்ன செய்கிறது? ஆகையால் இன்னொரு தடவை ஒரு கை பார்த்துவிடுவது. தேருவிட்டால் எந்தக் கல்வி ஸ்தாபனத்தின் எல்லைக்குள்ளும் அடிகூட எடுத்துவைப்பதில்லை. ஆம்; இன்னும் ஒரே தடவைதான். இவ்வாறாக அவன் மனம் சிந்தித்துக் கடைசியில் ஒரு முடிவுக்கு வந்தது.

## (2)

ஒரு வருஷம் ஒரு நிமிஷமாகக் கழிந்தது. பாஸ் செய்வதற்காகக் கோபு செய்யாத பிரயத்தனம் ஒன்றுகூடக் கிடையாது. எஸ். எஸ். எல். வி. பாலத்தைக் கடப்பதற்கு எத்தனை 'கய்ட்' களும் 'நோட்ஸ்' களும் வாங்கியிருக்கிறான். தினம் ராத்திரி எட்டு மணி முதல் பன்னிரண்டு மணி வரையில் தொண்டை கிழிய வாசித்தது அந்த தெருவில் இவன் ஒருவன்தான். தெரு முழுவதும் இவனைக் கண்டு பச்சாதாபப்பட்டார்களென்று வைத்துக்கொள்ளுங்களேன். அவனுடைய பாட்டியின் பச்சாதாபம் எல்லை கடந்தது. பேரன் கஷ்டப்பட்டு வாசிப்பதற்காகக் கருணைப் பிரவாகத்தால் தூண்டப்பட்டு, அவனை போஷிப்பதில் கவனத்தைச் செலுத்தலானான். மேலும் பரீகைப் பேப்பர் திருத்துபவர்களை யெல்லாம் சாபமிட்டான். அவனுடைய தாயார் பிள்ளை 'பைல்' ஆக ஆக பிள்ளையாருக்கு நைவேத்தியம் செய்ய வேண்டிக் கொண்டிருக்கும் கொழுக்கட்டைகளின் எண்ணிக்கைகளை உயர்த்திக் கொண்டே போனான். பிள்ளையாரும் வரிவசூல் செய்பவர்களைப் போல்

மாறிவிட்டார் போலும்! கோபுவும் வேண்டிக்கொள்ளாத தெய்வம் கிடையாது. பரீகை சமயத்தில் கடவுளைப் பிரார்த்திக்கும் கோஷ்டியில் ஒருவனாக விளங்கினான். ஆஹா! அப்பேற்பட்ட சமயங்களில் பக்தி மேலிட்டு, பரசவமடைந்து, கைகூப்பி, வலம் வந்து இறைவனடி பணியும் மாணவர்களின் பக்தியை என்னவென்று சொல்வது! அவனுடைய தர்மத்தால் செல்லாக் காசுகளையும் செப்புக்காசுகளையுமே கண்டிருந்த கோவில் உண்டிகள்கூட வெள்ளி நாணயங்களைக் காண ஆரம்பித்தன. பரீகையும் நெருங்கிவிட்டது. இன்னும் ஒரே இரவுதான். அதுவும் கழிந்தாலோ? அவன் மனம் புயற்காற்றிலகப்பட்ட சிறு துரும்பு போல் தவித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தது. புத்தகத்தைப் பிரட்டிக் கொண்டிருந்தான், மணியும் 9-30 ஆய் விட்டது. மனசு திக்திக்கென்று அடித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தது.

### (3)

பரீகை யெல்லாம் முடிந்துவிட்டன. மூன்று மாதங்களும் சீக்கிரமாகவே கழிந்தன. பரீகை முடிவுகளும் பேப்பர்களில் வெளியிடப்பட்டன. கோபுவின் நம்பர் பாஸ் செய்தவர்களின் தொகுதியில் காணப்பட்டது. என்ன ஆச்சரியம்! அவன் கண்களையே அவன் நம்பமுடியவில்லை.

