

(91)  
ON BOOKS & ARTS SUNK IN RIVER TIGRIS  
DURING THE MONGOLIAN INVASION OF IRAQ

Far in the deep, unravaged bed  
Of Mother Tigris, virgin soil,  
Lies the unknown powers that led  
The Souls of East, with pious toil.

The souls that saw with their ~~F~~ather's eyes  
The happy world too dull and dark;  
That paced the earth and read the skies,  
And spun sad tales and made us hark.

That were true slaves to their own hearts;  
That made their Hell and Heaven on earth;  
And knew their life, its ends and starts,  
For what it was - a poor worth.

Mighty people, adamant-hard!  
But could not rule their flickering soul;  
They had no ~~Fr~~eed to wield and guard  
Their springing nerves and make them whole.

They knew the firmaments - all the ~~Seven~~;  
And told their Fate and Fortune clear;  
How prophets come - and go to heaven;  
That Beauty's God, the One Great Peer.

They knew the music of the ~~Ages~~,  
The sad misfeatures - the devil's ways;  
The various forms, unequal stages  
Of Man, in all his changing days.

They lived their life, enthralled and fed  
With music, beauty, grief and love;-  
Far in the deep, unravaged bed  
Of Mother Tigris, it lies to prove.

16/2/41



A Fruitless Palm-tree in a Tempest.

What made me stand in this bare ground to breast  
 the desert winds that round  
 my dust-like bark, my frondage bound up high;  
 so pale and dry and drooping!

What made my fellow-trees so green & bright  
 without a single tear;  
 their luscious, lovely fruits are seen like a beekless-  
 hue earthwards tending!

Their lightsome gossip I could hear, their envious  
 secrets, fun & cheer;

And I wonder why they blush & fear to face  
 the red rays of the morning.

Alas! I lost my sense of light in aught; but  
 when the soft, dear night

closes in to blacken all the bright, strange hues,  
 I feel I am reviving.



I feel the luscious, lovely fruits above my self-worn  
 crown; & I move <sup>fronds</sup> ~~on~~ ~~my~~ ~~own~~ ~~side~~  
 My non-existent, <sup>fronds</sup> to prone, to realise my dreams,  
 my feeling.

But a dream's a dream; 'tis true in sleep when  
 the world is free, and you  
 may vanish up high in the Blue, or down in  
 the Sea-bed dancing;

And you may talk with sons of fine, on the  
 gently, hateful grin entire:—

But, you'll have no fruit to admire, if your  
 foliage is ~~is~~ yellow & drooping.

*[Signature]*  
 24/3/41



The Plea of a waterless stream.

The way I look on things & these things look on me  
was dark & unconcerned, when I was young & flowing,  
I did not know what was of old & what 'tis like to be —  
when I was in the making & putting out to sea.

The sky above me, now in its natural blue outspread  
And now too sad and patchy & weeping hand & feet,  
Was then a consolation, a spirit, a life, to lead  
My thing, weeping streamlets, now dormant deep — on dead.

The earth around was hardy, a stubborn tyrant ruling  
The moving creatures & the shell, with no sceptre, sword!  
I trusted aside her powers and made too soft her feeling;  
I was in turn a master — a slave — a master ruling.

I cared not much for Beauty — on the magic of the Form;  
For God Himself with angels found Beauty hard to tackle;  
Some say He worked at random, without a holy norm;  
Some say with cold mathematics He made these things conform  
To unprecedented patterns, to His Heart's Desire —  
None it this way or that, He was the One to make me;  
On make me lose my spirit, my heart, my being entire,  
A waterless thing that has no sea to meet, or to retire.

Handwritten signature or initials.



(8) on Aeneas

He was Nature's secret, and his art  
His unique, pure dreams, his unknown probability,  
His enormous world of thought,  
That showed him, through the ways of God, the Roman's ineluctable words;  
His unexplored, unfolded skills -  
Had the mind of man, the animal powers,  
The atom-spirits - the whole universe;  
In 'adamantine chains' to his mortal will.

He showed that God & man, one & all,  
Have their chargeless worlds, whose conduct lies  
In that deep single riddle - nothing;  
That all nature, of light or gloomy shade,  
Outside the Realm of Aeschylus' sands,  
Is of no avail -  
The Realm where all his race's Fathers lived -  
Those magic-minds in all abstractions dealt.

And e'en in science, that selfless way of thought,  
He, as a mystic pure, invoked  
The spirit of God, to lend him power to prove.

21/3/1941



P. S. E. DEVI  
Bachelors 274  
Bachelors  
April 18, 1947

Dear Mr. Jayaram,

I am sorry to have kept your very interesting letter unacknowledged up to now; the point is that we have had a terminal examination in our school which kept me so busy. I hope you would excuse me.

Now, I have gone through your letter twice, & have been quite delighted with your sincere ideas about first part of life & then about my poetry. Now far I was able to understand you is still unknown to me; but the thing I knew that your ideas about how the individual is going on in his atmosphere is a more subtle problem than those great intellectual words it takes. It is a problem that goes in a vicious circle, & the data are in turn a cause and <sup>an</sup> effect. The main thing to study is to know when man is a product of his environment, & when his environment is led & controlled by him; what modes of life would be more suitable for a group of men working for a definite & united purpose, whether they would improve their spiritual outlook, or whether they must follow the dictate of reason.

All this seems quite puzzling to a man who for the first time took over to solve the problem of "to be or not to be"; first, it may be for his lack of real experience of the particular circumstances he is examining and their interrelations, & second because he has not acquired that correct way of observation, which is the only thing which makes the modern man above his ancestors. Such an analysis of life scarcely comes to accurate conclusion & scarcely ends. It does not mean that we should stop; it means that we should consider it a difficulty & work on it, give it at least a working principle.

(P.S.E.)

TDV ISAM  
Kattuphansai Aruvi  
No RMB/1178



I would like you to read these  
 two or three poems which I have recently made. There is nothing  
 new in them; the form is classical & the ideas are drawn from  
 life. but I found relief in writing them. I say relief because  
 the thought contained herein (in the poems) troubled my  
 mind (or: a suit) & I was forced to sit to putting it on paper.  
 and no critic; & I don't know what poetic value these  
 are, & I wish you would pass your sincere remarks

Next let me hear constantly from you — about everything &  
 your good health.

your true friend  
 [Signature]



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 crown; & I move <sup>fronds</sup> to prone, to realise my dreams,  
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