CHAPTER III.

Nature (Prakrti as defined in Philosophy and Literature)

Nature and the human being are the handiwork of the same creator. One is speechless and other has the attribute of speech. Evolution, development, and destruction as well as creation and disintegration go on continuously occurring in nature as well as in the heart of the human being.

Three essential attributes go to form the chapter of nature as well as the human being. Beauty, love and welfare are these three attributes. They are the attributes of all life, where there is beauty there is love, and where there is love there is welfare. It is therefore, that these three attributes supplement each other and they together express an indivisible and dignified idea.

Another character of nature and of man is passion. It is a physical expression. Love that evolves out of this passion is welfare. Love, therefore, is the real and mature expression of passion. Nature throbbs with passion. Passion, there is rich. There is passion in the human heart as well but in human passion, there is a continuously flowing stream of austerity.

It is love that brings together man and nature.
All life on this earth - fixed and moving, cloud or lightening, the highest sky and the lowest depth, creeper or tree, beast or bird, all these are moved by the sentiment of love. Love is as dominating as it is spontaneous. It is as free as it is self-surrendering.

Nature and man are both means and ends. They supplement each other. From the moment of his emergence, man is attracted towards nature. As he develops, this attraction grows into a liking. Nature provides the bases for austerity. Self-surrender is its universal attribute. It is therefore said:

"परोपकारण वक्तृति बुद्धि:  
परोपकारण वक्तृति नयः |  
परोपकारण वक्तृति अयः  
परोपकारण वक्तृति सूर्यः ||"

Recognising, thus the identity between nature and man, we will next proceed to a definition of nature.

Speechless as प्राकृति is, it makes a great impact on the human heart. That many formed one adopts different colours. An instance in point is the multi-coloured phenomenon of dawn and dusk. Peaceful at times, dreadful at other times, expressing complete renunciation once and adopting a passionate garb at other times, nature fascinates the human being. The human being who is initially attracted
towards nature becomes ultimately its lover. Who created
nature? When was nature created? We will take these
questions later.

There are some who consider nature as illusion.
According to them man ensnared by this illusion is ultimately
enslaved. Its divine lustre is enough to captivate humanity.
The spring in full bloom in the KUMĀRASAṂBHAṆA moves even
ŚĪVA— even if it be for a moment, and ŚAKUNTALĀ succeeds in
captivating DUŚYANTA so easily because the whole panorama of
the TAṆOṆĀṆA is harnessed to her aid. Omnipotence of nature
appears to be the theme of ŚTU-SAṬHARA where nature appearing
in different moods, generates passions of different intensities
in the lovers. So also MEḤHAŬṬA is a poem where
nature sheds its lustre in full measure.

There are some who say that nature is a teacher.
Just as the mother educates her child, just as a preceptor
initiates his pupil, so also nature performs her educative
function.

There are some philosophers who treating nature
as ultimate reality identify her with the supreme being.
Worshipping it as such they aspire to realise the innermost
meaning of this mystic reality. There is a reference in the
very beginning of the VEDAS to the effect that people used
to worship tree, creeper, ocean, river, the firmament, the
lightening etc., other poets, depicting nature as background,
bring out of it—human emotions and human destiny. Nature
at times seems to be reflecting the sentiments of human
hearts.

Nature is full with sympathy. Misery of man makes it miserable and the happiness of man makes it happy. It comes before us in the garb of the beloved or of the mother or of the child. Off, it appears as great power. It also serves as a messenger. Nature is a catalyster fertilising imagination. It creates imagination, develops it and leads it on to soar in high flights. The inspired creator in his flight from vulgar reality seeks a repose in the realm of the bountiful nature. Equipped with all these characteristics that nature is, these characters do not unfold themselves to the ordinary physical eye – it only unfolds them to the inspired vision of the real poet who has a vision penetrating all the dross of reality and reaching into the deepest recesses where Beauty is united with Truth and Goodness resides.

The painter seeks to depict nature. His medium is line and colour. That medium is speechless. A speechless medium does not succeed in bringing out the beauty of a speechless reality. Music, through its medium of sound, succeeds to some extent in bringing out the soul of nature and thus in influencing her. History gives various illustrations of musicians - CRÈPÈJUS, TÉWASENA, BAIJU BÊVARA among them - who could move nature as much as they could move the human being.

