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a Happy &
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Prof. Y. Sreedhar Murthy
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-Triveni Foundation

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TRIPLE STREAM

SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL - INDIA'S STEEL MAN

I.V. Chalapati Rao *

On the 31st of October the nation celebrates the 38th birth day of Sardar Vallabhai Patel who brought unity and stability to India in difficult days. In military parlance 'Sardar' means Lieutenant. A grateful nation conferred this title on Vallabhai Patel in recognition of his heroic stature and soldierly performance in the pitched battles of non-violence. He was indeed Mahatma Gandhi's trusted Lieutenant.

Even as a boy Vallabhai Patel loved freedom and conducted himself with dignity and self-respect. There is a story about his experience in a school at Nadiad. It was mathematics class. The teacher went to the class without preparation. He was working a sum on the black-board and could not get the answer despite his frantic efforts. The boys in the class were amused. One of them, Vallabhai Patel, could not repress his laughter. The teacher, who was indignant, said: 'If you know how to do it, be the teacher yourself'. Vallabhai Patel went to the black-board, worked the sum correctly and sat in the teacher's chair! The teacher complained to the Head-master who demanded an apology from Vallabhai Patel. He refused to give the apology and left the school.

The epoch-making Bardoli struggle showed the philosophy of Satyagraha in action. Bardoli followed the Sardar and the Sardar followed Mahatma Gandhi. Vallabhai Patel successfully mobilised the people of the

villages and led them in their non-violent revolt against the British government.

As an illustration of the cast-iron will and steel-like self-discipline of this ardent patriot, John Gunther mentions an unforgettable incident. Years ago, Patel whose nerves were filaments of ice, was arguing a case in the Court. A telegram was handed to him. It announced the death of his wife. He read it, folded it, put it in his pocket and continued the case without interruption or change of mien. Only when the argument was over his friends knew what the telegram was about. The telegram was about the death of his dear wife! He was a Karma Yogi in the most exalted sense of the term.

Vallabhai Patel, one of the architects of modern India, was born at Karamsad near Nadiad in the year 1875. His father fought in the Sepoy Mutiny against the British imperialism. His elder brother Vithalbhai Patel was a great patriot and an eminent congressman. As a youth, Vallabhai Patel showed little interest in politics. He was a diligent student with the ambition of becoming a lawyer. He became a Barrister and was called to the Bar in London. He specialised in Criminal Law and soon became one of the greatest defense attorneys in murder trials. His name was a terror to the Judiciary during the British rule. It was even said by many people that the court was shifted from place to place to escape him.

His association with Mahatma Gandhi, was a turning point in Indian history. When Gandhi visited the Ahmedabad Club to convert the members to his political religion, Sardar Patel was not interested. All the members of the club crowded over the spot where Gandhi "held his court" but Vallabhai Patel sat in a corner at the card table inside the club. The Mahatma himself went to him with the unerring instinct of the General choosing his Lieutenants. At the very first encounter the conquest was made. It was a case of mutual attraction reminding us of the bond between Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda.

When Mahatma Gandhi launched his Civil Disobedience Movement, Vallabhai Patel gave up his flourishing legal practice to join the campaign. Henceforth, he had repeated spells of incarceration in conducting the campaign of Satyagraha. As a member of the Working Committee, he guided the Indian National Congress which was synonymous with the Indian Independence Movement. In 1930, he was unanimously chosen as the President of the Indian National Congress. He continued the fight till the last bastions of British beurocracy crumbled and the flag of Indian Independence was hoisted on the Red Fort.

The Sardar was a crusader for the integration and democratisation of the Indian States. His statesmanship welded into an integrated pattern 562 States which used to be so many out-skirts and spheres of influence chequer-boarded India. It was really a mammoth undertaking but he accomplished it in a magnificent manner. He excelled Bismark himself. He gave unity to a nation riven with discord. Sardar Patel persuaded the Constituent Assembly to ensure payment of

Privy Purses and to preserve the rights of the dispossessed *maharajas* and *navabs*. On that assurance they willingly acceded to the Indian Union. He did great service by making 555 States forming nearly 50% area of the pre-Independence India. After 20 years the Congress government broke the promise by abolishing the Privy Purses by Presidential order followed by amendment of the Constitution. It was an insult to Patel's memory. As Deputy Prime Minister in Independent India he held the portfolio of Law and Order when millions of people were uprooted in the after-math of the partition of India and there was widespread devastation. With relentless zeal and ruthless efficiency he tackled the forces of disintegration within the country and successfully prevented its balkanisation and parcelisation. Future writers will chronicle this achievement as an imperishable chapter in Indian History.

This solidly-built man with his great bald skull and classical features reminded one of the Roman heroes of Plutarch. He was *Rome to Nehru's Greece*. In his book 'Inside Asia', John Gunther said: "He is the party boss par-excellence. He is the Jim Farley, the party fixer and organiser. When once Gandhi determined to take the line, it was Patel who rammed it through... .. He is creator of the political machine". He is a man of action, of practicality, the man who gets things done. Vallabhai Patel's clear-headed thinking, precise and straight-forward language and direct and down to-earth approach to problems won for him reputation as an outstanding statesman with foresight and hindsight capable of dealing with any crisis or emergency in a cool and collected manner. He was like the rock of Gibraltar. He looked like one who contained power, not like one

who exuded it. It was characteristic of him that he dismissed the Jeypore accident (of the force-landing of the plane in which he travelled) as a humorous adventure.

He formed the Indian Civil Service. This great stickler for discipline was often called the man of steel, the Stalin of India. Very few people could penetrate the over-layer of stone and metal to perceive the inner depths of tenderness and love lying hidden in his great mind. If one stripped off these swathings and "filaments of ice", one was sure to encounter a loving heart and a kindly soul. His partnership with Jawaharlal Nehru in the Post Independence period is a memorable chapter in Indian history. It was an ideal combination.

Like Horatio, Sardar Patel defended the strait bridge of his country's independence, taking up arms not only against internal doubts but also external dangers - and at last laid down his arms with his face turned towards the 'promised land'.

In his book 'India Wins Freedom' which was released after Jawaharlal Nehru's death, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad explains his opinion about the circumstances leading to the partition of India. He makes oblique references to Nehru's softness and Patel's firmness towards the Muslims. It is common knowledge that Vallabhai Patel released the huge sum of sterling balances to Pakistan only under the pressure of Gandhiji's fast because he knew that the money would be used to purchase arms to be used against India.

But for Sardar Vallabhai Patel the Indian States especially the Hyderabad State, Travancore and Junagadh would not have merged in the Indian Union. He ordered

'Police Action' under General Chaudhury's command to bring Hyderabad into the Union subduing the Nizam's army and the Razakars. H.M. Patel, I.C.S., Sardar's Secretary, mentions an interesting incident. After Police Action the Sardar paid his first visit to Hyderabad. He had to decide whether he should visit the Nizam or the latter should visit him first. On enquiry from the officials he was told that Jawaharlal Nehru (Prime Minister) who went to Hyderabad earlier visited the Nizam first. But Sardar Patel told them that it would be in the fitness of things if the Nizam would visit the Deputy Prime Minister since all other princes visited him and that it would not be proper if he practiced discrimination in favour of the Nizam. Thus, he politely insisted that the Nizam should visit him first. The Nizam called on him.

India had the combination of these two great men at the helm of affairs for a short time. Unfortunately, Destiny had willed it otherwise. Sardar Patel died when his presence was badly needed.

Patel did not like Nehru's foreign policy of friendship with China. Nehru hobnobbed with China and believed in the slogan 'Hindi - Chini Bhai Bhai'. He cautioned Nehru against the impending treachery of China. Nehru took initiative in supporting the admission of China into the UN Security Council. India had to pay a heavy price for this Himalayan blunder.

There used to arise occasional differences between these two leaders. Gandhiji used to resolve them. In the early period of Independence, India was lucky in having these two great leaders at the helm of affairs. They supplemented each other.

HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE CROSS ROADS

Yalamudi. K*

If there is a question like "Do you think the education of the day is on the right path?" one can be fairly sure that the answer does not vary much from one to the other. But, if the question is framed in a different way like what is the possible solution? All hell is let loose. Solutions are many. Everyone is so sure of his/her solution that, if any attempt is made to speak about the failure of human judgement, not many are in a mood to accommodate the others' view point. Perhaps it is stretching things too far, to expect a kind of unanimity of solutions in a country of enormous diversity and a deep clash of ideological and class interests. At the individual level and even at the plane of policy framers, such is the intensity of convictions that, unfortunately, there is a great failure in arriving at a broad consensus. It is this absence of basic democratic temperament, which is at the root, that ails our polity and social structure too.

With the preface above, it is intended in this piece of writing to look at, with a specific focus, what has gone amiss in the teaching and learning process of higher education. Education at primary level has a simple goal. If a kid is taught the basic literacy of three "Rs", it is more or less enough. Of course, in the rat race for one-upmanship, much is attempted and much less is delivered

even at this elementary phase. The secondary stage is a preparation for the crucial higher education. If the solid foundation is laid with essential fundamentals, one can take off from here in an easy manner to the axis of higher education. In theory, it is a simple chain.

Unfortunately, this chain has got many weak links. Therefore, by the time, one comes to higher education, one is not in a position to empower oneself in the manner expected. The very purpose of higher education is defeated. The purpose of higher education is not as simple as that of school education. In saying this, one does not in any way intend to demean the significance of the education of preparatory stages. It is just a relative statement. Higher education, for sure, has a utility angle. It is all the more so, now that the neo-liberal agenda is in full-swing. The other seminal dimension of it is the imparting of critical literacy.

What does one mean by "Critical Literacy"? It is a capacity by which one can discern what is between the lines and what is even beyond them. Measured against this parameter, the situation is utterly cheerless. The young are so easily manipulated by the political masters that one is deeply worried whether they are educated or education just bypassed them. There are glaring instances of the executive power that was/is being misused to enrich the self and the yes men around. If some dole is thrown to the public at large, no questions are asked. The

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arbitrariness of power is, not even thought of, let alone protested against. About structural inequities and the legal corruption in the form of slanted rules favoring the privileged lot of the society are never given the critical focus by the great majority of the lettered lot. After all is said and done, it is the failure of higher education in its public purpose. The tragedy of the LPG is that higher education is no more for the public good. It is meant for the personal uplift even at the cost of all canons both ethical and legal.

The resentment from the educated youth against this insidious systemic rot is so passive that, one is troubled, as to what is to follow next. The percentage of literacy itself is not that rosy. The ground reality is so pathetic that the gross enrolment ratio in higher education itself is very low, when compared with the countries with whom we are supposed to compare ourselves. It is mere 18%. Even the fortunate few, who are in the places of higher learning, are so poorly placed at the end of the day, let alone critical capacities, even in the other areas, their competency is below par. As per one reckoning, mere 10% engineering graduates are employable. The research output of our products is not only meager in terms of quantity but also very low in terms of quality.

Starting with the Kothari Commission to the latest "Knowledge Commission", the refrain is the same. The destiny of a nation is shaped in the class rooms. At present, the teachers are well-paid. Relatively more qualified. There is technology to fill the gaps and to make the pedagogical practices more effective. Still, when chips are down, there is a gloomy situation all around. How does one

account for it? There is an argument advanced by the "save education" proponents that as long as the common school model was the norm, there was civic pressure on the executive to be more vigilant and accountable about the education system. Now that the private players are in the field at all levels of education, catering to the needs of different strata of the society, in tune with their financial clout, education at all levels got affected. Its impact on higher education is lethal. Another negative factor, which is seen to be at operation according to the same activist is that with the loosening of commitment on the part of teachers as public intellectuals, the situation is getting worsened by and by.

Yet, the rhetoric of the planners is unending. The 12th plan Higher Education document proclaims that it is basically time for quality consolidation. The simple reason is that the causal link between cognitive skills acquired through education and economic growth is now well-established. Along with the Three "Es" of the 11th plan (expansion, excellence and equity) the focus would be on 4Cs, like, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. It further adds, "therefore, focus should be primarily on improving the quality of general education. Graduates should be able to acquire skills beyond the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs)". Fortunately, there is no ASER report about the standards in higher education, as it is with the school education. Had it been available, even the truth about 3Rs would have been exposed.

Anyway, much of the 12th plan document on higher education reads poetic. There are some dangerous proposals, which

would under-cut the very idea of public education in the country in days to come. So a big fight waits against them. Unfortunately, when it comes to things positive, the credibility of the state is so tenuous that 18 state governments have given false affidavits to the supreme court of India stating that they have met all stipulations of the RTE act, as they are required to by law before the 31 march 2013.

Worse still, the others do not even care to respond. Similarly, when it comes to the implementation of anti-people policies, whether it is education or any other crucial field like public health, the bipartisan approach of the major political parties and their allies (despite some ritual protests) is indeed passionate.

SUN DOWN

C.M. Mohanrao*

Christ's blood coursing through its nerves
 Holding green leafy festoons of welcome
 To all seekers of shade and shelter,
 flower and fruit,
 Accommodating on its sturdy branches
 A host of nests for feathered tribes
 The aged tree is agog with the outbursts,
 Of the delightful cries of the hungry chicks,
 Just free from the grip of fear from the aliens
 Pushing one another to receive the first morsel
 At the fast approaching calls of
 their home coming parents
 After a day long strenuous labor

Not far away behind the hillock
 The sun, a giant sized ripe orange,
 With all his rays drawn in
 Sinks down slowly red with rage.....
 The sunset here must be sunrise
 some where else.....
 And the hillock lies motionless and
 unperturbed
 Like a saint squatting quiet cross legged
 Engrossed in deep meditation

Unmindful of what is going on around.....
 Facing the tree at a distance of ten yards
 Sitting on a rock hewn rough is sun and rain
 I have painted the picture in all its details
 The moment, the situation, the landscape
 the tone and the shade.
 I have immortalized.....
 A wonderful piece of art aglow with
 life.....
 I have nodded my head
 with ecstasy and pride.....
 Behind me a little away
 The rivulet chuckles over its gravel
 As if mocking at the boast of my achievement
 Like a sweet sixteen smiling blissfully
 Like a peacock dancing majestically
 Like a singing angel floating by
 The rivulet flows on and on nonchalantly
 Reflecting the passing clouds
 The infinite twinkling stars,
 Thousands and thousands of light years
 away from us,
 As if there is no beginning or ending
 As if everything is her own,
 Her own without a dispute...

* Poet, Hyderabad

C.Y. CHINTAMANI : THE LEGENDARY EDITOR

T. Siva Rama Krishna *

C.Y. Chintamani was indeed one of the most outstanding legendary editors in our annals of Journalism. *The Leader* of Allahabad was his first and last love. Strange as it may seem, from an obscure reporter on Rs.35, he rose, by dint of his innate worth, to the editorship of a daily, the ministership of a province (U.P) and the leadership of a party (Liberal Party).

His amazing industry, encyclopedic knowledge, phenomenal memory, superb command of English, his powerful eloquence and ready wit and pen, his political acumen and parliamentary gifts, his flair for controversy and genius for conversation, his conservatism, his courage of fierce convictions and fundamental regard for the nobler values of life established him as the Pope of Indian Journalism. He was a colossus that strode the scene of journalistic and public life.

C.Y. Chintamani was born in an orthodox scholarly Brahmin family of Vizianagaram in 1880. His father Sri Lakshmi Rama Somayajulu was Raja Guru in Vijayanagar Court. He had his school and college education in Vijayanagaram. He was only a graduate. But he was a product of liberal education and he acquired an erudite scholarship.

