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"They do their Maker wrong,
Who, in the pride of age,
Cry down youth's heritage,
And all the eager throng
Of thoughts and plans and schemes,
With which the young brain teems."

C. W. Stubbs.



NO. 2

EVOLUTION OF
THE INDO-PERSIAN STYLE
IN ARCHITECTURE.

By Prof. S. V. VENKATESWARA, M.A., L.T.

I

THE Middle Ages witnessed the bloom of Indo-Islamic art. They are redolent of the perfume of rose-gardens, and flushed with the lustre of crimson palaces and marble domes. They have bequeathed to posterity fine specimens of chisel work, of mosaic and tracery, of painting and decoration in colour. The pots and pans of the period are not less valuable to the student of history than the embroidered fabrics and illuminated manuscripts. It may be truly said of the artist, 'whatever he touched, he adorned'. His works illustrate the mutual influences of Hindu and Islamic cultures, of Indian and foreign styles. They disclose the fusing of two successive cultures into a harmonious structure. The one was fertile and adapted to this land and clime. The other reinforced it with the aesthetic variety of the outer world.

Much has been written on the clash and conflict of Hinduism and Islam. At first sight nothing is more striking than the contrast of the temple and the mosque. The temple is full of enclosed corners, dim twilight spaces and winding walks, suggestive of mystic shadows and the misty Beyond. Its construction is based on column and architrave, crowned with slender spires or sky-capped towers. Its decoration is in plastic modelling of forms drawn from folk-life, of mythological scenes and creations of religious fancy. It abounds in symbols and images carved in the

curves and curling lines of Time and Life. The mosque is broad and spacious, open to light and air, abounding in arches and vaults, and crowned with expansive domes. Its surface carving and colour decoration take the form of ingenious geometrical devices and intricate flowing arabesques. Naturalistic sculptures were out of the question, as Islam forbids the portrayal of the living.

Yet both temple and mosque are for congregational worship. Many a temple had an open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, which lent it readily for conversion into a mosque. The passion for iconoclasm spent itself when the dark chambers were pulled down and the divine figures dethroned or demolished. The trabeate structure, the columns and towers tapering towards the top, the balconied windows, the eaves and brackets, the railings and delicate tracery,—all these chiselled and moulded enrichments could be suffered to remain and were retained, with the decorative details dear to the heart of the Hindu. Muhammadan strictness in regard to images did not extend to the roof and less seen parts, where the cross-legged figures of saints may still be detected.¹

Islamic fashions were interwelded or superposed. A new wall on the west side, adorned with *mihirabs*, served to remind the worshipper of the direction in which Mecca lay. Concrete and mortar were extensively used in building, and filled the joints of pillars with the precision born of Hindu patience. Wide spaces were spanned with arches and immense areas roofed with domes. Screens in front of pillars gave occasion for sumptuous and elaborate carving. The effects of grandeur were achieved by minar and minaret, by the half-domed double portal, and by huge ornamental gateways. Thus was formed a national style based on the indigenous ideal of wedding strength to grace. On this was engrafted what was elegant or effective in the foreign modes. Hence the excellence of Hindu-Muslim architecture. Its picturesque grandeur and solidarity stand in contrast to the poverty of design and feebleness of construction of the Saracenic monuments in Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and Spain.

II

Afghan art shows a mimetic rather than a creative genius. Mahmad's brick tomb has doors of deodar divided into panels. It is adorned with six-pointed stars in the Hindu style. The mosque of Kutbuddin was built out of demolished temples and has a Hindu appearance. Its graceful calligraphs are entwined

1. Fergusson ; *Indian Architecture*, p. 503.

with curling leaves and sinuous tendrils and interwoven with the constructive lines of the design. His stupendous *minar* has rich but restrained carvings and was largely the work of Hindu builders. His mosque at Ajmir improves on that of Delhi: the colonnades are not so restricted or the pillars low and crowded. Hindu shafts, capitals and architraves adorn Iltutmish's addition to the Delhi mosque. The tomb built by Iltutmish for his son is the earliest of the period. The tectonic details and decorative motifs are purely Hindu. Even the arches and domes are built on the Hindu corbel principle. But the details are not aptly fitted to the new purposes.

Ala-ad-din's mosque has the entrances embellished with lotus cuspings, and its gateway is covered with apt lace-like decorations. The change of the square into an octagon is both elegant and appropriate. But the age of lavish display gives place to one of massive grandeur, stern simplicity and solemn gloom. The monuments of Firuzabad are cold and vacuous, but Hindu influence is visible in features like pillars, brackets and balconies. The flat lintel usurps the place of the pointed arch. The column and the arch are combined in his College. The Tilangani tomb has squat domes and low verandahs. The Sayyids raised the central domes, and introduced pillared kiosks (Chhatras) in place of the subsidiary domes. Lotus finials are found as motifs on the domes. Hindu influence is even more marked in the buildings outside Delhi. In Bengal, for instance, arches were constructed on the corbel system. In the Adina mosque, great attention has been paid to the surface decoration. Indian masons had to satisfy the requirements of Islamic ritual. But spontaneous activity flowed from their own art-traditions.

The fifteenth century opens with a host of royal builders. The mosques of the Sharqis at Jaunpur reveal a curious synthesis of Hindu and Muslim canons of building. But the synthesis is lifeless: it betrays a lack of rhythm and a failure to suggest the third dimension. The mosque of Malwa has serpentine brackets supporting the eaves. The picturesque edifices of Bengal have short pillars of stone supporting pointed arches and vaults in brick. Among the chiselled designs on them is the lotus. In Gujarat, ornament forms an essential element of the aesthetic purpose. The Jain temple of Abu was the inspiring model, and the richness of the style is in proportion to the Hindu details introduced. The Jami Masjid of Ahmadabad bears a strong resemblance to Rana Kumbha's temple at Rampur. It is merely a pillared hall with overlapping upper roofs and perforated

screens, to admit light and air along with protection against sun and rain. It is possible that Sher Shah learnt his lessons in Gujarat. The Hindu bracket is a characteristic feature of the decoration in his mosque of Purana Kila at Delhi. The mosques in Champanir fail in point of synthetic unity and the minarets are of doubtful taste. Hindu trabeate system is here modified by the use of structural domes in place of the older corbelled roofs. But the delicate traceries and jewel-like carvings suggest an almost feminine grace. The mosque of Sidi Sayyid is world-famous on account of its window-screens. The artist has filled his spaces and brought the natural forms of the trees into harmony with their architectural setting, the only instance of such elaboration in stone.

There is similar evidence of synthesis in the Hindu state of Vijayanagar. The ruins of Hampi reveal a judicious combination of Hindu and Muslim elements in plan and structure. Muslim soldiers were employed by the premier Hindu state and located in the heart of the capital. A mosque was constructed for the Muslim cavalry and archers. The palace buildings reveal a successful synthesis of the arch and cupola with the trabeate structure and floral ornament. In the lotus Mahal the pillars and arches are Persian, and the roof, cornice and stucco ornament are Hindu. The roof of the watch-tower in the north-west corner of Danaik's Enclosure is supported by arches and little domes. The gateway and dome to the east of Hampi strike the visitor as being in sharp contrast to the Hindu horizontal style of construction, in which the gateways are spanned by stone lintels supported from below by corbels. The arches in the Queen's Bath contain stucco work similar to what adorns the lotus Mahal. The octagonal Bath and Pavilion are in the same style.¹

III

Art is a mirror of the age and reflects its social life. The art of the pre-Mughal period belies the popular belief in the tyranny and exclusiveness of the Mussalmans. It bears witness to their socio-political relations with the Hindus, which can be traced also in literature. Even Mahmud the iconoclast maintained a corps of Hindu horse. He took Hindu artists to Ghazni, where they finished his mosque, 'The Celestial Bride'. Tilak was employed by Mas'ud in equal rank with his Muslim nobles. Hindu

1. For illustrations see Fergusson and Burgess: *Indian Architecture* Book VII.

Cambridge History of India Vol. III pp. 568-640 and Plates.
Longhurst: *Hampi Ruins*. Figs. 16 and 33.

legends appear on the coinage of Mahammad of Ghor. Ratna and Gangu occupied high position under Muhammad Taghlak. Firuz Shah, on his capture of Nagarkot and its famous Sanskrit library arranged for the translation of Hindu works into Persian. Hussain and Nusrat of Bengal ordered translations from the *Bhāgavata Purana* and the *Mahabharata* and Sikandar Lodi from some medical treatises into Persian. There were instances under Firuz Shah of Muslim women worshipping Hindu idols and going, like their Hindu sisters, afoot or on horse-back, on pilgrimage to tombs. Sufism, reinforced by the Vedanta, gave rise to the Mahdi movement traceable in Gujarat even in Firuz Shah's reign. Poets like Amir Khusru were ardent admirers of Sanskrit and Hindi and of classical Hindu music. Hindustani music was the bond of friendship between the Sultan of Kashmir and the Raja of Gwalior.

The stories of persecution under Ala-ad-din Khalji and Firuz Shah, narrated by Barani, are really records of the attempts made to stem the tide of Hinduisation. The natural effects of social intercourse could not be stamped out by political authority. There was protest against the Sultan's interference with the religion of his Hindu subjects. When a Brahman claimed equality for all religions the Qazis of Lucknow were divided as to his guilt. Mussalman poets enriched the Vaishnava literature of Bengal. Hindus and Muslims formed the expanding school of the *Panchapiriyas*. The cult of *Satyapir*, founded in Bengal, united Hindus and Muslims in religious worship. Sufis and Nur Bakhshis considered the path of devotion as more meritorious than the Law of the Prophet. Hindu unitarism is marked by the mysticism of Lalla the prophetess, Vallabhachārya's rapture in Krishna and the Gopis, and Chaitanya's sinking of the soul in the love of the Lord. Hindu-Muslim unification was the aim of Nanak in the Punjab and Kabir in Bengal. The political reforms of Zain-ul-Abidin in Kashmir and the solicitude of Sher Shah the Afghan were the crown and culmination of the Time-Spirit of synthesis and syncretism.¹

IV

The Mongol race is remarkable in history for its aesthetic sense and tomb-building propensities, and the Mughal rulers of India were no exceptions. Babar was a great builder. He tells us² that he employed 1491 stone-cutters everyday. Among his

1. S. V. Venkateswara: *Indian Culture through the Ages*, Vol. II Chap. V. Section 3.

2. *Memoirs* (Erskine's Translation, p. 384.)



buildings are the palace at Agra with its magnificent *baoli*, a mosque at Paniput and the Jami Masjid at Sambhal. Humayun's name is associated with many buildings at Agra and Delhi. He loved fine buildings and broad roads and made the streets of Delhi imposing and impressive. He resided at Delhi and built the fort. Its walls were covered with whitewash got by mixing lime with milk so that the walls shine like mirrors and no cracks appear. Ferishta mentions¹ as his a palace of seven pavilions and a mosque on the Jumna. But his mosque of five domed compartments at Kachchpura² and his tomb planned in his own life-time are marked by poverty of design. None of these buildings shows any Hindu details.

Akbar was not only builder among princes, but prince among builders. True to the genius of his race, he utilised and assimilated the art-traditions of the conquered peoples. Perhaps he was the aesthetic heir of Sher Shah whose employment of the Hindu bracket is in evidence in his mosque at Delhi. The Stone-cutters' Masjid (finished before 1554) contains an extensive use of 'S' brackets, which were copied in the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chishti at Fatehpur Sikri. It is more probable that Akbar's art reflects the conditions of the times. For the artistic vigour of the period was evident throughout India. The opening of the 16th century saw the country covered with palaces and tombs. In South India the Bijapur style stood unrivalled for grandeur of conception and boldness in construction, combining Indian and foreign influences. Abul Fazl says³ that Akbar's earliest buildings at Agra were erected 'after the beautiful designs of Bengal and Gujarat which masterly sculptors and cunning artists of form have fashioned as architectural models.'

The causes of such a universal art movement are not far to seek. The wanderings of peoples from Central Asia in the thirteenth century were due to inclement heat-waves and persistent sultriness in that region, as the earth was in perihelion. The next century witnessed the migrations crystallizing into settlements. Political conquest and religious zeal were slowly replaced by love of decoration and display ripening into aesthetic achievement. This was helped by the spiritual and moral forces of refined and reviving Hinduism, by the wealth of India, her cheap labour and her abundance of building material. The architects and the artisans of India were in organised castes and gilds, and clung

1. Briggs' Trans. Vol. II p. 71.

2. Arch. Sur. Ann. Rep. 1923-24, p. 6.

3. Ain-i-Akbari (Blochmann's Trans. Vol. II, p. 180).

tenaciously to their ancestral professions. They showed an inherited genius to adopt foreign styles and motifs and adapt them to native styles, welding them with indigenous details into a harmonious structure. This blending and synthesis was a gradual evolution. It was preceded by an age of the gathering of forces and collection of diverse details,—the aesthetic counterpart of Akbar's eclectic policy in religion.

The Indo-Persian style was a slow evolution, of which the stages can now be traced.¹ In 1555 Humayun had brought a school of Persian and Kalmuk artists into India. The Arab Serai was put up by Akbar's mother, Hamida Banu Begum, in 1560 to settle three hundred Arab families brought from Mecca. It has carvings on capital and base, and beautiful brackets. To 1561 belongs the mosque near Delhi built by Maham Anaga, with many-coloured tiles and a central hemispherical dome but without flanking towers or minars. The tomb of Nizam-ad-din at Delhi was put up by Sayyid Farid Khan in 1562. It has windows of marble lattice work with red sandstone frames and beautiful balustrades. To the same year belongs the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus at Gwalior, where some of the kiosks have square columns and bracket capitals. It is square, not octagonal in plan, and has an outward screen of trellis-work which is far more elegant than the open arcade till then in fashion. The Mahal Mandu of 1564 is now a forgotten city, with traces of mosques and wells alone as reminders. But the transition from Persian to Indo-Persian style is most noticeable in the tomb of Humayun finished by Haji Begum in 1569. Its pillars have plain carvings on the capital and the base, and it has numerous brackets and balustrades. It shows two innovations. There are towers attached to the four angles of the main building, and its groundplan is purely Indian. We meet also for the first time with the narrow-necked double dome, much more beautiful and effective than the low-pitched pre-Mughal dome, which was afterwards adopted in all buildings in the Mughal style. Akbar's Rang Mahal at Fatehpur-Sikri was put up the same year, to house the Jaipur princess who was conceiving the heir apparent Jehangir. The building is windowless and devoid of decoration. There is a single plain column in the centre of the room. On the other hand, Akbar's red palace in the Agra fort, then known as the Bengali Mahal, and now as the Jahangiri Mahal, marks the new style employed by him; for here Hindu ornamentation and the horizontal style of construction supersede Saracen arches. The fire-red stones were 'so cleverly

1. Jeypore *Portfolio of Architectural Details*—II, 41, 43, 47, 59 and 60 IV. 25-28; V, 54-58; VI, 18-27.

joined that a hair cannot find its way into the joints'. The building was apparently put up after 1569 when, we learn from the *Akbar Namah*¹, Akbar halted in this place. If De Laet² can be believed, it was here that 'foreign women were brought up for the pleasure of the king'. It is possible that the style of building was intended to please them, for, in the adjoining Salimgarh³ we have no Hindu details among the elaborate paintings and geometrical figures clumsily drawn like those of the Jami Masjid at Fatehpur-Sikri. It will be clear that none of these buildings—least of all, the tomb of Muhammad Ghaus—can be ascribed to the 'invigorating touch of Akbar's genius'⁴. The fine arts never burst into sudden bloom at the magic touch of a magnetic personality. That Akbar had no artistic genius or even taste in 1562 will be clear from his vandalism at Chitore. There, contrary to the racial genius, he allowed the fine Hindu monuments to be razed to the ground.

V

The architecture of Akbar's time is illustrated by his buildings at Agra, Fatehpur-Sikri and Lahore. These were successively the capitals of his empire. The old city of Agra had been planned in 1504 on an eminence on the left bank of the Jumna, but it had been subject to an earthquake in the very year after its foundation. Akbar planned the modern city on the right bank of the river, and commenced building a palace and citadel there in 1566. In the confines of the citadel were included not only the public offices and quarters for the nobility but houses for the common people. Dwelling there, the emperor could keep the rebels of the place in awe, and escape the intense heat of feverish Delhi. Monserrate⁵ describes it as a large city four miles by two which has a central position, mild climate, fertile soil, a great river and beautiful gardens. But the palace came to be looked on as a haunted house, and had witnessed the death of two infant imperial sons. Hence the foundation of Fatehpur-Sikri, 23 miles to the west, where Jahangir was born in 1569. The city was on the top of a hill, and there were some of Babar's buildings and a *masjid* erected by stone-masons near the humble cave-dwelling of Shaik Salim Chishti. The stone quarries of the place were such that the stones 'may be cleft like logs and sawn like planks to seal chambers and cover houses.' Verily did it rise like an exhalation, this city of crimson lights and golden domes. It stands,

1. *Akbar Namah* (Beveridge's translation), II, 247.

2. De Laet: *Commentaries* (Lethbridge's translation), p. 31

3. *Archaeological Survey Annual Report* for 1910-1911.

4. As claimed by Fergusson (*Architecture*, p. 576).

5. *Commentary* of Monserrate (Hoyland and Banerjea), p. 31.

the silent witness of a vanished dream, a beauty in desolation. The citadel was two miles in circumference, had four gates, and was embellished with towers at very frequent intervals. The roads to Agra on the east and Ajmir to the west were carefully laid out and punctuated by half-mile stones. For supplying the city with water a tank was constructed, in true Vijayanagara fashion, by building a dam across a low-lying valley. But the city had to be deserted and was no more the capital in 1585 when Ralph Finch visited the emperor¹. According to Finch² the reason for the desertion was that the brackish water of the city had caused much mortality. Xavier found the place in ruins in 1602, when only 'a few edifices stood firm'³. The capital moved to Lahore, and in 1598 to Agra again.

The art of the reign owed a great deal to the direct interest and supervision of the emperor. 'His Majesty' says Abul Fazl, 'plans splendid edifices, and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay'. 'He has passed new regulations, kindled the lamp of honesty, and put a stock of practical knowledge into the hands of simple and inexperienced men.' Monserrate bears evidence to the same effect:

"Zelaldinus (Akbar) is so devoted to buildings that he sometimes quarries stone himself, along with the other workmen. Nor does he shrink from watching and even himself practising, for the sake of amusement, the craft of an ordinary artisan. For this purpose he has built a workshop near the palace, where also are studios and workrooms for the finer and more reputable arts, such as painting, goldsmith-work, tapestry-making, carpet and curtain making, and the manufacture of arms. Hither he very frequently comes and relaxes his mind with watching at their work those who practise these arts".

