# My Reminiscences

A man of prodigious literary and artistic accomplishments, Tagore played a leading role in Indian cultural renaissance and came to be recognized, along with Gandhiji, as one of the architects of modern India. Ts career, extending over a period of more than sixty years, not only chronicled his personal growth and versatility but also reflected the artistic, cultural and political vicissitudes of India in the late 19th and 1st half of the 20th. His work depicts all the human emotions in depth and it is interesting to analyze these emotions.

To Tagore words were the raw material with which he shaped his emotions. Through them he delivered an emotion, touched a chord and evoked passion in his readers. He was a creator of a new pattern of thoughts for people to dwell on.

He was ~~bro~~ born and brought up in an atmosphere of the confluence of three movements, all of which were revolutionary: The religious reform movement started by Raja Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj; the literary revolution pioneered by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee; and the Indian national movement, protesting the political and cultural dominance of the West.

Right from his childhood, Rabindranath used to be struck by the beauty of nature in all her glory. Even within the four walls of the compound of his home, he used to enjoy the sight of the mirror-like water of the pond, the reflection of the banyan tree in the water along with the blue of endless summer sky. As he has said himself - 'I used to run away and hide on the terrace, would steal a golden holiday from the sky and would soak my tensed eyes in the ~~clear~~ calm blue of the sky'.

For such an independent spirit, being confined to the school building used to be too much of a torture. He felt that school is a box where the children are boarded and all their feelings about likes and dislikes are suctioned out of their spirits. ~~There~~

Tagore felt that forgiving an erring child is the duty of a teacher. Teachers and adults always judge

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children on the basis of their own perception and judgment. They forget that children are like cascading waterfalls. They remain unsullied by the dirt touching them.

The influence of Maharshi – his father :-

The earliest influences on T's poetic sensibility were the artistic environment of his home, the beauty of nature, and the saintly character of his father. 'Most members of my family', he recalled in My R, 'had some gift – some were artists, some poets, some musicians – and the whole atmosphere of our home was permeated with the spirit of creation'. His early education was administered at home under private tutors, but, he did not like 'the mills of learning', that 'went on grinding from morn till night'. Nature was his favourite school, as he recorded in 'My Reminiscences'.

T. was brought up as a free independent child at home. His father, Debendranath, popularly called Maharshi, was a writer, scholar, who for many years had been a distinguished leader of the Brahmo Samaj movement founded by Raja Rammohan Roy. His father never interfered with his activities. Many a times inspite of going against his father, he was never punished. Maharshi believed that a child needs to learn the truth about right and wrong from his own heart. He knew that if a child doesn't love the truth, he will never really accept it in his mind. Even if one goes far away from the truth, he can come back to it. But by punishments if the truth becomes unpalatable to the child, he will never be able to return to it.

When Tagore was 12-year-old, his father took him on a 4-month journey to the Punjab and the Himalayas. Their first stop was at Bolpur and this was T's first contact with rural Bengal, which he later celebrated in his songs. Their final destination was Dalhousie, a beautiful resort in the Himalayas. Overwhelmed by the beauty and majesty of the mountains, young Tagore wandered from one peak to another. During the sojourn, Debendranath

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took charge of his son's education and read with him selections from Sanskrit, Bengali and English literatures. He also sang his favourite hymns and recited to T. verses from the metaphysi-
-cal Hindu treatises, the Upanishads. The special attention paid by Debendranath and the sense of liberation experien-
-ced by Tagore contributed immensely in building up the character of the poet.

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