Naturally, Journalism had a strong passion for C.Y. Chintamani. In the beginning he wrote articles to *Telugu Harp* and later he was the editor of the *Visakha Spectator*. And then he returned to Vizianagaram and wrote an authoritative article on British Budget in the *Indian Herald* which earned him great name and fame. He learnt the rudiments of journalism first on the weekly *United India* for a few weeks, and then on the *Madras Standard* for a few months under the distinguished publicist, G. Subrahmanyam Ayyer. Then, with a spirit of glorious adventure and reckless heroism, he embarked upon the high seas of Journalism. He attended the Lahore Congress in 1900. There, as a prodigy, he attracted the attention and admiration of the mighty. Later, when Sachidananda Sinha and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru founded *Indian People* (an English Weekly), they appointed Chintamani as its Assistant Editor. After that, in 1909 when *Leader* came into existence under the auspices of Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Chintamani was made its Editor. He was an outstanding Editor of *Leader* for three decades from its inception till his last breath, (except for two brief interruptions, once when he became a Minister and next when he went to Bombay to edit the *Indian Daily Mail* at Jahangir Petit's invitation). Chintamani was the leader as emphatically as Spender was of the *Westminister Gazette* or C.P. Scott was of the *Manchester Guardian*. Chintamani and

* Lecturer in English (Retd.), Writer, Kakinada

Leader were spoken of as one inseparable entity. Certainly, this is considered as one of the greatest landmarks in Indian Journalism. He made it the official organ of the Liberal Party.

As an outstanding editor, he was an absolute dictator and monarch. He was independent and always quick in taking decisions. He would not pander, would not compromise and made himself heard. If he approached Spender in his editorial integrity and output, he recalled Stead, in his journalistic militancy and crusading zeal. He derived his power as editor from long and intimate acquaintance with public life and decisive insight into every national problem as it arose.

When once there arose serious differences of opinion over Montague - Chelmsford reforms between Malviya (President of the Managing Committee of *Leader*) and C.Y. Chintamani, (its Chief Editor) and when Chintamani wanted to resign, Malviya thought that, Chintamani would be indispensable for *Leader's* progress and development, and so he (Malviya) resigned. Chintamani called him a *Dharmatma*.

In fact, C.Y. Chintamani was not merely a journalist but a statesman. He was lucky in his associations. He came into contact with and under the influence of some of the greatest men and masterminds of his time. In the U.P. Council he was a force to be reckoned with. When he spoke they listened to an orator. When he was not a minister, he was the leader of the opposition. He was the foremost builder of public life in U.P. He was Knighted.

About his phenomenal memory B.C. Pal called him a moving encyclopedia. The *Bombay Chronicle* wrote that he had a strong memory, with a rectangular finish for every new idea in his head. Mahamad Ali described his memory as the card index system of Indian politics. His memory was described as a small secretariat in itself - with all its voluminousness and none of its mustiness.

K. Iswara Dutt says " if he wills, a Niagara of facts and figures, statements and statistics, quotations and passages shoots out, submerges you and sweeps you off. It is because of this phenomenal memory that his epistle is like an essay, his conversation is like a lecture, and his lecture like a page from history. He always delighted his audience with episodes".

Chintamani was a typical Gladstonian orator. Moderation in Chintamani was both strong and animated. Like Sir William Har Court, he was a fighting liberal. In fighting controversy he was a formidable factor. In the last few months of his ministership he used to carry a letter of resignation in his pocket.

Personally, Chintamani was an amiable gentleman and an ideal host. His eldest son C.L.R. Sastri was a great journalist. His second son Balakrishna Rao was a topper in I.P.S. For some time he was in government service and later he became a Mayor of Allahabad Corporation. And later he became Vice-Chancellor of Agra and Azamgarh Universities. They were worthy sons of a worthy father.

C.Y. Chintamani moulded K. Iswara Dutt, K. Rama Rao, C.V.H. Rao, Sri Prakasa et al, into great journalists. He was a great

friend, guide and philosopher and benefactor to one and all.

C.Y. Chintamani was a classic example of self made man. In politics a

confirmed liberal, in social matters a staunch rebel, in journalism a born genius, in public life a formidable figure, he played no small part in the history and renaissance of Modern India.

THE DEATH EXPERIENCE

It was about six weeks before I left Madura for good that the great change in my life took place. It was quite sudden. I was sitting alone in a room on the first floor of my uncle's house. I seldom had any sickness, and on that day there was nothing wrong with my health, but a sudden violent fear of death overtook me.

There was nothing in my state of health to account for it, and I did not try to account for it or to find out whether there was any reason for the fear. I just felt 'I am going to die' and began thinking what to do about it. It did not occur to me to consult a doctor or my elders or friends; I felt that I had to solve the problem myself, there and then.

The shock of the fear of death drove my mind inwards and I said to myself mentally, without actually forming the words: 'Now death has come; what does it mean? What is it that is dying? This body dies.' And I at once dramatised the occurrence of death. I lay with my limbs stretched out stiff as though rigour mortis had set in and imitated a corpse so as to give greater reality to the enquiry. I held my breath and kept my lips tightly closed so that no sound could escape, so that neither the word 'I' nor any other word could be uttered. 'Well then,' I said to myself, 'this body is dead. It will be carried stiff to the burning ground

and there burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of this body am I dead? Is the body 'I'? It is silent and inert but I feel the full force of my personality and even the voice of the 'I' within me, apart from it. So I am Spirit that is transcending the body. The body dies but the Spirit that transcends it cannot be touched by death. That means I am the 'Deathless Spirit.' All this was not dull thought, it flashed through me vividly as living truth which I perceived directly, almost without thought process. 'I' was something very real, the only real thing about my present state, and all the conscious activity connected with my body was centred on that 'I'. From that moment onwards the 'I' or Self focused attention on itself by a powerful fascination. Fear of death had vanished once and for all. Absorption in the Self continued unbroken from that time on. Other thoughts might come and go like the various notes of music, but the 'I' continued like the fundamental sruti note that underlies and blends with all the other notes. Whether the body was engaged in talking, reading or anything else, I was still centred on 'I'. Previous to that crisis I had no clear perception of my Self and was not consciously attracted to it. I felt no perceptible or direct interest in it, much less any inclination to dwell permanently in it.

Sri Ramana Maharshi

Courtesy: Sri Aurobindo's Action- April 2013

LIVING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Is technology eating away our creativity and intelligence?

Malini Seshadri*

LIFE SKILLS

If you think technology has been around only for the last couple of hundred years, you would be wrong. Ever since fire was invented and the wheel was discovered, and even earlier, people had been managing technology. But in recent times, it has begun to seem that technology is managing us!

We don't walk to school because there are buses and cars. We watch TV because there is TV to watch. We never stop talking because there are mobile phones. We don't visit family and friends because we can do 'remote visiting' by phone or webcam. In the next few years the world will come into your living room in newer and newer ways, and we will have to exert ourselves less and less to accomplish more and more.

People claim that technology has freed up time for us to be more creative. Yet, people have been astonishingly creative throughout the history of mankind, when technology was primitive by present-day standards. Much of that creative energy and genius went towards enhancing technology itself, but it also went towards music, literature and the arts. Shakespeare wrote out his astonishingly large volume of work with quill

pens on parchment paper. Much more recently, Tolkien wrote all the volumes of *The Lord of the Rings* without the benefit of a computer. Today, a high school student in the western world would feel lost without a calculator and a computer.

Constant Vigil: That does not necessarily mean people are becoming less intelligent. It shows that the brain adapts to new situations, and real-locates its resources where they are needed. But it requires constant vigil to ensure that the human mind remains in control of the technology, rather than becoming dependent on it.

So what would be the ideal way to manage new technologies as they arise? Ideally, to embrace and assimilate them, and use them to increase the efficiency of our output, freeing up time for creative activity and for the ultimate joys of life which require no technology at all - strolling in the park, playing with a child or writing a poem.

So let's take an inventory. Think about this and discuss: Do you manage the technology around you, are you at its mercy or have you never given it a thought? Do you think living in a highly technological world makes us more creative and artistic or less so?

Courtesy: *The Hindu*

* Freelance writer

ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL -AN OVERVIEW

Ch. Joseleena*

Language acquisition according to Krashen (1980) is the sub-conscious assimilation of the language without any awareness of knowing rules. Language acquisition is one of the typical traits of humans and usually refers to first language acquisition, which is how a child picks up the native language. In first language acquisition, children get a feel for what is and what isn't correct through a natural communication. The emphasis is on the way they communicate and not on the form. The term 'acquisition' is used to refer to picking up a language through exposure. 'Learning' on the other hand, is a conscious process achieved through formal study and resulting in an explicit knowledge of rules. It is the outcome of instruction of the rules of language.

Second language acquisition stands in contrast to first language acquisition. Naom Chomsky (1965), emphasized the learner's innate mental capacity for acquiring a language shifting the focus from language learning to language acquisition. In second language acquisition, the learners learn an additional language after they have acquired their mother tongue. The term 'second language acquisition' is used to emphasize the sub-conscious nature of the learning process but in recent years learning and acquisition have become largely

synonymous. The second language learner (L_2) differs from the first language learner (L_1) in two critical ways, according to William C. Ritchie and Tej.K. Bhatia (1996). The (L_2) learner begins the process of acquisition at a time when he/she has matured past the age when L_1 is normally acquired and L_2 learner has a language system in place. Although the role of first language has both negative and positive transfer on the second language acquisition, positive transfer being facilitative, should be encouraged in the teaching process. 'Transfer' is a general term describing the influence of previous knowledge to subsequent learning. Positive transfer is when $L(1)$ form is used in $L(2)$ usage and it is the part of $L(2)$ norm and negative transfer occurs when the borrowed $L(1)$ usage is not part of $L(2)$ norm and inhibits the learning process.

Second language acquisition is not a uniform and predictable phenomenon as there is no single way in which learners acquire a knowledge of second language, according to Rod Ellis (1985).second language acquisition takes place either in a natural or classroom setting and covers the development of phonology, lexis, grammar and pragmatic knowledge which lead to the learner's competence. Different learners in different situations learn a second language in different ways. In Indian context, the term second language is understood as a language that is learnt after one or more Indian languages

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which are primary and significant. In School Education, the three language formula is carried out and according to the Education Commission, 1964-66, a solid foundation in English must be laid at the School Stage.

The acquisition of English language at the school level is very crucial specially at the high school level. At this stage, the learner develops certain maturity levels and is in a position to explore the language all by himself/herself. In the School, the learner is exposed to a whole lot of aspects of the language in the form of syllabus. The learner is expected to learn everything only to reproduce it on paper through exams and tests. This kills the spirit of acquiring the language skills as he/she is crammed with too many things and the learner hardly puts what is being learnt to practice. Teaching English language skills is a major platform on which acquisition of English language takes place. Teaching of language skills can be embedded across the curriculum to achieve competency with the language. Developing learning experiences that strengthen all the four language skills is possible with suitable syllabus.

Language skills are normally defined as the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The acquisition of four language skills is considered a yardstick to measure the level of achievement in a student. Some formal classroom activities encourage the learner to focus on one or two of the skills, while others focus on integrating the skills within an activity. Although the learner can easily get acquainted with the richness and complexity of English language for communication when all the skills of language are merged into one form of approach, the contention here is that priority

should be given to the receptive component, which include, listening and reading skills. While it is true that a gifted learner benefits from even a short exposure of a second language it is an average and a below average learner who always ends up retaining very little of the four skills and unable to cope within a genuine authentic communication. For the process of developing of the four language skills, the training of the ear has to be given priority. In other words, it is the listening skill that tops the list of priorities. The recent emphasis on technology in Education will all the more pave the way towards making the learner listen to long stretches of English at School. By developing effective English as second language modules, and also by formatting all the units in the prescribed textbooks of English at the high school level into audio lessons will not only enable the students towards subconscious assimilation of the language but also to learn the correct pronunciation, which may not always be possible from a teacher.

Krashen (1984) and many others before him have argued convincingly for the priority of reading over all other language skills. Reading comprehension should also be an essential feature as seeing the language will reinforce the impression of the language which will make the learner absorb the language and lead the way for an active grammatical control. Most English course books describe life and situations from an English and western point of view. It is important that lessons should have simple English to understand and reflect the culture of our country so that the learner can identify with the lessons and interest on his/her part is generated.

Therefore it is obvious that in any language acquisition, comprehension makes way to production. This is all the more relevant in second language acquisition. Skill in production of speech output is the most difficult and complex and hence cannot be taken as starting point as in first language acquisition. In first language acquisition, the child has to inevitably follow the listening - speaking - reading - writing sequence, because of the physiological factors. Writing on the other hand, is a process of analysis and unless the learner is studying English for special purpose of academic study, it is unlikely to give importance to writing skill. Moreover, the skill requires relative cognitive maturity. The implications that can be drawn from the above said points are, the four skills of English language cannot be segregated and learners can interact naturally only when all the four skills of language are integrated. Nevertheless, listening and reading skills should be placed on a high position as progress in receptive component leads to progress in productive component of language acquisition.

A language text, for instance, prescribes an order of contents for the learner. It is understood that the order in which the features of the language are presented does match with the order in which the learner is capable of acquiring them. However, unless the teacher's understanding of the syllabus scheme coincides with the learner's own way of learning the language, we cannot be sure that the teaching content will contribute directly to language learning. With careful reflection and planning, any teacher can integrate the language skills and strengthen the tapestry of language teaching and learning. When the

tapestry is woven well, learners can use English effectively for communication. Apart from the prescribed text books, the materials employed should be determined by the teaching aims and method. Using the right kind of material which specifically and adequately serves the purpose is also another important prerogative in the language acquisition process.

Therefore the various stages in English language acquisition prepare the learner from pre-production stage to receptive knowledge stage and subsequently towards the productive knowledge stage where the learner reaches a level close to competence in all the four skills of language. At one time language learners were perceived to master various formal skills and today we see a new set of learners who comprehend and produce language that has emerged. Functional language acquisition has taken a front seat and in this process, the role that is played by formal instruction is of central importance because it enhances and accelerates the acquisition of English language. The syllabus put in place should stress not only on 'knowing' but also on 'doing' with the topics the students learn and acquire. Technology can be used to the advantage of English language acquisition as today's learners are techno-savvy. High school teachers can take the help of digital tools and use blogs and social networking to enhance the language skills in learners. Seminars and Projects also help in gaining the required language skills. Acquisition of English language skills at the high school level without opportunities for students to meaningfully apply these skills often lets the acquired skills quickly forgotten. The challenge is to blend them in effective ways.

NOMENCLATURE

Ramakrishna Rao Gandikota*

"Nomenclature is nothing but our good old practice of *Namakarana*. Why the very word *Name* is derived from the Sanskrit word *Nama*. This is our age old custom. Parents give a name to the child as a 'Blessing' to face the world with", the mellifluous voice of my 'Botany Sir', resonates in my ears even after five decades. He further continued, we follow the 'Binomial Nomenclature' in the case of plants and animals, with a generic name followed by a specific name, as is the case with our 'Sir name' and the name proper. He used to roll out hundreds of botanical names of the plants in Latin or Latinised English, which were most musical and worked as mantras and I used to get mesmerized and thereafter chanted those names from *Acaccia arabica to ziziplus jujuba*, as a Botany Lecturer myself.

Our Botany Sir, late Mr. Chako concluded his lecture on nomenclature with these humorous words. "We have some misnomers. For instance take the tall avenue tree Asoka. It was named *Polyalthia longifolia* meaning 'cures many -long leaves' in Latin. Actually the British botanist mistook this plant for the real Asoka Tree, *Saraca indica*, under which Mother Sita wailed, praying for reunion with Lord Sri Rama. We may have some misnomers amidst us who have names which are mere name sakes". How right he was! Parents name their children with great

aspiration ~ and ambition. Of course what lies in their future, god alone knows.

The music maestro of Sarod, Amjad Ali khan, named his sons 'Amaan' -(most lovable) and Ayaan (gift of god). What a beautiful and thoughtful selection of names. A good old pious gentleman known to me named his sons after Lord Vishnu, i.e. Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda etc. He had to contend himself with just six names of the Lord. Subsequently he had four daughters who were named after the *Maha Sadhvis* Sita, Savitri, Ahalya and Anasuya. Those were the days when to have a dozen children was a norm. Now it is 'One or none'. When we name our children after god, we unconsciously utter the holy name which by itself is a merit (*punya*).

