CHAPTER III
Although there is much difference regarding the definition of essay, it can summingly be defined as follows:

An essay is a well-ordered and well-arranged compact written composition where the essayist can freely exhibit his personality within a limited scope keeping the subject in view closely in a lucid and polished language. As an essay is mainly based on the personal feelings, thinkings and views of the writer, there can be no set literary principles for essay writing; so there are as many differences as the writers may be.

However, essays are broadly classified as (a) personal, and (b) impersonal. These general classes, again, may have many sub-classes. For example, personal essays may have as many kinds as the difference among the nature of the writers may be. Similarly, impersonal essays too may have numberless classes as there are numberless subjects in the infinite universe. The objects of which themselves are differently defined and judged or thought. So, the impersonal essays too have their wider scope to be divided than they are done and thought. For example, impersonal essays are divided into descriptive, narrative, analytical, thoughtful, critical, emotional, explanatory and so on. Again, one of these may be according to the mood.
and which of the writer's temperament can be guided by spiritual, religious, social, political, economical, geographical, historical etc. point of views. Again, one may deal the same subject under discourse as normative, reformative, revolutionary and so on. So, to understand the scope and nature of essay it is better to quote the famous line from Sanskrit literature — Nibandhanatiti, Nibandha, and the saying of Hudson — The true essay is essentially personal. That is, in short, an essay is that well-thread compact literary composition which must bear the impression of the writer's life-long erudition and experiences. If we emphasize on the prefix 'Ni' of 'Nibandhanatiti Nibandha", we may certainly have three major classes of Nibandha or Essay, by adding two other most common Prefixes, of Sanskrit language 'Pra' and 'Anu'. Thus there are (a) Nibandha, (b) Anubandha, and (c) Prabandha type or classes of Nibandha according to the size and quality of Nibandha. Like treatise, discourse and essay in English in Sanskrit literature too Anubandha, Prabandha and Nibandha have been interpreted differently according to the emphasis laid upon 'Ni', 'Pra' or 'Anu'.

In Hindi literature a new kind of essay has been in vogue; and it is known by a separate terminology called Lalit (adjective) means 'elegant'. This Lalit is not far from the meaning of the English term 'fine'. A Lalit Nibandha retains and contains all the qualities of a personal essay. Nevertheless, it is something new in Hindi.
However, its origin may be sought in the writings of Michael Montaigne, a French writer, who says very pertly regarding essay that I paint myself in my essays and I myself am the subject of the book.

It is under Acharya Sharma's sway to write whatever sort of essays he desires. For example, he can write critical essays like the essays included in Braja Bhasha Ki Vibhutiyan and Hindi Kaitiya Ka Mulyamak; he can write purely problematic and explanatory essays like the essays which have been included in Rstra Bhasha Hindi: Samasyayan Aur Samadhan; he can write purely personal or fine essays included in Aina Bol Utha, Khatte-Mesta and Praman Ki Pradarshani Me. Let us examine Sri Sharma in and through his essays:

Lalit or fine essays:

However, Acharya Sharma's artistic exquisiteness seems to have been fully exhibited in his fine or purely personal essays known as Lalit Nibandha in Hindi. We have at least three collections of those essays. They are Khatte-Mesta, Aina Bol Utha, and Praman Ki Pradarshani.

1) Khatte-Mesta: It is a collection of eleven essays written on very trivial and lowly subjects during the beginning part of his literary life. The very names of the essays are their subject-matters to deal. They are Cycle, Pipal Ka Peda, Ral-pal, Pachapan, Motor Banam Cycle and so on. These essays are the clear proofs of Acharya
These essays are the clear proofs of Acharya Sharma’s mobile style. Language and style are his two powerful wings with which he can move alaround — from lowest to the highest from smallest to the greatest like a bird in the sky. Verily Acharya Sharma knows well how to make great out of little and to enhance or raise triviality to importance. Like elsewhere Acharya Sharma’s language is sprinkled with satires, epigrams retorts and ridicules. For example, in the essay Ha Jane Ke hi vyasha Nahi, the change Bhagua is accidental and circumstantial. He was an audience of the Namak Andolan of 1930. He was arrested and imprisoned for one and half a year. And this, later on, caused him to be Bhaggu Babu from Bhagua, a leader to file nominations papers for an M.L.A. Similarly in Pipal Ka Paal, Bel-Pel etecetera, everywhere, we may find Acharya Sharma pleasant, interesting and readable.

