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THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.



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NOTICE.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Annual subscription in India including postage	2	8	0
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There will ordinarily be three issues a year, in September, December, and March.

Students, old Presidency College men and members of the Staff of the College are invited to contribute to the Magazine. Short and interesting articles written on subjects of general interest and letters dealing in a fair spirit with College and University matters will be welcome. The Editor cannot return rejected articles *unless accompanied by stamped and addressed envelope.*

All contributions for publication must be written on one side of the paper and must be accompanied by the full name and address of the writer, *not necessarily for publication but as a guarantee of good faith.*

Contributions should be addressed to the Editor and all business communications should be addressed to the General Secretary, *Presidency College Magazine*, and forwarded to the College Office.

Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, B A,
Editor.

Printed by J. K. Choudhuri, Biswabhandar Press, 216, Cornwallis St.
Calcutta, and Published by Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, B. A.,
Presidency College, Calcutta.

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Principal T. S. Sterling.

*By courtesy of the Superintendent,
Government Printing, Bengal.*

THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

Vol. XIV. }

SEPTEMBER, 1927.

} No. I.

EDITORIAL NOTES

WITH this issue, our Magazine enters on the fourteenth year of its existence. It has maintained, throughout these years, a standard of excellence which well justifies its claim to a respectable place in any company of similar publications. Need it be emphasised that it is incumbent upon every member of the College, professors and students alike, to see to it that the Magazine does not suffer in merit? It is for them to do all that they can to improve this College organ, with which the good name of the College is so intimately associated. The co-operation of all members of the College is the 'sine qua non' of the success of the Magazine and the Editor ventures to hope that in the arduous task of piloting it, such co-operation will not be denied him,

* * * *

From year to year, the editor has had the very pleasant duty of extending, in these columns, a cordial welcome to the new men who have joined our College. Senior students have only to remember their 'First Year' days to feel linked with the freshers by the tie of sympathy and fellowship. To recall the days when unaccustomed to College life we looked, almost awed, at the imposing library hall filled with young learners absorbed in study, is to experience a yearning to live those days over again. We extend our heartiest welcome to those who have just joined that community of Presidency College men who have built up a great tradition—a treasure which, we trust, shall never rust.

* * * *

To those of us who have just finished their College career, we send our fraternal greetings. May success be theirs, in the exacting tests that life may place in their way, Presidency College demands of her alumni the strength, that no failures can daunt, to stand four square to all the winds that blow.

* * * * *

It is with very great regret that we announce the retirement of Principal T. S. Stegling from the service of our College. For eighteen years, Mr. Sterling has worked in the College almost without break. Even when he was appointed for a few months Inspector of European Schools, Bengal, he used to come to College and take some of his old classes. Senator and Syndic, for sometime Officer commanding the University Training Corps, he has been a very conspicuous figure in the educational life of the Province. As Senior Professor of English, as President for many years of the Athletic Club, as Bursar and as Principal, he has served the College with a zeal and devotion which one, to whom the College was dear, could alone bring to bear upon his work. "Here is a man who loves our College" — is the best tribute we can offer him. Those who had the privilege of coming in contact with him—and the present editor is fortunate to count himself among their number—will ever prize the acquaintance. Kindly and sympathetic, he has won all hearts and surely, made no enemies. He is going home to take up an appointment in the Universities' Bureau of the British Empire—a post that carries with it great honour and responsibility. We are sure, Indian students going abroad, for whom he did so much as Secretary to the local Advisory Committee, will find in him their guide, philosopher and friend in England. Presidency College will never forget him and we are confident it will never cease to occupy in his heart the seat of affection it has so long held. To us, as to him, it is a wrench to part. Our best wishes follow him, wherever he may be.

* * * *

Principal H. E. Stapleton returns after the vacation and he will find as he rejoins how his project for improving the surroundings of the College is well on the way towards realisation. A large part

of the "bustee" area has been acquired and the work of demolition is proceeding apace. How we wish a College Hall were erected on the new site! How long shall we have to harp continually on the same tune, we wonder! The grievance promises to be perennial.

* * * *

We hope to publish in our next issue a long review of the College Register. A neatly printed and illustrated volume of 475 pages, the Register cannot fail to evoke a spirit of College loyalty and fellowship, revealing as it does something of the richness and glory of our proud legacy as students of a great College. All honour to Professor S. C. Majumdar and Mr. G. N. Dhar who were entrusted with the work. They must have spent many a laborious hour over it, and that in addition to their ordinary College duties which are, by no means, light. Everybody interested in the College must be thankful to Messrs. Majumdar & Dhar for their splendid compilation.

* * * *

The University results this year have not been satisfactory. We have, indeed, regained after a temporary lapse the first places in the I. A. and I. Sc. Examinations; but our men do not preponderate among the first ten. Anyhow, the results are much better than last year so far at least as the Intermediate examinations are concerned.

In the B. A. and B. Sc. examinations, we have lost the first places in English, History, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. Let us hope it has been for us one of those bad years which we will refuse to allow to recur.

This year the fair sex has very definitely entered the field as our competitors. In History and in Sanskrit, lady students have topped the list. We take defeat like sportsmen. Very chivalrous, aren't we?

* * * *

Two of our men have sailed for England as probationers in the Indian Civil Service, on the results of the examination held at Allahabad. Mr. Dwijendralal Mazumdar who heads the list of successful candidates from Bengal, had a brilliant career in the

College, standing first in first class (Economics) at the B. A. examination of 1925. Mr. Hiranmay Banerjee was also well-known in the College as a student of very considerable parts. They have our hearty felicitations. We also congratulate Mr. Annada Sankar Ray who tops the whole list. He is not one of us ; but, after all he is a Bengalee.

* * * *

State scholarships for study abroad have been awarded this year by the Government of Bengal to Messrs Tarapada Das Gupta, M. Sc. and Humayun Z. A. Kabir, B. A. Mr. Das Gupta stood first in first class (Geology) at the M. Sc. examination of 1925. Mr. Kabir requires no introduction to our readers. During the session just concluded, he edited this Magazine with conspicuous success. He has been the recipient of many a laurel of the University. To add to all this, he has won for himself a niche in the literary world. Our congratulations to both of these distinguished students.

* * * *

Quite a number of our students have gone abroad for study this year. To them, we shall say, as the Vice-Chancellor told them at the Special Convocation, that in their persons their country, their race, their former teachers would be on trial before foreign judges. Let them always remember that they are pilgrims in the quest of knowledge, going forth with a solemn mission, that of securing for their country an honoured place in the intellectual fraternity of mankind.

* * * *

Mr. J. N. Sarkar, Vice-Chancellor, was recently invited by the Bombay University to deliver its Convocation address. Last year, it was Sir Brajendranath Seal who was similarly invited. Bengal still leads, in the cultural field at any rate.

* * * *

We have great pleasure in congratulating Mr. Sushil Kumar Dey of the 5th Year Economics Class, on his being awarded the Viceroy's Medal for one of the best essays by an Indian undergraduate student on "Cattle breeding and Dairy Farming in India."

It was an all-India competition and Mr. Dey has upheld the prestige of his College by coming out high in the list. Second in the I. A. Examination of 1925 and first in first class (Economics) at the B. A. Examination this year, Mr. Dey is perhaps better known for his active participation in the corporate life of the College. No College 'social' for the last four years has been complete without the beautiful songs of Mr. Dey. Our best congratulations to our brilliant College mate.

* * * * *

A very sad event occurs to our mind and that is the death by suicide of Mr. Dinesh Chandra Datta of the 3rd Year Science Class. It is hard for a Bengalee to condemn sentimentalism ; but an excess of it has been our bane. We do not just now feel inclined to deliver a sermon on the courage to live. We only remember that human life is too precious, and none has a right to blast it. The memorable death-bed utterance of Heine comes to our mind as we think of the dead : "God will pardon me ; it is His job."

* * * *

There have been a few changes in the College staff since the Magazine was last published. Mr. M. C. Chatterjee, late of Ashutosh College, has joined the English department as a temporary professor. In the History department, Mr. K. Zachariah has returned from leave which he spent in Greece, Egypt and the Continent. He is such an asset to the College that we can scarce afford to miss him. In the Physics department, Mr. P. C. Mahalanobis has rejoined after a long itinerary. We welcome him back. We are sorry, however, to miss the genial figure of Dr. S. R. Khastgir who has left. Dr. Kulesh Chandra Kar has been appointed lecturer in the place of the late Mr. Satyendra Kumar Ghosh. In the Chemistry department, Dr. Anukul Chandra Sarkar of the Dacca University has joined *vice* Mr K. C. Ray, and Mr. Subodh Kumar Majumdar has left. Mr. N. C. Bhattacharyya has been temporarily promoted to the Senior Professorship of Physiology in place of Mr. S. C. Mahalanobis. A new appointment, we are

informed, will be made to fill the vacancy created by Mr. Bhattacharyya's promotion.

* * * *

Animated scenes characterised the elections to the College Union. For well over a fortnight before the elections were held, printed cards and manifestoes were distributed broadcast. The elections were held in right parliamentary fashion. How we wish the Union were working in perfect harmony! Is it too much to expect a spirit of fellowship and charity to guide the students' representatives in all their work? The Union is there to foster a corporate spirit among the students. It would be a thousand pities if it proves a misnomer.

* * * *

The Reserve Bank Bill has been dropped. Let us hope—and surely, it is not hoping against hope—it would not be long before it will be placed again before the Assembly. This Bill, for which we have to thank the Hilton Young Commission on whose recommendations it is based, will, if carried into effect, remove the greatest drawbacks of Indian currency and banking conditions. We refer our readers in this connection to the weighty article from the pen of Professor Coyajee who, as a member of the Commission, largely influenced its decisions.

* * * *

The whole country has been perturbed—and the student community shares the indignation—at the much-advertised publication of unprovoked slanders on Indian social morals. To the apologists of Miss. Mayo's book, "Mother India", we would say that 'a lie that is half the truth is ever the blackest of lies' and that to present one side of the picture and the darkest to boot, is not dealing fairly with a people who have perhaps a pardonable right to be a bit too touchy. Mr. Pilcher's savage reference to Indian widows deserves unqualified condemnation. Pure as the morning star is, in the words of a famous poetess, the honour of

Indian womanhood. A million Pilchers cannot defile it, do what they will.

* * * * *

We have the melancholy duty of recording our sense of sorrow at the death of some of our distinguished alumni. The late Mrs. R. C. Bonnerjee, in whom Calcutta society has lost an ornament, was a brilliant ex-student. Duff Scholar for languages, she stood second in the F. A. Examination of her year, and was first from the College. Mr. I. C. Bose capped a brilliant University career with very conspicuous distinction in the public service. Mr. Poresh Chandra Sen was making his mark as an able lawyer, when the hand of the assassin cut short a career of usefulness. Mr. Jogindra Nath Basu has left an honored name in the bead-roll of Bengali litterateurs, distinguished as he was as a biographer and a poet. Mr. Kshirod Prasad Vidyabinode was one of those cultured men who gave a new orientation to our dramatic literature. The College is the poorer by the loss of so many notable ex-students.

* * * * *

Two of our foremost educationists have recently passed away. The late Mr. Adhar Chandra Mookerjee was pre-eminent as a teacher of history, and his love for the subject and for the cause of education in general is exemplified in the endowment he created for a prize in books to be awarded every year to the student who stands first in History at the B.A. Examination. We refer, last of all, to the death of that saintly scholar, Henry Stephen. His was, indeed, a dedicated life—an inspiring life of singular devotion to learning. Full of years and honours, he has gone to his well-earned repose. His name will ever occupy an honoured place in the history of education in Bengal. His numerous students and admirers will never let die the memory of a great teacher of youth.

* * * *

A great and commanding figure has been removed from the world's stage in the person of Zaghul Pasha. It was he who infused

new blood into the veins of the people of Egypt. He has earned for himself a definite place in that dynasty of immortals who have fought throughout the ages for Liberty and for Light.

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It has recently been the fortune of the Indian legislature to listen to a very remarkable address from the Viceroy on the problem of communal dissensions in the country. It is painful always to refer to this gangrene which is eating into the vitals of our national life. But when will our political doctors cease differing and prescribe a remedy that will radically cure this ghastly malady? Peep through the long vista of India's past history and you will find how our ancestors spread a pure white carpet and invited all the world to sit thereon. Isn't it a pity that a land whose whole history points unmistakably to synthesis and brotherhood, should be the stage for scenes that must stagger our manhood? To-day, our thought leaders stand mortified, like the weary watchmen on the tower. The King comes out and asks, "Watchmen! what of the night?" And they reply, "The night is very dark, Sir." When will the people of India allow them to say to their King, "The dawn is breaking"?

THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

A lecture delivered in the University of Calcutta.

Professor J. C. COYAJEE, I.E.S.

IT is proposed to examine in this discourse, the main lines on which the Reserve Bank of India should be formed. The problem before us is how best to apply the world's experience of Centralised Banking to Indian conditions. Obviously, nothing is easier than to recommend the adoption of some foreign system of banking *en bloc*—whether a state bank system from Australia, or the system adopted by the United States or by England—and certainly nothing would be more futile. As an appreciative critic of the Royal Currency Commission's Report from America has observed "any one can concoct a bill based upon standard occidental principles and call it a project for a Central Bank for India. Devising an Indian Central Bank is quite another matter—an institution which will fit into Indian life, is adapted to Indian practices and adjusted to the diverse needs of the population. An imported European or American central bank of either standard type would no doubt offer some advantages over the present system. But the central bank that India needs, must be *sui generis*; it must be as Indian as the Ganges."

Obviously, it is from this point of view that the banking proposals of the Commission are to be judged and justified; and it is claimed here that the work of the Commission in adapting the the Central Bank idea to Indian conditions will bear careful scrutiny. A few examples of this might be noted here. Thus, the utilisation of the existing Imperial Bank of India alongside of the projected Reserve Bank and the method laid down for securing their co-operation is an important example of this adaptation of the Occidental ideas of central banking to local conditions. India requires both centralisation of banking and the pushing forward of commercial banking, and one cannot say which is the greater need of the country. The Commission

has therefore based the future banking organisation of India not upon a central bank alone as elsewhere but upon the co-operation of the Reserve Bank and the Imperial Bank of India, and this co-operation has been duly arranged for. Moreover, care has been taken to secure whatever Government assistance and guarantee was needed to inspire confidence amongst the uninstructed portion of the public. The problem of the destination of the redundant rupees and of how the Bank is to dispose of them without loss, has also received a solution. The difficult problem of how the Reserve Bank was to buy and sell gold without destroying the local wholesale bullion market has also been tackled, and the Commission has sought "to prevent the Bank from becoming a competitor of the bazar bullion merchants." In the regulation of the system of note issue the imitation of the Fixed fiduciary system of England—which caused a great deal of inelasticity of currency in India for such a long period—has been avoided, while the English system has been followed in the matter of the separation of the Banking and Issue Departments. So also several features of the Federal Reserve System have been—not so much copied as adapted. The various measures taken with the object of not disturbing the price of silver and of maintaining the confidence in the silver rupee as money are noteworthy. In fact the charge of close imitation of other systems, or even of mere eclecticism cannot be maintained as against the Commission.

So much is perhaps due to the labours of the Commission that we should start by glancing at their recommendations. What then are the main proposals made in the Report as regards the relations of the Indian Reserve Bank to the State? The most scrupulous care has been taken to preserve the independence of the Bank *vis-a-vis* the State and to free it from all "political pressure," while provision has also been made to secure the advantage of close co-ordination between the Currency and the Credit Policy as well as the Financial Policy of the country. While Government shares the profits of the Bank, the former is

under obligations to support the latter in various important ways —by guaranteeing its notes and by having the ultimate duty of redeeming rupees. In view of the transfer of the State's note issue and its remittance as well as banking business to the new bank, and in view of the ultimate responsibility of the State, just adequate—and not more than adequate—voice has been given to it in the management of the Bank through its power of nominating five out of fourteen members on the Central Board. Such a constitution, as the Report observes, leaves the Bank free from interference from the Executive in the day to day conduct of its business and as regards its banking policy.

It is not for one of the signatories of the Report to praise this arrangement, though it is permissible to point out that the arrangement proposed therein gives the bank a full measure of independence of the State, nor does it give unduly great powers to its shareholders. To demonstrate that the arrangement of the Report only puts into practical shape sound economic conceptions as regards the relation of a Central Bank to the State as well as to its shareholders, I venture to quote a passage from a famous economic classic. After a review of the various Central Banks of the world and their policies, Schmoller observes as follows :—“A great central bank performs its functions best when it possesses a certain independence as against the State*** *But all such independence is lost if the Central Bank is a State Bank, and works with state capital.* It becomes in that case an easy prey to fiscal forces and tendencies, and serves only the state finance not the national economy. *If, on the other hand, it is a purely shareholders' bank,* it will be guided in her economic policy by her Directors who are elected by shareholders and who are big shareholders themselves. It is then entirely in the hands of Capitalism and tries to earn large dividends which is not consistent with service to the country.” The claim might be reasonably made that there is a close parallel between this economic ideal and the scheme of the management of the Reserve Bank in the Report of the Currency Commission.

*Verdict of Banking Experience and Theory on
the State Bank Idea.*

The dominating issue in the present controversy in India is whether we are to have a State bank or an independent bank with its own capital and shareholders. In approaching this issue we must distinguish, however, between what is possible and what is advisable. The State bank is a perfectly feasible proposition, but it is not a proposition which is recommended either by banking experience or by Economic judgment. The possibility of following a policy of compromise in India is not denied here ; but it is another question whether such a compromise will be in the best and lasting interests of the country. As will be shown later, State banking has yet to justify itself and to build up sound traditions. It may be that India is to be the scene of its triumphs in future ; but at the present moment we have no reason to be sure of such future developments, and we must go by probabilities which are heavily against such success, and the auspices are all adverse to launching upon such an experiment. The fact is that anything like successful working of a State bank requires the presence of some dominating personality who commands great prestige both in the State and in the banking sphere ; and this country cannot be sure of always possessing such a leading figure.

So far as the evolution of central banks in the world at large is studied, the general experience and voice has emphatically decided against State banks ; so that there are only a few countries—and those by no means of the first rank economically—like Australia, Latvia and Esthonia which have got state banks. Hence, if we decide on having a State bank after all, we shall have to go somewhat far afield for our model and patterns.

Nowhere has the extension of the functions of the State been more ardently advocated than in Germany ; nowhere can such an extension count upon the assistance of such an expert, devoted and well organised service as in that country, and yet we find that the case against a State Bank has been most clearly and emphatically stated by the leading economists of Germany. Thus Prof. Lexis argues

that "The officials of a pure State Bank have merely to adapt themselves to the regulations coming to them from above; but a Bank of Issue with private capital, even when entirely managed by the state, has a *sort of independence as regards the State*--an independence which protects it against interference with the vital conditions of its existence. For the former indeed the interference of the legislature is always needed; but the latter must never forget that a great capital is in its charge. The Central Committee of the Reichsbank has undoubtedly only a very moderate authority, but its influence, nevertheless, is far greater than that of the advisory board of a State Railroad Company, because it represents the owners of a bank capital." The great German economists were roused to make these protests against a State Bank because the Agrarian party was threatening to convert the Reichsbank into a State Bank in their own class interests.

Such has been the experience of direct state intervention in the field of banking, that eminent bankers and great theorists are found to vie with one another in demanding the independence of banking and in decrying anything but a very moderate measure of state control. Thus, the Governor of the Bank of England "looked upon the substantial independence of the Central Bank as the surest safeguard" against serious danger. He added that, "I should not wish to see the Bank's freedom hampered in any way--least of all by a provision that in certain undefined circumstances freedom of action might be abrogated. We have the experience in Europe that in the case of the banks in which the Government has held considerable measure of control, or there has been a limitation on the freedom of the bank, it has not resulted to the advantage of the community." Such is the voice of the *doyen* of European bankers. But he did not state the principle of the emancipation of banks from undue state control in stronger terms than did the great economist Wagner in his palmy days, when he observed that "the unfortunate system of tutelage has never yet stood the test of practice. It merely leads from step to step, and when it has once been adopted, there is nothing in which

State does not think itself called upon to interfere in the interests of the citizens, and (for which the latter do not look hopefully and) imploringly to the state, while they themselves limit their activity to complaints."

What, one might ask, is a state bank but the conception of state control carried out to its logical conclusion and final consummation? As Schmoller puts it forcibly "All independence with respect to the State is lost when the Central Bank is a State Bank."

*Advantages of Private Capital and Shareholders
to a Central Bank.*

Under the special circumstances of the present controversy it is necessary to prove up to the hilt the advantages of private capital in the case of Central Bank. Before the War, Mr. Keynes in an appendix to the Report of the Chamberlain Commission reviewed the conditions of Central Banking in Europe and concluded that Continental experience suggested the inadvisability of Governments subscribing any part of the capital of Central Bank. Except in Russia, no part of the capital of such Banks was owned by any European state. The same author quotes with approval the following arguments against the abolition of private capital of such banks. "There is first the confusion of public and private credit, to the great damage of each; for they ought to remain distinct, for their respective good and the mutual assistance which they are at times called upon to lend each other. Further, there is the acceptance by the State of a task—the task of discounting—which is not within its competence, and of which, even with the best of will, it will acquit itself badly. It is neither wise nor practicable to suppress the legitimate stimulus of private interest in such affairs as discount. *It must not be believed that in such a matter disinterestedness alone suffices* or can afford a better guide than the foresight of those who run the risks and reap the benefits of such operations." It is necessary to quote these views based on the Banking experience of Europe, since some well-known public men have put

forward the contention in India that "With no shareholders' capital to pay dividends on, the Executive of the Reserve Bank can take an absolutely detached attitude."

Let us illustrate the benefits of private capital from the example of the former Imperial Bank of Germany where the powers of the private shareholders were most circumscribed. "Nowhere else," says Schmoller, "has the influence of the shareholders been so limited, but even so it is quite sufficient to produce the required touch with the outside banking world and to secure proper and expert management." Surely that great author knew better what was happening in Germany than the local controversialist who tries to belittle the importance of the shareholders on the Imperial Bank of Germany. We are told by the latter that "although there may be on the Board some men appointed (or supposed to be appointed) by the shareholders, the Government appointees alone have all the real power. I advisedly say 'supposed to be appointed,' because it is the executive that suggests certain names, and such names are, as a rule, accepted, as woe be to the men who would dare to defy an authority that wields such enormous power over money matters." The actual conditions in Germany are not so farcical as represented by this Indian writer, and the work of the Central Committee of fifteen elected by the shareholders in maintaining the independence of the Bank as against the State is considered of importance by such authorities on banking as Riesser, Schmoller, Conant and the National Monetary Commission of America. This is the more so because "no business with the Empire, for the German Federated States for which unusual terms are to be made is to be transacted unless approved by a majority of the Central Committee." Thus we see that it is exactly against the financial encroachments of the State that the representatives of the private shareholders of the Central Bank have been endowed with powers.

One can indeed go further and confidently assert that it would be an advantageous thing for the proposed Reserve Bank of India to have even a part of its capital held by private shareholders.

Supposing that a compromise was arrived at and our Government subscribed the greater part of the capital, it can still derive much benefit from the advice of shareholders holding the rest of the capital because these latter have a direct interest in the prosperity of the Bank.

A curious argument has been recently advanced in favour of dispensing with private capital in our Central Bank if the latter is a State Bank. Mr. Madon, a leading publicist of India, has laid down the following dictum on the subject: "Can such a bank (that is a Central Bank) work without any share capital? The answer is 'yes'. It will have all Government and semi-Government balances, and those of many public bodies, as also balances of bankers, and will thus have all the capital it needs as working resources." Need it be pointed out, as against this view, that in that observation banking resources and liabilities are strangely mixed up? The balances of other banks and of Government are of course not the resources of the Central Bank but its liabilities? As regards the capital of the Bank that is certainly a liability as between the Bank and its shareholders, but it assuredly forms a resource and a support as against all outside claims.

Do the "Special Circumstances of India" require a State Bank?

But we have been told—though nowhere very clearly—that there are special circumstances in the case of India which require that a State Bank—and no other sort of Central Bank is to be provided for it. We, therefore, proceed to examine what these alleged peculiar circumstances are. Now the most prominent peculiarity of India as regards banking is that joint stock banking is very little developed in this country. But surely that is no reason for proposing to start a State Bank in it—rather it is a strong argument against a State Bank. The spread of the spirit of prudent banking, the building up of sound banking traditions, the encouragement of commercial banking and the training of men who will ultimately be selected to be the managers and guides of the private banks—these are tasks for which a State Bank is but poorly adapted.

Magnificent systems of commercial banks have grown up under the aegis of ordinary Central Banks—witness the banking systems of England and Germany—but *we have yet to find out an instance in banking history where such systems of commercial banks rose or prospered under the wings of State Banks.* The truth is, that it is not within the power of a State organisation to create the spirit of banking, and in the development of a country's banking it is the development of banking traditions and spirit—and not State regulations that count.

It has been contended that it would be unfair and dangerous to transfer the financial interests of this country to the control of a group of capitalists like a Central Bank with private shareholders as a critic recently observed. "It is impossible to hand over to a private bank owned by a body of shareholders the huge assets of the Currency Department amounting to some 200 crores." It might be pointed out here in answer to this statement of Mr. Madon that no apprehension need be entertained as regards any such predominance of the interests of private shareholders. The Report of the Indian Currency Commission has provided amply against such contingencies. In the first place, the Report provides for a certain number of nominees of the Government on the Central Board which would suffice to check any policy of self-seeking by the private shareholders. But further, the Reserve Bank would, at its inception, take over many of the experienced officers of the Currency Department, and these officials would hand on the traditions of long public service to the officials of the new Bank. It can be thus seen that full precautions have been taken against any domination of private interests; and it is unfair to urge that the Report contemplates the "handing over of 200 crores of assets of the Currency Department and the many crores of Government Funds to a private Joint Stock Company."

It has also been argued that it is advisable to substitute State Bank for a shareholders' Bank, in order to avoid a conflict in interests between Indian and foreign capital, to secure an Indian management as well as to ensure public confidence. These

contentions are easily met. In the first place as the Report of the Currency Commission of 1926 has fixed a maximum rate for the dividends of the Reserve Bank, which is by no means large, there is no reason to expect that foreign capital will be particularly attracted to the securities of the Bank. The danger from foreign capital is only a bogey conjured up on purpose. In any case any apprehensions on this score can be set at rest by giving a preference at the allocation of the shares of the bank to the small investor, who applies for a limited number of shares. An assignment of shares based directly on racial lines is to be deprecated; admittedly, it is impossible to ensure that shares, though assigned to Indians at first, will continue to be in Indian hands after a time. Further, it is quite possible to secure that the majority of Directors of the Bank should be Indians without maintaining a racial distinction as regards shareholders. The object can be secured easily even though the Bank is a Shareholders' Bank; it would be preposterous to erect a State Bank only in order to secure an Indian directorate, for that object can be attained with a Shareholders' Bank.

It is true that in 1913 Mr. Keynes did put forward a scheme for the formation of a State Bank in India. But that was in days when the potentialities of ordinary banking in India had not been manifested. The inter-provincial jealousies existing then must have made the prospects of anything but a State Bank hopeless at that time. Before the impetus which the War gave to the co-ordination of work between the Banks and Government, and before the success of the Imperial Bank of India showed the potentialities of a Shareholders' Bank as a Central Bank, it might well have seemed impossible to entrust even the Government balances—let alone remittance business or paper currency—to a bank which was not a State Bank. But, even though the circumstances of those days compelled Mr. Keynes to project a State Bank, he was firm in his view of the advantages of the Bank having private shareholders. He observes that "Continental experiences suggest that it is probably inadvisable for the Government to subscribe any part of the capital of the Bank itself." In the appendix to his Memorandum he showed that

in no country of Europe, except Russia, was any part of the Capital of the Central Bank owned by the State.

The Record of State Banks.

So much has been made in the present controversy in India of the precedent furnished by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, that it is necessary to advert to the somewhat anomalous history of that institution. As started in 1911 it was not so much an experiment in the way of centralisation of banking, as in the direction of nationalization of commercial banking. In fact it was started because the Labour Party expected great financial advantages from the entry of the State into the field of private banking. I would refer those who want to study the origins of the Commonwealth Bank to an able article by Prof. Copland, of the University of Melbourne, in the *Economic Journal* for 1924. He observes that the Bank "was originally established *for the purpose of carrying on the ordinary functions* of banking as a State institution"; and hence for fourteen years more (i.e. up to about a couple of years ago) *it was in no sense a Central Bank*, and performed hardly any of the functions of a Central Bank. For example, the issue of paper currency was not in the hands of this bank, but was independent of it and was carried on by a Note Issue Board. This Notes Board was not associated with the Bank at all. It was a Central Bank only in the sense that it helped the Government in war finance operations, conducted the Government business of the Commonwealth and the six States, and the Savings Bank business. It was only in 1924 that circumstances made the absence of a central banking authority felt, and then a series of measures were carried erecting the State Bank into a Central Bank. The control of the Note issue was granted to it, it was strengthened by the provision of further capital and was granted the power to fix and publish discount rates. Further, with the idea of converting it into a bankers' Bank, the private banks were compelled to use cheques on the Commonwealth Bank for settling their clearing house operations. But we have a higher authority than even that of Prof. Copland to show how

recently the Commonwealth Bank has become a State Bank. In December 1926, Mr. S. M. Bruce, the Prime Minister of Australia, stated that "formerly this institution was *an ordinary trading bank managed by one man*. Now it is managed by a Board of Directors who are charged with the duties of central banking. The intention is that the Board shall control credit in Australia as the Bank of England regulates it in this country, and advice is now being sought from officials of the Bank of England, as to the exact steps necessary to bring about a fully effective central banking system." (Cf. *The Bankers' Magazine*, 26th Dec 1926, p. 820).

Thus we find that this State Bank has been working in Australia as a Central Bank for less than two years, and that it is still so young that outside advice is being sought to make it an effective Central Bank. It will take some time yet to win its spurs as Central Bank, and no doubt, in course of time it will establish high traditions. It is too early yet, however, to cite it as a worthy precedent for setting up similar State institutions in other countries.

For a large-scale and long continued experiment in State banking we have to go back to the former Bank of Russia. That was a State Bank in every sense of the word. There the capital was subscribed by the Imperial Treasury and the management of the Bank was entrusted to the Minister of Finance under whom was the Board of Treasury Officers known as the Council of the Bank. The arrangement was said to have "brought the Bank entirely under official supervision with no external check." In spite of the great ability of finance ministers like Vichnegradsky and Count Witte little success attended the Bank in its work of the promotion of a commercial banking system. More significant were the evil results of attempts made to promote industry and commerce through the State Bank, as the institution set about its task by the issue of fresh paper currency. As a historian of banking says, "this new policy of the Bank has been subjected to severe criticism." And no wonder, because, state banks seem apt to employ this dangerous weapon (*i.e.*, inflation) when they are in a benevolent mood towards national trade and industry. In this

connection, it should also be remembered that the Agrarian party of Germany desired and attempted to convert the Reichsbank into a State Bank in order to employ the funds of the Bank in the execution of their own programme. That is the besetting sin and weakness of state banks and it was well brought out by Sir Ernest Harvey, Controller of the Bank of England, recently, when he stated that "one of the main objects of establishing a State Bank for the conduct of ordinary banking was that it should provide extraordinary facilities, which, whether required to foster some purely political object or not, did not possess that sound financial basis which would render the business attractive to other banks."

Considerations of space render it impossible to furnish here anything like a full record of state banking. For a complete record, the inquirer is referred to the great work of M. Raphael-Georges Levy on Banks of Issue. At p. 490 of that authoritative book the author states that "one might be permitted to believe that one of the reasons of the small amount of bills discounted by the Bank of Russia was the fact of its being a State Bank ; and, as regards the discounting of bills, a central bank with private capital and managed by an independent directorate would have shown greater development." M. Raphael-Georges Levy devotes the conclusion of his book to the task of demonstrating the superiority of ordinary shareholders' banks to state banks. "The state Bank is a formula dear to the socialists ; they would not be logical if they did not proclaim that the whole nation represented more or less by the Government has all the capacity, science and art necessary to conduct any enterprise whatsoever. But, unfortunately for the socialists, their theory is at each step contradicted by the study of the past and by the observation of the present. My labours will be amply recompensed if I have succeeded by an impartial study of facts in convincing the reader of the dangers of State intervention and in enunciating what should be the relations between banks issuing notes and the public finance. The service done by banks of issue is the greater according as the

finest products of art result. Experience consists in the action and the reaction of thought and feeling and literature is the record of this experience. So long as a fact is apprehended only by our reason, it is distinct and separate from our life and has no place in the realm of art. It is only when intellectual truths become instinct with emotion and relations between man and man are charged with pain and pleasure that out of this seething mass, literature and art are born.

One of the distinctive features of Wells's art lies in this. All his thoughts are so charged and coloured with emotion that they refuse to be confined within the limits of a dull cold rationality. Things acceptable only to our intellect are all very well for building up philosophies; and syntheses but they can never supply the material out of which literature is created. Whenever Wells has thought about a thing he has done so with a passion of intensity which lifts it high above the coldness of mere logic, and makes it throb with colour and emotion. His heroes and heroines do not merely experience joy and misery, they try to find out the laws which guide human happiness and strive to solve the riddle of human life just as we do.

This is Wells's main contribution to the fiction of England. Never before has there been such an attempt at the portrayal of human life in its totality, at the representation in literature of not only the emotions and impulses that guide our conduct, but also the thoughts and the ideas that constitute our intellectual life. Wells has given expression to our intellectual beliefs and cravings, and his greatest credit lies in the fact that this intellectualisation of the novel has not been carried out at the cost of the simple human emotions which lie at the basis of the appeal of fiction to all men. His men and women are not mere abstraction to serve as mouthpieces for the promulgation of his own ideas and beliefs, they are intensely concrete and human and conceived with a freedom and sympathy of imagination which at once mark out Wells as a great master in the world of fiction. Even types antagonistic to his personality and holding beliefs opposed to his own

outlook are worked out with a markedness of individuality which leaves us in no doubt about their realism and truth.

Let us here make it clear that Wells is essentially a writer with a purpose. He has a definite code of ethics and definite ideas about the future and progress of mankind, and his novels have often-times served as vehicles to express his hopes and desires. It is for this that he has refused to be contained within the limits of the novel. He has the desire and the power to view all questions sanely and soberly, and to him human history has appeared to be a gradual unfolding of a purpose that has sought to work itself out in spite of a thousand obstacles and hindrances. He has conceived of the human spirit as for ever struggling for greater freedom, greater space and greater knowledge, and history in the past has been merely the record of the thousand petty vanities and follies which have rendered impossible the realisation of this ideal and this striving. This struggle for light can never achieve its end until men have risen over and transcended the thousand ties that bind them to their past,—the ties of superstition, of blind obedience to authority, of narrow exclusive pride. It is in the liberation of the creative spirit in man that the hope of mankind lies.

The greatest danger of all purposive writing lies in its tendency to sacrifice art to teaching. Though few masters in modern days hold to the creed of "Art for Art's sake" it is nevertheless true that any direct didacticism takes away from the appeal of a work of art. For this the reason is not far to seek. The human mind has a natural antipathy to commands and prohibitions, and a work of art which openly preaches, defeats its own purpose by arousing a latent feeling of antagonism and prevents it from fulfilling the first condition of any work of art, which primarily consists in giving pleasure. The skill with which Wells has avoided the danger of descending to didactic monologues constitutes his main charm. He has achieved this mainly by presenting to us a problem in which live human beings, through their action and their speech, drive home to us the inherent moral of the situation. It is in the contrast of different types of character and their different responses

to the circumstances in which they find themselves placed that his philosophy finds expression, and while losing ourselves in the interest of the situation, we unconsciously learn to see the question in the aspect from which he has viewed it. His heroes and heroines often suffer, but their suffering is sanctified by the sympathy with which he views their mistakes and shortcomings, and in the very act of portrayal of character and relation of story, he conveys to us the teaching which the situation has to offer.

Another reason why his work has not suffered from its professed purposiveness must be sought in the intensity of passion with which he has felt the delights and the sorrows of life. Emotions have not been sacrificed to intellect, and his stories throb with the vitality which only an appeal to our feelings can give to a work of art. Most fundamental and primary sentiments find wonderful expression in his work—the love of man for maid, the pangs of unrequited love, the misery of loving hearts who cannot come together across the many obstacles that society has raised, the agony of sexual jealousy which unfortunately is ingrained in most men—they all have their place in the gamut of passion from which he works at his pleasure a wonderful music of the human heart.

This attempt to view and represent life at its totality marks all Wells's work. To-day we are concerned, not with the sanity and profundity of his thought or the depth and meaning of his message, but with Wells the artist who shapes his work to give form and expression to his beliefs. And we find that he tells us all he has to say through the gradual unfolding of one human life, through the history of the development of one individual mind which modifies its outlook and its action in response to the various stimuli that it receives from the outward world from time to time. We begin at the birth of William Clissold, and follow him through all his life, and share in his doubts and difficulties, in the storm and stress of his passion and in the gradual evolution of his outlook upon the world. Every man, as experiences accumulate and our reason passes judgment on them, slowly evolves consciously or unconsciously, a philosophy of life which guides him in all his action, and which

adapts itself to every novel experience, adapting at the same time his powers of receptivity of influence from abroad. This framework of the mind into which we seek to classify and arrange all our experience constitutes the background of all our thought, action and speech, and rightly enough Clissold starts to give us an account of himself and his life by trying to describe to us this groundwork of all his consciousness.

A CASE FOR INDUSTRIALISATION OF INDIA.

BEJOVESH MOOKERJEA—*Fourth Year Arts.*

AT the very outset we want to make it clear that we do not advocate the policy of industrialising the country at a reckless speed. We are fully alive to the truth and wisdom of Tennyson's dictum: "Raw haste is but half-sister to delay." All that we urge is that agriculture and industry should be developed simultaneously. In India, specially, industry divorced from agriculture is like an edifice with a rotten foundation. As the edifice may collapse at any moment, so also industry may go to rack and ruin on any day. Now that agriculture is a transferred subject under the control of our popular ministers and that the provincial contributions to the Government of India have been remitted, it is to be earnestly hoped that India will be ere long in the hey-day of her prosperity with a fully-developed agriculture and a varied industry. An attempt has been made in the following pages to sketch the broad outlines of a scheme for the progressive development of industry without jeopardising the interests of agriculture.

Two schools of economists have hitherto raised the standard of revolt against the industrialisation of India. One school is headed

by orthodox economists like Keynes whose views resemble the recent "Furcoat theory" of Lord Morley and the other by men like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Radhakamal Mookerjee who shudder at the prospect of revolutionary changes that will follow industrialisation and want to retreat to more primitive methods of industry and social organisation.

"The orthodox economists," says Ranade, J. in his essays, "assign to the backward torrid zone regions of Asia the duty of producing raw materials, and claim for the advanced temperate zone countries of Europe the work of transport and manufactures, as a division in production which is fraught with the highest advantage to all, and is almost a providential dispensation against which it would be foolish to rebel." Agriculture is India's "natural avocation" and any efforts for making her an industrial country will be to her economic detriment. Such is the considered verdict of the orthodox school.

These reasonings, however, are based on the wrong assumption that India will develop her industries to the neglect of her agriculture. But that is quite absurd. India is wellaware that agriculture is and will long remain her staple industry. Her demand for industries is advanced without prejudice to the superior claims of agriculture. This is borne out by the fact that agriculture has improved and is still improving.

Dr. Mookerjee expresses his strong disapproval of the rapid industrialisation of India, and the reasons he puts forth may be thus summarised: First, Industrialisation means disintegration of caste and the family. But fond as they are of joint family life, Indians will find their work repugnant when not shared by other members of their family and done in their midst. Secondly, Western industrialism pre-supposes Western out-look of life. The frugal and unconventional life of an Indian will be replaced by the artificial life of the Westerner. The fine motto of "plain living and high thinking" will cease to exercise its beneficent influence. Thirdly, industrialism has some very serious drawbacks. It is now being condemned in the West, the land of its birth. Socialism is its reaction.

The first argument seems to be rather strange in this age of advanced ideas and ideals. Is it not high time that the caste-system which cloaks greed, avarice, cruelty, injustice, inequality and what not, should be hacked, scotched and buried? Does Dr Mookerjea wish that even in this age of "liberty, equality and fraternity" a high-caste Brahmin will continue, as of yore, to look down upon a pariah or a Namasudra as untouchable? If industrialism helps to disintegrate this pernicious caste-system—a system which "like gangrene is eating into the vitals of our society," we ought to be rather thankful to it. Again if Indians, as Dr Mookerjea complains, are so very homesick that they find their work repugnant when not shared by other members of their family and done in their midst, industrialism is all the more necessary. Is it not revolting to think that Indian workers and artisans will be always tied to the apron-strings of their near and dear ones, when their "confreres" of the West are out "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield". Let our Indian peasants and workers be given an opportunity to show to the world at large that they are not a whit behind their comrades of other countries in vigour, energy, enterprise and enthusiasm.

Dr. Mookerjea's next argument appears at first sight to be without a flaw. But if we look a little below the surface, the truth at once comes out. The life of an ill-clad, underfed and badly-housed peasant with a daily income of six copper pieces, is indeed an illustration of plain living with vengeance! If Gugel's dictum: the lower the percentage of expenditure on physical necessities, the higher is the plane of economic prosperity—be the criterion of a country's material progress, what a sad and a gloomy picture is presented by the chart prepared by Dr. Mookerjea himself which clearly shows that in India day-labourers spend 99·4%, agriculturists 97%, carpenters 95·5%, blacksmiths 90% and shopkeepers 86·7% of their incomes on food and clothing. With all respect for Dr. Mookerjea it must be said that to hide this appalling poverty under the cloak of "plain living" is ridiculous. The sooner the mask is removed, the better for us all. Dr.

Mookerjee's third argument is the strongest weapon in his armoury. But we have stated at the outset that we do not desire to import wholesale the industrialism of the West with all its many undesirable concomitants.

Now if we are bound to devote ourselves to these considerations which 'cry halt' to the march of India's industrial progress, still more are we bound to consider the facts and figures which like the sailor's needle point to the irresistible and unmistakable conclusion that industrialism is almost a "cure-all for social ills" to which India is now unfortunately a victim.

From the point of view of strict economic theory, it is a truism that that form of production must be preferred which gives the maximum return at a minimum cost in terms of effort and sacrifice, (Pillai : *Economic Conditions in India*, Ch. II). We should as well bear in mind that the exports of India and the imports of the United Kingdom consist mainly of raw materials and that the imports of India and the exports of the United Kingdom consist mainly of manufactured goods. We should further remember that manufactured goods have been rising in prices a good deal faster than the raw materials. So India is sure to be a loser if she does not adopt industrialism.

The profession of agriculture, again, is not a bed of roses. The seasonal conditions in India and the normal dryness of the soil make agriculture an extremely precarious occupation. To add to these, there is the question of rainfall. Except Bengal, Assam, Lower Burma, Malabar and Kankan where annual rainfall amounts to 76" and over, all provinces have to suffer the consequences of drought. (Dubey : *The Way to Agricultural Progress* :— Map showing rainfall by natural divisions.) The Indian Irrigation Commission (1901-1903) dispelled the popular illusion that irrigation would bring in a millennium. Of course irrigation has not yet reached its ultimate limit. For out of a total rainfall in India which is equal to 125 billion cubic feet, only 6% are utilised in irrigation. Nevertheless the fact remains that "there are many parts of India where the utmost use of every available means of

irrigation will fail to afford complete protection against failure of the rainfall".

There has been undue preponderance of the agricultural occupation and excessive pressure of population on the soil. The Famine Commission rightly pointed out that the number of people who turned to the soil for their subsistence was in far excess of that required for "thoro" cultivation. This necessarily means smaller cultivated areas per head of the population. In 1891 the cultivated area was 1 acre per inhabitant whereas now it is $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of an acre—if not less—per inhabitant.

"The scientific relation of labour to return is that while increasing labour to a certain point is attended by increasing proportionate returns, beyond that point further increase is attended by diminishing proportionate returns". Mankind cannot produce an unlimited amount of calico any more than an unlimited amount of wheat. A glance at the statistics shows that India has long ago passed the point of maximum return.

Crop.	England	India.
Wheat	1,919 lbs. per acre	814 lbs. per acre.
Barley	1,645 " " "	877 " " "

(R. Mookerjea : Rural Economy of India p. 80).

Then it is to be noted that in India one person is engaged to every $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of an acre or 2.7 acres of cultivated land (according to a more liberal calculation). But in Great Britain one person is engaged to every 17.3 acres of cultivated land. So if they still press the soil, India will recede farther and farther from the maximum return.

It is after a careful deliberation of these weighty facts—and not for a hobby to imitate everything Western—that a student of Indian Economics advocates the case for industries. "The cry for industrialisation is a natural outcome of this imperious economic necessity."

(a) Apropos the scheme of making India an industrial country at the safest speed it may be observed at once that capital should be first mobilised. A vast amount of wealth in India is now

(5) it must possess funds which it can afford to lock up for a time in securities not readily realisable ;

(6) it should possess a paid-up share or debenture capital high in proportion to its total business. These recommendations, it should be remembered, are based on a knowledge of the working of the Industrial Banks of various parts of the globe and as such India would do well to accept them in toto.

But all this certainly means time. And even if it requires no time, the probability is that the capital thus accrued will be insufficient to meet the colossal demands of India. So at any rate foreign capital has to be invited.

Foreign capital may be of two classes viz. (1) foreign capital borrowed directly by Indians and (2) foreign capital employed in India directly by the foreigner. The second class of capital must always be avoided. But the first class of foreign capital India should make it a point to use with profit. Large sums borrowed from the London money-market at exceptionally low rates of interest for industries in India will certainly bring about a remarkable increase in her wealth, the interest payable being negligible.

Labour force also should be mobilised. At present, Indian labour is anything but efficient. And this must be so as long as India strictly adheres to the status quo. The pith and marrow of the whole thing is that Indian agriculture is still in its archaic state and consequently more men are engaged in it than it would have been necessary, had the methods of agriculture been up-to-date. It is only in times of depression that these men offer their services to industrial concerns. The employers take advantage of their poverty and compel them to accept meagre wages. They, too, in their turn, work most half-heartedly, and, it naturally follows, most inefficiently. This state of things can only be removed if agriculture is improved. An up-to-date agriculture means more output with less hands. So a large number of hands will be permanently displaced from the soil when India adopts modern scientific agriculture. And these surplus hands will be

profitably absorbed in industries. They will also constitute a regular and a whole time labour force of Indian industries which now get only a spasmodic supply of labour. So our scheme is that agriculture must be developed and with a developed agriculture there will be no dearth of industrial labour. (This shows how untenable is the argument that industrial development will deal a death-blow to the cause of agriculture.)

The potential supply of labour is so very promising that it is hard to believe that Indian industries will ever suffer from a shortage of labour supply. The number of the untouchables is estimated in the latest census report at $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 crores. The number of the aboriginal tribes is put down at 16 million souls (Kale Introduction to Indian Economics Vol. 1. Ch. V) And the criminal tribes *; "who lead a vagrant life" and are a menace to law and order have also a great number in their stock. If all these men are trained to be useful members of the society and not pariahs, parasites and habitual criminals, who will say that India will have to face a shortage of labour ?

The arrangements that have hitherto been made for industrial training are, it must be confessed, inadequate and unsatisfactory, The whole country should be covered ere long with a net-work of industrial schools. For purposes of training industries may be classified into—

(i) manipulative industries i.e. those in which long practical training is required and

(ii) non-manipulative industries i.e. those in which, due to their automatic and semi-automatic plants, a training of special type is necessary. (Industrial Commission's Report Ch. X.) And the following classes of training as suggested by the Industrial Commission are absolutely necessary :—

* An interesting experiment to control and reform the criminal tribes was started under the auspices of the Government by Mr. O. H. B. Stark, I. C. S. At Bij-pore he succeeded in turning a large number of them into mill hands, masons and agriculturists. In Sholapur as well out of a population of 3,500, 1,500 including men, women and children are now employed in local mills. (Ibid)

(i) Appointment of apprentices in certain manipulative industries.

(ii) Industrial schools to be attached to certain manipulative industries and

(iii) Technological education for non-manipulative industries.

Then, energetic young men should make it a point to go to foreign lands in order to learn the 'modus operandi' of their successful industries. What India now badly requires is not a galaxy of "Barristers-at-law" to stroll in the corridors of the High Court with black gowns on, but a contingent of industrial and technological experts who will make their country and country-men happy and prosperous by spreading industries far and wide.

Stores and machinery destined for India's industrial use should be transported at the lowest rate possible, for they will repay the railways many times over in subsequently increased business in other ways. "A department of commerce is also to be established to organise water-ways". This department should leave no stone unturned to bring once more into existence the lost national industry" of shipping and ship-building, (Industrial Commission's Report. Ch. 19). All this will go a long way in developing India's industries rapidly.

"In the particular circumstances of every age or nation there is scarcely anything really important to the general interest which it may not be desirable or even necessary that the Government should take upon itself, not because private individuals cannot perform it, but because they will not" (Mill). Thanks to the Government, it has now definitely given up its '*laissez faire*' policy of the past. But it has much more to do.

First, then, it must take up at once the "pioneering and demonstration" work. Pioneering means "the inception by the Government of an industry on a small commercial scale in order to ascertain and overcome the initial difficulties and discover if the industry can be worked at a profit." The Government is to light the candle only and private enterprisers will find out their way. Demonstration means that "a Government factory after it has passed

through the pioneering stage may prove a useful training ground, both for the men who are to control the industry and the workmen who are to be engaged in it". The Industrial Commission has recommended that certain classes of articles such as magnetos, ferrotungsten etc. are to be manufactured by the State at its earliest.

Secondly, the State must protect the nascent industries either by raising prohibitive tariff walls or by granting subsidies or by buying large shares or by any other method it pleases to choose. Only a solitary instance of the "Madras State Aid to Industries Act" will not do. Each province should have a similar act or acts of its own. The development of the banking system in India depends entirely on the State. In Germany and Japan it is the State and State alone that is responsible for the rapid growth of a highly developed banking system. Will the Government of India lag behind ?

This, in a nut-shell, is the outline of a scheme which one would like to adopt in making India an industrial country.

An evil concomitant with industrialism is the insanitary condition of slums, "bustees" and "chawls" in which the labourers have to live. But this can be removed if the Government exerts itself in the matter. It may appoint a sanitary staff whose function will be to make provisions for—

- (i) scavenging purposes
- (ii) disposal of excreta, and
- (iii) supply of drinking water

(Industrial Commission's Report. Ch. 16)

As regards the building of houses, the following recommendations of the Industrial Commission are to be strictly followed :—

(i) Land required bona fide for the housing of labour is to be acquired by the Government at the expense of the employer.

(ii) Type of building to be erected must be approved by the Government and sanitary authorities.

(iii) Or Government may buy the land and lease out to the employer.

Congestion in industrial towns is another evil. Free air is 'rara airs' in towns which abound in mills and factories. But the remedy is simple. The State should make it illegal to build and establish factories in a place where there are already many. A limit should be fixed by statute.

Industrialism must not be regarded as a panacea for all ills. But we are sure that with judicious caution to guide its course, it will go a long way towards clothing the naked and feeding the hungry.

MOYNA : A LEGEND OF LONG AGO.

SUSHIL KUMAR DEY—5th Year Economics.

Once upon a time there lived in a far away land whose name we have now forgotten, a young maiden of the name of Moyna. The earth was fairer then than it is now. Its men were nobler and purer, its women more graceful and lovely. And though the rains came to darken the cheerfulness of spring then, as they do now, and a little of evil intermingled with much that was good, sorrow and suffering there were none. For men and women had no thoughts but were beautiful, spoke no words but were sweet and full of sympathy, and had eyes only to see the good in everything : so that, Evil, like an unknown and unwanted guest, slunk away from the door-step of man's world and hid his face in shame.

In an age when all maidens were beautiful and good, Moyna excelled all others in grace and loveliness. The fairies flitted down into her garden from the region of the blue sky to hold communion with her and claimed her as their playmate. The nymphs dancing in the woods and the mermaids who sported upon the sea-waves, knew her and loved her and sent her their invitation

on days of festivity. She would join them on those rare occasions and be as sportive and joyous as they. For she felt an instinctive kinship with these fairy beings which she did not perceive when she was among the daughters of men. These loved her, the maidens of the neighbourhood, as indeed anybody could not but do, and they came and played with her of an evening. But intuition told them she was not of their kind. They did not understand her. When they laughed and sang about her and entwined their dark, plaited hair with strings of sweet-smelling jasmine, she would sit among them in silence, with a faint, incomprehensible smile on her lips, a dream in her vision.

At the first flush of dawn everyday, the sun sent his blessings and good wishes to young Moyna on a blushing sun-beam which would peep into her bed-room through the open window on the east and kiss her sleeping eyes into wakefulness. Moyna would start in her bed. And what could she do but smile between vexation and amusement at this playful interruption in her dreams? But she loved the sun and his cheerful presence and the golden warmth of his caress which had nourished her little body from year to year with life and supple grace. She slipped in to the garden among the roses which had blossomed over-night and kissed them good-morning. She nestled her loveliness against the slender and pure lily, graceful even like her, and washed her eyes with the dew collected in its heart. She sang out to the birds the music she had learnt from the fairies in her dream.

Passers-by along the high-road of the world, men and women in youth and age, stopped short suddenly beside her garden and gazed at her over the fence. Her fairy-like presence among the flowers, and the poetry and music of her movements and her voice infected these early morning callers with a sense of joy and well-being. And even after they had passed on, they carried the impression in their hearts like the perfume of the *bakul*, and all their thoughts and words and deeds were made radiant with the pure incandescence of a loving kindness whose source they could not trace.

Moyna loved her many callers. They were a strange and fascinating procession passing by her one by one, a wonderful variety of human beings of all ages and conditions. There were the aged with bent backs and hands clasped behind, all in a tremble; bright-eyed youth with firm, sure steps and ringing voice; newly wedmaidens pulling up the unaccustomed hood which continually slipped away from their pretty heads; little children who pressed their small, bright faces between the close railings of the gate and peered in curious wonderment at the beautiful garden and Moyna. Moyna gazed at these assorted specimens of human life from her fairy aloofness with a perplexed smile. By a strange process of thought she came to regard these people as not many, but really as one person, who came to her in so many different shapes and garbs to amuse her by his playfulness. She was moved by a feeling of sympathy and admiration for this mysterious being who could change his form so often and took such great pains to please her. She would run lightly across the soft carpet of green grass to the callers at her gate and would give them the *sephalis* she had collected in an end of her sari. "Moyna! are you well?" they would ask her; to which she would smile up in return, "O yes, thank you; are you?"

In this way she grew up from year to year into a beautiful maiden, and never knew sorrow for once, till at last, one day, a young shepherd-boy stopped by her garden in passing, and looked up at her with love in his eyes. Moyna was startled when she saw him. She forgot to hold the rose she had drawn to herself, and it swung back and scratched her tender skin with its thorns. She dared not look up at the shepherd-boy who stood at her gate. She trembled violently and could not take to him her accustomed present of *sephalis*. Her eyes filled with tears for no reasons she could think of. She felt lonely and frightened very suddenly.

She fled back into her room and sobbed upon her bed. A vague sense of dread oppressed her young heart and she wept and prayed for protection against the danger which she sensed was

threatening her. All throughout the day she did not come out into the garden. Through her open window she gazed at the clear blue of the sky and the heaviness in her heart would melt in tears that blurred her vision and dropped upon her cheeks like pearls. Light white clouds sailed swan-like upon the blue depths of the heavens, and she longed to set sail with them for the land of her fairy play-mates. She was tired, and, haunted by the idea that she was pursued by a great peril, she panted with imaginary exertion.

At dead of night the fairies who were her friends sailed into her room along the moon-beams that streamed into it and touched her with their tender caress. "Moyna, Moyna," they whispered, "you are ill, you are unhappy. Tell us what has happened, Moyna!" But Moyna did not know what to say. Her fairy play-mates begged and asked her again and again, but she could only weep and shake her head. They were distressed to see her suffer so much—the beautiful Moyna who was always so happy and free—but they could not think of anything to do. "Men have made her suffer," they said at last. "They always do. She is not fit to live with them." "Moyna," they asked her, and kissed her long, wet lashes tenderly, "will you come with us, Moyna?" She started when she heard them. "I am tired," she moaned. "I do not want to live here. Yes, I will come." Then the fairies were glad and clapped their little hands. They brought honey and dew for Moyna to drink on ever so small a petal of a rose. They dressed her in a fine silk sari of pale blue, like the azure of the sky which was to be her abode from now, and they perfumed her dusky curls with the fragrance of the sandal-wood. Then, as she knelt down upon the dew-wet grass in the moon-lit garden with folded hands, the fairies all circled about her and chanted a song of love and death; and the oldest among them stepped forward and touched her with her magic-wand and changed her into a beautiful fairy like themselves.

The young shepherd-boy came to the garden-gate early next morning for a glimpse of the fairy-maiden whose loveliness had

haunted him, but he did not see her again. And as he turned sorrowfully to go, the little fairy who was Moyna, whispered to him in her fairy-language—"Grieve not, for my fairy-love shall attend you in all your journey through the world and shall comfort and cheer you in all your sufferings." He could not see her and did not understand her, but he felt happy, and went to tend his sheep with a light and joyous heart.