A student of mine was named Soumitri, meaning Sumitra's son Lakshmana, the younger brother of Lord Sri Rama. Lo! His parents never expected the present generation would be ignorant of our scriptures and Sanskrit in such a short time. Very often in his school and college nominal rolls, he was included among the girls. It is not all; he received a couple of love letters too from unknown boys, mistaking him to be a beautiful girl, with a beautiful name rhyming with Gayatri and Savitri. When he came to me for counseling, I suggested to prefix Lakshman to his name Soumitri; though redundant, it would solve the problem.

* Retired Principal, Kakinada

In the earlier generation, generally the first child was given the grand parent's name. For instance my elder brother was named Subbarao, a ubiquitous name in those days. He was named after our grandfather, a towering personality. Our mother faced a big problem. How could she call him names shouting "Subbu" or "Subbi", when got annoyed with this naughty boy! So she started calling him 'Babu'. Similarly we have Chinna, Chanti, Papayi, Chitti, Bulli, Baby *et al*, who remain kids perpetually, the original names being forgotten.

We have a craze for very short names now-a-days. They should sound well, no matter they have any meaning or not. With the advent of Internet we have become "Omniscient", with a click of the Mouse, we can access thousands of names from various languages with a choice of syllables and phonetic sounds. At times these words turned out to be adjectives and connectives. My brother's grand daughter, born in U.S, was named "Anik". When informed on phone, I mistook it for 'Unique'. My sister-in-law took great pains in enlightening me the meaning of the name, and the language it is derived from.

Of late it has become a fashion to give a very short name with one or two syllables and a long subtitle to our Telugu Movies. When such unique short names are given to our children, how nice it would be to add an explanatory tag!

At times the names we give to our children are embarrassing. A student of mine was named Mekhala by her parents. As a student of Sanskrit, when she came to know the meaning, she blushed to tears. Mekhala means a girdle or waist band in Sanskrit. Take for instance the name Ravikumar, supposed to be named after the Sun God. Ravi, the Sun, has two sons - Yama and Sani. While Yama torments the departed, Sani the living. Which of the two sons of Ravi is named after in the present case is doubtful!

These are the days of Adhar. The twelve digit unique ID Number is a must for our survival without which we are deprived of gas, ration, pension, scholarships etc. Modern technology may usher in 'Numerical Nomenclature'. and we are recognized by mere numbers.

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

-- Theodore Roosevelt

Dr. ANNIE BESANT - A WOMAN TO BE REMEMBERED Commemorating Annie Besant's BirthDay

V. Muralidhar*

It is precisely 165 years back, a little baby girl opened her eyes on 1st October 1847 on the soil of British Isles. She was none other than Dr. Annie Besant, who was destined and engendered to bring out changes both in her mother land as well as the sacred land of her adoption.

Indubitably, Dr. Annie Besant had been a multifaceted and versatile personality - thinker, labour leader, author, an eloquent orator, educationist, feminist, a politician and a social reformer. She became the champion of both women's emancipation and factory workers in her home town. It is in truth, the inspiration to visit and to study India and its people gave this outstanding personality an opportunity to peruse the book "Secret Doctrine" written by H P Blavatsky, the founder of Theosophical Society in America with Head Quarters at Madras, now Chennai.

Annie Besant first stepped on Indian soil in the year 1863 on 16 November, for she realized that Indians had been completely unaware of their culture and heritage. Consequently, she could initiate and undertake many an innovative programmes with a view to making Indians to be aware of their sense of pride and responsibility. She started many schools and among them Central Hindu High

School in Banaras in the year 1898 without any financial assistance from the Government. Besides this, she started Boys Scout and Girls Guide Association in India. In the first place, moral and religious instructions were introduced and included in the curriculum. With the passage of time, this institution became a college and later on it grew into Banaras Hindu University. She also served as the President of *Theosophical Society*, Madras (Chennai) from 1909 till her death in 1933.

Annie Besant, by and large, was drawn into the vortex of Indian politics in 1914, and she became the president of Indian National Congress during 1917 as a consequence of her total commitment, involvement and dedication. In order to hasten India's political independence, Besant started 'Home Rule League' in September, 1916 and our late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who had received apprenticeship in Indian politics, was its Home Leaguer. She wrote books *Wake up* and *India a Nation*. As a result of her political activities, the British Government without any trial, gave her punishment and interment along with G S Arundale and B P Wadia, and she was released on compulsion within three months. This is on account of public agitation with the culmination of a very strongly worded appeal from American President Woodrow Wilson to British Prime Minister, Loya George.

* Writer, Madanapalle

This unique lady followed Mahatma Gandhiji's non violence as a weapon with a view to achieving the object of freedom during freedom struggle. Gandhiji, the father of the nation asserts thus: "As long as India lives, the memory of the magnificent services by her will also live."

*There is no religion higher than truth
O hidden light vibrant in every atom!
O hidden light shining in every creature!
O hidden love embracing all in oneness!
May each who feels himself as one with
Thee,
Know he is therefore one with every other!*

Dr. Annie Besant's lines are more significant to comprehend the concept of God and religion.

SON AND HIS TWIN

Srinivasa Rao Gudepu*

Moments were ecstatic
for I was blessed with a son
In my home it was all fun
Obsessed to have a twin of my son
Brought a sampling and planted soon
Both were growing on a run
And scoundrel was none
All my name and fame was used by my son
But a bucket of water a day by his twin
I became old and my twin sons young
And the ecstasy returned
For I had a grandson
My son had no interest in twins
I was fearful of what he had done
Days were rolling fast
And I came to my last

I was felt as a mere waste
And soon was sent out
The sun was blazing hot
I could not find nothing built
A group of people were not too distant
My old eyes could easily spot
They were quite relieved of heat
For they were under my son's twin
I was moved by the sight
And soon forgot my plight
There were praises for him and his father
The parent in me was moved by this shower
Soon I was scared for
What would my son do
For my grandson has no twin
My son dislikes to shelter one
But his twin rejects none
Because he is not human.

* Asst Professor of English, Siddipet

“The oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class are to represent and repress them.”

-- Karl Marx

LOSING THE HUMAN TOUCH

L. Suresh*

ON HOW TECHNOLOGY HAD ALMOST RUINED CINEMA AND HOW THE INDUSTRY FOUGHT BACK

leisure to a Bollywood song - and with that, location scouts, location managers and coordinators lost their way in the industry.

April 6, 2020: It has been 125 years since the first visual special effect - the stop action technique that helped replace an actor with a dummy seamlessly- was demonstrated on film. Ever since, technology has played a major role in evolving cinema from black-and-white to colour and from silent movies to talkies... Unfortunately, it did not stop there.

3D computer-generated imagery (CGI) led to animated images vying with live actors for space in the movies. Soon, animated characters - dinosaurs, giant snakes, aliens and ghosts - began to star in movies, leaving actors to play mere supporting roles. Entire movies were set in simulated environments and virtual worlds. Motion capture made it easier to use humans, capture their movements and facial expressions, and then create animated characters that would represent them on screen. Since these characters were created using software, costumes and make-up became redundant - the careers of costume designers, costume supervisors, make-up artists and tailors simply came apart at the seams.

During the initial years, movies had been more about people, their lives and their stories. When technology came into the picture, visual effects took a giant leap, with techniques that blended multiple shots to create an illusion. Special effects such as the SchÜfftan process allowed miniature sets to be shown like Godzilla's penthouse and made actors look the size of gremlins in front of them. This removed the need for large sets, and consequently, scores of set designers, art directors and carpenters saw their careers being pulled down.

Soon movies became more about technology and less about people. What began as a collective effort of hundreds of people was soon reduced to a bunch of tech geeks making a movie. The last straw was when filmmakers realised that actors were no longer needed and they could be replicated on screen using CGI. The casting director and the casting agent soon found themselves without a role to play in the business.

Rear and front projection ensured that big budget outdoor shots could be completed indoors by projecting the background on a screen. Chroma keying allowed the film to be shot with a blue screen or a green screen as a backdrop - the background could be added later, during post-production. Suddenly, locations were no longer so important. The Swiss Alps could be added at the director's

Shortly, even actors began finding it difficult to find work - their computer-generated counterparts filled in for them

adequately. (Besides, producers were glad to do away with star tantrums, long breaks, big egos, bigger vanity vans, their burgeoning entourage and the huge monies they demanded.) But audiences the world over began to get restless. The magic was missing and soon they stopped going to the theatres. In the beginning, it was mistaken to be the onslaught of television. In the 1980s, it was attributed to home videos, and a decade later, piracy was made the fall guy. Finally, it took the utter failure of *Avatar VII - The Titanic Goes To Mars*, for the film fraternity to realise what had gone wrong. The audience was missing the human element.

To bring back actors on screen would be regressive. Technology was doing a great job of simulating them in the movies. How else could one get the audience to see real people on screen? "For at least five to 10 minutes, if not the entire duration," theatre owners pleaded. Much thought went into it and finally, after intense research, the experts found the solution.

And that was how, starting April 1, 2020, the newsreel came back into our lives.

Courtesy : *The Hindu* April 6, 2013

DYING LETTER

(poem in Telugu by Dr N Gopi, translated by Dr Usha K Srinivas)

What is there in phones
 Except silence of the hearts!
 Like decayed palm leaf unsatisfying
 however much read
 Like Kohinoor diamond hidden at the bottom
 of the trunk
 An evergreen dream's brightness is letter
 When (you) walk a distance of a mile
 Used to get a card in the post office
 Not like sprinkling in the fields
 In the available space itself letters used to
 become seedlings of maize
 Roots used to shine with the
 brightness of dreams
 A handsome man like postman
 (is) not found in this whole world
 Who broke this bridge of pearls, my dear!
 That has kept you and me on the line of anxiety

* Poet and Translator, Hyderabad

More than money order
 For mother, isn't letter itself is oxygen!
 Clouds, stars and moon
 Becoming bright, the sky itself
 Used to become a beautiful letter
 What happened to us?
 In empty temples of minds
 Have thoughts become bankrupt?
 Have infancies faded
 In efficiencies' fragrances?
 The Myrobalan-ink may fade
 Letters written (with the pen)
 dipped in blood-lake
 Are literally letters.
 For communications' roar
 Pigeons are flying away
 Hold them and stop
 With just one arrow of 'hello'
 Don't kill the sentience-soaked live volume

PSYCHOLOGY AND POETRY

T.Padmanabhan *

In philosophy or psychology, in nature or in literature, in the social sciences or in the less imprecise sciences (like the natural ones) *Poetry* has claimed and secured a place of its own. Intuition and imagination have never failed to lead the poets to effortless statement of indisputable truths in these fields. Our effort in this article is intended to bring out the impressive way in which poetry has ranged at unerring will in this area of attention, the way in which matter at/on which psychologists had to labour to reach and state their conclusions gets presented with effortless ease, by poets.

Someone described poetry as the 'impish attempt to paint the colour of the wind.' Substitute for the word 'wind' the word 'mind;' you will not be wrong. The point is that in both attempts poetry will only have scored successes. *Poetry is boned with ideas, nerved and blooded with emotions, and held together with the tough (though) delicate skin of words.* One has described poetry 'as the shortest way of saying something. It lets us express a dime's worth of ideas, or a quarter's worth of emotions, with a nickel's worth of words.' Not an incorrect way of description, though the value of the words used by true poets will be enormous; *Le Mot Juste* occurs to them just naturally.

As for psychology, a wag described it as *a rubber-stamp pressed upon a*

slippery, dodging ghost. But there have been poets who have achieved what is held to be the virtually impossible. To the ghost is lent substance and the rubber-stamp is pressed in a manner for all to see the effect and appreciate. Man's mind, it is said, is wont to tell him more than seven watchmen sitting in a tower. The poet says this much and more in ways that can never be missed. Take for instance the idea of Projection. Here is the effortless ease poetry evidences in describing the process and the result:

*their own defect invisible to them
seen in another they at once condemn;
and though self-idolised in every case
hate their own likeness in a brother's face.*

In the course of dealing with the matter, we can't help crossing the borderland between psychology and the preserve of the spirit where it is its exclusive privilege to wander at will. The very first instance given below will confirm this much:

*thus happiness depends, as nature shows,
less on exterior things than most suppose.*

and if every human being were to be looked upon as Caesar; let Caesar render unto god the things that are god's and to the spirit the things that are the spirit's, and to the mind-in so far as it is bound up with matters of the material world- the things that are the mind's.

* IAS (Retd.), Writer, Hyderabad

The truth ever is:

*Fierce passions discompose the mind,
As tempests vex the sea,
But calm, content and peace we find,
When, lord, we turn to thee.*

*In vain by reason and by rule
We try to bend the will;
For none but in the saviour's school
Can learn the heavenly skill.*

*Since at his feet my soul has sate,
His gracious words to hear,
Contented with my present state,
I cast on him my care.*

I believe it is Wordsworth who says:

*The world is too much with us;
late and soon,
Getting and spending,
we lay waste our powers.*

Everyone will do well to lay to heart the advice by the poet couched in these terms:

*When the one great scorer comes
To write against your name,
He marks not that you won or lost,
But how you played the game.*

The very thought of playing foul should be expelled from the mind, if one wants to live at peace with oneself.

To another are these lines to be ascribed:

*Virtue quickens with a warmth divine
The powers that sin has brought to a decline.*

*Prayer only and the penitential tear,
Can call her smiling down and fix her here.*

The cause and effect of excessive concern with the world are set forth in terms that are not easily forgotten, as also the way of liberation there from.

Henry Wotton has this to say about the character of a happy life and about the person who will have a just claim thereto:

*Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Who god doth late and early pray
More of his grace than gifts to lend.*

In a sense 'freedom from servile bonds of hope to rise or fear to fall' may give rise to the person who is

*Lord of himself though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.*

Contentment, the state of being consisting in 'content, content, beyond content, Which hath no room for betterment,' is a trait of personality that is rarely cultivated, and rarer far to find in pristine form. Strangely enough, often existence which is fast becoming indistinguishable from 'the teeming womb of sin and crime' will be found to oppose HOPE to contentment. Thus:

*Hope, 'heartening the soul
with odour of fresh hopes
And longings high, and
questings of wide power,*

may wreak havoc on a usually weak frame of mind, playing ever the role of the kind cheat, (truer is it to say 'unkind cheat,') and may

thrust contentment out of the aims of effort and existence. The antidote is advised in these terms:

*To measure life, learn thou
betimes and know
Toward solid good what leads
the nearest way.*

Learn to break free from the

*Care though wise in show
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
and seek and secure a long Lull
in the hot race
Wherein thou dost forever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, rest*

a chase often through wrong means, bound up with earthly concerns.

The power of praise, of its pejorative form flattery, is well-known. In psychology, it is to be held to be an appeal to the *ego*, an appeal that never fails to serve as an *inflator*. In psychology, the human *ego* occupies a place of special significance. The *ego* is often led by '*interest*', *not so much by 'reason'* as is well-known. This fact has given rise to a proverb: *if you would persuade, appeal to interest, not to reason*. This fact is brought out in a telling fashion by the poet, Dryden:

*What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
When flattery soothes and when ambition
blinds.*

Haven't we seen so many instances of persons in position and power (ordinary ones not always being an exception)

*Made drunk with honour, and debauch'd
with praise?*

Humourous poetry is not far behind:

*Flattery, we are taught in schools,
Is not unoften the food of fools;
But now and then your men of wit
Will condescend to take a bit.*

From what we know from experience and from what little we know of the human psyche, *not so much self-preservation as self-image preservation* is the basic instinct of a human being of the common run. And praise is a fillip always welcome to the one whom self-image preservation dominates as the aim of effort. It is not given to many to resist the temptation to gobble up praise even though deserved and it is not given to society to see many instances of people who fall in this category:

*For to be conscious of what all admire,
And not be vain, advances virtue higher.*

Personality Psychology has given rise to a deal of literature. The last word thereon is not yet achieved. The poet with ease presents the reader with a certain measure of understanding of so complicated a subject as personality. Here is how.