2. Aina Bol Utha :

In this collection of Acharya Sharma’s fine essays or Lalit Nibandha we can observe his consummate skill in the field of Lalit Nibhandha. There are altogether twenty essays in this collection. Their names are — 1) Khilana, 2) Tala, 3) Yeh Karoom Aur Woh Shah toot, 4) Ye Do Ankhen, 5) Dadi, 6) Marma Kee Pegr Na Jane Koye, 7) Ekam Sad Ma’Pra Bahudha Vadenti, 8) Maine Us Din Jana, 9) Karmanyewadhikaraste, 10) Mai Kitana Behaya Osa, 11) Ahithi Dee Bhawa, 12) Ninda Ras, 13) Eka Pyalee Chaay, 14) Mugh Sa
The title of the book is after this last of the twenty essays. This collection, also, is highly acclaimed by the readers. All the essays of this collection throw light, this way or that way, on the purely personal experiences and feelings, on the minutely observing power and keenness of the senses of the author, even of the most negligible things and matters of life. Besides, these essays are the clear proofs of Acharya Sharma's penetrating sight to pierce deep in to the bottom of the trivialities and coming out with their new meaning dimension like an earnest philosopher, scientist, or thinker. The projection of the imageries on so-called meaningless things ordinarily is excellent where Acharya Sharma knows no rival.

Although each and every essay of Acharya Sharma requires separate individual treatment in detail, but on account of the limitation of my present work, I will, take up some of the collection which directly throw light on Acharya Sharma's art and skill of essay writing. Let me proceed with the first of them, named, Khilauna, i.e., toy. The very first line of the essay is a problem for the author, because uptil now he finds himself unable to understand what a toy is. This question is the very carnal point of the essay which after a good deal of discussion remains insoluble as it was at the out set. A toy
(Khilanna) is generally meant for the children below ten or something like that; but the writer has much more meaning in it than its traditional meaning, i.e., anything which can give amusement is toy. Kind and degree of the amusement may vary person to person. For example, the author is pleased with a good book, while his younger son is satisfied with toys in the general sense, whereas his wife is gladdened by ornaments and dresses. Thus, we see, there can not be a set principle regarding the definition of toy. In a sense, everything in the world is a kind of toy for some body or else, still we do not call everything toy generally. So, the question remains unanswered.

"Tala" is one of the fine examples of Acharya Sharma's art of essay-writing where one can find him as a finished humorist, satirist and ironical at the same time and place. Let us start with one or two examples from the essay, "Tala", that is, lock. The hanging lock at the door, the writer thinks, "can-not protest if some one may try its strength, nor call some one for its self-defence, like an honest soldier, it will fight with the aggressor, but after that, will be defeated, there is no doubt ..... the lock having died like a brave soldier will be fallen down near about the door." p. 6. The period of time which the thief will have to lose till the lock — breaking has been humourously equalized to the period of the tuff fighting of a brave soldier with his more powerful enemy till his
falling on the ground. In the line — Tala, that is, the lock does not protect, rather the society (or the neighbourhood) does, — is a satirical remark on the modern society and neighbourhood which rarely protects the neighbour, rather it causes the theft, etc.; but unwillingly or unknowingly it checks the theft, for the thief is afraid of being seen by the neighbour and he caught. We all know by our common experiences that no great theft or dacoity is successful unless there is some clue given by our known and near to a thief or rogue afar.

However, as the writer feels and writes ironically, "Indeed, a lock is meant for gentlemen and honest people, not for house-breakers and robbers." p. 7; in the real sense of the term a lock is never meant for ascetics or sages, it is purposely only meant for the rogues. We know in the Gupta Age of our Indian History Faheem writes — there were no locks in the houses; because of the fact that the total civility was saint, so there was no necessity of any lock, where as, now-a-days when we are much more civilized, the society is full of and filled with the rogues, rascals, and pick-pockets. So, a lock is really meant for them that they can not easily and quickly take away anything from the house. For the gentleman, this is an indication that the owner of the house is out of it., please.

