

the same royal family. A *Dharma*-hunting Arjuna is here mentally manufacturing a case for himself justifying his cowardly retreat from the post of duty where destiny has called upon him to act.

He repeats what he had said earlier because Krishna, with his pregnant silence, is criticising Arjuna's attitude. The provocatively smiling lips of the Lord are whipping Arjuna into a sense of shame. He wants the moral support of his friend and charioteer to come to the conclusion that what he is feeling in his own mind is acceptable and just. But the endorsement and the intellectual sanction are not forthcoming from either the look of Krishna or the Lord's words.

*35. These I do not wish to kill, though they kill me, O Madhusudana, even for the sake of dominion over the three worlds; how much less for the sake of the earth.*

Feeling that he had not expressed his case strongly enough to Krishna to make him come to this conclusion, and, assuming that it was because of this that the Lord had not given his assent to it, Arjuna decided to declare with a mock spirit of renunciation, that he had so much large-heartedness in him that he would not kill his cousins, even if they were to kill him. The climax came when Arjuna, with quixotic exaggeration, declared that he would not fight the war, even if he were to win all the