"The splendour of his palaces approaches closely to that of the royal dwellings of Europe The roofs of these palaces are not tiled, but are dome shaped, being protected from the weather on the outside by the solid plaster covering the stone slabs. This forms a roof absolutely impervious to moisture. The palaces are also decorated with many pinnacles, supported on four columns, each of which forms a small covered portico. Not a little is added to the beauty of the palaces by charming pigeon-cotes, partly covered with rough-cast, and partly showing walls built of small blue and white bricks"⁴.

1. and 2. Purchas: *Pilgrims*, Vol. IV, pp. 41, 49, 72, 75.

3. J. R. A. S. 1896, p. 91.

4. Monserrate, *op. cit.* pp. 199—200.

The king's audience chamber which overlooked the city and was a huge and beautiful structure can be identified with the Diwan-i-Am where the imperial decisions were announced after they had been discussed in the Diwan-i-Khas. There is a quadrangle in front of the hall used for parades, north of which is a stone ring for securing elephants. The people thronged the courts surrounding the quadrangle. The Diwan-i-Khas is fitted with coffered on the N. W. and S. E. corners, and was probably the seat of the public offices. Its door-ways are trabeate in construction fringed by brackets on both sides. Its central pillar is an octagonal piece of intricate stone cutting, the outline being Hindu and the carving, which covers the capital and base, Saracenic. A lotus is carved on the ceiling right overhead of the emperor's seat, and carvings adorn the parapet wall all round the seat. The capital, which reaches halfway up the interior height of the hall has a fringe of numerous brackets, and supported Akbar's throne¹. Small galleries led from this circular space to the four corners of the hall where the ministers sat. Abul-Fazl² tells us that there were four chief ministers, the Dewan, the Judge, the Commander-in-chief and the Intelligencer. If they sat in the corner rooms, the emperor could easily take their advice during an audience accorded to a petitioner on the floor. It is probable that religious disputations were held in this building in the earlier years. We learn from Badaoni³, nobles were seated on the eastern side of the hall, the Sayyids on the west, the Ulama on the south, and the Shaiks on the north. The discussions took place on Thursday evenings till 1579, and often lasted till midnight.

It were hard to trace the model on which Akbar based his plan of a single pillar supporting the throne. 'The Mahagiri Nat shrine in the palace at Mandalay is also supported by a single pole, which signifies overlordship or divinity. That Akbar arrogated to himself divine honours and claimed the overlordship of India is symbolised by his sitting on a throne supported by a single pillar.'⁴ This explanation is ingenious, but there is no evidence of Akbar's arrogating divine honours at any time. According to Jahangir⁵, Akbar 'never by a hair's breadth placed his

1. E. W. Smith: *Architecture of Fatehpur-Sikri*. Part I, Pl. 80-84.

2. Preface to the *Ain-i-Akbari*.

3. Badaoni, Vol. II, pp. 200, 284; Monserrate p. 176. The *Kalima* of Islam had disappeared from the coinage and liturgy already by 1577. The Hindu halls of learning are described in exactly similar terms, e. g., by Rajasekhara in the 9th. century (S. V. Venkateswara: *Ind. Culture* Vol. I, p. 218).

4. *Arch. Sur. Rep.*, E. C. (Rangcon, 1917).

5. *Memoirs* (translation) Vol. I, p. 37.

foot beyond the base of humility before the throne of God, and never for a moment forgot God'. In the 36th year of his reign, Akbar forbade undue veneration to himself, 'for such acts of worship are for God alone'.¹ But perhaps there was the idea of sovereign power. An inscription of Salim's on the black stone seat on the terrace of the Diwan-i-Khas at Agra bears date 1011 A. H. (1603) and says:

The heir of the seal and throne gave laws from this sovereign height,
His name as lord of the world was known, and his fame as Religion's
light².

A curious piece of work is the Panch Mahal, a five-storeyed building, the upper storey in each case having fewer chambers than the lower one. It resembles in design the Buddhist (*vihara*) monastery,³ and was perhaps used for a diversion. From the uppermost storey could be obtained the cool evening breeze and a good view of the scenery. The other terraces, open on all sides, were pleasant places of retreat at all times. Many of the pillars of the Mahal are similar in outline, but no two are similar in design, showing the variety and skill with which Indian workmen can treat similar outlines. They are all profusely sculptured, and many are beautifully carved. The carvings are similar to those of the early cave temples in India. Architecturally the Panch Mahal is a clear improvement on the Lotus Mahal at Hampi which is in the same style. It has a decreasing number of rooms and columns in each upper storey, and there are beautiful stairs, whereas at Hampi the staircase appears to have been introduced as a later appendage and is ugly in structure.⁴

VI

By far the richest of Akbar's buildings and the most beautiful and characteristic are the palaces of his favourite queens. The earliest of these appears to be what is popularly known as Jodh Bai's palace.⁵ In a Turkish bath attached to the palace we find a half-dome decorated by a straight-line pattern. The scratches on the plaster were parts of the polygons which were the construction lines on which the pattern was formed.⁶ This structure

1. Elliot and Dawson: *History of India* VI, p. 149.

2. Translated by H. G. Keene (*Turks in India*, p. 106).

3. Fa-Hien (Beal: *Buddhist Records*, Vol. I, p. 169) The monastery described by him had also five storeys, the lowest storey having 500 chambers and the highest only 100.

4. Jeypore *Portfolio*, Vol. II Nos. 20-30. Longhurst: *Hampi Ruins*. Fig. 33 and p. 84.

5. E. W. Smith: *op. cit.* part II.

6. Arch. Sur. *Memoir* No. 15, p. 4.

has carved Hindu columns, elaborated capitals, beautiful brackets, and four pillared pavilions like the palace in the Agra fort. Its design is simpler and plainer than that of the Jehangir Mahal of Agra where Akbar halted in 1570, or of Birbal's house which bears an inscription of 1571. The arch-like tops found at Agra are not found here. The design of the facades is solemn and severe. The brackets crudely formed and carved, are evidently bad copies of proto-types in the Stone-cutters' Masjid which is the oldest building in the city. The chequering upon the cornice is Hindu. The kind of window tracery known as *Jali* work appears here. It was used in Hindu buildings for centuries, and was fashionable in the pre-Mughal period. There are other indications that the building was intended to house a Hindu. The main entrance has the sexagon (*shad konam*) in Hindu style formed of two triangles one of which is inverted over the other. The interior of this figure is filled with a full blown lotus. The figure is carved above the arch, on the spandrels on either side of the entrance. In the walls of the chapel are seven niches, some of which are reported to have, till recently, contained statues of Hindu deities. The recesses in the interior side of the wall probably also contained images, the sills holding the lights. The Hawai Mahal indicates connexion with Jodhpur, but was a later addition to the building, as some of the windows had to be blocked up, to the detriment of the adjoining room. It may therefore have been the residence of one of Akbar's wives, which was improved and adapted to suit the taste of Jodh Bai, the daughter of Udaya Simha of Jodhpur, married by Jahangir in 1584. Beautiful perforated screens let the breeze in, and enamelled tiles beautify the roof here as well as in the 'Winter House' opposite. It is probable that Akbar spent a great portion of his time here, as it was the apartment of one of his favourite queens. We learn from Monserrate and Pinheiro that imperial orders were often passed from the harem, and that one of the queens had the custody of the great seal and the signet seal¹.

Miriam Kothi was originally known as the Golden House (Sonahra Makan) from the profuse gilding which embellished the walls, and the verandah of this palace is praised in an inscription². Near it are numerous baolis or reservoirs with flights of steps below the ground, and special arrangements apparently made to cool the residence of the fair occupant during the summer months. The frescoes in the Kothi represent the events

1. Monserrate (*op. cit*) p. 209; Maclagan in *J. A. S. B.*, Vol 65,

p, 86.

2. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, (Horowitz's list) No, 632.

in the *Shah Namah* of Ferdausi, but the sculptures are Hindu in feeling, abounding in *kirtimukhas* and having, among others, a figure of Rama with Hanuman. Rama stands on a lotus, with Hanuman at his feet. Father Monserrate informs us that 'Akbar inscribed the name of Hanuman amongst the titles of God'. The garden is stone-paved throughout, and is reported to have contained sculptured representations of Hindu deities which, along with other sculptures from the Kothi, were thrown away by iconoclastic hands near the Musicians' Gallery on the Agra road¹.

Some² suppose Miriam to be a Christian wife of Akbar's, the sister of Juliana who was a doctor in the Zenana. It is open to any one 'to believe in a pretty and quaint tradition, rather than quibble over it'. But the Jesuit records make no mention of the Christian wife or of her sister. Nor would the architecture of the Kothi justify such a view. The paintings, too, on a close study, reveal no Christian character. The so-called 'Annunciation and Fall'³ is only in the fancy of the guides⁴. The Angel's attitude is Indian, the left leg dangling and the right leg crossed on the seat. His flowing robe is caught up over the left arm, in the Hindu *upavita* style, and round his throat floats a necklace. Adjoining is the figure of a man with a Punjabi cap talking to a woman across a tree, with a peacock at her foot and a serpent gliding away from the tree.

Nor is it easy to accept the suggestion⁵ that Miriam Kothi may have located the chapel and residence of Fathers Aqaviva and Monserrate. It is clearly within the Ladies' Enclosure, and very near Jodh Bai's palace. Monserrate says that the Fathers adorned the chapel with silken curtains, and makes no reference to the profuse gilding on the walls characteristic of this building. The surface of concrete, and the iron ring in the centre of the ceiling, are easily explained on the supposition that it was a Hindu place of worship. Badaoni⁶ remarks that 'in compliment to his Hindu wives Akbar had within the female apartments

1 E. W. Smith : *op. cit.*, Part I, p. 29, and Chap. V ; Monserrate *op. cit.*, p. 95.

2. Fanthome : *Reminiscences of Agra* (1895), p. 16; Kincaid : *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, Jan, 1887; W. S. Caine; *Picturesque India* p. 236.

3. E. W. Smith : *op. cit.*, Plate 109.

4. Similar fancy could read the story of man's first disobedience in the Buddhist figure of a man plucking fruit from a tree, depicted on one of the columns of the Panch Mahal.

5. Goldie : *First Christian Mission to the Court of Akbar*, p. 69, note 1 and Father Heras : *The Journal of Indian History*, Vol. III, pp. 64-68.

6. Badaoni (Lowe's translation) II, 261.

continued to burn the *homa*'. Jahangir's mother was named Miriam uz Zamani (Mary of the Age), and there is no reason why she should not have lived in this palace of coral and ruddy gold.

The Turkish Sultana's House¹ is a poem in stone. It probably belonged to Akbar's first wife Sultana Rukaiya Begum, a daughter of his uncle Hindal. She was evidently delighted by the Asiatic painting of the period, as shown by the Chinese carving, on the wall, of the Buddha housed in a bamboo dagaba. After the universal custom of Zenana buildings, there are no windows or doors in the outer walls on the exterior side, but the interior side is broken up into deep recesses for architectural effect. The building shows the influences of Saracenic, Persian and, perhaps, European styles. The walls are panelled after the Elizabethan fashion, and it is possible that some of Akbar's European gunners had some artistic taste and acquaintance with that style. The enamelled tiling was probably borrowed from Persia where the use of blue tiles was in vogue. The pillars are elaborately carved in Saracen fashion with geometrical patterns and floral devices. The pavilion is indeed a 'superb jewel casket', in which hardly a square inch of masonry is left uncarved. Upon the dados we find lions, tigers, birds, etc., beautifully sculptured. One panel is an elaborate and realistic jungle scene. On this and the other pavilions, Fergusson² remarks as follows: 'It is impossible to conceive anything so picturesque in outline, or any building carved and ornamented to such an extent without the smallest approach to being over-done or in bad taste.'

Within the Zenana quarters we have what is popularly called Birbal's Daughter's Mahal³, a small building which is the most richly carved. Birbal's daughter is mentioned nowhere among Akbar's wives, and it seems certain that the building was occupied by Birbal himself. The Mahal is dated Samvat 1629 (A. D. 1571). It shows an ingenious combination of Hindu brackets and Muslim arches and domes. The facades as well as the interior walls are minutely and elaborately carved⁴. We have geometrical devices such as octagonal patterns on the jambs at the entrance, and similar ones studded with rosettes on the ceiling, the finest in Fatehpur-Sikri. The enriched arched arcade is surmounted by a deep drip-stone or eave supported on handsome massive brackets

1. E. W. Smith : *op. cit.*, Part I, Chap. I, and Plates.
2. Fergusson : *Indian Architecture*, p. 579.
3. Jeypore *Portfolio*, Vol. v, 42-44; V. A. Smith : *Akbar*, Plate facing p. 443.
4. The names of the carvers are Bhairava Bhaksh and Fazl-ud-din. (E. W. Smith, II, Pl. 36).

springing from caps of pilasters. The tectonics aim at coolness as well as beauty, avoiding a lofty room on the one hand, or a squat, ugly, external dome on the other¹. The building has steep and narrow staircases and recesses in the walls of the upper rooms, and bay windows supported on brackets. It commands a beautiful view of the green meadow, dotted with the white domes of tombs, beside the rippling waters, on which glided the barge from the shores of the low undulating hills beyond.

VII

The palaces at Agra best illustrate the contrast between the building styles of Akbar and his successors. Shah Jahan cleared away most of these buildings to make room for others of his own design. The red sandstone palace of Akbar² with its manly vigour, rich sculpture and square Hindu construction stands in marked contrast to the white marble court of Shah Jahan's harem, with its arch and tracery, its inlay and mosaic work, its feeble prettiness and effeminate elegance. Though the substructures of Akbar's palace are of red sandstone, its corridors, chambers and pavilions are mostly of white marble, wrought with mosaics and carvings of exquisite ornament. The pavilions are inlaid with rich patterns and topped with golden domes. The buildings show a wealth of imaginative and varied elegance of unique and never iterative designs. They are bred of a prodigious fancy held in check by judicious intelligence. Shah Jahan's buildings show an exuberant fancy, free and unrestrained. The mosaics and tracery of the Taj are beautiful, but the unity and the individuality of the structure and the subordination of the parts to the whole have passed away.

Akbar's buildings at Lahore are also of profusely sculptured red sandstone, and are distinguished by features of Hindu architecture—such as brackets with figures of elephants and lions and friezes of peacocks. The most beautiful of his buildings at Allahabad is the Chalis Situn or pavilion of forty pillars, 'as fine in style and rich in ornament as any in India.' Among the Hindu structures of the time we have, for purpose of comparison the Sati Burj at Mathura, the quadrangular tower of red sandstone (1570) and the early temples and edifices of Brindaban dating from 1573³. Among the latter is the shrine of Govind Deva put

1. Cp. the double dome of Baghdad *The Euphrates and Tigris* Plate, p. 131) and the flat ceiling in place of the inner dome in the Ibrahim Rauza (Cousens : *Bijapur*, pp. 19, 53).
2. Illustrated in *Arch. Sur. Rep.* for 1910–11, Pl. 53 (b).
3. Jeypore Portfolio, XII, Pl. 31–34.

up by Māna Simha. The roof is constructed of true radiating Gothic arches instead of overlapping brackets. The walls are pierced in two stages, the upper stage being a reproduction of the Islamite triforium.

The Kanch Mahal at Sikandara is otherwise known as Birbal's house and sometimes as Jodh Bai's Mahal, and probably belongs to the end of Akbar's reign. The principal facade faces north, and not towards the main road leading to Agra. This would only be natural, as Agra was not yet the capital of the empire¹. The entrance throughout is more Hindu than Muhammadan in design, and the north facade is as elaborately carved as Birbal's Mahal at Fatehpur or the Turkish Sultana's House². The building shows how the florid style associated with the later Mughal period had its origin really in Akbar's reign.

The tops of the archways are enclosed by square-headed architraves which project very slightly in front of the stone framing. The inner moulding is carved with lotus buds, and the outer with undulating creepers. Between the two is the usual tooth moulding. The arch has its sides continued down in an unbroken line to the plinth, whereas in very early times it had sprung from pendants upon the sides of the jambs, and later was carried down to the ground by shafts. The intrados of the arch is beautified with a fringe of lotus buds, and the spandrel between the extrados of the arch and the architrave is decorated with leaf scrolls. The lines of the scrolls are easy and pleasing, and flow in graceful graduations from the centre to the corners of the spandrels. The spandrels thus contrast with those of the early part of the reign. Then they were almost plain, only a boss being carved in the centre; and flowing tracery gradually makes its appearance.

The top of the window is roofed by a half-dome in cement covered on the exterior with encaustic tiles in blue and green embedded in orange borders. The general effect of the tiling combined with the dark-red sandstone traceried windows is most effective, unique and pleasing. The windows rest on elaborately carved and moulded brackets tailed well into the wall. There are also bay windows, but these are rare in the Mughal style³.

Other public works of the reign likewise show the transition. The mosque of Balban at Jalali in Aligarh was repaired very

1. Mr. E. W. Smith is surprised at this as he refers the building to the reign of Jahangir.
2. E. W. Smith *Mughal Colour Decoration of Agra*. Pl. 82.
3. *Ibid*, Chap. IV.

early in the reign. Its facade is flanked by lofty minarets which are square in design and surmounted by cupolas with gilt pinnacles.¹

VIII

The glory of Fatehpur-Sikri is its mosque, one of the very best in all India. It measures 258 ft. × 66 ft. and is crowned by three domes. Its court-yard is 360 ft. × 439 ft. It was designed to resemble the holy place in Mecca, yet it exhibits Hindu construction in the details of the pillars and roofing. Its magnificent gateway has a nobler appearance than any of its kind in the whole world. Here we have the solution of the great architectural problem of all countries,—that of getting over the inconvenience of giving to a huge building a gateway proportioned to its size. The Saracenic architects placed their portals at the back of a semi-dome, and its dimensions become those of the portal, irrespective of the size of the openings provided at the base.²

The place of the Jami Masjid in architecture will be clear from a comparison of it with the earlier stone-cutter's mosque on the one hand, and with the later Mughal mosques on the other. The stone-cutter's masjid shows some peculiar features: there are curious little recesses, presumably used for lamps, on each side of the upper part of the *mihrab*, between the architraves and the piers of the bays.³ In the centre of the recess is a small arched opening of horse-shoe⁴ shape, rarely met with in other Mughal architecture. There are niches and fantastic-shaped 'S' brackets, which apparently served as models for those used in the tomb of Salim Chishti. Only the principal *mihrab* is carved.