The deep seated irony in the above quoted lines is about the degeneration of the social sense and conduct of the highly so-called polished and civilized society and its status.
In "Din Naam Jana" I knew on that very day — an... Sharma is humorous and hilarious everywhere, a fine painter of the postures and gestures of the ass with his family in the style creates great mirth and humour which is unparallel. I know possessing many enviable qualities and virtues like tolerance, self-restrain, "still the ass ass (that, i.e), I knew on that day.", p. 33. Humour, satire in the form or garb of glee, and irony are the very features of the fine essays by Acharya Sharma. At every step one will easily get all those essential features in Acharya Sharma's essays. At the very outset of the essay Acharya Sharma remarks that "had the ass been able to understand the language of the kind he would have filed a defamation suit against the user in such a sort of sentence.", p. 31.

Further, the author compares the foolishness of the elephant, with that of the ass; but none of them are cited as examples of foolishness," but the ass. p. 31. Acharya Sharma does try to find out why is an ass treated as the symbol of foolishness, but the more he goes to know in detail, the more he is puzzled, not only that he fears lest his old and traditional view regarding the ass might change. "However our old ideas and views may be true, I want to stick to them. I sensed that my inquisitiveness is aimed to uproot the foolishness related to the ass, I gave full stop to make. p. 32 that is, the further enquiry why is the ass called foolish...
How ludicrous it is not to kick back even the rotten and useless—
Old views like a female monkey who does not separate her dead baby
from her lap! Here one can sense a fine sarcastic remark on the
dogmatic view.

Similarly, you can not help laughing at the serene, tranquil,
and undisturbed mood and posture of the ass with his whole family
like an Indian Yogi in a Nirvikalpa samadhi — "the eyes shut, the
ears standing! the body motionless! ......................
However being an elevated and perfect devotee the lust for hunger
for praise was not appeased."

In short, the whole essay, from beginning to end, is full of
mirth, ridicule, hilarity with a sarcasm at the folly of the ass
and the man alike who "hardly shows a sign of wisdom.», p. 31: An
idiot too shows the sign of tolerance, self-restrain, honesty, devo-
tion, loyalty etc. like an ass undoubtedly only for the want of
intelligence.

Finally, irrational road—blockade of the writer by the English
pattern family (husband, wife and son) is the sufficient ground for
him for certifying and confirming the idiocy of the ass.

3. Pranam Ki Pradarshani Man
As the name indicates, the name of the collection is after one of its essays named Pranaa Ki Pradarshani. In this essay Acharya Sharma has ridiculously exhibited the different postures and gestures of Pranam (good byes). However, he has shown nowhere personal grudge-like harsh or bitter. In a very simple, pleasing and interesting manner he has revealed self-motifs behind these affected politeness, gentility and artful postures of various Pranam. This Pranam Ki Pradarshani Me is the first essay of this collection.

The other essay of this collection is Seth Nagar Mai which may be likened to the Har Ki Jee (story) by Sudarshan where Khadaga Singh's course of the routine of life is completely changed by the very force of the words of Baba Bharati. Here too Seth Nagar Mai's heart is changed on account of the simple, human but friendly suggestions of Acharya Sharma who is one of his intimate friends.

In this essay, Hindi Ki Durgati, we may trace his psychology to Hindi. Acharya Sharma is unable to tolerate anything wrong or incorrect, however little influential or harmful it may be. He comments on incorrect spoken Hindi in the meeting of Bihar Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Muzaffarpur. This shows Acharya Sharma's alertness and love to Hindi. He indicates that the habit of speaking and writing wrong Hindi would establish a wrong tradition which in due course of
Nagfani, a leafless thorny plant, is full of longing any how, in any circumstance without surrendering its will and zeal. Likewise, man's life-living will is in no case inferior to Cactus or Nagfani. In this, Acharya Sharma has beautifully intermixed the two-fold meaning of man's intense longing for life — man tolerates all sorts of misery, disappointments and set-backs in the hope of the future pleasure and glow of life. But, alas! he never gets what he has been longing for. In this respect Nagfani's condition is better than man; because Nagfani gets what she desires, while man does not, man's longing for his thorny life with that of Nagfani's is hide-ous and sarcastic side by side.