And ever since that day in that long ago age, the beautiful Moyna, who could not forget her human friends, has come down to the earth with the light of the sun and the moon, and has led the faltering steps of erring mankind to the path of truth and beauty.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE—AN INFORMAL ESSAY

RANAJIT KUMAR RAY—*5th Year English.*

THE 2 o'clock bell had just gone and I was making a hasty collection of my books and papers, prior to making a dash downstairs, when I was roused from my preoccupation by the descent of a particularly hard knuckle on my head with a sounding rap. Turning round in voluble protest against this sudden and quite unprovoked assault, I found old K. grinning from ear to ear in his own particularly maddening way. "What do you—what do you mean—", I spluttered forth, unable to finish the sentence with any degree of coherence. The grin on K's face broadened. "Do you know", he asked quite irrelevantly, "that you have got a tutorial class tomorrow?" I did not, but was too roused to admit that. "What in the name of goodness has that got to do with your infernal way of behaving?" I crushingly retorted, but K. took no notice of my

displeasure. "Try to cut a good figure and make an impression on the new professor. By the bye, you have got to write something on English Language. Don't forget." And before I could elicit any further information, he shot out of the room with a velocity which rendered pursuit futile. That is K's idea of being funny.

I had forgotten everything about it five minutes afterwards, but the memory of it came back with a sickening feeling of depression just as I was tucking myself snugly up in my old quilt, preparatory to dropping off to the well-earned sleep of the righteous, after a hard evening of basketball.

I then performed an act of heroism which I consider to be the most creditable achievement in my long career of notable deeds—I steeled myself against the soft and alluring invitation of my warm quilt and sat down shivering in my pyjamas to concoct an essay on "English Literature." I had not the faintest idea how to begin. I did not know what aspect of the subject to deal with, what angle to view it from, and, most important of all, how much to write. I would not have been much better off even if these details had been settled beforehand as my knowledge of the subject is hardly enough to fill a nutshell of any decent size; but this uncertainty was even more killing than a sure prospect of inevitable disaster.

After half an hour's concentrated thinking which made my brain palpitate—I have a doubt about the physiological accuracy of my description, but I never was a stickler for accuracy in obscure matters which most people know hardly anything about, and I do love to picture that poor, overworked organ as panting after a hard spell of mental callisthenics, like a spent athlete at the finish—however, as I was saying, after a gruelling half-hour of thinking. I was forced to pull up for my second wind. While I halted,—and I was in no hurry to make the halt a short one,—I rapidly sketched out a plan of action to guide me in my second burst. I do not take any credit for this coolness in the midst of action—it comes so natural to you when you have been addicted to long distance running and paperchasing from the time you could toddle. 'This pace will kill you before you catch the hare, old boy', I told myself, unconsciously using the

imagery of my favourite pastime, "reserve your strength and go slow." So I took a deep breath, metaphorically speaking, and made my brain settle down into the long, loping stride (still continuing the metaphor) which "eats up the miles like fire" (Kipling, *Jungle Book*, Part I), and set myself to a steady rummaging within Bradley and Lounsbury for the raw materials of my finished product. Just then, without a preliminary flicker, the electric light overhead went out ('Lights out by 10 45,' Y.M.C.A. Hostel Regulation), leaving me in abysmal darkness. I rose from my chair in a dozed way and groped about for my bed, the lure of which had now come upon me with redoubled intensity. In my uncertain peregrinations, I overturned the chair, retreated and caught a crack on my head against the corner of the bookshelf, turned round and wound up by hitting my shin against the edge of my bedstead (iron). Stifling an unholy but quite excusable desire to curse, I wriggled under the quilt which had become quite chilled at my long neglect. But the faithful thing soon warmed up in my company, and ten minutes afterwards, I was in a better and happier world, engaged in a glorious steeplechase where the fences were all made of huge volumes of Bradley and Saintsbury.

MATTHEW ARNOLD IN "THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY."

D. G. N.—*Second Year Science Class.*

MATTHEW Arnold is best known as a critic and an essayist. In craftsmanship and attractiveness his prose has never been surpassed. But it is a pity we often overlook that many of his verses have a message to deliver to humanity and are destined to leave an undying fame in this world. A contemporary of Carlyle he was, and though Arnold adopted a course altogether different

from that of Carlyle in giving expression to his themes and beliefs, both the teachers had the same object in view. They attacked the same problems and sought the same ends. While Carlyle lectured sentimentally on the poverty of the labourers and the sufferings to which they were subject, Arnold actually conducted his literary life in the midst of various handicaps and difficulties.

Most of the poems of Arnold breathe an air of melancholy, doubt and resignation. Brought up as he was in the healthy and religious atmosphere of his home, he was confronted, while at College, with a world of doubt and disbelief. So arose the struggle of the head and the heart—his heart eager to accept the faith of the ancestors, his head demanding proof and reasoning. This struggle—this momentary eclipse of reverence by knowledge—is manifest in his "Scholar-Gipsy." He points out with the touch of the master the pernicious ways of living that were eating into the vitals of society. "Sick hurry" and "divided aims," he diagnoses, are the "strange disease of modern life," and he pines for the days—

"When wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames."

He regards even contact with the people of modern society as injurious and baneful. He advises his "Scholar-Gipsy" to "fly their paths, their feverish contact fly." He realises and rightly indeed that even their "greetings, their speech and smiles" should be wisely avoided by every man who wishes to lead a life different from that led by common and unthinking people. So says he—

"Strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest ;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.

Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made ;
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours."

The note of melancholy, grief and resignation is nowhere more prominent than in this poem. This characteristic melancholy of Arnold furnishes a striking contrast to the astonishing vigour and hope, the optimism and courage of his great contemporary, Robert Browning, who says in his "Saul"—

"How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy!"

Tired of the complex modes of life in society, Arnold looks forward for a change and seeks, like Wordsworth, repose in the bosom of mother Nature. With what a masterly sympathy and delicate touch does he narrate the tale of the poor Oxford scholar—

"Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer-morn forsook
His friends and went to learn the gipsy lore."

And although most men deemed that the scholar was good-for-nothing and, in a sense lost to the world, Arnold gives him a very high place—far above the so-called great men of his time. With indomitable ardour, dogged perseverance and marvellous zeal, the Oxford scholar lived an austere life in the company of the gipsies, always hoping "for the spark from heaven to fall". The gipsy scholar does not belong to a particular age or a particular country; he is a man of all times and all lands; he is a living voice and an intellect to which one always listens. As soon as the words that the gipsy scholar is no more escape his lips, the poet hastily corrects his mistake and says—

"No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!"

* * *

Thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst—what we, alas! have not."

Side by side with his morbid melancholy and depression, we find in this poem very beautiful references to Oxford—"the sweet city with dreaming spires"—and the surrounding country

where he spent the best part of his life—both as a scholar and as a professor.

"No Oxford poems have caught or handed on, so much of the *genius loci*—the colleges, the studies, sports, festivities, the river, the flowers and peasant-folk and place-names of the surrounding country".

"Poetry", in the opinion of Arnold, "is nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth." He adheres to this principle in his "Scholar-Gipsy". Without any reserve, the poet speaks of the pollutions in society and his heart rends in grief when he says—

"And we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd."

In short, this magnificent poem of Matthew Arnold—unique in its excellence as a pastoral poem and worthy of being named side by side with the poet's "Thyrsis"—evinces the morbid and fretful discontent of a mind "conscious of the need of some message to humanity and of its inability to give one". The poet diagnoses the diseases of society, but finds no cure for them excepting "anodynes".

MILITARY ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA.

BENODE RANJAN BISWAS—*Sixth Year Economics.*

Preliminary.

IN a previous article contributed to this magazine, I dealt to some extent with the problem of constitutional development in India with special reference to the Indian States. But India's march towards her political goal will be wholly inconsistent, unless there is a simultaneous development in the military system. The rights of defence from internal disorder as well as external aggression and the rights to foreign relations etc. are fundamental in all ideas of real self-government. A "self-governing" India with a military policy dictated from outside, with an army wholly or preponderantly manned and officered by people of a foreign soil, will be a very serious anomaly—a more anomalous position it is hardly possible to conceive. The momentous declaration of 1917, promising full "Dominion status" for India has completely changed the whole outlook of British policy in India. It is proposed here to take note of this important development in the civil administration of India and the changed atmosphere to which the military administration must tend to adapt itself, unless it becomes a hopeless and dangerous anachronism.

A historical retrospect.

A knowledge of the historical background is necessary to understand the present position and this can best be given in the briefest possible outline in Sir K. G. Gupta's words—

"From the battle of Plassey in 1757, when the East India Company acquired for England her first footing in India, till 1858 when the Crown assumed the direct government of India, the principle underlying all measures was the maintenance of British domination and supremacy. In accordance with that

principle, all power, authority and control, whether civil or military, was concentrated in the hands of the British bureaucracy and Indians were relegated to very subordinate positions.

“As a legacy of the unhappy events of 1857, a feeling of distrust now further supervened and permeated the whole policy of army administration. Indians had always been excluded from the King’s Commission. A new restriction establishing a ratio of two Indians to one European was introduced into the rank and file.

“Ever since the assumption of the Government by the Crown, there has been a steadily widening difference in policy between the civil administration and the army organisation. During the last half-century, measures have been taken to extend the Indian element in the higher branches of the civil administration and in later years to introduce the principle of representation in the Legislative Councils which culminated in the statute of last year (1919). On the military side, however, the tendency has been to make the grip closer and tighter, so as not only to keep the Indians out of all superior positions, but also to exclude them from artillery and various other services which form essential branches of the army organisation.” *

Present position and the need for Indianisation.

A solemn declaration has been made in 1917 and measures have been introduced to give effect to this so far as the civil administration is concerned. It is now quite logical to argue that studious debarring of Indians from a purely military career must no longer be observed, if that declaration is not to remain a dead letter or a pious wish. “If we are to achieve this goal of national unity and full responsible Government, it is necessary that the British government should completely change their angle of vision in regard to military administration in India and that they should be prepared to share the control of the army with the people of

* Sir K. G. Gupta’s Minute to the Esher Committee.

the country.”† Events following this statement in 1921, go to show that the British policy in India as regards military matters is undergoing a gradual change of outlook though at an intolerably slow pace.

The Montford Report on Constitutional Reforms contains a reference to the problem of Indianisation of the higher ranks of the Indian army.

“There remains one item, the importance of which in the eyes of India outweighs all others. British Commissions have for the first time been granted to Indian officers The services of the Indian army in the war and the great increase in its size make it necessary that a considerable number of commissions should now be given.”

Esher Committee.

The Esher Committee was appointed to suggest methods of reorganisation of the Indian army after the Great War with special reference to the new situation created by the inauguration of the Reforms; but their “principal aim has been to promote the efficiency and contentment of the army in India and to secure that the Government of India will have at its disposal a well-trained and loyal army, fit to take its place in the defence of the Empire”; the Committee did not suggest any substantial measure of Indianisation and their recommendations necessitated a tremendous increase in military expenditure. The Report came up for discussion in the Legislative Assembly and evoked much criticism. Resolutions were passed that “the King-Emperor’s Indian subjects should be freely admitted to all arms of His Majesty’s military, naval and air forces in India and the ancillary services and the auxiliary forces, that every encouragement should be given to Indians—including the educated middle classes... ..”; that not less than 25 P. C. of the King’s commissions granted every year should be given to His Majesty’s Indian subjects to start with; and lastly that a Military College in India be established. ¹

† Ibid.

1. Legislative Assembly Debates, 1921. Vol. I. No. 15.

“Eight Units Scheme”

In connection with a resolution in the Assembly recommending the Government to take immediate steps to effect Indianisation of the army, the late Lord Rawlinson, the then Commander-in-Chief in India, enunciated a definite departure, at least in principle, from the professed policies of the past. The practicability of successful Indianisation was to be tested by what is known as the “Eight Units Scheme.” Let Lord Rawlinson himself describe the scheme. “.....I am able to announce to the House the following decision. The Government consider that a start should be made at once so as to give Indians a fair opportunity of proving that units officered by Indians will be efficient in every way. Accordingly it has been decided that eight units of cavalry or infantry be selected to be officered by Indians. This scheme will be put into force immediately. The eight units to be wholly Indianised will be mainly infantry units but there will be a proportion of cavalry..... Indian officers holding commissions in the Indian army will be gradually transferred to Indianising units so as to fill up the appointments for which they are qualified by their rank and their length of service and the process of Indianising these units will then continue uninterruptedly as the officers gain seniority and fitness in other respects which will qualify them for the senior posts.....” This is the much-talked-of “Eight Units Scheme”, adversely criticised in India as highly unsatisfactory and disappointing even for a first step, and in England as debarring British youths from positions of trust and responsibility in the Indian army and requiring their replacement whenever Indianisation demands it. * It has become highly unpopular even with the Indian army officers as those serving in these wholly Indianised units feel themselves stigmatised as it were with a mark of inferiority. The solution does not lie in segregating a few units wholly Indian but by effecting Indianisation in the Army as a

* The substance of a lecture given at the R. M. C. Sandhurst and reproduced in the Skeen Report from the R. M. C Magazine, Easter, 1925.)

whole. As the Skeen Committee rightly puts it: "The scheme is in conflict with the principle of co-operation between the British and the Indian which is applied in every other sphere of the Indian administration for the purpose of securing harmonious work and to increase the efficiency of the Indian personnel. Both for psychological and practical reasons the continuance of the scheme can only conduce to failure. With Indianisation proceeding in the Army in any measure, the only means of ensuring successful Indianisation and, concomitantly, the maximum degree attainable of military efficiency, is to allow Indian officers to serve shoulder to shoulder with the British officers each learning from the other, in every unit of the Indian Army."

The argument is quite sound in all respects and it is in the fitness of things that the Committee has seen its way to reject this scheme. Even if the scheme is adopted definitely, it would take a lot of years to effect Indianisation in these eight units only—not to speak of the whole Indian army. Besides, the scheme involves Indianisation in six infantry units and two cavalry units. What about the other and more important units? Indians are still not eligible to hold the King's Commission in artillery units, in the Military Engineer Services or in the Royal Air Force and in the newly introduced Royal Indian Navy. And even the present scheme for the partial Indianisation of the army in India is avowedly experimental and provisional in character. It cannot be said that Indians of proper calibre are not available; for "The Royal Military College at Dehra-Dun which has been in existence for only 4½ years has shown that even average boys, given proper facilities, can pass with credit not only into Sandhurst, but out of it." Indian public opinion cannot be satisfied with the present position, for it finds a wide discrepancy between profession and practice so far as the military policy is concerned.

Skeen Committee.

This dissatisfaction accounted for a resolution passed in the Legislative Assembly on February 19, 1925 urging the Govern-

ment of India to appoint a committee including the Indian members of the Legislature to investigate and report—(a) what steps should be taken to establish a military college in India to train Indian officers for the commissioned ranks of the Indian army; (b) whether when a military college is established in India, it should supersede or be supplemented by Sandhurst and Woolwich so far as the training of Indian officers is concerned; and (c) to advise at what rate the Indianisation of the army shall be accelerated for the purpose of attracting educated Indians to a military career. *

These recommendations with slight modifications formed the terms of reference of the Indian Sandhurst Committee. As regards Indianisation, the Committee's recommendations if given effect to, will make half the total cadre of officers in the Indian army Indian by 1952. The Committee do not envisage a future when the British element will be totally dispensed with. The Committee further recommends that Indians should be made eligible to be employed as King's Commissioned officers in the Artillery, Engineer, Signal, Tank and Air arms of the army in India. For this purpose they should be admitted to the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell. As soon as certain minor recommendations are fulfilled, the Committee recommends the establishment of a Military College in India in 1933, with an establishment at the start of 100 cadets doing a three years' course, on the model of "Sandhurst"—the establishment to be increased progressively.

These are in brief the main recommendations of the Committee. But India cannot wait till 1952 for Indianisation of only half the total cadre of officers in the Indian army. But as a beginning this is quite satisfactory and what Indian public opinion requires the Government to recognise is the principle underlying the main recommendations of the Committee. The Government recognised the principle of Indianisation so far back as

* Legislative Assembly Debates 1925
Vol V No. 19. Pp. 1273.

1917, concerning at least the civil government. Why should they falter on the military side, which follows the former as a logical corollary? This was the spirit underlying the recent debate in the Legislative Assembly on the motion for adoption of the Skeen Report tabled by Dr. Moonje (Aug. 25, 1927). The representatives of the people wanted the Government to accept the principle. But the Commander-in-Chief urging for postponement of the debate pending the decision of the Home Government, remarked that the Indian army forms a link in the chain of Imperial defence and nothing can be settled definitely unless the whole Imperial position is reviewed. He laid special stress on the essential maintenance of the present standard of efficiency and the continued supply of a due proportion of British recruitment in Indian army. "The problem (of Indianisation) is two-sided. On the one hand, is the question of Indianisation, of finding adequate opportunity for Indians to serve as combatant officers in the Army of India, and of training them in the qualities of leadership and command. On the other hand is the question of efficiency; and closely bound up with it, the maintenance of British recruitment." In the matter of efficiency again, there is another point to be considered. "The Indian army forms a link in the chain of our Imperial defence, and naturally therefore, no alterations in its organisation which might in any way affect its efficiency can be taken without the fullest consideration of His Majesty's Government, which is ultimately responsible for Imperial security." Again "we are all here at one on the twin purposes of assisting Indians to take an increasing place in the field for the defence of India and at the same time in making sure that the methods chosen to do this, do not directly or indirectly weaken the instrument of self-defence on which India must rely." *

We want to impress upon our critics that what the Indians want is free scope and that is why they urge the acceptance at

* Vide Statesman, Town edition, Aug. 27, 1927

least in principle of the main recommendations of the Skeen Committee. We do not wish here to enter into the controversy about the efficiency of the Indian army officers. The Skeen Committee conclusively proves this point in favour of the Indians. Our only hope is that when the decision of the British Government in India is made, it will be made after fully realising the grave constitutional significance, their formulation of policy will involve. What is needed in India to-day is broad-minded statesmanship, transcending considerations of petty national advantages and disadvantages and looking far ahead to the interest of humanity at large.

Inheritors of the Great Moghul.

The British Government is the inheritor of the Great Moghul in India. The spirit of this inheritance underlies all matters relating to the military administration in India. The British spirit is trying to manifest itself in the civil administration - as is visible in the various attempts at the introduction of responsible government in India. The "Great Moghul" spirit has become a hopeless anachronism and what is wanted is the extension of "British spirit" in the military administration as well.

QUO VADIS ?

PANCHANAN CHAKRABARTY—*Sixth Year Economics.*

WE have been born into a world distracted by problems, so many and so complex. The world has always had problems to solve, but the peculiarity about the present problems is that they multiply and accumulate from day to day, and refuse to be

solved. One hitherto untried angle of approaching them, namely to view them as problems which cannot be solved separately by each nation or individual but by the world as a whole, is being more and more advocated by thinkers of every clime. This is to take a standpoint radically different from that of our forefathers. They looked upon the world as divided into compartments, indifferent or hostile to each other, each with its own problems to be solved by itself alone. Their ideas were, of course, conditioned by their environments, and so they erred unconsciously, perhaps inevitably; but, unfortunately for us, they did err and the sins of the fathers are being visited upon the children, for we have inherited those ideas. We shall try to show how this parochialism of traditions is responsible for many of our problems, and hence for retarding development in many fields of thought and activity.

Let us take religion first, and look at our own country. Our two great religions evolved in different ages, in different parts of the earth and under different conditions, with the result that each gathered to itself certain appurtenances which are a 'sine qua non' to it but an anathema to the other. And when to-day they have come together closer than ever before in the field where ideals materialise, they have collided disastrously for both. Last year two events, one in the field of industry, another in that of religion, synchronised in England—the General Strike and the controversy about the Church of England being Christian. The latter may seem to be very insignificant beside the uproarious disorganisation and arrest of industry, but it points to a great problem. The controversy shows that even modern England, the pioneer of the steel-age and of liberalism, has not outgrown its swaddling clothes in religion, and thinks that the hunger of the heart of those who have conquered the air can be appeased by age-old remedies that could satisfy people whose boldest dreams of flight at most resembled Charlie Chaplin's in "The Kid."

The truth in every religion, of course, stands to-day, as ever, unchallenged; for, in truth there is no variation, but we have to

orient the religious traditions simply because conditions have changed. Even a century ago, men could cry out without intellectual insincerity that it was hopeless to attempt at an explanation of the universe. Archbishop Ussher could definitely assert that the world was created in the year 4004 B. C. Nobody would accuse Shakespeare of a weak imagination, but the maximum speed of which he could conceive was that of Puck who boasted that he could circle the globe in forty minutes. Everybody was satisfied with five primordial elements. The heavens were thought to be void, except, perhaps, for some "privacy of glorious light" where God perched in His glory to have a good look at the world. Under these conditions, the mass of men very naturally shrank from Nature in awe and found solace in idyllic dreams of "mysterious dispensations."

But slowly the foundations of men's beliefs were being undermined by increasing knowledge. Newton demonstrated that a quite intelligible and measurable principle binds every atom of the Universe, singly and collectively. Copernicus and Kepler shattered the old cosmology and Galileo showed how to look beyond the range of the eye. Leeuwenhoek discovered with the microscope the invisible world of bacteria. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Laplace was expounding the nebular theory and Lavoisier was laying the foundations of modern chemistry. Men's ideas were thus being liberated in all directions. The Nineteenth Century accelerated the pace of liberation. As yet, however, no systematic explanation of the origin of living beings had been offered, and the old religions could still command the devotion of men. With the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species", however, an idea that had been gathering force since the days of Lamarck shot up as a challenge to the scriptural versions of creation. It had to fight stubbornly, both because of its own defects and of the dominant religious traditions, but, in the main, it has come to be widely accepted to-day. Sir Arthur Keith, as President of the British Association for 1927, declared only the other day that Darwinism stands more firmly to-day than ever.

For many of those who accept it, the breach with the past is complete. They have transferred their allegiance from the God who ruled the thoughts of past generations to the entirely unconscious tendency of Evolution. Most of them are perhaps in the position of William Clissold whom Wells has recently introduced to us and say with him—"Plot to hold together this vast display in one comprehensive system I cannot see. My mind seeks it and needs it; the spectacle remains incoherent in spite of all my seeking." To them as to Clissold, Schopenhauer's dictum—'Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung': "Life is a show with a drive in it" is the ultimate metaphysical truth. But whether the drive is conscious or not, they do not know—and that is what matters. Well might the detractors of Evolution cry out, as they did, that Darwin has banished mind from the universe, for, its supporters, confronted with Einstein's quadri-dimensional space-time in which organic and inorganic evolution are proceeding side by side, and electrons that work all sorts of havoc, have not the intellectual vigour even to exclaim, like the ancient seer, "কৈশ্ব দেবায় হবিষা বিধেম"—"To which God shall we bow", simply because they can detect no Will in it all.

Bergson, Shaw and Rolland, on the other hand, have tried to synthesise science and religion in the doctrine of Creative Evolution, and have found many followers. But most people do not accept the theory of evolution or try to harmonise the revelations of Science with the scriptural theory of instantaneous creation. Philip Gosse's solution presumably occurs to few and satisfies even less. The result is that we offer half-hearted service to our God, and God refuses it. In no previous age was the saying that if God did not exist, it would be necessary to create Him so true as to-day, and though God may not have created Man in his own image, Man shall have to create for himself, not indeed an anthropomorphic God, but a God at least great enough to inform our universe, as we understand it to-day, with a purpose, a law and a development from eternity to eternity.

Some of those who believe that without a religious renaissance,

civilisation would end in catastrophe, doubt whether such a renaissance can be brought about by organised humanity and talk of the coming Messiah. But the heralds of the World-Teacher envisage him as shattering materialism by which they refer to the powers revealed by Science,—though how God is to deny His laws through His Prophet, we cannot understand. If the Messiah comes, He will, if ancient Prophets are guides in this matter, sublimate human achievements and build God's temple with the bricks Science is gathering. Unless the mass of humanity are permeated by a sense of God, instead of being ruled by traditions, internationalism has no chance of making headway, for it rests on the attitude of the mass and religion is the most potent of the forces that mould the attitude of men to their surroundings.

Let us turn now to the arena of politics. A casual glance at the world shows the incompatibility of the ideal for which the League of Nations stands with the pre-war doctrine of State-sovereignty, the Hegelian view of the non-moral personality of the State, and the Wilsonian gospel of the self-determination of nations. The doctrine of Nationality is to-day an anachronism : to William Clissold patriotism seemed like the barking of village dogs. Yet these are the theories which dominate the world, and Viscount Cecil has realised it acutely enough at last to have resigned from the British Cabinet. That modernisation of Aristotle's view that "Hellenes are superior to the barbarians" which lurks behind the ugly Colour Bar Bill and fear of Asiatics and Africans, black, brown or yellow, is equally an anachronism and a drag. So also the ideal of Imperialism and modern versions of the Pax Romana. As Professor Laski has put it. "The implication, in a word, of modern conditions is world-government. The process, naturally enough, is immensely more complicated than the government of a single state. The spiritual tradition of co-operation has still to be created ; the difficulty of language has to be overcome ; the application of decisions has to be agreed upon in terms of a technique that is still largely unexplored. The only source of comfort we possess is the increasing recognition

that modern warfare is literally a form of suicide, and that, as a consequence, the choice before us is between co-operation and disaster." Humanity cannot afford to fritter away its limited resources and energies in a senseless, fear-begotten piling up of armaments and periodical mutual slaughter that are its inglorious heritages.

In economic affairs, too, all the world over, the old traditions are ruling. In spite of the warning of experts like Cassel and Kitchin that the world's gold production is on the decline, and Keynes's denunciation of the gold standard as a "barbarous relic" that has outlived its use, we are hugging a gold standard with a gold currency in the illusory hope of making our money "fool-proof and knave-proof." Three quarters of a century ago, Bastiat exposed "the laughable inconsistency of tunnelling the mountains which divide countries, with a view to facilitating exchange, while at the same time setting up a customs barrier at each end." Yet, to-day, even industrially advanced countries are entrenching themselves more and more behind Protection under all sorts of devices, like the Most Favoured Nations' clauses in Commercial treaties and Imperial Preference, under the spell of the now useless ideas of National-Economy as opposed to World-Economy. Production and Consumption are not correlated because the nineteenth-century doctrine of *laissez faire*, curbed as it is, still allows industrialists to have their own way in production which is the way to maximum profits, and thus to swell the ranks of the unemployed. If our economic order is not to succumb, it must be based on universal free-trade; on a common standard of value for the whole world to regulate that trade and avoid recurrences of the post war break down of the exchanges; on a world organisation of communications—land-ways, waterways and airways—which will prevent the present enormous waste due to competition and national boundaries; on a world ownership of minerals so that, recognising our obligations to posterity, we may be deterred from using them up through sheer rapacity in a few generations; and, last but by no means the least, on a system of

property which will make it the reward of service, not of birth alone and set reasonable limits to its appropriation as well as expropriation.

Lastly, our social life needs similar liberation from the bondage to tradition. Social needs, happily, have won more recognition. The shackles, however, wear away but slowly. On the other hand, hectic modernism, in its revolt from traditions, threatens to banish decency and morals from social life ; and so, the remedy appears to be worse than the disease. But that is a transient phase. The new society of the future must allow women equal rights in every sphere with men, and will educate every member of the world to be fit for these rights. Minimum standards of health, no less than of education, will have to be kept up, and science will have to be harnessed in performing the dirty and unhealthy work of the community in order that no body shall be debased by the work that he does.

These needs are not exhaustive nor are they remote. Our social life, economics, politics and religion are all in the melting pot, and we are not evidently making much progress in this process of being boiled. Even before the War, which has vastly increased the urgency of these needs, Max Nordau found Europe and America degenerating. Oswald Spengler detects the same process to-day. The following remarks from his monumental work are very instructive in this connection. "Let it be realised," writes Spengler, "that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, hitherto looked on as the highest point of an ascending straight line of world-history, are in reality, a stage of life which may be observed in every culture that has ripened to its limit,.....and that "The future of the West is not a limitless tending upwards and onwards for all time towards our present ideals, but a single phenomenon of history, strictly limited and defined as to form and duration, which covers a few centuries and can be viewed and, in essentials, calculated from available precedents."

Spengler, evidently, thinks that mankind is, as before, too weak for its problems, but then he deduces it from what he calls his Copernican view of history as opposed to the Ptolemaic or

prevalent view of it. We may reply, none-the-less, that none of the decayed civilisations had that consciousness of their problems that some at least have to-day. A world-consciousness is only now dawning fitfully upon us. It has, happily, reached the masses too. That is evident from the world-wide demonstrations in protest of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti a few weeks ago in America, on the belief—justified or not it is for the future historians to say—that there has been a miscarriage of justice which, wherever it occurs, affects everybody. We are to see that this nascent world-consciousness is not stifled in its cradle by prejudice and ignorance, by spectres and traditions, for it is the only hope of this world in travail. We are at the parting of ways where the Life-force confronts the world with the grim question—“Quo Vadis ? Whither dost thou tend, to collapse or to resurrection ?” What shall we say to her ? Assuredly this—that we are determined to salvage our civilisation though clouds heap upon clouds and it darkness, for, ours is the glory,

“To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite,
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night ;
 To defy Power, which seems omnipotent,
 To love and bear ; to hope till Hope creates
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates :
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent ;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free,
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.”

REVOLT AGAINST DEMOCRACY—A PASSING PHASE *

ASOKE SEN—*Fourth Year Arts*

The four hundredth anniversary of the death of Machiavelli, writes Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson in the "Nation and the Athenaeum" finds him still playing his part in a world that pretends to repudiate his authority. In Italy, indeed, his fatherland, he is openly championed. But in many other countries his counsels, if not his name, are honoured. The "Prince" rules, disguisedly and otherwise, not only in Italy, but in Spain, in Hungary, in Bulgaria, in Turkey, in Persia and to some extent in Russia; and among the great States only the Commonwealths of the British Empire, France and the United States still care to pursue the difficult experiment of democracy. This so far, has been the result of the War to make the world safe for democracy. There is no denying the fact that a violent reaction was set up against democracy during and immediately after the War, vestiges of which still linger to this day. The Great War was followed by conservative reactions as well as by radical revolutions. The conservative tendency, typified by the Fascisti movement in Italy, the military revolution in Spain and the royalist movements in Central Europe and even in France, were all characterised by a distrust of politicians and of the red tape of government, and by a fear of communistic success. Dictatorship has had a strong revival in Europe. Democracy, it seems, was suspended, was held in abeyance during the War in all the belligerent countries. It was the Great Five in England, the all powerful Poincare in France, the dictator Wilson in America and the autocrat Mussolini in Italy that conducted the affairs of the state. The paraphernalia of a popular government was given the go-by and the so-called sovereign people was buried seven fathom deep. The critics of democracy take the above fact for a sufficient indication of the final exit of democracy from the arena of

* Read before a meeting of the Political Philosophy Seminar.

world politics. But far from it. Democracy has a very great future and it is to be the coming order of the world. Immediately after the War, Germany, the very home of militarism and autocracy before and during the War, has introduced the extreme type of democracy with referendum and initiative. Russia, groaning under the age-long tyranny of the Tsarist reign has successfully revolted against that terroristic regime to establish a popular form of government. It is no part of our business to determine whether Russia has been successful or not in her attempt;—we are immediately concerned with the spirit behind the movement and the spirit-is essentially a democratic one.

Before proceeding further, let us try to define “democracy” and understand its true meaning. A great deal of confusion has lately arisen in the discussion of the subject due to a misconception of the meaning of this word. “The word democracy is unfortunate in its associations.” “Democracy, as it is discussed from Plato to the present, appears in retrospect as the Hydra of political science—a many-headed concept. There is consequently no end of confusion in the literature. In part this confusion arises from the fact that as yet no systematic treatment of the philosophy of democracy has been written. The writings of De Tocqueville and Bryce are admirable as descriptions of the actual workings of democratic governments, but they leave almost untouched such important phases of the subject as democracy as a social force, an ethical concept, or a political ideal.” According to Professor Giddings, democracy may be either a form of the government, a form of the state, a form of society, or a combination of all three. With Miss Follett, democracy is a spiritual concept, while with the socialists, it is an economic concept. Miss Follett, under the head. “The True Democracy” says—‘Democracy is the rule of an interacting, interpermeating whole. Democracy is faith in humanity, not faith in “poor” people or “ignorant” people, but faith in every living soul.....The enthusiasts of democracy are those who have caught sight of a great spiritual unity which is supported by the most vital trend in philosophical thought and by the latest biologists and social psychologists,

Leaving aside the spiritual concept, let us consider the most accepted definition of democracy. Most of the exponents of democracy have regarded it as a social concept. Thus, Harry Elmer Barnes, in his "An Outline of the History of Democracy" defines democracy as "a form of social organisation in which the participation of each individual in the various phases of group-activity is free from such artificial restrictions as are not indispensable to the most efficient functionings of the group, and in which group policy is ultimately determined by the will of the whole people." Delisle Burns rejects scornfully the idea that democracy means the rule of the undistinguished and ignorant 'demos' or that it has any reference to quantity. According to him, a democracy is known by reference to the quality or characteristic in the members of the group which most dominates the organisation and policy of that group; a democracy exists only when the dominating characteristic is human, in distinguishing men from beasts, and civilised in contrast with the manners of the savage. Such characteristics are *reasoning* and *moral responsibility* of the individual for his actions. Where these dominate society, there will be democracy and even now there is a tendency towards such a society. The democratic movement is spreading. It can be seen that there is, in theory at least, a trend towards this form of social organisation. I hope that nobody in this twentieth century, save and except a handful of so-called perverted aristocrats, will oppose or find fault with democracy as a social concept. Democracy as a social concept is the ideal of those who desire a society of interdependent groups so organised that every man shall have an equal opportunity to develop what is finest in him. In such a society reason governs the contact of men and each man feels responsibility for his action and thus contributes some thought and feeling to the common life. Democracy as an ideal (i.e. as a social concept) is, therefore, a society not of similar persons but of equals in the sense that each is an integral and irreplaceable part of the whole. The democratic ideal does not involve

a refusal to give practical recognition to distinctions of intellect and character. Only distinctions of physical force, wealth, or birth are regarded by the democrat as insignificant.

But it will not do for us to confine our attention to the social aspect of democracy; we should also pay heed to the political side of the question. Democracy is also a political concept in as much as the political organisation reflects the social order. A democratic society is not possible without a democratic form of Government. It is this political aspect of democracy that has suffered the severest criticism. Let us examine the nature and form of a democratic government. It is that form of government, in the constitution and administration of which the great mass of the adult population have a direct or an indirect share. The democratic governments of to-day are founded on the theory that any honest and self-supporting male citizen is on the average, as well qualified as another for participating in the business of government. The democratic form of government postulates the sovereignty of the people: it accepts "general will" as the source of all powers. Representative institutions and the rule of the majority are the characteristics of this form of government. Really speaking, democratic or popular government is nothing but the government by public opinion. Now, what is public opinion? Public opinion to be worthy of the name, to be a proper motive force in a democracy must be really public as well as an opinion. In order that it may be public, a majority is not enough and unanimity is not required, but the opinion must be such that while the minority may not share, they feel bound by conviction, not by fear, to accept it and if democracy is complete the submission must be given ungrudgingly. The difficulty arises in rightly ascertaining public opinion; but it may easily be got rid of by selecting a suitable method of representation. Some critics find fault with democracy on the ground that competent persons do not like to seek election; but they will do well to bear in mind that the defect lie not with democracy itself but with the method of representation. The method of representation may

be modified on a group basis or in any other suitable manner, so as to get the services of the best men in the country.

It must not be overlooked that, however democratic the basis of government may be, the actual business of governing must be restricted to a comparatively small number of persons—that is, it must be aristocratic. Thus, democracy reaps the advantages of aristocracy but at the same time checks its evils; the representatives cannot pursue their selfish ends disregarding public opinion with impunity. There is the electorate always keeping watch over them; there is no chance of their becoming ambitious and autocratic.

The main arguments put forward by the critics of democracy are two in number—

- (1) that democracy is inherently fragile;
- (2) that democracy is inevitably the rule of the incompetent and untrained.

In reply to the first point we can do nothing better than quote Bryce, who says, "The excellence of popular government lies not so much in its wisdom—for it is as apt to err as other kinds of government—as in its *strength*.No body can be blamed for obeying it. There is no appeal from its decisions. Once the principle that the will of the majority honestly ascertained must prevail, has soaked into the mind and formed the habits of a nation, that nation acquires not only stability, but immense effective force. It has no need to fear discussion and agitation"

As regards the second point, democracy is not necessarily a rule of the incompetent and the untrained. There are the expert permanent officials who carry on the actual operations of the government: the representatives merely supervise. The act of supervision does not require any expert knowledge, rather it is best carried on by a layman having a strong common sense. Thus a Chancellor of the Exchequer may know nothing of accountancy and book-keeping and yet perform his act of supervision wonderfully well. Some of the critics of democracy characterise it as mob-rule; they look upon public opinion with

some distrust or dislike. According to them, the average man is incapable of exercising free-will and forming an opinion of himself ; he is simply carried away by demagogues or by his party leaders. But this argument loses much of its force in the present century when general education has made such wonderful progress. Moreover, an average man no longer behaves as a member of the crowd, but he behaves as a member of the group ; who, unlike a member of the crowd, has an opinion and judgment of his own. Again, the press, the platform and the pulpit are the three great agencies for public education and under their influence an average man will become more and more rational and critical. According to Lord Haldane, "An individual is always potentially more than he knows himself to be. He is no passive element in an assemblage. He can create, and this he does best when joining with others to form a real whole of opinion and action, a living group, in which he can develop his personality."

Some critics hold democracy responsible for bringing about a dead level of uniformity. But the truth seems to lie the other way. Democracy affords the best opportunity for the development of individual capacity in as much as it makes no difference between man and man.

Emile Faguet says, "Rudeness is democratic". But, in fact democracy promotes the dignity of man and consequently respect for man. Rudeness flies before the breath of democracy.

Some argue that in democracy, minorities may not assert themselves. But the temper and character of a people may supply valuable safe-guards. The energy of each individual in the minority makes it in the long run a match for a majority, huger but less instinct with vitality. In a free country, ten men who care are a match for a hundred who do not.

Thus we see that relatively speaking, democracy is the best form of government, and besides, democracy has some intrinsic virtues worth more than its detractors would concede.

The chief merits of popular government consist in its beneficial effects, first, on the character of the public service itself ; and secondly,

upon the citizens who share in its control and administration. It is the only form which responds readily to the needs and desires of the people for whom it is instituted—is, in short, the only form in which responsibility to the governed can be effectively enforced. It is largely free from the temptation to govern in its own interest or that of a class.

According to Mill, the ideally best form of government is that in which the supreme controlling power is in the last resort vested in the entire aggregate of the community. So far as the welfare of the community is concerned, the superiority of popular government, Mill goes on to say, rests upon two principles viz. (1) that the rights and interests of the individual can only be safe-guarded when he is able to “stand up” for them himself; (2) that the general prosperity attains a higher degree and is more widely diffused in proportion to the amount and variety of the personal energies enlisted in promoting it.

But the greatest glory of democratic government does not flow so much from its own inherent excellence as a political contrivance, as from its influence in elevating the masses of the people, developing their faculties, stimulating interest among them in public affairs, and strengthening their patriotism by allowing them a share in its administration. It recognises no privileged classes, but puts all on a footing of political equality. Popular governments, resting as they do on the consent of the governed and upon the principle of equality, are more immune from revolutionary disturbances. Mr. A. Ponsonby, M.P. in his book on ‘Diplomacy and Democracy’ puts forward the following arguments in favour of democracy.

(1) The influence of democracy would be pacific, because people have come to realise more and more that their highest interest is peace; they are not inspired by any racial animosity, their combative instincts are normally in abeyance, and they are more than ever inclined to concentrate their efforts and their energies against social evils and the forces of reaction.

(2) Democracy is not mob-rule. The blatant outbursts of

bellicose passion in the rabble is not an expression of national sentiment.

(3) Democracy is anti militarist : because the people as a whole do not believe any advantage, moral or material can be gained by war. Unfortunately, they have neglected to exercise any supervision over the authority which controls the issue of war and peace. A state will become militarist in proportion to the degree in which it can succeed in eliminating the democratic element ; e.g. pre-war Germany.

(4) The people are not ignorant, but in foreign affairs they are either uninformed or misinformed. Their supposed ignorance was one of the favourite arguments used against their having any voice in the control of domestic affairs.

(5) A well-informed democracy would not be misled by an unscrupulous press or any scaremonger.

(6) The moral sense of a nation resides in the people, not in the government.

(7) A growing spirit of internationalism has begun to manifest itself among the people, more especially among the working classes, but has not reached the rulers.

(8) It is diplomacy that is responsible for war ; and diplomacy is a relic of autocratic and aristocratic rule. So, anything aristocratic is fraught with evil.

After such a long discourse, I hope, I have been fairly successful in establishing the case for democracy—in convincing you of the excellence of democracy both as an ideal and as a practicable form of government. Democracy is the order of the day ; the democratic spirit is spreading far and wide. Italy is the only classical instance, which having already a taste of popular government, has willingly placed herself under a dictatorial form of government. But even there Mussolini has been compelled to make great concessions to the proletariat. Moreover, Fascism, in Italy is, we hope, merely a passing phase and not a permanent order. It has got its counterpart in the condition of France in 1852 when Napoleon III was ruling over France with a strong hand. Under the 1852 constitution the

French Parliament was reduced to impotence. Fascism has done the same with the Italian Parliament. The Fascist law extending the powers of the prefect might have been copied from the "*decret-loi*" of March 25, 1852, which made the French prefect omnipotent. The revision of the Italian penal code by the Fascist ministry is on the same lines as the reform of the French code in 1853. The object in either case was the adoption of prompt and more drastic repressive measures. Similar conditions, parliamentary paralysis, sterile debates, recurring crises and threats of an upheaval, led in each case to the *coup d'etat*. There is nothing new in Mussolini. Fascism is only an old remedy for an old ill.

Fascism's only value for the outside world is as a warning to constitutional governments, and socialists. For, it was the weakness of the former and the extravagance of the latter that provoked and to some extent justified Fascism in Italy. Democracy has asserted itself in France, and it will do so in Italy.

"The democratic ideal remains an inspiration to peoples already free and to the various more primitive races. Democracy remains for all a guide to some new organisation of the relation between political groups. And it has this one great power that it is not an ideal simply for individuals, as individualism is, not an ideal simply for groups, as nationalism is. It is both in one, for no real democracy is possible within any nation or State until its relations with other nations or States is democratic, and no such relation of States is possible until, as Kant said, the States are in some sense "republics."

"The so called evils of democracy—favouritism, bribery, graft, bossism,—are the evils of our lack of democracy or our party system, and of the abuse which that system has brought into our representative government. It is not democracy which is on trial, as is so often said, but it is we ourselves who are on trial. We have been constantly trying to see what democracy meant from the point of view of institutions, we have never yet

tried to see what is meant from the point of view of men." (Miss Follett)

"Democracy has one task only—to free the creative spirit of man" All honour to democracy! *Vox populi, Vox Dei.*

REVIEWS

Swapna-Sadha—by Humayun Kabir, B.A. This is a volume of poetry written by our ex-Editor, Mr. Humayun Kabir. It appears to us to be a very promising production, and considering the fact that it is the first venture of the youthful poet, something more than promising. It is well-nigh wholly free from the crudities and immaturities of expression to be found in the first ventures of even great poets. The style is pure, and evinces a mastery over the resources of the language and a command of rich, concrete images. The poems reveal a mind steeped in the enjoyment and appreciation of beauty, and finely attuned to the subtler spells of nature. Although there are marked traces in them of the influence of Rabindranath in both subject and imagery, as it is inevitable that there should be—for what poet of Modern Bengal has been able to resist the spell of the master,—yet the influence has been received with a much greater discernment, and originality than marks the work of the average disciple. Indeed nothing is wanting but a great maturity of thought and a fuller endowment of experience to enable our poet to take place in the front rank of the modern votaries of the Bengalee Muse

Of the lyrics which make up the volume before us, prominent mention may be made of the two poems on the Padma which really reach a high level of both thought and execution. 'Akbar' touches a note of high passion, rendered poignant by contemporary occurrences and is easily the best of the more ambitious historical pieces, with Jahanara as a close second. There are poems in a more austere and

restrained note, e.g. 'Shelley' and 'Aswasa,' presenting to us maturity of style as a thing well-nigh achieved. The love-poems are not so satisfactory, being hazy and nebulous to a degree, but even here there are redeeming touches awaiting but a closer grip of reality to give us the authentic thrill.

Not the least interesting feature of the volume is the translations from English poets, almost all of which are remarkably well done. Transfusion of spirit is, no doubt, a very difficult thing to achieve in translations, and Wordsworth, specially, is one of those who most obstinately refuse to give up their secret to a translator. The translations from Wordsworth, accordingly, do not strike as particularly happy or successful. The Wordsworthian economy of speech and inspired simplicity being but indifferently reproducible into the sentimental effusions of modern Bengali poetry. With Shelley and Keats the poet is undoubtedly in a happier vein, Shelley's 'To the Night', and Keats's 'Nightingale' and 'La Belle' have been done with a rare power, and an astonishing fidelity to their real spirit.

In conclusion we congratulate the author on this, his first venture into the field of poetry and hope that the future will more than justify that confidence in his powers which his present volume has inspired.

SRIKUMAR BANERJEE.

A History of Hindu Political Theories from the earliest times to the end of the 17th century A. D.—by U. N. Ghoshal, M.A., Ph. D. Oxford University Press.

This is the second edition of Dr. Ghoshal's well-known treatise on Hindu Political Theories. In this work the learned author has tried (1) to dispose of the main argument advanced by some scholars to discredit the claim of the ancient Indians to have contributed to the theories of the State, (2) to controvert the view that not only the Indians, but all other oriental peoples, were so thoroughly imbued with faith in the divine creation and ordering of the world, that they were never impelled to enquire into the *rationale* of their institutions, and (3) to remove the general impression that the

ancient Indian concepts of the state were too much vitiated by theological admixture to deserve the title of scientific deductions.

The Introduction is followed by seven chapters dealing respectively with (1) the political theories contained in the Vedic Samhitās and the Brahmanas, (2) the *Dharmasastras* and works of the Buddhist canons, (3) the *Arthashastra* of *Kautilya*, (4) the *Mahabharat* and the *Manusamhita*, (5) the *Niti-tests*, *Smritis* and *Puranas*, (6) the *Smriti Commentaries* and Jaina legal and political treatises, and (7) the later *Niti* treatises and digests and the *Dasabocha*.

Although the book mainly deals with the evolution of the theory of Hindu monarchy, it contains illuminating comments on Hindu theories of contract, *Danda*, Divine Right, state of nature, popular sovereignty, property and *Rajadharma*. We recognize that it has involved great labour and research on the part of the author to disentangle these ideas from the mass of Hindu, Buddhistic and Jaina texts and commentaries and we congratulate Dr Ghoshal on producing a treatise which will have a permanent value in the world of Hindu speculation and culture.

P.M.

EDEN HINDU HOSTEL NOTES

By A Hosteller.

“Born 1820,—still growing strong”; that is said of Johnny Walker. As there are wines that improve with age, so the traditions of the Eden Hindu Hostel that are handed down from successive batches, become more savoury the older they grow. Every year there is a galaxy of freshers to whom the mysteries of the Eden Hindu Hostel are wrapped up in a veil of mist. As they get accustomed to the ding dong of hostel life the mist melts away. They take up the mantle of tradition that has fallen to their share and try to keep it up to the best of their ability.

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The bell is rung, the screen is drawn and enter the New Session—full of infinite possibilities. Let us watch the course of events as the session unfolds itself.

* * * *

The drama begins with a tragic scene Mr. Dinesh Dutt, a student of the 3rd year Science class made an end of his life with potassium cyanide. The cause was that he was tired of his life and wanted to catch glimpses 'behind the veil.' It is a matter of great regret that the idealism of youth should run into such channels.

* * * *

In every sphere of the hostel there are signs of life. But in the sports the enthusiasm of the managing committee seemed at first to be like that of the Seidlitz powder. It fizzed and foamed for a moment and then everything seemed to be flat as ever. Fortunately it was not so. The tournaments have been played to a successful end.

The Highlanders who upheld the league honours for three years, have repeated their performance for the fourth time in succession. The team of Ward II, decidedly the best team as proved in the knock-out tournament, are unlucky in not topping the league.

* * * *

The Common Room has received a new impetus under the untiring energy of its prefect Mr. Benode Ranjan Biswas of whom it may be said 'he touched nothing which he did not adorn.' The Common Room wears a different look with its painted walls, carpeted floor, reupholstered sofas and green palms. Schemes are on the cards for fitting up electric fans.

The Common Room was so long the favourite haunt for recreation and amusement. The touch of Mr. Biswas's wand has converted it into the meeting place of Boarders, Professors and distinguished men. The ball was set rolling by the inaugural meeting of the Debating Club with the Hon'ble the Vice-Chancellor in the chair. Prof. A. K Chanda was kind enough to come and

personality and charming manners. Mr. Sterling was a man who really felt for the students and let slip no opportunity of lending a helping hand to his pupils. He assured the students that in the larger sphere of activity where he is called upon to work they would not find him wanting in looking to their interests

* * * *

The Mess Committee this year is sailing in troubled waters. Let us hope it will tide over its difficulties in near future.

* * * *

The library is pulling on well and has been kept in trim, thanks to Mr. Mony Mozumdar, the Secretary. Owing to the shortage of funds the list of additions is not heavy. We welcome some new periodicals on the table, but the absence of the Times of India is keenly felt.

REPORTS

Annual Report of the Union for 1926-27.

The Presidency College Union had a busy session this year. It arranged socials, invited scholars of distinction to address its meetings, held condolence meetings to mourn the death of distinguished alumni of the College and did its level best for ameliorating the distress of afflicted humanity. Its debating section can boast of having arranged more meetings than were held during at least the last six years.

Three socials were arranged during the year. The Autumn Social which was celebrated in the hall of the Calcutta University Institute on Friday, the 1st October, 1926, when before a distinguished audience the students of the College gave a very creditable

performance of Tagore's drama "Bisarjan", was an unqualified success. The 110th Founders' Day of the College was celebrated on January, the 20th, 1927. A very large number of distinguished 'Old Boys' attended; but in spite of the erection of a big pandal, it was not found possible to accommodate the guests comfortably. This one flaw in the arrangements, due to the lack of a suitable College Hall, can be said to have almost marred an otherwise most successful function. The Union held this year a new social—the Spring Festival which, let us hope, will be repeated every year. The Physics Theatre was tastefully decorated, and in a most picturesque setting, the function passed very smoothly and well.

Among those who were invited to address our meetings, were Mr. J. N. Sarkar, Vice-Chancellor of the University, Mr. C. K. Allen, Tagore Professor of Law at the University, Mr. J. C. Guha, the famous wrestler, Dr. S. N. Das Gupta of our Philosophy staff, Mr. M. O. Hudson, Bemis Professor of International Law at Harvard University and Mr. O. C. Gangoly, the well-known art-critic. They dealt with such diverse topics the "The Study of History," "Student-life in Oxford", "Physical Culture," "Experiences in America and Europe", "The League of Nations" and "Moghul Painting." The lecture on Moghul Painting was illustrated with lantern slides.

The Union met four times in the year to mourn the loss of seven distinguished ex-students of the College,—Professor Chandrabhusan Bhaduri, Rai A. C. Bose Bahadur, Professor Satyendra Kumar Ghosh, Principal Matilal Chatterjee, Mrs. R. C. Bonnerjee, Rai I. C. Bose Bahadur and Mr. Paresh Chandra Sen. The Union also held a meeting to mourn the untimely death of one of its number, Master Sukomal Ghosh of the 4th Year Science Class.

The Union arranged a Variety Performance in aid of the Midnapore Flood Relief Fund on the 16th September, 1926, and after deducting all expenses in connexion with the function, a sum of Rs. 360/- subscribed by the staff and students was sent to the proper persons. The receipts were duly posted on the Notice Board.

The Union also took up the task of collecting funds for relieving the distress of the family of the late 'Darwan' of the College.

A sum of Rs 122- 10As was collected from the students of which Rs. 100/- has been already sent to the family of the 'Darwan'. The balance is now with the Committee that was formed with Prof. K. N. Mitter as Secretary.

The Debating Section of the Union has held nine meetings to date. The meetings were all very well attended and the debate reached at times quite a high level of excellence. Professor P. C. Ghosh, the President of the Society, presided over most of the meetings and always took great interest in the affairs of the Society.

The out-going Secretary desires to express his thanks to the President, Principal Sterling for his unfailing sympathy and constant encouragement, to the Vice-President, Prof. B. M. Sen, for the silent influence he always exerted on the conduct of affairs under his charge, and to the Treasurer, Prof. S. C. Majumdar, for friendly advice and active help in the work of the Union. Of the student members, he would mention the name of Mr. Promod Kumar Ghoshal who lent him a helping hand on many an occasion and last but by no means the least, that of Mr. Bibhuti Bhusan Mukherjee, who did more than any other man to lighten his labours and share his anxieties.

<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
Students' subscription—Rs. 1110 8As 0P.	Autumn Social—
Professors' subscription— <u>Rs. 39 0 0</u>	Rs. 315 0 0
Rs. 1149 8As 0P.	Founders' Day—
	Rs. 643 9 9
	Spring Festival—
	<u>Rs. 186 14 9</u>
	Rs 1145 8 6
	Miscellaneous— 3 1 6
	<u>Rs. 1148 10 0</u>
	Balance—Annas Fourteen only

S. C. MAJUMDAR
Treasurer.

H. N. MUKERJEE
Secretary.

Annual Report of the Bengali Literary Society for 1926-27.

The Society arranged during the year five meetings including a Social which passed off most successfully. "Johan Bojer", "Knut Hamsun", 'The note of sadness in modern literature" and "Poetry" formed the topics of very well written papers read before appreciative audiences. The Secretary desires to pay a tribute to the kind zeal and interest shown in the work of the Society by its President, Professor Rai K. N. Mitter Bahadur. He apologisers to all for his inability, owing to illness, to arrange more meetings than he could. He hopes that under the new regime, the Society would grow from more to more and its activities influence the trend of our literary thought.

JYOTSNANATH CHANDA
Secretary 1926-27.

The Durwan Memorial Fund

It was on the 3rd April, 1926, that Ram Ekbal Sing, the Darwan, who had served the College so faithfully for years, was murdered at his post. A meeting of the staff and students, held after the sad occurrence, decided upon raising a fund in his memory. The undersigned came to be in charge of the fund and he begs to submit the following statement of receipts and expenditure.

RECEIPTS		EXPENDITURE		
	Rs. As. P.	Date.	Items of Expenditure.	Rs. As. P.
The Central Hindu Relief Fund	100-0-0	4-2-27	Sent to the widow by M. O.	100-0-0
Sir C. C. Ghosh	100-0-0		(M. O. fee)	1-0-0
Sir B.C. Mitter	100-0-0	22-2-27	Sent to the widow (M. O. Commission)	100-0-0 1-0-0
Sir P. C. Mitter	25-0-0			
B. K. Basu Esq	25-0-0	24-5-27	Sent to the widow in Insured Cover	500-0-0
H, R. James Esq.	50-0-0		(Postage)	0-13-6
W. C. Wordsworth Esq.	50-0-0			
J. R. Barrow Esq.	50-0-0	4-8-27	Do. Do.	200-0-0
College Staff	441-0-0		(Postage)	0-10-6
Students	122-10-0			
Total Rs....				Rs. 903-8-0
				1063-10-0

It has been decided that of the balance now in hand Rs. (160-2as.) a part will be devoted towards erecting a tablet somewhere in the College premises.

(Sd.) K. N. MITTER.
Professor-in-charge of the Fund.

Physical Society

At a meeting held on September 2, 1927, the following office-bearers were duly elected for the session 1927-28.

Professor P. C. Mahalanobis—President.

Professor S. Dutt—Vice-President

Mr. Subhendu Sekhar Bose (6th Year)—Secretary.

Mr Himansu Sobhan Maitra (5th Year)

Mr. Biren Dey (3rd Year)

Mr. Bhabesh Chandra Barua (6th Year)

Mr. Sachibhushan Dutt (5th Year)

Mr. Sudhanshu Mohan SenGupta

(4th Year)

Mr. Panchugopal Chatterjee (3rd Year)

} Asstt. Secretaries.

} Class-representatives.

SUBHENDU SEKHAR BOSE.

Secretary.

Historical Society.

The second meeting of the Society was held on the 25th March, 1927, with Prof. B. K. Sen in the chair, when Sj. Hirendranath Mukerjee of the 5th Year History Class read a paper on "Indian History", the whole trend of which, the essayist pointed out, marked a spirit of synthesis. Mr. J. N. Basu, M. A, B. L. presided over the third meeting, at which Sj. Anilendra Mitter of the 3rd Year

Arts Class read a paper on "Nalanda and Rajagriha", depicting with great ability those early shrines of learning. The President delivered a short, but suggestive, speech. The fourth meeting was held under the joint auspices of the College Union and the Society. Mr. O. C. Gangoly the well-known art-critic, delivered a masterly lecture on Moghul Painting, illustrated by beautiful lantern-slides Prof. B. M. Sen was in the chair. At the fifth meeting held with Prof. Nilmani Chakravarti as President, Dr. U. N. Ghoshal delivered a most informing and instructive lecture on "Some great missionaries of ancient India,"—that noble band who spread the torch of culture to far-away lands. Prof. K. Zacharia, presided over the sixth meeting held in the Physics Theatre, when Mr. R. D. Banerjee delivered a lantern-lecture on "The Early Civilisation of the Indus Valley." The learned lecturer was at his best in dealing with a subject of which he is a master.

JAYANTABILAS DEB.

Secretary.

Philosophy Seminar.

Second Meeting.

The second meeting was held on Saturday the 2nd April, 1927. Prof. Rai K. N. Mitter Bahadur, was in the chair. S. J. Viswa Ranjan Sen read a paper on the "Relation between Mind and Body."

The writer showed that the interaction theory which regards the relation between mind and body as one of causal interaction cannot be accepted, as it is contrary to the view suggested by Physiology and because it violates the Law of Conservation of Energy. He accepted the hypothesis of Psycho-Physical Parallelism that denies any causal interaction between the physical and psychical processes, which, however, does not fully solve the problem. After a brief survey of the various bold metaphysical theories concerning

the ultimate nature of mind and matter, he expressed himself in favour of the Theory of Parallelistic Monism, otherwise called the theory of Identity which regards that both mind and matter are at bottom the same process. They are but two different manifestations of one and the same Reality like the convex and concave sides of a curve.

