

became expert club-men. Aśvatthāmā was the first in the secrets of archery. Nakula and Sahadeva became expert swordsmen. Arjuna was expert in all branches of weapon-training. Bhīma had bodily strength and Arjuna had the strength of learning. Yudhiṣṭhira was the foremost in chariot-fighting.

e) *Artificial bird.* Once Droṇa placed an artificial bird on the branch of a tree without the knowledge of the princes, to test their practice in archery. Then he placed his disciples with their bows, around the tree, and told them to shoot the bird down at his command. Droṇa first called Dharmaputra and told him to look at the bird. Then he asked him what he saw. Dharmaputra said that he saw the bird, the tree, the teacher and the students. He tested one by one. All gave the same reply, that Dharmaputra gave. At last he asked Arjuna. Arjuna stood for a while, taking aim and said that he saw a bird only. The teacher commanded to shoot and Arjuna sent an arrow. At the first shot the bird fell down headless. With this test Droṇa understood that Arjuna could defeat Drupada and embraced his disciple.

f) *Droṇa caught by a crocodile.* Once Droṇa and his disciples went to bathe in the Ganges. While they were dipping and splashing in the water a crocodile caught Droṇa by the leg. Droṇa was unable to extricate himself from the grip of the crocodile. So he asked his disciples to shoot the crocodile and kill it. All stood agape. Arjuna at once took bow and arrows and sent five arrows one after another at the crocodile, which died instantly and came afloat. The teacher, who was much pleased, got out of the water and embraced Arjuna and taught him 'Brahma Śīrāstra', a divine weapon. After imparting this knowledge Droṇa told Arjuna not to operate this weapon on man. But if an enemy superior to man attacked him, then only, he should send this missile at him to kill him.

Giving due respect to the advice of the teacher, Arjuna received the Brahmaśīrāstra. (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 133).

g) *Demonstration by the pupils.* When the training of the princes terminated, Dhṛtarāṣṭra accorded sanction to hold a demonstration of weapon-play, by the princes. An arena was got ready. Droṇa entered the arena. As a preliminary rite Droṇa worshipped the gods. Then he invited Brāhmaṇas to bless his pupils. After that the pupils gave the teacher, gold, precious stones, cloths, and other costly things. The princes paid homage to their teacher. The teacher gave his blessings to them. With this the demonstration commenced. Clubbing between Duryodhana and Bhīma was a terrible one. But the mock fighting changed to a serious fight. Droṇa sent Aśvatthāmā who separated them. The audience applauded their performance. The performance of Arjuna was of the most superior type and the audience and the teacher were struck with wonder at his extraordinary capability. Karṇa also showed his performance. (For details see under Arjuna, Para 1 and Karṇa, Para 4). (M.B. Ādi Parva, Chapters 133 and 134).

5) *Revenge upon Drupada.* When demonstration came to an end it was the time for giving the teacher the gift due to him. The teacher had, at the beginning, told his pupils that on completion of the training they should give him a gift. Accordingly he demanded that Drupada,

the King of Pāñcāla, should be brought before him with his hands tied. As soon as Duryodhana and Karṇa heard this they rapidly marched to Pāñcāla and engaged Drupada in a fight but were defeated by Drupada. After that Arjuna entered the battle-field, defeated and tied Drupada and brought him before Droṇa who was kind enough not to kill Drupada. The Kingdom of Pāñcāla was divided into two. Drupada was given Uttara-Pāñcāla and Droṇa took Dakṣiṇa Pāñcāla. Then Drupada was released. (M. B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 137).

6) *Arjuna is accorded sanction to fight with his teacher.* One year after the revenge on Drupada Yudhiṣṭhira was anointed as heir-apparent, by Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Once, in the council of the king, Droṇa called Arjuna to him and said: "Oh, Arjuna ! you must take an oath to do a particular thing in the presence of your relatives. If it happens that I oppose you in battle you should fight against me without thinking that I am your teacher. This oath is your gift to your teacher." Arjuna agreed and took the oath in the presence of the people. Because there was such an oath Arjuna's conscience did not prick him when he had to fight against his teacher Droṇa in the battle of Bhārata between the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas. (M. B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 139).

7) *Part played by Droṇa up to the battle of Bhārata.*

(1) Duryodhana and his party came to know only at the time of the svayamvara (marriage) of Pāñcālī that the Pāṇḍavas were not killed in the lac house burning. When Arjuna won the test and got Pāñcālī, the Kauravas became furious and began to plot against the Pāṇḍavas. At that time Droṇa came to the council-hall of the Kauravas and said that the Kauravas should go to Pāñcāla and greet the Pāṇḍavas, bring them back and give them half of the kingdom. (M. B. Ādi Parva, Chapter 203).

(2) Droṇa was present at the sacrifice of Rājasūya (imperial consecration) performed by Yudhiṣṭhira. (M. B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 34, Stanza 8).

(3) When the game of dice was going on between Śakuni and Yudhiṣṭhira Droṇa came with Dhṛtarāṣṭra to the place to witness the game. (M. B. Sabhā Parva, Chapter 60, Stanza 2).

(4) Droṇa declared that the game of dice between Śakuni and Yudhiṣṭhira was not fair (M. B. Vana Parva, Chapter 9, Stanza 2).

(5) Droṇa was well-versed in archery. (M. B. Vana Parva, Chapter 37, Stanza 4).

(6) While the Pāṇḍavas were living in the country of Virāṭa, Arjuna in the guise of Brhannala, fought with the Kauravas. Droṇa was the first to recognize Brhannala as Arjuna at the sound of his conch. (M. B. Virāṭa Parva, Chapter 46, Stanza 24).

(7) In that fight Droṇa fought with Arjuna whose arrows wounded Droṇa and he ran away from the battlefield. (M. B. Virāṭa Parva, Chapter 58).

(8) When Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the council-hall of the Kauravas to plead for a treaty on behalf of the Pāṇḍavas who had returned after forest life and pseudonymity, Droṇa took the side of the Pāṇḍavas and argued with Duryodhana. (M. B. Udyoga Parva, Chapter 126).

(9) Droṇa advised Dhṛtarāṣṭra to see that a battle between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas was avoided. (M. B. Udyoga Parva, two Chapters from 138).

(10) When it was almost decided that the battle was inevitable Droṇa boasted to Duryodhana that he would