In *Panchatantra* these lines are to be found, about the possible misdirection of educational effort when indiscrimination prevails in the selection of the target of such effort:

*Educating sluggish wit
Kills no pride, but fosters it*

*As in daylight others find
Aid to vision, owls go blind.*

Of course, this is a matter on which a good deal can be said on both sides. Because of the possible refining influence of education even on sluggish wits; perhaps, *wits* get through appropriate educational effort released from vices like *vanity*, and from assertive impulses of the wrong kind. And an anti-dote to vanity is to be found in these lines:

*Just stand aside, and watch yourself go by;
Think of yourself as 'he' instead of 'i'*

This is perhaps the equivalent of 'self-introspection,' without exposure to which very often the *self* gets out of control.

Personality, as is known, is never to be looked upon as a simple concept, as a simple fact. Let us note the caution sounded by the poet:

*Within my earthly temple there is a crowd.
There is one of us that's humble;
one that's proud.
There's one that is broken-hearted
for his sins,
And one who, unrepentant, sits and grins;
There's one who loves his neighbour
as himself,
And one who cares for naught
but fame and pelf.
From much corroding care would i be free
If once i could determine which is me.*

It is self-inspection, self-introspection, self-analysis that will lend substance to this advice:

*For faults committed oft yourself arraign;
In treating wounds, the cure for pain is pain.*

Psychology has so many lessons on how to fend off stress, how to overcome stress while unavoidably facing it, and so on.

And in a telling fashion, the poet makes the point that we fritter away our energies through self-defeating moves, self-stultifying effort:

*We would have health, and yet
Still use our bodies ill;
Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth to
life's last scenes.
We would have inward peace,
Yet will not look within;
We would have misery cease,
Yet will not cease from sin;
We want all pleasant ends, but will use no
harsh means.'
We do not what we ought,
What we ought not, we do.
And lean upon the thought,
That chance will bring us through.*

The point is made, never to go unheeded, that man limits man in performance on ever so many fronts:

*Other existences there are, that clash with
ours.*

The outcome is inevitable, that man almost ever comes to be *an abridged version of possibilities*.

Enough is said, I suppose, to make the readers continue the excursion into the world of reflection about what ails us.

"RAMA RAJYA" -AN IDEAL STATE PAR EXCELLENCE

Dr. K. Aruna Vyas*

The Whirl gig of Time reveals a multitudinous vicissitudes and a myriad hues and colours. History reveals diverse trains of thought which run parallel. The iridescent brightness and hovering darkness are blended into a curious mixture in history. History narrates the exultations and agonies, the humility and habits, the sin and atonement of the great and small alike. We see great empires established. Great monarchs, exemplifying the spirit of the age reigned supreme. We see different political ideologies, after casting a spell over the world, fading into oblivion. The valiant Alexander the Great of Greece with unbridled ambition and Julius Caesar of Rome held sway over the world and silently slipped into the womb of history.

Alfred the Great of England introduced reforms on all fronts and civilized his people. Chandragupta Maurya, Asoka the Great and Akbar the Great contributed their mite to the swelling rise of their respective kingdoms.

History has her somber and dark side too. China's Sheh Hwang Ti and Mangolia's Chenghis Khan perpetrated many blood-curdling atrocities and left indelible stains on history as the most dreaded two-some. Different political systems and theories produced an appalling breed of men.

Totalitarianism and Authoritarianism produced diabolic men like Adolph Hitler of Germany and Mussolini of Italy. Hitler was hated as a devil-incarnate. Uganda's Idi Amin was an unscrupulous despot who committed innumerable, incorrigible crimes. Today almost all countries embraced Democracy which is government of the people, by the people and for the people. This system celebrates the triumph of the common man and enthrones him on a high pedestal.

Rama Rajya is a monarchy with a difference. Though the authority is centered in the king, this authority never converges into authoritarianism. The king is not an autocrat but introduces many people-friendly welfare measures. It is really surprising to find Rama talking so much about administration though he is never a full-fledged ruler in the *Ramayana*. This *Kaschit Sarga* deals mainly with polity. It is a treatise of Rama on polity and organizational skills of the king. We see Rama gathering all the shining pearls of administration one by one and stringing them together.

Rama, at the outset, tells Bharata to take care of the priest who was pivotal in performing fire rites and other auspicious things. The priest of the *Ramayana* age was held in high esteem for his probity, selfless conduct and vast knowledge. This is, historically speaking, the dominance of the spiritual over the temporal. The priest's word

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was law. Rama later refers to the importance of physicians. The physician was instrumental in keeping people in good health by attending to their ailments. Emperor Ashoka might have read his *Ramayana* and he built hospitals for both humans and animals.

Rama tells Bharata to respect their teacher Sudhanva who has trained all the four brothers in all the skills of weaponry and polity. Chandragupta Maurya owed everything to his preceptor-cum-Prime Minister Chanakya. Great teachers make their disciples great leaders indeed!

Rama tells Bharatha to be careful and choosy in selecting ministers because they are very crucial in bearing the yoke of administration. Rama says the king has to select such persons as ministers who are men of integrity, who are self controlled, reliable and well versed in polity.

Rama feels that an industrious and devoted emperor should not waste time in sleep. He should rise at the crack of dawn as early hours of morning would be serene, pristine and congenial to embark upon new ventures. Early hours of the morning are recommended by the present day management experts.

Rama says that the King should keep his allies at an arm's length, while giving them their due respect. The king should never take them into his confidence and reveal all secrets of administration. We know history is replete with stories of such allies turning against their kings, taking undue advantage of the king's lenience. Rama specified the fact that the king should always seek the opinion of the wise and circumspect minister and abide by it.

Rama intelligently grades the servants into three categories. He classifies that the most important work should be assigned to the best of the lot. The work of next importance should be handed over to the men of less ability and work of least importance to the ordinary folk. These are the important tips on "man-management". An able administrator should divide the work on the basis of relative merits, and, accordingly, distribute the work to those eligible for required posts.

Rama speaks of the rank of high affairs of state. The emperor should be very selective in choosing a person to such a high office. The person aspiring for this position should be a man of proven integrity and assiduity. He should be a holder of hereditary office, incorruptible and blemishless. We come to comprehend that it is essential for a man who is at the helm of affairs to be a standing example and a role model.

Rama insists that the ministers have no business to torture people with draconian punishments. Rama feels that a king should always be concerned with wellbeing of his subjects. *Rama Rajya* is a monarchy "for the people"

Rama is insistent that the ministers do not overstep the boundaries of loyalty and humiliate the king. Rama feels that the king should appoint such a person who is contented, powerful, sagacious, courageous, of good lineage, upright, dedicated and capable as commander for his army.

Rama insists that the soldiers should be paid their salaries and provisions regularly by the administrative authorities concerned. They should keep on enquiring about the

soldiers' welfare. A hungry and disgruntled soldier would be resentful, hate his work as thankless duty and turn against the ruler. This is nothing short of rebellion or mutiny.

Rama gives a list of qualifications of an emissary. An envoy should be a man born in the realm, canny, capable, ready-witted, faithful in discharging his mission, and should have good sense of discrimination.

Rama stressed the need for employing spies. He said a large number of spies should be taken into service and should be given different and various duties. Rama once again stresses that this intelligence network should work in secrecy. This in fact, is a fore runner to the spy-systems of later generations. Kautilya might have learnt this sarga by rote as he inculcated many devices in his *magnum opus Artha Sastra*. Rama wants the king to keep a careful watch on enemies who returned from exile. The king should, by no means, underestimate the strength of his enemies.

Rama cautions the king to be wary of Brahmins who are materialists and atheists. He says these self-styled scholars are blissfully ignorant of genuine knowledge and would mislead people with the disastrous theories. Here Ramachandra anticipates our own self-professed intellectuals, who with a handful of materialistic theories at their reach, promise the people a brave new world but who, in fact, land them in a fool's paradise. A number of young people are attracted by these perverted minds, as moths to a fire and lose themselves in the mire of uncertainty.

Rama is very particular about the welfare of the farmers. He says that lands

should be well - tilled and cultivated by the farmers. As the farmer is literally the "donor of food" to the masses, he should not be overburdened with taxes.

Agriculture is still a prime source of income in India. Gandhiji said "India lives in villages". The farmers should be provided with all the facilities to increase the agricultural produce.

Rama speaks at length of beautification of the city and urbanization. He refers to high mansions, chariots, elephants, horses, good water system, milk supply, advance of literacy and trade. These are the basic needs which all people are entitled to enjoy, anytime and anywhere. Cars of different sizes and different makes have replaced chariots and horses.

Rama wants the king to worship gods, to revere scholars and play perfect host to guests. He wants the king to be generous and affectionate to the old people and the children. Today the old are dragging their fag end of their lives in old age homes. Man is isolating himself from and insulating against all bonds of relationships. Rama's advice offers a panacea to man's irredeemable dilemma.

Lastly and very significantly, Rama wants the king not to be avaricious, not to succumb to the lure of money and punish the innocent. In the same manner Rama wants the king not to be carried away by covetousness and let off criminals. This advice of Rama reverberates in the wise observation of an eminent person "Let a hundred criminals escape but an innocent person should not be punished".

Our father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, was very much inspired by Rama's life and had Rama as his role model.

Rama Rajya is an ideal state par excellence! Rama addresses the problems of his kingdom with deep insight, sound

understanding, with clear and open mind. He readily offers the solutions. With the ribbon of stern purpose, and an inspiring righteousness as his weapon, Rama is out to destroy the evil. Our rulers would do well to set *Rama Rajya* as their goal and realise it soon.

BEWARE! BEWARE!

N.S.Rachakonda*

Old age is knocking at your door
bringing along with it ailments galore
Furrows deepen across the forehead
The cheeks are hollow and sunken.....

The wife loses her temper for little or no reason
Your children look at you now
as a supernumerary player in the game of life
All eyes are cast on your cheque-book.
But, alas! The tears on your cheeks--
hardly anyone notices.
Your body rebels against you
And to you who has struggled all his life
to satisfy its needs,
It causes annoyance every moment
Your soul imprisoned in the bodily cage
struggles in vain to set itself free

Beware! My elderly friends,
You should act your best

* Retd Physician, Poet and Translator

before the curtain drops..
This is your last and only chance

It is your turn to scatter far and wide
and give away to one and all
the sweet perfume, the quintessential essence
churned out and distilled
from your vast and oceanic
experience of life and letters

Proclaim the truths from the housetops
without fear or favour.
Millions of helpless men and women
Need your tender loving care.
Take them up into your arms.
Be a beacon of hope and
a bulwark of support
To those in distress.

(Telugu Original: *Jaagratta Sumee* by
Chandu Subba Rao. Abridged from the
original with the author's permission.)

A 95-YEAR-OLD WRITER SHARES A LIFETIME'S WORTH OF PERSPECTIVE

Conscience is inborn. It enters with our first breath and remains as a guiding light. It always points to the truth. Heed it. Your first instinct is the right one; before the mind brings its motives of self-interest. It is a hard task master; not comfortable to live with. Guilt is its companion. Be on guard for motives. True altruism, or a cloak for a hidden agenda? It is so easy to rationalise one's desires.

Like conscience, happiness is inborn. We spend our lives seeking it, sometimes selling our souls for this elusive *Nirvana*. Yet, unknown, it often enters our lives, its touch as light as a butterfly's. A baby's smile brings forth instant joy and a responsive reaching out. True friendship warms the heart. Treasure it. The beauty of nature brings a calm soothing happiness for the wonders of creation. Above all, feel the joy of giving. Give when you see need, give without expectation of return. Give even when it hurts and then forget about it. That is the hardest part. An appreciative word, a gesture of affection makes life so much easier.

Renowned philanthropists, like Bill Gates and Warren Buffet, establish foundations which will continue to manage their vast wealth for charities around the world. Our own House of Tata is a shining example. In a recent interview with Rockefeller representatives, Ratan Tata mentioned that 4.5 per cent of their income went to charities. The world needs more goodness, less greed

and lust for power, which have engulfed our country in a sea of corruption. The next bought election is not the answer. We need to pray for an *Avatar*.

Everyone wants to be happy, yet we sow the seeds of our own unhappiness. Life's sharp edges can rub us raw but angry response will solve no problems.

Nurturing grudges is like ingesting slow poison. It affects the health, robs the day of joy and makes for dreary companionship. Once we decide to forgive and forget, suddenly a load is lifted from our shoulders. Love enters the heart and we can be happy again. There will always be regret for the lost years, but don't let it spoil the present.

Possessions do not buy happiness. They merely encourage greed. Nothing is ever enough. The mindless consumerism that TV has brought into our homes has set in motion a huge discontent. Everybody wants everything and they want it now, especially the young. They also realise that education is the key to prosperity. For the first time it is open to all. Parents work over-time, take on multiple jobs, and the children show boundless ambition. It is common to be introduced proudly to "my M.Com. daughter" or "Engineer son". Their self-esteem has soared. In a single generation they have joined the middle class. We rejoice in the rising new India. May they fly far, yet not forget their roots.

**Courtesy: the Internet
Sri Aurobindo's Action - October 2013**

GREAT VALUES OF SMALL THINGS

N. Seetharam bai*

Kamala admires the beauty of our garden. She is all praise for my mother for maintaining it in an excellent condition. My mother is very fond of gardening. She collects a variety of flowers and finds a place to make flower beds and finds a place for most of them in our small garden. Everything in order, no haphazard look. I wonder many a time how she could manage it. When my friends, or for that matter any others, praise her I feel happy. After two months I could enjoy the cool fresh breeze sitting in our garden on a summer evening. My sister Shanthi and myself were too busy preparing for our final examinations. So we could not think of enjoying the freshness of sitting in our garden. Today we had our last exam. So we decided to relax in our garden. Our friend Kamala stays in the university hostel. She had come to spend the night with us before leaving for her native place tomorrow. My parents also joined us in the garden. I was happy to spend the evening together with them after a long time.

My mood suddenly changed when I heard somebody opening the gate. I got up saying "Oh, so we can no more sit and enjoy the beauty of nature, somebody has come to fetch water from our well". My mother noticed the disappointment in my tone and assured me with a smile that there was no need for me

to leave the garden. I was surprised and turned back and looked at the gate. I saw Suseela, our maid, walking in slowly followed by a middle aged woman and a small girl of about seven years.

"They must be Suseela's mother and sister" said my mother. Mother made enquiries about their journey. Then they walked into our backyard. In our backyard we built a small outhouse where Suseela and her husband stay. She works in our house. Her husband is a rickshaw puller. Her parents stay in a village near Anantapur. Recently Suseela's father passed away. Noticing the mental agony of Suseela my mother advised her to bring her mother and sister here. She could work as a domestic help in our neighbour's house and assured Suseela that they could live together in our outhouse. She was thrilled to hear my mother's offer. Her husband also agreed. So last week she went to her native place with the hope that her mother would agree to come with her to stay here. Suseela seems to have succeeded in persuading her mother.

Suseela came out with a bucket and opened the tap. After filling the bucket she closed it. The little girl jumped at the sight of water and started yelling "Oh, so much water!" She lost no time to open the tap and started playing with the water by sprinkling it all around. Suseela shouted at her and tried to close the tap, but the girl wouldn't let her do so. I was watching all this and looked at my

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mother expecting a shout from her. To my surprise I saw her observing the girl with a smile. She asked Suseela not to scold the girl and said "Let her enjoy for a while. Perhaps for the first time in her life she has seen so much water flowing freely". I came out of my thoughts when I heard our neighbor Vimala's voice "Auntie, can I have two buckets of water? Today we could not get any water. After coming from our office I find only empty vessels". "You take as many buckets as you need my child" said my mother. Vimala filled her buckets and left. Then came the procession of the people with buckets in their hands.

Our colony is situated on the outskirts of the city. About fifteen years back when the colony came up it was a calm, quiet and sparsely populated locality. Most of the house owners belong to the middle class and they built small independent houses. With the growth of industries near our colony, demand for houses went up which in turn resulted in the rise in rents. A number of houses came up including multistoried buildings and the population grew. As a result the water problem also got aggravated. The civic amenities couldn't catch up with the increase in population in the colony. The water tank which was built to cater to the needs of about two hundred and odd families had to serve the needs of nearly thousand families. Old wells were filled in to extend the buildings and there was no space for bore wells too.

