

1
Paper VII

Online English Class
B.A. Honours (English) Part III

By Dr. Jitendra Narain Singh

The Lotus : A poem of Nature

'The Lotus' is a beautiful poem of Nature, composed by Toru Dutt. It is a Sonnet marked by the poet's highly romantic fancy. It presents an imaginative account of the birth of Lotus. Before the birth of the Lotus, the rose and the lily both were rivals for the honour of being the queen of flowers. Thus, there were two flower-factions in "Psyche's bower." Love, therefore, went to Flora and asked for:

"... a flower delicious as the rose

And stately as the lily in pride"

Again, the condition also was such as to provide in the same flower the colours of the rose and the lily. The Lotus, therefore, was created to meet the demand of love:

"Flora gave the Lotus, 'rose-red-dyed'
And 'lily-white', the queenliest flower that blows"

The poet here appears to be quite familiar with the Greek mythology. Flora, in the Greek Mythology, is the Goddess of flowers and Spring's Psyche is the beloved of the God of love. (Love) here stands for the God of Love. Thus, Flora, Psyche

and Love belong to the ^{Greek} Mythology. 'Juno Min' too has got a mythological flavour for Juno, the wife of Zeus, is known for her stately beauty.

The flowers have been placed in 'Psyche's bower', as they stand for the beauty and bloom of love. Love chooses the lotus "delicious as the rose" and "stately as the lily in her pride".

Thus, the newly created flower has the red of the rose and the white of the lily harmoniously fused together. The 'red' is the colour of passionate longing and the 'white' is the symbol of its fulfillment. The poet thus makes the lotus a perfect symbol of love in its beauty and pride, in its passion and fulfillment. To quote C.D. Narasimhaiah: ¹⁰⁴

"Taru here vindicates with seeming playfulness the strength of her own tradition".

The Lotus is a typically national flower. It is to Sanskrit poetry as the lily is to European poetry and the rose to the Persian poetry. Sanskrit poetry has perhaps the greatest number of lotus images. Apart from this, in Sanskrit, the lotus has got mystic dimensions also. The human body is said to have eight lotuses; the human personality develops fully when these lotuses are made to bloom. Thus, this poem is a ~~divine~~ fine literary composition revealing the romantic fancy of the poet.