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சில மாதங்கள் கழிந்தன. ஒரு மனோகரமான மாலை நேரம். மணி சுமார் 5 இருக்கலாம். கோபு ஒரு ஈவியசேரில் சாய்ந்துகொண்டு சில டாக்கி பாட்டுகளை பாடிக்கொண்டிருந்தான். சீட்டாட்டத்திற்காக அவன் தன் நண்பர்களின் வரவை எதிர்பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருந்தான். வாசலில் காலடிச் சப்தம் கேட்கவே தன் நண்பர்களோவென்று சந்தேகப்பட்டுப் பார்த்தான். அவனது தகப்பனார் முகமலர்ச்சியோடு “கோபு”, என்று கூப்பிட்டுக்கொண்டே வந்தார். “வா அப்பா” என்று பதிலளித்துச் சந்தோஷத்தோடு வரவேற்றான். சட்டையை அவிழ்த்துவிட்டுக் காப்பி சாப்பிட்டுக்கொண்டிருக்கும்பொழுது கோபு தகப்பனாரை ஏதாவது விசேஷமுண்டாவென்று கேட்டான். அதற்குள் அவன் தாயரும் பாட்டியும் அங்கு வந்து சேர்ந்தார்கள்.

தகப்பனார் :—“ என்ன கோபு, மேலவாசலுக்குப் போயிருந்தே னுன்னோ அங்கே நம்ம கோபாலய்யரை பார்த்தேன். அவருக்கு வயது வந்த பெண் ஒண்ணு கல்யாணத்துக்கு இருக்காம். அதை உனக்கு கல்யாணம் செய்துவைக்கலாமென்கிறார்.”

பாட்டி :—“ பொண்ணு எப்படியிருக்கடா ? ”

தக :—பொண்ணுக்கென்ன, கிளியாட்டமாயிருக்கா. நன்னா பாடரா. வயது 15 தான் ஆகிறது. ஜாதகமும் நன்னா பொருந்தரது. கோபு சம்மதம் ஒண்ணுதான் பாக்கி.”

கோபு :—(சந்தோஷத்துடன்) “ அப்புறம் ? ”

தக :—“ பொண்ணு நாலுபாரம் வரை வாசிச்சிருக்காம். ரூ. 3,000 வரதக்ஷணை கொடுக்கறளாம். எல்லாம் நிச்சயமாயிடுத்து. உன் சம்மதந்தான் பாக்கி.”

கோபுவும் நேரில் போய் பெண்ணை பார்த்தபிறகு மணக்கச் சம்மதித் தான். (வாழைப்பழம் வேண்டாத குரங்கு உண்டா ?)

சித்திரை மாசமும் பிறந்துவிட்டது. மேலவாசல் கோபால அய்யரின் வீடு, முக்கால் தெருவை அடைக்கும் பெரிய பந்தலினால் அலங்கரிக்கப்பட்டிருந்தது. அங்கேதான் கோபுவின் கல்யாணம். மேலவாசல் முழுவதும் ஒரே அமார்க்களம்தான். இப்பொழுது நடப்பதுபோல் அரை நாள் கல்யாணமல்ல. முழுசாக நாலு நாள் கல்யாணம். கோபுபாடு குவிதான். வீடு முழுவதும் சொந்த ஜனங்கள், நண்பர்கள் புரோகிதர்கள். மேலும் வாத்தியார்களெல்லாம்—சமஸ்கிருத வாத்தியார் உள்பட—(கோபுவுக்கு பிடிக்காதவர்; கும்பலில் இரண்டு தடவை தக்ஷணை வாங்கியவர்) வந்திருந்தார்கள். இதெல்லாம் போக ரதிபோல ஒரு மனைவி. அவளே அவனுக்கு ‘பூலோகரம்பை’ கல்யாணம்னா எவ்வளவு குவி. அவன் நல்ல பாக்கியசாலி; அதிருஷ்டசாலியும்கூட. ஐ. சி. எஸ். காரனுக்குக் கூட இப்பேற்பட்ட மனைவி வாய்க்கமாட்.....

#### (4)

“கோபு” என்று கூப்பிடும் குரல்.

பதிலில்லை.

“கோபு” திரும்பவும் அதே குரல்.

மறுபடியும் பதிலில்லை.