As usual localities where middle class families live hardly get the attention of the officials. So no public taps or common bore wells. Even supply of water through tankers to these localities receive the least priority. Besides the deficient water supply, the timings

of the water supply by the municipal corporation are also at odd hours and one can imagine the plight of families where both husband and wife work. Hence they often have to depend on the goodwill of their neighbours having bore wells for a couple of buckets of water causing inconvenience to them. Some of the owners are reluctant to oblige them.

My father anticipated the problem and he didn't close the well which was dug at the time of the house construction. On the other hand he increased its depth and fitted it with a motor for drawing the water. So we hardly face water scarcity. Our neighbours know that my mother is generous in allowing the neighbours to carry water from our bore well and never she says 'no' to any one for taking water. So many families in our street and others come to our house to fetch a few buckets of water.

On hearing this story Kamala started appreciating my mother's helpful nature and showered praises on her. My sister Shanthi interrupted her and reminded me the need to attend immediately to tidy our room and the house. We had invited our friends for lunch next morning, a sort of farewell lunch with all our university friends.

Tidying the room is a job, especially after neglecting it for about two months. Dust got accumulated. Cleaning the show case, flower vases and the like takes a lot of time. Shanti started cleaning using tap water. Kamala was startled when she heard my mother's voice shouting at Shanthi and ordered her to close the tap. 'Oh mom is around. I thought she is in her bed room. She is really obsessed

with the idea of wastage of water'. Grumblingly Shanthi closed the tap.

Kamala was taken aback. 'How come Auntie could be so stingy with the use of water. Only in the evening I witnessed her generosity in letting the girl play with water or allowing neighbours to carry water'. I could read the mind of Shanti though she did not express it. Again I had to give her an explanation.

My mother is not worried about the money involved either in the payment of water or electricity bills. Basically she is against the idea of wasting water. She is against running the tap continuously just for the sake of

convenience. I could realize the truth in her arguments only a couple of years back when the people in our locality started facing the water shortage. Now I fully agree with my mother's opinion without any reservation though at times it is a bit uncomfortable.

My explanation seemed to have some positive effect on Kamala. 'How fine are auntie's ideas! If only all of us learn to pay a little more attention to such small details, perhaps life could become a lot better for all of us. Let us quench our thirst, but let us also give others an opportunity to quench theirs' was her reaction.

PROGENY

K. Tiwari*

Marriages though are made in heavens,
Delicate it is of all relations,
The thread is so thin and feeble,
That any moment to break it is liable.
Vows even though are made
before sacred fire,
To live together up to the funeral pyre,
Many a pair departs pierced in wrath,
Suffer they for which until their last breath
His arrival averts every bickering,
His glittering eyes kindle the lamp glimmering,
His sweet smiles strengthen weak bondage,

That was made in the name of marriage.
Now there is no tug of war,
Nor there is any cold war,
The past dwindles at distance,
The present perfumes in fragrance.
In his crying our copious tears are swept,
In his crawling our bitter brawling is burnt,
As he slumbers,
the life ladder high we clamber,
As he stammers, huge to earn we strive harder.
Be blessed let every couple with a progeny,
Removes he all depressions and agony,
Enter home of gaiety, we, through his gate,
Purchase we can't precious progeny
at any rate

* English Lecturer, Narsapur

KHAJURAHO THE TEMPLES OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

Bhavana. S. Chary*

One finds short of words and expressions to depict the picturesque sculptures of "Khajuraho", the only one of its unique kind representing temples blending India's past heritage sites and glory with the present theme of moods and nuances projecting love, passion, desire, joy, etc., which brings it nearer towards the new, brave and bold generation than just being a relic of the past.

Though some orthodox critics and fanatics take objection to this marvelous piece of architecture, grandeur and beauty as carrying a negative notion by capturing the erotic and passionate scenes of gods, goddesses and *apsaras*, it is certainly obnoxious to attribute such feelings and moods to the archival splendour of the past that connects to the present.

This heritage site is an extraordinary combination of the reign and glory of the Chandela Rajput dynasty on one hand, and the artistry and carvings of many craftsmen with their exquisite breadth of vision and forethought.

The Khajuraho Temples were built in the short span of a hundred years - from 950 - 1050 A.D. Of the 85 original temples, 22

have survived till today to constitute one of the world's great artistic wonders. It goes without saying that it provides ambience and a background, and natural settings for the pose and poise of enchanting danseuse, as part of each of the traditional forms of Indian dance.

History: The Creators of Khajuraho claimed descent from the moon and the legend behind these fascinating temples runs thus- Hemavathi, the lovely young daughter of a Brahmin priest, was seduced by the moon-god while bathing in a forest pool. The child born of this union was Chandra Varman, founder of the Chandela dynasty. Brought up in the forests by his mother who sought refuge from a censorious society, Chandra Varman made this successful attempt to portray the human passions, desires of the human mind by trying to gratify the sensual outlook which took shape in the form of intricate art and erotic figures and poses by freezing in stone these elements of the past for future generations to see.

With the decline of the Chandela Rajputs, the temples lay forgotten for many centuries, in the midst of encroaching forests, a victim to the ravages of nature. Rediscovered only in this century, the temples of Khajuraho testify to a past glory.

Description of the Theme: The temples of Khajuraho bear a strong resemblance to the *Odissi* architecture from the north - East to

* Writer, Satna, Bihar

the temples of Nepal on the northern frontier. The Pagoda - type *gopurams* representing the top of each one of the individual groups of temple constructions and the materials used by the craftsmen of granite rock and sandstone make it comparable with the above said Indian territories belonging to our country.

Also, most of the dance performances and the Khajuraho dance festival seem to take a cue from the *Odissi* dance life style and also the *Kathak* form of dance recital.

Three geographical divisions group the temple - western, eastern and southern.

I. Western Group:

Kandariya Mahadeo : The largest and most typical Khajuraho temple, it soars 31m. high. Dedicated to Shiva, the Sanctum Sanctorum enshrines a *Lingam*, particularly noteworthy being the entrance arch, the ceilings and pillars, accompanied by carved celestial maidens and lovers.

Chaunsat Yogini : The only granite temple and the earliest surviving shrine of the group (900 A.D), is dedicated to Kali. Only 35 of the original 65 shrines remain.

Chitragupta Temple: Facing eastwards to the rising Sun, the temple is dedicated to the Sun god *Surya*, driving a horse-drawn chariot. The scenes depict royal processions, hunting scenes, group dancers, etc., reflecting the lavish life style, chivalry and bravado of the Chandela Courts.

Vishwanath Temple : It is similar to the *Kashi Vishwanath* temple of the North.

However, this is the only temple enshrining the three-headed image of Brahma, the only temple worshipping him as a deity, due to a curse by a sage, Brigu Maharshi. So, the idol of Brahma is enshrined only in the Vishwanath temple of Khajuraho, and nowhere else making the site, the only one of its kind, for its uniqueness and creativity. The approach is equally impressive, with lions flanking the northern and elephants the southern steps that lead up to it. A Nandi faces the shrine.

Lakshmana Temple: This Vaishnavite temple shows the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva with Lakshmi, Vishnu's consort. It has a three-headed idol of Vishnu's incarnations, Narasimha and Varaha.

Matangeshwara Temple: The temple is dedicated to Shiva, having an eight feet tall *Lingam*, outside the precincts of the western group.

II. Eastern Group of Temples:

Parswamath Temple: The group's largest Jain temple, the sculptures on the northern outer wall are particularly noteworthy. The images were installed in 1860.

Ghantai Temple : This Jain temple has a frieze which depicts the 16 dreams of Mahavira's mother, and a Jain goddess on a winged Garuda.

Adinath Temple: Dedicated to the Jain saint, Adinath, the temple is lavishly and laboriously embellished, including *Yakshis*.

The three Hindu temples of the group are the Brahma, containing a four-faced

Lingam, the Vamana and the Javari, with a richly carved gateway.

III. Southern Group:

Duladeo Temple : Dedicated to Shiva. The apsara and ornamental figures are the temple's most striking features.

Chaturbhuj Temple: This temple has a massive, intricately carved image of Vishnu in the sanctum.

The Other excursion sites in and around the temple complex of Khajuraho :

Panna National Park: 32 Km. away and a mere 30 - minute drive from Khajuraho, Spreads along the river *Ken*. The jungles today harbour many species of wildlife. The tiger can be glimpsed here, with other rare species such as the panther, wolf and gharial. Herds of blue-bull, chinkara and sambar are a common sight. On the road to *Panna* are the spectacular *Pandav Falls*. Other worth seeing places in the periphery are Benisagar Dam, Raneh Falls and Rangan lake, Rajgarh Palace and Dhubela Museum. Further away, is the Bandavgarh National Park, and the tranquil *Chitrakoot*.

Another thrilling feature that comes to light, after a visit are the variety of shops at the destination, selling several mementoes, motifs, hawkers carrying picture - post cards of the temple of Khajuraho, glass works, handicrafts, Jewellery made out of a number of semi - precious stones, brocades, which make the spent moments there really memorable and also the visit valuable and spectacular.

The Tourist site of Khajuraho, with its Charming Bazaar, enticing temple architecture and the pleasant folk, inhabiting the place, make it the Kashmir of Central India.

The dhabas, inns and lodges provide delectable and delicious food including dal tadka, spicy paneer sabjis, aalu paranthas, raita, salad, chhole - bhature, and many more mouth - watering dishes to attract tourists.

Khajuraho is easily accessible by Air, rail and roadways.

After a panoramic kaleidoscope of the view of the place, one cannot simply resist the temptation to make Khajuraho your next holiday destination.

Here's to the crazy ones — the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently — they're not fond of rules. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things. They push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do

Steve Job

A TRIP TO ICELAND

Anu Nadimpalli*

It was eleven at night and still sunny outside. There we were, all alone in the middle of nowhere, in Iceland. It was so windy that our mid size rental car, our only shelter from the elements, was shaking violently. Before us lay the vast and majestic expanse of the Arctic Ocean. As we sat there on top of the cliff, contemplating the awesome nature around us, we heard some odd screeching sounds. We reluctantly left the warm comfort of our car to see what it was. Looking up, we saw a couple of sea gulls being tossed around by the wind, shrieking loudly. One of them, unable to control its flight, almost hit us. We were so overwhelmed by the moment that the thought of getting back inside the relative safety of our car didn't cross our minds at all.

These and many such moments marked our travels across this wondrous North European country. In the course of a week, we encountered lush greenery, fiery geysers, and dramatically abundant waterfalls alongside glaciers.

The best way to make the most of a visit to Iceland without feeling rushed is to rent a car and to drive around the island from one town to another, spending each night in a different town. The road you would like to take is the Ring Road or Highway 1. We started at the capital, Reykjavik, located on

the southwest part of the island, and drove eastward. Self-drive tour packages like Touris are a great starting point. We were able to tweak the package provided by Touris to include our main interest: Dettifoss, the biggest waterfall in Europe in terms of volume. Located in the Vatnajokull National Park, this waterfall ('foss' in Icelandic), ultimately falls into the Jokulsargljufur canyon.

As you drive around the country, you will notice that a typical town here is a group of five, fifteen or twenty houses with the tallest building usually a church with a steeple on it. They would typically be located in the valleys surrounded by beautiful mountains. And you can see "strings" of waterfalls flowing from the mountain tops all the way down to many of these remote towns. In fact one can see these towns from miles away. Iceland provides many wonderful opportunities for those who want to stop and feast their eyes on the overwhelming abundance of natural scenery.

Having said that, Iceland is a very tourist friendly country. The cafes and restaurants were more than ready to accommodate our 'No meat', 'No fish' and 'No egg' diets. All I had to do was to ask them very nicely, in English, if they would make something outside of the menu and they were willing to oblige. And for the more adventurous there is the Hakarl. Pronounced haukhadl, which is Icelandic for shark, a unique dish. And hey, the amazing sights around the island make it easy to do that.

* Photo Journalist & writer, New Delhi

I especially remember this one day. As we were traversing the only highway of the country, we had this eerie feeling that we were being watched. Not by someone, but by a silent giant, one that has literally been on the move now for more than a million years. It was the majestic Breidamerkurjokull glacier

While it can get pretty cold even in June, summer is the best time to visit, mainly because of the 24-hour daylight you will have at your disposal. And don't forget to pack a picnic lunch, park anywhere and get a front seat view of natural splendour at its best. You can choose between the " Eldhraun Lava Fields; the beautiful rainbows over the Gullfoss (pronounced Gutlfoss) waterfall that appear and disappear every few minutes depending on the time of day and the weather, jokulsarlon glacier lagoon, which is a must-see mainly because unfortunately, it is receding at a rapid pace due to global warming, while still retaining its spectacular beauty and the Great Iceland Geyser.

While being a vegetarian certainly presents a bit of a challenge in Europe, vegetarians will be glad to know they should be able to manage just fine in Iceland: oblige. And for the more adventurous there is a Hakaarl. Pronounced haukhadl, which is Icelandic for shark.

Speaking of smells, the one thing that literally hit us the moment we landed in Iceland is the strong smell of sulphur.

As for the health and safety issues regarding smelling this over extended period of time, the 300,000 inhabitants of Iceland will happily vouch for its safety. The best thing is to try and forget about it as soon it moves now for more than a million years. It was the majestic Breidamerkurjokull glacier. This magnificent and peaceful ocean of ice was guiding us through twists and turns until we reached the awe inspiring lokulsarlon glacier lagoon.

Come to think of it, this is why we travel. So that we may push our comfort zones just a little bit more. So we can force ourselves to learn smatterings of foreign customs and languages and get smiles when we try to use it on the locals. So that we may be there in the moment when looking upon nature's wondrous majesty in a place like Iceland. And so that we may later share that with anyone who cares to listen, hopefully inspiring them to head to Iceland's windy expanses, too.

Courtesy: Indian Express

“Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power. If you realize that you have enough, you are truly rich.”

-- Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

COLONIALISM, CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND WESTERN EDUCATION IN CHRISTINA AMA ATA AIDOO'S OUR SISTER KILLJOY

Dr. Aadi Ramesh Babu*

Christina Ama Ata Aidoo is a Ghanaian novelist, poet, playwright and short story writer. She was born in a small village in Ghana's central Fanti-speaking region in 1942. She was influenced by her father a lot. At the age of 15, she decided that she wanted to be a writer. She remembers: "... a teacher had asked me what I wanted to do for a career, and without knowing why or even how I replied that I wanted to be a poet. About four years later I won a short story competition but learned about it only when I opened the newspaper that had organized it, and saw the story had been published on its centre pages and realized the name of the author of that story in print was mine. I believe these moments were crucial for me because ... I had articulated a dream... it was a major affirmation for me as a writer, to see my name in print." Her grandfather who was also a politician was killed by the British. Due to her father's position, she grew up in a royal household with a clear sense of African culture and tradition. As she was interested in literature, she studied literature at the University of Ghana and became a university lecturer. She taught English literature there from 1970 to 1983. At that time, British people thought that there was no proper literature in

Africa. The African people have only oral literature in pre independence. Meanwhile African literature has emerged in the post independence period.

Aidoo's works examine the gender discrimination, racial discrimination, political, cultural and intergenerational conflicts that African men and women are forced to confront in the modern world. Renowned for her candid creative competence, she interrogates daring issues, both historical and contemporary, facing Africa as a continent and Africans as a people. Her first published work of prose is, *No Sweetness Her*. It consists of eleven short stories that highlights her anxiety with feminist issues. All the stories focus on tragic topics such as sexism, degradation, feminine adolescence, and humanist values. It is concerned with Western influences on the role of women and on the individual in a communal society. Aidoo rejects the argument that Western education emancipates African women. She argues that education ruined the local people. She explains that the colonial education spoiled their local culture and tradition and further exposed exploitation of women who, as unacknowledged heads of households when war or unemployment leaves them husbandless, must support their children alone. *Everything Counts* and *For Whom Things Did Not Change* are primarily centered on the impact of modernization on

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both rural and urban women, while *The Late Bud* explores budding girlhood and the identity crisis emanating from growing up as a female in a sexist environment. Most of her stories focus on the role of women in the process of change and their position in Ghana. Her idea is to expose the problems in traditional Ghanaian society, combined with her commentaries on pan-Africanism.