An interesting discussion followed, in which Messrs. Abdul Karim, Pankaj Kumar Banerjee, Syed Ahmed and Arunprasad Sen took part. The essayist having replied, the President closed the debate with a short speech. He believed that mind and matter are two aspects of one and the same unknown Reality. But how these two opposite substances, have come to act and react on each other is a problem hitherto practically unsolved and indeed insoluble. He remarked that among the different psychological theories proposed, the theory of interaction has many points to commend itself.

With a vote of thanks to the chair, the meeting then came to a close.

Third Meeting.

The third meeting came off on 16th July, 1927, with Professor K. N. Mitter in the chair. Mr. Md. Abdul Karim read a paper on "Philosophy and Religion."

The Essay began with the examination of the views of Paulsen and Caird about the relation of reason and faith. The Essayist supporting Caird said that the principles of Religion are not contradictory to those of Philosophy but rather above them. A religion not based upon reason is no religion. Referring to the Philosophy of Henry Bergson the essayist said that Reality is too obscure to be grasped by the analytic faculty of reason. It is an object of faith and intuition.

Then ensued a long and interesting debate. Messrs. Arunprasad Sen, Syed Ahmed, Jyotirindra Nath Das Gupta, Fazul Ali, Bibhuti Bhusan Mukherjee and Viswa Ranjan Sen spoke on the subject.

All the speakers agreed that Philosophy and Religion should be combined and that Religion should be based on Philosophy.

The meeting being the first one in the session, the President first extended his hearty welcome to the new members of the Seminar. Faith and reason, he said, are but two aspects of the same process. The problem of Philosophy and of Religion was really the same—they were but two manifestations of the search after Reality or Truth.

Fourth Meeting.

The fourth meeting took place on the 30th July under the presidency of Prof. K. N. Mitter. S. J. Viswaranjan Sen read a paper on "Locke and Leibnitz".

The essayist said that Locke's war against innate ideas arose from a revolt against the despotism of tradition. His assault was directed more to the dogmatic Rationalism than to the Intellectualism of Leibnitz. Hence Leibnitz's reply in his "New Essay" is indirect; it consists rather in throwing a flood of new light upon the matter discussed than in a ponderous counter-attack. The whole argument of Locke, Leibnitz very successfully showed, rested upon a wrong psychology that 'nothing can be in the mind which is not in consciousness'. To have ideas is virtually in Locke's language to be intelligent. But innate ideas are not to be supposed as explicit and conscious but implicit and potentially contained in the soul. Unconscious ideas are of great importance in Psychology as molecules are in Physics. Again, Locke's account of sensation is far from satisfactory and hence his epistemology is defective. Leibnitz's theory of monads has an important bearing on Epistemology. In view of the monads being windowless, the source of knowledge cannot be anything but the soul itself. Strictly speaking all thought and the sensations themselves are innate. Sensations, according to Leibnitz, are nothing but confused thought and knowledge consists really in introducing distinctness into the previously confused thought.

Messrs. Jyotirindra Nath Das Gupta, Fazlul Ali, Abdul Karim and Arunprasad Sen spoke on the subject. After the essayist had replied, the President remarked that innate ideas as understood and rejected by Locke were not supported by any philosopher and hence it had been said that he was fighting against the air. Leibnitz came as a mediator and brought about the compromise between extreme Rationalism and Empiricism by adding the phrase 'nisi ipse intellectus' to the empirical maxim 'Nihil est intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu.'

The meeting then broke up with a vote of thanks to the chair.

VISWARANJAN SEN
Secretary,
Philosophy Seminar.

Hindi Literary Society.

A meeting of Hindi-speaking students, held on Friday, July 8, decided to start a Hindi Literary Society. The following office-bearers were elected :

Patrons : (1) The Principal (ex-officio). (2) Dr. P. D. Shastri.
President : Prof. P. C. Ghosh, M.A., P.R.S. Vice-Presidents : Prof. M. G. Bhattacharya, M.A. and Prof. M. Chatterjea, M.A. Secretary : Mr. Bhuramal Agrawal of the 4th Year Arts Class. Asst. Secretary : Mr. Sitaram Sigatia of the 1st Year Arts Class. Treasurer : Mr. Taraprasad Khaitan of the 4th Year Arts Class.

The object of the Society is to promote by papers, lectures and debates the appreciation and spread of Hindi Literature.

The first meeting of the Hindi Literary Society was held on Friday, August 8 with Mr. Umavallabh Chaturvedi in the chair. Mr. Santosh Chand Bararia of the 4th Year Arts Class read a very interesting paper on "Comic Poetry in Hindi."

The formal inaugural meeting of the Presidency College Hindi Literary Society was held on the 28th instant under the presidency of Rai Badridas Goenka Bahadur, M.L.C. There was a large

and distinguished gathering including among others Principal T. S. Sterling, Rai Ramdeo Chokhani Bahadur, Mr. D. P. Khaitan, Mr. K. P. Khaitan, Mr I. D. Jalan, Mr. D. Khaitan, Mr. A. P. Bajpayi Mr. G. D. Saraff, Mr. G. R. Tapadiya and Professors M. G. Bhattacharjee, M. Chatterjee, B. B. Dutta, J. N. Mukherjee, Shakalnarain Sharma, . K. N. Chakravarti and G. P. Mazumdar.

The proceedings began with an opening song by Mr. Pathak. The Secretary, Mr. B. M. Agrawal, in welcoming the guests, made a short speech stressing upon the need of a Hindi Literary Society being started and regretted the lack of facilities provided by the College for Hindi-speaking students.

The President, after thanking the organisers of the Society for the honor they had done him, proceeded to impress upon the audience the importance of the Hindi language—the language of Tulsidas, Suradas, Keshabdas, Padmakar, Bhushan, Haranath and others—the language which alone, in his opinion, could aspire to be the *lingua franca* of India. He said how the language appealed to the heart of the people. He, however, warned every lover of Hindi not to be oblivious of the present defects in the language. He next referred to the lamentable lack of facilities for Hindi studies in the premier College of the country and in conclusion, expressed the hope that the Society might one day play the part of the torchbearer of Hindi culture to different parts of the country.

Proposing a vote of thanks to the chair, Principal T. S. Sterling said that when the question of the appointment of a Hindi lecturer came before him last year he recommended the proposal to the D. P. I. The D. P. I. referred the matter to the Finance Department which, unfortunately, turned it down. He, however, gave the assurance that he would support the matter when it came again. He announced that the President was kind enough to promise Rs. 100/- to the Society for the purchase of Hindi books. After the party was photographed, the meeting dissolved.

BHURAMAL AGARWAL

Secretary.

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| Harris, H. W. | Our Social Heritage. |
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- Kulliyati Mir.
- Kulliyati Sawda.
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| Do. | India, a Bird's Eye View. |
| Trevelyan G. M. | Lord Grey of the Reformed Bill. |



HINDU COLLEGE FOUNDATION TABLET

THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

Vol. XIV. }

DECEMBER, 1927.

} No. II.

RECREATION.

I had hardly time even to look round the College compound after my return from leave at the beginning of November, before our energetic Editor approached me on the subject of a Foreword for the next issue of the Magazine. In vain I explained that—quite apart from the urgent need for straightening out the tangle of Union affairs—my time was likely to be more than fully occupied, not only with my normal duties as Principal, but also the extra work involved from having been appointed Joint Secretary to the fast-approaching session of the Indian Science Congress. Could not the Editor, I suggested, compile a few genial editorial notes from a bundle of literature dealing with the Imperial Educational Conference that I hastily thrust into his hands? However, he remained smilingly obdurate: so I suppose there is nothing for it but to comply with his request.

The first thing that comes into my head is to recommend to every one that if they wish to enjoy a holiday properly, they should do something which is utterly different to their ordinary occupation. Last time I was on leave, I devoted myself (needless to say at my wife's behest) to endeavouring to help in the production of pullets that—unlike the ordinary barndoor hen which only condescends to lay about 80 eggs a year—would lay three times that number. This time I found our homestead in Jersey being devoted more and more to that most admirable of all animals, the Jersey cow. An Indian cow is regarded as somewhat remarkable if it yields 5 seers a day, whereas every Jersey cow gives at least 10 seers, with 5% Butter Fat, and one of our cows for some time after it calved

in June gave well over 22 seers of milk. Now if you are fortunate enough to own such cows they must be fed—preferably with food grown on the place to save unnecessary expenditure ; so I soon found myself turned into a farmer, diligently supervising the ploughing of land to sow with oats, mangels and above all, that most useful of all fodder crops, lucerne, while experiments were also begun early in the spring with a new fodder crop, Marrow-stem Kale—a sort of glorified cabbage with a long thick stem which is much appreciated by cattle. A drought in April and May proved a severe handicap to operations, but fortunately the weather changed, and, with plenty of rain for the rest of the growing season, everything grew well, so that when I left Jersey in September, ample crops were available to carry our small herd (now increased by 3 young heifers) over the ensuing winter.

In June I crossed to England to take part in the Imperial Educational Conference as one of the two delegates from Bengal. The Conference is held every four years, and this year's meeting drew more delegates than any previous one. There were 92 members in all, coming from every part of His Majesty's Dominions, India being specially well represented with 22 delegates, in addition to Dr. Paranjypte and Messrs Dumbell and Stewart from the India Office, and Dr. Quayle from the High Commissioner's office. For 3 weeks we discussed many aspects of education under the chairmanship of the Duchess of Atholl, who holds the post of Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, and the papers and speeches will doubtless some time or other be published in an official Report. I may mention, however, that the keynote of the Conference was the absolute necessity, in all post-primary educational institutions of maintaining and developing the interest and intelligence of the pupils. And until it is realised in India how soul-destroying it is to condemn young people to attend lectures daily from (often) 10 A. M. to 4 P. M., and until these lectures are largely replaced by private reading, supplemented by tutorial work, very little University education in the real sense of the word will ever be accomplished in Calcutta.

As guests of His Majesty's Government, we enjoyed most lavish hospitality during the 3 weeks of active session of the Conference, and after the meetings came to an end, there was a further 12 or 15 days' programme of sight-seeing under the efficient guidance of an ex-student of my old school, Mr. J. H. Burrows, of the Board of Education, who acted as Secretary to the Conference. Among the many visits we were privileged to enjoy, in my own memory at least there will always stand out the Royal Air Force Display at Hendon in the presence of the King-Emperor and his Consort, and over 100,000 other spectators, where for 2 hours the latest flying machines—often under orders by wireless telephony from the ground—manoeuvred and 'stunted' under perfect control. It was a marvellous demonstration of the progress made during the last 10 or 12 years in the mastery of the air by human intelligence. A few days later, at the Aircraft Apprentice Camp at Halton, we saw something of the organisation and educational training on which the success of the post-war Air Force depends. How are 3,000 apprentices drawn at the ages of 15—17 from all types of secondary schools to be converted in 3 years' time into reliable aircraftsmen able to take up any work (or deal with any emergency), in connection with aeroplanes, or motors? The answer is by a combination of an intensive scheme of education—20 hours a week in the workshop, 8 hours in school, and 9 hours at organised games, drill, and physical training—with systematic encouragement of independent thought regarding the world in general and human beings in particular. This latter is attained by the selection, towards the middle of each term, of essay themes, the subject-matter of which has to be worked out by the individual student during his spare time in the magnificent School Library. I hope that the next issue of our Magazine will contain a more detailed account of this almost unique school which, I may add, chiefly owes its success to the enthusiasm of its able Head, Lt. Col. Caldwell, D.S.O., M.A., brother of Principal Caldwell, of the Patna College. Lt. Col. Caldwell has been given practically a free hand to experiment by the Air Force Educational Adviser, Col. Curtis, formerly of the Royal

Navy, and the aim of both of them is to ensure that for the first time in the history of the world a thoroughly educated combatant force will gradually be brought into existence in a sphere where, until that happy day when the League of Nations succeeds in bringing about the abolition of War, the fate of nations will almost inevitably henceforward be decided.

And now for a few words about the progress—or otherwise—of our own College. The work of land acquisition with the subsequent clearance of insanitary *busti* is sufficiently well advanced to enable expert advice to be taken in order to make the best use of the ground. On the one hand, that portion which it is not wanted for new buildings must be laid out in such a way as to provide the maximum possible number of playing fields, tennis courts, etc. On the other, the rough building project, by which Government consent to the revival of Mr. James' Improvement Scheme was obtained in 1925, has now to be recast into what we hope may prove to be a final plan. The first and foremost item of the latter must be the College Hall which will enable members of our Foundation to gather together from time to time as a single unit, and thus to foster Collegiate, instead of merely class-room consciousness. In view of the great expenditure that has already been incurred on land and that is likely to be necessary for the new Honours and Tutorial block of buildings, it would probably be better, if possible, to raise the funds necessary for the College Hall by private enterprise, and our chief concern in the immediate future should therefore be to enlist the support of generous donors, especially from amongst the many who have themselves benefited by close association with the College in the past. This is likely to be the keynote of our Founders' Day Celebrations during the next 2 or 3 years.

But there is one difficulty about which I must say a few words, and that is the regrettable lack of cohesion among the present students of the College. Last year the Union under its new constitution functioned very successfully with much mutual good-will, and co-operation of all its members, both Professors and students. A large number of debates were successfully held, prominent men

from the outside world delivered addresses, social functions went off successfully, and the Magazine maintained a high level of excellence. This year, on the other hand, up to the Autumn Vacation, hardly a single debate was held, and the Autumn Social had to be abandoned, owing to an atmosphere of ill-feeling and petty jealousies that somehow or other was created in our midst. I am fully aware of the difficult times in which we live and particularly of the depressing effect on the adolescent mind of constant harping on the inferiority-complex in the daily newspapers. When, however—to mention a very recent occurrence—the simple proposal by an enterprising student that a College picnic should be held on Dec. 12th, the Durbar Day Holiday, why and how should this have led to the issue of printed leaflets in which boycott of the function was advocated and anonymous threatening letters were sent to members of the staff and even to our guests? If the Durbar Day holiday (which, incidentally, commemorates the re-union, by order of the King-Emperor, of Eastern and Western Bengal) cannot be peaceably enjoyed as a happy opportunity for much-needed recreation, things have come to an impossible pass, and the sooner Dec. 12th is struck off the list of holidays the better. I cannot, however, believe that such incidents are a true reflex of the feelings of the majority of our students. It would indeed be lamentable if this were the case, for Presidency College is a microcosm of Bengal itself, and if unity is not possible here, neither will it be when the present students of the College pass out into life, and are called upon to think and act wisely in guiding the future destinies of their Mother Land.

All I now ask is that just as successful team-work is possible in the sphere of athletics (e. g. the present Cricket Eleven, as well as those teams which have recently won distinction for the College in the fields of First Aid and Debate), so also all may work together to make the social life of the College fruitful and significant. The publication of the College Register during the present year has vividly recreated for every one of us the long procession of men who, during the 111 years of its history, have made Presidency

College what it is to-day. Founders' Day, which serves as a symbol for the unity, continuity and prosperity of the College during all these years, is fast drawing nigh, and, bowing our heads in the invisible presence of the past, let us one and all resolve to work together in harmony and high hope, so that Presidency College may continue to be, year after year, an ever greater factor in the well-being not only of the Bengali nation, but also of India herself.

H. E. S.

EDITORIAL NOTES

A few days more, and we shall be bidding adieu to the year 1927. It is, indeed, hard to remain unmoved when one hears the midnight bells toll out the old to usher in the new year. A vague sense of sadness at the passing away, as inexorable as it is indeterminate, of what shall never come back again, cannot fail to evoke in the mind feelings that refuse to find vent in words. It may be all an illusion, this attempt of man to mark the process of Time. Let him, who will, sneer at it. But man will ever cling to illusions such as these. Aren't his dreams in a sense but illusions ?

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What have we done in 1927 ? Surely, while face to face with the dust and turmoil of life's arduous journey, we shall long to be carried back on memory's wings to the days we are leaving behind to-day, the days when dreams and visions lent to our lives a strange and sweet and sad aroma. For once at least, we refuse to put on critical eye-glasses to scrutinise the year that is going. Farewell, 1927 !

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The new year is knocking at the door and the eternal question that ever stirs the heart of youth in every clime, makes us restless.

What can we do? There are moments of despair when ennui overtakes us, when to think is to feel that one is destined to be but flotsam and jetsam in the tide of life. Youth has to conquer this torpor, or it has failed of its mission. Does not the glorious sky of the wonderful dawn send us a speechless song of joy and hope? The silent enchantment of the moon-lit night, the garlands of stars that seem as it were to tell us their tale, the mighty waters, calm and ruffled and wondrous beautiful, the flowers that adorn our glorious earth—do they not whisper in our ears something that makes us feel the sense of a mystery half-hidden behind the veil, the vision of which, throughout the ages, brings out the best that is in man? Youth, self-conscious and proud, must answer the call they are ever sending forth, or the future of our world is dismal indeed.

The field before us is vast. There is the grim spectre of Misery raising its ugly head beside the beauteous palace of Art, and exclaiming with indignation we fain would share, "Dare deny me existence?" A thousand and one wrongs cry for redress in this land of many regrets. Youth has to shoulder a heavy responsibility, with the careless abandon that shrinks not from fear of apprehended failure. It is they alone who can do it, or who else will?

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Founders' Day is fast drawing near. It is needless to remind our readers of the great significance of this 'day of days' in the annals of the College. Surely, January 20th, will ever remain a red letter day in the history of education in this country. Past and present students, linked as they are by the silken bond of common loyalty to the *alma mater*, will meet that day to pay their homage of respect to the founders of the College of which they are all so proud. Is it too much to hope that the Old Boys' Association should be roused from its present state of inanition and co-operate with the present students in making the function a real success?

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The College Register has met with a warm welcome from the public, and we hasten once again to congratulate Prof. Majumdar and

Mr. Dhar on their achievement. We publish in this issue a review of the Register from the pen of our distinguished ex-Principal, Mr. H. R. James. The way in which he responded to the request for contribution made by our ex-Editor, Mr. H. Kabir, shows the great interest he takes in the College and its students. We have yet to meet anybody who knew him, who speaks in any but rapturous terms of sincere eulogy while referring to Mr. James. We cannot but congratulate ourselves on being able to publish his article and hope to receive in future further contributions from him.

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Principal H. E. Stapleton has, as is usual with him, set about his work in right earnest. The acquisition of land for the extension of the College grounds is almost complete and the area is being walled. The library arrangements are going through a thorough overhauling. The College Union is beginning to show some signs of activity. The unfortunate atmosphere of mutual misunderstanding is, we hope, clearing up. If only the members of the Union took as their motto: "In all essentials, unity ; in all non-essentials, liberty ; in all things, charity"!

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The farewell meeting in honor of our ex-Principal, Mr. T. S. Sterling amply demonstrated his popularity with his students and colleagues alike. Our readers must be interested to learn how his thoughts often turn back to the scene of his quondam labours. The following extracts from a private letter tell us much of what he feels: "I miss Presidency College very much and did not realize until I left how much it meant to me. I wish I could convey to you all my appreciation of the splendid send-off you gave me .. It was only by steeling my heart against emotion that I was able to say anything in reply." He speaks of his new work as "most interesting and varied," but hastens to add: "In whatever sphere I work, I feel that no post will have the place in my heart that Presidency College held and still holds." It is interesting to hear him when he says, "There are two great regrets in connexion with my stay in India. One is the regret that I did not learn the Bengali language

well and the other that I did not give more time to the attendance at meetings of students for debates, etc.” He touches a tender chord in our hearts when he says : “I shall never forget the kindness and affection of my old students whom I wish always to consider as my friends.” Need his old students remind Mr. Sterling that they, in their turn, will surely never forget him ?

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We cannot congratulate ourselves upon the results of the I. C. S. Examination held in London this year. One of our students, Mr. S. Dutt who is third in the list, tops the list of successful candidates from India. Mr. K. K. Hajra has also succeeded in the test. Our hearty felicitations to them both. But we find Madras supplies six of the successful candidates, four of them being students of the Presidency College of that Province. We do not advocate provincialism ; but, surely, Bengal cannot afford to yield the intellectual pre-eminence she has so long held to any other province. Madras has thrown before her a strong challenge ; she must take it up and win the tie.

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Coming nearer home, the results of the M. A. and M. Sc. Examinations have been quite satisfactory. Presidency College students have topped the list in almost all the subjects. We send them our fraternal greetings and wish them success in the careers that would now be opening up before them.

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Our congratulations to Prof. Sadananda Bhaduri, M. A., Lecturer in Sanskrit and Bengali, on his standing first in first class at the M. A. Examination in Pali this year.

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Our cricket team is showing up very well this year. Against some of the noted local teams, they have proved their mettle. The batting has been of a consistently high order, while the bowling of Mr. B. Sircar, the captain, and Mr. T. Roy. has won for them a place among local bowlers of note. We hope the standard of excellence will be well maintained.

We have also to congratulate our Ambulance team (Messrs. Pratap Mitter, K. Dutt, R. Mitter and R. Bhattacharji of the 3rd Year) on their success in lifting the St. John's Ambulance Educational Cup that has been instituted this year.

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The institution of the Rabindra Parishad (Tagore Society) has, indeed, been something of an event. It is a pity that there are not in our country many such institutions to help the study and appreciation of the great literature built up by our poet, the wonder-wizard whose golden wand transmutes everything it touches. The Society is fortunate in having as its President, Dr. Surendra Nath Das Gupta. No better selection could have been made. We wish the Society years of continued usefulness.

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The poet was in our midst the other day. He has just returned from his mission as the torch-bearer of Indian culture to the islands of the Indian Archipelago, where many a century ago Hindu civilisation spread its luminous wings to lighten the gloom that enveloped them. He spoke to us words that rang with pathos, and it was hard to hear him without emotion. Youth brings to you, O poet, the love-offering of the best that is in them. You are one of us—what more is there for us to expect ?

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It would be unpardonable for us to omit any reference to the magnificent address that Sir J. C. Bose delivered at the Convocation of the Mysore University. We doubt if in recent years, the students of any University had the privilege of listening to a more inspiring address. The poet in him sent forth to the youth of the country the message it needs most—the message of "Shakti," that refuses to resign itself to accepting the failures that dog its footsteps. No Indian can fail to feel a thrill of emotion when the scientist-seer speaks: "It was action and not weak passivity that was glorified in heroic India of the past, and the greatest illumination came even in the field of battle.....And indeed, a capacity to endure through infinite transformation must be innate in that mighty civilisation

that has seen the intellectual culture of the Nile valley, of Assyria and of Babylon, wax, wane and disappear and which to-day gazes on the future with the same invincible faith with which it met the past." Is there an Indian who will not feel a transport of exaltation when he dreams of the mission which his country's past incessantly calls upon her children to achieve? When, Oh, when, shall we furnish our motherland with the lamp she will present at the world-festival that must be coming, sooner or later? If the vision of India's history does not raise us to a higher sphere, if petty narrowness ever remain our horizon's utter sum, then all our pride as children of this glorious country is a huge mockery. 'Let us ring down; this farce is nothing worth.'

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A question of very considerable interest to the student-community is now being discussed by the Senate of the Calcutta University. The re-appointment of several part-time lecturers has given rise to the problem whether it is advisable in the best interests of the University to retain the services of some of them who have other professional business to attend to. The debate on the subject, we are glad to note, has been carried on in a most dignified manner, inspite of there being a chance of the subject lending itself to a discussion of personalities. We do not mean to pronounce any opinion on the subject, but we believe and our belief is strengthened by actual experience—that in some cases at any rate, the busiest man has the amplest leisure. Let us hope, the decision of the Senate, whatever it may be, will not in any manner impair the efficiency of post-graduate teaching. We are proud of our University and are confident that its Senate will be inspired, in whatever decisions it may adopt, by the best of motives.

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We have to perform the melancholy duty of recording our sense of sorrow at the loss the College has suffered by the death of some distinguished ex-students. The late Mr. Ram Chandra Majumdar had a uniformly brilliant career which culminated in his winning the blue ribbon of the University—the Premchand Roychand Scholarship.

He made his mark as one of the ablest lawyers of the city and acted for some time as a judge of the High Court. The late Professor P. Mukherjee was one of the oldest members of the Indian Educational Service and was a pioneer in the field of chemical teaching in Bengal. The late Mr. Haraprasad Chatterjee was a well-known advocate and a prominent figure in Calcutta society. We offer our condolence to the bereaved families.

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The College was represented for the first time this year at the All-India Inter-College Competition Debate held under the auspices of the Benares Hindu University Parliament. Messrs. Panchanan Chakravarti and Hirendra Nath Mukerjee were sent as the representatives of the College, the former to speak for and the latter against the motion: "That in the opinion of this house, the sentiment of nationality is detrimental to the progress of mankind." There were 37 competitors—a record entry—some of whom came from as far as Rajahmundry. Mr. Mukerjee was awarded the gold medal for the second best speaker. We hope a stronger team next year will bring with them the trophy for the best represented College, which, by the way, has been retained by Benares every year except but once.

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The College picnic held on the 12th December, was a great success. Besides the Principal and many of our professors, Mr. J. N. Sarkar, Vice-Chancellor, and Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari were in the party. The steamer trip to Budge-Budge and back was most enjoyable and the halt at the Botanical Gardens was equally so. The organisers of the function, especially Messrs B. Agrawal, Bibhuti Mukerjee, Adrish Banerjee and Golam Gafur Choudhury deserve to be warmly complimented. Let us hope the picnic will henceforth be an annual affair.

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A happy new year to all our readers.

THE COLLEGE REGISTER

PRINCIPAL H. R. JAMES (Retired)

THE completion and publication of the Presidency College Register is rightly a matter of warm congratulation for all who are interested in the College. It is a great achievement. Its four hundred and thirty ample pages of names are a monument to the painstaking industry of the compilers, yet do but imperfectly indicate the exacting nature of the task, the frequent discouragements and embarrassments encountered in carrying it through. Only those who have experience of similar undertakings can realize the difficulties at all adequately. The thanks of the College, therefore, and of all its members, present and past, are due abundantly to Messrs. S. C. Majumdar and G. N. Dhar for the unsparing diligence they have devoted to the work, and to Principal Stapleton and Professor Sterling. The value of the outline of history, which forms Part I, is scarcely less great. There exists nowhere else such a detailed and accurate account of the intimate bonds which link Presidency College to the Hindu College, the Mahavidyalaya founded in 1816. Not the least of the services which the publication of the Register does for the College, and for all Bengal, is that it assures once for all that the reality and intimacy of this connection shall never be forgotten. At the time when the effort for putting renewed life into the activities of Calcutta University was first started early in the present century, the association of Presidency College with the Hindu College had been allowed to grow somewhat faint : how faint may be readily seen by comparing the account given of Presidency College in the University Calendars before and after the year—I think it was—1908. A further step to ensure the fitting remembrance of the connection was taken when Founders' Day was instituted in 1912. There is nothing—if I may be pardoned a personal reflection—regarding such innovations as

I was instrumental in making for the College, which I recall with greater satisfaction than this institution of Founders' Day. That the new departure was made with permanent effect is largely due to the sympathy of Lord Carmichael as first official Visitor. The full and definite account of the connection which finds place in the College Register ensures that the remembrance shall be perpetual.

Surely this is well, and part of a worthy piety towards the benefactors of the past, who handed on the rich inheritance in which every student now admitted to the College has a share. It is, therefore, with a slightly puzzled feeling and with compunction that I read, on page 17 of the Register, of the marble tablet that was to be erected in a prominent position in the present Hindoo College building on which should be inscribed a brief history of the origin of the College, with the names of those who aided in the foundation. The passage quoted (Letter from the Council of Education, dated the 10th of March, 1854) goes on : "Should any corresponding tablets be erected in the new Presidency College building, perhaps the sense felt of the true value of the services done by those Hindoo gentlemen to the cause of education in Bengal, might be expressed becomingly by recording upon a tablet in the new building to which all classes will have access, the fact that the way for the foundation of the General Presidency College in 1854 had been first opened by the founders of the Hindoo College in 1816." Is it my memory that is at fault, or am I convicting myself of a culpable neglect of opportunity? But certainly, I cannot recall ever having set eyes on any such tablet and commemoration. If, as I think, none such exists, is not the Register reminding us of a neglected duty which should with all possible expedition be now fulfilled?*

* In conformity with the suggestion of the Council of Education such a marble tablet *was* actually erected, and still occupies a prominent position in the Library hall. A facsimile is reproduced in the present number of the magazine. It seems possible that this foundation tablet was originally in erected the Hindu College, and was afterwards transferred to the present Presidency College building. Another tablet raised to the memory of Mr. Charles Edwardes Lyall appears to have changed its habitation similarly. —Ed. P. C. M.

The College Register, by its arrangement of students' names in three groups, the third of which dates from 1909, rightly recognises that about the year 1909, with the coming into operation of the revised University Regulations and the expansion of the College area and equipment, a new era for the College began. The introductory sketch rightly traces the inception of the Presidency College Extension Scheme to the report of the Special Commission which inspected Calcutta Colleges in September, 1905 and the conferences summoned by Sir Andrew Fraser in 1907. There was, however, another less direct link of causation which it is interesting to recall. About the year 1905—it may be a little earlier: I have no means by me of checking dates—the Ranchi College Scheme (as it was called) was inaugurated, and made a great stir. It was one of many dreams of a model place of education which was to do great things for Bengal and, in particular, for the higher social classes in Bengal. Sir Andrew Fraser was personally interested in the scheme and a good deal of high enthusiasm went to its promotion. But in Calcutta, there was apprehension and doubt. It was feared that the interests of Calcutta Colleges, and especially of Presidency College, might suffer. There was much public protest and controversy. To allay this, perhaps not unnatural, alarm, Sir Andrew Fraser, without relinquishing the Ranchi Scheme, interested himself zealously in projects for the improvement and expansion of Presidency College. Hence the Belvedere Conference and the scheme ultimately elaborated for Presidency College. When in 1908, Sir Edward Baker had succeeded Sir Andrew Fraser, both schemes were under consideration. Sir Edward Baker ruled that the financial resources of the Presidency would not suffice for both schemes: one or other must be dropped. The upshot was that the Presidency College Scheme went forward: the Ranchi College Scheme remained a beautiful dream.

It was the war, of course, mainly, which held up the Presidency College Scheme after its promising beginning in 1912 and 1913. Even so, plans for the new hostel were under consideration in 1915. But more and more the Scheme dropped out of view, till,

two years ago there seemed no longer any prospect of its revival. Then in 1925, Lord Lytton's speech on Founders' Day suddenly rekindled the lamp of hope. It is now more than a hope: the scheme has been taken up and again goes forward. The appearance of the College Register is happily timed in coincidence with the renewal of these fair hopes. It is with this more hopeful prospect that the historical sketch in Chapter II comes to a pause. From this point of view also the completion of the Register is welcome, and of fortunate augury. It is evidence of the real vitality in the life of the College and of the active interest of old *alumni*. The scheme has been taken up again, interest in it has revived, but it will not be carried to completion solely by its own momentum. To keep it moving, the interest and sympathy, the zeal and enthusiasm of all friends of the College are needed. But if the hopes of the present time are justified, the vision of 1912 will yet come true. It is tempting to dwell on details of the scheme still to be realized, but this would carry me beyond the proper purpose of a notice of the College Register. Later, if the Editor permits, I should like to enlarge a little on the completion of the College scheme and the wider opportunities of usefulness which that will bring.

A FORTNIGHT IN GREECE.

PROFESSOR K. ZACHARIAH, M. A. (Oxon.) I. E. S.

TO see Greece properly, one needs not fourteen days but fourteen weeks – to see it, that is, with some degree of leisure and appreciation, with time for the savour to sink in, and without missing anything of much historical interest. To see Greece in comfort is, happily impossible, for the railway lines are few and the roads often bad and the hotels far from luxurious, even where they exist. Most parts of it, therefore, except Athens, are free from the kind of tourists who stand in queues outside Tutankhamen's tomb and one may go about without being deafened by American voices or dazzled by waving Baedeker's.

We had to crowd as much as possible into two weeks ; but we started well. We came to Greece by sea and from Crete. There is something to be said for the railway, which follows roughly the line of the march of Xerxes, but it is not comparable to the approach by sea, when in the early morning you glide into the Piraeus and wonder behind which of those hills lies Athens. And, coming from Crete you are coming from a part of Greece itself, even more unspoilt than the continent, where the hoot of an engine has never yet been heard, where sea and mountains live in even closer communion and the snowy peaks of Ida look down on the ruins of the earliest palaces of Aegean dwellers.

From the Piraeus, trains and electric trams run to Athens, but we went by car. Our hotel was of the type which guide books describe as 'well spoken of' ; and, indeed, at first sight it was attractive enough. The room was comfortable and from the window, between the houses, there was a view of the Acropolis. In front lay a narrow, cobbled street almost entirely occupied by a tram line. When the trams came along, the pedestrians had to jump on to the pavement. Beyond was a tiny square with a little shop

in the middle like an island, where one could get newspapers, stamps, cigarettes and chocolate. The hotel itself supplied beds,⁴ but no meals, except a light breakfast in the morning, glorified by the incomparable honey of Hymettus. It boasted a bath-room, but, characteristically, nothing functioned. We soon discovered that water was about the scarcest thing in Athens and in that hotel, at any rate, a bath could not be had for love or money. Other hotels were not much better. In our second one, a superior hotel, the bath room bore evident signs of being used as a bed room at night, nor did it provide more than about one cold shower in three days; but these were faithfully recorded in the bill as 'dushes'!

If it was difficult to be clean, it was difficult also to be warm. As it happened, that winter was exceptionally severe in Athens and on several days it snowed. It is true that snow is seen in Athens only once in four or five years, but no provision was made for it at all. A fireplace was a thing unknown. In the second hotel, we were shown with pride a stove; but, like many other things in Greece, it did not work. Even when the logs were blazing inside, one had almost to embrace it to feel the mildest warmth.

Food was another difficulty, but here no doubt we ourselves were to blame, as foreigners and ignorant of the language. There are plenty of restaurants in Athens, but it is not easy to choose when one is presented with a long menu of unintelligible dishes. And when we shut our eyes and put a finger on something, the result was usually not happy. In the circumstances, the safest thing was to watch the neighbouring tables and point to any dish that appeared edible. It was in this way that we discovered the excellent Greek curds, without which no subsequent meal of ours was complete. It is a favourite dish throughout eastern Europe.

Tea is not a Greek meal, although tourist demand has created one or two tea shops in Athens. The drink is qualified, not with milk, but with a slice of lemon; and this, while it tastes strange at first, very soon becomes acceptable. There are plenty of confectioner's shops and I still think with feeling of the wonderful eclairs they produce.

But it seems ungrateful to dwell on these pleasures or afflictions of the flesh when one is writing of Greece. There was the Parthenon and what more could one fairly ask? I do not think we minded our petty discomforts much; most of our time was spent in the Museum or on the Acropolis and our thoughts were far more with old Greece than with the new. Here is the Ilissus, an inch-deep stream, now curbed and bridged and islanded with refuse; but by its banks Socrates had walked, in its waters he had paddled and then dried himself as he sat and talked under the shade on the plane trees. Here is the Pnyx hill where the ecclesia met and the very bema on which Pericles and Demosthenes stood to talk. Here is the Dipylon gate and a bit of that hasty wall of Themistocles, the Cerameicus beyond and the Sacred Way to Eleusis running between the rows of funeral monuments. Out of this gate Alcibiades led the Athenians in procession to celebrate the Mysteries during the Peloponnesian War. Every inch is storied ground and no man may walk in Athens without a thrill, if he is at all conscious of the enchantments of the past.

Our first morning we spent in the Museum, to which we returned again and again. It is not to be seen in a day or a week; but every time we went, there were platoons of tourists, about twenty to a guide, marching in a sort of melancholy procession, content to look perhaps at one thing or two in rooms where everything was lovely and often looking without seeing. I cannot claim that we did much better, but at any rate we gave more time and took more pains; nor did we ever cramp ourselves with that sorest of handicaps, a professional guide. It is true that on that first visit a kind Greek student attached himself to us and insisted on explaining things; but, as he had little English and we had less Greek, no great harm resulted. He meant well, but he had the impatient blindness of all guides, who describe a thing and pass on to the next, thinking it time wasted for the eye to appreciate and appropriate what the ear has heard; and we had no mind to be hurried. In the halls of sculpture there is nothing that is superlative, but much that is good and not a little that is curious. On a statue

base recently unearthed, you can see Greek boys playing hockey ; if it is not hockey, it is as near to it as makes no difference. And there is the noble head of a warrior, one of the more notable discoveries of the British School at Sparta ; there is no harm done if one fancies it to be Leonidas. In the hall of bronzes is a splendid figure of a youth, which came up in a fisherman's net. Several rooms are full of the most charming funeral monuments from the Cerameicus, stone vases and groups in relief, common work, not by any of the great masters, and yet touched by that wonderful dignity and restraint which, like an aura, envelopes everything Greek. Here is the argument of the Phaedo in stone, a sense of sorrow and mortality clouding a faith in the life beyond, without any prostrate grief or cowardly fear of death. Long galleries are full of vases, one of the largest collections in the world, of all periods from proto-Corinthian to the latest Attic. Too many, perhaps, except for the student ; but the black and red figured vases are an open door into the life of the ancients. But perhaps the most interesting section is the Mycenaean room, where we find a fascinating collection of relics of that age. Here are the ornaments, many of them crudely fashioned, which Schliemann found in a tomb and which justified the Homeric epithet of 'golden' Mycenae.

The Museum is in the heart of the modern city, which lies to the north and east of the ancient town and is laid out in straight streets cutting each other at right angles. Round every little square are rows of shoe-blacks for this is an entirely out-door business in Greece. To the east, the roads begin to slope up, for we are coming to the hill of Lycabettus, the tall, sharp shape of which dominates the city. One fine afternoon we climbed this hill by the long flight of steps. At the top, there is a church and a cafe and a little courtyard, from which you can see the whole plain of Attica and the hills that hem it in on every side. We descended down a steep unroaded slope into a wood of pines and, with some difficulty made our way out.

Not far from the point at which we came out are the British and American Schools of Archaeology. We had introductions to

both Directors and one evening, in pouring rain, we called on them and were kindly entreated. Valuable advice about the right things to see and the right way to see them was freely placed at our disposal; and at the British School we got other things equally welcome, a warm fire and tea and a charming hostess. We were also made free of the admirable library and it was here I unexpectedly met an old Oxford friend, who was spending, lucky fellow, six whole months in South Italy and Greece and Crete. This was towards the end of our stay, but we had time for some joint expeditions, notably one to Eleusis.

We found other friends also in Athens. My companion fortunately belongs to a family with wide ramifications and, wherever we went, in Cairo and Jerusalem and Alexandria, we met his cousins. A hundred years ago, a great-aunt of his had married a Rangabe, perhaps the very Rangabe whose *Antiquites Helleniques* is still respectfully referred to by classical scholars. At any rate, we had an introduction to his son, a fine old gentleman who had in his time played many parts and been colonel, ambassador, managing director of the Corinthian Canal and other things. He told me of the days when, as a boy, he went camping round Greece with his father who was then head of the Archaeological department and mentioned with pride that he had the knee-cap of Agamemnon. This, no doubt, had reference to Schliemann's excavations at Mycenae, when, having found a skeleton and gold crowns in a tomb, he jumped to the conclusion that it was the murdered Agamemnon. We met other interesting people in the house, most of them over sixty, but still full of energy and varied interests, who talked three or four modern languages fluently. One of them had been for many years in India as a director of Ralli Brothers. Another had been a high official and responsible for the removal of the Hermes from the Museum at Olympia to a separate shed. A third spent his time between tramping on Hymettus and writing a vast work in French on the Venetian families in Greece. At another time we had the privilege of meeting the Archbishop of Athens in his

palace and several bishops of the Orthodox Church. Everywhere, we met with the same kindness and courtesy.

But our main concern was with things and not people, and our feet strayed naturally to the Acropolis rather than to the *Odos Akademias* or the *Plateia Omonia*. There are different roads up the Acropolis, but our way usually took us up by its north-western side, between the Acropolis itself and its off-shoot, the *Areopagus*, on which Paul had stood and seen with mingled feelings the fairest of all temples raised by men's hands. You turn to the left and there, on the top of the wall of Cimon, are the tiny shrine of Athena Nike and the most lovely porch in the world, the *Propylaea*.

I do not think the *Propylaea* and the *Parthenon* are the sort of buildings that take one's breath away. There are such, the great hypostyle hall at Karnak, for instance, and Milan Cathedral and perhaps the New York skyscrapers. But the Greeks aimed at proportion rather than size and the beauty of these buildings is of that rare and spiritual type which appeals to the intellect rather than immediately to the eye, a beauty which grows on one and which, in some measure, subdues the soul to its quality. Part of it is due to the material—for here is no brick and plaster or rough porous stone, but marble, the best of all mediums, at once plastic and resistant, and capable of a truth and delicacy unapproachable in any other material. The architectural refinements of the *Parthenon* and the other buildings are well known. They are all shaped as lovingly and accurately as statues. Time has mellowed the marble to a creamy yellow, which melts into the clouds and contrasts sweetly with the blue of the Greek sky. Indeed, there is about them all, some quality which seems to make them of one nature with the hill and the sea and the sky and even of one design.

Shall I compare thee with a summer's day ?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

It is a pity that the Acropolis should be closed at night—perhaps at night Athena comes again and wreathes her helmet with olive leaves—there is still an olive in the *Erechtheum*, although no shoot of that sacred tree which sprouted a cubit in a night after it had

been burnt by the Persians. And Poseidon is not far off ; but the best view of the sea is from the hill of Philopappus, whence on a clear day you may discern Salamis and the Saronic Gulf, Aegina and the mountains of Epidaurus. Much of this is visible from the platform of the Nike temple and it was as we sat there that we were photographed unbeknownst. For photographers abound on the Acropolis and it is a common thing for a visitor to pose in front of the porch of the Maidens. Happy they who can brave such a comparison !

(To be concluded)

INDIAN CULTURE IN AFGHANISTAN.

PROFESSOR U. N. GHOSHAL, M. A., Ph. D.

THE connection of India with Afghanistan is as old as the dawn of history. The Rig-Veda shows acquaintance with the rivers descending into the Indus from the Afghan highlands, such as the Gomul (Gomati), the Kurrum (Krumu) and the Kabul (Kubha) with its tributary, the Swat (Suvastu). It mentions (besides the Gandharas of the lower Kabul valley and their neighbours the Kambojas) five tribes who took part in the famous battle of the ten kings (dasarajna) and who have been located in Eastern Afghanistan and Northern Baluchistan. The fixation of the centre of Vedic culture in the region of Kurukshetra during the later Samhita and Brahmana periods, which was accompanied by fresh developments of the sacrificial ritual, was followed by the reduction

of the Indo-Aryan tribes of the north-west to the status of the non-Aryan peoples on the fringe of Vedic Aryandom. The Apastamba and Baudhayana Srautasutras imposed expiatory penances for visiting the lands of the Gandharas and various non-Aryan tribes. Gandhara, however, was in the pre-Buddhist period a powerful state taking its place in a conventional list of eighteen Mahajana-padas, and if the view of Goldstucker and Bhandarkar is to be accepted as correct, produced in the seventh century the greatest of Sanskrit grammarians Panini's derivation of the word-form "Kapisayana" which the "Kasika" illustrates from the grape wine of Kapise shows the intimate connection of North-Western India with the Upper Kabul valley.

A new chapter opened with the rise of the Achaemenid dynasty of Persia. For the first time the outlying Iranian tribes of Bactria and the adjoining lands together with the Indian tribes on their eastern fringe were united into a gigantic Iranian empire, stretching far away to the western ocean. Cyrus (556--529 B. C.), the founder of the dynasty, conquered Bactria along with the Kabul valley (including Gandhara) and Arachosia (Kandahar). His illustrious descendant Darius followed up his success by the conquest of the Punjab and Sindh (518 B. C.).

Alexander's famous expedition was attended with the thorough subjugation of Afghanistan which he secured by means of a chain of colonies including Alexandria in Arachasia (modern Kandahar). But his premature death gave Chandragupta Maurya the opportunity not only to expel the Macedonian garrisons from the Punjab and Sindh, but also to wrest from Seleucus the countries corresponding to modern Afghanistan to the south of the Hindukush and Baluchistan. Asoka employed his "dharma-mahamatras" among other places in the territory of his Yavana Kamboja and Gandhara subjects and was able to boast of his "dharmavijaya" in that region. At the same time the "thera" Majjhantika went forth as the apostle of Kashmir and Gandhara. It may be presumed that Buddhism was carried at this time further up the Kabul valley to the frontier of the Hindukush. After

Asoka's death and consequent disintegration of his empire the Bactrian king Euthydemus and his son and successor Demetrius crossed the Hindukush and conquered the Kabul valley with Arachosia and part of the Punjab. From the first two possessions Demetrius and his family were driven out by a rival called Eukratides. Thenceforth the two rival houses divided between themselves the country extending from the Oxus to the Eastern Punjab. The bilingual coin-types of these kings show a compromise between the ruling Greek families and their Indian Prakrit-speaking subjects. An interesting example of this compromise is a coin-type of Eukratides bearing on the obverse the king's name and title ("Basileus slegalou Eukratidou") and on the reverse the legend "Kavisiye nagara-devata" in Kharosthi with the figure of a Greek city-goddess holding a mural crown. The rule of the Greek kings was subverted by the Scythians, the Parthians and the Kushans. The earliest Indo-Scythian king was the Maharaja Manes who ruled Sindh and the Punjab up to Gandhara. The famous Parthian king Gondophares ruled an extensive kingdom comprising Arachosia, Dragiana (Seistan) and the Kabul region. The Kushan king Kadphises I crossed the Hindukush from Bactria and conquered the Kabul valley with Arachosia. In the time of Kanishka the Kushan empire was extended at least up to Benares in the east. During the period of Scytho-Parthian and Kushan rule, Indian culture entered on a new period of expansion in the west. No foreign people, however, took such a prominent part in the diffusion of Indian culture as the Yueh-chi. It was from the Yueh-chi country that a Chinese ambassador took home certain Buddhist texts in 2 B. C., the first authentic date of the introduction of Buddhism into China. The earliest Indian missionaries to reach China, Kasyapa Matanga and Dharmaratna, came from the Yueh-chi country (68 A. D.). In the second and third centuries A. D. Yueh-chi monks went to China and translated Buddhist texts into Chinese. Kanishka, the imperial patron of Buddhism, adorned his capital Purusapura (modern Peshawar) with a wonderful relic-tower and monastery and he is credited with the building of Buddhist edifices in Kashmir and at

Kanisi. With the diffusion of Buddhism went hand in hand that of the Indian vernacular of the north-west.

The Kharosthi inscriptions show how in the early centuries of the Christian era, even foreigners were proud to record their donations, both religious and secular, in that tongue. The discovery of the famous Kharosthi manuscript of the Dhammapada in the Khotan region by a French traveller has not only proved the prevalence of the Indian north-western Prakrit in Central Asia but also suggested the existence of a whole rescension of the Buddhist canon in that tongue. The discovery of humorous Kharosthi documents from the Khotan region and further east by Sir Aurel Stein has shown how this Indian tongue was used as the official language in the Tarim basin in the third century of the Christian era.

The Buddhist monuments of Afghanistan are the most majestic memorials of Indian cultural expansion in that country. They may be traced at present in the Jelalabad plain, the Kabul region and, above all, at Bamiyan with its rock-cut shrines and cells and its far famed colossal images of the Buddha. The Bamiyan caves are so numerous that Abul-Fazl estimated their number at 12,000. The weight of the two standing colossal images of the Buddha has been calculated to be 173 and 135 respectively. They are coated with stucco and were originally gilt so much so that Hiouen Tsiang in the early part of the seventh century thought one of them to have been cast in bronze. The niches containing the colossi were originally decorated with beautiful paintings of which some extant specimens have been copied and reproduced in colour by the French archaeological mission of 1923. The style of the monuments has given rise to some difference of opinion. By Foucher, the distinguished authority on the Graeco Buddhist art of Gandhara they have been held to be a branch of this same school. Others have distinguished the Bamiyan sculptures with their decorations as partaking of the Buddhist art of Central Asia. One German writer has traced the connection between the Bamiyan monuments and the cave-shrines of Long-men

in north-western China and has thence drawn the conclusion that the Bamiyan art is a welling forth of the great art of the T'sang period (see the remarks of Diez in Viedermayer's German work on Afghanistan). The Buddhist monuments from Afghanistan may be divided into two groups—the stupas and the viharas (the residences of monks as well as the shrines of the gods). They are either structural or rock-cut like their proto types in India. The stupas range from the simple type of a dome resting upon platform to more elaborate and complex structures. Detached pillars of the kind existing in the Buddhist sites of India are represented by two pillars in the group of Kabul stupas. Of these the one called the Minar Chakri (the wheel minar) may have originally borne the figure of a wheel like the famous Sarnath column of the Emperor Asoka. The groups of caves serving at once as monasteries and shrines exist to the present day not only in Bamiyan but also in the plain of Jelalabad and the Kabul region. From the Kharosthi inscriptions it is possible to throw light on the forms of Buddhism prevailing in Afghanistan in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Hinayanists (especially of the Sarvastivadin School) were in the ascendant, even during Hiuen T'sang's time. Balkh to the north of the Hindukush was a famous centre of Hinayanism. While the cult of Buddhas and Bodhisatvas was in vogue, the worship of the Bodhisatvas Avalokitesvara and Manjusri and especially of the Dhyani Buddhas was unknown to the school of Gandhara.

Even in Mathura during the Kushan period, such images are almost conspicuous by their absence. For the rest, the worship of relics belonging to the three specified kinds viz. corporeal (*saririka*), *paribhogika* and memorial (*uddesika*) was in vogue. An example of the first two kinds is furnished by the famous shrine at Hadda (5 miles south of Jelalabad city) containing the skull-bone (*usnisa*) with the staff and robes of the Buddha, which was visited by Fa Hian at the beginning of the fifth century. The last named group is illustrated by a stupa set up at Nagarahara to mark the spot where the Buddhishatva received from the Buddha Dipamkara the prediction of his future birth as a Buddha. The

invasion of the Ephthalites or White Huns in the latter part of the 5th century was a great calamity for Buddhism in the regions of the Indian North-Western Frontier. At the beginning of the 5th century, Fa Hian found Buddhism in a flourishing condition in Gandhara. But Song-Yun who visited Bamiyan in 518 A. D., while admiring the splendour and the power of the Ephthalites, lamented their lack of faith in Buddha. At this period arose the Hun Mihiragula as the scourge of Buddhism: the reputed slayer of three 'kotis' of human beings (trikotiha), he devastated the Buddhist shrines of Gandhara and gave the death-blow to the Gandhara School of Art. The rule of the Western Turks who destroyed the empire of the White Huns brought with it a short spell of prosperity. Hiuen Tshang during his visit in 630 A. D. found Buddhism flourishing at Balkh, Bamiyan and Kapisa. At Balkh, he noticed the great Navavihara monastery which was the only Buddhist establishment north of the Hinderknot producing a succession of commentators on the Canon. At Bamiyan the reigning king used to hold a quinquennial assembly at which he gave away all his possessions to the monks, his officials afterwards redeeming the valuables on his behalf. At Kapisa the king who called himself a Kshatriya made every year a silver image of Buddha. By the time of Hiuen Tshang Mahayanism had gained ground in Nagarahara, Lampaka and Kapisa. The Hevajratantra (belonging to a somewhat later time) mentions Lampaka as a Bodhisatvapithan. During the same period Brahmanism made some progress no doubt because of the general decay of Buddhism. Hiouen Tsiang noticed numbers of "deva temples" at Kapisa, Lampaka, Nagarahara, and Jaguda (Ghazni). At Kapisa there were above 1,000 Digambaras, Pashupatas, and "those who wear wreaths of skulls as head-ornaments."

A great calamity was now to overtake Indian culture in these frontier lands. In the reign of the Caliph Ottman (644-656 A. D.) an Arab army invaded Zabulistan (Ghazni) and Kabul. Then the Arab General Kantaiba bin Muslim invaded Balkh and destroyed the famous Navavihara monastery. The head of this monastery

accepted Islam and his sons afterwards rose to very high offices in the service of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid. In the early part of the 8th century the Arab general Kotaiba conquered Transoxiana, while another general, Muhammad bin Kasim effected the conquest of Sindh. Thus the non-Islamic Kingdoms in Afghanistan were caught between the upper and the nether mill stones of a grinding-machine. In the reign of Mamun, the last great Caliph of the House of Abbas, Bamiyan and Kabul were forced to accept Islam. In the middle of the same century, however, Ku-Kong found Buddhism still flourishing at Addivana and Gandhara and visited the famous Usnisa shrine to the south of Nagarahara. A Pala inscription of the 9th century has preserved the life-history of a distinguished Buddhist monk Viradwa who wandered from his home at Nagarahara to the Nalanda monastery, where he was honoured by King Devapala.

Before the close of the third quarter of the same century, however, Yakub Bin Laith, the founder of the Soffaride dynasty, annexed Balkh, Bamiyan, and Kabul. It was about this time that Lalliya, the Brahmana minister of the last Kushan King of Kabul, deposed his master and founded an independent dynasty known to history as the Hindu Shahujas of Sind. All later successors, Jaipal and Anandpal fought valiantly, but in vain, against the advancing hosts of the Ghaznavite Sultan Subuktigin and his famous son Mahmud Lampaka, Nagarahara, and finally Ohind itself were lost to the victors. The last memorable battle took place on the banks of the Toushi river to the south of Kashmir where Trilochanapala, son of Anandpal, after performing prodigies of valour, was defeated by the Ghaznavite. The utter ruin of this heroic dynasty wrung from the Brahmana author of the "Kashmir Chronicle", the pathetic lament: "Of the Shahiya kings, one now asks whether with its kings, ministers, and court it ever existed"; while it drew from the great Moslem scholar Alberuni, the generous tribute: "In all their grandeur they never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which was good and right; they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing." With this

epitaph on the last Hindu dynasty that upheld the cause of Hindu culture in the lands beyond the Indus, the story of ancient Indian culture in Afghanistan during a period of at least twenty-two centuries fittingly closes.

WORLD OF WILLIAM CLISSOLD

HUMAYUN KABIR—*6th Year English.*

II

AS we saw, Clissold starts to give us an account of himself and his life by describing to us the framework of the mind into which we seek to classify and arrange all our experience. The first book is, therefore, rightly named the *Frame of the Picture*. It gives us the visible, sensible world as it appears to Clissold and the thoughts and emotions that the riddle of existence arouses in his heart. Knowledge grows from day to day, the human mind grapples more and more with abstruse and subtle facts which for ever seem to elude the grasp till our intelligence and imagination stagger before the heights or depths of physical nature. The easy belief and complacency of the ignorant past have been shattered and it is no longer possible to-day to shut ourselves up in our comfortable faiths. The critical faculty has been newly awakened and applied to the manifold aspects of our life and every hypothesis tested in the light of experience and knowledge. For Europe, at any rate, religion has lost its former significance and the unmeaning ceremonials of a bygone age exist only to retard the progress of mankind. Values have changed, and already a new purpose begins to obtain among a section of the human race, who may well form the vanguard of a new age of enlightenment that is to come.

But Clissold, as he goes on discussing his beliefs and disbeliefs, never loses touch with concrete life, and there is no degeneration to didactic dissertations. Anecdotes and episodes of his childhood are scattered in the midst of discussions of his faith which serve to give unity to all his experience from childhood onward, and characters and personages are introduced who serve to wield the theories to the facts of life. Not only are the common beliefs and the simple faiths of the ordinary man discussed, but also the grounds and motives which underlie all our ideas. Annihilation is an uncomfortable prospect, and it is small wonder if we attach more importance to the evidence in favour of immortality than to that against it. The paradox of Philip Gosse is not after all such a rare phenomenon. Clissold's beliefs cannot be discussed at greater length in the short space of this article, but it has to be conceded that he sees life as a whole more steadily and more consistently than the average man, whose outlook upon life is generally a strange admixture of ill-assorted fancies and thoughts picked up from all sorts of places.

In the second book, Clissold begins by telling us of his childhood and the shadow that hung over his young life for the crime that his father had committed. The question of punishing the son for the failing of the father has often engaged the attention of Wells who fails to understand the logic or utility of punishing an innocent person after the actual offender has escaped unscathed. But Clissold soon passes from reminiscences of early boyhood and a father who though a great businessman never took business seriously to discussions of economic topics—perhaps it is natural that he should do so. So follow long discussions as to the origin of money and the history of labour through the ages. Karl Marx is dragged in and we have a chapter of gripping interest while the soul of Marx is laid bare by Clissold. He attributes the class animosity of socialism to the embittered personality of Marx and points out that the idea of conflict between capital and labour is not merely unfounded but positively injurious, for only on their co-operation can the world prosper.

Here we have to note the fact that the book has suffered as a work of fiction because of this discursive manner of treating economic, philosophic and political themes while relating the events of Clissold's life. It is true that Clissold himself again and again tells us that he is no craftsman in letters and has put down his thoughts and reminiscences as they occurred to him, but we have to consider the book as a work of fiction, and it is as such that Wells would have us adjudge its value. It appears to lack homogeneity and the two strands of intellectual discussion and emotional experience can be separated from each other, thus taking away from its unity. Not that intellectual elements have no place in a work of art—it is in the fusion of intellect and emotion that highest art originates—only they must be fused into the experience and life of the individuals whom it seeks to portray. Wells himself has in "Tono Bungay" or "The Passionate Friends" told us of his thoughts and beliefs, but they have been absorbed into the organism of the book and we feel no alien or foreign element.

Yet, by this looseness of texture and lack of homogeneity, the book has gained something of the inconsequence of life itself. In real life we can rarely trace any plan or purpose through the manifold events that crowd our experience, and incident seems to follow incident without any reference to any preconceived idea. This fact has immensely widened the scope of the book so that scarcely anything is out of place within its vast compass. As a result we have a work, not exactly a novel, but all the same a true work of art which gives us a faithful representation of life as it is lived by the intellectual of the modern day,—his faiths and doubts, hopes and fears, his loves and aspirations.

