PREFACE

Reading the works of Mill has made me a new man. After finishing my M.A. Degree in Philosophy from Bangalore University, I approached Prof. Dr. Srinivasa Rao, Professor of Philosophy and Chairman of the Department, and requested to guide me for my Ph.D. work. He thought over it for some time and then agreed. When I told him that I very much wanted to do some research in political philosophy, he said he already knew it and suggested to me that I work on Mill's Concept of Liberty. Probably the guides know better about what is good for their candidates than the candidates themselves. Certainly my professor knew what was good for me.

I have greatly enjoyed reading Mill and I have found the topic of liberty to be very close to my heart. But everything Mill was saying was not easily getting into my head. One important reason for this is that Mill's English is very good and also very complex while my English is very simple and not also very good. Therefore I had many difficulties in understanding quite a few passages in Mill. Hence I tried to adopt the easiest method of solving my difficulty: asking my professor. Many times he helped, but on some occasions he smiled and said: "I do not know. I think you have to ask Mill himself." When I told him that Mill is dead, he laughed and remarked: "But dead men also talk." Very slowly I began to understand what my professor was saying. I found out that there are some people who are mentally dead, but they also talk! I also found out that though Mill was physically dead, he could still talk to me through his books!! One thing I have discovered at the feet of my professor is that books also talk. But to hear the book talking, we must go very close to the book. When we go very close to some persons we discover many things about
In the same way, when we go very close to a book, we discover many things. My professor pushed me into the art of talking to books. I think I must always remain grateful to him, my guru, for helping me in this way.

This thesis is the result of my weak attempts at talking to Mill's books. I do not think I have been able to talk very well like my professor. My talk may be like a child's talk. A child's talk is mostly an imitation of older people's talk. But the child also sometimes makes some original sentences of its own. I have made a very honest attempt to think about the various fine points in Mill's Concept of Liberty. I have also tried to see whether some of the criticisms about Mill are correct and fair.

Whenever I tried to write, and found it difficult, my professor used to say: "Don't concentrate very much on improving your language. Try to improve your thinking." As my language was not very good, I accepted his advice quickly. Then I found that improving the thinking also is not easy. Slowly I saw that when I was able to clearly think and understand, I had less and less trouble with language. Thinking well is a gift; expressing one's thinking in beautiful language also is a gift. Everybody does not also have these gifts. Definitely I do not have these gifts. Therefore any beauty of expression, if it exists in this thesis, is due to the cosmetic surgery done by my professor on my ugly sentences. Even where my sentences are just alright, I feel safe to give the credit to him.

As the City Central Library near Vidhana Soudha was very close to my residence, I went there to find out whether the books I wanted were available there. This I did in the thought of avoiding to go to the far off University Library, if that was possible. I was greatly surprised to find many
works of Mill and also many works on Mill in the excellent collection of old books at the City Central library. Because no books are lent by this library I was always able to get the books I wanted. I am thankful to the staff of this library for their kind help.

The American Studies Research Centre Library at Hyderabad is the other excellent storehouse of books and journals on political philosophy. I have greatly benefitted by this library also and I express my thanks to its staff.

Not only I have learnt many things from my professor, I have also learnt many things from the other teachers in the Department. Therefore I use this chance to thank them all. They are Dr. Jalil, Dr. Siddhasrana, Dr. Eshwariah and Mrs. Sudha Gopinath. I am also thankful to the office staff Mr. Javare Gowda and Mr. Francis who have always been very nice and helpful towards me.

I once again heartily thank my professor for all his guidance and encouragement in submitting this thesis. I am really proud of my professor though he may not be proud about me as his student. I hope at least he is not ashamed of me as his student because I am not very good in many respects.

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