Aidoo's first novel *Our Sister Killjoy* or *Reflections from a Black-Eyed Squint* is mixed with traditional prose, poetry and passages which are written in the epistolary form. It is one of the important epistolary novels in Ghana. This novel explores differences between African and European cultures, and the psychological impact of post-colonialism on women. Her next work did not release for eight years because of the oppressive political regime in Ghana at the time, which was characterized by military brutality and the indiscriminate imprisonment of Ghana's intelligentsia.

Aidoo's most popular and powerful novel is *Our Sister Killjoy*. The novel is divided into four parts. The novel revolves around themes of black diaspora and colonialism. The novelist focuses on colonialism and neo-colonialism. The protagonist of the novel is Sissie, a young girl, who emigrates from her home of Africa to Europe. She is innocent and not insecure about difficult questions of race, and she is fairly adventurous, in contrast to most of the

other foreigners she is grouped together with others. Sissie comes to Europe to get good European education but she is exploited by their culture and tradition. She was changed by the European culture. She finally understands what she has lost.

Sissie in the novel represents black people. She is a symbol of the victims of Black Africa in Europe who are trying to forget their past. She will continue to uplift her nation and help them because she knows that they need her as well as for the ones who are trying to forget the motherland. Aidoo criticizes the way Africans are viewed simply as a means toward economic exploitation and domination. They are still ready to be exploited in the post independent African countries. She warns the Africans to be careful from the settlers and European people who are cunning and cheaters.

When Sissie visits England, she is surprised to see the African people with no proper clothes and food, sleeping on the roadside paths. She finds educated people also had become vagabonds due to not having work. Because of colonialism, Africans do not get proper education. The western education which talks of Christianity rather than knowledge is called the best education in Africa. Africans find cultural differences between western education and local education. The colonial rules and themes still exist in Africa, so the common people do not protest against it.

“By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.” -- Confucius

AUDIT

Elanaaga (Dr.N.Surendra)*

The audit party came. Our boss had fever. He called the superintendent, cashier and head clerk and said, "Take care of audit people. Provide whatever they want. Ensure that there is no shortfall in service you offer. Since there are no good restaurants in this town, I will get the food prepared for them in my house."

But the members of the audit party are inflexible. They are not the kind to be amenable to such measures. They got all the records like account books, ledgers, journals and daily books produced before them. They scrutinized each entry made in those records. They demanded that vouchers be produced. They inquired whether tenders were called prior to awarding contracts. They questioned as to why the lowest quotations were not accepted. They asked us to bring our boss. They objected to the retention of accountants who had no knowledge of accountancy and the cashiers who had not known additions and subtractions. They wondered how the balances of some books were 'tallying' with other books despite so many errors.

After a careful scrutiny, they found that the money present in the cash box was not tallying with the balance shown in the book. They could not make out what procedure was adopted in sanctioning loans to various people. When vouchers and

applications are not traceable, how can anybody know which is a real account and which is a fake one? No entries pertaining to the payments of installments could be found in the registers due to which, money was missing.

They checked and rechecked all the records for three days and confirmed that misappropriation had taken place.

We looked after the audit party members very well by providing whatever they wanted. They were pampered like the kin of a bridegroom. All their wishes and demands were fulfilled. But then one could not find fault with the auditors too. They never complained that there was a deficit in the comforts provided to them.

It was the last day of the audit. The auditors showed their report to the boss and asked his explanation. The boss almost lost his mental stability, stood with folded hands and fell at the feet of the head auditor. He also agreed that he was at fault. He asked for pardon and assured that he would not repeat such misappropriation in future. "I have many daughters to be married off" he said pleadingly. Offering a bundle of notes to him, he requested not to punish him.

The head auditor glanced disgustedly, laughed angrily and talked scornfully.

* Writer and translator, Hyderabad

"Don't talk anymore. What should I do if you don't understand what I am saying? Do the entries in the records change just by giving me money? Why do you talk as if you are the only person in the country indulging in misappropriation? Who are we? We are auditors. We check the accounts. What we want is correct accounts. The funds are yours. You can use them as you want. But we need the accounts to be shown correctly in the records. Learn to write them with smartness. Do you want us to teach that also? We are

extending our stay here for another two days. Meanwhile you must get all the accounts amended. Got it?" The head auditor thundered.

Like Pandavas bowing down in front of Lord Krishna, our boss knelt before the head auditor with gratitude, piety and obedience.

(Telugu original by Muktavaram Parthasarathy)

TWO POLES

O.P. Arora*

Mother's wails
heart-rending tales
they tore the skies
gods too were shattered by her cries...
The crowd heard her heart
clicked or sighed
felt her loss, touched as she grieved.

Her son, the blooming youth
mangled by the maniac driver, uncouth
mad rush, mad traffic, mad people
insensitive drivers, corrupt system,
they lamented...
The crowd swelled as she swooned and cried
her hands risking the wrath of the skies...

The elder brother, sad and grim
pushed aside the wailing mother

from over the bleeding body of his brother
her shrieks piercing his heart

Don't be cruel, how can I live without him
The crowd, sympathizing with her,
castigated him
reprimanded him, denounced him...

Unmindful, in full control of his mind
he hailed a taxi, tempted the driver
put his brother into it, his mother too
directed him to the nearest hospital..

Disgusted with his meticulous management
the crowd passed the judgment:
What a callous and unfeeling person!
Not a tear!
No, certainly no love for his brother
wants to swallow everything, the sole owner...

* Poet, New Delhi

DESTINY

Dr. Lakshman Palsikar*

Unchallengeable destiny overrides everybody - including Gods & Goddesses- but the unfortunate finds that it cannot be revealed by itself at any given time, as the fact lies in its endurance without any kind of grumbling as it is futile and worth nothing. Once my co-traveler wanted to catch a train bound for Warangal and tried to catch it at Kachiguda railway station, but missed it. In order to catch it he asked his car driver to follow the train and my friend caught it at Jangaon railway station. Unfortunately, the train dashed against a stationary train and my friend died in the accident. It was a shock to me as he left me abruptly. Thus one's destiny plays a vital role at times.

Ravana, the great king of Lanka, succeeded in getting the Atma linga (Soul) from the Three Eyed God, Bhola Shankar, on which the other Gods became concerned over his act but were hopeless as Lord Shiva agreed to part with his soul (Atma Linga). Shiva laid one condition to Ravana that the Linga should not be placed on the ground or else it would lose its power and becomes a mere stone. Ravana agreed to the condition but could not control himself from the call of nature on his way. Just then Vishnu appeared in the form of a boy (Kumaraswami) whom Ravana asked to hold the Atma Linga for a while. Kumaraswami agreed on one condition that the king should return before the

countdown from 10 to 1, else it would be placed on the ground. Destiny played its game. King Ravana could not finish nature's call in the given time and Kumaraswami placed the Atma Linga on the ground and disappeared. Thus, Ravana failed in his attempt and lost the Linga which he had gained by pleasing Lord Siva.

Same is the case of Sri Rama in the forest. Sita saw the golden deer in the forest and asked Rama to get it for her. Although Rama was hesitant, Sita pleaded so appealingly that he was compelled to catch the golden deer. He asked his brother Lakshmana to take care of Sita. After sometime Maricha (in the guise of the Golden Deer) mimicked the voice of Rama and cried 'Ah Lakshmana'. When Lakshmana overlooked it because he was confident that nothing would happen to his brother, Sita scolded him that her beauty was more important to him than the precious life of Rama. Such insulting words disturbed Lakshmana and he drew a line before the hut and asked her not to cross it. Ravana came in the guise of a Sanyasi and kidnapped Sita. Hence, the "Unpredictable Destiny" plays a powerful role in one's life where there is no way except to bow to it.

Destiny's ways are entirely unpredictable, hence, sometimes a hopeless situation can be changed into a hopeful one and one need not be discouraged by losing one's heart in a difficult situation.

* Retired Principal, Hyderabad

In order to support this view I would like to narrate the story of the cap-merchant who was going by cycle to sell his caps to make money, going from one village to another. On the way he felt thirsty and thought of having a dip in the pond when he entered the pond, he saw a group of monkeys taking

the caps and dancing on a tree. In a dejected mood he threw his cap on the ground. The monkeys saw him throwing down his cap and threw the caps on the ground imitating his action. The poor fellow gathered the caps and left the place without second thought.

I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY

I.K Sharma*

They are all taken away,
my tall and sturdy pals,
beneath whose branches we played,
cop, thief, and ball.

They all have gone away,
who sang on swinging boughs,
no feather of a song I hear,
only steps of scary toes.

They are all taken away,
the place is sad and dumb,
no gods dwell there now,
only ghostly hum.

They are all taken away.
They all have gone away.
No word falls like the rain.
I have nothing to say.

* Poet, Jaipur

NATURE'S FURY

Dr.R.M.V. Raghavendra Rao*

Alas! The Sandy and its twin-sister Neelam,
Different continents, but Nature is the same.
There came the onslaught of the deluge,
Human beings plunged in darkness
without refuge.
Right or left for days the Sun had no motion,
In nightmares all the world was a
sky-kissing ocean.
"The death fires danced at night,

The water burnt green, black and white".
No word of enquiry would reach a relation,
Modern technology uprooted in
Nature's commotion.
Breathlessly with tear-filmed eyes
we read in the papers,
Searching for our friends in the
crumbling skyscrapers.
Does the eon of evil and a few men's sin
Necessarily take toll of even virtue's kin!

* Camp: Houston, USA.

WINSTON CHURCHILL - HIS VIEWS AND WAYS

N.S.N. Murthy*

Besides being famous as one of the greatest Wartime statesmen and leaders of the world, Winston Churchill was also well known for his gift of great oratory and devastating repartee.

He was undoubtedly indomitable and heroic. When Germany declared war on English and during 2nd world war, the latter was not at all prepared and very much ill equipped to face the Nazi threat. But, Churchill, as prime minister, put a brave front and awoke and enthused the English people with his bold and patriotic statements and messages, one such being "We shall fight in the streets, we shall fight in the lanes, shall fight in the houses, we shall fight in air, we shall fight on the sea but we will not surrender to Hitler."

For the pivotal and valiant role played by the Royal Air Force in thwarting German Air attacks, he paid a very deserving and rich tribute to the pilots of RAF with the words 'Never before in the History of human conflict so many had ever owed so much to so few'.

Churchill had little respect for India and for its leaders. He detested the very idea of India being independent. On the question of granting independence to India, as the Prime Minister of UK during II world war, he observed "I have not become his Majesty's

first Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire".

Churchill's primitive love of imperial glory is well known. He was of firm conviction that the people of India dwelt in peace for generations under the broad tolerant and imperial rule of British Crown. In his considered opinion Indians were not fit to rule themselves. After the end of World War-II it became clear that the British rulers' exit could not be delayed any further and that Great Britain was forced to concede the Indian demand for independence under the Prime Ministership of Clement Atlee. Churchill, having been out of power, his conservative party having been defeated in the post war General Elections, warned Indians of serious consequences once the UNION JACK was lowered at the Government house and sympathized that from withdrawing from India, the Crown 'is throwing Indians on each other with the ferocity of cannibals'. Churchill had little respect for India and for its leaders. His oft repeated statement that the British were transferring power to "men of straw whose trace will not remain after a few years" is an example of the imperial and biased mindset of this, otherwise, great Englishman.

In August, 1946 he made a statement on India to the effect that the jewel in the Crown of England would become an anarchy in less than 50 years. His prophesy has been, of course, proved to be wrong by History.

* General Manager, BHEL (Retd.), Hyderabad

At the time of passing of Indian Independence bill in the House of Commons, Sir Winston Churchill emphatically said the following about India of the future and the future of Indians, "Power will pass into the hands of rascals, rouges and freebooters, not a bottle of water or a loaf of bread shall escape taxation, only the air will be free and the blood of these hungry millions will be on the head of Atlee. They will fight among themselves and India will be lost in political squabbles." Present day conditions in India, no doubt, unfortunately lend some credence to some of the prophetic observations of Churchill on India.

Winston Churchill had little respect for Mahatma Gandhi. At a time when almost the whole world venerated Ganhiji, he neither cared for Mahatma's simple way life nor for his doctrines of truth and non-violence. When Mahatma Gandhi was in London to attend the 2nd round table conference Churchill was asked by press correspondents whether he would like to meet Gandhiji. He replied with abhorrence "I do not want to see that half naked Fakir".

On his 75th anniversary someone asked Churchill if he had any fear of death, he replied "I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me is another matter".

During the crucial period of the Second World War, the big three met at Yalta. One day early morning President Roosevelt wanted to meet Prime Minister Churchill alone and walked into Churchill's hotel room. To the President's surprise he found Churchill

standing stark naked in his room and the President bolted back. Churchill shouted "Come on President. The Prime Minister of UK has nothing to hide from the President of the USA".

Winston Churchill affectionately called the 'Old bull dog' by some of his cronies, was popular for his ready wit as he was for his wisdom and able statesmanship in war.

On a visit to America as a young man, Churchill sported a moustache and he was accosted by a lady who said "Mr. Churchill, I do not like - one is your new politics and the other your moustache". "Well! You will not come into contact with either", chuckled the young man, eyes twinkling, as the embarrassed lady moved away.

Churchill and Bernard Shaw were great people in their own way. But both despised each other. But, these two great sons of U.K. would not let any opportunity to insult and humiliate each other. Bernard Shaw once sent to Churchill two complimentary tickets for the first night of his play "Joan of Arc" with the remark "one ticket for you to see my play and other for a friend - if you have one". Churchill returned the tickets. He regretted his inability to attend the opening night and requested Shaw to send him the tickets for the second night 'if you have one'.

Churchill, like a bull dog with his short stature, looked stout and bulk. On the other hand, Shaw had a very thin and weak physique. He was tall and lanky.

Once Churchill said to Bernard Shaw

"On seeing you people will think that England is facing a very severe famine". To that Shaw readily replied "on seeing you people will think that you are the cause of that famine".

Once Churchill while speaking in the House of Commons said 'half the Parliament members are donkeys'. The members got angry and looked upset. Then Churchill modified his statement saying "half the Parliament members are not donkeys". This pacified the angry members.

Winston Churchill was perhaps the world's greatest talker, but unquestionably the worst listener. In the House of Commons, while listening to a member of opposition he began to shake his head and got more attention than the member, who unable to control himself aimed a fore finger at Churchill and finally screamed "I wish to remind my right Hon'ble friend that I am only expressing my own opinion" Impishly looking up Churchill replied - "And I wish to remind the member that I am only shaking my own head".

During one of his speeches in Parliament, Churchill furiously remarked "This is the kind of nonsense I will not put up with". When a member of the opposition raised an objection to his use of a preposition at the end of the sentence, Churchill shot back "This is the kind of nonsense, up with which I will not put".

Churchill was once asked at press meet as to what special qualities are needed for an aspiring youth to become a successful statesman. With a solemn look on his face Churchill replied that a prospective statesman must be capable of envisaging with certainty

the possibilities of national and international political events and intrigues well in advance. But he hastened to add that if and when an event or two run contrary to expectations, the statesman should be capable of explaining convincingly why his prediction went wrong.

Once Lady Astor said to Winston, if you were my husband I should flavour your coffee with poison. Churchill - 'Madam, If I were your husband, I should drink it'.

Churchill, when he was Prime Minister of U.K., was invited to be the Chief Guest on an occasion. The gentleman who presided took a long time to deliver his speech who, no doubt, bored the audience and Mr. Churchill. After his speech the President said "Now Mr. Churchill will give his address". Churchill got up and said "No. 10 Downing Street" and sat down.