I feel I must apologise to both the writer and the readers of the book for thus cutting it up into sections. The best comment upon the book is the book itself and anybody who wants to get an idea of its magnitude and artistic finish should go to the original. Wells has excelled himself in the lucidity of exposition in this work, and left little for anybody to write upon it. This imperfect analysis can at the best give but a faint

idea of the beauty of the work, and I feel almost guilty of travesty for thus mutilating a great book. But I plunged into it at an unguarded moment and have to go on, making as best as I may of a fundamentally bad business.

How even a most unpromising material can be elevated to the dignity of artistic creation is well illustrated by the third book. Few are the writers who would dare to introduce a disquisition upon advertisement in the midst of a work of fiction and weave out of it the romance of trade and commerce. But Wells has not only attempted it, but gloriously succeeded as well. With a supreme audacity of imagination he plunges into the world of trade as we find it to-day, and lifts the story of its petty transactions into something of the dignity of romantic and perilous adventures. He dreams of the advertiser as teacher and prophet, and foresees a day when ignorance and superstition shall vanish before the advance of education which will be so advertised as to reach the humblest and remotest nooks and corners of human society.

In this book is also sketched out at full length the picture of Clissold's elder brother, Dickon. A big, burly fellow, with a desire to see things moving on, he has the genius to appreciate the immense significance of advertisement in the modern days of facility of communication. Perhaps less intellectual than Clissold, he is a man of simpler desires and instincts and in many respects much more a primitive man than his sophisticated younger brother. Contrasted to his full length portrait is the exquisite vignette of his wife Minnie, one of the most wonderful of women Wells has ever drawn, or rather suggested with a few deft touches here and there. As refined and exquisite in her tastes and perceptions as she is slender in person, she thoroughly understands Dickon and mothers the big boy in him with tact and sympathy. She is perfectly aware of his many lapses, but with wonderful imagination she forgives him all his minor faults and touches only upon what was sweetest and purest in their comradeship and love. Her last letter to him is charged with a humaneness of sentiment that almost brings tears to our eyes and we join with Dickon in silently thanking the fates that such a sweet

creature should live among us to add a bright silver touch to the darkness all around. But Dickon never fully understands her. There was in her nature a touch of shy reserve which he could never overcome. She remains for him an enigmatical figure even to the very end, a person with something of the mystery we are accustomed to associate with elves and fairies with distant and alien lands.

Wells has ever believed that the two most important problems for humanity to solve are those of labour and of sex. Of the first he has discussed as he unfolds for us the history of toil through the ages, and all his pleadings for a freer and more spacious life are based upon a change in the present distribution of the fruits of labour. In the fourth book, he starts to analyse the tangle of desires and there follow some of the most wonderful pages ever written by Wells. The first vague consciousness of the impulse of sex in early adolescence, the formless, yet intense, desire for something it knows not, "the strongest, richest, most terrifying, distressing and debasing tumult in the blood," the hidden struggle and sustained anxiety of the stress of youth find wonderful expression in his pages. The lack of sympathy from the outside world, the barriers of convention and respectability that prevent the dissemination of the knowledge about the fundamental facts of life, the attempt to ignore one of the most potent forces for both good and evil, have resulted in more misery and suffering than can be justified by the good accruing from this course of concealment and suppression. Relationship between man and woman is not free and natural, society looks askance at the friendship between the sexes, and the multiform phenomena of a man's emotional life are sought to be explained and condemned on the basis of physical desire. Clissold rushes into an inadvertent marriage and for a time sex rules predominant in his life. But then comes disillusionment, and he finds as every intelligent man must find for himself that mere physical desire without intellectual sympathy and comradeship is but a frail bond to hold together two persons to share the joys and sorrows of

common life. Clissold comes to recognise that affection, rather than passion, forms a true and lasting basis of marriage, and as Wells himself has said elsewhere, 'friendship lit by passion is the best form of love between man and woman.'

This 'motif' of precipitate marriage and consequent separation has been worked out again and again by Wells. In *Tono Bungay*, George marries Marian, but only to get out of it later on. So with *Kipps*, *Polly* and others. This problem of two persons coming to love each other and then gradually drifting apart, is insistent in the modern world. Love decays, and all social customs and institutions to keep alive the pretence of a thing that is no more, fail to bring consolation and happiness to the human heart. Jealousy still reigns supreme, and it is this quality of desire tinged with antagonism that is at the root of most human misery. The possessive instinct which still influences men and women in their mutual relations, the desire for exclusive proprietorship, must be abandoned and a standard of free and flexible comradeship established before this problem can be solved.

From the tangle of his own desires and the failure of his own life, Clissold passes on to tell us of his dreams and hopes for the future. The hope of mankind lies in greater knowledge and understanding, and a more equitable distribution of wealth in all strata of society. Man must grow out of regarding himself as the prime or sole concern of his life, and change his complete pre-occupation with his own feelings and deeds and pride and prospects into a concern for the wider demands of the racial adventure. The social instinct which made man build up his civilisation to what it is to-day must be pushed to its logical consequence in order that man might be released from "the traditions, economic usages, social injustices, mental habits, encumbering institutions, needless subserviencies and puerile interpretations that dwarf, confuse and cripple life upon this planet, that divide it, impoverish it, keep it in a continual danger from the wasting fever of war and threaten him with extinction."

But Clissold, if not also Wells, seems to expect that this better

day will dawn because the rich men of the world will make up their minds that poverty and social injustice shall no longer exist. If the millennium is ever to come, and young and ardent hearts all over the world look eagerly forward to see its coming, it is to be doubted whether the initiative will come from capital. It seems more probable that men, not rich in worldly goods but rich in sympathy, courage and vision, shall help to bring forward the glorious day when man shall be free, equal and happy.

With this new orientation of human life, the problems of labour and of sex shall have vanished. The things fundamental that lie at the root of love are desire, dependence and admiration, and when man has adjusted them so as to lead to a life of comradeship and sympathy and equality, the woman question will no longer trouble our consciousness. The antagonism of sex will be at an end.

So gradually knowledge dawns upon Clissold, and he prepares to launch his life anew in conformity to his new ideas and ideals—in his own words, to begin the ‘open conspiracy.’ But then fate, if there is such a thing, willed it otherwise and on the eve of putting his plans into execution, he dies of a motorsmash. But he would have attributed his death to chance, the blind mechanical forces that rule our lives. Through all these disquisitions about his ideas and the growth of his mind, the impression of an eminently lovable personality is borne upon our minds. Not that we have to agree with all his ideas and theories—as a matter of fact we do not—but the human element in them, the questioning, uncertain and doubtful groping after the truth cannot but touch our hearts. His petty faults and idiosyncrasies, his magnificent frankness and the charm and ease of his conversation—all combine to endear him to us. But it is, above all, his preoccupation with life and its problems, his strivings to make of this world a brighter and a happier show, that move us most. For we are also deeply concerned with our own lives and want to make it as joyous and fruitful as we may.

It is necessary only to look at the many living men and women who breathe through its pages to appreciate the wonderful artistry

of Wells. Types absolutely different from each other meet and jostle and depart—Clara, a magnificent female animal, Sirrie, who retains her innate fineness through all the dust and soil of social life, Clementina, the feminine woman with her inexplicable ebb and flow of humour and spirits and the enigmatical quality of her desires.

But as Dickon says, and Clissold said again and again, 'All things flow.' Ideas grow and change, institutions flourish and decay, individuals come and go, but the world goes on for ever, unmindful of their birth, life and death. This movement and flux of the world has enthralled all thinking hearts and all our attempts are directed to the solution of the riddle of life. But we ourselves shall pass, as all things pass, and time flow on as it has ever done.

THE LAND OF PAGODAS

BENOYENDRANATH BANERJEE—*Third Year Arts Class.*

“—a land of cheer,
 Where the temple-bells make ceaseless song
 And the Buddha smiles to hear,
 Where the lotus lures and the rice-fields laugh
 At a harvest's easy boon,
 Where nobody worries and more than half
 The day is afternoon.”

Burma enchants, entaptures, infatuates. Her glorious pagodas feast the eye, her rapturous music enthrals the ear. It is the land of the shaven-headed *pōngyis* (priests) of both sexes in ochre-coloured robes and begging-bowls in hand ; of the emancipated and domineer-

ing fair sex appearing all the more fair in dresses of riotous colours, their albeit flat shining faces besmeared with *tānākḥā* (sandal-paste); of a contented and gay manhood attired in beautifully coloured silken *loongyis*, *aingyis* (upper garment) and *gaung baungs* (head dress). Palms so commonly associated in English verse with pagodas are to be met with mainly in upper Burma, the centre of ancient Burmese monarchy and civilisation. The lower Burma of rice-mills, oil-refineries and timber-yards has grown up with the advent of the Europeans: it is *modern* and progressive. Upper Burma, the storehouse of tombs, treasures and traditions, is conservative, and smacks of the old monarchs who ruled at Amarapura, Sàgàing, Ava and Māndālay; of the monastic seclusions where monks living on royal endowments preached and prescribed laws; of palace intrigues and despotic courts.

To us, the land of pagodas is not only an Indian province, but the land that preserves the memory of the victories and colonisation of Tālāings (probably from Telinghana in Madras) and Manipuri adventurers, the land hallowed by the nobler victories won by the Indian teachers and monks who carrying the torch of culture gave shape to the Burmese literature and their systems of law, and to a lesser extent, their script.

Writing was brought to Burma about 300 A.D. from South India, and Burmese script bears a closer resemblance to South Indian round scripts than to the Mongolian. "The Burmese are a Mongolian race, yet none of their traditions hark back to China or Mongolian things: all hark back to India. The early part of their chronicles reads as if they were descended from Buddha's clansmen and lived in Upper India. Even their folk-lore is largely Hindu....As in the rest of Indo-china, most of their towns have two names, the one vernacular, the other classical Indian." * Legends tell of the conflict between Hinduism and Buddhism, the existence in Pāgān of religious worship similar to that of the Tāntrics: and during a railway journey in the Shan plateau (near the Chinese frontier), I was

* Outlines of Burmese History by G. E. Harvey I. C. S.

agreeably surprised to listen to a fairly educated Burman claiming Buddha to have been born in Burma and performing deeds attributed to Rājā Harishchandra in our folk-lore. Hindu Astrologers in Burmese courts drew out the Burmese Kacchapancha Era beginning in 638 A. D. ; the *Dhammathāts* and *pyāttans* on which Burmese law is based are adaptations of Manu ; the greater part of Burmese literature *till recently* consisted of prose and poetical versions of Pali texts and stories ; the early architecture (as evinced especially in the Pagodas of Pāgān, the ruins of which extending over miles consist mainly of temples and caves built in imitation of Indian models by Indian architects and decorated by Indian artists) of Burma till the 13th century was distinctly Indian, and even to-day Burmese architecture is as much Indian as Mongolian. Burmese kings sent envoys to Indian courts, crossed the bay on pilgrimages to Budhgayā, had many Indian ministers and military organisers. Arākān in the 15th century came under the protection of Gaur and her kings had a Mohamedan designation to their Arākānese names and henceforth began to strike medallions and coins with the *Kalwā* in Persian script. Ships full of rich merchandise crossed and re-crossed the Bay of Bengal for centuries, and Nabobs and nāibs, English companies and pirate traders grew rich by this commerce.

The history of Portugese and "Mag" raids on Bengal, the occupation of Burma by the British from their base in India and its consequent annexation to the Indian Empire are fairly well-known to us ; but, then, the drab 'finis' had been inscribed on the glorious chapter of Burmese history.

Burma's priceless treasures are the Pagodās. They have been built by a simple religious people, strangers to the abstruse depths of metaphysics. To live a life of ease ; to offer prayers and flowers at the lotus feet of the Lord ; and to build a pagoda or a rest-house of pilgrims or to endow a *pongyi.kyaung* (monastery) with what little money has remained after a rather extravagant life's journey—entitling the *phayā-tagā* (pagoda-builder) to a passport to heaven—this has been the ambition of generations of Burmans.

Pagodas have been built by hundreds every year, to decay and fall in ruins and later to be replaced by the pagodas of later generations of *phayā-tagās*. In the seclusion of the pagodas and monasteries grew up the civilisation of Burma, the legacy of generations of pious endowers; and there were Burmese maids and boys taught the alphabets and initiated into the beauties of the scriptures. Many a time have the monks safely steered the ship of state through perilous waters, preaching unity and nationalism and have been acclaimed as diplomats and masters of statecraft by historians. Every Burman Buddhist has for a period to live the life of a monk or nun in his or her young years. Similar institutions may be traced in Europe in the Medieval times, in India in the centuries of Buddhist predominance; but nowhere can be discerned the influence exerted for centuries and even to the present day by the monasticism of the Land of Pagodas.

Yet, it would be a mistake to be under the impression that the Burmans are a meek, religious, unostentatious people. The Burman does not kill an animal or fish himself, but he allows others to kill them for him, and his conscience is clear! The religion of the Burman is simple—belief in the fundamental doctrine of *Karma*, of *Samsāro* and *Nibbāna*; the chanting of hymns with flowers, lamps and incense before the benign Lord, and also to offer animals and food to the *Nāts* or evil spirits.* He is religious in the primitive sense and is not at all an astute philosopher.

A more aesthetic nation than the Burmese is nowhere to be found. The grace, beauty and colour-effect of the Burmese dress is comparable only to the beautiful patches of colour that nature has kept hidden in the corners of earth that men do scarcely tread. A Burmese street reminds one of the royal courts of the "Arabian Nights", a Burmese festival creates Fairy-land in the pagodas.

The *pwes* (dramatic performances) are staged in open air on a thatched stage. They are of four kinds, viz. historical dramas in-

* For a clear exposition of the peculiar Burmese viewpoint, Taw Sein Ko's Burmese Sketches Vol. I may be consulted.

terspersed with songs, posturing-dance with songs, drum-dance and marionette shows. The *pwe* commonly shown is the *yein pwe* or posturing dance, which is never indecent in posing but sometimes the songs and accompanying skits are not quite decent. The grace and equipoise of the dancer and the accompanying instrumental music are always refreshing and often lulling: the songs are sung in a rather monotonous, weird tune. Of late, Western instruments and tunes are having a vogue in Burma and the traditional music is losing much of its old originality and romance in the process of hybridization.

The Burmese bazar is a rather untidy buzzing bee-hive; the women predominate in the stalls and have sharp tongues but silvery voices. Oftener than not, the husband acts as the subordinate and the wife as the principal in shops, and the majority of customers are of the fair sex. Most of the stationery and provision-stores are in the hands of Madrased Mahomedans called *Chulias* or of the Chinese. Hindusthani is generally understood in every city and scarcely a village can be found where the Chittagong Mohamedan or Madrasi *Chulia* has not penetrated. It is of interest to note that the industrious, frugal Chettiars of Madras transact the functions of bankers and money-lenders through their network of branches and have got the majority of Burmese peasantry and rich folk in their clutches; they have done immense good to Burma and have also caused much distress. Their exactions have started afoot a movement for non-payment of their dues.

The Burman, while he is in the street, is tidy and clean; but the interior of his residence is often dirty. He eats several times in small quantities,—*ngapi* or preserved fish-paste is a delicious sauce to him with rice or flour-pudding. Walking-restaurants are very common in the towns, because often it is impossible to prepare dishes every two or three hours. In remote parts, the old self-sufficient village economy can be found, where barter to a certain extent is very common.

So much about the people. Burmans owe their national traits to geographical and physical conditions to a remarkable extent.

The Upper-Burma-man living in a "dry zone" with less than 40" inches of unequally distributed rainfall in the year is hardy, straightforward and dashing; the Lower-Burma-man is favourably treated by nature and is more ease-loving, soft, resourceful and prudent. Upper Burma with the hills and gorges, hill-stations with pines and snowfall during the winter, extremes of temperatures and virgin forests, offers a pleasing prospect and adventure to the sojourner, but is rather uncongenial for a long residence. Lower Burma, where "all the day is afternoon", is more equable in climate and is the part of Burma fairly densely populated and offers all the facilities that modern civilisation has brought to India. The Delta of the Irrawaddy is intersected by creeks and rivers offering great facilities for trips, interesting and pleasant.

The volcanic crater of Pòpā, the rapids in the upper course of the Irrawaddy, the ruby-mines of Mógok, the ruins of Pâgān, the oil fields of Yen ān-gyā-ung and Singú, the palace and historic hill at Mandalay and such spots have furnished the romance that has been sung by poets and portrayed by travellers.

The Land of the Pagodas is now being bespotted with rice-mills, timber-yards, oil-refineries and tall chimneys. Should monotony and standardization be allowed to encroach on pagoda yards and palm-groves? On the proper solution of such problems rests Asia's emergence in a new role in the coming Renaissance.

REVOLT AGAINST DEMOCRACY.

ANILENDRANATH MITTER—*Fourth Year Arts Class.*

This is an age of constitutional experiments—parliamentary government prevails in England, one-man rule in Italy, Turkey, Spain and certain other countries, new parliamentary republicanism in Germany, Bolshevism in Russia, Bureaucracy in India. This will perhaps show that the peoples throughout the world are in a state of confusion as to the form of government that will suit them, best.

Democracy is not merely a form of government ; it is not even primarily a form of government. As Prof. Giddings says, democracy may be either a form of the government, a form of the state, a form of the society or a combination of all three. Democracy as applied to society connotes equality, as applied to the state it means the ultimate sovereignty of the community as-a-whole, as applied to government it implies the actual administration of affairs by the people. I will confine my essay to one aspect of the problem viz. revolt against democratic forms of government, and I shall try to show that democratic government is neither practicable nor desirable.

In the course of history, democracy has assumed various forms. Strictly speaking, a democratic form of government is one in which the community as-a whole, directly and immediately, without delegates or representatives, performs the functions of sovereignty. Such is democratic government of the pure type. But this is only possible in small compact city states. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle beheld something resembling it in the Athens of Pericles. More recently, however, the Forest Cantons of Switzerland fulfilled in the main the necessary conditions. That form of democratic government which is so violently challenged to-day is called Parliamentary

* Read before a meeting of the Political Philosophy Seminar.

democracy or Representative government. Pure democracy of the old type is no longer possible in modern big national states.

Let us remember Abraham Lincoln's famous definition of democracy as a "government of the people, by the people and for the people", and see how a parliamentary democracy works. Though the people are the sovereign, they themselves do not manage the government. They send representatives and delegate their sovereignty to these representatives. The people exercise their sovereign control by exercising their votes in times of election. Thus the parliament becomes the sovereign assembly where the representatives divide themselves into parties holding certain principles, and the government is carried on by conference. The opinion of the majority of the representatives thus divided into parties prevails. I shall try to show that such an intricate and complex governmental machinery cannot possibly work. There is danger at every step. In an age which is enamoured of the glamour of democracy, it will be rather sacrilegious on my part to speak against what Sumner thought was 'impossible to criticise or discuss'.

Why has there been such a revolt? The crisis through which democracy is passing at present is due to two distinct causes. On the one hand are the particular difficulties inseparably bound up with the working of democratic institutions, difficulties which, so to speak, are an inherent part of democracy. On the other hand are the difficulties of a general order, the common inheritance of the age and not specially connected with democracy.

Democracy is inherently fragile. The instability of democratic constitutions, the changefulness of democratic parties, the unscrupulous logrollings of democratic groups, have inevitably militated against the constructive efficiency of democratic states. The instability of democratic governments would be apparent from the following facts. During the period 1848—1852, democracy achieved a momentary triumph but within the next four years it destroyed itself. In France the excesses of Louis Blanc and his Committee of Public Safety led to the establishment of Louis Napoleon in

power ; in Germany the incredible garrulities and inanities of the National Parliament ended in the restoration of Austro-Prussian duocracy ; even in Britain, the errors of the Chartists and the violence of the Young Irish thoroughly discredited the popular cause. The rising democracies, deluded and misled by blind guides and false prophets, blundered so irretrievably into chaos and contention that only "men of blood and iron" like Bismarck, men of craft like Cavour, men of destiny like Napoleon could bring back order and secure rational progress.

In the big representative democracies of to-day, democracy is impossible without some sort of organisation and this endangers democracy by introducing an oligarchical element. Prof. Giddings believes that oligarchy in party-politics is but one aspect of the operation of the sociological law that the "Few always dominate."

Crozier rejects democratic government as "cumbrous and unwieldy and unsuited to any condition of civilised society existing at the present time or likely to exist this side of the millennium." The democratic ideal is opposed to militarism and Imperialism. Democracy will inevitably break down if the government pursues a policy of war and violence. The great movement of colonial expansion which was started in the beginning of the 80's was really a flat negation of the principle of "government by conference." Thus a curious antithesis arose—As parliamentary institutions based on the principles of government by conference were spreading all over Europe, government by force was gaining ground afresh in the newly acquired territories inhabited by low cultured races. The Nietzschean principle, that those who possessed the will to power and faculty to execute this will are the natural rulers of mankind regardless of social contracts or theories of associations among men, was gaining ground. The application of the principle of government by force abroad which after all is the meaning of Imperialism affected men's attitude towards the problems of government at home.

Moreover democracy is not safe if the world is divided into groups of countries not only of unequal strength or unequal wealth but of quite unequal opportunities. A state of affairs cannot last

where the great undeveloped portions of the globe are a kind of trust to be exploited for the benefit of a few Powers who deny others access to this wealth. And again the world will not be safe for democracy if property accumulates in the hands of a comparatively few men at the expense of the many. It is impossible to maintain a state of affairs where the many have the votes and the few have the wealth.

Looking at the present times we cannot deny that war is a permanent social institution. Modern democracies have not yet reached that stage of civilisation where war is regarded as an evil—it is now regarded as a necessary evil. Quick decision and rapid action is necessary in conducting a war and hence power goes into one hand and so democracy ceases, and such a thing really happened during the last Great War when the governments of the so-called democracies were carried on either by a few or by one. The modern states of the world after the War were reconstituted on the opinion of the Great Four—Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando.

Let us consider the difficulties which arise from the application of the special problems of democratic government to practical affairs such as equality, liberty, public opinion etc.

The principle of equality is the basis of popular governments. Le Bon argues that there is no such thing as natural equality, it is a monstrous fiction and Carlyle calls it “palpable incredibility and delirious absurdity.” To the modern man of science it is ridiculous to equate the man in the street with Socrates or Shakespeare, Judas Iscariot with Jesus Christ. Until the laws of heredity equalise men, democratic doctrines will remain mere words. The application of this principle is attended with two dangers, firstly, a spirit of inequality will lead to Aristocracy and secondly, a spirit of extreme equality will pave the way for the domination of wire-pullers. If this spirit of equality is carried to extremes, it is irreconcilable with that of liberty. Lecky proves that democracy instead of extending liberty curtails it through restrictive legislation. “The deepest cause” says Lord Acton “which made the French Revolu-

tion so disastrous to liberty was its theory of equality thus pressed to extremes." There cannot be, strictly speaking, a general will. People only follow their leaders who are almost always skilful electioneers and nothing more.

All these facts go to show the instability and fundamental weakness of democratic constitutions. Democracy alone can never exist. Oligarchy is essential. Thus the majority of human beings in a condition of eternal tutelage are predestined by tragic necessity, to the dominion of a small minority and must be content to constitute the pedestal of an oligarchy. Miss Follet is of opinion that with present political organisations democracy is impossible to attain.

Democratic government is the rule of the incompetent and the untrained. The art of government is a technical and supremely difficult business and that it requires powers of mind and character of a high and rare order and it can only be entrusted to a limited body of the best. Mazzini himself defined democracy as the progress of all, through all under the leading of the best and the wisest.' Whether the consent of the members of a community is a necessary condition of good government is answered in the negative by Plato. H. G. Wells follows Plato. He describes an Utopia which is the result of the forcible overthrow of representative government by a voluntary aristocracy of trained men of science. Intelligence resides with the few and not with the many. Progress is a function of aristocracy—the well-known Straussian doctrine that History is a sound Aristocrat. Greatness, Maine holds, comes from the minority and the minority has no voice in conducting a representative government. The downfall of the Commonwealth so intensified Milton's aversion to popular rule that it produced what is one of the most curious passages in all literature. In *Paradise Regained*, he defines the people :

And what the people but a herd confused,
 A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
 Things vulgar, and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise?
 They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other..... ..

The intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce if few is raised."

People always have leaders but there has been a decline in the characters of leaders now-a-days. The democratic principle has reduced all mankind to a dead level of incapacity, remarks R A. Gram. Nietzsche who is of the same opinion, says "Democracy is not only a degenerating form of political organisation, it is also equivalent to a degenerating and declining type of man" Democracy by its worship of the average, obstructs all specialisation and modern representatives are merely replicas of mass mediocrity and representative institutions as such are merely a means of hoodwinking the people who for one single day only have a show of power, when the average man is asked to choose a leader. He either chooses some incompetent person and thereby ruins society or he makes democracy impossible by choosing an exceptional man who cannot be easily controlled by the average intellect. The incompetence of the multitude disgusted Carlyle who said "All that democracy ever meant lies there, the attainment of a truer and truer aristocracy or government by the best." That the multitude can have the capacity to select capable officers is a shocking idea, says Le Bon. Men in political society are mostly fools or 'rotten canaille.' Decision upon the basis of a popular vote is the rule of ignorance and there is a further evil that the few rich can buy off the vote. The money power in a democracy is a great standing evil; corruption and venality are the natural consequences. An influential and rich party can create public opinion by press propaganda and can even by their combined effort send their own man to the assembly by defeating a better candidate.

Democracy has failed to secure a good government. Democracy, new to its task of choosing representatives and appointing executives and judiciaries, has not yet learned to perform its elective function well. An electoral system simply places power in the hands of skilful electioneers. The chief burden of Carlyle's condemnation of political democracy is that it ignores or rejects 'the noble silent man' who best could serve it and places power in the hands of

windbags and charlatans. Who are the people to whom all the world over the democracies tend to entrust legislative power, administrative control and judicial authority? They are the men of mediocre intelligence, not men of light and leading, but men who give expression to the confused and nebulous sentiments of the crowd. They are orators, men of words, logic-choppers who hypnotise the multitude by eloquence and make the worse cause seem the better. 'Democracy is the paradise of the shrieker, the babbler, the word-spinner, the flatterer and the tuft hunter.' (Hartmann) The crisis of democracy is the crisis of journalism, says Lippmann. Parties distort public opinion. They are the levers of private interests. Ostrogorski traces the degradation of legislatures, the corruption in administration, the lack of public responsibility and inadequate leadership to party system. Public opinion is the basic fact in a democracy and the chief problem of democracy is to ensure its accuracy. Granted that the highest life and the fullest self-realisation are possible only in a democratic state, it is equally true that no good life at all and no self determination whatsoever are possible in a community where the majority tyrannise. Lord Acton says, "The one pervading evil of democracy is the tyranny of the majority or rather of that party, not always the majority, that succeeds by force or fraud in carrying the elections."

Admirers of democratic utopias are fond of shilting the ground. They constantly argue that the difficulties which arise in a democratic government are more or less visible in other forms of constitution, but they cleverly avoid the answer to the charges.

The "state-blind" defenders of democracy are fond of holding America as an example where democracy is working well. To this we may echo the words of Burgess, America's own political philosopher: "I do not hesitate to call the governmental system of the U. S. A. the aristocracy of the robe and I do not hesitate to pronounce this the truest aristocracy for the purposes of government which the world has yet produced." What is the present tendency of democracy? Is it spreading? To describe the conditions of the moment would be as if one should try to paint a landscape over

which lights and shadows were coming and going every moment under clouds driven before a gale. Seven new states have sprung up in Europe since 1918. But it may be also contended that in the form which it has almost everywhere taken, that of government by a representative assembly, democracy shows signs of decay. America joined the war to make "the world safe for democracy"; and what has been the result? The crowned heads of Europe have been replaced by a number of uncrowned heads.

The great war has shaken European economics to their foundation. The preponderance of economic interests has brought about the state of a parliamentary deadlock. No permanent majority can be formed. Practically all over the world the days of plain parliamentary majorities are over. Parliaments have broken up into different economic groups or blocks. Majorities can be formed only by "unholy" alliances. People are sick of this state of affairs. What do they care for democracy if democracy does not do good? What is the good of asking the consent of the people to the acts of their government, when the people cannot agree and the governments cannot act? They do not know where to turn for unity of mind and purpose; for they have no leader. And in the misery of their hearts, in the hopelessness of their situation they prayed that such a leader might arise. This accounts for the rise not only of Mussolini but also of the League of Nations, a foreign economic dictator, not responsible to the masses, but doing the things the nation wants to be done. Anybody looking at these facts may easily come to the conclusion that democracy, as parliamentary democracy, is doomed. If the governmental work can be done by a foreign dictator or by putting parliament out of action, surely this seems to be sufficient proof of the assertion that parliamentarianism has run its course and that the days of parliamentary government are over.

If a noble and civilised democracy is to subsist, the common citizen must be something of a hero, so says Santayana. In other words, only a democracy of aristocrats could really create a liberal society--democracy is fit for a nation of gods, so is Rousseau's

verdict. If the spirit of greed, of materialism, of violence which has ruled large parts of mankind so far is going to survive, democracy will not stand. It will ever remain a far-off ideal and we may sing in chorus with Mac Laughlin—"An embalmed democracy deserves burial."

EARLY ENGLISH EDUCATION IN BENGAL : The Neglect of the Mother Tongue.

G. N. DHAR, B.A., *Librarian, Presidency College.*

IN the annals of English education in Bengal, 1835 is a memorable year, as it ushered in a new epoch in the educational policy of Government. For some time past, two parties had been vying for ascendancy in the Committee of Public Instruction : each held pronounced views regarding not only the *kind of learning* that should be imparted in the educational institutions of the country, but also the *medium* to be used for the purpose. The "Orientalists" were staunch supporters of oriental literature and philosophy and advocated the cause of Sanskrit and Arabic as the medium of instruction ; the "Anglicists", on the other hand, were strongly in favour of European literature and science, and contended that the knowledge should be communicated through the English language. In the Committee, no less than in the press, the battle of opinions raged fearfully for a long time, till it was brought to an end by Lord Macaulay's famous Minute of 2nd February, 1835, and its subsequent adoption by Lord Bentinck in his celebrated Resolution dated 7th March, 1835,—which began : "His Lordship in Council is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be

promotion of European literature and science amongst the Natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone."

Before the advent of the English in this country, Persian was the language used in all transactions of the courts. Bengalees found it to their advantage to study this language, as it enabled them to earn money and distinction. Little attention was paid to the scientific cultivation and improvement of the Bengali language, which occupied the attention of Sanskrit Pandits of the *tols* in their spare moments. In these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that our learned countrymen of pre-English days were either Sanskrit *savants* or fine Persian scholars; persons with fair pretensions to a mastery of the mother tongue were very few and rare.

The English, as we know, established trade relations in Bengal in 1634. It was not before the dawn of the nineteenth century, however, that the Bengalees seriously betook themselves to learning the language of the strangers,—those only who came in daily business contact with the foreigners having acquired a casual acquaintance with the English language. Regarding the first English scholar amongst the Bengalees of Calcutta, Dewan Ram Comul Sen gives in the Preface to his English and Bengali Dictionary an interesting anecdote: An English man-of-war having anchored near the Botanic Gardens about the end of the seventeenth century, the Captain requested the Bysaks or *Sets* who carried on extensive mercantile business to send him a *dobhasia*—meaning thereby a person who could speak in two languages. The Bengalee merchants misunderstood the significance of the term and sent a *dhobi* or washerman to the vessel. This *dhobi*, "by frequent intercourse with the crew of the man-of-war got a smattering of the English language: and to him must be ascribed the honour of having been the first English scholar,—if a scholar he could be called—amongst the people of Bengal."

After the establishment of the Supreme Court in 1774, it became apparent that an acquaintance with the English language was sure to be rewarded with material advantages. Schools and Colleges were

therefore founded for instruction in English language and literature. The curricula of these schools, however, afford a gruesome spectacle of the sad neglect of the Bengali language ; in the examinations there was only one paper on Essay-writing in Bengali. Even when the battle was declared between the Anglicists and the Orientalists the latter appear to have held the brief for the classical languages alone of the Orient, and laid little stress on the acquisition of the Bengali tongue. In consequence, the interest of the people in vernacular language and literature decreased day by day ; and, in a few years' time the language of the province was in a sad plight indeed. "The Pathsala or vernacular school", wrote the *Friend of India* on February 22, 1844, "seems unfortunately on the wane, for the number of scholars has decreased in a few months, from 174 to 156, and we are informed that the establishment has been *proportionately reduced* !... . Instead of endeavouring to give new life to the studies, and to augment the number of students, the establishment is curtailed in proportion to the reduction of scholars !" The students of Calcutta and its suburbs were powerfully attracted towards the English language through which the path to wealth and distinction seemed to (and, in truth, did) lie ; and it was "found to be impossible to induce a love for the study of their own Native tongue" among them. An Abkaree Commissioner writing in 1844 to the Educational authorities deplored that an office assistant of his, "a distinguished student of the Hindoo College... cannot read *written Bengalee fluently*" although this excellent gentleman was "well versed in English". In the course of an investigation before the first Judge of the Small Cause Court in 1850 "a Bengali letter was produced, alleged to have been written by the defendant. The Young Bengal, for he was the defendant, was horrified at this charge, and declared his utter ignorance of the Bengalee idiom !" The *Hindoo Intelligencer* wrote of a young alumnus of the Hindu College known to the Editor, "who writes to his father in English which he (the father) does not understand, and the father's favours of course are indited in Bengalee, which the son holds in great abhorrence and consequently never reads.

The Governor has several times conjured his hopeful heir not to send him English letters, but to no effect" !

If the illustrious *alumni* of the Hindu College and of the General Assembly's Institution whose fine turns of English expression even Englishmen coveted, had given some of their time to the cultivation of the language which they had imbibed into their being with their mothers' milk, they might have left for posterity many more treatises written in chaste and elegant Bengali ; and the regeneration of Bengali literature would not have been so belated as it has actually been.

THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

(Continued from the previous issue)

Professor J. C. COYAJEE, I.E.S.

IN the past, when warnings were uttered against the harm done to the cause of banking by "political pressure", that danger was supposed to come from the side of the Executive. It was almost an unheard of thing that politicians in any country should demand the right of sitting on the directorate of the Central banks in their capacity as members of the Legislature. The voice of experience and of sound theory warned us that "banks, and especially banks of issue should be free from political pressure." But certain suggestions which are being made in the case of our Reserve Bank controversy would introduce that political pressure in its least desirable form—in a party form as well as in a personal form, For, the panel which is to be put forward by the Assembly, as

proposed, would naturally include men chiefly from the dominating party of the day. What is more, through the personal and direct action of the party members thus sent on to the Board of Directors, the eddies of political feeling and antagonism would act directly on the policy of the Bank. This would do great harm, even if the policy were adopted in a country like England with its innate conservatism and fixed political traditions formed through centuries of parliamentary life. The danger of the course would no doubt be greater in India.

It has been contented that, by the disqualification of our legislatures, the Reserve Bank will be deprived of the services of a class specially versed in public affairs and finance. But it might be rejoined to this, that our legislators are not mostly men belonging to a leisured class, but men belonging to professions or business class, who are, with all their abilities, hard put to it to discharge their duties as legislators as well as to carry on their private work. To pile on a fresh and exacting set of duties on them, as directors of the Central Bank, would be hardly fair either to them or to the Bank. Nor is this all; for experience in one or two other countries has shown that the retention of legislators on the boards of Central banks "easily leads to party nepotism." Finally, is it fair or just to assert that, outside the legislature, India cannot find sufficiently capable men to furnish the directorate of a central bank?

The most important consideration to be borne in mind in this connection is that *monetary issues are quite capable of becoming first class political issues at any time*. That has happened repeatedly in other countries. Thus Bimetallism was a political issue for many years in the United States; and inflation is a disguised political issue in many countries at present. Under such contingencies it is peculiarly harmful to have politicians on the Boards of Central Banks.

If put into operation, the schemes of control for our Indian Reserve Bank, which have been put forward recently, would form a remarkable contrast to the constitutions of all the other central banks in the world. In one or two of the dominions, it is believed

that the Central Banks have not been unaffected by political pressure ; but India would be the first country in which the members of legislature *as such* are to figure on the Board of such a bank. Even in the case of Australia—which has been so often quoted as a precedent by advocates of a state bank—the Secretary of the Commonwealth Treasury is a member of the Board of Directors, and all the members of the Board are appointed by the Governor-General—six of them being persons actively engaged in agriculture, commerce, finance and industry.

We should not forget that the admission of a few members of the legislature on the directorate of the Bank can be but the thin end of the wedge, and that the most probable result of the surrender of the principle as regards keeping out all political pressure would be to have a majority of politicians on the managing board. It is instructive to read what the leading commercial journal in India has to say on the subject : “It is true that nominally (under the Malaviya scheme) the Legislatures would elect only five in the Board of fifteen members ; but, as outside bodies would, under the amended Bill, be at liberty also to nominate M. L. A.’s and M. L. C.’s, it would in practice be possible to appoint at least three additional directors of the same genus, *viz.*, one by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, one by Joint Stock Banks with rupee capital, and one by the provincial Co-operative banks. On that basis *the politicians on the Board would form a majority.*”

An unexpected, but strictly logical, consequence of the proposal that members of our legislatures should be placed on the Board of the Reserve Bank made its appearance without loss of time. It has been proposed almost simultaneously with the original proposition that out of the fifteen Directors at least three should be Moslems. The further idea has been put forward without delay that a Moslem and a non-Moslem should be appointed alternately as either the Governor or the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank. In fact this corollary has followed with surprising rapidity on the main theorem. And if, indeed, the positions on the Board are to go not by considerations of Banking efficiency but on grounds of political

representation, we open the door to all sorts of political as well as quasi-political claims. If politics makes its way into the Reserve Bank, can Communalism remain far behind ?

Let it be added, that in the interests of the legislature itself, of its efficiency and dignity, it should pass a self-denying ordinance as regards the presence of its members on the Bank's Board. The legislature is elected by the whole country to regulate the affairs of the nation impartially, from its detached eminence. But if it once steps down from its pedestal to elect members to the Board of the Bank, how can it remain an impartial judge of the work of that Bank ? By the fact that it has elected members to the Board of the Bank it has shared the work of the Bank, and cannot with propriety sit in judgment on the work of the Bank. Those who are always expressing apprehensions as regards "vested interests" should see to it that the legislature itself has no vested interests in the Central Bank.

We in India are justly proud of the high character and disinterestedness of the members of our legislatures. All the same it behoves us to draw the proper lessons from the influence exerted on banking evolution by the politicians of other countries. Here is the considered opinion of Mr. H. Parker Willis—the eminent historian of American Banking—as regards the unfavourable influence exerted on banking in the United States by the interference of politicians. "Among those who most retarded the development of the Federal Reserve System and its introduction of forward-looking ideas, a high place must be given to the politicians who at first put themselves forward as radical reformers. It was Secretary MacAdoo who was most reluctant to effect the transfer of the Government funds to the reserve banks, and Comptroller Williams who was slowest in accepting the mandate of the Act by giving to them (the reserve banks) credit data concerning member bank conditions which they needed in order to build up their files. It is the supposedly popular or democratic members of Congress who have been most abusive toward every forward step in the process

crisis and, in such crises, the solemn procedure recommended by the Cunliffe Committee if adopted in this country also will prove useful."

Fortunately, the case against the Fixed Fiduciary System and also that for the Emergency Currency plan has been summarised for us by a leading English banker, the late Dr. Leaf in his speech before the Westminster Bank Limited. He observed that "*it may be taken as certain that there can be no return to a hard-and-fast limits for the fiduciary issue. That plan has been tried and has proved a failure, and of the many countries, which, with the advantage of the experience of our English plan before them, have recently been establishing or remoulding central banks of issue there is not one which has shown any tendency to follow our example. All have adopted systems which permit of elasticity in times of stress. The plan which has been adopted for the Federal Reserve System in America and was followed with some modifications in the regulations under the Dawes Plan for the new German Reichsbank is this: that the Central Bank has the sole right of issuing notes against a backing of gold and certain approved securities. The gold must normally be maintained at a certain proportion of the notes in circulation, but power is given to permit this proportion to be reduced on payment of a tax on the deficiency—a tax which is graduated on a rapidly rising scale, and must be added to the rate of discount charged by the Bank to its customer.*" After considering the scale of such taxation under the Federal Reserve System, Dr. Leaf added: "It will be seen that this is a severely penal rate of interest and one that is likely to check at once any demand for currency depending on mere panic. The provisions for the gold reserve of the Reichsbank the *last outcome of the Commercial wisdom of the world* as applied to Central Banks are very similar. The Reichsbank rates of tax, are, however, even heavier." This dictum has been quoted at length as the best defence of the scheme followed in the Report of the Indian Currency Commission—a scheme, which is not far removed in character from the American and German models which have been adapted to the circumstances of India.

The proposal to increase the proportion of gold coin and bullion to the gold-assets to 50 per cent, has been put forward recently and an attempt has been made to justify the measure by suggesting that it will ensure a free flow of gold into India and discourage a tendency on the part of the Bank to check the free inflow of gold by the substitution of gold securities.

It is submitted in answer, that this is a needless cutting down of the gold securities in the reserve, and of the income accruing from them. Forty per cent in gold is as high a percentage of gold in reserve as in any country. There is no possibility of, or motive for, the Bank trying to keep out gold if it is made to buy and sell gold at any time, according to its obligation. The best security for not keeping out any gold is to apply the Gold Bullion Standard in its fullest form and thus make India into a free market for gold.

Nor can there be any reasonable objection to the practice of investing part of the reserve in securities of other Governments, provided only short-time maturities are selected. There is sound reason for holding such gold securities, since we in India are short of eligible commercial bills. That is the answer to Mr. Madon, who "would most strongly advise the Assembly to absolutely reject these provisions." He forgets that, many other countries are in the fortunate position of commanding the requisite supply of commercial bills for their reserves without any difficulty.

There are several among the new proposals which will alarm other countries, and assure them that India is beginning a scramble for gold. The first of these is the setting up of an unnecessarily and extraordinarily high proportion of gold coin and bullion to the gold assets of the Reserve. In the second place, the discretion of the Board of Management is interfered with in order to increase the proportion of gold coin and gold bullion which shall be kept in India from 50 to 85 per cent., 15 per cent being considered sufficient to cover all possible requirements outside India. There are several objections to which these proposals are liable. In the first place, the fixing of percentages of the reserves to be kept in

India and of other percentages to be kept abroad amounts to tying down the discretion of the Bank unnecessarily. The desire, at all costs, to heap more gold in India is worthy only of the best Mercantilist traditions. Moreover, the new proposals are unnecessary for obtaining sufficient gold, because with the convertibility of notes into gold bullion, quite enough pressure has been put upon the Bank to import gold.

On this subject the observations of an able Indian economist are worth noting. The Commission has "suggested a minimum of forty per cent. gold and gold securities in the reserve. The Smith Committee, it will be remembered, recommended a forty per cent. metallic reserve. The law in force demands a fifty per cent. Since, however, the suggested forty per cent. embraces both gold and gold paper, it is a far more liberal provision than it seems and leaves a freer hand to the bank than if the whole of it had referred to gold. Still, the laying down of a fixed percentage is, in my opinion, essentially unsound in principle. As long as mutual conversion of gold and paper is insisted on and maintained, internal prices cannot exceed world gold prices, and for the rest, complete freedom can be safely given to the bank. *After safely tying down the issue to the chariot wheel of gold and by that means to stability of prices in practice, we can afford to give the bank the greatest possible latitude in its work.* There is no more justification in interfering for maintaining the convertibility of the notes than for maintaining the convertibility of bank cheques. If we have confidence enough in the bank regarding the one, we ought to have also for the other. The bank is entrusted with the issue on condition of maintaining convertibility." The public would do well to ponder over these suggestions of a careful student of the subject."—Prof. B. Das Gupta.

Objections have been made to the provisions in the Report requiring certain banks named in the First Schedule to keep a fixed percentage of their demand and time liabilities with the Reserve Bank. The contentions raised here are to the effect that "all Banks concerned already hold a far larger percentage than would be called for by the Act," and further that "it will create an

impression at least in the less experienced banking managements that they would have done their duty by their depositors when they had this $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the Reserve Bank." It is also argued that if the proposal "become law, there may be times when the legal limits will be reached by a large number of banks, and they will be compelled to recall loans indiscriminately to avoid breach of the law."

These contentions, however, are not convincing. The keeping of small reserves like $7\frac{1}{2}$ and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent cannot possibly be considered a burden to the banks in question—indeed the suggestion that there are occasions "when such low legal limits are reached by a large number of banks" is an alarming one, and shows that the regulation is a very necessary one indeed. Then, again, if much larger reserves are habitually kept by the banks against deposits, why should there be any objection to keep the smaller amounts with the Reserve Bank ?

Fortunately, one of the English Joint-Stock Banks—the Midland Bank—has recently borne witness to the absolute necessity of a central bank holding the cash reserves of commercial banks. In this connection reference might be made advisedly to the monthly circular of the Midland Bank for March-April 1926. It is argued there that unless a substantial part of these cash reserves are in the form of a balance at the Central Bank, it is "in practice impossible for the latter to carry out any strong, effective monetary policy." It is a declaration by an English Commercial Bank, which would have to keep such balances, and it deserves to be borne in mind by our commercial banks. The "Economist" commenting on this pronouncement by the Midland Bank pointed out the "immense convenience" to the English Banking system of "a great central monetary pool fed by the accounts of the Government and the commercial banks."

Those among us, who draw their inspiration from the Australian experiment in State banking might be invited to note that when in 1924 it was made into a true central bank, the private banks of that country were indirectly forced to keep balance in the former by

being compelled to use cheques upon the Commonwealth Bank for settling their clearing house operations. In South Africa, too, one cause of the former weakness of the Reserve Bank of the Union was that the other banks did not treat it as a bankers' bank nor would they keep their balances with it.

And *a propos* of the proposals regarding bankers' balances and the schedule of bankers, a new argument suggests itself against a State Bank. Would a State Bank with its political colour and atmosphere have the courage to reject the paper of the weaker banks on the Schedule when necessary, seeing that the result of such a step would be the closing down of these banks? It goes without saying that immense pains should be taken in constructing such a schedule, and the working of the re-discount system is best entrusted to a Shareholders' bank which would discriminate between the banks on purely economic grounds with a complete disregard of the political consequences of its action.

The treatment meted out to the Imperial Bank in the course of the present controversy makes its position, an unenviable one. It is often forgotten that the amalgamation of the Presidency Banks was carried out in public interests and not at the initiative of their shareholders; that the Imperial Bank has performed eminent services to the country since its formation and has fostered banking in India notably; that it carries on some of the finest traditions of Indian banking. The cry has been raised since the publication of the Commission's Report that the scheme under it would endow the Imperial Bank with vast and undeserved profits. But, surely, had such been the case, the prospect of such unbounded profits would have greatly raised the value of the Bank's shares. After all, the organised stock market is the best judge of the value of such opportunities. In any case, even if the terms proposed for it in the report are too favourable, there are still ample opportunities for fixing what might ultimately be proved to be a fairer rate of remuneration; only the proof should be clear.

The more recent line of attack on the Imperial Bank is still more unfair. Nothing less is proposed than to destroy the Imperial

Bank as a Commercial Bank by turning it into the Reserved Bank and by buying out the shareholders on disadvantageous terms. In order to attain this object, a number of fallacious arguments have been made to converge on the same point. It is pointed out, for instance, that the easiest way out of the present *impasse* is to take this line of action; as if our object was not to provide for the banking development of India for many decades, but to find the line of least resistance for the moment. Then, it is contended that this "giant" (as the Imperial Bank is now termed) "with some sixteen crores of capital and reserves" is bound to be too strong for new indigenous banks to compete with, especially when it will do a great deal of public work. It is added that "comparatively very small indigenous banks will have no option but to be swallowed up by (amalgamated with) this big neighbour, or, go into liquidation." Those who make such allegations should be asked to produce any instance in which the Imperial Bank has in the past utilised either its own strength or the Government resources at its disposal for objects of this character. And if it has not acted in that way when the entire Government balances were at its disposal, why should the apprehensions be any greater when only part of the balances will be at its disposal? As to the fact of its being a "giant," it must be remembered that the amalgamation of the Presidency Banks was carried out for public reasons and not in the interests of these banks primarily. It is surprising to hear responsible publicists talking so lightheartedly of destroying this great Commercial Bank which India has reared up. Of course, its destruction as a Commercial Bank would benefit its rivals; but the nation as a whole will lose a splendid institution and long traditions. Even on its purely commercial side the Imperial Bank has been a great example and a great achievement.

Even our pre-occupation with the construction of a Central Bank has not been able to keep out proposals for retaining the sovereigns and half-sovereigns as legal tender and for the minting of gold mohurs. Such proposals will do very little, even if carried out, to secure a gold currency for India under the present circumstances,

but may result in the weakening of that system of Gold Bullion Standard which has been the result of a century of monetary practice and theory. The automatic character of this standard would be destroyed if sovereigns were retained as legal tender ; for the gold from the reserves might in certain circumstances pass into circulation and thus prevent the contraction of the currency when it was desirable. There remains to be noted another suggestion also made recently to the effect that Government should go on coining a quarter of a million worth of gold coins every year. No statistical basis has been furnished for justifying this particular amount of gold coinage ; and the proposition that a certain arbitrary amount of gold should be coined annually and indefinitely without regard to any public demand for it or to the ultimate destination of such coinage cannot be regarded as either economical or economic.

There would be no harm in the hints and suggestions of a gold currency policy, of which we have lately had a recrudescence, but for the fact that if they were adopted in practice they would compromise the success of the Gold Bullion Standard. As an American critic has asserted emphatically, that standard "would put India squarely on the gold standard." In point of automatic working, the system would prove superior in India both to the gold exchange standard and the gold standard with gold currency. Both of these latter systems are bound to work erratically in India with its hoarding habit. It is also a great advance upon the Gold Exchange standard in the fact that it established confidence in the currency system "by giving the country not only a real, but conspicuously visible link between the currency and gold." In another way it is an improvement upon the Gold Exchange standard in providing for that full measure of convertibility which was only an aspiration under the older system. It would be a great pity if such a system were to be wrecked by untimely hankerings after a gold currency.

For the evidence taken by the Currency Commission proved fully that the introduction of gold currency in any effective form in India, in the near future, is most inadvisable. This fact is being

recognised and frankly admitted by Indian economists. Thus Professors Vakil and Muranjan observed that "we are welcome neither as creditors of our own gold in England, nor as borrowers of surplus gold from America. This conclusion is bound to create considerable heart-burning ; but these are stern facts of the situation, and we cannot get away from them."

This fact lies in the way of all attempts at gold currency in India ; nor it is all. The imminent fear of a period of low prices, which is widely felt and expressed, will form another great factor—if such was required—to put the idea of acquiring a gold currency for India outside the pale of practical politics. One has only to recall the excitement which arose not so long ago when it was believed that the Reichsbank and the other German Banks were acquiring gold with the objects of strengthening their gold reserves. Virtually, indeed, even the authors of the projects for coining small quantities of gold or for retaining the sovereigns as legal tender admit this. These incomplete projects are so many confessions that the full gold currency is out of range of practicability. But if the idea of an effective gold currency has been postponed for many years to come, why is it necessary to alarm the world as to the intentions of India by the coinage of a few gold mohurs ? The trouble is that while professing to regulate banking and currency in the 20th century, we disclose all the Mercantilist prejudices of the 16th century.

Conclusion.

We might now sum up briefly the results of our inquiry. We have found that the history and nature of state banking has not been of such a character as to tempt us to add one more experiment of that character in India ; Such an institution cannot possibly enjoy any independence as against the state, and cannot but be the mere auxiliary of state finance. Indeed, with the passage of time, the dangers of state banks increase continually, for in our own age they must ultimately become the tools and implements of the growing tendency towards State Socialism. As Dr. Gregory has

put it "the Central Banks—the children of a Liberal age—are surviving into an age of socialisation and of vigorous class opposition." He infers that they must be so constituted as to be able to withstand the demands of Ministers of State and of socialistic measures.

As it is however, the fault of the recent proposals as regards the State Bank of India are of a *cumulative* character—they would give India not only a State Bank but a bank with a considerable number of members of Legislature on its Boards. Such a Bank would not be even a state bank—it would be a political bank. The presence of members of legislature, of the nominees of the executive and of the representatives of industry and commerce on its directory would make of the bank a house divided against itself. Even such a system would no doubt work as long as the country possesses some personality of recognised authority and prestige both in the Legislature and in the sphere of finance and banking. But can we be sure of always possessing such a personality in our midst? It is not impossible for high financial talent to frame a compromise banking system for India, and even for a time to keep it working. But a banking edifice requires the soundest material for its construction. Otherwise, in the long run, its flaws make themselves felt and will derange the economic organisation of the country in its most vital portions. It is well to bear in mind that while it is a great task to construct a Central Bank, it is a much greater task to repair one. But even if, as a measure of compromise, the principle of a State Bank is accepted, it is possible to obtain tangible benefits by laying down the right scheme as regards the composition of the Reserve, and by allowing the Bank a reasonable latitude in its task of arranging the proper constitution and distribution of its reserves. If the Bank possesses private capital, if it is given a free hand to do the remittance work properly, and to evolve our paper currency system on the lines laid down by the Indian Currency Commission, this country may in the future have reason to feel grateful, both to the Reserve Bank and to the Indian Legislature.

DEDICATED LIFE IN QUEST OF TRUTH

SIR JAGADIS CHANDRA BOSE, F.R.S.
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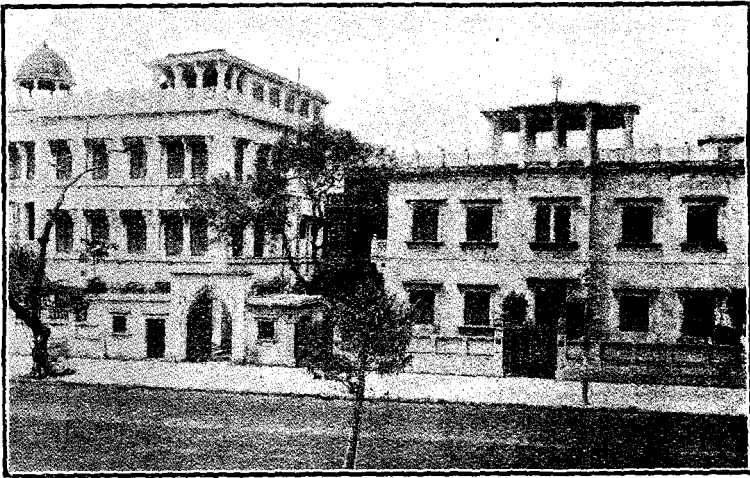
SINCE clearness of thought is essential for the discovery of truth it is of much importance to extend our knowledge into the underlying mechanism, and trace its gradual evolution from the simplest to the most complex. In the simpler vegetable life, where lies the plant-psyche the faint copy of our consciousness? A nervous structure I have been able to discover in the plant, the characteristic reactions of which are likely to lead to the better understanding of parallel phenomena in our own psychic life. What is the special vehicle along which nervous impulse is transmitted? It is found to consist of special strands along which the impulse is conducted from point to point; this impinging on the terminal organ causes movement of the muscle or sensation in the central perceptive organ. The particles may be likened to a row of billiard balls touching one another; a blow given to the first ball is communicated to the next and next, till the last ball starts from the rest in acknowledgment of the blow, the intermediate balls having kept their place. In the same way each particle of the nerve though keeping its place, passes on the impulse.

This brings into prominence the importance of the mobility of the nervous particles in the conduction of impulse, this mobility being greatly modified by use or disuse. As a physical analogue, we find a hinge rusty from long disuse fails to work, while one that has been in frequent operation, works easily. The experimental results obtained with plants in this connection are highly significant.

Adversity Evolves True Manhood

A plant carefully protected under glass from the stimulating blows of the environment looks sleek and flourishing, yet in reality

it is flabby and decadent. The nervous tissue is present, but from the want of use it is functionally inactive. It is very interesting to watch the plant in this condition and observe the growth of nervous function under the influence of stimulating blows. There is at first no nervous impulse; after a time the impulse begins to be transmitted and finally under continuous stimulation the nervous activity is raised to a maximum. Here we have displayed before us the modification of the organism by the environment, the creation



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of the organ by the cumulative effect of external stimulation. In human life also it is not cotton-wool protection but blows of adversity that evolve true manhood. The nerve unstimulated is passive and inert; but shocks from outside energise it. Stimulation by thought increases our power of thought.

The Colour of Sensation

Since our psychic life is so intimately related to the impulse which courses through the nerve and by which we are placed in communication with the external world, the problem arises whether it is possible to control the nervous impulse. It is one of the greatest of mysteries how we are brought in contact with the external world, how blows from without are felt within. Our sense

organs are like so many antennae which pick up messages of various kinds ; these bear moreover a certain potentiality to induce in us a sensation which may either be agreeable or disagreeable. The quality of sensation is often determined by the intensity of the impinging stimulus. It is well-known that while a gentle touch or moderate stimulus of light and sound produce a sensation which may be described as pleasant, an intense stimulus of the same kind causes a sensation which is extremely unpleasant or even painful.

The intensity of excitation that reaches the central perceptive organ depends on the two factors, the strength of the external stimulus, and the condition of the vehicle that conducts the impulse. Under normal conditions, extremely weak stimulation gives rise to an impulse which is so feeble that it cannot be transmitted and therefore remains below perception. Moderate stimulation gives rise to a responsive sensation which is not unpleasant or may even be pleasant ; very strong stimulation causes an intense reaction of a painful character. Our sensation, then, is coloured by the intensity of the nervous excitation that reaches the central perceptive organ. We are subject to human limitations through want of power of perception of feeble stimulus on the one hand and over-sensibility to strong stimulation on the other. There are happenings which elude us because the excitation transmitted by sub-minimal stimulus is too feeble to waken our senses ; the external shock on the other hand is so intense as to fill our life with pain. Is it possible then to control the nervous impulse itself so that during transit it may become intensified in one case, and inhibited or obliterated in the other ?

