

CHAPTER I.

PROLOGUE

“ १ पुराणमित्येव न साधु सर्वम्
न चापि काव्यं नवमित्यवद्यम् ।
सन्तः परीक्ष्यान्यतरङ्गजन्ते
मूढः परप्रत्ययनेयबुद्धिः ॥ ”

KĀLIDĀSA, who propounded this axiom of criticism almost at the beginning of his creative career, has been reviewed from various angles and his genius has been proved to be of the brilliant order of gold.

A thing of beauty that the creation of KĀLIDĀSA is, every attempt at a study yields ever-new beauties.

KĀLIDĀSA is the paramount enlightener of Indian literature. A clear picture of his life and his works has not yet been constructed. The first century before Christ is the earliest limit in time for the period in which he flourished. The latest limit may be placed somewhere in the fifth century A.D.

KĀLIDĀSA wrote in Sanskrit. But most authorities are agreed that the prevalent medium of communication was some form of PRĀKRĪTA. Even in the midst of this situation, KĀLIDĀSA gave to Sanskrit maximum sweetness and enriched it

with a beauty whose life would not lose its lustre for immemorial times.

ABHIJĀNA-ŚAKUNTALA, VIKRAMORVAŚĪ YA, MĀLVIKĀGNIMITRA, RTUSAMHĀRA, MEGHĀNTA, KUMĀRASAMBHAVA, and RAGHUVAMŚĀ are universally accepted as the works of KĀLIDĀSA.

KĀLIDĀSA was a master of RASA. ŚRĪGĀRA was his beloved RASA. But the ŚRĪGĀRA of KĀLIDĀSA never degenerates into obscenity. It remains at the emotional level. Moonlight, music, flowers and intoxicants are the appertenances of his ŚRĪGĀRA.

His times find a very vivid reflection in his works. The customs, the beliefs, the religious sects etc., of his time find a suggestive expression in them.

The women in KĀLIDĀSA, are not of the royal variety only. The queen's inflated ego is a very rare occurrence. ŚAKUNTALĀ and PĀRVATI, shine in the full brilliance of beauty even in the absence of artificial ornaments. It is KĀLIDĀSA'S conviction that love has as great an invigourating power as life. His heroines have the attribute of the maternal emotion to the fullest extent.

All this and much more is found in the works of this great poet of poets. Nature occupies an equal place with love there. The distinct philosophy of nature of KĀLIDĀSA and his exquisite portrayal of nature have attracted many aestheticians. Each one of them, has evaluated his characteristics in this behalf differently. Evaluating

MEGHADŪTA, RAVINDRANĀTH TĀGORE says. "There is in this poem a unity of Man and Nature as much as the unity of duty and law. A unity of absolutely divergent forms of this type is not possible to be achieved in any country except India".

Radhakrishnan says, "Nature does not become mechanical in KĀLIDĀSA. It preserves its attraction. The characters of KĀLIDĀSA fully appreciate the beauty of creepers and trees, mountains and rivers and they experience a feeling of - fraternity for animals." The great German critic Augustus William Von Schlegel says. "I fail to understand as to the possibility of comparing KĀLIDĀSA with any other creator. Shakespeare, who presents musical beauty of nature is - essentially a poet of the human heart. Such a statement can scarcely be made about KĀLIDĀSA. At the same time, it is not appropriate to assert that KĀLIDĀSA is essentially a poet of nature. These two aspects have been so closely interwoven in KĀLIDĀSA that almost a chemical combination seems to have emerged."

The similes, which give to KĀLIDĀSA his pre-eminence, are mainly based on nature. The rising of the tide of the ocean with the rising moon, the grand majesty of the snow-capped HIMĀLAYAS, the blooming harvest in the fields, the many shaped clouds and the intoxicating fragrance rising from the earth when the monsoon arrives: all these attract our poet. But when we assert that KĀLIDĀSA is a poet of nature, we must not forget that he is the poet of Indian nature.

Poets like Vyāsa and Vālmiki have flourished in India. Even so, the epithet of the PRECEPTOR OF THE FAMILY

OF POETS, (Kavi Kulguru) has been bestowed only on KĀLIDĀSA. The appropriateness of this bestowal rests mainly on KĀLIDĀSA'S depiction of love and nature. Both these aspects, no doubt, have been observed. Conclusions about these have been formulated. But, a critical analytical study has not so far been undertaken. The object of this thesis is an exhaustive study of one of these aspects and a formulation of conclusions with reference thereto. How did KĀLIDĀSA view nature? What was his purpose in depicting it? What was his viewpoint? What are the various aspects of nature that he portrayed? What did he propound through this portrayal? This thesis aims to find satisfactory answers to these questions.

The plan of this study is as under :-

- (1) Prologue
- (2) KĀLIDĀSA, his life and works.
- (3) Definition of nature.
- (4) Nature in literature.
- (5) Nature in RĪTU-SAMHĀRA.
- (6) Nature in MEGHADŪTA.
- (7) Nature in KUMĀRASAMBHAVA.
- (8) Nature in RAGHUVAMSA.
- (9) Nature in MĀLVIKĀGNIMITRA.
- (10) Nature in VIKRAMORVAŚĪYA.
- (11) Nature in ABHLEĪĀNA ŚĀKUNTALA.
- (12) Analysis of Nature - 1. Inanimate nature.
- (13) Analysis of Nature - 2. Botanical nature.

- (14) Analysis of nature - 3. Zoological nature.
- (15) Nature and aesthetics :-
 - (1) Use of figures of speech. (Alaṅkāra)
 - (2) As an aid to RASA.
 - (3) As an instrument of Dhvani.
- (16) Conclusions - KĀLIDĀSA'S philosophy of Nature.

A bibliography is attached at the end.