The power of speech is in quite a different category from the power of these two arts. The devotee of the word achieves a mastery over speech. Speech is powerful
and grand as it is serene and beautiful. Endowed with this power the poet succeeds in penetrating to the innermost recesses of the soul of nature. He grasps as it were the mind of nature and then he proceeds to reflect it in his words. Speech, therefore, is the supreme medium for expressing the inner truth of nature, superior to both painting and music. If the poet reflects the soul of nature, nature in her turn adorns him with imagination and adds colour and variety to his works. The colour, the beauty, the sympathy that nature generates are, in essence, the progeny of the mating of the poet's inspiration with nature's bounty. The western poets have depicted nature as a means or as background which serves to convey their emotions. They have always enslaved nature. The poets in the east have never treated nature as a lifeless phenomenon. They have never approached nature in a spirit of irreverence. Adopting the maxim "अत्यंत सर्वभूतेऽः" they have always treated nature as if it were of the same stuff as themselves. Nature is respected, holy, educative, maternal, fraternal in the view of Indian Civilization and is, therefore, well-meaning.

A budding maiden growing into the consciousness of her sex, a blooming passionate youthful woman, a serene and peaceful mature dame, an ascetic breathing a spirit of purity, these are the various forms in which nature comes before us in Indian literature. Passionate nature appears in KUMĀRASMBHAVĀ, and it appears in a similar aspect in ABHILĀJNA ŚĀKUNTALA and VIKRAMORVĀŚIYA. The nature in MEGHAŚṬŪTA is both amorous and tragic, whatever the aspect
that nature may wear, ultimately it never fails in rising to serenity.

Poets are lovers of nature. They derive plenty of material from nature. If nature and art are co-related so also nature, and philosophy are related. Expressing the poet's mind with clarity, it facilitates the purpose of expressing his philosophy.

Sanskrit poets have enshrined nature in their poems, plays and narratives. These poets were fully in tune with nature and they lived a life of identification with nature. Their activity was centred in the midst of nature and whatever persuasion may they be following, nature was always their guide, philosopher and friend.

Our objective is a study of the way in which कालिदास has approached nature. We have to review exhaustively all references in the works of कालिदास. As a prelude to this it is essential to arrive at an understanding of the meaning of nature.

Sanskrit scholars and philosophers have defined the term nature in different ways. We shall proceed to representing the important viewpoints in this connection.

(1) An equilibrium of सत्त्व, राजस and मात्स य is called प्राकृति according to the संक्षेप doctrine. Equilibrium is अभ्युणानातिरिक्तांत्यां. i.e. "अंतेकालविशेषपरसिल गुणसामायं प्रकृति.

1. सृंख्या. 2. संख्या.
The Sūtras have said:—

"तत्काल रजस्तम इति हृदय प्रकृतिः सत्यः
लघूव यस्मी सद्यागर्भिणोदत्तपः पारे परे पश्चात्""

"MĀHĀTTATTVĀM" is the function of PRAKR̥TI. 'AHAṈKĀRA'
is the function of 'MAHAṬ'.

There are two functions of 'AHAṈKĀRA'.

"TANMAṬRĀ and both the INDRIYAS". Both these
INDRIYAS are of eleven categories. The five physical elements
are the functions of the TANMAṬRĀS. Thus, it is a character
of PRAKR̥TI that the subsidiary cause of the transformation
of elements is PRAKR̥TI according to SĀNKHYA:

"तत्वान्तरोपादानत्यं प्रकृतिलयं"

(2) The followers of ŚAṆKARAṆHĀRYA are of the opinion
that PRAKR̥TI has two distinct forms: MAYĀ and AVIḌYĀ.

"माया अविद्या चतुर्दशिवविद्वक्त्वस्य स्वयंत्वादिनः"

(3) The followers of VALLABHĀCHĀRYA characterise PRAKR̥TI
as JADĀṬMAKA and BHAGAVADAN ŚAVI DEṢĀṢ:

"जडात्मको भगवदविवेकोः प्रकृति:"

(4) PRAKR̥TI is of two categories

'CHIT PRAKR̥TI and JADA PRAKR̥TI'. Chit PRAKR̥TI is
called LAKŚŚIS and CHIT or JADA PRAKR̥TI including the whole
movable world includes earth, stone etc. This is the view
of MADHVAṆHĀRYA.