Nervous Control

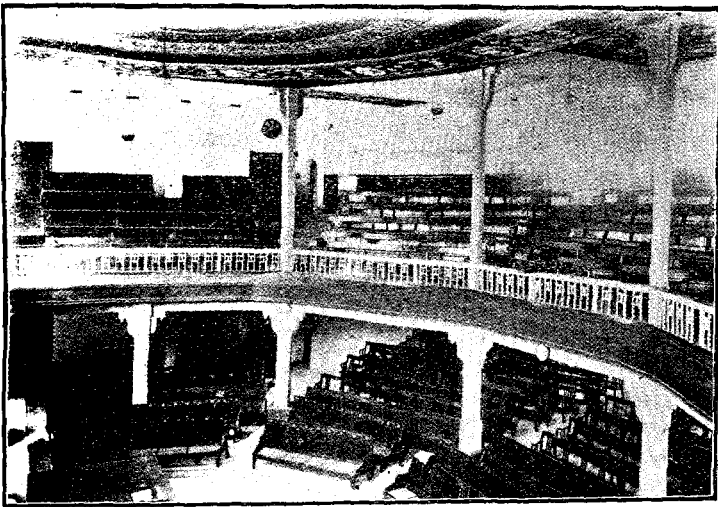
There is some superficial resemblance between the conductor of electric impulse in a metallic wire and excitatory impulse in a wave. In the metal, the power of conduction is constant. If the conducting power of the nerve is also constant, then the intensity of impulse and the resulting sensation would entirely depend on the

intensity of stimulus and the modification of sensation would be an impossibility. But there may be a likelihood that the conducting power of the nerve is not constant but capable of change, so that the resistance to the passage of the impulse can either be decreased or increased at will; should this surmise prove to be correct then we arrive at the momentous conclusion that sensation itself is modifiable whatever be the external stimulus. The modification of nervous impulse can be attempted in either of two ways. In the one case, we may render the nervous path super-conducting so that the impulse generated by a sub-minimal stimulus may be brought into sensory prominence. In the other case, we may block out the pain-causing impulse of intense shock by rendering the nerve a non-conductor. Under a narcotic the nerve becomes a non-conductor and we may thus save ourselves from pain. But such heroic measures are only resorted to in extreme cases as when we are under a surgeon's knife. But we are usually confronted with unpleasantness without previous notice. A telephone subscriber has the evident advantage that he can switch off the connection when the message begins to be unpleasant. Few have the courage of Mr. Herbert Spencer, who openly resorted to his ear-plugs when his visitor becomes tedious.

Control of Nervous Impulse by Molecular Predisposition.

The problem that confronts us is the possibility of intensifying or inhibiting the impulse during its transit. Since the impulse is due to propagation of molecular disturbance, the passage of the impulse may possibly be favoured or obstructed by inducing two opposite molecular predispositions. For visualising the process let us imagine a row of standing books. A certain intensity of blow to the book to the extreme right, causes it to fall to the left hitting its neighbour and making the other books topple over in succession. A minimum intensity of stimulus, say of 3 units, will be necessary to start the impulse; any intensity below this will fail to be transmitted. Now, if the books had previously been tilted slightly to the left, a disposition would have been given

to them which would bring about the upset under the feebler blow of 1 unit and initiate the impulse which would have previously failed to be transmitted. A tilt in the opposite direction, on the other hand, would be a predisposition to retard or inhibit the impulse. Is it then at all possible to induce opposite molecular dispositions, so that in one case a sub-minimal stimulus will be effectively transmitted and brought into *sensory prominence*, while in the other case, an intense wave due to a violent stimulus will be inhibited during transit and thus be obliterated? The possibility of this would depend on our power of *coercing* the molecules of the nerve into arranging themselves favourably or unfavourably for the passage of the impulse. I first attempted to accomplish this



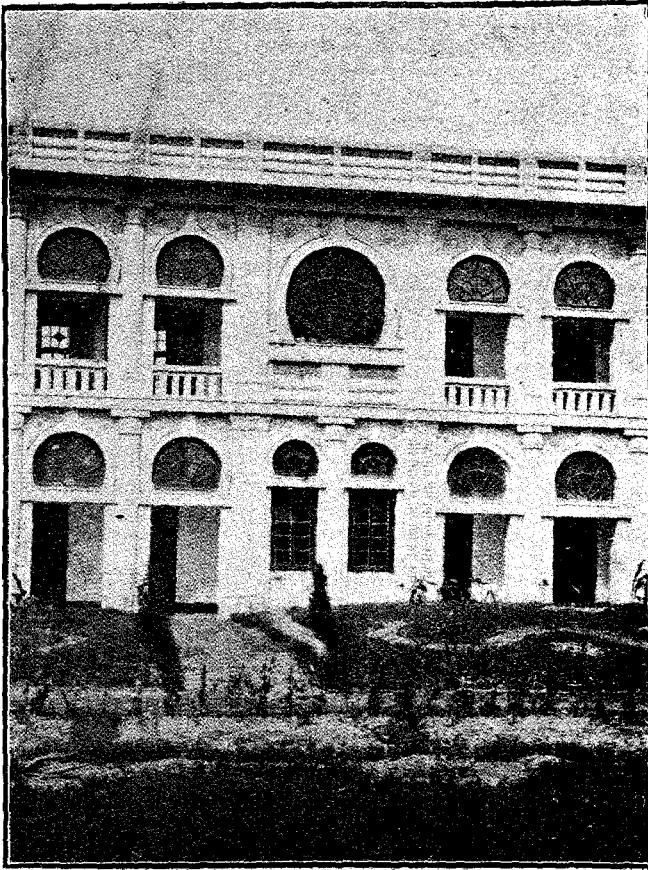
THE RESEARCH LABORATORY AND LECTURE THEATRE.

by application of an electric force of a polar character by which the molecules of the nerve could be orientated in one direction or the other, so as to predispose them to facilitate or oppose the impulse. The results obtained are of extraordinary interest. Thus under a particular molecular disposition of the nerve, the experimental frog responded to a stimulus which had been hitherto below its threshold of perception. Under the opposite disposition, the violent spasm under intense irritation caused by application of salt

on the nerve was at once quelled as if by magic. This leads me to the possibility of

Control of Nervous Impulse by the Action of Will.

Full scientific attention has not yet been given to the power of our will in controlling all bodily functions, and very few have realised how great becomes the power of the will when intensified by practice and by concentration. There can be no doubt of the



HOSTEL FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS.

free dispositions which can be conferred on the nerve by the internal power of the will facilitating or inhibiting the nervous impulse. - The effect of attention of expectation and of suggestion in enhancing

perception is familiar. The following incident will show the influence of will in controlling the nerve.

I had gone on an expedition to the borders of the Himalayan Terai in Kumaun. Terror prevailed among the villagers, for a man-eating tigress had come down from the forest and numerous had been the toll of lives exacted. When all hope of deliverance had nearly vanished the villagers appealed to Kaloo Singh, a simple peasant who possessed an old matchlock. With this primitive weapon and with the entreaties of his fellow-villagers ringing in his ears, Kaloo Singh started on his perilous adventure.

The tigress had killed a buffalo and left it in the field. Kaloo Singh waited there for her return to the field ; there was not a tree near, only a low bush behind which he lay concealed. After hours of waiting, as the sun was going down, he was startled by the sudden apparition of the tigress within six feet of him. Trying to raise his gun, he could take no aim, as his arm was shaking with uncontrollable fear.

Kaloo Singh explained to me afterwards how he succeeded in shaking off his mortal terror and I will repeat his very words : "I quickly said to myself, 'Kaloo Singh, Kaloo Singh who sent you here ? Did not the villagers put their trust in you ?' I could then no longer lie in hiding and I stood up and then something strange happened. All trembling went and I became as hard as steel. The tigress with eyes blazing and lashing tail crouched for the spring ; only six feet lay between us. She sprang and my gun went off at the same time ; she missed her aim and fell dead by my side."

Man Victorious over Circumstances.

In the determination of sensation then, the internal stimulus of the Will may play as important a part as the shock from outside. And thus, through the inner control of the nerve the character of the resulting sensation may become profoundly modified. The external, then, is not so overwhelmingly dominant and man is no longer

a passive agent in the hand of destiny. He has a latent power which will raise him above the terrors of his inimical surroundings. It rests with him whether the channels through which the outside world reaches him shall at his command be widened or become closed. It should thus be possible for him to catch those indistinct messages that have hitherto passed by him unperceived ; or he may withdraw within himself so that the jarring notes and din of the world should no longer affect him.

From the plant to the animal, then, we follow the long stairway of the Ascent of Life. In the high spiritual triumph of the martyr, we see the high expression of that evolutionary process by which life rises above and beyond all the circumstances of the environment, and fortifies itself to control them.

FAREWELL ADDRESS*

Prof. S C. MAHALANOBIS

THERE are occasions when thoughts lie too deep for expression. To me, this is preeminently an occasion like that, and my own inclinations would certainly be to maintain silence. But my friends, my students and colleagues compel me to speak. Yet what am I to say? You have given me a surprise beyond description—you have overwhelmed me with kindness and indeed you have taken away my breath so completely that I am unable even to express my gratitude adequately.

It is no easy task for me to say "good bye" to the Presidency College; it is very hard for me to bid farewell to my beloved students; and it is, indeed, a wrench to me to be severed from the Physiological laboratory—with which the best part of my life has been identified.

I have often wondered which of the two, is more important to one's life—the day he enters upon a career—or the day he finishes it? The start and the course of a race have their excitement no doubt—but it is the end that reckons most. To me, this is the proudest day of my life when, at the close of a career chequered by the stamp of stress and strain, on looking back to the labours of twenty-seven years—I am told that they have not been wasted. It is highly gratifying to me to find that my humble share in the work of this premier college has been so kindly appreciated. Yet I do not feel elated with your most generous praise. Hoary headed in the service of that great community which is known and respected all over the world as "the student"—a community that knows no distinction, of colour or creed—of race or rank,—I stand here to-day—humbled with a sense of shortcoming that your generosity only sets in relief.

Twenty-seven years ago, I was called upon to do spade work in

* Delivered on the occasion of his retirement.

connection with the teaching of Biology in Bengal. How captivating that call was to me : and what a proud privilege it has been, to be associated with Presidency College! The very mention of the name of ‘Presidency College’ conjures up wonderful visions before my mind’s eye, and as I think of the past, they move in quick succession like the fleeting pictures of the cinematograph. In my childhood I witnessed the imposing building slowly rising from foundation to plinth and from floor to floor, assuming gradually its dignified proportions. In my schooldays, I often stood at the gate—trying to get a look at the learned professors whose names inspired awe. Never, even in my wildest dreams, did it occur to me that someday I might have the chance of following in the wake of such illustrious men. Yet the unexpected has happened—and now, at the close of that golden opportunity, I stand here covered with regrets—realising how sadly I have fallen short of the ideals of my great predecessors. You have nevertheless, not only overlooked my failings, but been lavish in your kind appreciation of whatever little I may have contributed towards the common weal of the college.

In bidding adieu to my comrades at the College, I take this opportunity of expressing my grateful thanks for the unfailing kindness and courtesy I have received from them. I remember with pride and acknowledge with gratitude the very kind welcome that I, as a young member of the staff, received from such savants as Sir J. C. Bose and Sir P. C. Roy. To my colleagues in the Physiological Department—all of them my former pupils—I desire to express my sense of high appreciation of their whole-hearted co-operation and loyal friendship.

During the last quarter of a century, the Presidency College has been under the guidance of a number of Principals who have left their mark in the annals of this institution. Dr P. K. Roy, Mr. H. R. James and Mr. W. C. Wordsworth (to mention only those who have left the service) won their way into the hearts of the staff and students alike and will be long remembered for their eminent services in furthering the welfare of the college.

Although refraining, for obvious reasons, from mentioning the work of the recent occupants of the Principal's chair I feel tempted to allude to some interesting incident. In the summer of 1909, a scholar of Downing College at Cambridge, decided to come to the East, in the service of the Empire, and chose the field of Education in Bengal as his sphere of activity. By some curious coincidence that very summer I happened to be a guest at Downing College, as Calcutta University's delegate participating in the Darwin Centenary Celebrations held at Cambridge. On my return to Calcutta,—about the middle of October, I met the scholarly, but shy, youngman as Professor of English literature at Presidency College. Seventeen years have rolled by, and outsiders—specially ladies—will still find him the same shy youngman, but we know that in the meantime the horizon of his experience and sympathies has widened so largely that to-day he worthily officiates as the Head of this great institution. I shall always cherish very happy recollections of the last year of my service, during Mr. Sterling's principalship.

Then, I must not forget the College Office Staff. I cannot leave this place without acknowledging with sincere thanks the many kind services that the much-worried, hardworking, ever-busy office staff have always ungrudgingly rendered me.

Now I come to address my own students—present and past. You have touched the deepest chord of my heart and I do not know how to express my feelings on this occasion. But I am sure you know them—you know the place you occupy in my heart. We understand each other so thoroughly, we confide in each other so completely that there is no room for formality. You have presented me with a rich gift, an address in a casket, which I value highly, but I know it is only a symbol, the real jewel is not in the casket. The gift I value beyond all price, comes straight from your hearts and the possession of that makes me feel the proudest man to-day.

It has been my privilege for the last thirty years, to be associated with youthful seekers of science whose eagerness to learn has always been a source of joy and inspiration to me. I see before me crowds of familiar faces of my former pupils, now in various walks of life

who have assembled here for the sake of "auld lang syne" in remembrance of the days they have spent in these precincts.

Your allusion to the great masters at whose feet I had the honour of sitting—at the great University in "the Heart of Midlothian", recalls to my mind some of the happiest days of my life, and I wish you—the best of wishes, that your relation with your *alma mater* may be as happy and sweet as mine has been.

Yes, I have devoted the greater part of my life to teaching science. But to what effect? At best, I have been a guide in your excursions into the mystery-road of Biology. I have held out to you a helping hand in your hazardous ascents—or conducted you through the labyrinth of Biological problems. I have talked to you of the wonderful manifestations of the activities of protoplasm. You say I succeeded in helping you in your studies—your testimony is comforting and I am very grateful to you for that. But I have failed in my duty if I have not helped you in getting a glimpse of that aspect of life which transcends protoplasmic activities, which defies the tests of physico-chemical reactions, and passes beyond the Ken of the ultra-microscope. For, sooner or later, even a biologist realises that the protoplasmic concept of life must sink into insignificance as compared with the immensity of that which is only revealed by a vision of that sublime ideal of life towards which the whole universe moves.

My young friends, I have addressed your brains—often enough and talked to you, times without number, of the physico-chemical constitution of life. But now I will speak to your hearts and therefore I say, hold aloft the ideal, orient your lives in the right direction and so conduct yourselves as to become conformed to the Good and the True. Let your talents be cultivated with a view to strengthening the cause of good in the world. Let your lives be dedicated to the realisation, as far as it lies in your power, of the ideal of truth, beauty and righteousness.

With these parting words, I bid you, my beloved students, "good bye", and most heartily wish you prosperity in the truest sense.

REPORTS

Presidency College Union.

A protest meeting :—

A largely attended meeting of the College Union was held on the 15th September, in the Physics Theatre, to record its emphatic and indignant protest against the malicious aspersions on Indian social morals, made by Miss Mayo and Mr. Pilcher M.P. Prof. B. M. Sen, the Vice-President of the Union, was in the chair. After several speakers, including the Chairman, had condemned the base fabrications of Miss Mayo and Mr. Pilcher, the following resolution moved by Sj. Hemendra Nath Sen and seconded by Sj. Birendra Nath Mukerjee was unanimously accepted :—

“This meeting of the Presidency College Union emphatically protests against the slanderous aspersions on Indian social morals based on unjustifiable generalisations contained in Miss Mayo’s book “Mother India” and Mr. Pilcher’s speech in England.

Farewell to Principal T. S. Sterling :—

A meeting of the College Union was held on the 23rd September, in the Physics Theatre, to bid farewell to Principal T. S. Sterling on the eve of his retirement. Prof. B. M. Sen took the chair. Among those present were Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary, Rai A. C. Banerjee Bahadur, Dr. P. N. Banerjee, Mr. S. C Mahalanobis, Mr. P. N. Banerjee and Mr. Ramaprasad Mukherjee. After the opening song, Prof. Sen made a short speech eulogising the varied services of Mr. Sterling to the cause of Education and expressing regret at his premature retirement. The Secretary then read out the farewell address which was nicely printed on Bengal silk and presented in a fine silver casket. After several gentlemen had spoken, our national anthem, “Bande Mataram” was sung beautifully by Sj. Jotindra Mohan Singha-Chowdhury. Principal Sterling then rose and made a feeling speech. Wherever he might be, he

emphasised, the interests of Presidency College would be always nearest to his heart. The meeting then came to a close.

PROMODE KUMAR GHOSHAL

Secretary.

General Debating Society.

The first meeting of the Debating Society took place on the 25th November with Prof. P. C. Ghosh in the chair. The resolution before the house was—"The rule of a benevolent despot is preferable to democracy." Sj. Birendra Nath Mukerjee who moved the resolution said that democracy makes quick and steady action in times of emergency impossible and often leads to mob-rule and its attendant excesses and atrocities. He cited Napoleon, Lenin, Kemal Pasha and Ashanulla as the great examples of benevolent despots and pointed out how much humanity owes to them.

Sj. Ranadhir Sarma-Sarkar (IV Year Arts) who led the opposition said that it was difficult to have an ideally benevolent despot. The rule of a despot perpetuates the political babyhood of the governed. Benevolent despotism may be useful in abnormal times but can never be advocated as a permanent form of government. Sjs. Suresh Chandra Sen and Benoyendra Banerjee (IV Year Arts) supported the resolution, while Sjs. Benoy K. Banerjee and Probodh Gupta (III Year Arts) spoke against.

The debate was then adjourned.

Second Meeting.

The adjourned meeting of the Debating Society took place on the 1st December with Prof. P. C. Ghosh in the chair, when the discussion on the resolution "The rule of a benevolent despot is preferable to democracy" was resumed.

Sj. Bhuramal Agarwala (IV Year Arts) opposed the resolution.

Sj. Sudhir Majumdar (III Year Arts) moved an amendment that "The rule of a benevolent despot is preferable to democracy only in abnormal times such as periods of transition or revolutionary disturbances." The amendment was seconded by Sj. Niranjan Sarkar (III Year Arts). Sjs. Sunil Sircar and Ranadhir Sarma-Sarkar opposed the amendment.

After the mover of the resolution had replied, votes were taken and both the amendment and the resolution were declared lost.

P. K. GHOSHAL,
Secretary.

Students' Common Room.

The Secretary in presenting his first report begs to thank Prof. K. N. Chakravarty, the Professor in-charge and Treasurer for his unfailing help and advice. In the middle of the session it is not possible to state all the changes that will take place. But the students may rest assured that the present Secretary will spare no pains in becoming worthy of their confidence.

The following is a *list of games* provided for in the Common Room :—

Pingpong	1 Set.
Four players Ludo	1 Set.
Six players Ludo	1 Set.
Snakes & Ladders	1 Set.
Draughtsmen	1 Set.
Carrom	3 Sets.
Chess	2 Sets.

The following are the magazines subscribed :—

(1) Pearson Magazine, (2) Review of Reviews, (3) Nineteenth Century and After, (4) The Bookman, (5) The Fortnightly Review, (6) The Strand Magazine, (7) Library World, (8) Publishers Circular, (9) Wide World, (10) Nash's Magazine, (11) Windsor

Magazine, (12) Great Thought, (13) Amateur Mechanic and Work, (14) Popular Science Siftings, (15) Athletic News, (16) Illustrated London News, (17) Punch, (18) The Nation and Athenaeum, (19) Times Educational Supplement, (20) Modern Review, (21) Welfare, (22) Prabasi, (23) Bangabani, (24) Manasi-O-Marmabani, (25) Masik Basumati, (26) Kali Kalam (discontinued), (27) Uttara, (28) Chand, (29) Times of India Illustrated Weekly, (30) The Calcutta Review.

It is also intended that from the beginning of the next financial year some papers on physical culture will also be subscribed.

The present Secretary and Mr. Bibhuti Mukherji whose singular ability he cannot sufficiently admire have been asked by the Professor-in-charge to formulate a scheme of improvements for the Students' Common Room.

It is hoped that the scheme, when prepared, will be welcomed by the students.

ADRISH BANERJI,
Secretary.

Historical Society.

Visit to the Indian Museum.

A visit to the Indian Museum was arranged on Friday 9th Sept. It was our second visit to the Museum under the guidance of Dr. Ghosal, whose sympathetic care and earnest help we cannot sufficiently admire.

The seventh meeting came off on Friday, the 23rd Sept., when Mr. Kalyan Kumar Basu of the Fifth Year History Class read a paper on the "Young Turk." The essayist brought out clearly in the course of his essay—the greatness of the Young Turk, the dangers it had overcome and the drawbacks of its present military government. Prof. B. K. Sen, the President of the Historical Society was on the chair.

At the eighth meeting, held on Friday, December 3, under the joint auspices of the Society and the College Union, Mr. C. K. Webster, M.A., Professor of International Politics, University of Wales, who had been delivering a course of Readership lectures at the University, spoke on "Modern Europe and the League of Nations" It was indeed a great speech delivered in a most fascinating manner. After the lecture, Professor Webster gave replies to questions asked by some of the students.

JAYANTA BILAS DEB
Secretary.

Philosophy Seminar.

The fifth meeting was held on Saturday the 13th August, 1927, when Md Abdul Karim read a paper on "Free Will" It was a well-written paper and provoked a good debate in which Messrs. Amiya Rav Choudhuri, Viswaranjan Sen, Jyotirindra Nath Das-Gupta and Syed Ahmed took part.

In the sixth meeting held on the 17th September, 1927, Sj Krishna Kumar Banerjee read a paper on "Teleology." A spirited debate followed, Messrs. Md. Abdul Karim, Jyotirindra Nath Das Gupta, Hiranmay Ghoshal, Viswaranjan Sen and Arunprasad Sen participating. The remarks of the President, Prof. K. N. Mitter, were specially instructive.

The Philosophy Club

Presidency College.

This Club is the first of its kind, ever started in this College. Any student or ex-student of the College is eligible for membership. The Club started with a few members, but, gradually, more members are being enlisted.

In the first meeting, over which Prof. H. C. De presided, Mr. Jyotirindra Nath Das Gupta read a paper on "Mysticism."

In the second meeting, presided over by Dr. Das Gupta, Prof. B. M. Sen gave us a discourse on "The Law of Relativity."

In the third meeting, over which Prof. K. N. Mitter presided, Dr. Das Gupta spoke on "Immortality." Prof. R. K. Dutta also spoke on the subject. The President, summing up the proceedings, gave his own views and enlightened us all the more fully. On the day, fixed for the fourth meeting, we were invited by Dr. N. N. Sen Gupta M.A., Ph. D. (Harvard) to his own institution where he gave us a demonstration in Experimental Psychology.

JYOTIRINDRA NATH DAS GUPTA

Secretary.

The Geological Institute

The first ordinary meeting was held on the 4th April, 1927, with Prof. S. L. Biswas, M.Sc. in the chair. The following papers were read :—

- (1) Ore Separation—By Mr. T. C. Gupta, B.Sc, Min (Birmingham)
- (2) Fuel—By Mr. A. N. Gupta—VI Year Geology.
- (3) Radio-activity and age
of the Earth—By Mr. J. S. Bhaduri III Year Geology.

The third paper was written in Bengali. After Prof. H. C. Das Gupta had spoken a few words, the President suggested in his speech that a trial might be given to the method of ore separation as suggested by Mr. J. C. Gupta in our laboratory.

The second meeting was held on the 8th September with Prof. H. C. Das Gupta, M.A., F.G.S. on the Chair.

A paper on the Mica Mines of Kodarma was read by Mr. J. S. Bhaduri of the IV Year Geology Class. The paper was supplemented by sketches on the black-board and various interesting

samples of minerals and rocks collected during the excursion were exhibited.

The third meeting was held on the 23rd September to bid farewell to Mr. Taraprasad Das Gupta, M. Sc. an ex-member of the Institute on the eve of his departure as State Scholar for further studies in England. Prof. Das Gupta was in the chair. The meeting opened with Setar-solo and a song. Mr. Das Gupta was garlanded and the Secretary, in a short speech extended congratulations and well wishes to him on behalf of the members of the Institute, to which Mr. Gupta gave a short, courteous reply. The meeting ended with an attractive and a very instructive speech by the President.

T. L. ROY GUPTA,
Secretary.

Chemical Society.

The following are the office bearers for the session 1926-27 :—

President,—Prof. R. N. Sen, M.Sc., Vice President, Prof. P. Neogi, Ph. D., Hony. Treasurer,—Prof. S. L. Mitter, M. A., Hony Secretary,—Mr. Benoy Bhushan Ghosh. B Sc., Hony. Asst. Secretary,—Mr. Syama Charan Mukherjee, B. Sc., Representative of the staff—Prof. S. K. Mazumdar, M. Sc., Representative of the students—6th Year Class, Mr. Benoy Bhusan Ghosh. B. Sc., 5th Year Class, Mr. Syama Charan Mukherjee, B. Sc. 4th Year Class, Mr. Monoranjan Sircar., 3rd Year Class, Mr. Mahammad Ishaque.

The first meeting was called on the 17th December, 1926. under the distinguished presidentship of Sir P. C. Roy, Kt. D. Sc., C. I. E. Mr. Suresh Chandra Sen, M. Sc. read an interesting paper on "Condensation of diorthothiobenzoic acid with aromatic hydroxy compound." Sir P. C. Roy delivered a lengthy presidential address and asked Prof. R. N. Sen to publish the works undertaken by him,

in the Journal of the Indian Chemical Society. The second meeting was held on the 9th February 1927, with Prof. R. N. Sen in the chair. Dr. P. Neogi read a valuable paper on "Rustless iron and steel, and theories of rusting." He dealt with the subject lucidly and from different standpoints. It was as interesting as it was learned. Prof. S. K. Mazumdar, then drew attention to the colloidal theories of rusting, which were highly appreciated. The third meeting was held on the 28th March 1927, with Prof. R. N. Sen in the chair. Dr. Hira Lal Roy, D. Sc. of the Bengal Technical Institute, Jadabpur, delivered an interesting lecture on "Possibilities of Electrothermic processes in India", which was highly appreciated by the audience, particularly the students of Industrial Chemistry. A lively discussion followed in which eminent Professors such as Mr. R. N. Sen, Dr. P. Neogi, Rev J. Van Neste, Dr. J. Roy and others took part. The fourth meeting of the Society was convened at the end of April 1927, with Dr. Biman Behari Dey, D. Sc. in the chair. Mr. Jnanendra Nath Adhya, M. Sc. read a highly interesting paper on, "Fuel oil and its industrial applications." A short discussion followed it. Dr. H. K. Sen of the University College of Science, pointed out the importance of liquid fuel, and added further that he was himself working on the subject. He was trying to prepare alcohol from a certain kind of wood, which would be very cheap and he got high hope of its success in the near future. Prof. A. Moitra of our College humorously remarked that if success followed Dr. Sen's enterprise, the preparation would be valuable both for internal and external combustion. The President praised the paper in high terms as it contained new points quite in touch with recent advances on the subject. He moreover suggested to hold an annual exhibition of the Chemical Society in the College, which should be open to all students of schools and colleges, as was done in the Presidency College, Madras.

Advancement of Chemistry is the motto of our Society. It behoves undergraduate students to take greater interest in its work.

The total receipt, during the session, including last year's balance of Rs. 1-1-9pies amounted to Rs. 115-1-9p, while the

disbursement stood at Rs. 112-4-3p. leaving a balance of Rs 2-13-6p., which will be carried forward this year.

SYAMA CHARAN MUKHERJEE,
Secretary.

Persian and Arabic Literary Society.

At a meeting of the students interested in the study of Persian and Arabic, held on Friday the 16th September, 1927, it was decided that a society named Persian and Arabic Literary Society should be started to create an interest in the culture of Persian, Arabic and Urdu literature in particular and Islamic civilisation in general, among the students of this College. The following office-bearers were elected. Patrons : Principal H. E. Stapleton. Prof. J. C. Coyajee. President : Shamsul Ulama Dr. Hedayet Hossain Khan Bahadur, Ph. D. Vice-President : Prof. Sanallah, M.A. Prof. M. Huq, M.A. Treasurer : Prof. Ziaul Huque. Secretary : Chowdhury Golam Goffer, Asst. Secretary : Hafez Abdul Hafez. Khalilur Rahman, Khandaker Mohsin Ali, Khondaker Khalilur Rahman, Mahbub Morshed Aminul Islam (Members Executive Committee).

The formal inangural meeting of the Society came off on Saturday the 4th December with Dr. Hedayet Hossain as President.

There was a large gathering including among others, Principal H. E. Stapleton, Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, Dr. S. M. Dutta, Rai Bahadur K. N. Mitter, Rai Bahadur H. C. De, Prof. S. C. Majumdar, M. Haque, Z. Haque, and Mr. Sanallah.

The proceedings began with a short speech by the Principal. After the Secretary had spoken appealing for co-operation, Dr. S. N. Das Gupta, Prof. K. N. Mitter and Prof. H. C. De expressed their sympathy and appreciation for the object the

Society stood for. Dr. Das Gupta promised to read a paper at a subsequent meeting. In a neat little speech, the President wound up the proceedings.

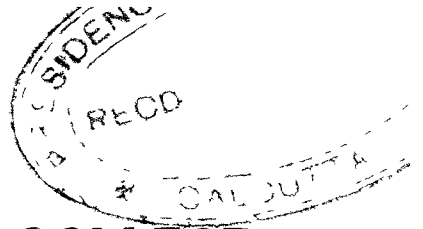
CHOUDHURY GHOLAM GAFFUR,
Secretary.

Hindi Literary Society.

The second meeting was held on the 16th September with Mr. S. C. Bararia in the chair. The "Constitution" of the Society was unanimously adopted.

The third meeting was held on the 23rd of September with Mr. Shrichand Rampuria in the chair. An interesting debate was held on "Moghul Administration vs. British administration." Mr. Sitaram Sigatia championed the cause of Moghul administration, while Mr. T. P. Khaitan led the opposition.

BIHURAMAL AGRAWAL,
Secretary.



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All contributions for publication must be written on one side of the paper and must be accompanied by the full name and address of the writer, *not necessarily for publication but as a guarantee of good faith.*

Contributions should be addressed to the Editor and all business communications should be addressed to the General Secretary, *Presidency College Magazine*, and forwarded to the College Office.

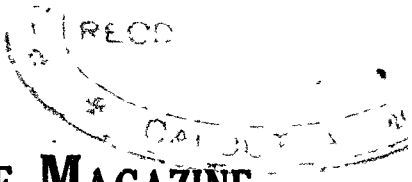
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Editor.

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The late Lord Sinha

By courtesy of "the Basumati"



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EDITORIAL NOTES

A word of apology is due for the late appearance of our March issue. As most of our readers are aware, the College was closed for about a month owing to certain unforeseen incidents having taken place. The delay has thus been due to circumstances over which we had no control, and we hope to be excused for an unavoidable lapse.

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Corporate life in the College has suffered a set back at the suspension of the College Union. The manner in which it had been working of late may not have been heartening to those who sincerely appreciate its tremendous possibilities. But it would be a great pity if that most useful body—as much a necessary part of college life as the class room itself—ceases permanently to function. To judge of it by a look at its seamy side is a mistake which we hope shall not be committed. Let every effort be made to revivify the College Union, that it may work with the spirit that makes for success.

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Principal H E. Stapleton has been appointed to act as Director of Public Instruction, Bengal. He had previously officiated in that capacity, and as the seniormost member of the Educational Service in the province, the honour comes to him as a matter of course. The College owes much to him for all that he had done for the institution by resuscitating Mr. James's Improvement Scheme and the publication of the College Register. His personal contribution to the College Hall Fund is eloquent proof of his sincere enthusiasm for the project. His attempts to tone up the social life of the College and to start an Old Boys' Association did not meet

mendous epic drama of the Napoleonic era, remains perhaps his outstanding poetical work. Despite a certain ruggedness of expression, his shorter poems breathe an inspiration born of that shock of apprehension which alone can produce the truest poetry. Hardy as a novelist, however, outshines the poet; perhaps posterity will endorse this judgment of his contemporaries. The creator of "Tess" will ever have an honoured place in all literature. Round about that "partly real, partly dream-country", Wessex, he wove scenes that have a strong universal appeal. His powerful, sombre style has in it a quality of subdued emotion that overpowers the reader. He has been called a pessimist—he himself disliked the word as a misleading description of his attitude. He never confessed to an abject pessimism. But how could a sensitive poet who looked round only to see a wondrous beautiful world where cruelty and narrowness and injustice were seated on thrones of royal state, find solace in comforting assurances of a better and a happier life? Not that Hardy could not be gay at times, but his heart bled to see man as the victim of Destiny's whimsical sport. We may rebel against this view of life; perhaps Hardy himself rebelled against it. But certainly the world would be richer, if more men were there to weep with him. Thomas Hardy has passed away, full of years and honours. But he has his seat assured among the great elect whose names will live till breath endures.

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In the death of Lord Sinha, India loses a remarkable personality. The story of his career is in itself a romance. One cannot but marvel to think of the run-away Raipur boy sitting in the historic Hall of Mirrors at Versailles along with statesmen of international repute, to settle the destinies of the world. The first Indian Advocate General, the first Indian Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, the first Indian King's Counsel, the first Indian to sit in the British Cabinet, the first Indian peer and the first Indian Governor of a British province—he had won the highest distinctions through sheer merit, without ever having sought them. He has demonstrated before the world that an Indian yields to none in his ability to shine in every

sphere of activity. Lord Sinha's own countrymen paid him their highest compliment by calling him to the presidential chair of the National Congress. His essentially judicial temperament and his unswerving faith in England's intentions gave a certain cast to his political opinions that many of his countrymen found hard to share. Yet none ever questioned his patriotism or his transparent honesty of conviction. In private life, he was the very pink of courtesy. A gentleman to his fingertips, he had no enemies. He always took an active interest in the affairs of our College and was present at the meeting held on Founders' Day this year. The country is distinctly the poorer by his death and the College mourns the loss of an alumnus whose great career shed, and will continue still to shed, lustre on her name.

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One of England's most notable figures has passed away in the person of the Earl of Oxford and Asquith. He capped singularly brilliant academic success with a great political career. He entered the Cabinet of Gladstone in 1892, and will be remembered by posterity as England's Prime Minister when the Parliament Act of 1911 set the capstone on the edifice of English democracy, by vesting real sovereignty in the House of Commons. A man of wide culture, he represented the Victorian tradition in a manner worthy of the highest praise. His speeches were literature; in these days of curt and slipshod speech, it was certainly a relief to hear Asquith speak in his wonted effortless style. England loses in him a great man who had given of his best to his country.

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It is our melancholy duty to prolong this obituary list and record the death of several notable ex-students of our College. Rai Pankaj Kumar Chatterjee Bahadur, who had a distinguished career in the service of the state and retired as District and Sessions Judge, used always to take considerable interest in the affairs of his *alma mater* and regularly attended the Founders' Day celebrations. Rai Ramani Mohan Ghosh Bahadur, who died in harness as Deputy Director General of Post Offices, India, was a poet and litterateur of no mean

distinction. Dr. Pashupatinath Sastri was distinguished for an exceptionally wide culture and suavity of disposition, and the University loses in him an eminent member of its staff. Mr. Anath Bandhu Guha of Mymensing was one of our sincerest, and at the same time most unostentatious, patriots and educationists. Mr. M. N. Basu was a wellknown figure in Calcutta society, respected for his wide catholicity of culture. Rai Lalit Kumar Mitra, whose premature death came as a shock to many, was an untiring worker in the cause of promoting Calcutta's civic amenities. Rai Tarit Kanti Bakshi Bahadur, was a respected member of the Indian Educational Service, and gave of his best to the cause of education in the Central Provinces. We offer our condolence to the bereaved families.

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His Excellency the Governor of Bengal paid a visit to our College on the 31st January last, and he must have been pleased to observe the working of the scheme of College improvements that is being pushed forward so vigorously. He was shown round the Common Room, the Laboratories, and some of the Seminars and classes, and formally opened the Library with its renovated arrangements. Our Visitor was greatly interested in what he saw, and his generous donation to the fund that is now being raised for the erection of a College Hall, is a reflex of his attitude towards the premier educational institution of the province.

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We should offer in this connexion our sincere thanks to Mr. H. G. Beall of the Y.M.C.A., who before his departure from India, kindly prepared the scheme of College improvements that is now being put to effect. We need not say how much Bengal owes to Mr. Beall for the pains he has taken for the physical wellbeing of her young men, and his kind labours in the interests of our College may be called his last legacy to the province that he has for long served so well.

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We congratulate Alderman Bejoy Kumar Basu, an ex-student of our College, on his election as Mayor of Calcutta.

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To turn to the activities of our students in the field of sport, we are gratified to note the brilliant successes of Mr. P. L. Mehta who has earned for himself the reputation of being one of the best tennis players in the country. His exploits in the provincial tournament here are too wellknown to require mention. It is, however, noteworthy that in the Punjab tourney, he could only be defeated by Mr. M Sleem who is perhaps the finest player that India has yet produced. On top of all this, comes the news of the invitation that has been extended to Mr. Mehta to join the Indian Davis Cup Team. To play in the Davis Cup is the highest distinction that any votary of the game may look forward to, and considering Mr. Mehta's age, it is certainly a very great honour. The College, we have no hesitation in affirming, is unreservedly proud of him.

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We welcome the institution of the "Bankim-Sarat Samity", started for the study of the works of two of our greatest litterateurs—Bankim Chandra, whose wonderful genius found characteristic expression in his "Bande Mataram" hymn, perhaps the noblest of all national anthems, and Sarat Chandra, who holds probably the foremost place among our writers of fiction. We hope the institution will prove as much of a success as the Rabindra Parishad has been, if we be justified in judging from the work it has already done. It is for us, however, to see to it that the Bengali Literary Society is not cramped between these two institutions.

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We congratulate Mr. Bhuramal Agarwal of the 4th Year Arts Class, on his being awarded the provincial Silver medal in the competition for the Viceroy's prize for the best essay written by undergraduate students of Indian Universities on subjects specified

every year. This is the second year of the competition, and the provincial medal has been won both times by students of our College.

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It is a happy sign of the times that serious attempts are beginning to be made in the task of organising a youth movement in this country. We would like to mention in this connexion the work of Mr. T. L. Vaswani who appeals with a singular beauty of language to the creative spirit in youth to reconstruct the country. Surely, the youth of the land cannot be too often reminded of its tremendous responsibilities. There are maladies to be fought—social, economic, political, intellectual. The mother requires strong and manly children to help her stand erect; she is weary of leaning on crutches. Let us never forget that it is only sustained endeavour born of an inspiration that does not require momentary excitements to keep it aflame, that can enable us to give of our very best to our country and to the world.

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We are tempted to refer to an event which unfortunately does not appear to have attracted as much attention as it deserved, and that is the return of the three Parsee Cyclists after their tour round the world. We can only use the strongest superlatives in commending the great exploit of these adventurous youths. To-day the greatest ambassador that America can send to all the world is the twentyfive-years-old Lindbergh of Atlantic flight fame. How we wish that more of such spirit of adventure were abroad in our country! Our thoughts naturally turn to the four Bengalee youths who started a little over a year back on a cycle tour round the world. We look forward to the day when they will come back home, with golden laurels won.

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Those of our students who have been appearing at the various University examinations will be glad to learn that a friend of theirs from overseas—Mr. T. S. Sterling—had sent them his best wishes for success in their efforts.

THE COLLEGE HALL

PRINCIPAL H. R. JAMES (Retired)

“**Y**OUR old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” The words have a certain appropriateness to the present time in Bengal. Never, perhaps, was there a better time for dreaming dreams and seeing visions, and then turning them into reality. Some fifteen years ago, when at any rate I was younger, I saw a vision (as readers of the introductory chapters of the College Register have been reminded) of Presidency College as it would be when the newly inaugurated Improvement Scheme was completed. That vision haunts me still. It may haunt many now in Calcutta. It has gained new and inspiring vividness of late.

There is no reason to doubt that the whole scheme would have been carried through in the course of time as planned, not perhaps quite by 1920, but certainly, I think, by 1928. The war changed all that. Four years ago it still looked as if the scheme, once so prosperously begun, was cut short for good and all. Worse than that, there was actual loss of prestige after 1917 through the altered relation to the College of its M. A. and M. Sc. classes; and further loss threatened when, later, suggestions were made for reductions of staff and equipment. Then suddenly, three years ago, hope revived. It was on Founders' Day, 1925, and in the words spoken by His Excellency Lord Lytton. Since then it has been possible to hope that the scheme, which seemed to have been abandoned, will yet be carried to completion. It now again seems only a question of time. And the more the pace can be quickened, the greater is the assurance of the ultimate realisation of the scheme in all its details. Can those who love the College and believe in its high destiny do nothing to forward the desired consummation?

Hopes for the full working out of the scheme on the lines

planned in 1910 necessarily depend, in the main, on Government interest and sympathy, and what can be spared for the purpose from severely strained public resources. The process must be gradual and will take time. But, as Lord Lytton pointed out, voluntary co-operation is not excluded. The opportunity stands open wide to private and personal liberality.

All parts of the scheme as recapitulated by the Principal on January the 20th, 1925, are valuable developments; all are needed. There is one that claims priority, did claim priority (I, at least, believe) from the beginning. What fully corporate activities can be carried out by a College, if its members cannot meet together within the walls of one building, or place of assembly? There is no College Hall. There never has been. Yet there can never have been a time when the disabilities, which this deficiency implies, have not been gravely felt. They have been felt more acutely, and consciously, since the unity of the Collegiate body, and the importance of the social side of College life, were emphasised by the Universities' Commission of 1901. Within my own experience I recall that several times, in order to gather the College together, staff and students, we had occasion to borrow the use of the hall of the University Institute, and once (or was it more than once?) the neighbouring Y.M.C.A. Hall. It was only through the considerate courtesy of those in charge of these institutions that we, as a College, were able to meet together in this way at all. For the healthy functioning of College life on the social and moral sides (they are nearly the same), a College Hall is indispensable. I suggested once before, and I suggest again now, that it would be a fine thing if the College Hall could be made a gift to the College from its own old *alumni*. The completion of the Presidency College Register testifies to the real existence of love and loyalty towards the College, of pride and gratitude on the part of those who have in the past belonged to it as students or who belong to it now. Is there not hope that if the enterprise were set going, these same feelings would be manifested in this different, but no less practical and memorable way?

Hindu tradition sets a high spiritual value on gratitude and reverence towards the teacher. An institution, College or School, is greater and more venerable than any individual teacher. It is right and natural to desire to pay back in some practical way gratitude for benefits received. Education, if it be true and right education, is the greatest of benefits. All who have been educated at Presidency College, Calcutta, or who have served on its staff, have received great benefits from their association with an institution of this scale and character. All should desire to make some return for the benefits received. Here then is one way, a great opportunity. Is the idea that old Presidency College men (not excluding members of the teaching staff) might make a gift to the College of its Hall of Assembly, an idle dream? Or is it a true vision?

A FORTNIGHT IN GREECE

(Concluded)

PROFESSOR K. ZACHARIAH, M.A. (Oxon) I.E.S.

ATHENS is indeed 'the eye of Greece', the feature in the whole physiognomy most moving and bright and finished. But its very perfection robs it of some of the charm that often invests the primitive and immature. When the Homeric poems were composed, she was but a village or cluster of villages round a bare rock, and the seats of the mighty were elsewhere, at Argos or Tiryns or Mycenae. Besides these early palaces, there are in the Peloponnesus other places like Sparta and Corinth, Olympia and Epidaurus from the classical period, Mistra and Nauplia from the Latin; and outside, Delphi, Eleusis, Marathon, Thermopylae, Sunium. To be

in Greece and yet forbear to see some of these was an abnegation of which we were not capable. The problem was, since we could not go to them all, to collect the largest number into the compass of a five or six days' itinerary. This involved careful consideration, much consultation of time-tables and reviling of the slowness of Greek trains and, in the end, inevitable regrets. But, on the whole, I think we chose wisely and our plan was to limit ourselves to the Peloponnesus and to what could be seen by train or by short motor journeys.

There was much we were sorry to leave out, Sparta for instance; but journey to Sparta would have eaten up the whole of a summer's day, from morn to dewy eve and more; Pheidippides did not take much longer twentyfour centuries ago! The train brings you as far as Tripolis, which takes its name from the three ancient Arcadian towns on whose territories it stands—Mantineia, Tegea and Pallantion, of which but few ruins survive. Tripolis has to do duty for all of them, for it is the only town in Arcadia—which is as it should be, for Arcadia is not for town-dwellers. Baedeker describes it as one of the most important places in the Peloponnesus: 'it is the seat of an archbishop and contains a gymnasium and a seminary for priests; the population is 10,500.' Neither the gymnasium nor even the archbishop and priests is likely to prove much of an attraction; but Tripolis is on the way to Sparta; thence a car takes you along forty miles of narrow, winding mountain road through 'some of the finest and fiercest scenery in Greece'. At the end is Sparta, with the great wall of Taygetus behind and the burbling Eurotas below; but Time, she-who-must-be-obeyed, barred the way to us. Even more inaccessible is the temple of Phigaleia, of historic memory, for it was built—so says Pausanias—to commemorate a merciful release from the great plague of 430 and was planned by Ictinus himself, the architect of the Parthenon; its beautiful frieze is now in the British Museum. Most difficult of all to abandon was Delphi of the oracles—but again ease of communications decided for us between Delphi and Olympia, that and the Hermes. The usual route to Delphi is by sea from the Piraeus to Itea at the head

of the small bay of Salona and from there by car; and Baedeker says cautiously, 'the times of the return journeys are irregular'. Also, as I have said, there is the *Hermes* at Olympia, of which more anon.

Cold and wet was the morning we set out from the Peloponnesus station at Athens. This line runs north for a few miles and then turns east, finding a pass between Aegaleos and Parnes into the plain of Eleusis. Closer and closer it moves to the sea, till it clings to the steep hillside like a fly on a wall, the white line of foam a dizzy way below. Then we ran through the plain of Megara, down the Isthmus and over the canal to Corinth; south again, till in the afternoon we came to the little station of Nauplia.

Nauplia is one of the most attractive towns in Greece. 'The beautiful and healthy situation of the town, its handsome new buildings and the un-Grecian cleanness of the streets invite the traveller to a stay of some time.' So says the prosaic and practical guide-book. If the traveller stays, it will not be for the new buildings which are what he would find in any provincial town, nor for the neatness of the streets which would be remarkable in Greece alone, but for the striking beauty of its position. The town is on a little peninsula, which forms one side of an open, sweeping harbour, dotted with islands. The sea is of the clear blue so rare except in the Aegean, turning in the dusk to the wine-dark colour which Homer noted and which shades off into the purple of the hills beyond. The coast has that clean and austere grace of line which only a rocky shore can show. Behind the town towers the steep walls of the Palamidi, crowned with its Venetian fortress, its strong red-brown a foil to the rest of the picture.

But we had little time to spare for Nauplia—even the name is pretty. No sooner in port than we had to weigh anchor again. We got a room in a hotel, put our bags down and presently were deep in negotiations for a car. Friends at Athens had advised us about the proper fares and, after some haggling, we persuaded the owner that we were not American millionaires (here our appearance must have helped us!) and set off for Epidaurus.

Everywhere in Greece now you find these ancient Fords, to all appearance imported from America at an advanced age; but they hold together marvellously and are a blessing to the tourist. Only once did we stop in thirty kilometres and that was to inspect a small 'Cyclopean' bridge.

The Hieron of Epidaurus was the most sacred sanctuary of Aesculapius, the god of healing. The whole place is now strewn with stones and bits of columns and with anxious care we traced out the ground plans of the temples, of colonnades and walls, of the katagogion or hostel, of the tholos or round temple, where mystic rites were celebrated; enough of the last has been reconstructed in the museum to make its design intelligible to the layman. Then we had a race in the stadium, sunk between its sloping green walls; it is curious, but characteristically Greek, to attach a race-course to a hospital—sport and amusement are elements of well-being. So we find a theatre too, the best preserved of all Greek theatres, fashioned from the cup of a circling hill. In the centre is the dancing floor or orchestra, surrounded by a ring of grass, beyond which rise the rows of semi-circular seats of stone, one above the other, the highest nearly 200 feet above the orchestra. At intervals run passages from side to side and up and down. The Greeks were an open air people and they had an open air worthy of looking at and living in. If your eye strayed from Agamemnon or Alcestis, it had something even better to dwell on, the white pilgrim road winding among the hills, sprinkled perhaps, as when we saw it, with whiter snow.

We tested the acoustic properties of the theatre, of which we had heard much. There was a small Greek boy, feeding a goat—goats do not need much help to feed! Him we adjured by pantomime (worthy of a Greek comedy) to drop a coin on the paved orchestra, while we mounted to the topmost row; the tinkle could be distinctly heard; and, without raising our voices, we could understand each other right across the theatre.

It was late when we got back to Nauplia; but early the next morning we walked the three miles to the mound on which stood

the massive fort and palace of Tiryns. It was the first castle in Europe with an outer wall of stone and, then as now, the great ramparts must have been its most striking feature, for Homer speaks of 'wall-girt Tiryns'. In the interior there is now little above the foundations, but much of the wall is still standing and the galleries in the enormous width of the lower courses are intact, where the huddling sheep in the course of generations wore the stones to a glossy smoothness. There was a tiresome man about, who looked like a peasant and said he was the care-taker, but we neither took nor gave anything.

Back in Nauplia, we had just time for a look at the museum, before it was time for the train to Argos. Thence, a car bore us further and further from the haunts of men, deep into the desolate uplands, till in a light hailstorm we came to Mycenae, now forlorn in the heart of the Argive hills. The sun came out as we passed into the citadel through the famous Lion Gateway. It was not very far away, at Nemea, that Hercules slew his lion; but the balanced lions rampant of Mycenae perhaps trace their pedigree, by some strange filtration of art, to similar motifs of Sumerian Lagash. Anyhow they were a fit symbol for the robber chiefs of this acropolis, who waxed wealthy by preying on the rich caravans that made their way along the valleys; for, as Berard has shown, waste and empty as the outlook now is, Mycenae commanded the route from the Argolic Gulf to the Saronic. Wealthy they were, no doubt, for did not the old Greeks call it 'golden' and did not Schliemann find below the agora rich tombs with crowns? The hole gapes there still, below the circle of stones. But far more interesting are the so-called beehive tombs further down the hill, in shape like enormous beehives or pointed domes, lined with well-hewn stones, finished buildings with nothing rough or careless about them. There is perhaps no other site in Greece so vocal of the beginnings of history as Mycenae; as far as the eye could see, there was no intrusive later note, no garish museum or hotel, not another visitor—only our Ford, and that was itself a thing of no small antiquity. Almost one could imagine oneself back in

Homeric days, watching the line of long-haired warriors going down the hill.

On the way back, we stopped for tea at the house of the custodian in the little village of Charvati. A pleasant smiling housewife bustled about and produced first a stove at which we warmed chilled hands and then tea, bread and delicious honey. We bought picture post cards and turned over the pages of the visitors' book and were amused to find a recent Bengali inscription by one of my colleagues in this college who had visited Greece a few weeks before.

The car left us at the tiny station of Phicthia, where we had a longish wait and were thankful and surprised to find a fire on the empty platform, for the day was perishing cold. Then, at the close of day, came troubles. The train was crowded, as Greek trains often are; it ran late into Corinth. As we walked into the town we were greeted by a sea gale that nearly blew us off our feet and it became difficult to carry one's bag without losing one's hat. Then we had a difference of opinion about the hotel, for the proprietor was a man of vast size and oily manners whom I mistrusted at first sight, while my companion was more hopeful.

As soon as we had secured our room, we sought for a car, for Old Corinth is about four miles away at the foot of the great rock of the Acro-Corinth, a notable landmark; the modern city, on the sea, was only built about sixty years ago, after an earthquake had destroyed the village on the ancient site. The American School is exploring the old city and we had a card to view the excavations; but scarcely an hour of daylight remained and our eagerness for a car must have aroused suspicions, for such exorbitant sums were demanded as it would have been an encouragement of wickedness to pay. So we left Old Corinth to its fate.

The next morning we were at the station again to catch the train to Olympia. The line runs along the edge of the coast, always in view of the sea, often at a stone's throw, in a few places where the hills descend sheer to the water actually on piers with the waves lapping below. This marriage of hills and gulfs is characteristic of

Greece, where the ridges run down and the inlets run up to embrace them. One travels slowly and with sufficient time to look at the passing panorama—the islands, the snowy Aetolian mountains to the right, the torrents in which the water scarcely covered the bouldered beds, the olive groves shimmering in the breeze, the currant fields full then of bare bushes, the rare clumps of oak trees, the casks of wine at Patras along the crowded quays, here and there old Venetian forts in ruin, the goats on the hill sides. We never saw a cow or ox in all Greece, although we were told they exist; readers of the classics will remember how often shepherds appear and how seldom cowherds. It is a most casual train and stops at stations as long as it likes. You see the guard going off to the market and returning with a leg of mutton. Small boys come along the corridors offering loaves and oranges for sale, figs on long strings and bits of roast meat speared on sticks. It was dark when we changed trains at Pyrgos; from there a small branch train of two or three carriages, cloudily lighted by kerosene lamps, every window shuttered, finds its way up the valley of the Alpheus to Olympia.

We were met by the manager or we should never have found our way to the Hotel Olympia, which Baedeker justly summarises as 'unpretending but good.' It was much too late for anything but bed that night; but all next day we wandered among the ruins and in the museum. The temples of Olympia lie in the dust and scarce a pillar stands in all the sacred enclosure, but you can see the foundations and bits of columns which the patient industry of German excavators brought to light again from the deep silt with which the floodful river, Alpheus, and its tributary, the Kladeus, had covered them; for, almost alone of Greek cities, Olympia lies in a river valley, on low land, subject to inundations and earthquakes and receiving its full measure of both; but it was never really a town, only a shrine, a centre of worship and fellowship, not of inspiration like Delphi. Here was the temple of Hera, one of the oldest of Greek temples, in which Pausanias saw a wooden column, and the great temple of Zeus, father of the gods, once glorious with the gold and ivory statue which Phidias, the Athenian,

made. Here were the small 'treasuries' of the various cities, like pretty maids, all in a row; and numberless statues on their bases, of which two happily survive, and many later buildings. Close by was the stadium or race-course, of which only a part has been excavated, where every fourth year the athletes of Greece came to compete for the green wreaths and undying fame which were the rewards of victory; for their names were inscribed on stones, poets wrote odes to them and their cities set up monuments in their honour. What a brilliant and busy scene it must have been at festival time, when the Greeks forgot for a moment their petty feuds and remembered their kinship!

But now Olympia is a picturesque waste, untenanted but by a watchman, who keeps a suspicious eye on visitors. The ground is thick with blocks of limestone, but between them, in the grass thousands of short blue irises were then blossoming, filling the air with scent; and among the pines the birds flitted and chattered. Nowhere else in Greece is there such a lovely, such a pastoral, scene. Two sides are bounded by the streams and on the third rises the steep Kronos hill, clothed to its top in evergreen shrubs and trees. Thus should the past be sepulchred, its bones laid in soft grass and flowers, under the shadow of great trees.

There are wonderful things in the little museum. The pediment groups of the temple of Zeus are earlier than those of the Parthenon, less perfect but more human and more appealing. The metopes represent the labour of Hercules. At one end of the hall is the Nike of Paeonius, dedicated by the Messenians after the Spartan surrender at Sphacteria, wingless now and headless, but still victorious. But the chief treasure of Olympia is the Hermes of Praxiteles, one of the very few original masterpieces which time has spared, removed now from the museum for fear of earthquakes and housed in its own little shed and embedded to the knees in plaster. The child is far from perfect, for the Greeks did not study the infant form with such care as they devoted to the youthful and mature; and children are rare in Greek art as in Greek literature; but the Hermes itself and the finish, reaching in marble a softness

transcending that of very flesh which has to be felt to be appreciated—it is forbidden to touch the statue, but the custodian usually looks the other way—these are beyond praise. The Hermes was not one of the most admired statues of antiquity, Pausanias gives it but a line, but it conveys an unforgettable impression of Greek art at its best.

We had a cold journey back from Olympia. It was snowing hard, the streams were raging torrents, the fields were empty, the snow lay to the sea's edge; and, round Athens, the hills were draped in unaccustomed white.

Once more we climbed the Acropolis and looked out over the land. 'Stranger', says the choir in Oedipus, 'thou hast come to earth's fairest home, where, fed of heavenly dew, the narcissus blooms morn by morn with fair clusters, crown of the great goddesses from of old; and with golden beam blooms the crocus,' Narcissus and crocus were still hidden in the earth, but there always gleams the temple of the Maiden Athena.