The Jami Masjid shows the free use of the kiosk, to break up what otherwise would be a hard and right sky-line, to screen the nakedness of the Pathan dome surmounting the tomb, and impart a picturesqueness to the building. The cupola is crowned by a rich leaf-carved and moulded finial in stone.⁵ The portal conceals the dome behind, as in the Jaunpur masjids, and supplies the place of minaret. The principal chamber is one of the most elaborately decorated in Northern India. The cupola of the dome rests on corbels instead of on arched pendentives of the

1. *Arch. S. Ann. Rep.*, 1914--15, p. 144.

2. Fergusson: p. 582. (*Arch. S. A. R.* 1911--12, pp. 25--26.)

3. Smith: IV, p. 184. Fig. 2.

4. To drive away the influence of the 'evil eye' (Blochmann: *Ain-i-Akbari*, I. 139).

5. Cp. the brazen finials at Bijapur, where the pillars in the corridors are also Hindu in style (Cousens: *Bijapur*, p. 55).

later Mughal style. Over the apex of the arch is a carved terminal of leaves spread out like a fan palm and resembling the Greek palm-leaf ornament. The arch is in several pieces of stone, but has no keystone, and one of the joints comes immediately beneath the terminal over the apex. Hindu brackets spring from the capitals of columns¹ to support the massive lintels closing the top of the arcade which leads to the roof. The whole of the bracket is visible here, whereas it is hidden by an arch in the external doorway to Birbal's house.

The columns in the mosque savour of Hindu design.² The lower section is square, the middle octagonal, and the upper 16-sided and fluted, and finished off at the top by octagonal necking. Round the semi-octagonal shafts is an edging of lotus-buds, the favourite Hindu ornament. On some of the piers we have, instead of the Saracenic circular scroll, the Hindu undulating one.

Even here we have only an illustration of the Time—spirit of the age. The mosques of Rohtasgarh and Hajipur reveal Hindu influence, even in details unnecessary for artistic ornament. The former was erected by Hatsh Khan in 1580, and the latter by Maksud in 1587 on the banks of the Gandak in Behar. The latter has an inscription in Persian characters, but it is in Hindi and refers to Hindu Gods. The chronogram for the year 995 is obtained here by deducting *Manmatha* (5) from *Indra* (1000).³

IX

At Fatehpur-Sikri are the tombs of Shaikh Salim Chishti and his grandson Islam Chishti. To the former Akbar owed his eldest son,⁴ and with his family, according to Badaoni, Akbar was on terms of infamous intimacy. His tomb is wholly in white marble, and there is a Hindu feeling about it. It contains some of the finest specimens of perforated marble work and geometrical patterns of the most exquisite design. The design of some of the brackets is so elaborate as to appear almost fantastic. The saint reposes under a canopy which is encrusted all over with fine mother-of-pearl inlaid work. Miriam's tomb at Sikandara has octagonal kiosks in the corners and rectangular ones at the centre of each facade. Plastered domes rise from octagonal drums.

1. Smith : IV, Pl. 71.

2. Smith : IV, Pl. 58, Pl. 48, Fig. 6.

3. *Calcutta Review* for 1891, p. 39, note.

4. Keene suggests that the fakir substituted a child for the royal infant who was still-born. Akbar was away at the war. (*Guide to Agra* cited by E. W. Smith, III, 10).

The sole internal decoration of the tomb is a dado of coloured plaster.¹

The most characteristic of Akbar's buildings is the tomb which he commenced to erect for himself at Sikandara. It is in an emerald isle of 40 acres, dotted with red granite gateways and pavilions and minarets of white marble. The space within is divided into green alleys leading to the central pyramid, which ends in a square platform of white marble, surrounded by most elaborate lattice work, round a small altar tomb which is carved with delicacy and beauty. The real tomb at the bottom is plain and unadorned, but there are traces of painted dados beneath the whitewash on the lower portion of the walls.² It is in the style of a Buddhist *vihāra*, but the number and proportion of the storeys are the same as in the Pallava structures at Mamallapuram. The pavilions that adorn the upper storeys of Akbar's tomb appear distinct reminiscences of the cells that stand on the edge of each platform of the rock-cut temple.

A domical chamber over the tombstone was part of the original design. The pyramid as it now stands has a truncated and unmeaning aspect. A central dome of 30 or 40 feet over the 100 ft. of the existing height, would give the tomb beauty in outline and in proportion.³ The cloud-forms and other motifs here were apparently copied from Persia to which they had travelled from the Far East.

The Koranic prohibition of tombs being raised higher than a span from the ground, had been disregarded long before this period. But Akbar's tomb was enriched with paintings and carvings also. Manucci saw 'a holy crucifix delineated in the wall, on the right hand of the crucifix the image of Our Lady with the infant Jesus in her arms, while on the left was St. Ignatius.' These paintings were put up 'only because they were a novelty in those days, not on account of religion.'⁴ Butter-flies and other insects are carved on the panels of the cenotaph. Among the flowers and plants portrayed here are the lily, the almond, and the dahlia; while among the floral paintings of the palace at Sikri we recognise the peony, poppy, tulip, rose and almond.⁵

1. Arch. Sur. A. R. for 1910—11, p. 96.

2. Smith : *Akbar's Tomb*, p. 9.

Abdul Fazl says the work took eight years (*Akbar Nama*, II, 373). Jahangir (I. p. 3) says it took 16 years and cost 35 lakhs of rupees.

3. Fergusson, p. 585.

4. Irvine's translation, Vol. I, p. 42.

5. On the southern vestibule are engraved *Kuran*, Chap. 67—33, and 56, and 37, the last three verses.

On a panel in the western gateway is figured the cypress, the symbol of mourning in Christianity, and on the panels are cut stone-coloured slabs with rounded ends, as in a Christian cemetery.¹

X

The vast amount and first rate quality of the ornamental carving which belongs to the period indicates an age of luxurious leisure, when great powers of mind were thrown into decorative design and all the surplus energy and free fancy were thrown into manual work. How much unconscious practice, for instance, is involved in the drawing of an ingenious spiral or the elaboration of a geometrical or floral pattern! In this case it illustrates also the triumph of art over religion, as among the early Muslims the Koranic prohibitions as to portraiture were in strict observance. And a wealth of variety, a flowering of geometry, exquisiteness of design and delicacy of execution meet our gaze everywhere—whether in the pillars of the Panch Mahal, the Diwan-i-Khas or the 'Turkish' Sultan's house, in the plinths and copings of Jodh Bai's quarters or the 'Grape Garden' of the Fort at Agra, the arches of Birbal's palace, or the tomb of Salim Chishti, or the balustrades in the Khas Mahal, or the tomb of Humayun.² Two of the buildings, the houses of Birbal and the 'Turkish' Sultana, are the most minutely carved in all India. Even figures of animals and human and divine beings are carved, in defiance of the expressed prohibition in the Koran. In the Mahal-i-Khas, for instance, we have the boating scene³ where the figures of fair faces are carefully drawn; the elephant with uplifted trunk as a bracket figure;⁴ the carving of foliage, Persian in feeling, with the branches of trees at right angles to the boughs to fill up blank space;⁵ and birds over a conventionally carved shrub mutilated later by Puritan hands, in the garden scene.⁶ The Hindu *gaja makara* ornamentation appears in the Hide-and-Seek chamber.⁷ The stone carvings are done in such delicate detail that an expert wood-cutter may take pride in producing the like of them successfully even on wood. Timber is as conspicuous by absence as the arch is by its rare appearance. It looks as if Akbar meant to make all

1. Smith : *Akbar's Tomb*, Pl. 57.

2. See the plates in E. W. Smith : *op. cit.*, Also the *Jeyapore portfolio of Architectural Details*, Vol. I, Pl. 1821, 46 ; II, 18—34, 54, 55 ; IV, 37—40, 47 ; V, 42—44, 54—58 ; VI, 26, 27, 31, 41, 42.

3. E. W. Smith : *op. cit.* I, Pl. 12.

4. Pl. 34.

5. Pl. 41.

6. Pl. 45.

7. Pl. 98.

his buildings cyclopic, as emblems of the strength and stability of his empire. Stone is made to serve the place of clay and the roof consists of solid slabs of stone carved on the outside in imitation of tiles. But there is no carving on the spandrels, no instance of the flowing tracery which is everywhere in evidence in the later Mughal buildings. Nor is there any evidence of ivory carving having been known at the time.

XI

The colour decoration of Akbar's reign may be considered under three main heads—frescoes, mosaic and glazed tiling. The buildings of Fatehpur-Sikri constructed towards the end of his reign were richly decorated with frescoes upon the interior walls. Fresco painting is mural painting upon damp freshly-laid plaster lime with colours capable of resisting the caustic action of the lime. Precious stones were sometimes pounded for colour, e.g., the lapis lazuli for blue, the coral for red. Some of these frescoes were first class illustrations of historical and mythological scenes. Those of the Mariam Kothi, for instance, illustrate the events in the *Shah Namah* of Firdausi. We find marble mosaic used in the Jami Masjid, one of the finest mosques in all India, and in the corridors, chambers and pavilions of Akbar's palace at Agra. There is a mosaic of mirrors adorning the chambers and pavilions of the Shish Mahal or 'Palace of glass' at Agra. There is an oriental bath, the walls and ceilings of which are decorated with thousands of small, circular, convex mirrors arranged in intricate patterns. But mosaic ornament was very sparingly used by Akbar, and *pietra dura* ornamentation was introduced only after his death.

In the enamelled tiles used in the buildings we have a striking illustration of the colour decoration of the times. The art of tile work was in use in India before Akbar's reign. It was probably introduced about 1500. One of the earliest examples is in the tomb of Sikandar Lodi of Khairpur (of about 1517). Some bits of brilliant tiled mosaic still exist in a ruined mosque of about 1562 opposite the western gate of Purana Kila at Delhi.¹ The tomb of Akbar's foster father, Shamsuddin Atgah Khan, is adorned with faint mosaics in which we have the rare combination of deep blue and green tiles with white marble in geometrical patterns. Glazed bricks and white and blue tiles are found used in the tomb of Shaikh Musa at Lahore. The glazing is in a transparent blue or rich dark purple, dark green or golden brown. It is found in the shape of tiles, of pinnacles for the tops

1. Arch. Sur. Ann. Rep. for 1903—4, p. 25 and Pl. XI.

of domes, pierced windows and other architectural accessories. Glazed vases and cups are commonly found on certain Mughal buildings, but these belong to a later age.

Glazed pottery was in use in India long before its contact with the Mughals, specimens of Vellore, Peshwar, and Gaur being most probably indigenous. And the kind of caustic tiles now manufactured in Sind and the Punjab were probably a development of indigenous tradition dating from the antiquities of the Copper Age and analogues to the ancient art of Chaldea and Assyria. But Persian influence is visible in the use of the knop and flower pattern in decoration and perhaps suggested by the term *Kasi*. Sir George Birdwood² derives *kasi* from *kas*, the semitic word for glass, but *kacha* is the Vedic word for 'glass bead.' It is not an accident that the old glazed tiles in India are seen only in Muhammadan buildings, for the art of tile work formed the chief decoration of the brick buildings of the contemporary Safevi Kings of Persia.

The manufacture of enamelled tiling was rather difficult in Akbar's day, and we find it used rather sparingly. The Chiniwali Masjid at Thanesar has its minarets and eastern facade covered with floral tiles and mosaics. Rooms on the north and south sides of Jodh Bai's palace are roofed with stone slabs, enamelled a deep blue. Tile mosaics are used for roofing and enriching borders round doorways, etc., at Fatehpur-Sikri, and for covering the outside of the kiosks round the third floor of Akbar's tomb at Sikandara. The patterns used are essentially geometrical, chiefly hexagonal, but these are in most cases combined with star or flowering patterns. It is not quite easy to classify the colours used by Akbar, as these seem to change with the light. His fondness for colours is clear from the statement of Abul Fazl that he introduced improvements in the method of mixing colours, and from the fact that even the Khwabgah, the unpretentious building where he mostly spent his leisure hours, is remarkable for its colour decoration. In the tile work five colours seem to be easily distinguishable—deep and light blue, green, yellow and white.

But his liking for the red is clear from the red sandstone of his buildings, and for golden from the profuse gilding of the walls of Miriam Kothi, hence known as the Sonahra Makan or Golden House. In the Macchi Bhawan at Agra is a black slate throne, and the sub-structures of the palace are of red stone, and the corridors, chambers and pavilions are of polished white marble

2. Birdwood: *Industrial Arts of India*, p. 320.

topped with golden domes. Akbar's Masjid at Delhi is profusely ornamented with coloured plaster and glazed tiles and the facade with medallions of various colours. The variety of colouring employed by him in the details may be illustrated by reference to one of the cupolas of his tomb at Sikandara. Here we have the ancient *Swastika* worked in white upon the centre of a dark blue star the points of which are green, except one which is yellow.¹

In spite of the Koranic prohibition we find animal figures on Mughal buildings at Fatehpur-Sikri, Agra and Lahore. The facades of the palace at Lahore are quaintly decorated with enamelled tiles representing hunting and mythological scenes, while scenes of social life and popular amusements are found depicted on the walls. Among these are camel and elephant fights. One of the latter is probably illustrated on a wall at Fatehpur-Sikri², but I was unable to read the details there. Details are found, however, on a panel near the Hathi Pol. Here is an arrangement for ending the fight before either elephant was killed, but none whatever as a precaution against the driver being slain. A second driver was to take the mahout's place if the latter were pulled down from his seat or trampled to death by the opposing animal. Under the Great Mughals animal fights became the recognized recreation of the Court, and a large number of the tile mosaics in the Agra fort relate to them³. According to one story, Akbar's last illness was caused by an excitement arising from an elephant fight. According to another, Akbar himself was the son of an elephant driver, who was surreptitiously exchanged for a daughter born to Humayun's wife. But he took delight in the fights of other animals as well. A bull fight scene occurs on a wall painting at Fatehpur-Sikri⁴. Akbar was interested in the daily exhibition of wrestlers, and gladiators, and in the fights of camels, frogs, spiders, flies and other creatures. His special fondness for the amorous fights of leopards illustrates his sensuality. Abul Fazl accounts for it by saying that there we have the best example of the power of love⁵.

1. E. W. Smith: *Mughal Colour Decoration of Agra*, Pl. LX, Fig. 3. See Pl. 59-63 for the kiosks round the tomb. Also the detailed illustrations in *Akbar's tomb in Sikandara*.

2. E. W. Smith: *Fatehpur-Sikri*, Part I., p. 112.

3. Dr. Vogel's articles and plates in *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, 1911 (Pl. 1, 3, 7, 9, 17, 35, 37, 39), and his *Tile Mosaics of Lahore Fort* (1920).

4. E. W. Smith: *op. cit.*, Part I, Pl. 8.

5. Blochmann: *Ain* (translation), Vol. I., p. 286.

XII

Akbar's architecture bears the impress of the feelings and fashions of the age—an age of luxurious leisure, an atmosphere of sensuousness and sensuality. It was an age of great aesthetic abounding. We find a strangely beautiful medley of buildings of all styles and plans, destined for all sorts of purposes, which has been the wonder and delight of artists and architects for centuries. Materials abundant, labour far from dear, and the resources of the builder infinite, there was every facility for noble building in India. The consequence was that luxurious ornamentation and exquisite finish of style which is always associated with the Orient.

The general purpose of the design was Indian: to counteract the heat and glare of the fierce tropical sun. Everywhere we find enclosed courts with their cool shade, pleasant shrubs and gay flowers; tall trees flaunting their silken flags, speckled with bright blossoms or laden with golden fruit; and dark verdant banks of varied foliage cooling the eyes and quieting the heart,—a relief from the silvery sheen of the white marble charged with the noon-day blaze of the Indian sun. Ladies of rank performed their elaborate toilets by the splashing fountains, and their husbands sought rest and repose in the gardens of the seraglio. Nor was such splendour reserved for the New Capital or for the imperial city of Agra. On their environs we find relics of huge buildings with extensive grounds enclosed, where were housed the nobles of rank, a number of whom with all their stately equipage attended on the Emperor's person at the public processions and the ceremonies of the court. The palace of Birbal at Samougarh, for instance, is one of the innumerable remains of the kind and it is nine miles from Agra¹. The architectural effect is marvellous. Of the least among the buildings we may use the words of Victor Hugo: 'Everywhere was magnificence refined and stupendous; if it was not the most diminutive of palaces, it was the most gigantic of jewel-cases'.

Akbar's eclecticism is evidenced by the borrowings from various religious styles, and his love of variety and delight in things new by the presence of details foreign to the art of India. His inventiveness is illustrated by his introduction of various coloured stones encrusted in marble, in place of coloured tiles. In nothing was the skill of the architect so much displayed as in the wedding of strength to elegance, and in the successful combination of the Muslim arch with the Hindu architrave construction,

1. Cunningham: Arch. Sur. Rep. Vol. IV, p. 121.

varied picturesqueness and ornamentation of details. Foreign decorative modes were freely introduced without impairing the spirit and character of Indian art. We can see an illustration even of Indian superstition in the structure. It is a well-known fact that the Indian artisan believes to this day that the Gods cannot bear the sight of a caparisoned building brought to completion without flaw. The artist leaves off before giving the finishing touch lest some sad calamity should befall him or the tenant of the building. This is the reason why a portion of the border is left unfinished in a carved panel in the 'Turkish' Sultana's House. For similar reasons, too, the wall of Fatehpur-Sikri remains unfinished, and the tower is an irregular pentagon.

THE ETHICS OF TEA-PARTIES

THERE are different kinds of tea-parties, as there are different varieties of tea. There are tea-parties held at twelve in the night, and the tea used may vary in cost from one anna to an infinitely incalculable amount. There are also tea-parties, where anything but tea is served, and yet, the committee of hosts, in charge of such parties are furious, if you call these by any other name, as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Of late, however, tea-parties have been given not to help the invitees with tea, but for other purposes, which even the cups that cheer and never inebriate are not generally prone to indicate. Hence a troublesome question arises as to why one should have a tea-party at all; and if one holds it, why should people take tea at all, when some other beverage might equally quench the thirst, if any, at six o'clock in the evening.