1. स्मृति. 2. साधन. 3. अभ्यास. 4. ज्ञान. 5. यौगिक.
The states of the body are called **PRAKRITI** according to **AYURVEDA**.

The original note is **PRAKRITI** according to musician.

The SAKTAS consider **PRAKRITI** as the fifth quality of SAKTI.

The organs of the state like the king, the minister etc., are called **PRAKRITI** according to the **NITISASTRAS**.

The rhetoricians are of the opinion that the CHHANDA with twenty one PADAS is called **PRAKRITI** CHHANDAS.

**MATSYA PURANA** says:

"Sātvam Rasasaṃcayam gūnaṃ gāyathrāḥ | 
Sāmāyavādyātisātayaḥ prakūtiḥ. pārthīvītāt ||

The three qualities SĀTTVA, RAJAS and TAMAS brought together and established in common are called **PRAKRITI**.

The MANUSMRTI calls SWĀMI, AMĀTYA, PURA, RĀŚTRA KOŚA, DANDA and TUKHADAS these seven **PRAKRITI**.

"Svāmyāśāsya puruṣa kāmadhūni suālaṣṭhāya | 
Sēth prakūtalō kalāta: ||

It is said elsewhere that the religious head, the head of wealth, the head of treasure, the king, the -
messenger, the PURODHA and the astrologer become PRAKRIT.

"धर्मिधारी धनाधारी: कोषधाय भूपति:।
ईल: पुर्वेदा वैवस: सच प्रकृतीयोभवन्॥"

(13) Learned men have explained the word PRAKRIT thus.
The word 'प्र' denotes excellence and 'कृति' suggests creation.
That which is the most excellent in creation is 'PRAKRIT'
"प्रकृताय चक: प्रस्तुत कृति श्रृविचाचक:।
शुद्धि प्रकृता या देवी प्रकृति: सा प्रकृतिता॥"

(14) Another commentary on the word PRAKRIT says 'प्र' is the word or the best quality viz. सच्य. The letter 'कृ' is for 'शस्त्र' and 'कृति' is for 'तमस' - such is the interpretation of Smrities. That which has a form with three qualities and in which all power is integrated and which is at the principal place in all creation is called 'PRAKRIT'. That in which 'प्र' is in the beginning, and in which 'कृति' suggests creation is 'प्रकृति' the primeval Goddess of creation.

"'शुद्धि प्रकृतै सत्यो या प्रशस्तो चलिले शुद्धि।
मध्ये प्रमस्त कृत्य तलेक्ष्वस्तासर: स्वच्छः।"
"त्रिगुणालिवस्यस्यस्य या सर्वशिक्षकसमविता।
प्रकृतनां शूक्षिनणेन प्रकृतिस्ते स्तथस्य।"
"प्रतिवेद चतुर्विध प्रस्तुत कृतिर्य शृविचारक:।
सृष्टिराय च या देवी प्रकृति: सा प्रकृतिता॥"

(15) The word 'PRAKRIT' has thus been defined in various ways. We shall now examine some definitions by

I. टत्त्वमुद्र: न्यायमुद्र: यत्र: प्राणी प्रकृति:।
II. प्रस्तुति प्रकृति: स्वतः: प्रकृति: स्वत:।
rhetoricians. The SARAVATIKAR THABHARANA gives the following definition.

The town, the garden, the nation, the sea, the hermitage, and the country's wealth are described with a view to develop the interest in a composition. The seasons, day and night, the sun, the moon, the rising and the setting and all the times are narrated with a view to increase the interest of a poem. The princess, the prince, the woman, the army and its organs, the travels etc., are described to increase the interest. The garden, the water-sport, the drinking of wine, the festivals of pleasure, love in separation and marriage create interest in a poem.