THE SĀMKHYA THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

SHYAMA CHARAN CHATTERJI—*Vth Year Philosophy Class.*

BEFORE we proceed to an exposition of the Sāmkhya theory of knowledge, we may very briefly touch on the Sāmkhya theory of Reality. Sāmkhya, as it is wellknown, advocates a doctrine of Dualism—Prakriti, the primordial matter and Purusha or rather Purushas (Souls). Prakriti is eternal and changing, in a continuous flux so to say—পরিণামিনী নিত্য [cf. Bergson's E'lan Vital or Spencer's matter]. Purusha is eternal but changeless—কুটস্থনিত্যঃ. Prakriti is an undifferentiated manifold, "an indeterminate infinite

continuum of infinitesimal Reals” which are called Gunas— (1) Sattva, the Essence, (2) Rajas, the Energy and (3) Tamas, the Mass or Inertia [সত্ত্বরজস্তমসাং সাম্যাবস্থা প্রকৃতিঃ]. And evolution begins through the transcendental influence of Purusha. And in the words of Dr. B. N. Seal, “the process of evolution consists in the development of the differentiated within the undifferentiated, of the determinate within the indeterminate, of the coherent within the incoherent” [We are here reminded of Spencer who says, ‘the matter passes from an (Rand addi, relatively) indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a (relatively) definite coherent heterogeneity]. The first evolute of the unknowable (অলিঙ্গ) Prakriti is the knowable (লিঙ্গ) Mahat which is otherwise called Buddhi. This Mahat further bifurcates into two series—the subject series and the object series. In the subject series we have Ahamkara (cf. Kant’s apperception), mind and the ten senses. In the object series we have the five Tanmatras (potentials) and the five ‘bhuts.’ These in the object series further lead to (but this is not evolution according to Samkhya) the gross external world.

Samkhya Epistemology is thus one of realism. There are both the subject and the object and they are quite independent of each other. And knowledge consists in the union between subject and object.

It is through the senses (ইন্দ্রিয়প্রণালিকয়া) that ‘buddhi’ comes into touch with the external object and takes their shape (directly in the case of perception and indirectly in the case of inference etc.) It is however a point at issue whether buddhi flows through the senses and goes over to the external object or the external object somehow affects buddhi through the channels of the senses. The conception of buddhi going out through the senses to the external objects appears crude to us. But we can and should accept it in as much as this seems to be the prevalent idea among the philosophers of other systems too. Thus Vedanta speaks of mind going out of the body (শরীর মধ্যাং) ; we have also to bear in mind that the science of optics did not develop much in India. So any way we take it that buddhi comes into union with the external object. And this becomes possible because both buddhi and the

external world are evolutes of Prakriti and as such partake of a common character. In buddhi however there is a preponderance of the Sattva elements and in the 'Sthula bhuts' there is a preponderance of the 'tamas' elements. But it should be borne in mind that the other three gunas are more or less present in buddhi and the bhuts alike. Now, we see that Buddhi comes into contact with the external object. But this in itself does not constitute knowledge. Buddhi is unconscious and unintelligent, it being only a modification of Prakriti. Here comes in Purusha—Chit or soul. This Purusha however is not an object of perception—it is rather to be inferred or be accepted as authority—[চৈতন্য তু ন লোকপ্রত্যক্ষ-গোচরঃ অপিস্বাগমানামান-গোচরঃ] It is the pure light of consciousness. The light of Purusha falls on the changes of Buddhi and thus knowledge begins. "Our cognitions so far as they are mere forms or images are merely compositions or complexes of subtle mind substance, and thus are like a sheet of painted canvas immersed in darkness; as the canvas gets prints from outside and moves, the pictures appear one by one before the light and are illuminated. So it is with our knowledge." Thus we have Purusha—pure consciousness on the one side and the gross external world on the other, and buddhi mediates between them. Kant also in a similar way effected a union between understanding and sense. He had recourse to imagination which stood midway between sense and understanding and thus served as the coupling link between the two. Purusha does not directly illumine the external world which because of the preponderance of the tamas elements fails to receive the light of Purusha. Buddhi, however, by virtue of the preponderance of the sattva elements (intelligence stuff—essence) is fit for reflecting and absorbing the light of Purusha. Purusha's light thus illumines the changes of Buddhi. The buddhi state therefore is thus intellectualised and so knowledge begins.

A question may be asked here—How can Purusha be said to have an experience (ভোগ) of these images or modifications? The Vyasa-bhasya speaks of দৃশ্যত্বেন—Purusha has the capacity of experiencing and the buddhi states are endowed with the capacity

of being experienced. The experience is made possible because of the সন্নিধি of পুরুষ with buddhi. But this সন্নিধি is not, however, as Vachaspati Misra says, one of a spacial or temporal character. সন্নিধি rather implies an ideal proximity—a particular kind of fitness (যোগ্যতা) Purusha is fit for; cognising the external object. There exists a specific relation by virtue of which Purusha, which is capable of experiencing the world, actually experiences it. Bhikshu, however, joins issue with Misra on this point. He remarks that if knowledge or experience be possible by virtue of fitness the purusha as such, endowed with this fitness, can never be thought of as getting rid of the experience at any time. Hence, according to Bhikshu, Misra goes against the tenet, of Samkhya. Bhikshu, therefore, has recourse to samyoga (সংযোগ). Purusha reflects itself on buddhi and buddhi also reflects itself back on Purusha and thus knowledge begins. Here Bhikshu takes care to add that reflection on Purusha does not mean that Purusha undergoes any kind of change or modification. The changes really appertain to buddhi. Reflection of a tree on the water of a tank does not mean that the tank itself in any way changes. But we must note here that Bhikshu really tries to make too much of the idea of reflection. Really, Vachaspati Misra's 'yogyata' seems to be more philosophical. The union of subject and object that are both disparate and distinct seems to be the crux of the Samkhya theory of knowledge. In knowledge, it may be said, we have a subject-object relation, but from this duality of subject and object we cannot assert their dualism. It is contended that subject and object as viewed apart and distinct from each other are mere abstractions. But we may say that since it cannot be asserted that the subject depends upon the object, nor that the object depends upon the subject, there is no logical bar against taking them as separate. To say that the subject and the object come into relation does not mean that any one depends upon the other, that the relation between them is one of dependence. In fact, we cannot in any way get rid of the dualism of subject and object. And as such Samkhya takes them to be as they are. Purusha is pure consciousness and the object has the capacity of

“being known” and as such, when these come into a specific relation, one, viz. the Purusha cognises the other viz. the external object. And beyond this we cannot go [cf. the modern Searchlight theory of consciousness.]

It may further be asked, if knowledge consists in such illumination of the buddhi's changes made possible by the contact of the external world, how is it that we get knowledge bit by bit and not of the whole external world at one flash of time, so to say. It may be held that buddhi pervades the whole external world at one and the same time and that these changes are thus revealed by Purusha (to itself, of course) at the same instant. Samkhya holds that this is not rendered possible because of the presence of the tamas elements (mass or inertia), both in the external world and in buddhi. It is “on account of mass or tendency of obstruction that knowledge proceeds from image to image and discloses things in a successive manner. We should note here that Samkhya regards time as a nonentity objectively considered, it being only a construction of buddhi (बुद्धि निर्माण) [cf. the notion of space time as an ‘artefact’—i.e. ‘a structure in which materials found in the world are compounded in such a manner as to be convenient for the mathematician’] As in Spincza, time in Samkhya has validity only in the stage of empirical intuition (सबिचारा निर्विकल्पप्रज्ञा) but not in the stage of intellectual intuition (निर्विचारा निर्विकल्पप्रज्ञा).

REQUIEM

(HUMAYUN KABIR—6th Year English Class.)

A thin unimposing volume of poetry one takes up and is almost half-afraid lest out of its pages stare a dull, cold philosophy or the harsh echo of a thousand machines grinding day and night. For they say, the days of poetry are over and with the

growing industrialisation of the world, the energies of man shall be used more and more for purposes of increasing productivity. The mystery of the universe dwindles every day and in the cold clear light of knowledge, the glamour of poetry shall vanish. Even theoretical science is at a discount to-day and seems to be tolerated only because theories in the long run lead to practice. At such a time it is a pleasant experience to wander into a valley where flowers bloom and song gushes forth, suffused with the soft moonlight of imagination in which a cold, arid intellectualism and a crude, vulgar realism are equally out of place.

Requiem is a collection of dramatic lyrics by Humbert Wolfe who, we are told, has rapidly achieved the biggest reputation among the younger poets of modern England. But the book is something more than a mere collection of detached lyrics, for an underlying unity of thought and feeling binds them into one organic whole. It is at once a picture and a criticism of modern society, with its restless striving after some ultimate end, its magnificent enterprise and deepening despair.

The first thing that strikes one in these poems of Humbert Wolfe is their form and the meticulous care with which he has striven to conceal the art that has built them up. Wolfe shows himself a consummate master of verse-construction and one is surprised at every step at the easy skill with which he has overcome the difficulties peculiar to his chosen form. Since the days when Wordsworth made the astounding statement that there neither is nor can be any essential difference between the language of prose and poetry and that this should be a selection of the language actually spoken by men and women under the stress of passion, a ceaseless controversy has raged round the question of poetic diction and metre. Walt Whitman's total denial of any special form to poetry was only an extreme instance of the application of Wordsworth's theories to practice, but no poet in recent times, however much he might have differed from the views of Wordsworth, has been able to ignore totally the implications of his principles. Here we have to make the observation that poetry differs most from prose, not

in its vocabulary, but in the inversion of the order natural to prose. In this, Wordsworth himself often violated his own theories—and sometimes with magnificent success—for exigencies of metre, but Whitman who discarded both metre and rhyme strictly adhered to the order natural to the sequence of thought. Wolfe has tried to combine the influences of Wordsworth and Whitman in his poetry, and while retaining the prose order of language has sought to maintain the rhythm and the rhyme which constitute so great a part of the charm of poetry. It would indeed be an injustice to assume that his verse is merely prose cut into lengths with rhymes tagged at the end of every line, for a subtle sense of music and rhythm, which result from the harmony of poetic thought, pervades the whole body of his poetry.

The influence of Wordsworth and Whitman appears also in his selection of themes, for like them he sings of life in its common walks, the common joys and sorrows of the ordinary man and woman of to-day. His sympathies are wide and deep, the struggles, failures and successes, the hopes and the despairs of the modern world are faithfully and tenderly mirrored in his poems. To throw a glamour of beauty over the common experience of everyday and pierce into the core of truth and reality that lies behind the shams and hypocrisies of a work-a-day life are achievements of which any poet might be proud and it is no exaggeration to say that Wolfe has at times succeeded in doing so.

The influence of Wordsworth has not, however, succeeded in saving him from the bane of intellectualism and at times his involved and tortuous modes of expression remind us of Browning, whose obscurity often seems to hapless readers to result not from any lack of power on the part of the poet but out of a spirit of sheer perverseness and spite. Wolfe's references to obscure mythologies and obsolete deities are equally puzzling to simple readers and it must be asserted that he indulges in these rambles into the bypaths of history, not because the stress of his passion demands them, but simply because he cannot check the temptation of making such references.

In his attitude to life, the influence of Browning is manifest

at every step. He has acquired the same easy tolerance for lapses from a conventional code of morals and the same impatient anger with a dull conformity that does not sin because it dares not. To him the 'Nun' and the 'Harlot' are equally failures, because they denied beauty and love, the one for the sake of the spirit and the other for the sake of the flesh. Requiem is divided into two halves, the Losers and the Gainers, and the principle of division is significant. The Losers are they who have suppressed any vital element in their personality for considerations of gain and profit, while the Gainers are those who have given freedom of expression to the creative impulse that is in them. Anything negatory or destructive makes for failure, be it suppression of an instinct or denial of order and beauty. The difference between the gainers and the losers lies, not in their actions or achievements, but in the attitude with which they face the world. Whoever bases his (or her) life, not on mere negations but upon positive principles, has gained the world, though the world may class him among its failures. The Anarchist is a failure, for the impulse that prompts his conduct is mere absence of control :

This is the freedom I demand for man —
 no king, no law, no guide, no love, no God,
 life with no purpose, death that has no plan,
 contempt the axe, and nescience the rod
 with which we crack
 out of life's black oppression into further black.

The Builder on the other hand is a Gainer, for his supreme consideration is,

There is one splendour of vision, another glory,
 different and less, of vision consummate
 snatched from the void in steeple and clerestory
 and the tall iron irresolutely great,
 the builder's tale
 of all the strivings of men that thus divinely fail.

The influence of Browning is manifest also in the prevalence of the dramatic element in these poems, for it is no unfair description

of the book to call it a modern edition of *Men and Women*. Wolfe lacks the detachment of Browning from the moral issues involved and cannot help making comments and remarks in his own person. This results from his failure to identify himself with the subject as completely as Browning who loses his own individuality in the person whose attitude he adopts, be it Blougram or Rabbi, Caliban or Saul as the case may be.

Wolfe has, however, sympathy with his subjects even when he implicitly condemns their course of action, and he attributes their failure, not to any inherent evil in their nature, but to ignorance and error and mistaken ideals of life. Even his Harlot can plead,

I did not understand. I dreamed that I dreamed
 of kisses that did not kiss, of hands not hands
 but fishes at my throat, and that the world seemed
 like tainted water about deserted lands
 to the dead hum

of heavy spotted insects swaying its slow scum.

The Huckster who has bartered life's good for the world's gold turns back with the query,

Are we to blame? or life the sorceress
 who with a single potion can pervert
 the desire for action into beastliness,
 the golden shadow into common dirt,
 and blurs the fine

boundary, that separates the angel from the swine?

So also the Respectable Woman who has denied herself all pleasure and beauty in life, not because she loves virtue with a love that makes her careless of everything else, but because she fears lest she should lose her all by daring too much, can console herself with the thought,

Is there no virtue in bearing down the threat
 of the jungle moving faintly in the blood,
 and the smooth velvet footsteps, and the wet
 muzzles of creatures, stirring in the mud,
 and the hot breath

that men called freedom to live, and I called death?

But then we come to the enchanted realm where Romance for ever reigns and the lover sees new beauty where we see none, for

She touched his eyelids with a morning
that left him beautiful and blind
to be a promise, and a warning
of what we too may find.

The maiden that abandons herself to love is also happy, for she knows I chose between my soul and him—no choice since he became my soul, and dying, know that, though all voices fade in love's one voice, and all but this are silent where I go, the path I trod, alone, was lonely with the loneliness of God.

And she believes,

Love is greater than the lovers. Love is such
that all may love, and fail, and yet be rich.

The great man is he who aspires and may be fails, for
..... Greatness is the vision, not the deed.

So a note of optimism runs through all his poems, a sense that failures on earth are but earnestings of a success to follow and that weakness, hesitancy and evil are but conditions for ultimate greatness:

We are the losers of the world and we have it.

We are the lost archangels and we rise.

We have cheated the faith they had and they forgave it,
blind, and we see behind their darkened eyes.

Died and instead

are the life eternal for which all these are dead.

But then in midst of human struggle and striving comes a pause, and death comes and wipes out the tale of sorrow and suffering, of ecstasy and joy.

The high song is over. Even the echoes fail now;
winners and losers—they are only a theme now,
their victory and defeat a half-forgotten tale now;
and even the angels are only a dream now.

NATIONALISM AS A DYNAMIC FORCE *

BEJOYESH MUKERJEE—*IVth Year Arts Class.*

TRULY has it been said that nationalism is a very refractory term to bring within the limits of a clear definition. (Gilchrist: Indian Nationality). Indeed, "very few words in political terminology have been used more vaguely and through their indefiniteness have brought more confusion into the modern world than the word nation and its derivatives, nationality and nationalism." It is not necessary for us to entangle ourselves into the labyrinth of the etymological and ethnological meanings of the term. For, modern political philosophers all agree that Huxley with his superficial classification of mankind into xanthochroic, melanochoic, mongoloid, australoid and negroid, and Burgess with his ante-deluvian ethnological definition are veritable back-numbers. Leaving aside the anthropologists and the ethnologists to wrangle amongst themselves in deciding the race and nationality of mulattoes, mestizos and zambos, let us start at once with the universally accepted definition of nationalism as given by Holcombe in his "Foundations of the Modern Commonwealth."

"Nationalism," says he, "is a corporate sentiment, a kind of fellow-feeling or mutual sympathy, relating to a definite home country and binding together the members of a human group, irrespective of religious differences, economic interests and social positions, more intimately than any other sentiment." And the dynamic force of this sentiment is "the tendency on the part of the members of a nation to wish to dominate the state of which they happen to be a part, or, failing in that, to organise a state of their own." John Stuart Mill, the leading liberal British political philosopher of his time, was the first prominent man to harp upon the theme of this dyna-

* Adapted from a paper read before a meeting of the Political Philosophy Seminar.

mic force. Writing in 1861, he declared that each nation must organise itself into a state. If it does not, it is no genuine nation and there is no true national sentiment. His opinion was afterwards re-echoed by Ernest Renan, the gifted French thinker. Writing in 1882, he declared that a nation exists when

1. A community possesses a common heritage of memories whether of achievement and glory or of suffering and sacrifice.
2. Its members wish on that account to live together in the same state and transmit their heritage to posterity.

(Quoted by Holcombe)

Nationalism is a subtle blend of noble and ignoble forces. And it is this subtle blend which makes nationalism a difficult problem for a moralist. Nevertheless, nationalistic politics can broadly be divided under two heads, viz, aggressive nationalism as represented by the pre-war German school of thought and non-aggressive nationalism as represented by the American school.

Aggressive nationalism—itsself the outcome of arrogance—leads to further arrogance. It wants to impose its culture upon the world by and through a machine gun. “Trietschke was the greatest exponent of the glorification of naked brute force and his lectures on Politics became the very Bible of the German state-craft. According to this theory, the essence of the state and its *raison d’etre* is not justice but power and the expansion of its power is its highest moral obligation.” (Ramsay Muir : Nationalism and Internationalism). The Germans—to quote further Prof. Muir—have come to the Council Table in their Shining Armour hammering the table with their mailed fists and clamouring that the will of Germany must be respected. Such a perverted nationalism is largely fed and fostered upon reciprocal ignorance and contempt. “The Englishman seriously believed a century ago that the French subsisted mainly upon frogs, while the Frenchman was equally convinced that the sale of wives at Smithfield was one of the English national institutions.” (Inge : Outspoken Essays.) ‘Inborn pugnacity of the *bete humane*’ and acquisitiveness play no mean part

in promoting the growth of this perverted form. Such aggressive nationalism, however, is condemned by commonsense and the verdict of history no less than by morality. Let us remember once for all that so long as this perverted fad remains, justice will be denied to weaker nations, however much they may cry for the principle of self-determination of nations. As Inge very appropriately puts it, "it is useless for the sheep to pass resolutions on vegetarianism while the wolf remains of a different opinion."

Non-aggressive nationalism is a grand ideal. Its success will make the earth a veritable paradise. Denuded of war-drums and battle-flags, national bickerings and mutual jealousies, all fairy flights of imagination would be realised. The activities of a non-aggressive nationalist will be based on this belief :—" I desire the greatness of my country not because I prefer my country to the salvation of my soul—(as Machiavelli would do)—but because my country stands for something intrinsically great or valuable." (Ibid). Nationalism divorced from this belief is a cohesion of wolf-pack.

Purged of all rancour and jealousy, nationalism is a lofty sentiment. It is a stimulus to all honourable conduct and noble effort—"a piece of the poetry of life." "The undistinguished individual in a group where the sentiment of nationality is strong, merges his puny personal identity into that of the whole magnificent group and becomes capable of exalted emotions and glorious deeds" (Abraham Lincoln, quoted by Holcombe). None dare defy the sentiment which breathes through the lines—"Breathes there a man with soul so dead, বঙ্গ আমার জননী আমার, or If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

The second great merit of nationalism is the advantages which accrue from a blending of cultures—a blending which greatly enriches our life. "As toleration of religious differences has greatly improved the spiritual life of the people, so toleration of cultural differences should elevate their civilisation." But let it be repeated that these merits are the merits of nationalism purged of all rancour and jealousy—nationalism not liable to any misuse. Unfortunately, however, jealousy and rancour have always played

a dominant part in the history of nationalistic politics and the force of nationalism has more often been abused than utilised. Hence a thousand and one maladies which nationalism has been heir to.

Even the ardent advocate of nationalism has to admit that war is an inevitable concomitant of this sentiment. Analyse the causes of each and every war and you will find this sentiment responsible in some way or other for the horror and carnage which these feats of barbarism on the part of man have produced. Some ultra-nationalists, however, possess sufficient brass to suggest that wars are healthy tonics for a nation. Such a grotesque argument betrays only the perverse mentality of those who indulge in reasonings of this type. The painful effect of a war by eliminating the strongest and the healthiest of the population, while leaving the weaklings at home to be the father of the next generation, is too well-known to need any emphasis. Then, again, lives destroyed in war are all males. Thus the sex-equilibrium of the population is violently disturbed. To boot, they are all in the prime of life and at the age of the greatest fecundity.

Then, by any rational standard of morality, few greater disturbers of peace have lived than Frederick and Napoleon. They tore to pieces all conventions of civilisation and vigorously carried on their work of sheer brigandage and terrorism. Yet they are still names to conjure with. And why? Only because they acted under the mask of nationalism or patriotism—call what you may. But if we condemn the career of a high-way man or a burglar as illegitimate or undesirable, we have no moral right to cry hallelujah over the acts of robbery and brigandage on the part of a nation. It is absurd to maintain that what is disgraceful for an individual is creditable for the state. This is why Fichte argued that devotion to a sentiment of nationality helps to satisfy the individual's craving for immorality.

The second great demerit of this dynamic force is its impracticability. Mill's dictum that "it is in general a necessary condition of free institutions that boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities" has come down to the posterity as the pure milk of the liberal doctrine. With great

respect to that eminent political philosopher, I beg to submit that nationalism is not an inevitable result of the sentiment of nationality. The Flemish and the Walloons belong to different cultural groups, but they have formed a single and extraordinary robust state. The Scotch and the Welsh are as much a nation as the Irish. But there is no political unrest in Scotland or Wales akin to Irish nationalism. Similar will be the case—let us fervently hope—in India when Hindus and Muslims, though belonging to different cultures, will form themselves into a healthy state.

Such a doctrine, again, is one of the most formidable and sinister forces on the side of militarism and one of the chief obstacles to human progress. The underlying principle of the theory is that because a certain people—X Y Z feel themselves to be a nation, there ought to be an independent state. That is to say, X Y Z would be the mark of the state—the criterion of its citizenship. In other words, “the state is not based on any universal principle such as justice or democracy or collective consent or on anything moral or universally human at all, but on something partial, arbitrary and accidental.” (A. Zimmern : Nationality and Govt.)

Moreover, this idea of making national boundaries co-terminous with geographical boundaries is not within the range of practical politics in very many cases. To quote Alfred Zimmern again, “one can easily see at a glance what would happen if the sentiment of nationality were admitted as a sole and sufficient claim for a change of government. French Canada would have to pass to France, Wisconsin to Germany and part of Minnesota to Norway, while the New York police would be the servants of the Irish Home Rule League.” Even a lunatic will shudder at the impracticability of the suggestion.

Gumpłowicz points out that there is no historical or sociological evidence to prove that mono-national states should possess any advantages over poly-national states. Switzerland, though a poly-national state, is the freest state in the world. Bluntschli likewise welcomes the presence of foreign elements in a state for it will keep the door open for appreciating different cultures and thus “may

serve as an alloy to give strength and currency to the nobler metal" (Garner : Introduction to Political Science)

Aggressive nationalism in its naked character manifested itself in Bismarck's policy of *Kultur staat*. Peoples of Central Europe were not all Germans by nature. But what of that? Even undaunted by these standing barriers Bismarck 'germanised' them all by his soul-less policy of "Blood and Iron." Such a policy stands self-condemned—its great defect being extreme intolerance.

Another obnoxious defect of nationalism is that it implies the haughty assumption of superiority of one nation over another. Even a peace-loving poet of Milton's calibre firmly believed that "whenever the Almighty wished something great and difficult to be done, he entrusted it to His Englishmen." Then the scientific or pseudo-scientific theory of race-superiority is too recent to be forgotten. "The belief of the Germans in the superiority of their own blood was based upon certain historical and ethnological theories which acted like a heady wine in stimulating the spirit of aggression among them. The theory stated briefly is that the shores of the Baltic are the home of the finest human type—a type distinguished by blond hair, great physical strength, unequalled mental vigour and ability, superior morality and an innate aptitude for governing and improving inferior races." (Inge : Out-spoken Essays). This mischievous and dangerous nonsense, to quote Prof. Muir, for which there is no justification either in physiology, anthropology or history reached its apogee of fantastic megalomania in the pompous pseudo-scientific absurdities propounded just on the eve of the Great War. When nationalism is the father of such a fantastic rubbish can any one be accused of blind cynicism if he regards this sentiment as "pure egoism, magnified and disguised?" Tagore was quite justified in exclaiming that nationalism is a great menace.

"In ancient Greece, Sparta had all her attention to becoming powerful; she did become so by crippling her humanity and died of amputation." A similar fate awaits all those nations "who are increasing their armaments to unimaginable absurdities."

To quote the brilliant words of Inge, "our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west by justice and when she oversteps that invisible boundary line by so much as a hair's breadth, she ceases to be our mother and chooses to be looked upon as *quasi noverca*." We maintain, therefore, that the sentiment of nationalism—of course, aggressive nationalism—that regards man as a tool for its devil dance in the battlefield is anti-human—it is hostile to us. We can never be reconciled to its morality—its double-faced and lying cynicism. "With malice towards none : with charity for all : with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right," let us strive on to finish the work of Rabindra Nath Tagore, M. Romain Rolland and Miss Jane Addams—the selfless servants of humanity and the world. All glory to them ! All strength to their elbow !

THE BEAUTIES OF KASHMIR.

RIDHIKARAN LAKHOTIA—II Year Arts Class.

BERNIER, the famous French traveller, and the first European to visit Kashmir in 1665 says, "In truth, the kingdom surpasses in beauty all that my warmest imagination had anticipated," and those who have been so fortunate as to have only a glimpse of this world-renowned country will undoubtedly share the view of this far-famed traveller. It is, indeed, a wonder land,—with its long ranges of snowy mountains, skirted with thick jungles ; its picturesque valleys of luxuriant vegetation ; its beautiful meadows of velvety green ; its dancing fountains, murmuring brooks, placid lakes, and silvery rivers ; its unique roads, bordered with tall poplar trees ; its enchanting gardens, and its marvellously captivating snow-scenes.

Europeans are of opinion that the country with which it may naturally be compared is Switzerland. We are told that Switzerland, too, has many charms of its own which are not to be found in Kashmir. But as combining the austere with the tender in Nature, it even excels Switzerland. That long range of giant mountains,

“Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
Whitened with eternal sleet,
While summer in a vale of flowers,
Is lying lazy at her feet”—

Is it possible for any other land to match it ?

Visitors can enjoy a pleasure trip to the lotus-covered rivers and lakes in a house-boat, shikara, or a motor launch. Motors, ‘Tongas’ and ponies are easily available. Out-of-the-way places can be traversed on foot, or on ponies, but the best way to enjoy the trip is to go forth like a scout with camp out-fittings.

It was the month of April, our College was closed for the long vacation. I joined a band of young scouts going to Kashmir. On our way we visited almost all the places of interest in Northern India and finally reached Jammu, the capital of the Jammu State. From there we had decided beforehand to make the journey on foot, a distance of 209 miles. This otherwise tedious journey took a good deal of time, but it brought out the best that is associated with the Scout Movement. Our experiences during the journey were unique and absolutely thrilling. At one time a severe snow-storm enveloped us ; as soon as it subsided, brilliant sunshine greeted us.

Starting from Jammu we were steadily ascending the valley of the snow-clad Pir-Panjal with the river Jhelum continually dashing past us on the left. The Jhelum has been turned to useful ends, in generating electric power for the State, and in making millions of acres fertile. We passed through the Chenar forest on either side of Ramband and saw the huge rocks which lifted their head from amidst the forest. We had our first glorious view of the perennial snows from the tunnel near Banihal, but real experience came when we were on the borders of Verinag. All the country

around had been covered with snow ; the hillsides, thickly studded with thousands of Chenar trees, were glistening in the brilliant sunshine, and the frozen road was rattling under our feet. Narrow valleys opened out and enclosing hills widened apart. The Jhelum was now as calm as the Ganges. The little town of Anant Nag, with its oval-shaped but dirty buildings and fine willow and poplar trees, came into view. And then the hillsides finally parted exposing to our sight the glorious valley amid the mountains. As we emerged into the open valley, snow disappeared and the signs of spring were visible about us. At last Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir was reached and we were in the heart of what is so often called the earthly paradise.

Srinagar is situated on both the banks of the Jhelum which is spanned by seven bridges. What catch the eye of the visitor most are the wonderful lotus lakes and snowy peaks. The cool, shady avenues of poplar trees come next in point of beauty. The main traffic is carried through the river on large antique boats. Srinagar has many canals running through it. For a city whose inhabitants number about a hundred thousand, it is most disappointing from the sanitary point of view. Some quarters of the city are extremely dirty. The city, on the whole, however, is bewitchingly captivating. The mosques and temples, the gardens and royal palaces, the canals and rivers, the white mountains in the background, form a beautiful panorama. Srinagar puts on its gala dress during the days of the annual Royal Procession. We must refer to the two lakes, Wular, and Dal. Wular, the largest fresh water lake in India, is about 45 miles from the city, but Dal is close by. The Dal lake covers an area of seven miles and is one of the chief attractions of Srinagar. It is always lovely, but perhaps at no season more beautiful than in May. Then it puts on its spring-time attire—how entralling is the charm of its clear transparent waters! On its right side rises the great Takhat—suleman, in front are the everlasting snows bordering the valley of Sind.

Next we come to the famous gardens of Kashmir. Chasma Shahi

the smallest garden in the valley, is about five miles from the city. These gardens are, as it were, the play grounds of Nature herself. Then comes Lirhat, the most splendid and glorious gardens in Kashmir, six miles from Chasma Shahi. It is said that these gardens were laid in the time of Akbar. Perhaps the gardens never look more beautiful than in May. The willows are then well out, in all the charms of fresh, young, spring foliage. Chenars are in a gorgeous foliage of gold and purple. After the rains when there is brilliant sunshine no finer pleasure-ground could be imagined. The fountains, which count a little more than two hundred, indicate the cultured taste of the Moghuls.

The Shalimar gardens are situated on the banks of the Dal-lake. These gardens, once the favourite resort of the Moghul Emperors, are perhaps the most delightful spot in Kashmir. On an Autumn evening, the great Chenar trees are tinged with gold and russet, and the 'high mountains' which rise behind them, assume different shades of blue and orange. The numerous fountains running through the avenues sparkle in the sunshine. The beds on both sides of the road are covered with flowers of every hue.

Places like Harban, Takhe-te-suleman, Gulmarg, Sonamong are also worth seeing. Gulmarg is a noted beauty-spot in the valley. The main charm of Gulmarg lies in its scenic beauty and in the glorious view of the great peak Nanga Parbat, 26000 feet above sea-level and 80 miles distant across the valley. The further attractions in Gulmarg are its everchanging scenes,—sometimes clear and suffused in brilliant sunlight, sometimes the battleground of monsoon storms, sometimes streaked with soft fleecy vapours and sometimes bathed in haze and colour. No two days are alike, everyday discloses a new loveliness.

After having a most enjoyable time, we returned to Calcutta with the sweet remembrance of a sweet country.

The lines of Longfellow spring spontaneously in our mind :

“ If thou wouldst learn a lesson that will keep.

Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,

Go to the woods and hills.”

EDUCATIONAL ASPECT OF THE SCOUT TRAINING METHODS.*

1. *What we do in the Scout Movement.*

We aim our programme as follows :—

- a. We study what qualities will be needed in the citizens of the future.
- b. We study each individual boy, his inclinations and his failings.
- c. We then eliminate the bad and promote the needed qualities in the boy through the activities and attractions of Scouting.

OUR OBJECT is to fill in any chinks left in the school education in the direction of developing character, of preparing boys for making the best of life, and of expanding the habit of goodwill and helpfulness generally in place of the prevailing self-interest and antagonisms.

The term "Scouting" means generally teaching such attributes through the laughter and self-education involved in practising the camp life of backwoodsmen.

The following are among the subjects which we promote :—

Character.—Through the Ideals of the Scout Law which mainly develop love through practice of service.

(These laws include honour, loyalty, helpfulness to others, friendship to all, courtesy, kindness to animals, obedience, cheerfulness, thrift, moral cleanliness.)

Accomplishments.—Self-education encouraged through the Badge system in some fifty useful attainments, among which the boy can make his choice.

* Notes of the address given by the Chief Scout, Sir Robert Baden-Powell, to the Delegates of the Imperial Education Conference at Gillwell Park, 21st June, 1927.

The Badge system, when employed by an understanding Scoutmaster, can bring on the backward and give ambition and hope to the dull or poor boy.

Intelligence.—Through Tracking, OBSERVATION and memorisation of detail is taught and becomes a habit; and the DEDUCTION of the meaning of the signs noticed develops reasoning, imagination and general intelligence.

Leadership.—Through the Patrol system where a boy is in responsible charge of six others. The sense of duty, initiative, tact, authority and human touch needed for leadership are developed. *The Patrol at the same time learn the team spirit of Playing the Game for their side and not for self.*

Happiness —Through Nature study the boy is led to appreciate God and to recognise the beauties and wonders of nature, to understand sex problems, to realise the brotherhood of man *and his place in the order of Nature*, and thus to develop goodwill and love *with a fuller enjoyment of life.*

Character development is the important objective in education. The three R's alone can produce good 'crooks' as well as good citizens.

Knowledge without the ballast of character is apt to be dangerous.

Character gives the poorer boy his chance; and if it includes Love it produces true Religion in practice and not merely in precept.

2. *Would Scouting Methods be Helpful in Schools?*

The great Public Schools such as Eton, Rugby, Wellington, Charterhouse, Christ's Hospital, etc., have lately taken up Scouting, not because their boys need so much the training in character and intelligence, but in order that they should eventually become Scout-

masters and pass on their Public School characteristics to their poorer brothers.

It gives them the ideal and practice of Service.

This step on the part of the Public Schools is being followed by a number of the leading Schools oversea.

The following suggestions have been made towards adapting the above ideals so as to be helpful to schoolteachers in their effort towards counteracting the tendency to selfishness incident to the award of individual prizes, scholarships, exhibitions, etc., and towards preparing the pupils for life and not merely for examinations.

Character.—In developing character the teacher's difficulty lies in the large classes to be dealt with ; in the Scouts we can fortunately keep our classes below the maximum of 32. None the less character is the most important subject of all in education and must therefore be tackled.

The following are the three of the more important elements of character suggested for consideration.

It has been suggested that the pupils might be classified as Excellent, Very Good, Good or Fair, in each of these.

HONOUR.	CHEERFULNESS.	SERVICE.
Sense of Justice	Sense of Humour which gives sense of proportion	Unselfishness
Straight dealing	Facing difficulties with a smile	Self-sacrifice
Incorruptibility	Contentment with what you have got	Helpfulness to others.
Reliability		

Classification alone would not be fully effective without definite cultivation of the elements of character and tests specially devised for exposing

them. Thus, for Honour, boys could be put on their honour and really trusted, not merely watched, in carrying out their responsibilities. *Justice through team games and competitions.* Sense of Humour is cultivable, not the inherent laughter at grotesque folly but the more refined humour with which the most serious situations can be balanced. (A schoolmaster whom I know uses "Three Men in a Boat" as his text-book, and with success.)

How to lose games with a smile instead of a snarl.

Service can be practised and tested by voluntary work about the School premises in out of school hours and collective voluntary services for the community ; also through organised entertainments, games, etc.

Accomplishments.—Badges might be awarded for passing tests in school subjects, such as arithmetic, dictation, general knowledge, reading, languages, art, history, geography, music, etc.

I suggest tests as distinct from examinations meaning thereby that the award would not be made on the number of marks gained but solely on the amount of effort on the part of the individual, by which means the most backward gets his chance with the most brilliant.

Intelligence.—Observation and Deduction, invaluable in all lines of life, are to some extent taught in the school curriculum in Nature Lore and Cause and Effect lessons ; but are more easily taught as a habit through tracking as described in "Training in Tracking" by Gilcraft.

Leadership.—The Patrol System is different from that of prefects, the prefect being more of a non-commissioned officer representing and backed by

superior authority, whereas the patrol leader is held responsible by superior authority for all that goes on in his patrol, and to this end he is given initiative with all the possibility and all the credit for failure or success. It is the most effective way of developing character and especially of turning a bad boy into a reliable one.

Happiness.—Promoted by good turns to others by cheery organised work for the community, by correspondence with fellow boys in other countries, and generally by the introduction of content, goodwill and love in his conduct of everyday affairs.

In organised work or games it should be made a point that every individual does his share in the cause of the whole.

It has been suggested that school might compete against school not merely in games but also in school work and that thereby keenness would be aroused among the scholars and the standard raised. Many teachers, however, see valid objections against the scheme.

In any case training in the above directions, if it is to be fully effective, should begin in the earliest stages of education. In the Wolf Cub branch the young boys are found capable of responsibility. The foundations can best be laid in the infant school.

Thus far the Chief Scout. It is generally recognised that schools in India have concentrated on a purely literary education and have done little to prepare boys for life in the widest sense of the term and, for the most part, they are still content to go on in the old way, teaching a few text-books, blind to their chances and responsibilities in developing character, in upholding high ideals, in drawing out every joyous faculty and every innate talent—or perhaps they are wilfully heedless of these things. That is why education has

become so jejune and melancholy a business in this land, unprofitable and sorrowful for both the teacher and the taught. The 'chinks' in Indian education are really yawning gulfs. To improve the thousands of schools in Bengal, widen their outlook, change their emphasis, invigorate their anaemic constitutions, is a task that sorely needs tackling but which might well make one despair. Meanwhile, experience has shown that, in the Boy Scout Movement, we have a most valuable instrument to fill up some of the gaps and correct some of the abuses of the present system. But the spread of scouting depends on an adequate supply of scout-masters of the right type, imbued with the true spirit of the movement. Here is a piece of social and educational service in which many of us can take a part.

H. E. S.

A PEEP INTO OUR PAST SOCIETY.

ANIL CHANDRA GANGULY—*4th Year Arts Class.*

THERE is no commoner cause of historical misjudgment than the tendency to read the events of the past too exclusively in the light of the present, and so twist the cold and unconscious record into the burning service of controversial politics. And in this way, unfortunately, India's past has been, for reasons not difficult to unravel, constantly misunderstood and misinterpreted according to the prejudices and preferences of the writers of her history. Our attempt here will be just a "peep" into the most striking aspects of Indian social life during the period which saw the heyday of Hindu civilisation, and the following lines will represent the impression formed by looking into the past from an angle of vision which is too often ignored by the West.

India has got a culture of her own which had its birth and constant supply of vigour and vitality from Hinduism. India and Hinduism are organically related as body and soul. The Hindu Aryan made India the symbol of his culture, he filled it with his soul; in his consciousness it was his greater soul. This culture of original Hinduism need not be confused with the dogmatic, conservative orthodoxy of to-day. It was so wide in its outlook, so deep and comprehensive that it could easily accommodate so many alien cultures and assimilate into its being so many contending cults. This vast Hinduism was not a mere form of religion nor a particular cult of philosophy. It covered the whole of Indian life and comprised the fundamental basis on which Indian civilisation was built.

Unlike other countries India's ancient history has little to speak about politics or the State. Her history is the story of her social evolution; for the vital point of India's destiny is situated not in politics but in her society, which has been the cradle of her intellectual culture, the theatre of her spiritual speculation. Unlike the present state of things, when Hinduism was a living institution, there was in the society nothing rigid, nothing mechanical, nothing static. Its fundamental basis was nature's universal law of *variety* which summarily rejected the notion that "all men are equal" either in work, capacity or utility. The Hindus knew that human nature is composed of diverse elements and naturally the path of self-realisation must vary according to the varying types of individuals.

Democratic Europe had ignored this plain truth. In that country, spiritualism, flung random upon a society unprepared for it, did not find ready response from the inner life, but still was fostered as a luxury for the Sunday; and very naturally what had been a 'holy day' was conveniently converted into a 'holiday'. A movement based on the principle of democracy had pretended to render invaluable service by injecting, as it were, the spirit of the Lord into all souls, no matter whether fit or not, intellectually and morally. But what was the net issue of this indiscriminate democracy? The

people who in the domain of spirit had been taught to worship Jesus and St. Francis, selected Bismarck and Machiavelli for their idol in the world of matter. It is this sort of democracy which India has ever dreaded and denounced as *Varnashankara*. In building society she did not care to thrust, in the fashion of democracy, any general law or universal rights *for all*. She was satisfied with only prescribing some broad channels to be followed by different classes of society in accordance with individual taste and aptitude. "Proper man in the proper place"—this was the guiding principle.

Hinduism has no doubt affirmed a (general) সামান্য ধর্ম but it has also recognised a (particular) বিশেষ ধর্ম, স্বধর্ম for the individual. Swadharma is the individual's particular current in the great stream of the flow of cosmic evolution, and it is in the Swadharma that we meet with an endless variety and wonderful elasticity. For instance, what is extolled as saintly virtue in the Brahmin would be regarded as weakness and wickedness in the case of a Kshatriya, for the latter's is a path which requires more of the *Rajashik* (রাজসিক) element than the *Sattwic* (সাত্ত্বিক). Hinduism never took life for a machine. It afforded sufficient latitude for the free play and natural trend of the mind, instead of indulging in the frantic effort to extirpate the inborn propensities and inevitable tendencies of man who is after all made of clay. "প্রকৃতিং যান্তি ভূতানি নিগ্রহঃ কিং করিষ্যতি." It is this compromise between the glory of an ideal and the limitations of day-to-day existence—this sort of a safety valve—which has saved the soul alike from a crushing ethical burden and the blowing blast of the animal-in-man.

In society the doctrine of অধিকার ভেদ played a very important part, for the Hindus realised the truth that "the block of granite lying on the pathway, though it may be a stepping stone for the strong, will prove too dangerous a stumbling-block for those that are weak." Accordingly they invented a wonderful method to systematise life both of the individual and of the society, by judicious allotment of rights and duties with due consideration of time, place and fitness

of the recipient. The principle followed in thus arranging society was certainly not what we understand by democracy, nor was it autocracy. The nearest English equivalent would be hierarchy, and in our own way we call it *Varnashram Dharma*.

Before we speak anything about the nature of this excellent system it is necessary to clear away the misconception and misinterpretation of the original meaning.

The word *Varna* has been mistranslated into 'Caste.' It is derived from '*Vri*' 'to chose' and thus its proper meaning is a 'choice of profession or occupation,' It should therefore be translated into 'class' rather than caste. "The word, caste" says Sir Henry Risley, is derived from the Latin *Castus* and implies purity of Creed." (The People of India p. 66.) The Vedic Purushasukta hymn of creation * is misinterpreted to yield a meaning in favour of Caste system but the real spirit was otherwise. Liberally interpreted it simply describes the constitution of human society and the functions of its various classes by means of an analogy between mankind and the human body. The Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras occupy the same place in the system of social hierarchy, as the head, the hands, the thigh and the feet do in the human body. This is not Caste system as we now understand by the term. It is a division of mankind on the principle of division of labour. It is based not on *birth* but on *merits*. And what division can be better and more equitable than this? It assigns the first place to learning and character, the second place to strength or power and the third to wealth.

That the *Varna* was not based on *birth* but on *merit* can be proved from internal evidences from the scriptures. In the Mahabharata †

* ब्रह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहूबाज्जनाः कृतः

उरू तदस्य यद्वैश्वः पदभ्याम् शुद्धो अजायत ॥

(ऋग्वेद १०, २०) ।

† न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वत्र ब्रह्मिदं जगत्

ब्रह्मणा पूर्वं सृष्टं हि कर्मणा वर्णतां गतं—महाभारत, शान्तिपर्व

Bhrigu says to Bharadwaja, "There is no distinction of castes . this whole world is created by God. Having been first created by God, it became afterwards separated in *Varnas* in consequence of works." Again Vaishampayana says to Yudhishthira, "Neither by family nor by birth but by actions does a man become Bramhan. Even if a Chandala possesses good character he will be a Brahman, Oh Yudhishthira." *

These and many other passages clearly show that the original Varna was not caste. There are, besides, numerous traditions in Sanskrit literature, of many Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras having been actually raised to the position of Brahmans, for instance, the beautiful life of Satyakama Javala in Chhandagyopanihad. Again Vyasha was a son of a কৈবর্ত (sailor class) woman, and Parashara was the son of a Chandalini. From the above extracts and instances it follows that Varnas were functional and occupational classes determined by গুণকর্ম of the individual as enunciated in the Gita and not mere hereditary castes which dominate our present society. "চাতুর্বর্ণ্যং ময়া সৃষ্টং গুণকর্মবিভাগশঃ"

Varnashrama dharma comprised two aspects of which we have explained the first. Now what is Ashrama? It symbolised the conscious effort for the purification and uplift of the human soul and represented different stages in the evolution of an individual's life, namely, ব্রহ্মচর্য্য, গার্হস্থ্য বানপ্রস্থ, সন্ন্যাস. The Ashramas were very wisely arranged, the first two being related to the enjoyment of this world and the last two to the renunciation of it. The first of the former couple was a preparation for the second. After leading a celibate life devoted to learning, the youth entered life (গার্হস্থ্য আশ্রম) which aspired at the moderate and moral enjoyment of all that this world could offer. When his passions were satisfied, a spiritual life was prescribed for him (বানপ্রস্থ). The final stage, the Sannyasa Ashram, was the crowning glory of an individual's life after he had passed through the three previous stages, and

* ন কুলেন ন জাত্যা বা ক্রিয়াভিব্রাহ্মণো ভবেৎ

চাণ্ডোলোহপি হি বৃত্তশ্চো ব্রাহ্মণঃ স যুধিষ্ঠির—ভাগবত

a man who reached Sannyasa in that way became really an adorable being.

Thus the ideal scheme of social order was based on religious and philosophical principles which were also the practical ideals of daily life. The Ashrama was the unit of the individual's spiritual life, the Varna was the unit of social and cultural life. The Varnashrama Dharma was the unwritten constitution of the society, a powerful dynamo that supplied vigour and vitality, a living institution that helped the rapid progress of the whole country by introducing a serene atmosphere of harmony, discipline and co-ordination. To the individual as well as to the society it gave purity without puritanism and liberty without licence. The ideal Varnashrama Dharma was the guiding spirit of mankind, the institution was the most potent factor in social, commercial, political, intellectual and spiritual life in Hindu India.

But alas, there came a time when abuses overpowered the law and exceptions eclipsed the rule. The spirit of the ideal perished and dead forms dominated everywhere. In course of time the idea of *Ashrama* was totally forgotten and the idea of *Varna* degenerated into caste system which is "a slur on our humanity, a blot on our religion, a disgrace to our nationality and a retrogression from our past civilisation."

Still, we should not decry our ancient ideal judging it by its present manifestation,—the perverted, conservative, superstitious Hinduism of to-day. "Corruptio optimi pessima"—this is a hard truism and there is no help against it.

In fact abuses prove nothing against an ideal ; and if it is necessary to destroy everything that has been subject to abuse—that is to say, of things which are good in themselves, but corrupted by the licence of man—God Himself ought to be seized upon His inaccessible throne where too often we have seated our own passions and errors by His side.

IMPERIALISM IN ANCIENT INDIA

SUKUMAR BHATTACHARYA—*Vlth Year History Class.*

IN entering upon a study of ancient ideas and institutions it is essential that we must remember the warning given by Mr. Adams to every student of early civilisation not to attribute to the minds of that time ideas which are the results of historical growth and experience since their day. The temptation is almost irresistible to assume that they understood by certain terms the same things that we do, and to apply the technical terms by which we characterise practices and customs to similar practices and customs among them. In the study of the early history of imperialism, the besetting temptation is to use the word in its modern sense. If we could only use it in the sense of a feeling of pride for the greatness of one's country, as Viscount Cecil puts it, and in no other, we should be perfectly justified in using it for all countries and for all times, for in this sense, says Lord Cromer, Imperialism is as old as the world.

Imperialism, however, in its modern sense, that is, in the sense in which it is used by the modern Western powers, is quite different from what the ancient Hindus, and to some extent the Greeks, understood by the term. The creation of new spheres of influence and investments and the political control of backward countries constitute, in the words of a very distinguished writer, the essence of modern imperialism. The motives are mainly economic and it enters into the political life of the native country as a means to that economic end. But imperialism, as conceived by the Hindus, was of a far lofty character. Though it was sometimes of a violent and military nature, it was pre-eminently cultural and intellectual. A feeling of brotherhood and equality permeated throughout all the parts of the empire, the narrow ideal of nationalism and the militant idea of jingoism being but secondary aspects.

Let us first concern ourselves with the theoretical side of Hindu imperialism. The conception of a world-sovereignty is as old in India as the philosophy of the early Vedic period. "Monarchy at its highest", we read in *Aitareya Brahmana*, "should have an empire extending right up to the natural boundaries, it should be territorially all-embracing, up to the very ends uninterrupted, and should constitute and establish one state and administration up to the seas". The ancient theorists evidently thought of the Indian continent as comprising the entire world. As Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar says, "the achievement of a pan-Indian nationality was in their eyes the equivalent of a world federation, just as in medieval European theory the unification of Western Christendom was tantamount to the constitution of one state for all mankind, or as in the Euro-American world-peace movements of to-day "the world" is postulated practically to be the territory inhabited by albinos or white races."

This theory of world-nationalism—or to speak more accurately, United Indianism, exercised a powerful influence on the political speculations of the Hindus. It gave rise to the set of formulæ and slogans that fired the imaginations of powerful Indian monarchs: "I want to attain lordship over all rulers," proclaims one aspirant, "I want to achieve the conquest of both space and time. I want to be *Sarvabhauma*, and be the *Ekarat* of the earth up to the skies."

Hindu political thought produced several other categories to express the same idea of the world-state or universal sovereignty. We have the doctrine of *Chakravartin*. It has reference to the arena where the imperial wheel moves unobstructed, the wheel being the symbol of sovereignty. According to the *Arthashastra*, the *chakravartin* arena was limited to 1000 yojanas from the Himalayas to the ocean. The ideal, says Mr. Jayswal, had been in the air certainly as early as 570 B. C. and presumably earlier. The Buddha took it from the phraseology of politics and proclaimed the foundation of the Empire of his Religion. Both the Buddha and Mahavira claimed to be religious *chakravartins*. But politically the epithet *chakravarti*, *Adhiraja* etc. appear late in history. As Dr. Ray

Choudhury has pointed out, "The expressions Kshatrasya Kshatra, Adhiraja, Chakravarti etc. are no doubt known to the ancient literature. But there is no proof of the use of the last two as formal styles of sovereigns till the post-Mauryan period, while the first is never so used."

But by far the most important doctrine was that of *Sarvabhauma*, expressed more popularly in the conventional conception of *Samrat*. The *Mahabharata* uses the category in order to convey the idea of world-dominion. "There are *rajās* in every home (state) doing what they like," we read in the Book of Sabha (সভাপর্বে), "but they have not attained the rank of *Samrat*, for the title is hard to win," and this rank is at last won by Yudhisthira in the epic.

Another doctrine in which the principle *Sarvabhauma* is manifest is that of *chaturanta* of which Kautilya availed himself in order to establish his ideal of imperial nationalism. The *Chaturanta* state is that whose authority extends up to the remotest *antas* (limits) of the *chatur* (i. e. four) quarters. The ruler of such a state অনন্ত পৃথিবীং ভুক্তে, i. e. enjoys the whole earth without anybody to challenge his might. In the অর্ধশাস্ত্র he is known to be a *chakravartin*, for the territories of such a *chaturanta* is called *chakravarti kshetra*. (দেশ পৃথিবী। তস্যাং হিমবৎ সমুদ্রান্তরম্ উদীচীনাং যোজনসহস্র পরিমাণম্ অতির্যক্ চক্রবর্তীক্ষেত্রম্।—Country is the whole land (i. e. India). In it from the Himalayas up to the ocean—straight north 1000 *Yojanas* in measure is the *chakravartin* arena).

The *Aitareya Brahmana* has given us a varying gradation of states beginning from *Rajya* and ending with the pan-country sovereignty or *Sarvabhauma*. But the gradations are not sacrosanct. As Dr. Ray Choudhury points out, "It is a characteristic of Indian history that imperial titles of one period become feudatory titles in the next. Thus the title *Raja* used by Asoka became a feudatory title in the Scythian and Gupta periods, when designations like *Rajadhiraja* and *Maharajadhiraja* came into general use. But even *Maharajadhiraja* became a feudatory designation in the age of the Parthians when the loftier style of *Paramabhataraka*, *Maharajadhiraja*, *Paramesvara* was assumed by the sovereign rulers."

The great rulers performed sacrifices, the nature of which varied according to the importance and dignity of the monarch. Authorities, however, differ as to the relative importance of political sacrifices, but it is generally held that the rituals have a state value on their face, and that it is the greatest power or the highest nationality alone that is entitled to the highest sacrifice (be it অশ্বমেধ or রাজসূয়). The concept of *Yajna* is, therefore, an important element in the theory of world monarchy, or federated universe embodied in the doctrine of *Sarvabhauma*, the foundation of which is the concept of *dig-vijaya* or conquest of the quarters. With the attainment of *Sarvabhauma* the conquest of the *Vijigisu* is complete.

Let us now turn to the practical aspect of imperialism in ancient India. It is generally admitted that before the advent of the Nandas and the Mauryas, India was divided into a large group of states owing allegiance to no paramount power. With the advent of the Maurya dynasty the innumerable fragments of distracted India are definitely unified and a huge empire springs into existence. The motto of Chandragupta, the founder of the Maurya dynasty was *dig-vijaya*. Besides bringing under his control the whole of Northern and a large part of trans-Vindhyan India, Chandragupta subdued Bactria and Syria. Chandragupta had a very high ideal of imperialism. He did not crush a fallen foe but bound him with the ties of friendship. He entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Syrian King, and thus proved that all parts of the empire stood on a footing of equality, and there was no ground for distinction between the victor and the vanquished. Chandragupta's policy of extending the empire by military conquest was continued for some time till the early years of the reign of Asoka, who brought about a complete change of policy after the famous Kalinga War. The acts of cruelty committed in the Kalinga War resulted in a change of religion for the Emperor who henceforward accepted the cult of *Ahimsa* as preached by Sakyamuni. "The chiefest conquest," declared Asoka, "is the conquest of Right (Dhammavijay) and not of might." In Edict IV he exultingly says, "the reverberation of the war drums (Bherighoso) has be-

come the reverberation of the Law of Piety (Dhammaghoso)," A whole empire pledged itself to peace as an absolute good. "The steam-roller of Maurya aggression, which under Chandragupta had levelled down most of the independent states of India, was now brought to a halt: "Thus far and no farther" was Asoka's command." Many a small state was spared its independence. India became a happy family of nations, says Prof. Radha Kumud Mookherji, under an international system of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity for all great or small. States unequal in size and strength were deemed equal as regards their status and sovereignty. The Yavanas, the Kambojas, Gandharas on the N. W. frontiers, the Nabhapantis, Bhojas, Andhras, Pulindas, Rastrikas and Pitinikas in the central parts and the Cholas and Pandyas, the Satiyaputras and Keralaputra in the South—all these small states were acclaimed by the Emperor as his friends and equals in freedom, the objects not of a dreaded or fearful military conquest but of his moral conquest, i. e. Dhammavijaya, the objects of his tender solicitude for their spiritual welfare. Instead of subduing them to his authority by violence of an army, Asoka sent them missionaries to subdue them by a "conquest full of delight" to the moral life he proposed to his own people. To the many unsubdued borders of his empire was sent the assuring message: "The King desires that they should not be afraid of him, but should trust him and should receive from him not sorrow, but happiness." His wide-hearted toleration and cosmopolitan catholicity were all the more remarkable for a man who was zealous follower himself of a particular religion. "Asoka," says a brilliant writer, "not only contradicted with unparalleled historical sagacity the entire politics of antiquity up to his age, but also like a spiritual Columbus, discovered a new world of constructive politics, which unfortunately remains as yet only an aspiration and a dream for humanity. Behind him stretches the dead ruin of ancient empires; before him unfolds the tableau of lamentable duplication of the same selfish politics in our modern history; and in the centre lies the spiritual oasis of Asokan imperialism. It shines as a beacon light in the path of

the political evolution of humanity, explaining the inevitable decay of old empires and putting to shame the retrospective laughter of the cynical imperialists of our modern age. Thus the empire of Asoka with its new philosophy of Dhammavijaya and its new foundation of universal well-being (Kalyana) stands as the central climacteric of human history—at once a fateful warning and a divine inspiration for Humanity.”

During the period between the fall of the Mauryas and the rise of the Guptas India is again divided into pieces and falls a prey to foreign domination. With the advent of the Guptas unification is again at sight, and a huge empire springs in the time of Samudragupta, the second king of the line. While Asoka stands for peace and non-violence, this monarch stands for the opposite principles of war and aggression. Samudragupta was not, however, a ruthless annexationist, but a magnanimous conqueror, generous towards the fallen foe. His fame which pervades the whole world is due to his re-establishing many royal families in the South, whom he had overthrown and deprived of sovereignty. Following the traditional policy of Hindu Kings, he performed the Asvamedha sacrifice to celebrate his conquests.

After Samudragupta the most notable imperialist monarch is Harshavardhan (606-47 A. D.) who combines in himself some of the attributes and characteristics of both Asoka and Samudragupta. By his thoroughgoing conquests in different directions, recalling the military idealism of Samudragupta, he first won for himself the status of an Emperor, and recovered for the country the unity of its history. And then, making an end of all wars within his empire politically united by the strong arm of his authority, he proceeded, like Asoka, to devote himself to the tasks of peace, the promotion of the material and moral interests of the country and to bring about its cultural individuality and greatness.