கூப்பிட்டது அவன் தகப்பனார்தான். பதில் வராதபடியால் சந்தேகத்துடன் ருமுக்குள் நுழைந்தார். காலடிச் சப்தம் கேட்ட கோபு கண்ணைத் திறந்தான். கடிக்காரத்தை பார்த்தபொழுது மணி 10 அடித்து 10 நிமிஷங்களாயிருந்தன. பரீக்ஷையில் அவனது வெற்றி, புதிய மனைவி, சந்தோஷம் எல்லாம் ஒரு கணத்தில் மறைந்தன. விளக்கு மாத் திரம் எரிந்துகொண்டிருந்தது.

“என்னடா மணி 10 கூட ஆகவில்லை. அதுக்குள்ளே தூக்கம். வாழ்ந்தாப்போல இருக்கு போ. நீ பாஸ்கீஸ் செஞ்ச பிரட்டரதா எனக்கு துளிக்கூட நம்பிக்கையில்லை” என்று இரைந்துவிட்டு அவன் தகப்பனர் நேராகச் சமையலறைக்கு சென்றார்.

நானைக்குப் பரீக்ஷை என்ற நினைவு வந்தவுடன் கோபுவுக்கு தூக்கி வாரிப்போட்டது. இவ்வளவுநாழி கண்டதெல்லாம் பொய்தானா? அதுவாவது இன்னும் கொஞ்சக்காலம் நீடித்திருக்கக்கூடாதா? அட பாபமே!

“உன் பிள்ளை வாசிக்கிற அழகைப் பார்த்தியோன்னடி! நானைக்கு பரீக்ஷை. பத்துமணிக்கே தூங்கரான். இதுக்கு நீ கல்யாணம் வேறு செஞ்சவைக்கணும்னு என் பிராணனை வாங்கரே. பாஸ் செஞ்சாப்பறம் தானே பாக்கியெல்லாம். அவனை பாத்தா உருப்படரவாற காணும்” என்ற குரல் சமையலறையிலிருந்து கணீரென்று ஒலித்தது. இது கோபுவின் தகப்பனர் தம் மனைவிக்கு விட்ட டோஸ். இதைக் கேட்ட கோபுவுக்கு கோபம் ஒரு பக்கம், வெட்கம் ஒரு பக்கம். பற்களால் உதடைக் கடித்துக்கொண்டான். வந்த ஆத்திரத்தில் மேஜைமேலிருந்த இங்கிலீஷ் புத்தகத்தின் அட்டையை கிழித்தெரிந்தான். மறுநாள் ஒருவாறாகப் பரீக்ஷையை எழுதிமுடித்தான்.

(5)

இந்தத்தடவையும் கோபு ‘கோட்’ அடித்தானென்று மிகவும் வருத்தத்துடன் தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறேன். நீங்கள் எதிர்பார்த்தபடி

அவன் தற்கொலையொன்றோ அல்லது வருத்தப்படவோ இல்லை. ஆனால் படிப்பை நிறுத்திவிட்டான். யாராவது ‘என்னடா படிப்பை யெல்லாம் மூட்டைகட்டி வைத்துவிட்டாயா’ என்று கேட்டால் போதும் உடனே “படித்தவனெல்லாம் என்னசார் செஞ்சு பிரட்டிவிட்டான்? சந்துக்குச் சந்து இரண்டு பி. ஏ. பிழைப்பில்லாமலே இருக்கான்சார்” என்று மடக்கி, அவர்களை மட்டம் தட்டி அனுப்பிவிடுவான். ஆனால் இன்றைய வரையில் கல்யாணமாகவில்லையென்று கேள்வி.