After all, tea is not generally taken for what it is worth, but for the sake of those, who sip it by your side, in your neighbourhood, in your town, in your country, and in short, in your planet. People drink tea, and you feel that you are a milk-sop if you do not drink it, either alone or in company. But the most interesting news about tea is that it is generally relished, milkless or sugarless in company, where the fault of such tea is usually not that of the hosts, but of the 'boys,' old and young, who serve it to you. So far so good.

But a cup of tea along with a few sweets and savouries, if any, need not cost more than a few annas. Take the annas to even fifteen, but let them not exceed a rupee. This answers another question, whether such a tea for annas fifteen should not be construed to be an excellent dinner, or at any rate, a substantial part of dinner, after dusk. Whatever that be, it is called most pertinaciously TEA, and it also includes the inevitable ice-cream and the inseparable fruit-salad. All this is TEA.

And when this conglomeration is chewed, sipped, masticated or swallowed up in one gulp, with of course, one or two cameramen grinning with their timely instruments before you, under

your very nose, more so in company, which might include a few ladies, you are in a supreme bliss, for you are verily present in a tea-party.

What for are such parties given? This is certainly not a convenient question to answer. Sometimes, they are given to honour a person, and whether he drinks tea or not is out of the question. If he is honoured, and if you get your share of the tea, you should be immensely satisfied. Another reason for giving such parties is to find an outlet for one's insuperable inclinations to wander about as a Jew, in search of a mysterious something, which he thinks he alone knows, and of which others can only faintly guess. What do you say to that? I know that parties can now be given as a prelude to the great Election Drama, to begin early next year. Will you agree with me there?

Or perhaps, (there is more meaning in this perhaps than in any other) parties are given to 'introduce' the honoured guest, whoever that unfortunate person happens to be, to all the officials, semi-officials, dummy-officials, non-officials and un-officials in this city. And great regret is evinced if they happen to be present at other functions than where you want them to be. All these are included, by some implication or other, in the very tea, and you are asked to gulp it along with other equally solid, semisolid, liquid and gaseous matter, neatly spread before you on the table. And you take this, at your own cost (how funny) at a place and time fixed by the entertaining bodies or a committee of hosts, known and unknown to you. What do you say to that?

Let us examine another reason why such parties are usually given. Sometimes, they are given, while honouring your chief guest, to honour several other persons as your known Caterer, Chairs-contractor, Garland-maker, Decoration-wallah and such specimens of poor humanity who will never fail to be at your heels, the moment they hear of the fair. To them it does not matter, whether you mix tea with coffee, wine madeira, or codliver oil. Again parties are given to burn your effigy in public, as for instance, you can show your love for the person, by making a figure of your honoured guest in a frame of fire-works, bursting forth in living flames as in Dante's Inferno.

What more is needed to keep up the solemnity and grandeur of such functions? Why, you may tell His Excellency, Her

Exalted Highness or His Grace that all the monies have been contributed exclusively for the purpose of honouring him or her, and that those who subscribed (God knows their feelings) have done so most willingly.

And your honoured guest is much charmed, and in the aroma of self-deception, he thinks that even an amount to the tune of a thousand rupees (I give a modest figure) is well spent, even if the devil should have his due. And what is worse, a day after the fair, the honoured guest as the president and the other hosts as the principal speakers, the whole gang will mount the platform and become cantakerous over subjects as Social Reconstruction, Village Uplift and Conversion of India by men, women and children, not excluding other animals, if they be of any use. And there ends the ethics of such tea-parties.

Ignatius.

INTOLERABLE IRRELEVANCE

IT was a cool September evening. We were talking on nothing—myself and my friend. If any one had the power of keeping me spell-bound in conversation it was Dr. Blacksheep. I used to sit for hours and hours together paying unremitting attention to him. And this evening he had come purposely to chatter as was evident from his gestures, and I, having no special engagement for the day, was quite prepared to hear him.

Falstaff. Dos't thou hear me, Hal?

Prince. Aye, and mark you too, Jack!

The agreeable smell of a Havanna cigar, to which he resorted every now and then, made me happy and created a secret desire in me to venture smoking one day. Lodoo, my pet cat, fixed her grey eyes on the speaker and remained motionless on the floor. Perhaps she was wondering at the extreme volubility and the unusual style of his conversation. From a nest within the bushy growth of a creeper that climbed up to my window a small bird was getting intoxicated with the charm of the evening to pour a melodious ditty into our inattentive ears. "I was telling you about the T. B. patient," resumed he, after deliberately taking a puff, "Oh! there are lots like him. They are the grass-hoppers of conversation, as they alone can jump with readiness from one topic to another without any difficulty. There are several kinds. The first variety goes on at a dull speed to infinity; to escape from them it is a sheer impossibility. The second is less dangerous. They go at the same speed to find themselves in a precarious position with very little hope of an escape, as Phaethon found when he attempted to drive his pa's car. There is one more variety of caterpillars of whom I shudder to mention. It is them that you ought to fear, for they can easily make you weep with their talking. They can so regulate the trend of their conversation that they conclude with a common ending. Give them whatever subject you like, they never leave you without pouring into your ears their 'favourite song.' Do you know how I manage to avoid them? Oh! that will make you laugh. Well, whenever I see them from a distance, I pretend as if there is something wrong with my garters and kneel down to pull the socks up and thus give them time to pass by. Otherwise I am a helpless man....." He paused abruptly to take one more puff and to prepare me for the wonderful stories he was going to relate.

"When I was a student in the Medical College I had a friend—Jones was his name. He was the son of an Assistant Excise Commissioner, a well-to-do man with great influence. He was a good student and came out of the college with distinction. But there was this defect in him. He could not talk about anything without bringing in an 'auntie' of his into the conversation and citing some of her nauseating maxims; 'just as my auntie rightly remarked,' or, 'this reminds me of my auntie who used to say' or, what is worse, 'when my auntie caught dysentery' and so on and so on. Many a time had he spoiled the gaiety of our conversation!.....many a pleasant face had he made morose!.....and all of us used to curse his 'auntie,' who was the cause of much annoyance (though indirectly) to us. His reminiscences were disgusting and his irrelevance irritating.

"My friend Ramdayal had a 'cousin' who was more odious than the auntie of Jones. We had had much of this 'cousin' of his, who was none other than a goods clerk in the Bengal Nagpur Railway. This fellow was so very eccentric as to take his hat whenever any goods train passed by, which, always, as he himself used to say, reminded him of his 'cousin.' He never allowed a Railway employee to pass by without expressing a few words on 'Railways and Philanthropy.' Whenever an Anglo-Indian came within his angle of vision he began to wax eloquent on Anglo-Indian punctuality and proceeded to narrate the isolated incident of his cousin's encounter with a bull-dog belonging to an Anglo-Indian Traffic Superintendent, who was a very good man and who was very much impressed with his 'cousin's' smartness and good looks.

"Mr. Pindari, whom you saw with me yesterday, will never allow you to talk if you invite him to a party; nor will he allow you to rise up without giving you the tiresome details of his experiences in England. 'It is on occasions such as this,' he would begin, 'that I am reminded of my glorious university life in Cambridge.....' he would then pause to hoot a fashionable cough such as you very often hear from a gathering of Gazetted-officers. This is the opportune moment for you to rise up slowly with least noise and give the slip, if ever you want to escape being bored. Otherwise you will be held against your will until his tongue gets tired of chattering. But unlike others, he is not deserted. His rank, his position, the influence he wields in the official world—all these create audience for him. The prospect of 'something' which he can give is so tempting to the speculators of 'Vanity Fair' that they are prepared to make sacrifices to win his favour. While unsophisticated people

like us, you and I, pity him, there are others around him ready to laugh if he laughs and cry if he cries. As I have often told you, the so-called society is nothing but a conglomeration of hypocrites and cut-throats. But,

‘ This world is a world for a’ that

For a’ that and a’ that ’

and

I fear I am straying away from story-telling to moralising.” He stopped for a minute and then going up to the window to look at a car which was dashing at full speed through the road, “Ah! there goes Miss Maloney in her Baby Austin. Don’t you know her?” Upon getting a negative reply he proceeded.

“Miss Maloney is a rare specimen. She is unendurable. Oh! I was almost killed one day with the story of her wonderful diamond pendant, which she got as a present from her uncle who is a rich planter in America, and which she lost in the train while travelling to Bangalore, and got back by the cleverness of a Railway Police Officer from the thief who stole it. However she lost it again at a Public Meeting, and never got it back. The story is simple enough, but she took one full hour to narrate it, and you will be surprised to learn that she introduced it when we were seriously talking about ‘The League and the sanctions.’ She did it in a theatrical style, especially towards the close. She gave a description of the Police Officer, how he searched every passenger, and how majestically he walked up to her to return the pendant saying, ‘Madam, here is the precious thing which you lost and the like of which I have never seen in my whole life. Be careful here after.’ She then heaved a long sigh of agony to say (with tears trimming down her rosy cheeks) ‘And such was the will of Providence that I could not wear it for a week more before I had to part with it.....soon,.....and.....So.....on.....’ and just imagine the unenviable situation into which I was thrown!

“When I was a student in the S.....High School, T....., I had a teacher, to think of whom is to get disgusted with life itself. I am not going to give a caricature of him now, but I shall tell you this much—that he was an uncrowned sovereign in the realm of Irrelevance. “Well, boys,” he would say on entering the class. Then he would squeeze out his snuff-box from one of the holes of his coat-pocket to thrust a pinch of snuff into his wide nostrils. It is then that the teaching begins. Suppose he is dealing with a topic in geography, can you imagine how he would begin? Well, it is thus. “Boys, Richard Hakluyt—have you heard of him?—well, Richard Hakluyt, the first of English naval

historians and the author of *Divers voyages touching the Discovery of America*; he did much to help forward the colonising spirit; yes, this man observes, (as I in his shoes would have done) "Geographie and Chronologie are the Sunne and the Moone, the right eye and the left eye of all history". And boys, you must always honour Ladies.....Make it a point.' He would then look at the girls to see the effect of his exhortation and then proceed in the same manner.

"I had a servant—his name I don't exactly remember. He had been the cook of a Post-master before he came to me. Well, this idiot never allowed a day to pass without bringing in his 'Post-master' and relating the wonders of the Post-office. 'Why do you put so much of sugar in Ovaltine?' Because the 'Post-master's children always used to cry for sugar'. 'Why don't you get up early in the morning?' He was sure he would get up at 6, the next day, 'but in the Post-master's house I used to get up only at eight'. 'Shut up, you fool!' I always said, 'Don't plague me with your Post-master series,' and always he left me with a look of discontent to grumble in the kitchen.

"When I was in Edinburgh I had a house-keeper—one Mrs. Bridgewater. Her husband was a merchant, somewhere in Spain whom she called her 'good man'. Well, this woman never opened her mouth but to speak of her 'dear, dear, good man'. She made herself tiresome to me by always speaking of him and whenever I heard her foot-steps, I pretended to be sleeping in the chair. Disappointed at having been unable to chat with me about her 'good man,' she used to approach the butler who had a knack of humouring her by uttering at the end of every sentence, 'Aye, Aye, and is it even Sa?"

By this time, the cigar that Doctor Blacksheep held in his hand reached its other end and villainously burnt his fingers. It made him start. This frightened Lodoo and she jumped up to the window-frame up-setting the flower vase and spoiling the table cloth. From a neighbouring house a chanticler was heard announcing the approach of Night to his 'feathery dames'. The doctor looked at his watch and rose up, "well, I must be going now."

I gave myself up to meditation. I thought of the doctor and his experiences. "Irrelevance," said I to myself, "is always intolerable." A lizard from the ceiling said, "Exactly so," and the time-piece which ticked from the shelf seemed to me to be applauding my views by repeatedly uttering "Quite Right! Quite Right!".

I. Achyatha Menon, Class III.

LATE VISITORS

THE only reason I can advance for forgoing the privilege of a charming and dramatic beginning like, "It was midnight", is, that in that case, you will expect something spicy and thrilling from me; whereas, I fear, I am just but trying to recall the circumstances under which I had the honour to receive some visitors, who, I must say, unexpectedly turned up about that time. I had pushed aside a huge text-book; switched off the light and thrown myself despondently into the inviting depths of my comfortable easy-chair. I had been trying to tackle a tough problem in vain and had got tired of it. Under the circumstances I found the sweetest consolation in brooding over the problem of the educated unemployed, of the futility of university education, of the gloomy future awaiting us, and all that. Unless you grew a little bit sentimental, you could not get consolation. What, I thought, is the use of sitting under the nose of a professor, listening to his never-ending lectures, consuming mouthful after mouthful of chalkdust, when, you know, you are slowly but surely heading towards an unknown and obscure future, which holds out few hopes for you.

At that moment it appeared as though light dawned upon me, by way of a solution to the problem. But light fell also on my hateful text-book, my chair, my table, in short, on each and every article in my room. Needless to say, my fingers had unconsciously played with the switch. I slowly and reluctantly took stock of the situation. I surveyed the room with my sleepy eyes. I lifted up my face towards the offending light, in protest.

Yes, there he was, my uninvited guest. Guess, reader, who he was—a grinning monkey! He was holding the wire with one hand, comfortably seated upon the shade of my electric bulb. He seemed to be slightly disconcerted by the sudden brilliance of the light. Immediately he was absorbed in an examination of the bulb. I looked up at him, slightly surprised. "To what do I owe the pleasure of your company, sir?" I asked. This time he looked at me and graciously grinned recognition.

I rubbed my eyes and again looked up towards the bulb. He was not there. My attention was attracted by a squeak from my back. Yes, again, he was there perched upon my coatstand. He got at my shirt; put it on, surveyed himself in the mirror on the opposite wall, and was evidently displeased, for he impatiently

flung it aside. With a bound he reached my cot, on which I had prepared my bed, rather carelessly. For a minute he sat quiet, lost in profound thought. The next five minutes he was busily engaged in making a wholesome repast of the plentiful bugs, which were journeying up and down my sheets, like a gang of determined rebels.

Dinner over, he jumped over to my table and was instantly absorbed in my calculus text-book. Near it was placed my cup of milk, undrunk. I was mildly amused to see a monkey taking so much interest in infinitesimal calculus. But the poor fellow was not fated to have an undisturbed study, for soon a venerable cat appeared on the scene and demanded his attention. He dipped his tail in the cup of milk and waved an enthusiastic welcome. The venerable creature growled by way of acknowledgement and made way towards the cup of milk, which it had already seen.

She did not condescend to look at me or even to recognize my existence. She walked over to my table in a stately manner and coolly despatched the milk. The monkey did not seem to resent it at all. Presently they were busy studying each other's face. But he could not stand long the piercing scrutiny of her fiery eyes. He was exhausted, or, at least, he seemed to me to be so. I was all sympathy for him. "How tired you are, dearie! Just go to bed, darling", I said. He did. He jumped over to my bed and took possession of it. She seemed to question his right. She stepped over to the place with the mischievous intent of picking up a quarrel, I thought. She asserted her rights by a loud growl and threatened to summon assistance by another. "You had better keep quiet, madam, and better not create a row here", I warned her. "Like everything else, hospitality has its limits; I cannot allow a duel in my room", I frankly spoke out.

At this stage, as though in answer to her summons, another reverend creature of the feline species sailed in, evidently from nowhere. I was hugely interested in their deliberations. I was looking up to see them enact the old, old story. But there was no disputed piece of bread here and no scale-pans with which the monkey could weigh it. Moreover, the two cats sat together in conference, throwing occasional glances of unmistakable malignity at the monkey, from which, I concluded, they were scheming as to the best way in which they could wreak vengeance upon this fellow, whose ancestor had played such an ugly trick upon theirs. The monkey looked very grave. I melted in pity for him. But I sympathised with the cats, too. "Your Nemesis is upon you,

lad," I said to the monkey: "Come, Come, take it like a gentleman, and say your prayer. Surely you don't mean to justify the scandalous conduct of grandpapa?" I indignantly asked.

In fact, he seemed to be very defiant. He picked up his courage, waited no longer, and bounded on to my table. This time my spectacles on the table stirred his curiosity. He put it on his nose; surveyed the room through them and looked at me expectantly, as though awaiting my approbation. I was immensely flattered. "Quite decent of you, chap, to consult my tastes," I gratefully replied. "You look nothing short of a chief justice in it," I unreservedly applauded him. When I raised up my eyes again, I found him looking down upon the poor cats, from the cross-beam. He caught hold of two straying mice in one hand, and violently flung them down on the cats, evidently by way of reparations. Before these worthies could get at the mice, he was on the back of one of them (the first offender), galloping off towards the door-way. The other set up a hot pursuit, disregarding the mice, which, in turn, strange enough, followed them squeaking and screeching. And I, just to complete the picture, made up the rear of this solemn procession, with the monkey continuing to lead it, looking more than ever, every inch a chief justice.

After having followed them to a safe distance, I returned and found my spectacles, on the doorway, fortunately for me, undamaged. I admit, I hastily bolted the door lest my noisy guests should choose to favour me again with their company.

V. S. Ramaswamy,
Class III.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

MY class examination being just over, I was sitting in an easy chair, in my room, looking at the new ceiling which my father had just repaired a couple of months ago, with its highly glittering paint. I was reading a newspaper, eager to know how Mussoloni had fared in his war. I had nothing to do; nothing to think of, either—nay, not even of my wife, because I was not married.

The clock struck eleven; A tap at the door; S-a-a-r! I could recognize the voice of the postman. Even without the door being opened, I could see his glittering turban.

He handed me a letter, an envelope, trimmed yellow at the sides, and, with a smile that was but natural and serene, stood there looking stupidly at me. Knowing as I do what his intention was I sent him with a two-anna piece. Bolting the door I tore open the envelope and sat down to read the letter. It was from my father, was typewritten and it read as follows:—

Dear Ramu,

You will be glad to hear that I have arranged a nice match for you. Mr. Ramanath Iyer, an Engineer in Bellary and a particular friend of your uncle, Mani, offers his daughter in marriage to you. As you know, he is a very nice gentleman, and the girl too, I am told, is handsome, accomplished, and of fair complexion. To settle everything your mother and I will be leaving this place for Bellary the day after to-morrow. I want you to join us at 31, Kachaleswaram Agraharam, Madras. Also I want you to marry this girl. As Mr. Iyer is well to-do, he might even send you to London for higher studies. Hope you will join us at Madras.