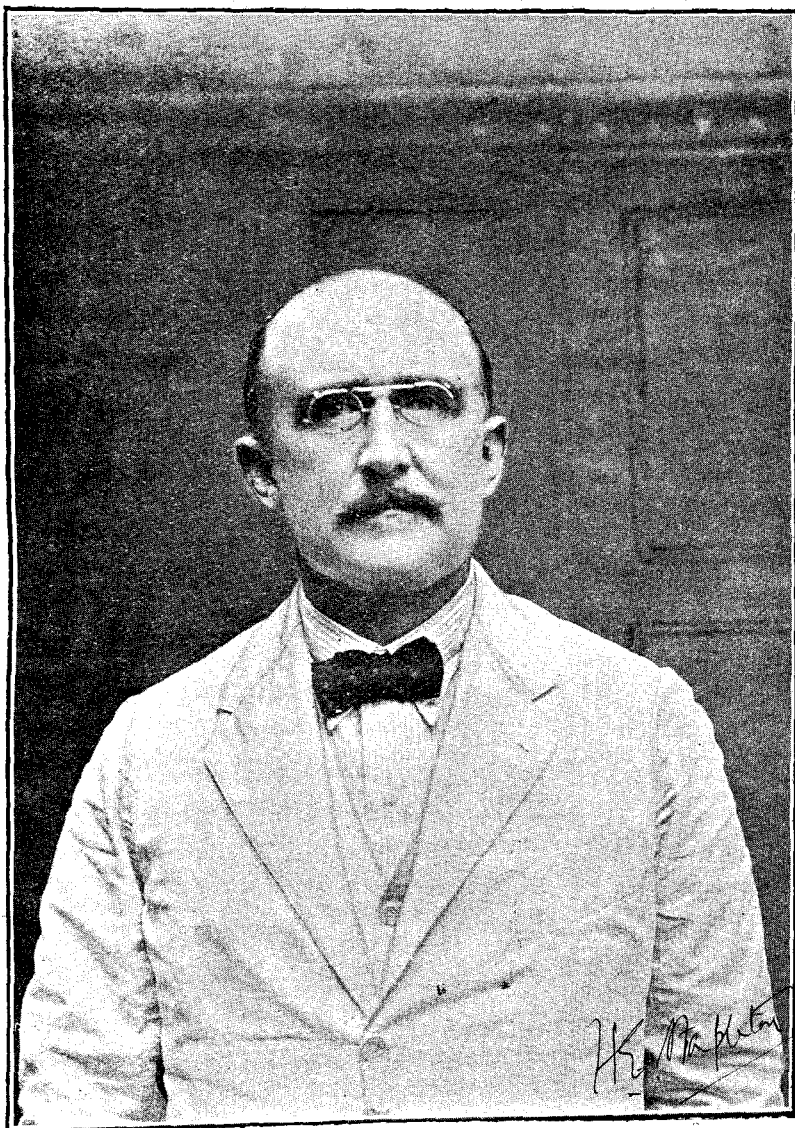
The most important of the Southern powers to have an imperial policy were the Cholas, whose imperialism resembled to a large extent that of the Romans. The Cholas are the only dynasty in ancient India who may fairly claim to have established a vast

maritime Empire carefully watched and held intact by an efficient navy. The islands of the Bay of Bengal and Lower Burma were conquered and colonised by them, and the Bay itself was practically turned into a Chola lake, while in the Arabian Sea the Cholas possessed a number of islands including the Laccadives and Maldives. In the present state of our knowledge we are not quite sure about the exact bonds that held together the colonial and central powers ; but since the colonies provided an abode for the surplus population of the mother country, it is not improbable that the splendid system of local autonomy, which was a distinguishing mark of Chola administration, was extended to all parts of the empire.

Let us now consider the cultural side of imperialism in ancient India—the empire conquered by her not through brute force, but by the supreme weapons of human progress, viz., art, literature, philosophy and religion. India was in those days the centre of thought and culture. From the beginning of the Christian era, India started playing her role of internationalism not only through the vigorous conquest and zeal of a royal personality, but through her lofty philosophy. “This grand movement of spiritual conquest, this noble dynamic of cultural imperialism—a legacy of Asoka—soon won for India the inalienable empire over the vast continent, right across Tibet and China to Korea and Japan on the one hand and across Burma and Indo-China to Java on the other.” It was a period of give-and-take in human history—between Buddhism and Mazdaism, Manichaeism and Christianity. The Mahayana school of Buddhism through the zeal of its founder Asvagotha and propagated by Nagarjuna with royal patronage made a spiritual conquest in the East that remains to this day a marvel of history.

PRINCIPAL H. E. STAPLETON'S ADDRESS
ON FOUNDERS' DAY, 1928.

OF all the work that falls to the lot of the Principal of Presidency College, nothing gives me personally greater pleasure than the



Principal H. E. Stapleton,

like Oxford or Cambridge or Paris will not need to be taught the value of a long and glorious tradition. It is, as it were, some exhilarating atmosphere which pervades everything, an atmosphere which invigorates and intoxicates even when one is breathing it unconsciously, so that one gets more by drinking in the air of the place than from books and teachers. Now, in India, our traditions, old as they are, have been many times interrupted. We have no institutions that count their life by centuries; the buildings of the past where they survive, survive as ruins, which may excite admiration but cannot give shelter; no continuous and unbroken stream of inheritance enriches or refreshes us. But here, in this College, we have something that is already venerable, something that began in the life-time of men who remembered the great Peshwas and Hyder Ali, the War of American Independence and the French Revolution.

But it is not right to live in the past alone, for the dead hand of tradition may be the most blighting of influences, where there is no vigorous energy of life in the present to control and correct it. The past may inspire, but it should not dominate. We are the creators as well as the legatees of a tradition. And so we turn to the present to ask if the College is keeping its place worthily in the educational system of Bengal. Of this there is no sure criterion, but, as far as we can judge by examination results, it does. In the M. A. & M. Sc. Examinations, students attached to the College had the first place in English, both Group A & Group B: History: Philosophy: Economics, both Group A & Group B: Pali: Sanskrit: Physics, both Group A & Group C: Chemistry, Group C: Physiology: and Geology. In the B. A. & B. Sc. we also secured the first place in Pali, Persian, Economics, Philosophy, Chemistry, Botany, Geology and Physiology. There was a regrettable fall in the percentage of passes in the B. Sc., due partly to the unexpected—but educationally welcome—stopping of grace marks, and partly to the belief that an Honours student could have no difficulty in getting sufficient qualifying marks in his pass subjects. In the I. A. & I. Sc. both the percentage of passes and the proportion of First Division

passes continued to maintain the high level of former years. Two students of the College were successful in the last I. C. S. Examination in London, one of them being the first of the Indian candidates, as well as 2 more in the examination for the I. C. S. held in India. There is something to record in other spheres as well. A team from the College won the St. John's Ambulance Educational Cup, which was offered for the first time this year. One of our representatives at the All-India Inter-College Competition Debate at Benares was awarded a gold medal for the second-best speaker. The long list of academic medals and prizes won by members of the College is printed elsewhere.

There is one notable distinction conferred on a member of the College staff which deserves special mention. In the last New Year's Honours List we saw with peculiar delight the name of Prof. J. C. Coyajee, who now becomes Sir Jehangir. Knights of old had sometimes to do three great deeds before they won their spurs; and even if it is true that Prof. Coyajee's Knighthood comes to him mainly for his work on the Tariff Commission and the Currency Commission, we may claim that the third deed is his long and splendid services to the College. This is the first time that any Professor has, during his service in the College, received such a distinction, although we are proud to have had two Science Professors viz. Sir P. C. Ray and Sir J. C. Bose, promoted to the same rank after their retirement, as well as four others, Sir George Watt, Sir John Eliot, Sir Alfred Croft and Sir Alexander Pedler who were knighted while serving in other official positions after leaving the College. The same Honours list contained two other ex-students among those awarded Knight-hoods viz. Sir Brojendra Lal Mitter, the Vice-President of our Governing Body, and the Hon'ble Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, who is awarded the K. C. S. I. after holding the high position of Finance Member to the Government of India. For any College to have three of its *alumni* awarded Knight-hoods in a single list must be almost without parallel and all connected with the College cannot but feel a glow of pride at this signal honour conferred on our foundation.

In connection with the subject of the staff, we should mention also two retirements during the course of the year. For 27 years Mr. S. C. Mahalanobis was Professor of Physiology in the College, so that he was a familiar and respected figure to generations of students and seemed almost as integral and intimate a part of the College as its walls and books. But it is not walls that make a City or a College, but men ; and it is to the steady and devoted service of men like Prof. Mahalanobis that the College owed its prosperity. He organised the whole teaching of Biology in the College and in the University ; and, when the post of Dean was created in 1916 he was the first Dean of the College. We hope that he will be able to enjoy for many years the rest and the respect he has so abundantly earned.

Mr. T. S. Sterling was Professor of English for 17 years and from June 1926 to October 1927 he officiated as Principal. During all these years, his courtesy, patience, and general interest in all College activities won him the good will of his colleagues and pupils. Nor should his special services to the Calcutta University Training Corps be forgotten, for he was one of its most enthusiastic supporters. He has left us for very responsible work in the Empire Bureau of Education, and we wish him a long period of work which may be as useful, but cannot but be more deeply appreciated.

In the social life of the College, there are developments in different directions. The College Union, after a period of unrest, has again settled down to work. A new society has arisen in the *Rabindra Parishad*, a fitting tribute to one who is not only a great poet but a great educationist as well. The Cricket team is in the middle of a very successful season ; and a member of the College played in the finals of the Calcutta Tennis Tournament.

It must be confessed, however, that there have been dark moments ; and the sense of corporate solidarity, to which the memory of our past should be a noble incentive, has not always proved strong enough to surmount personal or party feeling. In the last issue of the College Magazine, reference is made to a recent incident which illustrates this. There are, of course, many diffi-

culties, but the creation of *esprit-de-corps* is as important as it is difficult. The political unrest militates against it, the general lack of athletic interests, the thinness of social activities, the system of mass lectures and non-residence. We are trying, as best we can, to strengthen these weak points ; but it is clear that a new conception of education is required as well as the right material environment. As long as the College has no Hall where it can gather altogether, it will be impossible to arouse a true Collegiate consciousness.

But some who have thought deeply on education in Bengal would say that the need of our day, the most pressing need, is an organised system of Physical Education. The Sadler Report drew a sombre picture of the health and physical condition of students. Since then, detailed investigation has proved that no line in that picture was overdrawn. The University Welfare Committee has examined hundreds of students year by year, including the students of this College, and their careful statistics have shewn that two out of every three students have serious physical troubles or defects. What is still more serious, the condition appears to be speedily becoming worse ; there is a progressive deterioration. At this rate, in the course of a few decades, Bengal will, through sheer physical incapacity, be compelled to lag behind the other Indian provinces. But the example of Japan shows that, if there is reason for alarm, there is no need to despair. Thirty years ago, the state of things in Japan was very similar. Discerning observers wrote like this :

“The percentage of deaths among students is a constant source of sorrow and disappointment.”

“At present, under the strain, young bodies and young minds too often give way. And those who break down are not the dullards, but the pride of schools, the captains of classes ”

But there, in Japan, the State and the Nation promptly woke up to the danger and applied remedies. Diet and clothing were improved, hygienic precautions were taken. Systematic physical training was introduced for all school children. The result is that no one could call the Japanese to-day a weakling race. Within a

generation a tremendous change has been worked. And what Japan has done, it is both necessary and possible for Bengal to do. In this College, a beginning has been made with compulsory drill and games, but it is only a beginning. We need larger playing fields and a more spacious gymnasium.

In past years, we have referred to our needs and hopes for expansion. This year, we can speak, not of hopes alone, but of achievements, thanks to the generosity of Government. The Improvement Scheme, first formulated by Principal H. R. James many years ago, has been taken up again and a beginning made. Land to the extent of nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres has been acquired at the cost of about Rs $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. The bustees which stood on it have been removed and now one can look out on a wide open space, which,—with, if possible, a little further rounding off and expansion—will eventually provide playing fields and sufficient room, on the west, for buildings. New buildings are indeed badly needed. An Observatory block (with a few servants' godowns, garages, and certain office rooms below) has been sanctioned; further Servants' quarters and a block for Tutorial and Honours classes have been planned. All this, buildings and land together, will cost the Government not less than Rs. 10 lakhs, quite apart from the chief need of all, an Assembly Hall, with which it is suggested a gymnasium and Students' Common Rooms should be combined. For the sum of Rs. $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs, which this is estimated to cost, we look with confidence to the munificence of private benefactors. When we remember that the College owed its inception to the faith and liberality of private gentlemen, who esteemed wisdom more than riches and counted knowledge beyond all price, we feel that the same opportunity should be given to those at this time who have the same spirit, to crown the work which they so worthily began. And as we look at the long list of distinguished names in the College Register, we are confident that the appeal will not be in vain. Those who have profited by the opportunities and amenities of this institution will rejoice to widen and extend them, for they are trustees for thousands still to come. There is no feature of which

the College is more justly proud than of the fact that it owed its origin to the broad-minded desire of Bengali gentlemen for the spread of higher education ; and in making this appeal we trust to show that this feature has not been effaced, but that the College still possesses the active love and loyalty of all those who have the privilege of calling her *Alma Mater*.

REPORTS.

Founders' Day.

Founders' Day was celebrated with great eclat on January the 20th, 1928. There was a very distinguished gathering, and the Re-union meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. S. N. Mallik, C. I. E. Among those present were noticed :—The Right Hon'ble Baron Sinha of Raipur, Dr. P. K. Ray, Mr. and Mrs. S. N. Mallik, Mrs. Harley, Dr. Stapleton, Sir Brojendra and Lady Mitter, Sir Jehangir and Lady Coyajee, Prof. and Mrs R. N. Sen, Mr. and Mrs. P. N. Chatterjee, Hon'ble Nawab Syed Nawabali Choudhuri, Raja Gopendra Krishna Deb, Mr. Basanta Coomar Bose, Rai Jogendra Nath Mitter Bahadur, Rai Ramtaran Banerjee Bahadur, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Justice Sir Charu Chandra Ghose, Mr. Justice B. B. Ghose, Mr. Justice M. N. Mukerji, Mr. Justice D. N. Mitter, Raja Bhupendranarayan Sinha Bahadur (of Nashipur), Raja Ramani Kanta Ray (of Chowgram), Raja Kshitindra Deb Ray Mahasay (of Bansberia), Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray (of Dighapatiya), Messrs. N. N. Sircar, Amulyadhan Addy, Abdul Karim, K. C. De, S. C. Mukerji, J. N. Roy, M. C. Ghose, G. S. Dutt, J. H. Lindsay, E. F. Oaten, Dr. G. Howells, P. G. Bridge, J. Watt, Prof. C. V. Raman, S. Radhakrishnan, S. C. Mahalanobis, Mr. J. Van Manen, Dr. B. L. Chaudhuri, Rai H. K. Raha Bahadur

C. I. E., Dr. Kedarnath Das, C. I. E., Rai Bahadur Dr. Upendranath Brahmachari, Satis Chandra De, Haridhan Dutt, Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Banerjee, Gobinlal Banerjee, Hem Kumar Mallik, Mallinath Ray, Khan Bahadur Afzalur Rahman, Shamsul-ulama Mr. Kamaluddin Ahmed, Messrs. Mohini Kanta Ghatak, Jyotis Chandra Mitter, Bisweswar Bhattacharyya, Jotindra Mohan Ray, Satyananda Bose, Bijoy Kumar Ganguly, Amarendranath Pal Chaudhuri, Praphullasankar Sen, Asutosh Pal, Prabodh Chandra Bose, Bhujagendra Mustaphi, Praphulla Chandra Dutt, Binod Bihari Sarkar, Giris Ch. Sen, Kshitis Chandra Ray, Basanta Kumar Chatterjee, Bijay Kumar Chatterjee, M. L. C., Taraknath Mukerjee, M. L. C., Sasisekhar Bose, M. L. C., Lieut. S. C. Ghose Maulik, M. L. C., Messrs. J. Chaudhuri, I. B. Sen, A. K. Ray, Nirmal C. Sen, P. L. Ganguly, S. K. Gupta, Aswini Chaudhuri, A. P. Bose, M. N. Kanjilal, R. C. Ghose, P. N. Mullik, Amin Ahmed, Capt. Haji Dabiruddin Ahmed, Messrs. J. C. Dutt, Jatindra Nath Basu, Bijay Kumar Basu, Susil C. Neogi, Amiyanath Mukherjee, Sailendra Mohan Dutt, Ajit Kumar Sen, Susil Chandra Sen, Rai Saheb Revati Mohan Das, Harisadhan Mukerjee, Akshay Kumar Datta Gupta, Adyanath Ray, Messrs. Hemendra Nath Sen, Narendra Kumar Basu, Satinath Roy, Nagendranath Banerjee, Hiralal Chakravarti, Charu Chandra Biswas, Sachindranath Mukerjee, Rishindranath Sarkar, Prabodh Kumar Das, Suryya Kumar Guha, Mukunda Bihari Mullik, Mrityunjay Chatterjee, Rames Chandra Pal, Dharendra Nath Sen, Jites Chandra Guha, Profs. P. C. Mitter, J. N. Mukerjee, Sisir Kumar Mitter, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Gauranga Nath Banerjee, Nibarana Chandra Ray, Rabindranarayan Ghose, Nripendra Chandra Banerjee, Nares Chandra Ghose, Susil Kumar Acharyya, Brajendra Nath Chakravarti, Messrs. Sudhindra Chandra Sinha Sarma, Harit Krishna Dev, Satyendra Nath Mukerjee, Sukumar Ranjan Das, Nihar Ranjan Chatterjee and others.

Principal H. E. Stapleton and S. Promode Kumar Ghoshal, Secretary of the College Union, spoke welcoming the guests, and on behalf of the Old Boys, Mr. Justice B. B. Ghosh made a speech in reply. The Chairman then delivered his address. With a vote

of thanks to the chair, the meeting terminated. The guests were then treated to a nice musical entertainment. Tea and light refreshments were served to the guests earlier in the evening.

College Improvement Fund.

The following sums represent the donations, promised and realised, to the fund that has been started for erecting a College Hall ;

- The late Lord Sinha—Rs. 1000
- H. E. the Governor of Bengal—Rs. 1000
- Sir Rajendra Nath Mookerjee—Rs. 2500
- Hon. Justice Sir Charu Chunder Ghosh—Rs. 1000
- Mr. S. N. Mullik—Rs. 500
- Principal H. E. Stapleton—Rs. 500
- Mr. W. E. Griffith—Rs. 50
- Mr. Basanta Kumar Bose—Rs. 10

The Physical Society.

The second meeting came off on Nov. 18, 1927, with Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis on the chair. The discourse was on "Some Personalities in Modern Physics," i.e. a personal record of some of the greatest physicists of Europe. In his address, Prof. Mahalanobis described how he came into contact with Prof. Weyl of the University of Zurich, Prof. Einstein of Berlin, Prof. Ehrenfest of Leyden and Prof. Rutherford of Manchester. Of Einstein he said that the Professor was a very simple man with Socialistic sentiments, always yearning after world-peace. He combined within himself the genius of a mathematician with the imagination of a musician. A hard smoker, he is more fond of solitude than the fashionable societies of the West and feels a desire to visit our country. Similar reminiscences on other physicists were highly appreciated and the

house dispersed late in the evening, after light refreshments were served to all the members.

The third meeting came off on Dec. 22, 1927, with Prof. S. Dutt on the chair. The paper for discussion was on "The Principles and Application of Quantum Theory." Mr. Subhendu Sekhar Bose read his paper, dealing with the mathematical development of the theory and the numerous applications of it in different branches of Physics and Chemistry. It was a long discourse and the proceedings were admirably summed up by Dr. S. Dutt in his final presidential address wherein he discussed some of the recent applications of Quantum Mechanics and encouraged the student-members to take part in such discussions as a part of their higher study of Physics.

The fourth meeting on January 4, 1928, was rather a unique occasion in the history of the Physical Society. We had in our midst, thanks to our President, Prof. Meghnad Saha and Prof. Satyendranath Bose, the two great alumni of our College and past members of our Society. Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis was on the chair and distinguished professors of other universities were present. The President and the guests were garlanded and Prof. Mahalanobis gave a neat little introduction of our guests of the evening. Prof. Saha rose up before a full house to speak on the true spirit of Science, needed in India, and was of opinion that our present religious principle, with its tame and poor sentiments, was a retarding factor in our pursuit of Science.

Prof. Bose, or Einstein's Bose as he is happily called, seemed to think of religion otherwise. He believed religion had its share in building up our civilisation and the absolute faith in Science which Prof. Saha claimed ought to be harmonised with religion for real peace and progress of the world.

The Secretary then expressed, on behalf of the members, his feelings of joy and pride in welcoming the noble guests and spoke on the contributions to the permanent stock of human knowledge by these two professors and hoped that they would be widening the

bounds of human knowledge from day to day, thereby reflecting glory on our country.

The guests and the members were then entertained with music and refreshments.

The fifth meeting came off on Jan. 25, 1928, with Dr. S. Dutt in the chair. Mr. Birendranath Roy read a popular account of Wireless Telephony as it is to-day. He dwelt on the methods of reception both by simple crystal detectors and by elaborate valve arrangements. The paper was highly appreciated and both by way of demonstration as well as entertainment, Mr. Roy had his own valve set ready for the purpose.

The wireless music over, Mr. Roy entertained the guests further with light refreshments.

SUBHENDUSEKHAR BOSE,
Secretary.

Hindi Literary Society.

The fourth meeting of the Society was held on December 16, 1927, with Mr. S. C. Bararia (IV Year Arts) in the chair. Mr. Taraprasad Khaitan (IV Year Arts) read a very interesting paper on "Lala Shrinivas Das and his Randhir Prem-mohini." Mr. Khaitan after giving a short sketch of the life of Lala Shrinivas Das and the place he occupies in Hindi literature, dwelt at some length on the various dramatis personae of the drama. The characterisation of the friendship of Randhir Sinha and Ripudaman, the love story of Prem-mohini and Randhir, the faithfulness of Jivan and the treachery of Sukhvasi Lal etc. were much appreciated by the audience. After a few remarks by the Chairman the meeting terminated.

The fifth meeting of the Society was held on January 30, 1928, with Prof. M. Huq in the chair. Mr. Umavallabh Chaturvedi (I Year Sc.) read a paper on Akbar and his Poetry. From a very humble

position, Akbar rose to the position of a Sessions Judge by dint of sheer merit. Although he was absorbed in worldly affairs, he rendered very brilliant services to Hindi and Urdu literature. His poems were mostly on patriotic themes.

BHURAMAL AGRAWAL,
Secretary.

The English Literary Society.

This Society is a small study-circle, founded in 1926, under the guidance of Prof. H. K. Banerjee, by B. A. English Honours students. It has been decided to publish the reports of the Society in the Magazine from the current session which begins from September 1927.

(1) On 10th September, 1927, Mr. Pankoj K. Banerjee of the 4th Year Class read a paper on "The Pseudo-Artist in Charles Dickens." S. J. Hiranmoy Ghosal presided.

(2) On 17th December 1927, Mr. Sunil Taluqdar of the 3rd Year Class read a paper on "Sarojini Naidu--the Poetess and her Poetry." S. J. Gobinda Prosad Ghose presided.

(3) On 21st January, 1928, Mr. Tarak Nath Sen of the 3rd Year Class read a paper on "Some Aspects of Modern English Poetry." Prof. S. N. Moitra was in the chair.

The papers were highly interesting and illuminating, attracted appreciative gatherings and were throughout accompanied by keen and lively discussion.

SUNIL TALUKDER
Secretary.

Calcutta University Training Corps.

Annual Musketry Course held at Belghurriah during March
 Presidency College came in third.

Results of the Presidency College Men.

Aggregate Marks	...	...	...	130
Lance-Corporal T. Sur 3rd Year B. A.	...	...	...	104
C. Q. M. S. P. Dutt (Geology)	...	...	...	94
Sgt. D. Dutt V Year Economics	...	...	...	93
Pte. A. Ali 1st Year Arts	...	...	...	93
Pte. A Khabir 1st Year Arts	...	...	...	91

Cricket News.

We had a very successful cricket season. We played 17 matches. We won 7, lost 4 and in one we tied with our opponents. 5 matches ended in draw, (mostly in our favour). It is to be noted that most of our reverses were sustained early in November or during Christmas when we could not put up our full team.

His Excellency Sir Stanley Jackson was so pleased with our results that as a mark of his appreciation he was pleased to allow himself to be photographed with the team.

Special mention should be made of Bijay Sarbadhikary and Kiron Roy in batting and of Bishnu Sarkar and Jaladhi Roy in attack. Lastly we have to thank Bishnu Kinkar Sarkar, who by his skill as a bowler and by his tact and resourcefulness as Captain contributed very materially to our success this season.

S. RAY,
Secretary.

Report of the Tennis Club.

The Annual meeting of the Tennis Club was held on the 16th September, 1927, when Mr. P. L. Mehta and Mr. B. K. Palit of the 5th Year Class were elected Captain and Secretary respectively for the coming season. The number of members was 48. The hard court was opened on the 14th November and the lawns on the 8th December. We entered for the Duke Cup, but, as ill-luck would have it, our Captain, Mr. P. L. Mehta, could not play, and the College was represented by Messrs Bhuyan and Emery. We lost in the first round after a tough fight. We found ample consolation, however, in the brilliant successes of our Captain in all the great tournaments of Northern India. Mr. Mehta reached the finals, in both singles and doubles, of the Calcutta and the Bengal Championships, represented Bengal in the Inter-provincial tournament, and had reached the semi-final of the All-India Tournament at Allahabad, when it was abandoned. In the Punjab Championships again, he reached the singles final and, partnered by Mrs. Gough, carried off the Mixed Doubles trophy. To crown all, he was selected to represent India in the Davis Cup. Surely a unique honour for Presidency College! Our heartiest congratulations to our popular Captain.

The unfortunate closing of the College in February necessitated the postponement of the annual tournament to March, when, owing to the lateness of the season, only the singles event was held. There were 23 entries and quite a high standard of tennis was reached in the matches. Mr. R. Emery beat Mr. H. Bhuyan in one semi-final, while in the other Mr. A. Mukherjea beat Mr. T. Sur. The final was held on 31st March, when Mr. A. Mukherjea beat Mr. R. Emery 6-2, 1-6, 6-2, 3-6, 6-4, after a thrilling game, and won the College Championship Cup, very kindly presented by the Pioneer Sports Ltd. Mr. Emery received the runner-up cup and the College Blue was awarded to Mr. H. Bhuyan. Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis M. A. (Cantab), I. E. S., presided and

Mrs. Mahalanobis kindly gave away the prizes. The curtain was rung on the tennis season with a social gathering after the final.

B. K. PALIT,
Secy., P. C. T. C.

Condolence.

Principal H. E. Stapleton had conveyed by letter the following resolution of condolence at the death of Lord Sinha to the family of the deceased. The resolution was adopted at a meeting held on the 8th March.

"The staff and students of Presidency College assembled together to pay tribute to one of the most distinguished ex-students of the College, desire to place on record their sense of the irreparable loss the country has sustained by the untimely and unexpected death of the late Rt. Hon'ble Lord Sinha of Raipur, K. C. S. I., P. C., K. C. As a lawyer, statesman and patriot, he has left an abiding mark on the history of his country, as well as a noble tradition of courageous and disinterested service, which will act as a worthy model to all who desire to follow in his footsteps."

The Principal received the following letter in reply, :

17, Elysium Row,
Calcutta, 12. 3. 28.

Dear Mr. Stapleton,

Lady Sinha wishes me to convey to you, the staff and the students, her deepest gratitude for their kind expression of sympathy. It is a great consolation to her to know that her sorrow in her irreparable loss is shared by all.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) S. Sinha.

বাংলা

পৃথিবীর বয়স *

পৃথিবী কতকালের তাহা জানিবার কৌতূহল নানা দেশে নানা জাতির মধ্যে নানাভাবে আত্মপ্রকাশ করিয়াছে। ভূতত্ত্ব ও পদার্থ তত্ত্বের দিক হইতে আমরা পৃথিবীর বয়স দুই প্রকারে জানিবার চেষ্টা করি।

১। সাধারণতঃ যে ভাবে পৃথিবীর এবং তথাকার প্রাণীসমূহের পরিবর্তন ঘটিতেছে এবং এই সমস্ত পরিবর্তন সম্বন্ধে যে সকল তথ্য সংগ্রহ করা হইয়াছে ও হইতেছে, তাহা হইতে বস্তুকার জন্ম নির্ণয় করা যাইতে পারে।

বস্তুকার বাহ্যকৃতির পরিবর্তন হইবার কারণ—বাহ্য এবং আভ্যন্তরীণ—যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে দেখা যায়। মনে করা যাক একটা সমতল দেশ আছে, যাহার মধ্যে অনেক নদনদী বহে; সেই দেশে বৃষ্টিও বেশী হয়, বৃষ্টির জল চারিদিক হইতে ধুইয়া মাটি নদীতে আনিয়া ফেলে, আর নদী তাহা বহিয়া বহুদূরে—সাগর সমুদ্রে স্থলে লইয়া যায়। নদীজল সমুদ্রজল অপেক্ষা লঘু বলিয়া সমুদ্রের তরঙ্গের উপর সানন্দে নৃত্য করিতে থাকে; আর অপেক্ষাকৃত গুরুভার দ্রব্যাদি যাহা নদী বহিয়া আনিয়াছিল তাহা নীচে ধীরে ধীরে পড়িয়া স্তরে স্তরে সঞ্চিত হয়। এই ভাবে একটা দেশ ঢালু হইতে থাকে, আর দূরে—বহুদূরে—অপর একটা দেশের প্রাণপ্রতিষ্ঠা হয়। স্মরণ্য আমরা দেখিতে পাই যে, একটা দেশের ক্ষয় হইতে অপর একটা দেশের সৃষ্টি এবং তাহা ঘটে এক বা দুই দিনে নহে—বহুযুগ পরে।

২। বিজ্ঞান বলে মানুষ আজ দেখিতে পাইতেছে যে, জীব ও বৃক্ষাদির জন্ম এবং পরিবর্তন যুগ যুগ ধরিয়া অতি ধীরে সাধিত হইয়াছে ও হইতেছে। পর্বতাদির স্তর হইতে বৈজ্ঞানিকগণ জাগতিক জীব ও বৃক্ষ সমূহের জাতি, বর্ণ, শ্রেণী ও আকৃতির অসংখ্য পরিবর্তনের প্রমাণ পাইয়াছেন। উহাদের মধ্যে অনেকেই একেবারে লয় পাইয়া গিয়াছে; আবার অনেকে স্ব স্ব রূপ ত্যাগ করিয়া সময়ের পরিবর্তনের সহিত অণু রূপ ধারণ করিয়াছে। প্রাণি-জগতের এই সমস্ত পরিবর্তন ঘটিতে বহু যুগ কাটিয়া গিয়াছে;—কত কাল যে গত হইয়াছে, তাহা স্থায়ী প্রমাণ অভাবে নির্ণয় করা এক প্রকার অসম্ভব।

প্রাণী ও বস্তু-জগতে আজ কাল যে প্রকার মন্থর পরিবর্তন হইতেছে তাহা হইতে ভূতত্ত্ববিদগণ সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন যে, বহুকাল পূর্বেও বাস্তব জগতের পরিবর্তন

* প্রেসিডেন্সী কলেজ ভূতত্ত্ব সমিতির বার্ষিক অধিবেশনে পঠিত।

এই প্রকার ধীর গতিতে হইয়াছে। কিন্তু বিরুদ্ধবাদিগণ বলেন যে, অধুনা বস্তু ও প্রাণি-জগতের পরিবর্তন সহস্র শতাব্দীর পূর্ব হইতে ধীরে ধীরে হইতেছে ; তাঁহাদের স্বপক্ষে প্রমাণ পদার্থশাস্ত্রের দিক হইতে। তাঁহারা বলেন, সমস্ত পৃথিবীর এখন যাহা শক্তি আছে, সহস্র সহস্র শতাব্দী পূর্বের তাহা আরও অনেক বেশী ছিল। তখন ভূমির আকার পরিবর্তনাদি অতি অল্প সময়ে ঘটত ; আগ্নেয়-গিরিসমূহ বৃহৎ ছিল ; ভূমিকম্প ভীষণ রুদ্রমূর্ত্তি ধারণ করিত ; জোয়ার-ভাটা ও ঝড় প্রভৃতি ভয়ঙ্কর হইত। কিন্তু এই সমস্ত বর্ণনার সত্যতা নির্ধারণার্থ কোন প্রকার প্রমাণ দেওয়া হয় নাই এবং তাহা পাওয়াও যায় নাই। এই সমস্ত বর্ণনা কবিদিগের কাব্যে এবং ভাবুকের ভাবরাজ্যেই শোভা পায়—বিজ্ঞান-জগতে ইহার স্থান নাই। বহু পুরাতন স্তরসম্ভূত (Sedimentary) পর্বত বিশ্লেষণ করিয়া দেখা গিয়াছে যে, প্রত্যেক স্তর একটীর উপর আর একটা পড়িয়া ক্রমে বহুকাল পরে এক বৃহৎ পর্বতের সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে। ভূতাত্ত্বিকগণের মতের বিরুদ্ধপ্রমাণাভাবে তাহাদের সিদ্ধান্তই গ্রহণ করা ভিন্ন উপায় নাই।

স্তরসম্ভূত পর্বতাদি ও তাহার চতুঃপার্শ্বস্থ আকাশ ও সমুদ্রের অত্যন্ত দ্রুত পরিবর্তন, নিবর্তন বা আবর্তনের কোনও প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায় না। একটা অতি পুরাতন প্রমাণ হইতেছে স্কটল্যাণ্ড দেশের “স্ট্রিডোন” বালুকাস্তর। সময় সময় কোন কিস্তৃতকিমাকার প্রস্তরখণ্ডসমূহ প্রচণ্ড বেগে নদীর জোয়ারে ভাসিয়া চলিয়া যায় এবং সমুদ্রের কোনও এক প্রান্তে ইতস্ততঃ বিক্ষিপ্ত হইয়া থাকে। কিন্তু সেই বহু পুরাতন স্থানের নিষ্পেষিত প্রস্তরখণ্ডসমূহ মোটেই পূর্ববানুরূপ থাকে না ; জলস্রোতে উক্তস্থানের প্রস্তরসমূহ চমৎকার গোলাকৃতি ধারণ করে এবং তাহাদের বহির্ভাগ খুব মসৃণ হয়। যে জলাশয়ের কোলে ইহারা জমিতেছিল তাহার জল বড়ই শান্ত ছিল ; সেইজন্য বাতাসে যখন উপরের জল নাচিয়া উঠিত, তখন নীচের বালুকারাশিতে ঢেউয়ের দাগ খেলিয়া যাইত এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ভারী ও পাতলা বালুকাখণ্ডগুলি স্ব স্ব স্থানে সঞ্চিত হইত। ইহাদের মধ্যে বালুকারাশি-সংশ্লিষ্ট চূষকের পাতলা আবরণও স্ব স্ব ওজনানুসারে সন্নিবেশিত অবস্থায় পাওয়া গিয়াছে। আবার এই সমস্ত সূক্ষ্ম স্তরের ভিতর পাতলা মাটির আবরণ পাওয়া গিয়াছে। এই মাটি যদি কোন জীবের দেহাবশেষ হইয়া থাকে, তাহা হইলে ইউরোপে উহাই বহু পুরাতন যুগের জীবদেহাবশেষের চিহ্ন বলিয়া ধরা যাইবে। সকল দিক আলোচনা করিয়া দেখা যাইতেছে যে, বস্তুধারার মৃত্তিকাস্তর-

সমূহ বহুকাল ধরিয়া গঠিত হইয়াছে। জীবতাত্ত্বিকগণ প্রস্তরসমূহ হইতে যে সমস্ত জীবদেহ বাহির করিয়াছেন, তাহা বিশ্লেষণপূর্বক সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন, যে এই সমস্ত জীবের পরিবর্তন ঘটিতে প্রায় দুই কোটি হইতে তিন কোটি বৎসর লাগিয়াছে। বৈজ্ঞানিকশ্রেষ্ঠ ডারউইন্ এর মতে আরও বেশী সময় লাগিয়াছে। আবার ভূতাত্ত্বিকগণ পৃথিবীর বাহ্য ও আভ্যন্তরীণ যে সমস্ত পরিবর্তনের সাক্ষ্য পাইয়াছেন তাহা হইতে তাঁহারা এই সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হইয়াছেন যে পৃথিবীর পরিবর্তনাদি ঘটিতে অল্পান দশকোটি বৎসর লাগিয়াছে।

ডাব্লিন সহরের ট্রিনিটি কলেজের অধ্যাপক জে. জলি একটা চমৎকার বৈজ্ঞানিক উপায়ে পৃথিবীর বয়স স্থির করিয়াছেন। তিনি বলিতেছেন যে, বহু পূর্বে সমুদ্রের জলে লবণ ছিল না। ভূমি ও পর্বতাদির ক্ষয় হইতে সমুদ্রের জল লোনা হইয়াছে। সমুদ্রে কতখানি জল আছে, তাহা তিনি বাহির করেন, এবং তাহাতে কতখানি লবণ আছে কিয়ৎপরিমাণ উক্ত জল বিশ্লেষণ করিয়া তাহাও তিনি স্থির করেন। আবার নদীসমূহ হইতে প্রতি বৎসর যে পরিমাণ জল সমুদ্রে পড়িতেছে, তাহার মধ্যে কতখানি লবণ আছে, তাহা বাহির করিয়া উহার পরিমাণ দিয়া তিনি সামুদ্রিক লবণের পরিমাণকে ভাগ দেন এবং ইহা হইতে সমুদ্রের জল লোনা হইতে কত বৎসর লাগিয়াছে তাহা অনুমান করেন। তাঁহার হিসাব অনুসারে নয় হইতে দশ কোটি বৎসর পূর্বে হইতে সমুদ্রে লবণ জমিতে আরম্ভ করিয়াছে। জলি সাহেবের এই চমৎকার সিদ্ধান্ত ভূতাত্ত্বিক ও জীবতাত্ত্বিকগণের মতের সহিত মিলিয়াছে। ইহা হইতেই পৃথিবী যে কত পুরাতন, তাহা আমরা কিয়ৎপরিমাণে অনুমান করিতে পারি।

পদার্থবিদগণ তিন প্রকার প্রমাণ দ্বারা পৃথিবীর বয়স নির্ণয় করিয়াছেন; যথা:—

- (ক) ভূগর্ভস্থ তাপ ও পৃথিবীর তাপ হ্রাসের পরিমাণ হইতে;
- (খ) বসুন্ধরার ঘূর্ণন হেতু জোয়ার এবং ভাটার গতির পরিবর্তন হইতে;
- (গ) সূর্যের উত্তাপের জন্ম হইতে।
- (ক) লর্ড কেলভিন ফোরিয়ার সাহেবের তাপ-গতির তথ্য হইতে দেখাইয়াছেন যে, পৃথিবীর গভীর হইতে গভীরতর প্রদেশের তাপ ক্রমশই প্রথর হইতে প্রথরতর; আর বহির্ভাগ ক্রমশই তাপশূণ্য হইতেছে। তিনি যে সমস্ত প্রমাণ পাইয়াছেন তাহা হইতে সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন যে, পৃথিবীর বহির্ভাগ জমাট হইতে

যে সময়ের প্রয়োজন হইয়াছে তাহা ছুই কোটি বৎসরের কম নহে এবং দশ কোটি বৎসরের বেশী নহে।

(খ) জোয়ার এবং ভাটার টেউয়ের সংঘর্ষ হেতু পৃথিবীর ঘূর্ণনের বেগ পূর্বে যাহা ছিল, তাহা হইতে কিছু কমিয়াছে। ইহা হইতে লর্ড কেলভিন্ প্রমাণ করিতে চাহেন যে, পৃথিবী যদি দশ কোটি বৎসরের পূর্বে জমাট হইত, তাহা হইলে দ্রুত ঘূর্ণমান গতিহেতু মাধ্যাকর্ষণশক্তি মেরুপ্রদেশসমূহকে চওড়া করিতে প্রয়াস পাইত; কিন্তু তাহা নহে।

(গ) পূর্বে ছুই প্রকার নিয়মদ্বারা বস্তুবাব বয়স যতদূর নির্ণীত হইয়াছে, এই তৃতীয় নিয়ম দ্বারাও তাহা হইতে বেশী কিছু স্থির করিতে পারা যায় নাই। শূন্যমার্গে গ্রহউপগ্রহগণের সংঘর্ষে যে উত্তাপ উদ্ভূত হইয়াছে, তাহা হইতে সূর্যের উৎপত্তি। এই উত্তাপ চারিদিকে কত পরিমাণে বিকীর্ণ হইতেছে, তাহা নির্ণয় করা হইয়াছে। সূর্যোত্তাপ সমভাবে হ্রাস পাইতেছে, এই অনুমান করিয়া অধ্যাপক টেইট্ সাহেব সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন যে সূর্য পৃথিবীকে দেড় কোটি হইতে ছুই কোটি বৎসরের বেশী উত্তাপ দেয় নাই। লর্ড কেলভিন্ অনুমান করিয়াছেন যে, সূর্য যদি এই প্রকারে সমভাবে পৃথিবীকে উত্তাপ দান করে, তাহা হইলে পৃথিবী আর পাঁচ হইতে ছয় কোটি বৎসরের বেশী সূর্যোত্তাপ পাইবে না।

ভূতাত্ত্বিক ও জীবতাত্ত্বিকগণ পৃথিবীর বয়স যতটা নির্ণয় করিয়াছেন, পদার্থবিদগণ তাহা অনেকপরিমাণে উক্ত তিন প্রকার মত অনুসারে কমাইয়া দিয়াছেন। কিন্তু ৫ ক্রম মতত্রয় সম্বন্ধে পদার্থবিদগণের মধ্যেই যথেষ্ট মতবৈধ আছে। উপরোক্ত এই সমস্ত প্রমাণাদি হইতে লর্ড কেলভিন্ ও অধ্যাপক ডারউইন্ পৃথিবীর বয়স নয় হইতে দশ কোটি বৎসরের কম নহে, এই সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হইয়াছেন।

এবার আমরা রেডিয়াম (Radium) বস্তুর সংরক্ষণ হইতে পৃথিবীর বয়স যে আরও বেশী, তৎপ্রমাণে যত্নবান হইব। লর্ড কেলভিন্ ধরিয়া লইয়াছেন যে, সর্বপ্রথমে পৃথিবী দীপ্যমান বস্তুপরিপূর্ণ একটা গোল পিণ্ড ছিল; উহা হইতে তাপরশ্মি চতুর্দিকে বিকীর্ণ হইবার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ক্রমশঃ শীতল হইয়া বর্তমান পৃথিবীর আকৃতি ধারণ করিয়াছে। কেলভিন্ ইহা হইতে দেখাইয়াছেন যে ভূতাত্ত্বিকগণ প্রস্তরীভূত মৃত জন্তু ইত্যাদির চিহ্ন দেখিয়া পৃথিবীর বয়স যাহা নির্ণয় করিয়াছেন, তাহা পৃথিবীর সর্ব প্রথম রূপ হইতে বর্তমান পরিবর্তনের সময় অপেক্ষা অনেক বেশী। কিন্তু ভূমির অভ্যন্তরে তাপ বিকীরণশীল পদার্থ (Radio-

active) বর্তমান থাকায় কেল্ভিন সাহেবের সিদ্ধান্ত পুনর্বিবেচনা করার প্রয়োজন হইয়াছে। এখন ইহাষ্ট আমাদের আলোচ্য বিষয়।

ইউরেনিয়াম নামক এক প্রকার বস্তুর ক্রমপরিবর্তনের সহিত উহাৰ আণবিক ওজন ক্রমশঃ স্বল্প হইতে স্বল্পতর হইতেছে ; এই পরিবর্তন কঠিন পর্বতে যেমন, সমুদ্র জলেও তেমনি—সর্বত্রই সমান। আণবিক ওজন ক্রমশঃ কমিতে কমিতে এমন এক সময় আসে, যখন উহাৰ আর পরিবর্তন হয় না বা উহাকে আর বিচ্ছেদ করিয়া অণু প্রকার পদার্থে পরিণত করা যায় না। তাহা হইলেই আমরা দেখিতে পাইতেছি যে, প্রত্যেক আণবিক ওজনেব পরিবর্তনের সহিত ঐ পদার্থের ক্রিয়ণ পরিমাণ অণু ইতস্ততঃ বিক্ষিপ্ত হইয়া যাইতেছে। যাহা বিচ্ছুরিত হইয়া গেল তাহাদেব বাহ্যকৃতি সর্বত্রই সমান। বৈজ্ঞানিকগণ উহাকে আল্ফা তেজরশ্মি নামে অভিহিত করিয়াছেন। রাদারফোর্ড (Rutherford) ও গিগার (Geiger) দেখাইয়াছেন যে এক একটা আল্ফা তেজরশ্মির অণু এক একটা হিলিয়াম অণু ছাড়া আর কিছুই নয়। এখন যে পরিমাণে ঐ পূর্ববর্ণিত পদার্থের পরিবর্তন হইতেছে, তাহা যদি আমরা জানিতে পারি এবং কোনও একটা বিশেষ ক্ষেত্র হইতে তাপবিকীরণশীল পদার্থের ও হিলিয়ামের ওজন যদি বুঝিতে পারি, তাহা হইলেই কত সময়ে ঐ পরিবর্তন সংঘটিত হইয়াছে, তাহা আমরা অনুমান করিতে পারিব।

ফারগুসোনাইট (Fergusonite) নামক পদার্থ হইতে প্রতি বৎসর 0.95×10^{-8} কিউবিক সেন্টিমিটার পরিমাণ হিলিয়াম অণু প্রত্যেক 'গ্র্যাম' হইতে বিচ্ছুরিত হইতেছে। ঐ পদার্থের প্রত্যেক গ্র্যামে 1.71 কিউবিক সেন্টিমিটার হিলিয়াম বর্তমান আছে। ঐ সংখ্যাকে প্রতি বৎসর যে পরিমাণ হিলিয়াম এক গ্র্যাম হইতে বিচ্ছুরিত হয়, তাহা দিয়া ভাগ করিলে যে সময়ে ঐ পরিমাণ হিলিয়াম জন্মিয়াছে উহা আমরা বাহির করিতে পারি এবং এই সময়ের পরিমাণ হইয়াছে কিঞ্চিদধিক চব্বিশ কোটি বৎসর।

বন্টউডের হিসাব অনুসারে পৃথিবীর বয়স আবও বেশী। পূর্বেই বলিয়াছি যে, ইউরেনিয়ামের আণবিক পরিবর্তন হইতে ঐ বস্তু এমন এক অবস্থায় পৌঁছে যখন উহাৰ আর কোনও পরিবর্তন হয় না বা উহা হইতে আর অণু কোনও প্রকার পদার্থ পাওয়া যায় না। বৈজ্ঞানিকগণের মতে ঐ পদার্থ আর সীসা একই জিনিষ। বন্টউড লিপিবদ্ধ করিয়াছেন যে, একই স্থানের অপরিবর্তিত আদিম ধাতু গুলিতে

সীসার পরিমাণ ইউরেনিয়মের অল্পপাতে সমান। অধিকন্তু সর্বাপেক্ষা প্রাচীন স্থান সমূহে প্রাপ্ত ধাতুতে ইউরেনিয়মের অপেক্ষা সীসার পরিমাণ অত্যন্ত অধিক। তাহা হইলে ইহাই স্বীকৃত হইবে যে, সীসা ইউরেনিয়মের ক্রম পরিবর্তনের শেষ পরিণাম। উল্লিখিত সত্য অবলম্বনে বন্টউড্ কতকগুলি ইউরেনিয়ম-সংশ্লিষ্ট ধাতুর বয়স নির্ণয় করিয়াছেন। উহার পরিমাণ ২৪-১৩২ কোটি বৎসর। এই সমস্ত ধাতু পৃথিবীর ঠিক কোন্ স্থান (Geological portion) হইতে পাওয়া গিয়াছে তাহা নির্ণীত হয় নাই, নরওয়ে ও সিংহলের আদিম পর্বত হইতে যাহা পাওয়া গিয়াছে, তাহাই সর্বাপেক্ষা প্রাচীন।

পৃথিবীর বয়স সম্বন্ধে এমন কোনও সিদ্ধান্ত এখনও হয় নাই, যাহা আমরা ঙ্গব সত্য বলিয়া মানিয়া লইতে পারি। কখনও হইবে কি না, কে জানে।

শ্রীজ্যোৎস্নাশঙ্কর ভাট্টী,

চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ।

“সন্ধ্যা”

দিবা হ'লো সমাপন,

সন্ধ্যা আসে শান্তিময়ী। তিমিরের তীরে

অসংখ্য-প্রদীপ-জালা এ বিশ্বমন্দিবে

এলো আরতির বেলা।

কর্মমুখর জগৎ শ্রান্ত ক্লান্ত হ'য়ে তাহার কর্ম হ'তে নিবৃত্ত হ'য়েছে। বিশ্বব্যাপী কোলাহল সুদূর সমুদ্রের অশ্রুট কলধ্বনির মতো ক্ষীণ হ'তে ক্রমে ক্ষীণতর হ'য়ে অবশেষে দিগন্তের নিবিড় নিস্তরুতার ক্রেণ্ডে বিশ্রাম করিতেছে। মানুষের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সেও যেন শ্রান্ত হইয়াছে, তাই সে এখন স্তম্ভিত। তার পরিবর্তে

ওই শুন বাজে

নিঃশব্দ গভীর মন্ড্রে অনন্তের মাঝে

শঙ্খঘণ্টাধ্বনি ।

বিপুল বিশ্বের দূর দূরান্ত পরিব্যাপ্ত করিয়া একটা গভীর নিস্তরুতা বিরাজিত । সে নিস্তরুতা জড় মুক নহে । তাহার দেহে প্রাণ আছে, অন্তরে ভাষা আছে এবং হৃদয়ে তীব্র বেদনা আছে । তাহারই সেই শব্দবিহীন ভাষা অনন্ত শূন্যে অসংখ্য শঙ্খঘণ্টার গভীর মন্ড্রে রূপান্তরিত হইয়াছে । দিবসের কর্ম সাঙ্গ করিয়া আরতির এই বিপুল আয়োজনের মধ্যে বিশ্বব্রহ্মাণ্ড বিশ্বদেবতার পূজায় বসিয়াছে । এখন সে যুদ্ধ বিগ্রহ, অভাব অভিযোগ, সকলই তাহার মন থেকে দূরে ফেলিয়াছে— বিদ্রোহের উচ্চ কণ্ঠ ধীরে পূর্ববীর স্তানমন্দ স্বরে নামাইয়া আনিয়াছে । বাসনার নিত্য নব নব নিষ্ফল বিলাপ মৌন হইয়াছে । মাথার উপর তমসার অবগুণ্ঠন টানিয়া দিয়া কখন অলক্ষিতে সন্ধ্যাসতী অবনত মুখে সন্নতনয়নে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইয়াছে । অচিরেই সে তাহার তিমিরাঞ্চল দ্বারা ব্রহ্মাণ্ডকে আচ্ছন্ন করিয়া ফেলিবে । আজি এই শুভক্ষণে সন্ধ্যার আলোকে শান্তমনে অনন্তের সঙ্গে সন্ধি করিবার সময় আসিয়াছে । কবির মন বলিয়া উঠিতেছে

বিন্দু ছুই অশ্রুজলে

দাও উপহার—অসীমের পদতলে

জীবনের স্মৃতি । অন্তরের যত কথা

শান্ত হ'য়ে গিয়ে—মর্মান্তিক নীরবতা

করুক বিস্তার ।

নদীতীরে স্তম্ভপ্রায় গ্রাম । পাখীর সব আপন আপন বাসায় ফিরিয়া গিয়াছে ; ছোট ছোট শিশুদের খেলাধুলা আজিকার মত শেষ হইয়াছে ; ঘরে-ফেরা গুটি দুই তিন শ্রান্ত গাভী কুটীর অঙ্গনে ছবির মত বাঁধা । গৃহকার্য সমাপনান্তে গ্রামের বধু বেড়াখানি ধরিয়া উদাসনয়নে সম্মুখে উর্দ্ধপানে চাহিয়া আছে । কবির চক্ষে বসুকরাও গ্রামের বধূটির মতো অমনি নিস্তরু প্রাণে দিবসের কর্ম অবসানে দিনান্তের বেড়াটা ধরিয়া দিগন্তের পানে চাহিয়া আছে । সম্মুখে অম্বরপথে আলোকশ্রোত ধীরে ধীরে অন্ধকার-সমুদ্রের মধ্যে আপনাকে হারাইয়া ফেলিতেছে ; সুদূর পল্লীর প্রদীপের মতো আকাশের দূরান্তরে এক একটা দীপ্ত তারা বাহির হইতেছে

সন্ধ্যা

ধীরে উঠে যেন ভেসে
ম্লানচ্ছবি ধরণীর নয়ন-নিমেষে
কত যুগ যুগান্তের অতীত আভাস
কত জীব-জীবনের জীর্ণ ইতিহাস ।
যেন মনে পড়ে সেই বাল্য নীহারিকা
তা'র পরে প্রজ্জ্বলন্ত যৌবনের শিখা,
তা'র পরে স্নিগ্ধশ্যাম অন্নপূর্ণালায়ে
জীবধাত্রী জননীর কাজ, বক্ষে ল'য়ে
লক্ষ কোটি জীব—কত দুঃখ, কত ক্লেশ,
কত যুদ্ধ, কত মৃত্যু, নাহি তার শেষ ।

ক্রমে ঘনতর অন্ধকার নামিয়া আসিল ; নীরবতা গাঢ়তর হইল ; এবং
বিশ্বপরিবার সূত্রের আবেশে নিশ্চৈতন্য হইল, ও তাহার মাঝে

নিঃসঙ্গিনী ধরণীর

বিশাল অন্তর হ'তে উঠে স্নগস্তীর

একটি ব্যথিত প্রশ্ন—ক্লিষ্ট ক্লান্ত সুর

শূন্যপানে—“আরো কোথা ?”

“আরো কতদূর ?”

শ্রীমুনীতকুমার ইন্দ্র

চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, কলা-বিভাগ ।



ফুলের ব্যথা

আধিব্যাধির বোঝা যখন প্রবল হ'য়ে ওঠে,
টানাটানির চোটে
জীবন-তরুর শিকড় গুলি শিথিল হ'য়ে আসে,
আবার জড়ায় নিবিড় বাঁধন পাশে ।
সেবার যখন পড়েছিলুম রোগে,
অনেক ওষুধ, অনেক মুষ্টিযোগে
ব্যাধির সনে কয়েকমাসের মল্লরণের পরে
এই জীবনের তরে
বিন্দু মাত্র রইল না সংশয়,
বেঁচে থাকার সনন্দ যখন টিক্কেই গেল, রইল না আর ভয় ।
সেদিন শরৎ প্রাতে
জান্‌লা ছুটি খুলে আপন হাতে,
অনেক কালের না-দেখা মোর পূব আকাশের আলো
লাগল বড়ই ভালো ।
ঘন গাছের বেড়ার ফাঁকে স্নিগ্ধ মধুর হেসে
অরুণ-আলো করলো আশীষ এসে ।
চেয়ে দেখি শিউলি গাছের তলে
সবাই ছুটে চলে,
পাড়ার যত ছেলে মেয়ের দল ;
তা'দের কোলাহল—
মনে হল, আবার এ কোন্ স্বর্ণমায়ার ছল ।
শরৎ রাতের শিশির শিহরণে
কাটিয়ে জাগরণে,
মৃত্তল মধুর ভোরের হাওয়া সারা রাতের শেষে
বইল যখন এসে,
একে একে ফুলগুলি সব পড়ল ঘুমে ঢলে'
মাটির কোলে, শিউলি তরুর মূলে ।

ফুলের ব্যথা

ছেলেরা সব করে ছটোপুটি,
সে কি দারুণ ব্যস্ত হ'য়ে নি'ল তা'দের লুটি,
শূন্য অঁচল পূর্ণ করে তারা
প্রভাত করে হাস্ত উজল চল্ল যেন আনন্দেরি' ধারা
চপল দিশাহারা :

ভাঙল ক্রমে শিউলি তলার মেলা—

ফুল-কুড়ানো খেলা,
ফিরে গেল সবাই আপন ঘরে ;
তারি খানিক পরে
ছোট্ট মেয়ে নন্দরাণী রুহু রুহু বাজিয়ে পায়ের মল,
এল ছুটে শিশির সজল শিউলি-তরুর তল,—
শুভ্র দুটি ফুলের আশায় ।

হায় গো, বালা, হায় !

তোমার মত এই ধরণীর বৃকের মাণিক যারা,
খানিক আগে তারা
ফুলের ফসল নিঃশেষে লুট করে
গেছে চলে' অঁচল তা'দের ভরে ;
এখন হেথায় আছে কেবল বাবা পাতার ঝারা,
ফুলের সঙ্গ হারা ।

রাণীর অঁখি ছল্ছলিয়ে উঠল বৃকের ব্যথায়
বিপুল নিরাশায়,

না-পাওয়ার এই করুণ কাতরতা

এক নিমিষে ঘুচিয়ে দিল

তরুণ মুখের হাস্ত কোমলতা,

খামিয়ে দিল নৃত্যে-রচা নুপুর-ধ্বনি খানি ;

শুধু হ'য়ে রইল তখন রাণী,—

মূর্ত্তিমতী ছবি যেন লেখা পটের গায়

ব্যথার তুলিকায় ।

রাণীর ব্যথা শিউলি বৃকে হান্‌ল দারুণ দাগা,
মিথ্যা তাহার সারা রাতের জাগা,
ব্যর্থ তাহার ফুল ফুটানো, ব্যর্থ তাহার আশা,
ব্যর্থ তাহার ফুলের ভালোবাসা ।
কান্নায় তাঁর বক্ষ ওঠে ফুলে,
পাতার কূলে কূলে
রাণীর ব্যথায় বেরিয়ে আসা যত অশ্রুজল
উঠছে জমে করছে টলমল ।
আজকে দিনের দানের মেলার নীরব হরষ যত
সবই সফল হ'ত,
যদি রাণীর ছোট্ট অঁচল খানি
ভরিয়ে দিতে পারত কিছু ফুলের ফসল আনি ।

শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়
চতুর্থ বাষিক শ্রেণী, কলাবিভাগ ।

রক্ত-করবী

“সুন্দরের হাতে রঙের তুলি দিয়েছে বিধাতা ।.....মালতী ছিল, মল্লিকা ছিল—
ছিল চামেলী । সব বাদ দিয়ে এ ফুল কেন বেছে নিলে ?”