“கீனா”

R. SRINIVASAN, III, B.A. (Hons.) History.



## தலைவன் பாங்கற்குத் தன்னிலை கிளத்தல்

அன்பும்	பண்பும்	அமைவுறக்	கொண்ட
இன்புறு	நண்பரே	என்னிலை	கேளீர்
விரிதிரை	யுடுத்த	வியன்கண்	நிலத்தில்
அரியநுங்	கேண்மை	அன்றிவே	றொன்றும்
பற்றுதற்	கில்லாப்	பாவியென்	நிலையினை
உற்றுமக்	குரைக்கின்	உரையி	லடங்கா
பைந்தமிழ்க்	கலையின்	செந்தண்	மொழிகளும்
நைந்தவென்	திறனினை	நவிலற்	கமையா
கலங்கவிழ்	நாய்கன்போல்	மனங்கவல்	வுற்றனன்
துலங்குமென்	னுயர்வின்	நலங்கெட்,	டொழிந்தனன்
ஆண்மையும்	அறிவும்	கேண்மையும்	பிறவும்
மாண்புற	வமைந்தவென்	மாசறு	நெஞ்சம்
அலையிடைப்	பட்டவோர்	துரும்பெனச்	சுழன்று
நிலையிடங்	கானேன்	நிம்மதி	யறியேன்
ஊனும்	துறந்தேன்	உறக்கமும்	மறந்தேன்
காணும்	பொருளின்றிக்	கையற்றுக்	கலங்கினேன்
கெட்ட	காலைவிட்	டனரென்	னாது
நட்டோ	ரென்பது	நாட்டிரீர்	இன்று
உறுதுணைத்	தோழ	மறுமொழி	இறுப்பாய்
பவளச்	செவ்வாய்த்	தவளவாள்	நகையும்
மதியோர்	பழித்த	ஒரு திரு	துதலும்
கருந்தடங்	கண்களுங்	கார்நிகர்	கதுப்பும்
ஒருபிடி	துசுப்புடன்	உயர்ந்த	சாயலும்
அன்னமென்	னடையும்	பொன்னுறு	மெழிலும்
குழலும்	யாழும்	அமிழ்துங்	குழைத்த
மழலைக்	கிளவிக்கு	மயங்குத	லுற்று

உள்ளகம்	நெகிழ்ந்து	ஊன்மிக	வாடியே
நொந்தனன்	நண்பயான்	உய்ந்தனன்	வாழுவோர்
சின்தனை	கூறாய்	செய்குவ	தறியேன்
ஆன்முலைக்	கொண்ட	வான்நிற	வமிர்தம்
மலைப்பெய்	நெய்யொடு	தலைப்பெய்	தாங்குச்
செங்கனி	வாய்மருந்	தின்புட	னுகர்ந்து
கவவுக்கை	நெகிழாமற்	காதலிற்	றினோக்க
இல்லற	மென்னுந்	நல்லறந்	தன்னீ
நல்லைநீ	யுதவுவாய்	நற்றுணைப்	பாங்க
ஒன்றன்	கூறாடை	உடுப்போ	யாயினும்
ஒன்றினார்	வாழ்க்கை	நன்றரோ	வென்று
அன்றுநீர்	கவித்தொகை	அறிவுறக்	கற்றீர்
என்றிறத்	தப்பொருள்	ஏற்றதன்	நென்று
இன்றுநீர்	கூறல்	இயைபுடைத்	தாமோ
கற்றவர்க்	கெல்லாங்	கடுநகை	வினோக்கும்
உற்றுநீர்	ஓர்ந்து	தெற்றெனத்	தெளிவீர்
மற்றுயான்	கூறவோர்	மார்க்கமும்	அறியேன்
பற்றுநான்	மற்றிலேன்	பண்புறு	நண்ப
துன்பத்திற்	றுளங்கா	தின்பத்தின்	மகிழாது
ஆற்றுழி	நிற்றல்	ஆடவர்	கடனெனச்
சாற்றிய	முதுமொழி	போற்றிடல்	நன்று
தேற்றிட	உன்றன்	செம்மைபு	முண்டெனத்
தேறுவன்	சிந்தை	தேறுவன்	சிறிதே

தா. தங்கராசன்,

அண்ணாமலைநகர்.