Rest in person,

Yours affectionately,

V. VENKITARAMAN,

This letter was read by me 'with feelings of painful agitation and surprise.' I could not believe my eyes, as my father had told me only four months ago that he could not even think of my marriage for at least a couple of years to come, as he was against early marriage.

The first thing I directed my attention to was to send an immediate reply to my father at Kumbakonam, that I would positively join them at Madras. Then I walked straight from

my house to the Bazaar. I was so much excited by the expectation of what was in store for me that I could notice nothing on the way. I purchased all that would make me a smart and handsome young man. My business with Venku Iyer being over, I directed my path to Krishnan Nambissan, a famous astrologer.

Mr. Nambissan and I sat on the *Kudam* of his house. I showed him my horoscope. He brought a slate and made several calculations for nearly an hour. When he expressed his readiness to answer any question that I might put him, I asked him these questions,—

“When will my marriage take place?”

“In a fortnight,” he said.

“To what place does my love belong?”

“North-West”.

“Will she be of fair complexion?”

“Very fair, I think”

“Am I likely to go on any sea voyage?”

“Very probably you may”.

“When will it be?”

At this juncture, Mr. Nambissan stopped me and refused to answer more than four questions for the one rupee I had paid him. Since I was wanting in money I returned home, pleased with the answer of Mr. Nambissan.

It was 9-30 P. M. I had to abstain from my supper that day, but I did not, in the least, mind it. Several dreams haunted my sleep. The dreams I had were about my future wife, I dreamt what her name would be, how tall, fair, dark, or..... I also indulged in thoughts of my future life in England, where I would stay, what I would study, etc.

The next morning, my bath and shaving over, I was busy packing. About 10 o’ clock a friend of mine came calling, “Ramu-o-o!”

“Good morning, Dass!”

“Good morning, Ramu, here’s a letter for you.”

“A letter!”

I opened the letter. It was from my father and it read as follows :—

Kumbakonam,
15th September 19.....

Dear Ramu,

Hope you have done well in your examination. Start for Kumbakonam. You can enjoy your Michaelmas holidays here.

Yours affectionately,
V. VENKITARAMAN.

This letter puzzled me. I wondered if I had really received a letter from my father the previous day. I thought it all a dream. I opened my eyes wide. I found myself in my room, with Dass standing in front of me. It was day. All around me it was bright and brilliant; nothing but white, and red, and gold; blazing arabesques, and paintings on ceiling and wall. I was much struck and wondered whether there could be any deceit, in that letter. And I took the letter that I had received the previous day; it was lying on the table.

But alas! to my dismay, it was posted at R. M. S. Olavakkot; not at Kumbakonam. I noted the superscription carefully.

There it was, the work of Dass! He suddenly burst into laughter.

It was all his mischief. My mind was not in one. I did not know what I should do then. The only thing that I did was to curse him and Nambissan.

S. V. Krishnan,
Class I, Group 1.

ON MAKING LOVE

Do you make love? I beg your pardon, I have accused you of some crime which you are, perhaps, unable to commit. My contention is with the use of the word 'make' in "make love". How is love to be made? Is it something concrete, substantial, palatable, pleasant to see and smell, to be moulded in whichever form and shape you may desire? To me, making, mending, marring and allied processes belong to the sphere of manual labour, and, therefore, I cannot comprehend how love can be Made.

Perhaps, when you make love, your lips quiver, and the 'addressee' sees and hears that you are really making love. Or perhaps, when you do not make love, your forehead begins to get a shade thicker, and it frowns, and then it is manifest that your love is on the decline. Whatever it may be, 'making love' is an expression I do not like. I will straightaway love.

There is another expression more ominous than "making love"; and that is "Falling in love". What a painful experience it is to merit a fall! You fall into a ditch, you slip and fall to the ground, you trip and fall into a river, and sometimes you fall back in consternation at the sight of an imaginary ghost. And yet, when you Fall in love, you seem to rejoice over that experience. Tut! Tut!!

For the first time, after a series of Falls from babyhood to adult life, you feel proud of this one great fall. Is it ennobling to stoop, to kneel down, to kiss the ground, to get up and ask your lady-love, "Do you love ME?" And yet, this operation is repeated many a time in the civilised world by many a gentleman. No doubt, every suitor stoops to conquer; but 'stooping' is a better phrase than "Making" love and "Falling" in love.

To be frank with you, why should you Fall in love? It is true, great men have loved equally great women. But ask them today and you will find how they shudder to think that their greatness fell, when they encountered their lady-loves. In this great battle of conquering hearts, any henpecked husband will now tell you, that falling in love was certainly the most appalling Fall in all his life. Don't you think so?

However, I shall grant that love can be Made; but I know fully well that it cannot be manufactured that way. For one

thing, love is not a commodity that can be turned out in thousands. It is something that grows and expands in all your being, and it undergoes a revolution when a bevy of sweet ones pass by you. But, do you make love for all that? If you Make it, how do you begin? Where does it end? The ending is perhaps more distinctly seen and endured than the initial stages of its Making, for the least quarrel makes all the neighbours feel that the love, that you had the temerity to Make, has actually ended. Now, of course, 'she' is no more your darling, and the attempt at making love has suffered a reverse. All this happens when you Make love!

I am not inquisitive to know what you mean by 'Making love'. But I will fight tooth and nail against the phrase 'Making love'. I shall use the simple, honest and straight-forward expression such as Love in the noun form as the subject or perhaps object of a sentence, Love in the Present, Past and Future tenses as a verb. That was what my Grammar Teacher had taught me, and I shall follow him till the end of time, at least till the English language lasts, waiting in vain for Macaulay's Newzealander to take his stand on the broken arches of the London Bridge. Even in the time-old Grammar lessons "to fall" or "to make" was not prescribed for conjugation. On the other hand, 'To Love' was given for an exercise to be stretched in all its inflexions. 'To love,' 'to be loved,' 'to have been loved,' 'should love,' 'should have been loved,' 'would have been loved,' etc., are all the conjugations I am familiar with. Nowhere have I heard of "Making love" or "Falling in love" to be conjugated. Why, perhaps the grammarians knew that the falling sickness or making mania was not in their line!

With your permission, I should like to analyse the feelings of a boy of the first form, when he begins to conjugate *To Love*. It is still a mystery whether he knows what he is conjugating. Well, I solved the trouble this way. When the Grammar-teacher asked me to enter all the mysterious channels of *To Love*, I drew my face pretty sharply, and blurted out with a condescending air, "Sir, I don't know what love is!" At this confession, the other girls giggled; and because I in my innocence ventured to know all about love, the other girls were rewarded with the patronage of the cane. I pity those class-mates of mine with tearful eyes. But they have taught me how to save myself from my Grammar-pedant's vile instrument, the cane!

Now, this should tell you, reader, that 'Making' love is artificial. 'Making' or 'falling' in love is not in my line. But

loving, dancing, merrymaking, all these, terminating in the circus arena of matrimony, are to my mind a better conceivable plan and process than making love or falling in love, which, to me, is incomprehensible.

May I remind you of such men, who never loved, never made love and never fell in love? Why, almost all the cinema stars, including their 'talkie' brethren, are in that line. Count the number of divorces to the credit of every person in the Hollywood hemisphere, and tell me whether they really make love or fall in love everytime they address another woman? They make love and marry as easily and as seriously as you and I make a cup of tea and drink it. And you will not call it making love. Will you?

Marriage is a great blessing, and it should not admit such nasty expressions as Making and Falling in love. It is perhaps the culmination of several other falls, past and present; for when you love a person you do not fall in love, but you literally and truly 'Rise' in love. You 'Rise' in her estimation and in your own conscience before God and man. Even when you overstep the bounds of taste and propriety, and love another, and, what is worse, marry quite another, you never Fall in love, but rise in your notoriety. And you do not "Make love," but love.

Finally, I should like to bring back to the English language that simplicity of the expression in, "I love", "I shall love", etc. Making and marring love are naughty expressions, as bad as a bad pudding. Love, Love in all places, bylanes, side-tracks, and mainroads. Go back to your old English Grammar lesson, and start loving in all earnestness. Verily, early books teach us more than all the sages can.

Miss Angela Rosario,
Class IV.

NEMESIS.

DEAD silence brooded over mid-night darkness. One mighty groan was heard within the bed-chamber deepening the hushed silence—and all was over. There appeared another Macbeth with the marks of his bloody deed. He rushed past the door-ways tumbling on the snoring porter. His limbs grew leaden; he staggered. The shadow of his Crime seemed to grip him; and the way seemed endlessly long. He felt himself in a Demon-land.

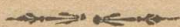
He reached home at last but could not shut out the shadow that had followed him. He got into his bed and threw the shawl over his body; he closed his eyes, only to see a dream-theatre expand horribly. Terrific images haunted into his mind and he was growing mad. His heart sank down; the thought of his Crime gnawed at his soul. Time stood still. The approaching dawn proved a torture to him. The very dagger he had handled rose before him, disappeared, and rose up again deepening the horror of the situation.

The vision continued even after day-break. He watched life-blood dripping from the dagger; the sight maddened him beyond recovery. The twinkle of every moment seemed a long, lingering age of oppression and fear. He cursed the morning Sun; he shunned day-light, his wife and only child, nay, inanimate objects even, for, all appeared enraged at his bloody deed. Sounds and sights were dreadful to him. Yet, in the stillness of his solitude he heard several voices proclaiming his crime! His own conscience smote him mercilessly. His lips were sealed.

The murder-scene swam before his eyes: the victim lay tossing in a pool of blood. The assassin raved: "Great you were; I envied you. You loved me; I hated you. You trusted me;...I stabbed... Me-will you pardon?" Reply there was none. The last moments of his earthly punishment were numbered. Lo! the dagger he once again beheld. A fair white hand now pointed the weapon towards his heart. He reeled back and fell down with a shriek of fear. The hand plunged the dagger into his heaving bosom. He groaned. Life became extinct.

M. S. Ramaswamy, IV U. C.

പ്രേമസപരൂപം.



അന്നൊരു ഞായറാഴ്ചയായിരുന്നു. പിറൈദിവസം “രാജാസ്” ഫൈസ്കൂൾ മാസികയിലേക്കു ലേഖനങ്ങൾ അയക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള അവസാനദിവസമായതുകൊണ്ട് അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി തിരക്കിട്ടെഴുതുകയാണ്. നേരം പതിനൊന്നുകഴിഞ്ഞത് അറിഞ്ഞിട്ടേ ഇല്ല. ലേഖനം അവസാനിപ്പിച്ച്, സംഗ്രഹിയോടുകൂടി ഒന്നു പുഞ്ചിരികൊണ്ട് അവൾ വിളിക്കുതി കിടക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങുമ്പോൾ കോവിലകത്തുനിന്ന് “കൂട്ടമണി” അടിക്കുന്നതുകേട്ട് അല്പമൊന്നു തെട്ടി. മുക്കാലും താഴ്ന്നു തിരി വീണ്ടും നീട്ടി, താഴെത്തു് സുഖമായുറങ്ങുന്ന മാതാമഹിതയെ വിളിച്ചുണർത്തി. “എന്താ, അമ്മിണി?” എന്നു ചോദിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ആ സ്ത്രീ കണ്ണുതിരുമ്മി ഉണർന്നുഴന്നു.

“കൂട്ടമണി അടിക്കുന്നത് കേട്ടില്ലേ? എന്തോ ആപത്തുണ്ട്. മഞ്ചേരിയിലും മലപ്പുറത്തും മാപ്പിളമാർ കൂട്ടം കൂട്ടമായി ലഹളക്കൊരുക്കിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു വ്യാഴാഴ്ച ‘കുട്ടേന്’—എന്തുകാരണത്താലോ യാതൊരു ബന്ധവുമില്ലെങ്കിലും ഗോപിനാഥമേനോനെ അവൾ അങ്ങിനെയാണ് അഭിസംബോധനം ചെയ്യാറുള്ളത്—വന്നപ്പോൾ പറഞ്ഞു. സൂക്ഷിച്ചിരിക്കണമെന്നും പ്രത്യേകം പറഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. മഞ്ചേരിയും കോട്ടയ്ക്കലും തൊട്ടുതൊട്ടായതുകൊണ്ട് ആ ലഹള ഇവിടേയും പടന്നു പിടിച്ചേക്കുമോ എന്നാണ് എനിക്കു പേടി. എന്നാൽ നാം എന്തുചെയ്യും? നമുക്കു സഹായത്തിനായി കുട്ടേന്റേ കൂടി ഇല്ല. ഇന്നു രാവിലെ മദിരാശിയിൽ എത്തി ഒന്നരമണിക്കുള്ള സ്ലീമറിനു റജുണിലേക്കു പോകുമത്രെ, ഇല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഇങ്ങോട്ടുതന്നെ വരാൻ എഴുതായിരുന്നു.”

വലുതമ്മ: “നീ എന്തിനാണമ്മിണി ഇല്ലാത്ത ലഹളയൊക്കെ ഇവിടെ ഉണ്ടാക്കിത്തീർക്കുന്നത്. ലഹള ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ കുട്ടന്മേനോൻ മാത്രേ അറിയുള്ളൂ! എന്തൊ ഞാൻ ഒന്നും കേട്ടില്ല. പോയിക്കിടന്നുറങ്ങൂ. നേരം അതാ മണി പന്ത്രണ്ടിട്ടു. ഇങ്ങിനെയാണെങ്കിൽ നിന്നെ ഇനി ഞാൻ സ്കൂളിലേക്കേ അയക്കില്ല. ഒരുവൻ ഉറങ്ങും ഉറക്കുമില്ലാതെ പുസ്തകം തിന്നുതിന്നു ഇരയുള്ളവരെ വയസ്സ് കാലത്തു് അനുഭവിക്കുകവയ്യാത്ത സങ്കടങ്ങളൊക്കെ അനുഭവിച്ചിട്ടു്.” എന്നു പറ

ഞതു ആ സ്ത്രീ കരയാൻ തുടങ്ങി. മാതാവിന്റേയും പ്രിയസഹോദരന്റെയും മരണത്തെ സൂചിപ്പിച്ചപ്പോൾ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിക്കു കണ്ണിൽ വെള്ളം നിറഞ്ഞു. അവളുടേയും മാതാമഹിതയുടേയും നിസ്സഹായ സ്ഥിതിയാൽ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ ഹൃദയം ആകുലമായി ഒന്നു കലങ്ങിമറിഞ്ഞുവെങ്കിലും ആ കഥ ഭീഷ്മിപ്പിച്ച് വലിയമ്മയെ വ്യസനിപ്പിക്കേണ്ടെന്നു കരുതി അവൾ രണ്ടാമതും മുകളിലേക്കുതന്നെ പോയി. പക്ഷെ ദിവംഗതരായ മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാരേയും സഹോദരനേയും ദേശാന്തരം പ്രാപിച്ച അവളുടെ 'കുട്ടേട്ട'നേയും പഠിയുണ്ടായ സ്കൂളായാൽ അവൾക്ക് അനുരക്തം വന്നതേ ഇല്ല. ആകുലമായി അന്നവൾ ഒരു സഹായമായി അവിടെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നത് ആ കുട്ടിയുടെ ഒരു അകന്ന അമ്മാമനും കോവിലകം കാൽപ്പന്തുമായ നാണനായരായിരുന്നു. മണിയുടെ ശബ്ദം കേട്ടപ്പോൾ, "അമ്മിണി! ഞാൻ ഇത്തിരി അങ്ങോട്ടൊന്നു ഇറങ്ങി നോക്കട്ടെ. എന്താണെന്നറിഞ്ഞിട്ടു വേഗം വരാം" എന്നു പറഞ്ഞു ആയാൾ കൂടയും വടിയും പുകുപ്പിച്ച് ഒരു റാന്തലുമായി പുറപ്പെട്ടു. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി എഴുന്നീറ്റ് ജനലിനുള്ളിൽ കൂടി നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ ആയുർവൈദ്യശാലയിൽ വിളക്കു ജനക്കൂട്ടവും കണ്ടു. വിവരമറിയുവാനുള്ള ഉൽകണ്ഠയാൽ നാണന്മാന്റെ വരവും പാത്രം അവൾ അവിടെത്തന്നെ നിന്നു.

കുറച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോഴേക്കും മുമ്പിൽ നാണന്മാനും പിന്നിൽ ഒരു കൂട്ടം മാപ്പിളമാരും വരുന്നതുകണ്ടു പരിഭ്രമിച്ചു, പേടിച്ചു അവൾ താഴ്ന്നു കിടന്നു. തന്റെ സംശയം യഥാർത്ഥമായി കലാശിച്ചു എന്നവൾക്ക് ബോദ്ധ്യപ്പെട്ടു. മഴക്കാലമുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ലോകത്തിൽ നടക്കുന്ന അകൃത്യങ്ങളെ ഉറക്കാനോക്കിയും ഭയാനകങ്ങളായ പല കാര്യങ്ങളും കാണുവാൻ ശക്തിയില്ലാതെ വീണ്ടും കാരണങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു മറഞ്ഞു നിന്നും ശശാങ്കൻ നിശാകാലം കഴിച്ചുകൂട്ടുന്നു. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി താഴ്ന്നു കിടന്നപ്പോഴേക്കും ലോകത്തിൽ വാതിലിൽ 'ബലമായി മുട്ടിത്തുടങ്ങി. അപരിചിതമല്ലാത്ത പലരുടെ ചെറിയും അവൾ പുറത്തുനിന്നു കേട്ടു. അന്നുരാവിലെക്കൂടി മുറുത്തു പഞ്ചപുഷ്പമടക്കിനിന്നു വലുതുമായി കാര്യങ്ങൾ പറഞ്ഞിരുന്നവർ ആശ്വാസവാക്കുകൾ പലവിയുംകൊണ്ടു വാതിൽ തുറക്കുവാൻ ആജ്ഞാപിക്കുന്നതുകേട്ടപ്പോൾ ലോകഗതിയുടെ വിശേഷമൊത്തു അവൾ അത്ഭുതപ്പെട്ടു. അവരുടെ കലശലായതങ്ങളെ വിലക്കി സൽബുദ്ധി ഉപദേശിക്കുവാൻ മുതിർന്നു.