According to Churchill a true politician is one who could colourfully describe what he would do in the event of winning his election and after success convince the people with ease why he could not achieve what he promised.

Any signs of Winston Churchill's future greatness were conspicuous by their absence in his childhood. The bull dog warrior Churchill was a regular visitor to the caning room in his school. He was then not a particularly bright spark. In fact, his associative sentiments were so intense as to make him revel in being left behind in the old form while his classmates, moved on to the next one. But Churchill is considered immortal as a statesman, orator, historian, writer, war correspondent et al. The secret was very

simple. Unlike students who preferred to vegetate in the same form, Churchill found opportunity to develop and build up his roots. In his own words "As I remained in the third form three times as long as anybody else, I had three times as much of it. Thus I got into my bones' the essential".

Popular notion has it that greatness and perfection are twin brothers. Not exactly. The more fame a man has achieved the more flaws he has acquired. As the saying goes "It is the prerogative of only great men to have defects".

Winston Churchill, one of the most resplendent statesman of the century, was also a Nobel Laureate for literature, so he had an exalted opinion of himself and his literary attainment. Once the fourteen year old grandson of Churchill told him that his class was studying Churchill's History of English speaking people. "Some of us are going to

write to him a letter" said the boy. "I am sure Sir Winston will be pleased" said the Nobel Laureate with an air of importance "well, I don't know" the boy replied to the great man's chagrin, "We are going to ask him not to write any more books".

If Sir Winston's uncle had died childless, Sir Winston would have been barred from the House of Commons and forced to become Duke of Marlborough, a role which would have effectively kept him from leading the battle of Britain and eventually defeating Nazis and winning the war for the allies.

Winston Churchill died in 1965 at the age of 91 years. He was given a State funeral which is normally accorded to Kings and Queens, but by the order of the reigning monarch and by a vote in British Parliament, extended to exceptionally distinguished people like Churchill.

BLISS IT IS

Dr. V.V. B. Ramarao*

Bhartriharis's trope is telling
All come singly and leave so
Like logs they meet in the river
Sail together for a while
And depart, never to meet again.
What you think is yours is so for just a trice

Attachments delude like mirages
Follow sages, seers and visionaries
Draw a line firm and in-erasable

Social animals must mature
Mysticism is fruition
Blessed it is to be in solitude
A consummation devoutly to be wished
That's all we need to know.

* Retd. Principal, Writer, Noida

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Certain points for Implementation

Dr. M. A. Waheed*

This brief account touches upon the quality and equity assurance in terms of open and distance learning in the present competitive, globalized, commercialized, technologically advancing world, searching for employable opportunities for bread and butter. Open and Distance learning has been spreading and touching the boundaries of the world. Open and Distance Learning is not only meant for employability but also for research degrees to compete with the learners of conventional university degrees. Such competitive knowledge and degrees will open doors in the multinational companies. So, to meet such aspects, there is a need for quality and equity with reference to output - the student a university produces, the material that he or she learns and gains knowledge with enough communication skills besides hard skills. Therefore, this is the challenge for researchers of Distance Education to understand the jargon of quality assurance that includes quality audit, quality control, and quality management with action oriented system of education in Distance Education.

In order to achieve quality assurance, certain issues are to be implemented:

- 1) The definition of quality should be flexible, that is to say that the assurances are commonly accepted and adequate enough for operationalization in day to day life.

- 2) Benchmarks should be identified to evaluate the programmes periodically.
- 3) Short term and need based courses are the order of the day besides conventional and commercial courses to meet the demand in the market.
- 4) New technology like multimedia, basics of computer software packages of self-learning nature should be introduced in all the courses to drag the learners into the practical and real life for self-help as part of life skill.
- 5) Personnel of Open and Distance Learning institutions should be reoriented to meet the commitments of the learners.
- 6) There must be frequent checking at the study centers.

There is a criticism that Open and Distance Learning Universities are nothing but material providers and without academic audit and quality concern. So to brush aside such criticism, the ODL must take and make Open and Distance Learning as a rededication to innovation. Then only, we will have an upper hand in the society. Of course, there are certain courses in conventional universities also which face criticism, still there is charisma with superior feelings that conventional education provides classes for many days but here for only nominal days. Therefore, whatever be the reasons and criticism, education is education and quality is quality and that quality is the need of the hour in ODL at any cost uncompromising the situations.

* Professor of English, Academic Counselor, IGNOU and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT MILTON

Choppala Neeraja*

While Shakespeare is the greatest English play-write, Milton is the greatest English poet. As we gather from Johnson's Lives of the English Poets Milton was called in the college, Lady of the College as he was good looking. After completing his studies Milton wanted to become a clergyman because he was highly religious. However he changed his mind when he observed the magnitude of tyranny prevailing in the church at that time. How sensitive and reactive he was to the circumstances he was living in rouses our curiosity. What else would Milton become in future if not a clergyman? From Milton's own words we can understand that one day he would become a distinguished personality in England. It is relevant to quote his own words here: "Childhood shows the man as morning shows the day". It is made clear that he was bound to become a great person. Here Milton uses a beautiful and homely simile as he is known for his greatness in using similes.

Like Gerald Manly Hopkins, Milton was not only a true Christian but also a serious Christian. He in fact joined the Puritan sect, a denomination prevailing in Christian community in England in those days and hence the epithet Puritan. Milton was known for his exemplary moral, ethical and spiritual life - a unique personality. He worked in several

capacities including as a parliamentarian in his early life but ultimately shifted to writing poetry, and he produced immortal poetry surprisingly after he became blind. Each poem he wrote is a master piece. Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained are the greatest works in English literature. In fact they are his Magnum Opus.

It is worth mentioning that Milton identified himself with Satan and argued with God and ultimately lost his argument and as well as his paradise - too. Where as in Paradise Regained, he identified himself with Jesus Christ and wins against Satan. It is the character of Milton that is reflected in Paradise Regained. He reveals himself in lines quoted from Paradise Regained.

*When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing, All my mind was
Set serious to learn and know and thence.
To do what might be public good.*

Even from his very childhood he was trying to know what is good and how to do good to others. The spirit of public service struck roots deep into his mind even at a tender age which quality is disappearing in men in the present day world. His mental agony is for his inability in serving his people to his best in spite of his strong will. He expresses the same in the poem "On His Blindness". He laments how his genius and talents are being wasted because of his blindness. However he consoles himself in the following manner.

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Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?

and again

*Who best bear his mild yoke,
They serve him best and
They also serve who only stand and wait.*

The above lines speak volumes about his innate goodness and how his wealth of knowledge was being wasted.

Milton married thrice. His first wife died in child birth. His second wife, an educated woman, lived with him for one year. His third wife was of a dominating type. Once his third wife asked him to accept a particular job. Milton replied, "You, like other women, want to ride in your coach; my wish is to live and die an honest man."

Milton was greatly praised by his successors for his virtues, character and moral life. William Wordsworth for instance, in his poem "The Same" extols Milton as follows.

*Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour
England hath need of thee, she is a fen of
stagnant waters ----- we are selfish men.
O! Raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,
power.*

At every stage in his life his rectitude and exemplary character are reflected in Milton's writings. No slip from the path of righteousness. That is Milton. In other words Puritan.

Milton's life is highly interesting. He was very studious in his college days. He used to spend mid night oil. Never did he go to bed before twelve in the night. His doctors advised him not to study to a deep into the night lest he lose his sight. In spite of such advice he went on studying late in the nights and ultimately lost his sight totally. And all the immortal poetry he wrote was after he became blind. He used to dictate to his daughter who wrote for him with utmost patience and love for her father.

Milton in his poem "On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty Three" seriously thinks and becomes gloomy for his failure to do something good or great even though he completed twenty three years. A serious man of this kind is rarely seen. He emphasizes the value of time and days of youth in every man's life and how a great man feels when valuable time is lost is portrayed by him in this poem.

John Milton's father, it is curious to learn, is also John Milton. Milton died on 8-11-1674. He was buried next to his father in Saint Giles, at Cripple gate. And there was no epitaph for him. But fittingly in 1737 a memorial was built for him in West Minister Abbey. Mr. Benson wrote an epitaph for him like this "To the Author of Paradise Lost." But, as his critics point out, Mr. Benson in his inscription bestowed more words on himself than upon Milton.

Long live Milton in the minds of lovers of English Poetry!

QUEST FOR HUMAN VALUES IN TRIPLE STREAMS OF TRIVENI: AN OVERVIEW

K. Rajamouli *

TRIVENI, India's Literary and Cultural Quarterly, deserves encomiums for its rich literary values and varied cultural interests. It attracts wide readership especially that of intellectuals across the world. Its kaleidoscopic concepts: culture and literature; arts and fine arts; history and heritage; tradition and civilization; values and virtues; justice and orderliness; science and technology; games and sports; education and enlightenment; scriptures and sculptures; faith and religion; etc present the confluence of diverse cultures with their snapshot details to represent the affluence of Indian renaissance. Dr. V.K. Gokak appreciates TRIVENI for its merits, "... it was indeed a step in the direction of federation of cultures, arts and literatures through identification of their similarities and a cross-fertilization of ideas." (Jan-Mar, 2003) All literary pieces enshrined in the journal mark all literary values. 'The Triple Stream' excels the others with its lucidity for comprehensibility and variety for avidity and welcomes its voracious readers at its threshold to leave them enlightened for a great awakening.

The Chief Editor, Prof. I.V.Chalapathi Rao has to his credit 'the triple streams' in TRIVENI to reflect his multisided genius and multi-dimensional learning like Francis Bacon. His triple streams aim at establishing cultural,

moral and human values, building and rebuilding India to renew and revive her past glory and splendor; name and fame; recognition and reputation; crowning her the ideal and the model nation to other nations. He cannot think of the degeneration or decadence of values in India, "It looks as though the country has run out of intellectuals, men and women of true heroic stature and simple living"(Oct-Dec, 2012). His 'triple streams', essays are real 'attempts' to preserve human values and moralistic standards in the world in general and in India in particular. They reflect his deep anguish for the downfall of human values as he is human in relation, humanistic in approach and humanitarian in feeling. His philosophy is humanity and his essays are the lessons in humanism. For him a good essay must have a lesson in human values for the revival and renewal of the past glory and splendor in India. He teaches humanity from the heart of his heart as he respects human and moral values. His readers are not for just knowledge but for enlightenment and awakening to human values. By virtue of such merits, his essays have gained universal appeal. It is an undeniable fact and an open truth in the literary spectrum through the journalistic medium.

Prof. Rao's essays are characterized by lucidity for avidity. They are free from obscurity and difficulty of Bacon's Essays. The reader finds in his essays the felicity of expressions due to his lightness and ease. His

* Professor of English, Warangal

sentences are crispy in style, weighty in thoughts, moralistic in teaching and humanistic in spirit. They are conveniently short unlike those of Bacon. His essays, therefore, mark terseness of expression and beauty in brevity. His grammatical compactness suits his terseness of expressions. Finally his aphoristic style is remarkable for we find in it quotable sentences and knowledgeable maxims. For example, 'Life is not a celluloid world of make believe', 'Teachers should lead by example' (Oct-Dec, 2011), 'Happiness is not a gift of accident', 'It is not chance but a choice' (April-June, 2003), etc are at once crisp and aphoristic.

Apart from these values, his essays are within the reach of a common man in all respects. The titles of his essays are lengthy unlike those of Bacon but they are as effective as Walt Whitman's titles. The reader is enabled to learn the gist of the essay by the title. He ironically passes comments on man with his questions and exclamations: 'Is not happiness within us?' (Oct-Dec, 2002), 'There will be second spring in old age!' (Jan-Mar, 2002), 'Wise men are happy even with small things but nothing pleases the fool!' (April-June, 2003), etc and finds the readers at ease and comfort. He aptly quotes Tolstoy's story, 'How much land does man need?' to comment on the selfish and avarious attitude of man. His light humor presents the reader a pleasant mood to know life-truths and ground-realities. By all literary merits, he fulfills the objective of Bacon: "A good essay must have a grain of salt within it."

Bacon uses long sentences with parentheses and foreign expressions some times unlike Prof. Rao for his use of small and

crisp sentences. Both the essayists display their wide learning for different goals. Prof. Rao teaches humanism whereas Bacon teaches utilitarianism "the philosophy of fruits". Bacon gives importance to the subject with truths and facts related to domestic relations whereas Prof. Rao involves himself by virtue of his humanistic concern for man. Both of them are moralists with different outlooks. Bacon's essays with his great learning are mere recreations for utilitarianism whereas the triple streams are sheer lessons on humanism with open truths and accepted facts.

Prof. Rao composes various types of essays for his social documents, character portraits, biographical sketches, treatise on humanity, etc apart from his works: Indian Renaissance, Ancient Wisdom Modern Insights, Culture, Art of Living, Living through Changing Times, etc. For him, morals and ethics are very essential in all walks of life as they lead man to honesty, responsibility, humanity, orderliness, fairness, frankness, justice, etc. When one is committed to them, one will be away from the lures, temptations and provocations of vices: corruption, deception and exploitation. Today's news papers are filled with the news of rapes, murders, mass-killings, thefts, robbery, ragging and kidnaps which are a few against their infinitude. Who and what are responsible for these inhuman acts? Cinemas, TV channels, etc are the root-causes and "weapons of mind pollution, mass distraction, rampant consumerism, casual sex and commoditization of women" (Jan-Mar, 2010). Selfish people think in terms of earning money, forgetting morals in any business or customer transaction. He rightly says, "Many people think that ethics and business are antithetical

and mutually exclusive" (Jul-Sep, 2011). Business today is not free from deception and the falsity of advertisements. Now corruption is another evil which is much talked of and debated without arriving at a solution for it. He vehemently criticizes the clashes between the people of different religions, regions, castes, classes, sects or others in the realm of society. He rightly says, "Great men make small men painfully aware of their smallness. Puny persons are not at ease in the company of great men" (Jan-Mar, 2006). For him, man-to-man relation should be healthy and harmonious for mutual encouragement and enlightenment. Gentle pat, charming smile, hearty hug, kind advice, etc., should motivate fellow citizens to do right things to come up with flying colors in life since "it is human relations job"(Jan-Mar, 2012). He feels that the teaching of morals and ethics is the most essential ingredient of his essays to promote humanity. Man's thinking in the right way brings about right actions and righteous deeds "for individual and social evolution."(Apr-Jun, 2008)

Whether mother is great or the motherland is great is the question on the option of a citizen for integration. According to Prof. Rao, the worthy citizens say that Mother India is greater than Mother. He is a worthy citizen for his patriotic fervor and nationalistic zeal to the core. He quotes not only lessons from scriptures, sermons in stones and teachings of saints but also from the lives of great people and the Constitution of India to sow the seeds of patriotism and transcend "religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory, the dignity of women; and to value and preserve the rich heritage of our

composite culture" (Oct-Dec, 2011). He always reflects his woes and throes of Mother India for corruption, bribery and indiscipline today.

According to Prof. Rao, man is the part of society and he plays the most vital and pivotal role in the welfare of the society he lives in. The orderliness of society depends on man in the way the quality of a tree depends on the quality of a seed. Man-to-man relation should be pure and sure to promote the welfare of human society and ensure man's well-being but it is otherwise in the age of science and technology. Man's intelligence is deliberately used in the fulfillment of coveted goals and vested interests. Prof. Rao opines, "Artificial intelligence will replace human intelligence."(Apr-June, 2005) and feels sorry for the most unwelcome change. He welcomes scientific advance and technological progress for constructive purposes in the promotion of human values. The progress of science and technology goes meaningless and senseless "when the poor are denied their meager meal and aqua!"(Jan- Jun, 2002). Man's welfare is the key one to fulfill the prime objective of man in society.