## தாயும் சேயும்

கள்ளங் கபட மில்லாக்—கையின்—பிள்ளைதன் உள்ளமென்ன  
 மெள்ளத் தவழ்ந்து சேல்லும்—ஒடைத்—தேள்ளிய தீஞ்சுவை நீர்  
 தண்மணல் நீர் தழுவித்—தவழும்—வேண்மணல் ஒண்பரப்பாம்  
 அன்னை இயற்கை அவள்—மடிமேல்—தன்னந் தனியிருந்தேன் ;  
 ‘அன்பின்’ பசியுழந்தேன்—அதனால்—துன்பக் கண்ணீர் துளித்தேன்  
 அன்பமிழ் தூட்டி யன்னை—எந்தன்—துன்பந் துடைத்துவிட்டாள்  
 மேடையின் புல் மேய்ந்து—ஆரிரை—ஒடையில் நீரு(ண்)ணங்கால்  
 கன்றுகள் தூரவிளி—காதோடும்—ஒன்று முன் நின்றிடுமேல்  
 அம்மா என்ற விளியின்—ஆர்வம்—நம்மால் அறியலாமோ  
 சேய் விளி கேட்டதுவும்—சேவிசாய்—தூய் விழி நீர் ததும்பும்  
 நீரினை ஊடுருவி—நேர்வரும்—ஆர(ன்)னை அன்போளியாம்  
 பாலமிழ் துண்ணவே யென்—பசியும்—சாலவும் நீங்கியதே.  
 உண்ட களையகற்ற—ஓர்வழி—கொண்டனள் கோதிலன்னை  
 தாழ்ம் பூவின் போடியும்—மணமும்—தாங்கித்தவழந் தென்றல்  
 மெல்லிளங் கைகள் கொண்டு—மேனி—மெல்ல மெல்ல வருடி  
 வண்டுகள் சாதாரி—வழங்கக்—கொண்டன கண்ணுறக்கம்.  
 ‘கவலை’யாம் ‘உறுமி’—கனவில்—கழுத்தினைத் திருகிக்  
 கடும் பயம் விளைத்தான்—கதறித்—திடு மேன விழித்தேன்.  
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 குருவிக் குஞ்சுகள் தம்—கூட்டில்—அரவுக் கஞ்சி யழ  
 அடுத்தங் கிருந் தாய்—அவற்றை—எடுத்துச் சென்றதுவே.  
 கவலை யென்பதிப்போ—தெனக்குத்—திவலையு மில்லையே.  
 அன்னை யியற்கை ஈசன்—அன்பு—தன்னை யுணர்த்தும் ஆடி  
 அன்னவகை அடைந்தான்—ஈசன்—தன்னையுந் கண்டடைந்தான்

C. JESUDASAN, V Hons.

## தூய்மை துலங்கும் வழி

இன்னொன்று நல்ல தென்பாய்—நானே  
ஈதேது மோசமென்பாய்  
அன்று நீ ஆசித்ததைப்—பின்னும்  
ஆகா தறவே என்பாய்  
நின்ற நிலையில் நில்லா—நெஞ்சே  
நீயோ எனக் கிறைவன் ?  
உன்றனை ஆள்பவன் யான்—இதை  
ஓர் பொழுதும் மறவேல்.

உந்தன் வழி நடப்போர்—அவர்  
ஓர் சிறிதும் சிறவார்  
சொந்தப் பலமறியார்—நீ  
சொல்வதே வேத மென்பார்  
சிந்தனை கெட்டழியத்—தம்  
சீர்மை யெலா மொழிய  
மந்த மதிய ரெனக்—குணம்  
மாறு கொண்டே யலைவார்

தன்னிலே நல்லவன் நீ—ஆயின்  
தான் எனுங் கர்வமிகின்  
உன்னைப் போலே கொடியன்—எவன்  
உள்ளன் இவ் வையகத்தில்  
என் வயப் பட்டிருப்பாய்—அது  
ஏகன் வகுத்த வழி  
துன்பம் அருகும் வழி—வாழ்வின்  
தூய்மை துலங்கும் வழி

ரம்போலா,

தமிழ் ஆனார்ஸ் மாணவன்.