നാണുനാനെ, “പോടാ നിണക്കെന്താ ഇവിടെ? നിന്റെ ചോറ് കോലോത്തല്ലെ? ആ പെണ്ണിനെക്കണ്ടിട്ടു വന്നതാണല്ലോ” എന്നു പറഞ്ഞു രണ്ടുകൊടുത്തു. അതോടുകൂടി നാണുനാന്റെ ശക്തിയും നിലച്ചു. ഇനിയും അവിടെത്തന്നെ ഇരുന്നാൽ പലതും സംഭവിച്ചേക്കുമെന്ന ഭയപ്പെട്ട് അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയും വലുത്തയും വടക്കെ വാതിൽ തുറന്നു പുറത്തേക്കോടി. അന്നത്തെ രാവു അവർ അടിമയായ ചാത്തന്റെ അതിഥിയായി കഴിച്ചുകൂട്ടി. അമ്പലക്കുളത്തിൽനിന്നു കളിച്ചുവരുമ്പോഴുടനാണു അവനെ കണ്ടിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ കാണാതാവുന്നതുവരെ വഴി തിരിപ്പിച്ചു നിർത്താറുള്ള വലുത്തയുടെ ആഭിജാത്യം അന്ന് ചാത്തന്റെ അടുക്കളയിൽ അഭയം പ്രാപിച്ചപ്പോൾ എങ്ങോ പോയി മറഞ്ഞു.

പിററദിവസം വീട്ടിൽ വന്നു നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടികളെ വെറും പൂർണ്ണമാണ്. വല്ല റിക്കാട്ടുമായിരിക്കുമെന്ന് തെറ്റിദ്ധരിച്ച് അവർ തലേദിവസം അർദ്ധരാത്രിവരെ ഇരുന്നെഴുതിയ ലേഖനംപോലും ചീന്തിചിന്നികിടക്കുന്നതുകണ്ടു. ഏതായാലും പകൽസമയം കൊള്ളക്കു വരികയില്ലെന്ന വിചാരിച്ച് അവർ ഗൃഹകൃത്യങ്ങളിൽ പ്രവേശിക്കുവാൻ തുടങ്ങിയപ്പോൾ നാണുനാൻ വന്നു അവരെ കോവിലകത്തേക്കു കൂട്ടിക്കൊണ്ടുപോയി. കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ കോവിലകം അന്നാണ് കേരളീയർക്ക് അനശ്വരമായ ഒന്നാംതരം ഒരേയൊരു കലവറയായി പ്രശോഭിച്ചത്. ഇതരദേശങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു പ്രാണരക്ഷക്കായിവന്ന അനേകം ജനങ്ങൾക്കു അന്നവസ്രങ്ങൾ സൗജന്യമായി കൊടുത്തു കോവിലകം വക സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ താമസിപ്പിച്ചു. ദിവസവും വൈകുന്നേരമായാൽ ജനങ്ങൾ വല്ല “ബീച്ചി”ലേക്കോ മറ്റൊരുകൊല്ലത്തു പോലെ കോവിലകത്തേക്കു പോയിത്തുടങ്ങി. കോവിലകക്കാർ ചിലരെല്ലാം ആഗതന്മാരുടെ വസ്രധാരണത്തിൽ സവിശേഷം അക്കാലത്തുകൂടി ശ്രദ്ധിച്ചിരുന്നതിൽ പല അഭിപ്രായവ്യത്യാസങ്ങളും ജനങ്ങൾ പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ചിരുന്നു. ഈ നിഷ്പഷ്ട കോടതികളിലും ആറ്റിസുകളിലും സാധരണ കണ്ടുവരുന്നതാണല്ലോ. അതുപോലെതന്നെ കോവിലകങ്ങളിൽ പോകുമ്പോഴും വസ്രധാരണം ബഹുമാനസൂചകമായിരിക്കണമത്രെ! സ്ത്രീകളായാലും പുരുഷന്മാരായാലും അർദ്ധനഗ്നരായി ചെന്നാൽ മാത്രമേ അവർക്കു അകത്തേക്കു പ്രവേശനമുള്ളൂ. ഈ നിയമം അനുസരിക്കുവാൻ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയെപ്പോലുള്ളവർ നന്നെ വി

ഷമിച്ചു. പോരെങ്കിൽ പോകുന്നവഴിക്കു സഹപാഠികളുടെ മമ്മഭേദകമായ ചില വാക്കുകൾക്കൂടി കേട്ടപ്പോൾ അവർക്കു ഈ വിധം ജീവസന്ധാരണത്തെക്കാൾ പ്രേഷ്ടയായിത്തോന്നിയത് മരണം തന്നെയാണു്.

ഒന്നരണ്ടു രാത്രികൊണ്ടു് നാട്ടുമുഴുവനും കലങ്ങിമറിഞ്ഞു. നില്പനന്മാർ ധനികന്മാരായി; കുബേരന്മാർ കുചേലന്മാരായി. എവിടെ നോക്കിയാലും ഭയവിഹ്വലരായി ജനങ്ങൾ യഥേഷ്ടം ശ്വസോച്ഛാസം കഴിക്കുവാൻകൂടി സംശയിക്കുന്നതായി കാണപ്പെട്ടു. ഇതരദേശങ്ങളിലുള്ള കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങൾക്കു വിവരമറിയിക്കുവാൻപോലും കുറച്ചു ദിവസങ്ങൾക്കു മാറ്റമുണ്ടായില്ല. കമ്പിതപാൽ മുതലായതുകളെ നശിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നു. അവിടവിടെ പാളയമടിച്ചു നിരത്തുകൾ ലഹളക്കാർ കൈവശപ്പെടുത്തിയിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു് ജനങ്ങൾക്കു സമാധാനപരമായി ജീവിതം കഴിക്കുവാൻ വല്ലവഴിക്കും പോകുവാനും തരമുണ്ടായില്ല. എല്ലാവരും കോവിലകത്തെത്തന്നെ ശരണം പ്രാപിച്ചു. “പന്തീരായിരം തേങ്ങതിന്നുന്ന ചെങ്കുത്താണെ” പേടിച്ച് ലഹളക്കാർ ചുറ്റുപാടും പൊടിപൂരമാക്കിയതിൽ തൃപ്തിപ്പെട്ടതല്ലാതെ കോവിലകത്തെ മാത്രം ആക്രമിച്ചില്ല. അപ്പോഴേക്കും അവരുടെ ശ്രദ്ധയെ സമ്പത്സമൃദ്ധങ്ങളായ ഉറനാടുകളിലെ പല ഇല്ലങ്ങളും ആകർഷിച്ചുതുടങ്ങി; അവർ ആ വഴിക്കു തിരിഞ്ഞു.

പട്ടാളം എത്തിയതോടുകൂടി സംഹാരഭദ്രന്മാർ ശാന്തന്മാരും കവച്ചുക്കാർ മയ്യാദക്കാരുമായി മടറി. ഈ കുഴപ്പം മുഴുവനും ഉണ്ടാക്കിത്തീർത്ത ഈ ‘ആൾമാറാട്ടക്കാർ’ അന്യരാജ്യക്കാരായ മാപ്പിളമാരെ പഴിപറഞ്ഞും തങ്ങളുടെ “ഏമാന്മാർ” പററിയ വിപത്തിൽ നിർവ്വാജമായി വ്യസനിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്നും രെഭിനയമാണു് പിന്നെ തദ്ദേശവാസികളായ ആ കള്ളന്മാർ ആരംഭിച്ചതു്. പൊയ്ക്കോയമുതൽ എടുക്കാത്തവന്റെ കയ്യിലുണ്ടെന്നും അതു ഏതുവിധമെങ്കിലും അവനെക്കൊണ്ടു മടക്കിതരിപ്പിക്കാമെന്നും മറ്റും പറഞ്ഞു ഫലിപ്പിച്ചു്. പ്രത്യുപകാരമായി അവർ ‘ഏമാന്മാർ’ ഒരു ‘കോൺട്രക്ട് സർട്ടിഫിക്കറ്റു്’ മാത്രം കൊടുത്താൽ മതി എന്നുള്ള അപേക്ഷയും കറേജ് കേട്ടുതുടങ്ങി. മറ്റുചിലർ “പട്ടാളം വന്നതേലെപ്പൊ അലാക്കായതു്” എന്നു അവരുടെ അഭിലാഷം നിറവേറുന്നതിന്നുണ്ടായ പ്രതിബന്ധമോളു് ആത്മാത്ഥം വ്യസനിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

ഇങ്ങിനെ “പലരും പലതു”മായി കഴിയുമ്പോൾ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി അവളുടെ ‘കുട്ടേട്ട’ന്റെ അച്ഛനായ ഗോവിന്ദപണിക്കരെ കാണാൻ കോഴിക്കോട്ടേക്കു പുറപ്പെട്ടു. ഗോപിനാഥമേനോന്റെ സ്വന്തം ജ്യം കോട്ടയ്ക്കു ലാണെങ്കിലും അദ്ദേഹം ഇപ്പോൾ കോഴിക്കോട്ടുകാരനാണ്. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുമായികുറച്ചു പരിചയത്തിലാണെന്നല്ലാതെ— അതും അവളുടെ അച്ഛൻ വഴിക്കുണ്ടായതാണ്— അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നു ആ സ്ഥലവുമായി യാതൊരു ബന്ധവും ഇപ്പോഴില്ല. ഈ വിധമുള്ള പരിചയം പലപ്പോഴും “അബദ്ധത്തിൽ” കലാശിക്കുന്നത് സാധാരണയാണ്. യാതൊരു പ്രതിബന്ധവും ഇല്ലാതിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ട് അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയും ആ തിരിച്ചിലിൽ പെട്ടു. മേനോന്റെ ഇഷ്ടത്തിന്നെതിരായി നടക്കുന്നതിന്നു കുറച്ചുമടിയുള്ള കൂട്ടത്തിലാണ് ആയാളുടെ അച്ഛന്റെ പ്രകൃതവും. മേനോന്റെ ഉദ്യോഗമോഹവും അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ പഠിപ്പവസാനിപ്പിക്കലും മാത്രമെ അവരുടെ “പരിചയ” സമ്പ്രദായത്തിൽ വേണ്ടിയിരുന്നുള്ളൂ. ഈ വാസ്തവം നല്ലവണ്ണം മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടാണ് അവൾ കോഴിക്കോട്ടേയ്ക്കു പുറപ്പെട്ടത്.

അന്ന് തിരൂർ കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ ബസ് സർവ്വീസ് നടപ്പുണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. ഒരു കാറ് വാടകക്കു വാങ്ങിട്ടാണ് അവർ പോയത്. പോകുമ്പോൾ അവളുടെ വലിയമ്മ കുറെക്കുറെ മുടക്കം പറഞ്ഞുവെങ്കിലും “വിനാശകാലം വിപരീതബുദ്ധി”യായിരുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി അതത്ര വകവെച്ചില്ല. പോരെയിൽ ‘കുട്ടേട്ട’ന്റെ വർത്തമാനമറിയുവാനുള്ള ഉൽക്കണ്ഠയും അവളെ മുന്വോട്ടുതന്നെ വലിച്ചു. ഏകദേശം പകുതിവഴിയെത്തിയപ്പോഴേക്കും ഡ്രൈവർക്കു നെററിക്കൊരേരുകൊണ്ടപ്പോൾ കാറിന്റെ ബ്രേക്ക് താനേതുമറിയാതെതന്നെ നിന്നുപോയി. പെട്ടെന്നു ആയുധപാണികളായ രണ്ട് “കരിമല്ലന്മാർ” അവിടെ എത്തി അവരെ എതിർത്തു. നാണുമാനം ഡ്രൈവർക്കും അപായകരമല്ലെങ്കിലും സാരമായ പരുക്കുകൾ ഏറ്റു. ഇനിയും അവിടെതന്നെ നില്ക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ അവരുടെ കയ്യിൽ മിന്നിത്തിളങ്ങിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന വാൾ അവരോട് സമാധാനം ചോദിക്കുമെന്ന് ഭീഷണിപ്പെടുത്തി അവരെ മടക്കിഅയച്ചു. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ നേരെയെന്ന് ആ ഘാതകന്മാരുടെ ദൃഷ്ടി സവിശേഷം പതിഞ്ഞതു. അവൾ അവരെ അനുഗമിക്കുവാൻ തടിച്ചപ്പോൾ ബലാപ്തകാരമായി അവളെ കൊണ്ടുപോകുവാൻ അവർ ഒരുങ്ങി. സാധു അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി അവ

രുടെ കരസ്ഥം ഭയന്ന ബലിവേദിയിലേക്കു നയിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന ആട്ടിൻകുട്ടിയെപ്പോലെ അവരെ പിന്തുടന്നു. അനാഥയും ഏകാകിനിയുമായ അവളെ സ്ഥായിക്കുവാൻ ദൈവം മാത്രമല്ലാതെ ആവിജനപ്രദേശത്തു മററാരുതന്നെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. അവരുടെ ആയുധമല്ല അവളെ ഭയപ്പെടുത്തിയതു്, കപേഷ്വിതങ്ങളായിരുന്നു. അവളുടെ കലദൈവമായ “ഗോപിനാഥനെ” തന്നെ അവൾ സങ്കടനിവൃത്തിക്കായി പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചു. കണ്ണടച്ചപ്പോൾ ബേഭോധിനാഥന്മാരത്രെ അവളുടെ മനോദൃഷ്ടിക്കു ഗോചരിഭവിച്ചത്. ആ ചോരപ്രമാണികളാകട്ടെ അവളുടെ മുമ്പിൽ കീചകന്റെ ചുവടുകളും വെച്ചുതുടങ്ങി. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി സമാധിയുണർന്നു നോക്കിയപ്പോൾ കണ്ട കാഴ്ച ഇതാണ്. തത്സമയം അവൾക്കു ഒരു കാരിന്റെ ശബ്ദം കേട്ടതായി തോന്നി. വരുന്നതുവരട്ടെ എന്നു വിചാരിച്ചു അവൾ മുക്കുകണ്ണും നിലവിളിച്ചു. നിരത്തിൽ നെടുനീളത്തിൽകിടക്കുന്ന ഒരു മരമുട്ടിയും രക്തംപുരണ്ടു കൈലേസും കണ്ടപ്പോൾ പാമ്പൻ റിവോൾവറുമായി കാരിൽനിന്നു ഇറങ്ങി. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കണ്ണുപടങ്ങളെ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ ദീനാരവം ആകർഷിച്ചു; അദ്ദേഹം ആ വഴിക്കു നടന്നു. ആഗതന്റെ നേർക്കു കുതിച്ചു ചാടിയ ആ ഘോരസത്വങ്ങളെ രണ്ടിനെയും അയാൾ ഒരു നിമിഷത്തിനുള്ളിൽ റിവോൾവറിന്നിരയാക്കി; അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയായ ആ മാൻപേടയെ അത്യാപത്തിൽനിന്നും വിമുക്തയാക്കി. മാനവും ജീവനും രക്ഷിച്ച ആ മാന്യമഹാശയന്നു അവൾ എന്നെന്നേക്കുമായി കടപ്പെട്ടു. അവൾ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പാദങ്ങളിൽ സാഷ്ടാംഗപ്രണാമം ചെയ്തു. ഭക്തിയാലോ, ഭയത്താലോ, നന്ദിയാലോ, എന്തൊ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിക്കു അവിടെനിന്നും എഴുന്നീല്ക്കുവാൻ ഭേദബലമുണ്ടായില്ല. അവളുടെ രക്ഷിതാവായ ആ സി. ഐ. ഡി. ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥൻ മി: കേശവൻ നായർ അവളെ താങ്ങിക്കൊണ്ടുപോയി കാരിൽ കയറി തിരുകുത്തന്നെ മടങ്ങി. അവളുടെ പരിഭ്രമമൊക്കെ തീർന്നു സുസ്ഥിരചിത്തയായി എന്നു കണ്ടപ്പോൾ അവളോടു വിവരമൊക്കെ അദ്ദേഹം ചോദിച്ചറിഞ്ഞു. അവളുടെ ആ വശ്യപ്രകാരം അവളെ ഗോവിന്ദപ്പണിക്കരുടെ ഗൃഹത്തിൽ കൊണ്ടുവന്നു. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി ആയാളുടെ സ്വന്തം മകളെന്നു നായർ തല്ലാലം ധരിച്ചുള്ളു.

അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ വലിയമ്മയും അവളെ ശുശ്രൂഷിപ്പാൻ കോഴിക്കോട്ടേക്കുപോയി. നായരോടുള്ള അവരുടെ ഓരോരുത്തരുടേയും

പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടേയും നന്ദിയും സ്നേഹബഹുമാനങ്ങളും എത്രയാണെന്നതിന്നു കയ്യും കണക്കുമില്ല. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി പലപ്പോഴും അവളുടെ ആത്മാർത്ഥമായ സ്നേഹം അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നു വ്യക്തമാക്കി കൊടുത്തിരുന്നു. താൻ ചെയ്തത് അത്രയൊന്നും പ്രശംസാർഹമല്ലെന്നു സഹജമായ സരസവിലാസത്തോടുകൂടി നായരും പറഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ സ്വഭാവഗുണത്തിന്നു അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി അടിമപ്പെട്ടു. നായർക്കു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രവൃത്തിയുടെ ഫലമായി പല സ്ഥാനമാനങ്ങളും ഗവൺമെന്റിൽനിന്നു ലഭിച്ചു. പക്ഷെ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നു അതിലൊന്നുമല്ല അത്ര തൃപ്തിയും സന്തോഷവും തോന്നിയത്. അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ ഹൃദയാന്തർഭാഗം സ്പർശിച്ചുവരുന്ന കൃതജ്ഞതാപ്രകടനങ്ങളായ വാക്കുകളിൽ മാത്രമായിരുന്നു. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ഇഷ്ടപ്രാണേ ശ്വരിയുടെ പ്രേമാമൃതം വഴിയുന്ന മൊഴികളിൽപ്പോലും നായർ ഇത്രമാധുര്യം ആസ്വദിച്ചിരുന്നില്ല!! അവളുടെ പേരിൽ എന്തെന്നില്ലാത്ത ഒരു വാത്സല്യമോ, സ്നേഹമോ അഥവാ, അതിലും കവിഞ്ഞ മറുവല്ലവികാരമോ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നുള്ളതെന്നു നായർക്കുതന്നെ മനസ്സിലായില്ല. അവളുമായികണ്ടെത്താൻ ഇടവരുത്തിയ ആ ഘാതകന്മാരിൽപ്പോലും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നു പലപ്പോഴും ആക്രന്തതോന്നി.

