

sworn enemy. But he unwittingly spells ruin to himself when he delights in depicting Bhima's army as meagre while praising that of Bhishma as multitudinous. He uses the terms *panyāptam* and *aparyāptam* respectively. *Paryāptam* not only means meagre, it also means limited, compact and well disciplined. *Aparyāptam*, on the other hand, means unlimited, unwieldy and indisciplined. This makes a world of difference between the two forces. The strength and victory of an army do not depend on its bulk, but on its training and team-spirit. Though limited in number, the Pandava forces are trim and equal to any eventuality. The Kaurava forces are on the other hand, promiscuous and placed together pellmell. Duryodhana's boast, therefore, stands self-condemned.

Again, the ethical excellence of Bhishma ever remains beyond the ken of the worldly-minded Duryodhana. This divinely-gifted and invincible man has no doubt consented to wage war wholeheartedly for the Kauravas. There is no sacrifice greater than this that an upright man can make. But at heart he knew that dharma alone was going to triumph in the end. Still, true to his word, he chooses to champion the cause of the wicked, only to prove that no power on earth or in heaven can make adharma victorious. Bhishma is in no way tainted by taking sides with the wicked, because of his being supremely above selfishness. The tenet 'be active in the world, but be not of the world,' is exemplified in his perplexing character.