In Chhoti Bat, Acharya Sharma has vividly shown his power of minute observation of meaningful petty occurrences of life and his power of putting the matter before the readers in a sarcastic way with an irony at the end. He reminds us of very negligible acts or behaviours, which may be categorised as an etiquette or manner, causing the disturbance to
others or putting them into inconvenience. We generally think that only ordinary persons should care for the trivial matters, and they, if they are educated or holding any prestigious post must not pay any heed to little things or trifling matters like knocking at the door. How much "Knockings" at door are the causes of annoyance and disturbance to others or the hosts, the visitors concerned may not understand. That is why he justly ironically says with a polite suggestion to himself — each minute there is knocking at the door, it would be more right to call it hammersing. 1

In the remaining essays of this collection too Acharya Sharma has got something unique to discuss and has concluded it with a meaningful end in an ironical style. For example, in Adhuk NusMia he sarcastically advances a formulae to move a friend foe, for the so-called friends will one day be turned in foes. So, it is better to make them unfriendly by pointing out their defects and demerits in their faces.

Similarly, in Meealv-at, he enigmatically points out that Meealwat that is, mixing of one thing with another is not an ordinary job, it requires the sufficient practical knowledge of many branches of human knowledge for example, philosophy, art and science. Those who are expert in the science of mixing, must have a ready made knowledge of Chemistry. Mixers are good Chemists, he says.

1. Pranam Ki Pradarshani Me : Chhoti Bat, p. 24
There are persons who are "Sada Bahar" (evergreen). Sada Bahar is a tree remaining all the time green and fresh. By the help of the essay "Sadabahar", Acharya Sharma explains ironically how some persons like an yew-tree remains all the time glad, cheerful and careless and the unmindful to their disregard, disrespect and defame. For them, self-respect, honour etc. are meaningless and useless words. They are obstacles in the way of life. They should be rejected into.

In "Jag Andha, Main Kahi Samajhawon", Acharya Sharma tells that the whole populace has been blind, to whom he can show the path of not-taking dowry; no one will understand the evils of dowry system, saying it differently, the light of the abolition of the dowry system will not be appreciated by the people since they have lost the eyes of understanding of the genocidal demerit of this system.

One more essay from the above book I would like to discuss, though very briefly, is Parikha. In this essay Acharya Sharma ridicules but in a very polite language points out the increasing maladies, of modern age entailing the examination system. During the period in between from the ending of examination to the announcement of the result the numbers of the visitors or guests and the entreaties by the post to the examiners increase. Acharya Sharma frankly reveals the nature of the honourable guests in the following words — "Give the marks yourself, cause others to give and let the students
Language and Style of the essays:

The most glaring merit of Acharya Sharma's language is its brevity, simplicity and compactness. No sentence, not even a single word is useless or unnecessary. Even words are not verbose or bombastic if they have their simple and brief synonyms. His style of putting the matter is tutorial and method is dialectic or questionaire and deductive. To make it clear on many occasions he begins an essay with the very question which he wants to answer. In many cases he gets the solution, and in many cases the question remains the question, although it has been very beautifully answered in the middle of the question. For example, in Khilam, he begins the essay as the question — I could not decide what is Khilam called? And concludes the essay with the same question — ....... The doubt of my mind remains as it is, after all what is Khilam called?

1. Pariksha, p. 71
2. Pariksha, p. 71
3. Ainabol Utha-Khilam, p. 1-L.1
4. Ainabol Utha-Khilam, p. 5
Very often Acharya Sharma picks up a general fact from the daily life and bisects like a surgeon or analyses it threadbare until he reaches the conclusion, sometimes confirming the same general fact, principle, maxim or truth; and sometimes throwing special light of his erudition on it obliquely without any distortion of the universality of the fact.

The other interesting and remarkable point in Acharya Sharma's style to be noticed is that like a magician he unrolls the sheet of his matter one by one, shows the charm of his magic of revealing the inner sense of the idea, however, it may be familiar unattended at the beginning, with newness and uniqueness, encharms the audience for sometime and quickly winds up as a conclusion or final summarizing. This is possible only when one has got mastery over the art. In other words, unless and until one has the clear conception or thorough cognizance of the subject, he can not make the subject smart, springy and attractive within a very short period of time. Brevity in the size of the fine essays of Acharya Sharma is their another quality. Most of his fine essays do not exceed half a dozen page of a pocket size book. In many respects his style and diction are found close akinness to the great Elizabethan writer, philosopher scientist and logician Francis Bacon.