

Classic Poetry Series

**Sudhindranath Dutta**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**  
2012

**Publisher:**  
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

# Sudhindranath Dutta(30 October 1901 - 25 June 1960)

Sudhindranath Dutta was a Bengali kayastha Indian post-modern poet, essayist, journalist and critic. Sudhindranath is one of the most notable poets after the Tagore-era in Bengali literature.

## <b>Early Life and Education</b>

Sudhindranath Dutt was born in Veranasi aslo known as Kashi, a city of United Provinces in Brithish India. He went to the Theosophical High School in Varanasi between 1914 and 1917, and later attended the Oriental Seminary in Kolkata. Later, in 1922, he graduated in English from the Scottish Church College. He later studied law at the Law College (1922–1924), while also simultaneously preparing for his finals for an MA in English literature from the University of Calcutta. However, he never completed a degree (MA or a law degree) in either subject.

## <b>Career</b>

Born to renowned lawyer Hirendranath Dutta & Indumati Vasu Mallik (sister of Raja Subodh Chandra Vasu Mallik), he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. But however he failed to complete his degrees, and decided to prepare for attorneyship under his father. He completed that neither. He married Chhabi Basu in 1924.

He started publishing Parichay, a literary magazine which heralded his philosophy, in 1931 and carried on with the job till 1943, when he left following ideological battle with his associates, but supplied funds nevertheless. He was also associated with Sabuj Patra, another noted literary magazine of the era, which was edited by eminent story-writer of the era, Pramatha Chaudhury. He also worked as a journalist for The Statesman from 1945-1949. He was also associated with the daily The Forward, then edited by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, as the organ of All India Forward Bloc. He had also worked for several companies such as Light of Asia Insurance Company from 1930–1933, ARP from 1942–1945, DVC from 1949–1954, and Institute of Public Opinion from 1954-1956. He worked as a part-time lecturer of Comparative Literature in Jadavpur University from 1956-1957. In 1957, he left for his final foreign trip and toured Japan and Europe before moving to United States of America to join University of Chicago to write his autobiography in English. However he left the lucrative job

midway and returned home to rejoin Jadavpur University to resume his classes of Comparative Literature, which he continued till his death.

### <b>Death</b>

He died in Kolkata in his 58th year.

### <b>Trivia</b>

Sudhindranath Dutta believed that hard work is what is needed for creating art, and the embattled nature of his poetry contrasted with that of the romantic poetry of Jibanananda Das. When Jibanananda Das's poetry notebooks were printed, Dutt commented after seeing the great number of corrections and deletions in the notebooks "Oh, then the natural poets are also unnatural poets, like me!"

Perhaps his most famous line is the widely quoted one from his poem Utpakhi (The ostrich):

"Does hell fail to let loose because you're blind?"

# Cyclone

If I never return to earth  
I shall walk down this lane once more  
And see the gateway in the delicate sunshine  
And by its side the scarlet iris;  
The closely tended flowers, the yellow and fresh blue  
There, and the deep green carpet of the grass will rest my eyes.  
Whose house, who lives there, these I shall not know --  
But the eager pain of springtime in the farer's lonely breast,  
Will fill, in the restful quiet that trembles with the piano  
My eyes with joy for a passing moment.

On days of rain I still remember her  
As soon as local green is overcast  
With common grey, she comes, an image sharp  
In outline only, lighted symbol-wise  
By fitful flares of memory, just before  
The curtain falls, and instantly, the show  
And seer transfusing, I forget my years,  
My forty years and more...

Sudhindranath Dutta

# The End

This gloomy day of rain I spent in reverie.  
Throwing ajar the gates of my heart,  
I made an easy passage for memories.  
With sightless eyes I saw

Another day like this, framed in the curving sky;  
In the rain's endless lamentation  
Heard the tender greeting of that voice.

The fury of the storm as it pressed upon the shutters  
Echoed the impotent rage of my ruined heart  
Against a harsh, indifferent, silent God.  
Rain ceased as evening came; The twilight's dying flame

With life's last effort, suddenly flashed  
The signal for extinction. And then darkness spread  
Within, without, its winding sheet.

No hope, it seemed,  
No words to tell of this caged defeat.  
It seemed that Death was closing in,  
Narrowing its circles in slow manouevres.

Scurrying like a mouse in its hole,  
Putrid crumbs I had stored through all my years  
In my miser's coffers.

But now the game was up,  
Closed the executioner's trap,  
And soon the cleansing blade will fall  
Annihilating all my beggarliness.

Sudhindranath Dutta

# The Vagrant

The tree, a shock of red and yellow, shakes its crown;  
The parrot hovers, kept from nest;  
The year is overblown; the hangdog sun goes down;  
And bones, though old, are yet impressed.  
The wind alone is loud with distant lamentations ---  
An infidel intoning runic evocations,  
While Time, at wanton play amidst extinct oblations,  
Reiterates its ageless jest;  
And rid of dust from homing kine, the sky transcends the  
common noun ---  
The tree's ambition and the parrot's forfeit nest.

Then all at once, uprushing from chthonic deep,  
The Dark Begetter overwhelms,  
The wind grows deathly still, and latitudes of sleep  
Disintegrate the charted realms.  
Oh, no, the night is not inert: its chronic fever  
Breaks out in spangled sweat, as straining at some lever,  
It alters far to near; and subtle like the beaver,  
The moment makes of fretted elms  
An ark for perfect self-assurance. But involved in whirlwinds'  
sweep,  
The parrot strays till Void, triumphant, overwhelms.

Sudhindranath Dutta