ഈ അവസരത്തിലാണ് ഗോപിനാഥമനോൻ ഈ നാട്ടുവർത്തമാനം 'മാതൃഭൂമി' മുഖാന്തരം ഗ്രഹിച്ചത്. കോട്ടയ്ക്കലേ മേൽവിലാസത്തിൽ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിക്കു ഒന്നരണ്ടുഴുത്തയച്ചതിന്നു മറുപടി കിട്ടിയതായാലും റജിസ്ട്രിൽ എന്തുവാൻ താമസിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് തന്റെ ഉദ്യോഗം തന്നെക്കാൾ ഭാഗ്യവാനായ ഇതരൻ, കൈവശപ്പെടുത്തിയതുകൊണ്ടും നിരാശനായി മേനോൻ തലക്കാലം നാട്ടിലേക്കു മടങ്ങി. വീട്ടിൽ ചെന്നപ്പോൾ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി നായരായി സംസാരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതുകണ്ടു ആദ്യം അല്പമൊന്നു പരിഭവിച്ചു. "അതാ 'കുട്ടേ'ൻ വന്നു" എന്നു പറഞ്ഞു അവർ മേനോനെ സാദരം സ്വീകരിച്ചു. കറെ പണം അനാവശ്യമായി ചിലവാക്കി ഉദ്യോഗമില്ലാതെയാണെങ്കിലും മകൻ തന്റെ അടുക്കലേക്കുതന്നെ തിരിച്ചുവന്നതിൽ ശ്രദ്ധാത്മാവായ പണിക്കർക്കു അതിയായ സന്തോഷമുണ്ടായി. 'എട്ടൻ' എന്നു പറഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ വാസ്തവത്തിൽ അങ്ങിനെതന്നെ ആയിരിക്കുമെന്നു കരുതി, നായർ "അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയുടെ ബ്രദറോ?" എന്നു ചോദിച്ചു. നായർക്കു അവരുടെ കുടുംബസ്ഥിതികളെപ്പറ്റി അ

ത്ര വിവരമൊന്നും ഇല്ല; അറിയുന്നതിന്നു സാധാരണക്കാരുടെ ജിജ്ഞാസയും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. തൽഫലമായിട്ടാണ് ഈ വിസ്ഫുർത്തം പരറിയത്. “അല്ല”—എന്നു മാത്രം പറഞ്ഞ്, അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടി ശേഷം കഥകൾ വിസ്തരിക്കാതെ അവരെ പരസ്പരം പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊടുത്തു. വർത്തമാനമൊക്കെകേട്ട് അതുതപ്പെട്ട് മേനോൻ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയെ യാതൊരു കേടുപാടും കൂടാതെ രക്ഷിച്ചു നായരോടു ഹാർദ്ദമായി നന്ദിപറഞ്ഞ് സസ്സേഹം കൈ വിടിച്ചു കലക്കിയപ്പോഴാണ് ‘ഏട്ടൻ’ എന്നത് ഒരു പ്രത്യേക പയ്യായമാണെന്ന് നായർ ധരിച്ചത്.

മേനോന്റെ വിവാഹാനന്തരം അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിക്കു തന്നോടുള്ള പ്രതിപത്തി വിട്ടുപോയേക്കുമോ എന്നു നായർ സംശയിച്ചു. പക്ഷെ കണ്ടെടുത്തോളം അവർ സാധാരണക്കാരിൽനിന്നു വ്യത്യസ്തമായൊന്നു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്നു ബോദ്ധ്യമായി. മേനോനു കളഞ്ഞു കിട്ടിയ ഈ നിധിയിൽ എത്രത്തോളം പ്രേമമുണ്ടായിരുന്നുവെന്ന് അന്നു വൈകുന്നേരം തന്നെ തന്റെ നിഷ്കളങ്ക ഹൃദയം തുറന്നുകാണിച്ച് അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിയെ ബോദ്ധ്യപ്പെടുത്തി. അവർ എഴുതിയ ലേഖനം നശിച്ചതോടുകൂടി വിദ്യാലയവുമായുള്ള അവളുടെ ബന്ധം അറു. റജുൺ യാത്ര മേനോന്റെ ഉദ്യോഗഭ്രമവും നിലപ്പിച്ചു. ഇരുവരും പഞ്ചാംഗം നോക്കിതുടങ്ങി. മേനോന്റെ അഭിലാഷം നായരുടെ ഉത്സാഹത്താൽ അടുത്ത ശുഭമുഹൂർത്തത്തിൽ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ അച്ഛൻ സസന്തോഷം നിറവേറി. സനാഥയായ അമ്മിണിക്കുട്ടിക്ക് ‘ഗോപിനാഥ’നിൽ ക്രമേണ ഭക്തി വർദ്ധിച്ചുകൊണ്ടും വന്നു.

വിദ്യാത്മിനി.

காவியமும் பாவிதமும்.

மேலும் கற்புடை மகளிர், தம் கணவர் எந்நிலையிலிருப்பினும், எக் குற்றமுடையராயிருப்பினும், இயற்கையிலேயே தம்மாட்டுள்ள கருணை மிகுதியால் அக்குற்றங்களை மன்னித்துவிட்டு, அவர்களைத் தம்மாரு யிரினு மினிதாய்க் காதலிக்கின்றனர். அவர்கள் இன்பதுன்பங்களைத் தம்முடையனவாகப் பாவித்துப்பங்கிட்டு ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதே கற்புடை மகளிரின் தன்மையாம். “தோன்றற்கும் தோகைக்கும் ஒன்றாய்வரு மின்பதுன்பங்களே” என்பர் வாதவூடிகள். “தற்காத்துத் தற்கொ ண்டான், பேணி, தகைசான்ற, சொற்காத்துச் சோர்விலார் பெண்” என்பது திருவள்ளுவரின் பெண்மைச் சித்திரம். இவர் தம் கணவ ரையே தெய்வமாகப் பாவித்துத் தொழுவார். தெய்வத் தொழாது கொழுற்றொழுதெழும் பெண் பெய்யென மழை பெய்யும் என்று “மழை வளந்தரும்” இப் பெண்களது தெய்வத்தன்மை வாய்ந்த கற் பைத் திருக்குறள் புகழாநிற்கும். இதேபோன்று கணவரும் தம் மனைவியாரை நேசிப்பது இயல்பென்பதை மறுப்பாருமுளரோ? இது கூறாமலேயமையும். இக்குணங்களெல்லாம் கண்ணகி கோவலர் பால் அமைந்துகிடந்தன. கண்ணகி தன் கணவனைத் தெய்வமாகவே பாவி த்தாள். கோவலனது பிரிவாற்றாமையினால் கண்ணகி வருந்தியபோது, அவள் தோழி தேவந்தியென்பாள்,

“சோமகுண்டஞ் சூரியகுண்டந்துறைமூழ்கிக்
காமவேள் கோட்டந் தொழுதார் கணவரொடு
தாமின்புறுவருலகத்துத் தையலார்
போகஞ்செய் பூமியினும் போய்ப் பிறப்பர் யாமொருநாள்
ஆடுதும்”.....

என்று அறிவுறித்தினாள். ஆனால் கற்புடைத் தெய்வமாய் கண்ண கியோ அது “பிட்டு” என்றுவாளா விருந்தனள், கணவனைத்தவிர வேறு தெய்வம் கணவிலுங் கருதாளாதலான்.

“இன்னிசை யெழிலியை யியம்பவு மிசைவதோ
களைகதிர்க் கனலியைக் காமுறலியைவதோ
வளிதருஞ் செல்வனை வாழ்த்தவு மியைவதோ”

என்னும் பாலைக் கலியடிகள் இங்கு ஒப்பிட்டுநோக்கத் தகுந்தன.

கண்ணகி தன் கணவனைத் தெய்வமாகக் கருதியதோடு தன் ஆரு யிர்த் தலைவனாகவும், தன் உள்ளன்புக்குப் பாத்திரனாகவும் கருதியிருந் தாள். பொருளைத் தொலைத்தாலென்? பரத்தைபாற் பிரிந்தாலென்? அவன் தன்னுள்ளத்தைக் கவரந்த கள்ளனன்றோ? மீட்டும் எவ்வாறு

னும் தன் பால் வந்தேவிடுவான் என்பது அவள் எண்ணம். கணவனும் மனைவியும் ஒருவரை யொருவர் உள்ளன்போடு நேசித்த தன்மை மனையறம்படுத்த காதையில் வெளிப்படுகின்றது. கோவலன் தன்னுருயிர்க் காதலியைப் பார்த்து

“மாசறு பொன்னே வலம்புரி முத்தே
காசறுவிரையே கரும்பே தேனே
யரும்பெற்றபாவாய், ஆருயிர் மருந்தே
பெருங்குடி வாணிகன் பெருமட மகளே” என்றும்,
“மலையிடைப் பிறவாமணியே யென்கோ
அலையிடைப் பிறவா அமிழ்தே என்கோ
யாழிடைப் பிறவா இசையேயென்கோ

தாழிருங் கூந்தற்றையால்” என்றும் பலபடியாகக் காதல் கனிந்த மொழிகளால் அவள் அன்பு நலத்தையும், எழிலையும், குணமேன்மையையும் புகழ்கின்றாள். இதே அன்பைக் கண்ணகியும் கோவலன் மாட்டுச் செலுத்தினாள் என்று கூறவும் வேண்டுமோ?

கோவலன் பரத்தை மாட்டுப் பிரிந்த பின்பு, கண்ணகி தனித்திருந்த தோற்றமும் அவள் அன்புநிலையைப் புலப்படுத்தும். அவனையே நீள நினைந்து நினைந்து நெக்குருகும் கண்ணகி, அதைப் பிறருக்குக் கூறினாள். வருத்தமிகுதியை வெளிப்படுத்திக்கொள்ளாது, தன் மாமன் மாமியருமறியாது மறைத்துவைத்த பெருமை அதைவிடச் சீரியதாம். மேலும் கணவன் சென்றவிடத்திற்கு தானும், வழியிலேற்படும் இடையூறுகளையும் துன்பங்களையும் பொருட்படுத்தாது உடன் சென்றாள். கவியரசராக் கம்பரும் இராமன் காட்டுக்குச் செல்வழி உடன் வருவேனென்ற சீதை “உமது பிரிவுத் துயரினும் காடு சுடாது” என்று கூறி அவன் உடன் படாவிடினும் இராமனுடன் சென்றாள் என்று அமைப்பது கண்ணகியின் செயலோடு ஒப்பிட்டுதோக்கற்பாலதாம்.

“பரிவிகந்த மனத்தொடு பற்றிலா
தொருவுகின்றனை யூழியருக்கனு
மெரியுமென்பது யாண்டைய தீண்டுநின்
பிரிவினுஞ் சுடுமோ பெருங்காடென்றாள்;”

என்பது சீதை இராமனைப்பார்த்துக் கூறியதாக கம்பர் கூறுவது.

அடுத்த நாம் மதுரைக்குஞ் செல்வோம். மாதரி வீட்டில் காதலரிருவரும் உண்டபின், கோவலன் சிலம்பு விற்பதற்குப் பிரிகின்றான். இச் சமயத்து நிகழும் செயல்களைப் படிப்போர் தம்முள்ளத்தைப் பறிகொடுப்பது திண்ணம். கடைசியாகக் காதலர் பிரிகின்றனர். பிரிந்த

வர் பிறகு கூடினரில்லை. “உள்ளகம் வெதும்பிவருபனிகரந்த கண்ண” னாகிப் பிரியாவிடை பெற்றுச் சென்றான் கோவலன். இத்தருணத்து அவர்கள் பால் நிகழும் உரையாடல்கள் அவர்கள் தம் முள்ளங்களினூடுபாய்ந்து செல்லும் அன்பு வெள்ளத்தை விளக்குவனவாம்.

பின்னர், கோவலன் கொலையுண்ட செய்தியைக் கேள்வியுற்றொருத்தி குரவையாடுமிடம் வந்து, அக்கொலையை வாக்காற் சொல்லாற்றுவளாய் மெய்ப்பாட்டாற் புலப்படுத்தி நின்றபொழுது கண்ணகியின் மனம் கோவலனை நினைத்து நடுங்கியது.

“நன் பகற் போதே நடுக்கு நோக்கைம்மிகும்
அன்பனைக் காணுதலவுமென் னெஞ்சன்றே
அன்பனைக் காணுதலவு மென் னெஞ்சாயின்
மன்பதை சொன்னதெவன் வாழியோ தோழி”

என்று கலக்கமுற்றாள். கோவலன் கொலையுண்டானென்று கேட்டதற் பின் கண்ணகி “பொங்கியெழுந்தாள், விழுந்தாள் பொழிகதிர்த், திங்கள் முகிலோடுஞ் சேனிலங்கொண்டெனச்; செங்கண் சிவப்ப அழுதாள் தன் கேள்வனை, எங்கணுவென்ன இளைந்தேங்கி மாழ்குவாள்.” பின்னும், தம்மோடு இன்புற்ற தம் கணவர் எரியின் மூழ்க, அவரோடு தாமும் மூழ்காது துன்புறும் தன்மையதாகிய கைம்மை நோன்பு நோற்று இடர்ப்படும் உயவற் பெண்டிரைப்போல அன்பனை இழந்தே னாகிய யான் இருந்தழுவாள் ஒருத்தியோ என்று புலம்பினாள். இவையெல்லாம் கணவன்பால் அவட்கிருந்த அன்பின் திறத்தைத் தெரிவித்து அவள் கற்புடைமையையும் நிலை நாட்டுகின்றன.

இனி, பாண்டியனோடு வழக்குரைத்து, வென்று தன் கற்பின் மாட்சியால் மதுரையை எரித்த செயல்களும் கண்ணகியின் வீரக் கற்பையும் தெய்வத்தன்மையையுமே புலப்படுத்துகின்றன. கண்ணகியின் வீரக் கற்பின் முன், பாண்டியன் நெடுஞ்செழியனும் நிற்கவல்லனல்லன் என்றால், பின் என் சொல்வது? கோவலன் கொலைக்குப் பிறகு பொறுக் கொணுத்துயருற்றுத் “தய்வமுற்றாள்” போன்றாகிய கண்ணகியின், அப்பொழுதைய நிகழ்ச்சிகள் மக்கட்டன்மையில் வைத்தாராய் தற்குரியனவல்ல. எனினும், அந்நிகழ்ச்சிகள் கண்ணகியை உலகத்தார் அறிந்து கொள்ளுவதற்கும், வீர பத்தினி என்று கொண்டாடுவதற்கும் காரணமாயிருந்தன. பாண்டியன் நீதிமன்றம் நோக்கிச்சென்ற நங்கை காய்கதிர்ச் செல்வனை விளித்துத் தன் கணவன் குற்றவாளியோ என்று கேட்ட வீரமுழக்கமும், அரசன்முன் அஞ்சாது சென்று அவனை நற்றிறம் படராக்கொற்கை மன்னென்றும் தேராமன்னென்றும் இடித்துரைத்து வழக்காடிப் பெற்ற வெற்றியும், மதுரைக்கண் வதியும் பத்தினிப் பெண்களைக் கூவியழைத்துக் கூறிய நெடுமொழியும், மதுரையை எரி

யகப்படுத்தியதும், நினைக்க நினைக்க நம்முள்ளத்தைக் கலக்குகின்றன. “ஆரஞ்ருற்ற வீரபத்தினி” என்று ஆசிரியர் கூறுவது கண்ணகிக்கு முற்றிலும் பொருந்துவதே. அங்கியங் கடவுள் அந்தண உருவந்தாங்கி வந்து தேவிமுன் தோன்றி யார் யாரை அழிக்கவேண்டும் என்று கேட்டு, அவள் பணித்தவழி நின்றதும், மதுரைத் தெய்வம் தோன்றி அவள் பழம்பிறப்புணர்த்தியதும், காய்கதிர்ச் செல்வன் நின் கணவன் குற்றவாளியல்லவென்று மறுமொழி கூறியதும் கற்புடை மகளிரின் உரைவழி, தெய்வங்களும் நிற்கும் என்னும் எண்மையைப் புலப்படுத்துகின்றன. தெய்வ வடிவம்பெற்ற கண்ணகி, வஞ்சியில் தனக்கென அமைக்கப்பட்ட கோட்டத்தில் வெளிப்பட்டு, காட்சி கொடுத்து செங்குட்டுவர்க்கருளியதோடன்றி, ஆரிய மன்னருக்கும், மாளவவேந்தனுக்கும், கடல்குலங்கைக் கயவாகு மன்னனுக்கும் அவர்கள் பூசையில் எழுந்தருளி அருள்புரிவதாகவும் கூறினர். மீட்டுந் தேவந்தமேல் வெளிப்பட்டு இளங்கோவின் வரலாற்றையுங் கூறினார். இவையெல்லாம் தன்னை வழிபடுவார்க்கருளும், கற்புடைத் தெய்வமாயினான் கண்கி என்பதைக் காட்டுகின்றனவன்றோ?

இனி இல்லறம் நடத்துவோராய் கற்புடைப் பெண்களுக்குரிய கடமைகளையும் கண்ணகி நன்கறிந்திருந்தாள். தன் கணவனோடுகூடி இல்வாழ்க்கையைப் பண்புடன் நடத்தி இல்லறக் கடமைகளை நன்காற்ற முடியவில்லையென்று கண்ணகி வருந்தின இடமொன்றை ஆசிரியர் அமைத்து, அதன்மூலமாய் அவற்றை அவள் நன்கறிந்த தன்மையையும், கோவலனைப் பிரிந்திருந்த நாட்களில் அவள் மனநிலையையும் நமக்குக் காட்டுகின்றார். இங்கும் கண்ணகியை நாம் மதுரையில் மாதரி வீட்டில் காண்கின்றோம். ஆண்டு கோவலன் கண்ணகியைப் பிரியுமுன்னர், “நினக்கு யான் இழைத்த இடுக்கண்கள் பல; கல்லதரத்தில் மண்மகளறியா நின்வண்ணச் சீறடிகள் வருந்தயான் பலகாவததூரம் உன்னை நடத்திக் கூட்டிக்கொண்டுவந்தேனே. இது வல்வினைப்பயனோ” என்று வருந்திக் கூறியக் கால், கண்ணகி வழிநடையினாலும், வறுமையினாலும் வந்தெய்திய துன்பத்தைக்காட்டிலும், இல்லறக் கடைமைகளினின்றும் வழுவியதனால்தானுற்றுந் துன்பமே பெரிதெனக்காட்டினள். “யான் நின்னுடன் போந்தது கற்புடை மனைவி செய்யவேண்டுவதே. ஆனால் இல்லறக் கடமைகளில் வழுவித் தாங்கள் பெற்றோரையும் வருந்தும்படி செய்து “போற்றா ஒழுக்கம் புரிந்தீர்” என்று அவனுக்கு அறிவுறுத்தினாள்.