"पूर्वपवनार्थादि-समुदायाभिष्कारिति।
"देश-समग्रता-बिध्वस्त स्वेर्द्धविधिकारिति।"
"अनुसारिणिवा केन्द्रौदय स्तम्भ कीर्तिति।"
"कन्न: कच्चे धिलन् सप्तपुष्टिन नियुक्तिः।"
"राजकन्याकु मार स्त्री स्त्रियों स्त्रियां भेदितः।
"यात्रानं ललितं काच्चे स्मृतोभविलितः।"
"उदासिनं क्रीडामधु पानस्तोलस्य।
"विप्रतम्भा विवाहश्च चेषां काच्चे स्मृतः।"
"मन्त्र-प्रयोगाविश्वास्यालं भुद्याविद्विषि।
"पुष्टिः पुरुषकारस्य समं कच्चे धिलन्।"
"नान्यानं नान्यादेवे देवी सिद्धं प्रताद।
"मदि शैल्पीमाध्यमविद्यानीव लुप्ति।"

1. सरखं 1:142. 2. सरखं 1:143. 3. सरखं 1:144. 4. सरखं 1:145. 5. सरखं 1:146. 6. सरखं 1:147.
VIŚNARĀTH in SĀHITYA PARPAṆA says that the twilight, the sun, the moon, the night, the dusk, the days, the morning, the mid-day, the sport, the mountain etc., are worth narrating according to necessity or completely.

"संध्यासूर्यनाराज्यप्रकोपंतवा सरः |
प्रात्रप्रायश- मृगया- शैलस्वरनवासरः ||

"अग्निधा यथायो जातिपात्रा अन्मी रङ्ग ||

Thus is described the method of narrating PRAKRṛTI in poems. All aspects of nature find their place in them.

The ALĀṆKĀRA SĀSTRA refers to the word PRAKRṛTI in the sense of Hero, for instance "प्रकृतिनिज जिपक्र: " in the commentary on this it is said that the hero is called PRAKRṛTI. These heroes are celestial, non-celestial and both celestial and non-celestial at the same time, according to MAHĀMĀYĀ.

There is a very clear distinction between Indian and Western thought in this approach. Philosophy in the west, in its initial stages, studied nature only and man, when Idealist philosophies developed, they rejected the reality of nature. After the advent of Jesus, Christianity cast its forbidding shadow over the minds of men and philosophy ceased to exist. Only ethics was discussed. Trembling before the fear of sin, and making an effort to find a release from this sin, man could not concentrate his attention on problems of beauty, art etc. The development
of science and the impact of Indian philosophy in the modern age, once again, led to a development of the philosophy of nature in the west. In consequence of this, similarity and identity between man and nature began to be accepted. It is, only after this development that nature has become a living theme in the literature of the west.

Next, we proceed to a presentation of the understanding about the meaning of nature in Western Philosophy.

Philosophy in the west begins with Greek thought. Greek thought begins with a study of the external world. What is the reality behind the world of experience? What is nature? These are the questions with which philosophical inquiry begins. The meaning of nature and the place of men in it is the first problem in all philosophy arising out of this fundamental question, a second question follows. What is man and what is his relationship with nature? Philosophical inquiry began with the study of nature and then it developed into a study of man. It was thus that different areas of inquiry such as psychology, logic etc., emerged.

Upto about the fifth or sixth century B.C. Greek philosophy was essentially directed toward a study of nature. Nature to the Greek Philosophers of that period was living, and it was believed that it is made up of some definite elements. In the period following this, greater attention was paid to introspection and to an effort at studying the nature of the mind. External nature, therefore, went into
the background. This was the period of the SOPHISTS. SOPHISTS were followed by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. They paid an equal attention to the external world of nature as well as to the internal world of mind. The last period of Greek Philosophy was the period of Epicureans and stoics. They were more concerned with problems of ETHICS.

Thus we see that efforts at understanding the essence of nature were most extensive in the initial period of Greek Philosophy. Pythagoreans, Heraclites, Eleatics, Empedocles, Atomists and Anaxagoras were the principal philosophers of this period. Each of them elaborated independent views. The pythagoreans asserted that nature or reality is constituted of numbers. The first Greek Philosopher, to raise a question about the nature of ultimate reality was Thales. In his hypothesis about the nature of ultimate reality he did not take recourse to any super-natural force. He tried to approach his problem scientifically. He put forward a hypothesis to the effect that water was the ultimate reality. Water according to him was the prime cause of all existence. All things evolve from water. Reality is living, moving and ever changing. Thales was followed by Anaximander. He refused to accept the hypothesis of Thales to the effect that water was the primeval element. He instead proposed a vague hypothesis. This hypothesis asserted that reality is made up of a stuff from which all things develop and into which they ultimately merge. This stuff is not something supernatural. It is matter in its primeval form. This concept of matter is very similar to
the concept of matter in the modern science of physics.