## தமிழ் மொழி

(தரவு கொச்சகக் கலிப்பா)

சீர்விளங்குந் தமிழ்மொழி நீ ! திருவிளங்கு முயர்மொழிநீ !  
பார்விளங்கு மொழிபலவும் பரவியிட வேழுமொழிநீ !  
ஏர்விளங்கு மகம்புறமேன் றியல்விளங்கு மிருவகைத்தாம்  
பேர்விளங்குஞ் சிறப்புரிமை பேறவிளங்கு மொழிநீயே

2

எழுத்துமுத லணியீறு வியம்பிடுமைந் திலக்கணமும்  
அழுத்தமுற வமைந்ததன்மே லழகிருநான் கியன்றினிதாப்  
பழுத்தசுவை நனிபயந்து பாவலர்தந் நாவழியும்  
விழுத்ததமிழ் மொழியுனக்கு விளம்புவமை வேறுளதோ ?

3

அமைந்தபெருந் தமிழ்த்திருநாட் டரசரோரு மூவரையுஞ்  
சமைந்தவுன தருட்டகவாந் தாம்புகோடு பிணித்துனைநாச்  
சுமந்ததிரு ஷுடைநலவர் சோலும்வணமே யவரோழுக  
இமண்புவியிற் புரிதியெனில் யாவருன்சீர் முழுதறிவார்.

4

எண்ணியவா நெப்போருளு மீதலிற்கற் பகமென்கோ !  
அண்ணியவின் சுவையினிலா னமுதேன்கோ ! கனியென்கோ ?  
பண்ணியவை பலித்தலின்மீப் பயன்றருமந் திரமென்கோ !  
புண்ணியநல் லுருவேன்கோ ! புனிததமிழ் மொழியுனையே.

5

கற்பனைக்கு மரிதாய காலத்துப் பருணிதர்தம்  
பொற்பிதயக் கருவூலப் போலங்கலனும் பலகவியும்  
உற்பவஞ்செய் லிக்குமுன துயர்வினையீண் ளுள்ளபடி  
அற்பமெனுஞ் சோலச்சேட வரவினுக்கு நாச்சிலவே.



6

நசைவகையா லகிலமதை நடிப்பிக்கு நின்பெருமை  
இசைவகையா லுரைத்திடினம்ற் றெம்மொழிக்கீங்  
[குள்ளதுகோல் ?  
அசைவனவாய்ப் பன்மொழியு மகன்றோழிந்து முழிபல  
திசையுலவி யிளமைவளந் தினைத்துயர்செந் தமிழ்மொழியே !

7

வள்ளுவர்தம் வாய்மொழியும் வனப்புறுதோல் காப்பியமுந்  
தேள்ளுறுசங் கத்தமைந்தோர் தேரிந்துரைத்த பாடல்களும்  
உள்ளுறநின் பெருமையினை யுள்ளபடி தேரிப்பவென்றால்  
நள்ளுவரோ பிறமொழியை நன்றெனநல் லொழக்கிகவார்

8

செய்யதிரு வாசகமாய்த் தேய்வமணங் கோளீஇயுணரு  
மெய்யருளங் கரைத்திறைவன் மெல்லடிக்கா ளாக்குதிறம்  
ஐயனெழில் வாதலு ரடிகடிகு வாக்கினிலே  
உய்யநின்ற போன்மொழியா முனக்கலதேம் மொழிக்குளதே.

9

அனைத்துயிரு முயிரில்லா வசேதனமு மயல்கொள்ளத்  
தனித்தனியே செயலிக்குஞ் சதுரிசையா மோருபகுப்பும்  
இனைத்தெனவேண் ணிடலருஞ்சீ ரேயந்தவிய லெனும்பகுப்புங்  
கனத்துயர்நா டகப்பகுப்புங் கைக்கோருநின் றிறஞ்சிறிதோ ?

10

ஆதலின லேமக்கினிய வாருயிராந் தமிழனையே  
ஓதலுமுன் னுயர்வினையுள் ளுணர்வதுமுன் மெய்ப்பணியே  
காதலுடன் புரிவதுவுங் கடல்வரைப்பி னுள்ளளவும்  
ஏதமிலா மாணவக ளேமக்குளதாம் பெருங்கடனே.

D. R. தேவப்பிரியம்,

வித்துவான் 3-ம் ஆண்டு மாணவன்.



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