

## Social Harmony as Delineated in Literature

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John Dryden begins his poem “A song for St. Cecelia’s day” with the line “From harmony, from heavenly harmony the universal frame began”.

He believes that the universal frame began with divine music. He lays stress on the power of music. St. Cecilia is the patron St. of music. Hence, she is represented with a harmonium a musical instrument like a small organ. Air is forced through metal pipes to produce the sound and different notes are played on the keyboard on which there are many reeds fixed in harmony. Pleasant music swells from the organ when played to regale our ears.

Harmony means music. It also means STATE OF PEACEFUL EXISTENCE AND AGREEMENT. Life becomes livable when the humans live together in perfect harmony. Blessed is the society where the people live in harmony with their environment. We eat to live and live to enjoy our existence till we quit ‘this stage’.

We eat in our houses, live in the public places and grow in educational institutions. We have to grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man”.

Father Gerald Manly Hopkins in one of his poems says, “No man is an Island”. We cannot live peaceful without the company of others.

A Psychologist defines intelligence as the ability to adjust with the environment. Hunger is appeased when we eat. Peaceful joy is born when we live together with our friends and relatives in unity. Literature is ‘a lamp to our feet and light to our path’. Psalm no 133 in the book of books given below stresses the importance of unity. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity!..... It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the lord commanded the blessing-Life forevermore.

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Unity paves the way to harmony, Consider the fowls in the air. The birds of a feather flock together. There is no animosity among the sparrows or swallows. Turtle doves do not have friction with the pigeons. Similarly we human beings should live in unity. Non-interference is the best policy. If we are not involved in other people's disagreement, we will be safe. Our unity will be safe. We should not get involved in or try to influence a situation that does not concern us.

If we do not poke our nose in another man's affair, we will be safe. Poet Alfred Lord Tennyson in his poem 'Ulysses' stresses the importance of non-interference. Ulysses the king of Ithaca says, "He (i.e. Telemachus his own son) works his work and I mine" Ulysses does not want to interfere with the affairs of his prince. Therefore the unity in Ithaca will never be affected.

Oliver Goldsmith said, "Charity begins at home". Similarly unity begins at home. A house that is divided cannot stand long. If there is unity in a house there will be unity in the land. People in general will enjoy the benefit of harmony.

The heartless French Lords were torturing their own countrymen. "The worm turned". The affected people promoted unity, revolted against the Lords and attained freedom in the Year 1789. The people enjoyed the benefit of harmony.

The nature poet William Wordsworth was fully aware of how the poor were tortured and how the Lords were punished. At that time he wrote a short poem titled 'Lines written in the early spring'. One day Wordsworth sat reclined in a grove. The birds were hopping and walking. They lived in harmony. They were not blood thirsty. The creepers that bore primrose and periwinkle got intertwined with each other. In the front of PAX cottage at Ellis Nagar the vines intertwine with Mullai creepers. They enjoyed their existence. They grow in harmony. Why should human beings alone fight and shed blood? Hence Wordsworth asks,

"Have I not reason to lament what man has made of man?"

Man calls himself the crown of God's creation. But they do not live in harmony. Harmony is spoiled because of the bad feelings and blind thoughts of selfish people. There will be perfect harmony in a family if the man and his better half are constant through thick and thin. Balthazar in the Shakespearean play 'Much Ado About Nothing Sings'.

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more, Men were deceivers ever, one foot in sea, and one on shore; to one thing constant never. The sad and bad time coming for us to accuse one or two ladies too. If one of the wheels is small no chariot will run. The bad hour is come to our shock. A

few women have become bold enough to kill their husbands for reasons more than one. This is the error of time.

When we read John Keats 'Ode on Grecian urn' we see the figures of a lover and his sweet-heart engraved on the urn. The youth goes near her, but he cannot kiss her. Keats says, "Forever wilt you love, and she be fair". If he and she are constant there will be perfect harmony in a family. But so many factors in the modern society like liquor shops, Television and political feuds are spoiling social harmony.

Literature is an ointment to the soul. It teaches us how to live life. Most of us are away from it. Not only 'desire' and 'love of money' but also poverty and addiction to alcohol and drugs are the roots of all evils that multiply in the modern society. The scripture advises us not to labor to become rich. But powerful people turn a deaf ear to this advice. They are unaccountably crazy after shoreless wealth. They turn a deaf ear to the saying 'Better is little with the fear of God than great treasure with trouble (Proverb 15:16). Belly has become important than mind and heart. Justice is perverted. The sole aim of most of us is to run after fleeting pelf and futile political power.

P. B. Shelley one of the Romantic poets sang 'we look before and after and pine for what is not; our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught. Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought'. It is true that we are pining for social harmony that is rare to find.

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