Heracleides, the philosopher of flux, asserted that everything is in a state of flux. Fire which appears as being in a permanent state of flux was proposed by him as the ultimate element at the root of all reality. He had a typical theory about God. All life that we see is in essence God.

Parmenides has given another view about the nature of reality. Ultimate reality according to him is simple, continuous and vague. The world of experience about which we come to know through our senses is not real - reality is somewhere in the background.

Plato propounds an idealistic philosophy. Whatever we see is not real. Nature, therefore, is not real. Only ideas exist in the world of reality. We see several men, in reality, there is only one archetype of man. Because that archetype is there, an illusion of its existence is experienced at all places and therefore, we see men everywhere. Thus, according to Plato nature does not exist. At the same time, according to his philosophy, the nature that we see is not absolutely unreal. It is real secondarily. The primary reality belongs to the archetype. Keeping that primary reality in view, a mystic power called "demiurge" creates the reality of our experience. This "demiurge" has no capacity to create anything that is original. It creates only images of the primary reality. Aristotle is of the opinion that nature cannot be realised mechanically. It is dynamic and it follows an eternal law. No process is without object. This universe is
without a beginning and an end. The earth is its centre. Whatever exists on the earth exists since eternity. In all things living and nonliving there is soul. Such in brief is Aristotle's view of nature.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, CAMPANELLA and TOMASSO advocated empiricism. No correct knowledge was possible without direct experience, according to him. Nature is God incarnate.

The German philosopher SCHELLING was the next philosopher who gave a new philosophy of nature. He was an idealist. But he did not view nature as an illusion or as an impediment in the development of man. Nature and man are one. Nature is a creation of the same dynamic power which created man and Nature is endowed with life, mind and purpose. Such was his philosophy. The mind of nature is not of the same form as the mind of man. But there is a similarity between man and Nature in this that both of them are dynamic and both of them are self-regulated. Developing his philosophy further SCHELLING comes to a conclusion that soul in its visible form becomes nature and nature in its invisible form becomes soul. This philosophy was the inspiring cause of romantic literature in Europe in the nineteenth century. It was because of this philosophy that the poets following SCHELLING viewed nature as a living presence which had to be approached with love and sympathy. SCHELLING developed this philosophy still further and said that nature was only the first step and that the most mature form of nature was man. The development is continuing and so there will ultimately be a stage at which nature will become spirit. Thus, for
understanding reality there are two approaches. Either we proceed from nature to soul or we proceed from soul to nature.

SCHOPENHAUER was the next western philosopher who further developed the philosophy of nature. The world of experience is limited by our intellect. It is not possible to arrive at a correct understanding of reality through the agency of human intellect. Reality as understood by human intellect is bound to be as limited as this intellect. It is therefore, a greater possibility that the ultimate reality is of the character of this intellect. The intellect creates illusions and thus produces the experience of the world.

Super-natural elements were resorted in arriving at an understanding of the universe and its forms in the beginning. This dualistic approach was not satisfactory. Indian philosophies began to feel that the ultimate reality ought to be one without a second. The search for this ultimate became the main object of Indian philosophy. The hymns of VEDAS, the BRÄHMANS, the UPAHISADE etc., show traces of such an effort. Conjectures were made with regard to this ultimate existence. Several hypothesis were propounded and were rejected. In the end the non-dualistic philosophy was formulated. This philosophy which accepts the identity of man and nature has been revolutionary in its impact.

There is another important development in Indian
thought which deserves to be noted here. Worshipping the elements of nature as the ancient Aryans were, they felt that there was a supernatural power controlling all phenomena. The highest ideal, therefore, did not lie within this worldly existence. It lay at some distant future after death. Naturally, therefore, renunciation became attractive in those conditions. With the passage of time, this point of view was discarded. The ultimate purpose of human life began to be sought within the present existence and not in life beyond death. Through austerity, through knowledge or through devotion it was possible to achieve perfection in the course of the present life. With the development of this approach the view of the identity of nature and the affinity between man and nature has developed and has influenced literature, art, etc.