Mr. Rao applauds science for its advances and inventions by looking at its positive side but criticizes its negative side reflecting on its destruction. All scientists start their invention with 'doubt' rather than 'faith'. He reiterates, "It is plagued with several shortcomings: indeterminism, irreversibility, uncertainty, non-linearity, etc". He supports the view of Prof. Planck: "Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of nature..." He further adds that it "is being used by the vested interests to exploit and further impoverish the

poor." He too looks at the destructive side of science, "It has become the hireling of politics and is destroying life and property by producing nuclear bombs and other of mass destruction.'(April-June, 2005)

Prof. Rao is an out-and-out humanist as well as a lover of nature: flora and fauna to reflect his human touch. He emphasizes the need for ecological balance, environmental care and nature proliferation for human welfare. He ascribes the colossal losses of Mother Earth: deforestation, pollution, etc to man for he is the one "who commits matricide". It is very essential on the part of man to conserve nature by all means. He opines in 'Nature Endangered' that trees are to be grown as a remedy for pollution and other problems, 'the cure for the present ills is the study of scriptures of the past to learn lessons' (Oct-Dec, 2012). Man should forget his suicidal war against nature with him as its integral part to prove his insightful wisdom in the preservation of humanity and bio-diversity.

India is famous for its traditional and cultural varieties. It has a pluralistic society for its rich variety of social, ethical and religious values. Though it has diversity, it has unity in tact to achieve harmony. The essayist is happy that some British scholars too appreciated India for the treasure of her literatures, cultures, customs, traditions, arts, games, laws, archaeology, wisdom, etc in spite of their hatred. In the age of globalization or the world becoming "a true global village-a mini multi-cultural world", it witnesses all unwelcome changes in the name of modern fashions and cultures: "proliferation of vulgarity, unabashed luxury and commoditization of women" (Jan-Mar, 2010). All cultural values have become

topsy-turvy due to various reasons without any ways for solution by means of good thinking.

For the solution of ills, evils, entangles and riddles in today's society, the preaching of scriptures helps the man today as they serve as a beacon light for the flight of life. Prof. Rao exhorts man to approach the scriptures for the solution of the cruel deforestation and ecological imbalance and for the salvation of mankind sans miseries. 'Unity in diversity' is the message of the Vedas. In the same way, sculptures in holy places are sermons and lessons in humanism. They shape the minds and the personalities of on-lookers. Our culture and heritage, embedded in scriptures and sculptures, serve to be reservoirs of wisdom for the education of the people today. Prof. Rao feels that apart from scriptures and sculptures, the teachings of great men and women retold in their biographical sketches stand as the compass for the voyage of life. He is influenced by the lives of Swami Viveknnda, Rabindranath Tagore, etc. Vivekananda influences him by the spiritual concept of The Gita: "Nishkama karma". He admits Tagore's view of "the slavish system of education which encourages parrot-like repetition of lessons from the text-book." For the student, the text serves as a pretext and the teacher is to quote many things from his wide knowledge and rich experience in the observation of the society around, "True education comes even from the companionship of trees and the presence of Nature" (April-June, 2012). His essay, 'New Winds Blowing in the Corridors of Higher Education' presents an exhaustive list of Commissions and their obligations to improve the quality of education. His extensive reading

and comprehensive understanding of the scriptures and the lives help him conceive triple streams for the readers to receive the fruits for assimilation.

Like Bacon's essays, the triple streams reflect the multisided interests of Prof. Rao. He touches all subjects with equal dexterity. Arts and fine arts like music are to bestow on man indefinable experience and pleasant feeling. Prof. Rao says, "The queenliest of the fine arts", "music soothes the frayed nerves and reduces the level of metabolism" (April-June, 2002). He talks of many Indian musicians and music lovers giving music spiritual status as it presents bliss and cures diseases as well. He refers to the art of letter-writing too for it is very much missing with its warmth and gaiety in the modern scenario. He expresses his anguish over the vanishing of the art, "We lament the loss of many good things and positive features of the by-gone times." The art of playing meant for

health and happiness is in the dire need of encouragement. Games and Sports are instrumental in the promotion of international understanding and mutual development. Now match-fixing and misunderstanding replace the values already established for games and sports. In a positive vein, he heartily encourages games and sports, giving room in his triple streams.

In the concomitant and convenient genre of compositions, Prof. I.V.Chalapati Rao, as a humanist and true patriot has had vision and mission; objective and perspective of his own for the revival of the past glory of India in all respects to see it at the crest of the list of well-cultured countries. He does not mind much though it does not advance in respect of science and technology but, in his triple streams of TRIVENI and other writings, he minds much for its status as a nation of humanity. The concept of humanity dealt with fine dexterity has won universal appeal.

BIO DIVERSITY MEET

Srinivasa Rao Valavala*

Clear the monstrous bushes
Cut the useless grass
Kill the dangerous snakes
shoot down the dirty dogs
catch the bloody birds
trap the rogue rodents

crush the ugly caterpillars
spray chemicals and
zap all other unwanted creatures
'coz this place is our venue
for a great event -
BIO DIVERSITY MEET
Let us make it a mega and
memorable affair

* Lecturer in English, P.R.Govt College,
Kakinada

READERS' MAIL

Nature, sculpture and literature thrill all human beings of insight and fill their hearts with joy. The divine creation, nature as a life-force delights all creatures by its bounteous beauties on one side and shares their feelings on the other. In the triple stream, 'India's National Poet', Prof. I. V. Chalapati Rao presents Kalidasa's prolific poetic output in the digest form. He identifies with nature of manifold responses to human beings. Peacocks, trees, birds, creepers, deer, clouds, rivers, and other objects of nature have the sense of benevolence to sympathize with human beings and share their tears and smiles. Sculpture and literature unlike nature are creations of sculptors and writers with noble souls. His previous triple stream on sculpture, 'Ramappa, a Sculptural Marvel' is a picturesque description of the sculptural treasures that serve as sermons in stones and lessons on values for the shaping of human mind. His innumerable articles on literature show his extensive knowledge to be presented to the readers of TRIVENI. I share the deep sorrow of Chandrasekher K. Srinivasan on missing the dear sparrow and the tears of Elanaaga on losing the glory of hand written letters.

Dr. K.Rajamouly, Warangal

The erudite journal is full of creative interest and keen instincts which touches the heart and the sense and sensibilities of the readers.

**Bhavanachary, Satna
(Madhya Pradesh)**

Triveni Oct-Dec 2013, abuzz with your trenchant editorial on Kalidasa, V Srilatha's article on Joan of Arc, Ealine Norden's write up on Solitude, Ramakrishna Chitrapu's view point on Juvenile Crime and Punishment and E. Satyanarayana's study on Badal Sarcara make happy reading. Thanks.

Dr. Manas Bakshi, Kolkata

In Triveni October December 2013 Issue, Kalidasa - India's National Poet, Editorial, Prof. I. V. Chalapati Rao garu aptly described Kalidasa at the end as 'He is to India what Shakespeare is to England'. Thanks for publishing, as it has provided ample information regarding Kalidasa.

Siluveru Sudarshan, Bhagyanagaram

In October issue the article written by Dr. Yelamudi K 'Parliament at 60' is very apt. At one time Indian Parliament was considered to be an example to South East Asia. There used to be well informed and dignified and interesting discussions. Today they are missing.

Sri M. Surya Prakasa Rao, Kakinada

In October-December journal Dr.C. Jacob's poem A Street Dog is very interesting. Dogs are very intelligent and careful in crossing the road. Our human beings are careless.

S. Vasant Reddy, Khammam

BOOK REVIEW

FLYING SPARKS | Prof I V Chalapati Rao | Sri Yabaluri Raghavaiah Memorial Trust, Hyderabad. Dec 2013 | ISBN: 978-81-928009-1-2 | Pages 235 | PB Rs 150 US\$ 15 | HB Rs 200 US\$ 20

For copies: Prof Y Sreedhar Murthy, SOWRAG, H No. 4-4-102/A, St. No. 3, Bhavani Nagar, Nacharam, Hyderabad - 500 076. Email: syrmtrust@yahoo.com, profysm@yahoo.com. Ph. +91-40-27171383, 27014762

"Why are people starving? Because the rulers eat up the money in taxes, the people are starving. Because the rulers interfere too much, people are rebellious. Having to live on, one knows better than to value life too much" (p 189). Is it not a true representation of our present day society enfeebled by ubiquitous governmental stranglehold? Well, it is so, but that was a comment made by Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher in 6th century BC. It is the unsettling vagaries of life buffeting man that have led him to be rather fatalistic. Then do we have to remain passive, thinking that, after all, Fate has preordained everything? No, we have to exercise our Free Will too, since "Fate and freedom are like the two blades of a pair of scissors" (55). Acting in the right way, we will be able to change our destiny. The moves from our Free Will are 'actions', whereas the counter moves by Existence are 'consequences' - in the inexorable cycle of cause and effect (57).

Analysing the contemporary social matrix, this book (in the series of Culture Capsules) offers a package that is capable of transforming our lives - individual as well as collective - for the better. The message in the book is the blended best of the east and the west. It is the quintessence of practical wisdom that could come only after reading a hundred good books and digesting their essence and appraising it on the touchstone of a life of ninety years lived meaningfully and conscientiously. It flows from the nonagenarian pen of a proven savant Prof I V Chalapati Rao who "is a specialist in communication skills, Indian ethos and culture, purpose of life, personality development..." (Blurb).

The book divided into three sections - 'India's Cultural and Spiritual Heritage'; 'Personality Development'; 'Luminaries and Role Models' - will be useful to a cross-section of readers: to youth for their personality development, to those keen on developing their communication skills, to those who would like to score well in essay & elocution contests, to the wannabe motivational speakers, to those who would like to enrich their knowledge-cum-wisdom, and to anyone who would like to know of and strengthen their cultural moorings.

Always have a noble aim in life. "Hitch your wagon to a star," called Emerson, the American philosopher (120). Only by doing so, people like Florence Nightingale, Mother Teresa, Durgabai Deshmukh, M S

Swaminathan, Jamsetji Tata, Vivekananda, Yellapragada Subba Rao and Dr Anji Reddy reached inspiring heights. If you want to accomplish something edifying, you have to cut out unproductive and wasteful things that will only lead to a 'vanity fair'. The crisis of modern man is that he 'is overexposed outside but underdeveloped inside' (179). Culture doesn't mean sartorial splurges or cosmetic encrustations. When Vivekananda was walking in the Chicago streets in his ochre robes and a turban with a tail, the local students tried to make fun of him, but only to be cut down to size, when the Swami retorted: "In your country, it is the tailor that makes the gentlemen but in our country it is character that makes the gentlemen" (108).

Our country is racked by rampant evils like corruption, black money and violence. Corruption has become so odious that the will of common man snowballed in the form of Anna Hazare is no longer able to tolerate it. Media has become proverbially murky what with the hypocrisy, rank opportunism and blatant immorality of crooks like Tarun Tejpal of Tehelka. Conscious of perversities like this, Gandhi observed: "There cannot be political emancipation of India without ethical regeneration of Indians" (187). What is ethics? Shorn of technicalities, it is just following your heart and not your senses, since senses misguide you unless controlled; and heart gives the right guidance (189).

For a sound development of the country, both money and spirit are required. There should be a right proportion of things. We certainly want materialism, but toned

down by morality, spiritualism (18) and philanthropy. It is better to assimilate four ideas than to memorize a whole library of books, says Vivekananda (15). Here the necessary inspiration comes from religion. Being religious means 'being good and doing disinterested service,' says Gandhi according to whom religion is not confined to Monday bhajan, Sunday sermon or Friday namaz (180).

Communication skills have a place of prominence in today's globalised world. The author offers many a practical tip. The wheels of communication need to be constantly lubricated by a discerning person.

An effective speaker who likes to sail into the heart of his audience needs to inculcate a positive attitude of looking at the good things in others. He should be quick in giving due praise, be empathic and courteous. However knowledgeable you are, don't be flamboyant and boastful. Lord Chesterfield advised his son: "Be wiser than other men if you can, but do not tell them so" (146-148). The author has offered many a practical suggestion on how to be an effective speaker and on how to get the audience interested in your speech. The book provides us a rich gleaning of profitable inputs and quotable nuggets of wisdom.

On the whole, *Flying Sparks* is a book that enriches one's mind, broadens one's horizon and ennobles one's heart. And it is hoped that the next edition will be freed of the typos that have crept into this valuable book.

U. Atreya Sarma, Secunderabad

Parables For Healthy Minds- Short Stories | Kharidehal Venkata Rao | Sri Yabaluri Raghavaiah Memorial Trust, Hyderabad. Dec 2013 | ISBN: 978-81-928009-0-5 | Pages 235 | PB Rs.150 US\$ 15|HB Rs 200 US\$ 20.

For copies: Prof Y Sreedhar Murthy, SOWRAG, H No. 4-4-102/A, St. No. 3, Bhavani Nagar, Nacharam, Hyderabad - 500 076. Email: symtrust@yahoo.com, profysm@yahoo.com. Ph. +91-40-27171383, 27014762

Here is a book of short stories for young minds aged between 6-14 as the author translator states. This book is a translation into English from Telugu written by Smt. M. Satyawathi for the Telugu monthly *Rushipeetham*.

The short story has been the most effective mode of communication from times immemorial. Stories appeal to all people for all times. Stories make an interesting and enlivening chunk of world literature, religious and social and India has a prominent place in it.

Children like to listen to stories as much as they like to munch toffees. Stories entertain, amuse, inspire, enlighten and transport us to places to which we never go. Stories reflect life in all its fullness in a miniature world and contain the wisdom of ages and provide moral standards for all. They present the philosophy, ethics and guiding principles of life in capsule form. They provide food for thought to the youngsters as well as to the adults.

In the book under study, there are seventy stories which deal with situations and experiences of life told imaginatively to appeal to the young readers. The stories reflect happiness, sorrow, irony, humour, misery, cheating, nobility, mercy, munificence, greed, friendship and such qualities life is made of. Each story is brief as a short story should be and yet full of characters, situations and incidents cleverly intermingled in the narration. There are kings, ministers, advisers, thieves, rogues, saints, beggars and every other man and woman we meet in real life. The titles suggest the contents. For example: Virtues of Charity, Mind Control, Fruits of Sin, Words of Wisdom, to name a few. Animals too play an important part in the stories as in life. Children are fascinated by animals in general and more so when the animals talk like human beings, their joy is unbounded.

Sri Venkata Rao who has adopted the stories from Telugu has done great service to the young and old alike by presenting the stories in book form in English for a wider reading public by writing them in a simple diction, direct and effective, doing justice to the original. The credit of the virtues of writing goes equally to the original writer in Telugu who enthused Mr. Rao to make the English version. The illustrations by Sri K.V.Bhima Rao increase the interest quantum of the work. The publisher has done a good job in bringing out the book giving it a handsome get up.

D.Ranga Rao, Hyderabad.

NEW MEMBERS

The following is the list of Donors/ Members who have joined the TRIVENI family during October- December 2013. The TRIVENI FOUNDATION welcomes them.

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AN APPEAL

Journals like **TRIVENI** devoted to literature and culture, naturally cater to a limited number of intellectuals and are not to be considered as successful business propositions in any country. They need the active support of the cultured few. We earnestly solicit the patronage of philanthropic persons to enlist themselves as Patrons and Donors and extend their co-operation to the cause of Indian literature and culture. Donations to **TRIVENI** are exempt from Income Tax, Under Section 80G (2) &(5) of the I.T. Act, 1961. vide Proc. No. DIT (E)/HYD/ 80G/52(04)/Ren/08-09, dated: 21-08-2008 of Director of Income Tax (Exemptions), Hyderabad, deemed to have been extended in perpetuity vide IT Circular No.7/2010 [F.No.197/21/2010-ITA-I] dt.27-10-2010. Donors are requested to draw Demand Drafts/Cheques in favour of 'Triveni Foundation' payable on any bank in Hyderabad.

Our dear subscribers may note. In view of the escalation of the paper cost and printing charges it has become increasingly difficult to meet the expenditure of the journal. We are constrained to increase the annual subscription to Rs.200/- and life subscription to Rs.2000/- We shall be grateful if our old members also cooperate with us by sending the balance amount. Donations are welcome.

TRIVENI FOUNDATION