(தொடரும்).

S. A.

॥ श्रीः ॥

चा मु ण्ड प्र ह स न म्



। प्रस्तावना ।

(ततः प्रविशति सचिन्तः सूत्रधारः)

सूत्रः-

चाक्रिन् शार्ङ्गिन् सीरमालिन् पिनाकिन्
वज्रिन् पाशिन् दण्डधारिन् शिखावन् ।
सद्यः सर्वे सायुधाः सन्निधध्वं
साह्यं चास्मिन्नध्वरे मे कुरुध्वम् ॥

(ऊर्ध्वमवलोक्य) हन्त, मया बहव आहूताः, नैकोऽप्यागतः ।

मन्ये भयचकितास्ते नागच्छन्ति । भवतु ।

चतुर्भुजश्चतुर्मुखश्चियम्बकः सुराश्च याम् ।

न पारयन्ति हिंसितुं निहन्मि तां कुयक्षिणीम् ॥

(नेपथ्याभिमुखमवलोक्य) मारिष, इतस्तावदागम्यताम् ।

मारिषः- (प्रविश्य) भाव, किन्निमित्तमाहूतोऽस्मि ?

सूत्रः- अस्यस्माकं वटवृक्षे यक्षिण्येका प्लक्षद्वीपादागत्य प्रतिवसति । उच्चाटयामि
तावदेनां मन्त्रप्रयोगेण (इति कुम्भस्य पार्श्वे कृतासनः पत्रपुष्पाद्यैस्तमल-
ङ्करोति)

मारिषः- भाव, कोऽयमस्थाने तवारम्भः ? यक्षिणी नाम जननामभीष्टदात्री
सद्देवता । तदाराध्यतां सा भक्त्या ।

सूत्रः- धिङ्मूर्ख, नाहं तव वचने स्थितः । धीरो मे सङ्कल्पः कर्मण्यस्मिन् ।
त्वया च भाव्यं सहकारिणा ।

मारिषः- का गतिः । तथा भवामि । किमत्र मे कर्तव्यम् ।

सूत्रः- इह पार्श्वोपविष्टो भव । कथायिष्यामि यत् त्वया कर्तव्यम् ।

(मारिषस्तस्य पार्श्वं उपविशति)

सूत्र:- (कुम्भं स्वाङ्के निधाय नेत्रे पिधाय) हां ह्रीं ह्रीं ॐ उद्धर उद्धर । गं रं
भं धं धारय धारय । जं जूं गं भं भञ्जय भञ्जय (इति पठति; मारिषो
दण्डकाष्ठमुद्धृत्य कुम्भं भञ्जयति, सूत्रधारो जलेन क्षिप्तो भवति; तरसो-
त्थाय) रे दुर्बुद्धे, बहु नाम प्रगल्भसे ।

मारिष:- (साञ्जलिबन्धन्) आर्य, भवता हि भञ्जय भञ्जत्ययुक्तम् ।

सूत्र:- रे त्वमपेहि । असहाय एवाहं प्रयोगन्तरमारभे (इत्येकपादस्थितः प्राणा-
यामं कृत्वा जपमारभते ।

(नेपथ्ये)

अहह परमचण्डालः स पाखण्डः

सूत्रः (सभ्रान्तः) को नु खलु मामारब्धजपं चण्डालं कथयति (अवलोक्य) अहो
किञ्चिन्निमित्तात् सङ्क्रुद्धो दन्तैर्दन्तान् दशनं रुषा ।

इतोमुखः समायति चण्डश्चामुण्डपण्डितः ॥

अस्तु । कुपितस्य चण्डपण्डितस्याग्रे न स्थातव्यम् । तन्निष्क्रामामि (इति
निष्क्रान्तः ॥

इति प्रस्तावना

प्रथमोऽङ्कः

(ततः प्रविशति यथोक्तरूपश्चामुण्डः)

चामु:- अहह परमचण्डालः स पाखण्डः । प-र-म-चण्डालः । यः खलु धर्माख्यं
गां निहत्य अधर्माख्यं गर्दभं पौषयति । हन्त, व्यथते मे हृदयम्, क्वथते
मे रक्तम् ।

(ततः प्रविशति पुराणश्रावको बाणः)

बाण:- चामुण्ड, त्वं व्यथित इव दृश्यसे । किं गृह एवाद्य भोजनम् ?

चामु:- भो बाण, चण्डाल्या विद्वद्दृश्यस्य कावा मे भोजने स्पृहा ?

बाण:- किं कुटुम्बिन्या ताडितोऽसि ?

चामु:- कुटुम्बिन्या ताडितस्य किं रुजा स्यात् ?

बाण:- का पुनरन्या चण्डाली ?

चामुः- किं नु खलु जानन्नप्येवं पृच्छसि । अपि जानासि गोवर्धनम् ?

बाणः- को न जानाति परोपकारैवप्रवणं निखिलगुणार्णवं महापुरुषम् ।

चामुः- तस्य चण्डालस्य सुता चण्डाली ?

बाणः- शान्तं पापम् । कर्णारुन्तुदं ते वचनम् । न जाने,
निजेन जीवतेनापि जगतामुपकारिणः ।

कथं गोवर्धनार्थस्य सुता चण्डालतां ब्रजेत् ॥

चामुः- भोः श्रूयताम् । अहमपि श्लोकं जानामि—

यथा काकी पक्षिजातौ मृगजातौ च गर्दभी ।

तथा मनुष्यजातौ सा चण्डाली लोकनिन्दिता ॥

बावः- किन्निमित्तमेवं प्रलपसि ?

चामुः- सा खलु विधवापि सकेशी वर्तते ।

बाणः- अद्यत्वे हि सहस्रश उपलभ्यन्ते सकेश्यो विधवाः ।

चामुः- ताः सर्वा अपि चण्डाल्य एव ।

बाणः- स्यादेतत् । परन्त्वयं दोषोऽद्यतनैः बालकैः परिहृतः ।

चामुः- कथमिव ?

बाणः- अद्यत्वे हि बालकाः सधवा अपि निष्केशा उपलभ्यन्ते । तव पुत्र एवात्र
प्रथमं निदर्शनम् ।

चामुः- (मन्दस्वरेण) सत्यम् । किन्तु बालकानां केशखण्डनं नातीव दोषय ।

बाणः- (विकृतस्वरेण) विधवानां केशवर्धनमपि नतीव दोषाय ।

चामुः- भो, नाहं तस्याः केशवर्धनमधिकृत्य ब्रवीमि, किन्तु

बाणः- तिष्ठ, एवं तर्हि केशवर्धनविचारो नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः समाप्तः ॥

अभ कोऽसौद्वितीयोऽध्यायः आरभ्यताम् ॥

चामुः- सां लण्डन्नगरं गता ।

बाणः- अथ लण्डन्नगरगमनं नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ।

चामुः- किं मां परिहृससि ?

बाणः- नाहं परिहृसामि । किन्तु परमार्थत एव ब्रवीमि—गच्छतु नाम सा लण्ड-
न्नगरम् । किं त्वया धनव्ययः क्रियते ?

चामुः- नास्माकं धनव्ययः किन्तु धर्मव्ययो भवति ।

बाणः- अपि जानासि—किमर्थं सा तत्र गता ?

चामुः- वैद्यशास्त्रं शस्त्रावद्यां च परिशीलयितुं किल ।

- बाणः- हन्त, साधुकृतं तथा ब्रह्मचर्ये व्यवस्थितया । अपि जानासि कदा सा प्रत्यागमिष्यति ?
- चामुः- किमेवं सादरः पृच्छसि ?
- बासः- यदा सा प्रत्यागमिष्यति तदा प्रभृत्यस्माकमग्रहारोऽनुगृहीतः स्यात् । यतो हि सा बलात् प्रविशन्तमकालमृत्युं निवारयिष्यति ।
- चामुः- किं मृत्योरपनोदनाय घोरमृत्युरामन्त्र्यते ? (ऊर्ध्वमवलोक्य) भगवन् धर्मपरिपालक, प्रत्यागच्छन्ती सा पोतभञ्जनेन अतलान्तिकाब्धेः अगाध-सलिले मग्ना भवतु ।
- बाणः- अयमब्धिमज्जनप्रार्थनं नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ।
- चामुः- धिङ्मुखं पण्डितम्मन्य पाखण्ड चण्डाल ।
- बाणः- अथ कोपावतारो नाम चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ।
- चामुः- अङ्ग श्रूयतां—पुराणाब्धिमथने विषमुत्पद्यते विवेकचन्द्रश्चाविर्भवति । भवादृशास्तत्र ललाटान्तरिततृतीयलोचनमात्मानं मन्यमाना विषं पिबन्ति; विषधरकल्पाश्च भवन्ति । यैस्तु विवेकचन्द्रः शिरसा धार्यते त एव विवेकिनः कलावन्तो भवन्ति ।
- चामुः- एवं च वयमविवेकिनः ।
- बाणः- न केवलमविवेकिनः किन्तु विषधराश्च ।
- चामुः- भद्र, न मे त्वां प्रतिकोपः किन्तु गोवर्धनं प्रति । तन्मा वैमनस्यं गमः ।
- बाणः- जाने, कोपो नाम युष्माकं कुलदैवतम् । तन्नास्ति मे वैमनस्यम् ।
- चामुः- एवं तर्हि गोवर्धनस्य सुताऽद्य समागमिष्यति । कथं तस्याः प्रवेशो निरुध्यताम् ।
- बाणः- अत्र विषये ग्रामस्थाः प्रष्टव्याः । तत्सभासम्मेलनं कृत्वा तत्रालोच्यतामयं विषयः ।
- चामुः- ग्रामस्थानां सम्मेलनं ताम् कुलपर्वतानामेकीकरणम् । द्विवारमामन्त्रिता मया ग्रामस्थाः सर्वे । परं न कश्चिदागतः ।
- बाणः- तर्हि किमर्थं त्वयैकेनाव्यापारे व्यापारचिन्ता क्रियते ।
- चामुः- धर्मः खलु रक्षणीय इति ।
- बाणः- अवश्यं रक्षणीय एव । एवं कृते भगवते त्वयोपकृतं भविष्यति । अन्यथाहि धर्मरक्षणाय भगवताऽवतारप्रयासः स्वीकर्तव्यः स्यात् । रक्ष्यतां धर्मः । साधयाम्यहम् (इति निष्क्रान्तः)

चामु:- मन्ये, नान्यस्मिन् जन्मनि कृतमवदातं कर्म धर्मेण, येनैवमसहायो विपद्यते (अवलोक्य) अहो अयं पुराणवाचकः सूताचार्य इत एवाभिवर्तते। स मे साह्यं करिष्यति ।

(ततः प्रविशति पुराणपुस्तकहस्तः सभाण्डेन शिष्येणानुगम्यमानः सूताचार्यः)

सूत:- अप्यागता गोवर्धनस्य सुता ?

चामु:- चण्डालीति ब्रूहि ।

सूत:- कः सन्देहः । परमचण्डाली । अप्यागता ?

चामु:- अद्यागमिष्यति । तामवमन्तुकामोऽहमत्र तिष्ठाभि । भवता च मे सहकारिणा भाव्यम् ।

सूत:- मया खल्वद्य पुराणपठनाय गङ्गाधरभट्टस्य गृहं गम्यते । तत् क्षम्यताम् ।

चामु:- सूत, किमेवं पुराणचिन्तापरोऽसि । तव पुराणानां जलाञ्जलिरुपस्थितः ।

सूत:- कथमिव ?

चामु:- विधवायाः केशवर्धनं नाम कश्चित् साङ्क्रमिको व्याधिः । गोवर्धनस्य सुतां दृष्ट्वा सर्वा विधवाः सञ्जतकौतूहलाः केशान् वर्धयिष्यन्ति । तदा श्रोत्रभावात् तव पुराणानां स्वयमेव जलाञ्जलिः कर्तव्यो भविष्यति ।

सूत:- (सस्मितं शिरःकम्पयन्) आं ज्ञातम् ; तव पौरोहित्यस्य तिलाञ्जलिर्भविष्यति ।

चामु:- भवतु । धर्मे रक्षिते सर्वं रक्षितं भविष्यति । परं न जाने केनोपायेन सा चण्डाली निरोद्धव्येति ।

सूत:- ह्यः खलु ग्रामस्थानां सभासम्मेलनमासीत् । ते किमब्रुवन् ?

चामु:- अवाच्य एव सभासम्मेलनस्य वृत्तान्तः । वक्ता श्रोता अग्रासनाधिपतिः अनुमोदकः प्रतिषेधकश्च सर्वोऽप्यहमेव । अहमेक एवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म तत्तासम् । गृहात् स्वयमेव मया नीतान् कम्बलान् विस्तृत्य चिरं प्रतिपालितम् । न कश्चिज्जन्तुरागतः । न जाने कथमेकत्र ते मेलनीयाः ।

सूत:- एवं क्रियतां यथा—प्रायेण ग्रामस्थाः सर्वे पुराणश्रवणार्थं शिवालयेऽत्र प्रत्यहं सायं मिलन्ति । भवता इवः सायं तत्रैवागम्यताम् । पुराणपठनावसाने तेषां समक्षमयं विषयः शक्य आलोचयितुम् ।

चामु:- (सहर्षम्) तथा करिष्ये। अवश्यमुद्दण्डशास्त्रिणा सह श्वस्तागामिष्यामि।

सून:- तर्हि साधयाम्यहम् (इति प्रणामं कृत्वा साशिष्यो निष्क्रान्तः)

(अन्धकारः)

चामु:- श्वस्तावत् वामस्थान् प्रक्ष्यामि। इदानीं तु सा चण्डाली बाष्पशकटादव-
रुह्य अनेन पथा गृहं गमिष्यति। अत्र निलीय स्थितोऽहं तस्या मुखम-
ञ्जनेन कालीकरिष्यामि। तेन लज्जिता सा कदाचिद्धर्ममार्गमाश्रयेदपि (इति
निलीय स्थितः अञ्जनं सज्जीकरोति) कदाचित् सा मां प्रत्यभिज्ञास्यति।
तन्मदीयं मुखमञ्जनेन लिम्पामि (इति स्वीयं मुखमञ्जनेन लिम्पति)

(ततः प्रविशति चण्डी पुत्रेण सह)

पुत्र:- अम्ब, भीषयति मामन्धकारः।

चण्डी:- वत्स, तव पिता मूर्खः, येनैवं नौ क्लेशयति।

पुत्र:- कस्मात् तं मूर्खं कथयसि।

चण्डी:- यतः स्वयं न किञ्चिज्जानाति, नान्योक्तमपि कर्णे करोति।

पुत्र:- स किन्निमित्तं तमिस्रायां निर्गतः ?

चण्डी:- स खलु गोवर्धनसुतायाः शीलवत्या निरोधने बद्धकच्छे वर्तते। मया
निषिद्धोऽपि स मां कात्कृत्य गृहान्निर्गतः।

पुत्र:- शीलवती तावत् श्वः प्रातरागामिष्यति इति तन्त्रीवार्ता समधिगतैत्युक्तं
हि तद्भूत्रा। अयं तर्हि कुत्र गतः स्यात्।

चण्डी:- रात्रौ बन्धनभ्रष्टो महिषः कुत्र गत इति कन शक्यं वक्तुम्। मन्ये स
मोहिन्याः गृहं गतो भवितुमर्हति।

पुत्र:- तर्हि तत्रैव गच्छावः।

चण्डी:- न युक्तं तत्र गन्तुम्। अन्येद्युः सा मया सह कृतकलहा मां केशेष्वाकृ-
ष्टवती।

पुत्र:- सा त्वया कस्मान्न केशेष्वाकृष्टा ?

चण्डी:- सा निष्केशी। तदिदानीं प्रतिनिवर्तावहे (इति परिक्रामतः)

चामु:- (विलोक्य) इत आयाति सा चण्डाली (इति शनैरुपसृत्य तस्या मुखमञ्ज-
नेन लिम्पति)

(चण्डी पुत्रेण सह क्रोशति रक्षापुरुषः प्रविशति)

रक्षी:- (चामुण्डं हस्ते गृहीत्वा) रे कस्त्वम् ? किमेवं पथि गच्छतो जनानास्कन्द-
यासि ? किमाराजकः संवृत्तो जनपदः ।

चामु:- भो, रक्षिन्, तुदति मे हृदयमेषा चण्डाली ।

रक्षी:- कान्वेषा ?

चामु:- सैव पृच्छयताम् ।

चण्डी:- भो अहेमतदग्रहारवासिनश्चामुण्डस्य पत्नी । भर्तारमन्विष्यन्ती दुःखेन
गच्छामि । साहमेन चण्डालेन प्रसह्य धर्षिता ।

रक्षी:- रे कस्त्वम् ?

चामु:- आर्य, स एवाहं चण्डालश्चामुण्डः ।

पुत्र:- तात, कोऽयं वेषः ।

चण्डी:- कालभैरववेषः ।

रक्षी:- रे किं त्वं चण्डाल उताहो कालभैरवः ।

चामु:- सर्वं ते कथयिष्यामि । मुञ्च माम् ।

रक्षी:- राजकुलं नीत्वा मोक्षयामि । गच्छामः (इत्याकर्षति)

चामु:- (सखेदम्) धर्मः कालीकृतो हन्त दृश्यतां कलिकौतुकम् ।

चण्डी:- (सोपहासम्) इतो हास्यतरं लोके न भूतं न भविष्यति ॥

(सर्वे निष्क्रान्ताः)