“রক্ত-করবী” পড়তে গিয়ে যে প্রশ্নটি আমার মনে প্রথম জেগেছিলো সেটি এই। রক্ত-করবী যুগে যুগে বাঙলা-দেশের বৃক্কে শক্তির প্রতীক। রবীন্দ্রনাথ জীবনকে এই রক্ত-করবীর ভেতর দিয়ে এমন চমৎকার করে প্রকাশ করেছেন যে সে প্রকাশের ঐশ্বর্য্য হয়তো তাঁর কল্পনাকেও হটিয়ে দিয়েছে। নন্দিনীর গলায় রক্ত-করবীর দোলন দেখে অধ্যাপক বিস্মিত হয়ে বললেন—“তা আমাকে ওর একটা ফুল দাও, শুধু ক্ষণকালের দান.....ওর রঙের তত্ত্বটা বোঝবার চেষ্টা করি” আর সত্যি করেই জীবনের প্রত্যেকটি তন্তুর সাথে জড়িয়ে রয়েছে মানুষের এই “রঙের তত্ত্ব বোঝার” স্পৃহা। জীবন যেখানে গানের রঙে, খুমির রঙে রাঙা হয়ে রয়েছে “রক্ত-করবী”র অধ্যাপক সেইখানে খুঁজছেন তাঁর মনের মানুষটিকে। গন্ধে গানে লীলায়িত নিখিলের এই রক্ত-করবীর পাপড়ি দিয়ে গড়া নন্দিনীর ভিতরে রবীন্দ্রনাথ যে বিপুল চেতনার রাজ্যটিকে টেনে এনেছেন সে রাজ্যটির কিম্বত্ ভালো করে বুঝতে হলে “বিশ্বের বাঁশিতে নাচের যে ছন্দ বাজে সেই ছন্দেরই” ছোপ দিয়ে রাঙিয়ে নিতে হয় মনোরাজ্যটিকে, নইলে “সহজের থেকে ঐ প্রাণের ষাটটুকু কেড়ে আন্তে পারিনে আমরা।”

নন্দিনীর গলার রক্ত-করবীর একটা পাপড়ি কত জনাই না চাইলে কিন্তু নন্দিনী ফুল না দিয়ে কেবল বলেছে—“তুমি নিজেকে সবার থেকে হরণ করে রেখে বঞ্চিত করেছো ; সহজ হয়ে ধরা দাও না কেন ?” সহজ হয়ে, “অনবকাশের উজান ঠেলে” এসেছিল শুধু একজন। সে রঞ্জন। কিন্তু রঞ্জন কী করে নন্দিনীর মনোহরণ করলে ?

চিরদিন, চিররাত্রি হয়তো এ প্রশ্ন অমীমাংসিতই থেকে যাবে।

আমাদের বিংশ-শতাব্দীর যন্ত্র সভ্যতা-দীপ্ত যুগে যে লড়াইটা লুক হয়েছে সেটা সোজা কথায় “জোর” ও “ষাত্ত্ব”র যুদ্ধ। মানুষের মনকে যিনি নেপথ্য থেকে যুগে যুগে রঙের আঙুন জ্বালিয়ে জোয়ান্ করে তুলেছেন তাঁর দুটি কথায় ফুটে উঠেছে এই জোর ও ষাত্ত্ব তফাৎ। “পৃথিবীর পায়ের তলায় পিণ্ড, পিণ্ড পাথর, লোহা, সোনা—সেইখানে রয়েছে জোরের মূর্ত্তি। উপরের তলায় একটুখানি

কাঁচা মাটিতে ঘাস উঠচে, ফুল ফুটেচে—সেইখানে রয়েছে যাত্রা খেলা। দুর্গমের থেকে হীরে আনি, মাণিক আনি; সহজের থেকে ঐ প্রাণের যাত্রুকুকে কেড়ে আনতে পারিনে।” কী করেই বা পারবে? জোর দিয়ে সোনারূপোর চাকৃতি জড়ো করা যায় কিন্তু মন জয় করতে হলে চাই “প্রাণের যাত্রা”। ধরণীর ঘরে ঘরে রূপোর ঢেলা নিয়ে মানুষ খাব্লে খাচ্ছে কিন্তু প্রাণের পরশ সেখানে নেই—তাই তো এল বলশেভিজ্‌ম, নিহিলিজ্‌ম আর কম্যুনিজ্‌ম।

জীবন যেখানে রূপোর আঙুল নাড়ায় ওঠে বসে প্রাণের রস সেখানে ঠেলে বেরিয়ে আসে তুঁতের রসের মতন তেতো হয়ে। এ যুগের মানুষ কলকজার পাল্লায় পড়ে বেমালুম্ হাঁপিয়ে উঠেছে—তারা চায় প্রাণের যাত্রা; একান্ত ভাবেই যা তাদের মানুষ হিসেবে ভগবানের কাছে পাওনা!

“আমি প্রকাণ্ড মরুভূমি—তোমার মত একটা ছোট্ট ঘাসের দিকে হাত বাড়িয়ে বুলছি.....আমি তপ্ত, আমি রিক্ত, আমি ক্লান্ত। তৃষ্ণার দাহে এই মরুটা কত উর্বরা ভূমিকে লেহন করে নিয়েছে তাতে মরুর পরিসরই বাড়ছে, ঐ একটুখানি দুর্বল ঘাসের মধ্যে যে প্রাণ আছে তাকে আপনি করতে পারছেন না।” ‘নেপথ্য’র যে এই কান্না, এ কার কান্না? স্ত্রীমের গরমে চোখের মণি খেঁৎলে গেছে, মদের নেশায় রূপোর চাকৃতি দেউলের পরোয়াণা জাহির করেছে, এক কথায় মানুষের সহজ জীবনের স্বচ্ছন্দ আনন্দের আবাসটিকে ভেঙ্গে চুরে গুঁড়িয়ে দিয়েছে। এই “কমার্শিয়ালিজ্‌ম”-এর বিরুদ্ধে কান্না আজ রুফ্ট রুফ থেকে ভারতের ভরতদেরও অতিষ্ঠ করে তুলেছে—একবার ছুঁচোখ তুলে পরিপূর্ণ ভাবে ওপরের আকাশটার দিকে চাইবার শক্তি নষ্ট করে দিয়েছে। নেপথ্য থেকে নন্দিনীকে প্রশ্ন করা হল—

“আমার শক্তিতে তুমি খুসি হও, নন্দিনী?”.....

“ভারি খুসী লাগে। তাইতো বুল্‌চি আলোতে বেড়িয়ে এস, মাটির ওপর পা দাও—পৃথিবী খুসী হয়ে উঠুক!”

“রূপের মায়ার আড়ালে অপরূপ” নন্দিনীর কথা আজ বিশ্বের কথা। জোরের সঙ্গে মেশাতে হবে যাত্রা! কিন্তু রবীন্দ্রনাথ কবি—এ সমাধান বিশ্বের খুসি বহন করে আনুক কিন্তু কবির খুসির খেসারৎ কই? নন্দিনী জোরের মায়ায় মুগ্ধ কিন্তু তবু বুল্‌ছে “সোনার পিণ্ড কি তোমার ঐ হাতের আশ্চর্য্য ছন্দে সাড়া দেয় যেমন সাড়া দিতে পারে ধানের ক্ষেত? রাজা, বলতো পৃথিবীর এই মরাধন দিন-রাত নাড়া-চাড়া করতে তোমার ভয় হয় না?” ধনী তার ধনাগারের রত্নের বহর ঘেঁটে

মনে করে জীবনের রূপ-রস ও আনন্দকে সে মুঠোর মধ্যে পূরেছে কিন্তু সত্যিকারের সম্পদ যে কোন ফাঁকে ছিটকে বেড়িয়ে পড়ে সে তা হাজার হাংড়েও খুঁজে পায় না। “পৃথিবী আপনার প্রাণের জিনিষ আপনি খুসি হয়ে দেয়” কবিদের, দেয় তাদের সৌন্দর্য্য-সৃষ্টির পথ বাংলা; কিন্তু পঙ্গু হয়ে রইলো যাদের জীবন—রসকে যারা কসিয়ে দিলে তারা আসে নন্দিনীর কথায় “অন্ধকার থেকে একটা কাণা রান্ধসের অভিসম্পাত নিয়ে।” মনীন্দ্রলালের “রমলা”র ইঞ্জিনিয়ার যতীন, টুর্গেনিভের “ফাদাস্ এণ্ড চিল্ড্রেনে”র বিরাট মানুষ ব্যাজারোভ্ এবং এম্নি আরো অনেক-সবাই তারা খুলতে চেয়েছিলো “বিধাতার বন্ধমুঠো,” কিন্তু সত্যি করে খুলতে পেরেছিলো কী? পারেনি তাদের কেউই, কেনোনা যে সোনারকাঠির স্পর্শে মায়াপুরীর রাজকন্য়ার ঘুম ভেঙ্গে যায়, যে Sesame আঙড়ালে আলিবারা ধন-দৌলতের দরজা খুলে যায়, সে চাবি তারা পায়নি। জীবনের সিন্ধুকটীকে যন্ত্র দিয়ে খোলা যায় না, যা দিয়ে যায় সে ঐ “প্রাণের যাছ”! জোরের দেবতা নন্দিনীকে বলছেন “যে দান বিধাতার হাতের মুঠির মধ্যে ঢাকা, সেখানে তোমার চাঁপারকলির মত আঙুলটী যতটুকু পৌঁছয়, আমার সমস্ত দেহের জোর তার কাছ দিয়ে যায় না।” এ যুগের Industrialismএর নেতার কাছে আজও এ সত্য এসে পৌঁছয়নি। “God is god, man is man” থিওরী আওড়েই আজ গোটা পৃথিবীর মনুস্যরটী নিলেমে চড়েছে—actualismএর বালাই দিয়ে চড়াও হচ্ছে বিধাতার রাজ্য। ফরাসীর ছেলে বার্গস্ নিয়ে এসেচেন তাঁর গতিবাদ, জীবনের চলার পায়ে পরিয়ে দিয়েছেন তাঁদের থিওরীর শিকল, কিন্তু এই শিকল ভেঙ্গে যে বড়ো জীবনটী রয়েছে তার খোঁজ পেয়েছে ক’জন? “নীল চাঁদোয়ার নীচে” জীবনকে আজ বিষিয়ে দিয়েছে টাকার দালাল। এই বিষের ব্যথায়ই “রক্ত-করবী”র বিগু বলছে “একদিকে ক্ষুধা মার্ছে চাবুক, তৃষ্ণা মার্ছে চাবুক; তারা জালা ধরিয়েছে। বলছে কাজ করো। অগুদিকে বনের সবুজ মেলেছে মায়া; রোদের সোনা মেলেছে মায়া; ওরা নেশা ধরিয়েছে, বলছে ছুটী ছুটী!” এই যে একটা জীবনের ছুমুখো টান তাকে রূপো লেলিয়ে নিয়ে যায় কাজের দিকে; তাদের “না আছে আকাশ না আছে অবকাশ,” তাই ওরা “বারোঘন্টার সমস্ত হাসি-গান সূর্য্যের আলো কড়া করে চুঁইয়ে নেয় এক চুমুকের তরল আগুণে।” মার্কিণ ধর্ম্মযাজক ভ্যন্ ডাইকের একটা চমৎকার উক্তি উদ্ধৃত করবার লোভ স্মরণ করতে পারলুম না

আমি। তিনি লিখছেন...“Many honest folk dislike these emotions so much that they shut their eyes and walk through the world with their heads in the air, breathing a little atmosphere of their own, and congratulating themselves that the world goes very well now.” কথাটা বলা হয়েছিল Sunday School Spirit এই, কিন্তু আমল কথাটা তা নয়। যারা নিজেদের সন্তুর্পণে রক্ষা করে কেবল ওপরের দিকে হেঁটে চলেন তাঁদের চোখে এ সব পড়ে না। “এক চুম্বকের তরল আশুর্পণে”র জাঁচ তাঁদের কাছে পৌঁছয় না—কিন্তু জীবন-পদ্মের পাপড়ির দুটো পিঠই যারা দেখেন তাঁরা জানেন কী নিবিড় নিপীড়নেই ওরা ছোট্টে খোলা মদের আড্ডায়। Capitalist এদের গলায় যে ফাঁসির দড়ি লট্কে দিয়েছে তারই ভেতর থেকে ওরা গায়—

তোর প্রাণের রস তো শুকিয়ে গেল ওরে

তবে মরণ-রসে নে পেয়ালা ভরে।

সে যে চিতার আশুর্পণ গালিয়ে ঢালা,

সব জ্বলনের মেটায় জ্বালা,

সব শূন্যকে সে অট্ট হেসে দেয় যে রঙীন করে!

বিশ্ব যখন বলে—“সর্দার কেবল যে ফেব্রুয়ার পথ বন্ধ করেছে তা নয়, ইচ্ছেটা-সুদ্ধ আটকেছে। আজ যদি বা দেশে যাও টিক্তে পারবে না, কালই সোনার নেশায় ছুটে ফিরে আসবে—আফিমখোর পাখী যেমন ছাড়া পেলেও খাঁচায় ফেরে” তখন ওকথা যে শুধু বিশ্বের কথাই এতো মনে হয় না, মনে হয় খড়্গাপুরের কুলি থেকে গোটা পৃথিবীর মজুরদের মনের কথা সেঁধিয়ে যাওয়া পঁাজর ঠেলে নির্মমভাবে বেরিয়ে এসেছে। বিশ্ব আবার বলে “গাঁয়ে ছিলুম মানুষ, এখানে হয়েছি দশ-পঁচিশের ছক্। বৃকের ওপর দিয়ে জুয়োখেলা চলছে।” ধরিত্রীর চারকোণা সরগরম করে যখন কলের বাঁশী ডাকে তখন কী আর জুঁস থাকে এই ছকেদের। ছোট্টে ওরা “সোনার তালগুলো যে-মদ” তারই নেশায়। ওরা তো মানুষ নয়, এক একটা বাজ-পড়া ঠুঁটো তালগাছের সামিল জীবন যাদের রূপোর চাকতির পায়ের তলায় ডিগ্বাজী খাচ্ছে নিত্য তিরিশদিন। তিনশো-পঁয়ষট্টিদিনের বছর। ফুরসুৎ নেই তবুও একটা দিন—কাজ ফুরোয় তবু Overtime পেছন থেকে টানে বলে—ডবল পয়সা দেব! একদিন হঠাৎ দেখে জীবনকে যে জুয়ো

কাছে বিক্রী করেছে সে শরীরের তাগৎ কমতে না কমতেই কাঁচকলা দেখিয়ে বিদেয় নিচ্ছে—নিজের বুক হাত দিয়ে যা পায় সে শুধু গোটাকয়েক শক্ত হাড়।

আজ পৃথিবী জুড়ে মজুরদের যারা আমাদের নরম তুলতুলে শরীরটাকে নিজেদের রক্ত জল করে গড়ে তুলছে তাদের গোড়ানি শুন্তে পাচ্ছি। আজ যারা মানুষ তারা বলুক “বিশ্বের মর্শস্থানে যা লুকানো আছে তা ছিনিয়ে নিতে চাই, সেই সব ছিন্ন প্রাণের কান্না।” আজ বিশ্বের নন্দিনী “রক্ত-করবী”র নন্দিনীতে এসে বসেছে—“কিসের আর্ন্তনাদ?” মুখেচোখে তার প্রাণের লীলা আর পিছনে কালো চুলের ধারা মৃত্যুর নিস্তক স্বর্ণা। নেপথ্য থেকে জবাব আসে—“তুমি জাননা আমি কত শ্রান্ত! কল কজার পিছনে ছুটে ছুটে এ যুগের পৃথিবী হাঁপিয়ে পড়েছে। ভারতীয় দর্শন শাস্ত্রের ওস্তাদ পড়ুয়া অধ্যাপক রাধাকৃষ্ণন Rabindra Nath Tagore and his Philosophy নামক পুস্তকে কবির এই Commercialism এর প্রতি অবজ্ঞার কথা উল্লেখ করেছেন। অধ্যাপক লিখছেন—“Rabindra Nath does not want India to worship efficiency and machinery and build her fabric on fear and discipline, but wishes her to practise the love that gives but does not grasp, and build on the stable foundations of freedom and goodwill.” (p, 294) Commercialism আজ কাজের নাম দিয়ে আমাদের বাজ করে ছেড়ে দিয়েছে। “রক্ত-করবী”র অধ্যাপক বলছেন “সঙ্কয়-সরোবরের পাথরটাতে চাড় লেগেছে, তলাটা ভিতরে ভিতরে ক্ষয়ে এসেছে।” আজ বালটিক্ থেকে ভ্লাডিভস্টক্ পর্যন্ত প্রশ্ন শুন্তে পাচ্ছি “বস্ত্রবাগীশ, এ কোন্ জায়গায় আমাকে আন্লে, আর কী করতেই বা আন্লে?” আজ Commercialism এর আত্মরে ছেলে মার্কিংকে জিজ্ঞেস করলে সে শুধু বলবে—“We stagger and reel!” মানুষ আজ যে সমাজে বাস করছে, পুরুষ ও নারী তার ছুটি পা। খণি থেকে মণি খুঁড়ে বের করে পুরুষ, নারী আড়াল থেকে শ্রীতির পাত্রধার যুগে যুগে পুরুষের মুখে অমৃতের আশ্বাদন দিচ্ছে। আজ যন্ত্র-সভ্যতা-দীপ্ত বিংশ-শতাব্দীর চারদিকে দেখছি ষ্টীয়ারিং হুইল থেকে ট্রিগারে হাত পড়েছে—অধ্যাপক রাধাকৃষ্ণনের কথায় we have unsexed them! আর একবার আপনা থেকে আমাদের চোখ পড়ে নন্দিনীর দিকে। নন্দিনীর personal individualism কবির কালির আঁচড়ে লোপ পেয়ে গেছে আর সেখানে এসে দেখা দিয়েছে Communal individualism. অধ্যাপকের কথায় বলতে

সাধ যায় “পৃথিবীর প্রাণভরা খুসিখানা নিজের সর্ব্বাঙ্গে টেনে নিয়েছে ঐ নন্দিনী।” **Wastage of Man-power** বলে একথানা বইয়ে ডাক্তার তারকনাথ দাশ এ যুগের মানবীয় জীবনের দাম কমে যাবার যে কথাটা উল্লেখ করেছেন আমাদের কবির কলমে তা জীবন্ত কথা কইচে। রক্ত-করবীর রাজা বলছেন “আমি যৌবনকে মেরেছি, এতদিন ধরে আমার সমস্ত শক্তি নিয়ে কেবল যৌবনকে মেরেছি। মরা-যৌবনের অভিশাপ আমাকে লেগেছে।” আজ বাংলার যৌবন, বিশ্বের যৌবন দেউলে হতে বসেছে—টাকার পায়ে বিলিয়ে দিয়েছে জীবন! আজ আমার দেশের নন্দিনীরা “রক্ত-করবী”র নন্দিনীর কথায় আমাদের বলুন, “বীর আমার, নীলকণ্ঠ পাখীর পালক এই পরিয়ে দিলুম তোমার চূড়ায়। তোমার জয়-যাত্রা আজ হতে শুরু হয়েছে।”

নন্দিনীর রক্ত-করবীর মঞ্জরী বহন করে আনুক রঙীন রেনেসাঁসের বার্তা। *

শ্রীজ্যোৎস্না নাথ চন্দ

দ্বিতীয় বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, কলা বিভাগ।

* বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার বর্তমান বর্ষের দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশনে পঠিত।

রবীন্দ্রনাথ *

প্রভাতের দীপ্ত রবি রজনীর নিঃশব্দ গহন
তিমির উদ্ভাসি',
পূর্বাকাশপ্রান্তে যবে অঁকে তার রক্ত-আলিঙ্গন
আলোকের জয়গানে নিখিল ভুবন ওঠে হাসি' ।
অন্ধকার শিহরিয়া দূরান্তরে সভয়ে মিলায়,
জীবন চঞ্চলি' ওঠে নৃত্যশীল আনন্দ-লীলায়,
কুঞ্জ ফোটে পুষ্প রাশি রাশি ।
হে কবি আলোকরথে পূর্ব হতে পশ্চিম গগনে
যাত্রাপথ তব,
বিশ্ববিজয়িনী তব প্রতিভার প্রদীপ্ত কিরণে
বিমুক্ত ভুবন আনে পদতলে অর্ঘ্য নব নব ।
পূর্ব পশ্চিম আজি ভুলিয়াছে প্রাচীন কলহ
তোমার বিজয়গান নভোপানে ওঠে অহরহ
আনন্দ-উছল কলরব !
জীবন প্রভাতে কবে যাত্রা তুমি করেছিলে কবি
আশার আলোকে,
সংসার সংঘাত লাগি' চিন্তে তব জাগে যত ছবি
অমর প্রতিমা গড়ি' রূপ তারে দিলে মর্ত্যালোকে ।
শরত আকাশতলে অপরূপ আলোক উৎসব,
বসন্ত পূর্ণিমা-রাতে মোহময় গীতি কলরব !
উচ্ছ্বসিল প্রকাশ-পুলকে ।
স্বচ্ছ লঘু মেঘসম যে স্বপন অন্তর আকাশে
ভেসে যায় চলে,
যে আকাজক্ষা অগ্নিগর্ভ গিরিসম বিদ্যুৎ বিকাশে
জ্বালাময় শিখা মেলি সুগভীর অন্তরের তলে,—
স্বপন-বিলাসী চিন্ত রচে তব বিরামবিহীন

* রবীন্দ্র পরিষদের অধ্যোক্তবৃন্দ প্রদত্ত অভিনন্দন হইতে পরিশোধিত।

সে আশা আকাজক্ষা দিয়া সঙ্গীতের সুধা নিশিদিন

কভু হাসি কভু অশ্রুজলে ।

নিখিল অন্তরমাঝে জাগে যেই দুর্বীর আবেগে

গভীর ক্রন্দন,

পর্বত হইতে চাহে বৈশাখের নিরুদ্দেশ মেঘ

ভেসে যেতে নভস্তলে ছিন্ন কার' মাটির বন্ধন ।

সুদূর গগনপারে কায়াহীন আকাজক্ষার ভরে

অনন্ত আলোক মাগি তৃপ্তিহারা অন্তর গুমরে

খুঁজে ফিরে আশার নন্দন ।

তোমার জাগ্রত আত্মা ছড়াইল দিক্দিগন্তরে

যে অমৃতবাণী,

নিখিল মানবচিত্ত সমস্ত্রম বিস্ময়ের ভরে

বরণ করিল তারে সঞ্জীবনী প্রেমমন্ত্র জানি' ।

তোমার অন্তরমাঝে অসৌম্য খুঁজিয়া ফেরে সীমা,

তিমির উজলি তোলে মানবের বিপুল মহিমা

তীক্ষ্ণ দীপ্ত আলোরশ্মি হানি ।

প্রভাত-সঙ্গীত গাহি, আনন্দের উচ্চরোল তুলি'

বাহিরিলে পথে,

যৌবন-বেদনা-রসে উচ্ছল রজনী দিনগুলি

মানসীর লাগি' তব সাজাইলে অন্তর আলোতে ।

ক্ষণিকার পরশনে ভাসিল সোনার তরী খানি

খেয়াঘাটে বসি' তব চিত্ত ভরি' উচ্ছ্বসিল বাণী

সঙ্গীতের স্বপ্ন-সুধা-স্রোতে ।

পূরবীর ছন্দে আজি রবির বিদায় বীণা বাজে

ক্লান্ত সুগম্ভীর,

আসন্ন বিরহ ব্যথা মেঘমায়া রচে চিত্ত মাঝে,

নয়নের কোণে ঝলে মুক্তাবিন্দু সম অশ্রুসীর ।

সে অশ্রুমালিকা কণ্ঠে লক্ষ লক্ষ বর্ষ ধবণীতে

তোমার অমর আত্মা যৌবনের বিজয়-সঙ্গীতে

জাগাইবে মূর্ছনা মদির ।

ছমায়ুন কবির

খোকার ভয়

ওমা আরো কাছে সরে আয় ;
আজকে রাতে ঝড়ের মাতনে
মন যে আমার ভয়ে ভরে যায়,
বাহিরে ওই দেয়ার গুরু গুরু
বুক যে আমার কাঁপায় ছুরু ছুরু
জলের ঝারা বনুছে বুরু বুরু,
ছফ্টু ছেলের দারুণ দাপটে
মায়ের চোখে কাঁদন হল সুর ।

মেঘের দেশে সকল ছেলে মা
ছষ্টু তারা সবাই বড় যে
মায়ের কথা মোটেই শোনে না
ঐ দেখ মা করছে ছটোছটি
খেলা তাদের কেবল লুটোপুটি
ছড়ুম ছড়ুম কেবল ছুটোছুটি
শাস্তু তারা হতেই জানে না
ছষ্টু পনায় ওদের নাহি জুটি ।

তুমি আমায় বল ছষ্টু ছেলে
ছফ্টু পনায় কিন্তু আমি মা
ওদের কাছে নেহাৎ কচি ছেলে
এবার যদি ছফ্টু বল মোরে
সত্যি আমি বসব আড়ি কোরে ;
আর একটু আয়না কাছে সরে
জানিস্ তো মা ঝড়ের মাতনে
মন যে আমার ভয়েতে যায় ভরে ।

বিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়
চতুর্থ বামিক শ্রেণী, কলাবিভাগ ।

বৈজয়ন্তী

তোমার যখন খুসী হবে দেখবে আমায় চিনে,
খেয়াল হ'লে নেবে আমায় জিনে ।
খুসী তোমার আপন খেয়াল সুখে
বন্ধ-বিহীন-উৎস মুখে
দিকে দিকে পড়িতে চায় লুটে
ছড়াতে চায় সকল বাঁধন টুটে ।
খুসীই তোমার সাধন হ'ল তোমার সার্থকতা
আনন্দতায় জাগল তোমার, জাগল বেদন ব্যথা ।
খুসী হ'লেই দেখবে যারে চিনে,
খেয়াল হ'লেই রাখবে যারে কিনে,
আজকে তারে এড়িয়ে চল উদাসীনের মত,
সেই কি তোমার ব্রত ।
যেজন এল তোমার চোখের আগে
তারে কেন দেখতে প্রয়াস আধেক আঁখির ফাঁকে ;
যেজন চলে তোমার পায়ে পায়ে
আপন মনের গন্ধ ছড়ায় তোমার পথের বায়ে
কেমন ক'রে ভোল তারে, কেমন করে বলি,
কেমন ক'রে এড়িয়ে যাও চলি' ।
খুসী থেকেই আসবে তোমার জয়,
তাই তো খুসী তোমার চিন্তময় ।
আমার চলে আয়োজনের পালা
তোমার তরে সাজিয়ে তুলি আমার অর্ঘ্যভালা ;
বুকের তলে জাগিয়ে রাখি প্রয়াস বেদন জ্বালা ।
তোমার খুসীর হিসাব নিয়ে চলে আমার কাজ,
হাজার রঙে রঙাই আমার সাজ,—
তোমার পায়ের ছন্দ নিয়ে বাঁধছি আমার সুর,

তোমার সনে চলছি বহুদূর !
 আমার গতিটাকে
 পদে পদে বাঁধছি কেবল তোমার খুসীর বাঁকে ।
 তবু মনে ভয় রয়ে যায় খুসীই যাহার খুসী
 তারে আজি কেমন ক'রে তুষ্টি,
 ভেবে মরি জাগাই যে কোন ফাঁকে
 তোমার আমায় জিনে নেবার তুচ্ছ খেয়ালটাকে ।
 তবু চলে আমার আয়োজন,
 প্রতিক্ষণের অর্থ্য বিরচন !
 জানি জানি যেদিন আমায় আপনি নেবে হেসে
 তুচ্ছ এ মোর সব আয়োজন ব্যর্থ্য যাবে ভেসে ।

অমরেশ রায়

কালিদাস

কোন সান্দ্র আষাঢ়ের মেঘ-ঘন কজ্জল দিবসে
 হে কবীন্দ্র কালিদাস ! তব চিন্ত-বাসনার মোহে
 সৌন্দর্যের ইন্দ্রজালে, সঙ্গীতের সুর সমারোহে
 পরিপূর্ণ করিয়াছ বিশ্ব-প্রাণ অমৃতের রসে ।
 এখনো তাহার সুর মর্শ্বরিছে কর্ণে মোর এসে ;
 হৃদয়-সলিল ধার উছলি উঠিছে পলে পলে
 সে গানের নৃত্য-তালে ; আজি আমি চাহি কুতূহলে
 মাতাল হইতে তব তরঙ্গিত সুরশ্রোতে ভেসে ।

হে কবি সঙ্গীতে তব নভোলেহী বিরাট মহান
 লীলা-শৈল, তরুণীথি বলিয়া উঠিত বার বার
 মঞ্জুল মাধবী কুঞ্জ মুঞ্জরিয়া উঠিত হরষে
 কী পুলকে শিহরিত অলসিত বল্লরী বিতান ;
 করুণ বীণায় যবে ঝঙ্কারিতে রাগিণী মল্লার
 কাঁপিত বিরহী চিত্ত সে সুরের আকুল পরশে ।

শ্রীশৌরীন্দ্র নাথ রায়
 প্রথম বার্ষিক শ্রেণী—কলাবিভাগ ।

রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ

রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যের আলোচনা ও রসগ্রহণের মানসে গত ১৯শে সেপ্টেম্বর (২রা আশ্বিন) সোমবার অধ্যাপক সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাশ গুপ্তের সভাপতিত্বে এক সভায় কলেজে রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ নামে একটি প্রতিষ্ঠান স্থাপন করা স্থির হয়। নিম্নলিখিত কার্যানির্বাহক সমিতি নির্বাচিত হয় :—

সভাপতি :—অধ্যাপক সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশ গুপ্ত,

সহ-সভাপতি :—অধ্যাপক প্রশান্ত কুমার মহালানবিশ, চারুচন্দ্র ভট্টাচার্য্য ও সোমনাথ মৈত্র
 (অর্থ-সচিব) মহাশয়গণ

সাধারণ-সম্পাদক শ্রীসুশীল কুমার দে ; সহ-সম্পাদক :—শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্র নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

অভ্যর্থনা-সম্পাদক :—শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায় ; সহ-সম্পাদক :—চৌধুরী গোলাপ গোকুর ।

২৩শে সেপ্টেম্বর (৫ই আশ্বিন) বৃহস্পতিবার সন্ধ্যা পাঁচ ঘটিকার সময় Physics Theatreএ পরিষদের উদ্বোধন হয়, অধ্যাপক সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশ গুপ্ত, প্রফুল্লচন্দ্র ঘোষ, শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, বিনয়কুমার সেন, অপূর্বকুমার চন্দ, চারুচন্দ্র ভট্টাচার্য্য, স্নেহময় দত্ত, শিবপ্রসাদ ভট্টাচার্য্য, সদানন্দ ভাট্টা, সোমনাথ মৈত্র, ও রিপন কলেজের অধ্যাপক রবীন্দ্র নারায়ণ ঘোষ মহাশয়গণ ও কুমারী মৈত্রেয়ী দাশ-গুপ্তা উপস্থিত ছিলেন। প্রায় সত্তর জন ছাত্র-সভ্য যোগদান করেন। মঙ্গলঘট, ধূপ-প্রদীপ, আল্পনা ও পুষ্পাদি দ্বারা ঘরটি সূসজ্জিত করা হইয়াছিল। উদ্বোধন সঙ্গীত ও জলযোগের পর অধ্যাপক সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় পরিষদের উদ্দেশ্য সম্বন্ধে কয়েকটি কথা বলিয়া “রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যের প্রথম স্তর” সম্বন্ধে একটি সারগর্ভ ও সুস্বলিত প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন।

অধ্যাপক শিবপ্রসাদ ভট্টাচার্য্য মহাশয়ের প্রস্তাবানুসারে একটি গ্রন্থাগার স্থাপন নির্দ্ধারিত হয়। অধ্যাপক অপূর্বকুমার চন্দ মহাশয় ‘নটরাজ’ হইতে একটি কবিতা পাঠ করেন। সুনীল সরকার, ভমরেশ রায়, হীরেন্দ্রনাথ ভঞ্জ আবৃত্তি করিয়া ও সুনীল দে, বিনয় ঘোষ, সুনীল সরকার ও কমলেশ রায় গীতদ্বারা সভার মনোরঞ্জন করেন।

৪ঠা অগ্রহায়ণ ববিবাব পবিষদেব প্রথম সাধাবণ অধিবেশন হয। শিল্পী ব্রতীন্দ্র নাথ ঠাকুর, কান্তি চন্দ্র সেন এবং বহু অধ্যাপক ও ছাত্র-সভা উপস্থিত ছিলেন। অধ্যাপক সুবেন্দ্রনাথ দাসগুপ্ত মহাশয় ববীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যেব প্রথম স্তব সম্বন্ধে “আলোচনা” আবিস্ত কবেন। ববীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যে বিশিষ্ট লক্ষণযুক্ত যুগ বিভাগ কবা যায়, এই মত বিবৃত কবিষা সেই আলোকে তিনি কৈশোবেক কবি-প্রতিভাব উন্মেষ ও তৰুণ বযসেব ‘সাতাল ভাবেব’ পবিচয় দিবাব কালে কতকগুলি কবিতা পাঠ কবিষা তাঁহাব বক্তব্য স্পষ্টভাবে বুঝাইষা দেন। সভাগণেব ভিতব হইতে আলোচনাব পব, অধ্যাপক সোমনাথ মৈত্র মহাশয় ‘বালি’ সম্বন্ধে কবিব একটি অপ্রকাশিত কবিতা পাঠ কবিষা বিশেষ কৌতুহল ও আনন্দেব সঞ্চাব কবেন।

পবিষদেব প্রথম সম্পাদক শ্রীস্বনীলকুমাৰ দে বিদেশযাত্রাহেতু পবিষদেব সম্পাদকত্ব তাগ কবিতে বাযা হওয়ায় পবিষদ বিশেষ ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত বোব ক বভেছে। তাঁহাব স্থলে সাধাবণ-সহকাবী-সম্পাদক সম্পাদক ও শ্রীঅমবেশ বায সহকাবী সম্পাদক নিৰ্কাচিত হন।

১৮ই অগ্রহায়ণ পবিষদেব দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশন হয।

কতকগুলি কবিতা ছাণ ‘ববীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যে বাস্তবদৃষ্টি’ প্রসঙ্গেব অবতাবণা কবেন। তিনি বিশেষ কবিষা কবিব ‘বাহিবেব ভূবনে আপনাব অন্তবকে খুঁজিষা পাইবাব’ প্রয়াসেব কথা বিশদভাবে, বিলাতি কাবদেব কবেকজনেব সহিত তুলনা কবিষা দেখান। ছাত্র-সভাদেব ভিতব হইতে আলোচনাব পব শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী বাস্তবেব তাৎপর্য, বিজ্ঞান ও সাহিত্যে ব মিলন ও প্রভেদ প্রভৃতি সভায় আলোচিত প্রসঙ্গগুল সম্বন্ধে নিজ মতামত ব্যক্ত কবিষা সভাব বিশেষ কৃতজ্ঞতাভাজন হন। অধ্যাপক ভূপতিমোহন সেন মহাশয় সাহিত্যেব ষাচাই “artistic truth” এব ওজনে হওয়া উচিত, এই মত পকাশ কবিষেন।

অধ্যাপক সুবেন্দ্রনাথ দাসগুপ্ত একটি স্মলিত বক্তৃতায় প্রবন্ধ প্রসঙ্গে নিজ মতামত বলেন। তাহাব মতে মানসীতে কবি বাস্তব ও কল্পনায় মিলাইষা এক অপূৰ্ণ বসেব সৃষ্টি কবিয়াছেন। উদাহরণস্বরূপ তিনি “উপহাব” কবিতাটী পাঠ কবেন।

পবিষদেব কার্য্য কলেজেব অধ্যাপকগণ ও ছাত্রবৃন্দেব, বিশেষতঃ সভাগণেব উৎসাহ ও সাহায্যেব জগ্ন পবিষদেব কার্য্যনিৰ্কাচক সমিতি কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশ কবিতেছে ও ভবিষ্যতেও তাঁহাদেব সহায়ত্বিত্ব প্রার্থনা কবিতেছে।

শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

সাধাবণ সম্পাদক।

বাংলা সাহিত্য সভা

বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার দ্বাদশ বর্ষ চলিতেছে।—গত ১৬ই সেপ্টেম্বর শুক্রবার সভার প্রথম অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত খগেন্দ্র নাথ মিত্র মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্র নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, 'বাংলার নূতন সাহিত্যের স্বরূপ' শীর্ষক একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। প্রবন্ধলেখক বলেন বাংলার নূতন সাহিত্য “বিদ্রোহের সাহিত্য”। “তাহাতে প্রাচ্য ও প্রতীচ্যের সম্মিলনে বাঙালীর অন্তর্জীবনে যে বিপ্লব আসিয়াছে, তাহারি ছায়া পড়িয়াছে। বাংলার তরুণ সাহিত্যিকেরা সাহিত্যে বেরণেসাসের প্রবর্তন করুক। ভারতী তাহাদের পথ চাওয়া রহিয়াছেন।”

প্রবন্ধ পাঠ হইয়া গেলে, শ্রীপ্রভাত শর্মা, শ্রীজ্যোৎস্না নাথ চন্দ, শ্রীগোবিন্দনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য, শ্রীদেবেশ দাস, শ্রীঅমল মুখোপাধ্যায় এবং শ্রীসুচীন রায় বিষয়টি লইয়া সুন্দরভাবে আলোচনা করেন। তাহাব পর সভাপতিমহাশয়ের একটি সুন্দর বক্তৃতার পর সভা ভঙ্গ হয়।

দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশন—গত ১৮ই নভেম্বর, সভার দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাস গুপ্ত মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন।

সম্পাদকের বিবরণী পাঠ শেষ হইলে, শ্রীজ্যোৎস্না নাথ চন্দ রবীন্দ্রনাথের 'রক্তকবী' স্মৃষ্টি একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। প্রবন্ধটি এই সংখ্যায় প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে। প্রবন্ধ পাঠ শেষ হইলে শ্রীগোবিন্দনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য বিষয়টি লইয়া সুবিস্তৃতভাবে আলোচনা করেন। তিনি বলেন এই বইখানি বিংশ শতাব্দীর প্রসিদ্ধিত মানবমনেব ইতিহাস,—যে মানব মন আনন্দের জন্ত ব্যাকুল হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, আন্দের জন্ত ব্যাকুল হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, সত্য এবং সুন্দরের জন্ত ব্যাকুল হইয়া উঠিয়াছে।

সভাপতি মহাশয় বলেন—রবীন্দ্রনাথের এই সব নাটকের ভিতরকার অর্থ সব সময় বুঝিবার চেষ্টা না করিলেও চলে—তাহাতে আমাদের রসোপলব্ধি কোনো ব্যাঘাত হয় না। এই বইখানি মানব মনের শক্তির পরিচয় দেয়—যে মানব মন যান্ত্রিক সভ্যতার অন্তরকে জয় করিয়াছে। নাটকটির যদি 'রক্তকবী' নাম দেওয়ার কোনো সর্থকতা থাকে, তবে তাহা এই যে—রক্তকবী শক্তির প্রতীক।

তৃতীয় অধিবেশন—গত ২রা ডিসেম্বর বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার তৃতীয় অধিবেশন হয়। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শিবপ্রসাদ ভট্টাচার্য্য মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীপ্রভাতকুমার শর্মা 'সরোজিনী নাইডুর স্বর্গতারণ' (Golden Threshold) নামক একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন।

প্রবন্ধলেখক এই বইটির বহু কবিতা অনুবাদ করিয়া সরোজিনী নাইডুর বিশেষত্ব ফুটাইয়া তুলিতে চেষ্টা করিয়াছেন। প্রবন্ধ পাঠ শেষ হইলে শ্রীজ্যোৎস্নানাথ চন্দ বিষয়টি লইয়া আলোচনা করেন। সভাপতি মহাশয় বলেন—প্রবন্ধ লেখক কবিতাগুলির সুন্দর অনুবাদ করিয়াছেন। মূলের spirit আগাগোড়া অনুবাদে ধরা দিয়াছে। তিনি বলেন ভারতবর্ষের আকাশ বাতাস, ভারতবর্ষের ভাবধারা সবোজনী নাইডুর কবিতাকে দরল করিয়া বাধিয়াছে।

শ্রী প্রতুল গুপ্ত

সম্পাদক

বাংলা

সরোজিনী নাইডুর “স্বর্ণতোরণ” *

পিতা পারাকে সোণাতে পরিবর্তিত করিবার চেষ্টায় জীবন পাত করিয়া গিয়াছেন। সে অপূর্ব “পরশ পাথরের” সন্ধান বিজ্ঞানলক্ষ্মী বিজ্ঞানের বরপুত্রকে দেন নাই—অধ্যাপক অঘোরনাথের সকল প্রয়াস ব্যর্থ হইয়াছে। কিন্তু কাব্যলক্ষ্মী কণ্ঠা সরোজিনীর হাতে আপনার সোণার বীণাটি তুলিয়া ধরিয়াছেন। তারই যে ছ’একটি সুর আমাকে স্পর্শ করিয়াছে তাই লইয়া আপনাদের সম্মুখে উপস্থিত হইলাম।

অতি সাধারণ-যা, প্রতিনিয়ত আমাদের দৃষ্টি এড়াইয়া যায়, সৌন্দর্য্যাপিপাসু কবি তারি মধ্যে মহাকাব্যের গিরি-সৌন্দর্য্য দেখিয়াছেন এবং গীতি কবিতার ঝরণা ধারায় সেই সৌন্দর্য্যকে মুক্তি দিয়াছেন। তাই পাল্কি বেয়ারা বলিতেছে—

তারে আস্তে ধীরে আস্তে ধীরে যাই যে বয়ে চলে,
মোদের গানের হাওয়ায় ফুলের মায়ায় দোতুল দোলা দোলে।
সে যে ঝর্ণা ফেণায় পাখীর মত যায়গো চলি ভাসি,
যেন স্বপ্নশেষে ঘুম-আবেশে ফুটলো ঠোঁটে হাসি।
মোরা ফুল্লমনে গাই যে গান আস্তে চলি গণি,
তারে যাইগো বয়ে যাইগো বয়ে সূতোয়-বাঁধা মণি।

সন্ধানী যেমন অরণ্যের ভিতর মধুচক্রের সন্ধান জানে, দরদী কবি-হৃদয় তেমনি কালো-চামড়া সাপুড়িয়ার বুকে কী গভীর প্রেমের পরিচয় পাইল! সে উদার কল্পনার স্পর্শে সাপ প্রিয়ার আসনে ফণা উচাইয়া বসিয়া আছে, আর সাপুড়িয়া তার পদতলে পড়িয়া বলিতেছে—

খাইয়ে দেব মোহাগভরে তোমায় ও মোর বাঁধু
জ্যোৎস্নাধবল ছুঁক আরো বনের লালিম মধু
সবুজ-সাদা ঘাসের উগায় সাজিয়ে নেব বুড়ি
বইয়ে নেব কুঞ্জ তলায় যেথায় রাজার পুরী।
সোণার বরণ ঘোমটা পরা তরুণ বয়স কত
আনন্দেরি পুষ্প গাঁথে হাসির পাপড়ি শত।

* বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার অধিবেশনে পঠিত।

কিন্তু কেবল সাপুড়িয়ার প্রেম নিবেদন নহে, মুক পশুর প্রিয় বিরহের যে বেদনা, কবির বুকে তা দারুণ হইয়া বাজিয়াছে। ভর্তৃ-হারা হরিণ-বধুর অশ্রু কবিতার ধারা বাহিয়া আমাদের হৃদয়ে প্রবেশ মাগিতেছে—

হায় হায় সে আমার নাই নাই আর
কে করিবে মুক্ত মোর বেদনার ভার ?
গিয়েছিলো—সন্ধ্যা সবে আসিয়াছে ঘিরে,
পান করিবারে জল তটিনীর তীরে,
ছুঁড়িল বল্লম ব্যাধ গুপ্ত কোথা ছিল ;
প্রিয়ার বক্ষটি মোর হানিল, হানিল ।

এই অশ্রুবিন্দুতে কি কেবল হরিণ-বধুর বেদনাই জমাট বাঁধিয়া রহিয়াছে ? আমাদের ঘরের চিরন্তন কান্নার কাহিনী কি ইহাতে কিছুই খুঁজিয়া পাই না ? প্রয়োজনের ডাকে পুরুষ রণক্ষেত্রে প্রাণ দেয়, নারী ঘরে বসিয়া অশ্রুপাত করে— আমাদেরি বৃকের অনাদিকালের এই বেদনার ইতিহাস কি এই অশ্রুধারায় লিপিবদ্ধ হয় নাই ? আমার মনে হয়, কবি আপনার হৃদয় গলাইয়া সে কথাটুকুই এখানে বলিয়া গিয়াছেন—

হায় হায় সে আমার নাই নাই নাই
বুভুক্ষু অশ্রুরে মোর কে রুধিবে ভাই ?
কে মিটাবে দৈন্য এই ছুঁভিক্ষের দিনে
সাজাবে বাসর-সজ্জা তার প্রেম বিনে ?
মোর বক্ষে রাবণের চিতা জ্বালি দিল—
তার চিতা ভস্ম' পরি যে অগ্নি জ্বলিল ।

তারপর দেখি করমণ্ডল-উপকূলে যে জেলে মাছ ধরিতেছে, কবি তাকে দিগ্বিজয়ী বীরের শৌর্য্য বীর্য্যে প্রতিষ্ঠা করিয়াছেন। রূপকথার পক্ষীরাজ ঘোড়া যেন তারি দরজায় বাঁধা—বিজয়-যাত্রার চাঞ্চল্যে ক্ষুর দিয়া মাটি খুঁড়িতেছে আর ঘন ঘন হেঁসারবে গগন বিদীর্ণ করিতেছে। আর তো দেৱী সহে না—

দেৱী না দেৱী না আর চল মোরা যাই
যাই সাগরের পাখী যে পথেতে ডাকে
সাগর মোদের মাতা, মেঘ হয় ভাই
আমাদেরি সহচর ওই ঢেউ হাঁকে ।

কোন অন্ধকার আকাশের অদৃশ্য ধ্রুবতারা লক্ষ্য করিয়া আমাদের যাত্রা ?—

সাগর তাড়িয়ে নেয় রবি যেথা মরে
ছলি মোরা ছলি যদি কিবা ক্ষতি কার
ঝড়ে যে বেঁধে রাখে কেশে তার ধরে
লুকাবে মোদের প্রাণ বক্ষতলে তার।

এমনি নির্ভাবনায় বিজয় যাত্রা, কিন্তু তার আগে জয়-যাত্রীর মনে গৃহের যে চিত্রটি ফুটিয়া উঠে তাহা কী অপূর্ব !

নারিকেল কুঞ্জ-ছায়া অতীব সুন্দর
আত্রকুঞ্জ গন্ধ মধু, মধু নিশি দিন
প্রিয়জন কণ্ঠস্বরে কেবল মুখর
পূর্ণিমার জ্যোছনায় সৈকত পুলিন।

ইহা শুধু ক্ষণিকের। তার পরেই আমাদের অন্তরতম চিরন্তন বীর-পুরুষ বলিয়া উঠিয়াছেন—

চল ভাই বেয়ে চল নীল সীমাপর
আকাশ আনত যেথা সাগরের পায়।

সুদূরের ব্যাকুল বাঁশরী শুনিয়া সুদূর পিয়ামী মাহুশের মনে যে চাঞ্চল্য জাগে
কবির চারণেও তাহাই মূর্ত হইয়া উঠিয়াছে—

কি আশা মোদের মনে, কি স্বপন বপন করি
যেখানে ডাকছে হাওয়া, আমরা চরণ ধরি
বঁধুত কয় না “থাকো”, স্মৃখেও কয় না রে তা
আমাদের ভালের লিখা বাতাসের কণ্ঠেতে যা।

এই গতিশীল আবেগময় জীবনের সঙ্গে বিশ্বদেবতার মন্দিরে শান্ত কৃষকের
বন্দনা গান তুলনা করুন—

কমলের সখা তুমি, তুমি প্রভু ধান্যের ঈশ্বর
প্রভাতের সূর্য্য তুমি, দানে দানে তুমি হে ভাস্বর !
তোমার কুপায় দেব ধরণীতে বীজের বপন
লালিত পালিত হ’ল দিনে দিনে শিশুর মতন।

সরোজিনী নাইডুর “স্বর্ণতোরণ”

তোমার চরণে আজি গান দিই মালা দিই আনি
ফলের সোণালী আভা মাঠের সোণালী ধানুখানি
কোমল সোণালী দীপ্তি দিলে দেব বন্দনা তোমায়
বাজে করতাল বাঁশী হে বরুণ তব মহিমায় ।
রামধনু-সখা তুমি, তুমি প্রভু শস্তুক্ষেত্র প্রাণ
সমুদ্ভ বরুণ তুমি দানে দানে তুমি হে মহান
তোমার কুপায় দেব ধরণীতে পড়িয়াছে সীতা
লালিত পালিত বীজ দিনে দিনে তুমি তার পিতা
তোমার চরণে আজি মালা আর ধনুবাদ আনি
ক্ষেত্র হ'তে গোলাজাত নূতন সোণালী ধানুখানি ।
বৃষ্টি ও শিশির বিন্দু দিলে দেব বন্দনা তোমায়
বাজে বাঁশী করতাল হে বরুণ তব মহিমায় ।
অলাবু ফুলের রাণী, তুমি দেবী ধাত্তের জননী
সর্বশক্তিময়ী তুমি, তুমি মাতা সুন্দর ধরণী ;
উর্বর তোমার বক্ষ আমাদের আহাৰ যোগায়
তোমার গর্ভেতে মাতা নিখিল সম্পদ জন্ম পায় ।
তোমার চরণে দেবী মালা দিই প্রেম দিই আনি
তোমার বহুল দান—তোমার দানের ভাণ্ডখানি
মোদের আনন্দ-খনি, বন্দি মাতা বন্দি গো তোমায়
বাজে করতাল ঢাক হে ধরণী তব মহিমায় ।
বিশ্বের স্বামী হে তুমি আমাদের আত্মার দেবতা
সনাতন পিতা তুমি কথার অতীত ওম্ কথা
মোদের ক্ষেত্রের বীজ তুমি দেব, তুমি কাস্তে তার,
তুমি হস্ত, তুমি হৃদি, তুমি গৃহ চিরদিনকার
তোমার চরণে দেব কর্ম্ম দিই, দিই হে জীবন
রক্ষা কর জ্ঞান দেহ কর তুমি মোদেরে পালন
জীবনেরো প্রাণ তুমি হে মঙ্গল করি হে বন্দনা
হে ব্রহ্ম তোমারে পূজি করতাল বাজায়ে প্রার্থনা ।

এই তরঙ্গায়িত উদাত্ত সঙ্গীত একদিকে যেমন অন্ন ভেদ করিয়া উঠিয়াছে

অন্যদিকে তেমনি ঘুমপাড়ানিয়া গান মাতৃহৃদয়নিঃসৃত স্তম্ভরসের মত আমাদের হৃদয়ে প্রবেশ করিতেছে—

কোমল-গন্ধি কুঞ্জ হ’তে
 ধানের ক্ষেতের বৃকের পথে
 কমল-দোতুল বারণা দিয়ে পাড়ি,
 শিশির-ভেজা একটুখানি
 তোমার লাগি স্বপন আনি
 ললিত স্বপন একটু তাড়াতাড়ি ।
 বোঁজরে বাছা আঁথির কালো
 বুনো জোনাক জ্বালায় আলো
 নিমের পাতার আড়ালেতে রয়ে ;
 আফিম গাছের বক্ষ রুরি’
 তোমার লাগি আনছি চুরি’—
 ললিত স্বপন একটুখানি লয়ে ।
 ঘুমো ঘুমো সোণার আঁথি
 সোণার আলোয় হাজার লাখী
 জ্বলছে তারা তোমার সকল ধার ।
 দিই গো খুলে আলস ভরে
 তোমার তরুণ চোখের পরে
 ললিত স্বপন একটুখানি আর ।

এমনি অজস্র ধারায় উৎক্লিপ্যমান ভাবনিচয়ের মধ্যে কবিজীবনের একটি সহজ অভিব্যক্তি সহস্রদল পদ্যের মত উর্দ্ধমুখী হইয়া রহিয়াছে । সে অভিব্যক্তির ধারা অনুসরণ করিয়া কবিজীবনের সম্যক পরিচয় পাইতে চাই । কিন্তু কবি-জীবনের গোমুখী হইতে যাত্রা করিয়া তার জীবন-গঙ্গার ধারা বাহিয়া আমি প্রয়াগে আসিয়া থামিয়া গিয়াছি—যেখানে অন্তরের প্রেম ও বাহিরের অভিজ্ঞতার ধারা মিলিত হইয়া বেদনার আবর্তে সহস্র জীবন পীড়িত করিয়া তুলিতেছে । সে জন্ম কবির কাছে ক্ষমা ভিক্ষা করি ।

প্রথমেই দেখি কবির যৌবন স্বপ্নে বিশ্বের আকাশ ছাইয়া গিয়াছে এবং নিখিল বিশ্ব-চেতনা ‘আমি আছি’র সত্য সঙ্গীতে কবি-হৃদয় সজাগ করিয়া তুলিয়াছে—

নিশার স্বপনে আমি দাঁড়াইয়া আছি একদিন
 একেলা বনের ছায়ে সুগহন স্বপনে বিলীন
 সত্যের বৃকের মাঝে পাখীরা গাহিছে যেন গান
 তারাগুলি মিটি মিটি প্রেমিকের হৃদয় সমান
 গাহিয়া শান্তির গীতি তটিনী হইল ধাবমান ।
 সেখানে ঘুমের দেশে বনছায়ে দাঁড়ায়ে একেলা
 প্রেমের হৃদয়-তারা হেরিলাম করিতেছে খেলা
 তরুণ যৌবন মোর ঘিরি যেন জ্বলিতেছে কত
 সত্যের বৃকের গান কাণে এসে পশেছিল শত
 শান্তির তটিনী জল পান করিবারে হ'লু নত ।

শিশু যখন ভূমিষ্ঠ হয় তখন বিশ্ব-জগতের অস্তিত্ব যেমন তার চেতনাকে আঘাত করে, সগুজাগ্রত কবিচিন্তকেও প্রেমের স্মৃতিভ্রতা তেমনি আঘাত করিতেছে । কিন্তু এই আঘাত জীবনের পরিপন্থী নহে, ইহা একান্তভাবেই জীবন বিকাশের সহায়ক । তাই সগুজাগ্রত শিশুর ক্রন্দনের মতই কবি বলিতেছেন—

ঢেকে ফেলো আঁখি দু'টি হে প্রিয় আমার
 আনন্দেতে ক্লাস্ত আঁখি মোর ;
 তীক্ষ্ণ আলো খর যেন উজ্জ্বলতা তার,
 মৌন কর চুম্বনে অধর ;
 গীতিক্লাস্ত ওষ্ঠাধর মোর ।
 প্রেমব্যথা হ'তে ঢাকো হে প্রিয় আমার
 প্রেমভারে আমি অবনত ;
 পুষ্প 'পরি চাপে যেন শোভাভার তার
 পুষ্প যেন হ'ল বাবিহত ;
 আমার আঁখির ঢাক পথ ।

তারপর এই তীব্রতা যখন মৃদু হইয়া আসিয়াছে তখন দেখি ছুঃখে-সুখে-আনন্দে,
 নৈরাশে-পুলকে, বেদনায় অভিভূত এক অপূর্ব জীবন—

ছুঃখের বৃকের মাঝে আনন্দের মত
 একটি মেঘের বৃকে সূর্যাস্তের বাস ;

কম্পিত সুন্দর নম্র পত্র শত শত
উজ্জ্বল নীষের ঝড় সোণালী আভাষ
একটি মেঘের বৃকে উন্মাদ বাতাস ।
আমার হৃদয়ে আসি ডাক লাগে কার
শোন শোন বাতাসে সে ভেসে আসে ওই
হৃদয় আমার ক্লান্ত বিষাদে সে ভার
কম্প্র পত্র সম তার স্বপ্ন গেল কই ।
আমি কেন আর তবে পিছে পড়ে রই !

তারপর ধীরে ধীরে মেঘে মেঘে জীবনের আকাশ আচ্ছন্ন হইয়া গিয়াছে । যে স্বপ্নকে কবি জীবন দিয়া পোষণ করিয়াছেন তা’ কোন্ সীমাহীন অন্ধকারে বিলীন হইয়া যাইতেছে ?—

বৃকেতে আদর করি রাখিতে না পারি
পদ্ম পাতার মত কেশের মাঝারে,
উড়ে যাও উড়ে যাও স্বপন আমারি
মেঘের বনানী তলে আকাশের পারে ।
থাকিতে পার না হেথা হাসি মুখে আর
জীবনে একেলা আমি ভাবনার ভারে,
উড়ে যাও উড়ে যাও স্বপন আমার
হাওয়ার সূতায় বোনা গগন মাঝারে ।

স্বপ্ন বিদায় লইল । লক্ষ দীপমালায় সজ্জিত উৎসবসভার বৈজ্ঞানিক সংযোগ কোন অদৃশ্য গ্রন্থিতে ভঙ্গ হইয়া গেল ? অনিচ্ছুক ব্রতীর মত বেদনার দেবতার অন্ধকার বেদীতলে কেন কবি আপনার আত্মা বলি দিলেন ?—সেই অলিখিত কাহিনীর উপসংহারটুকু কী করণ ?

আমার তরুণ এই যৌবনের সবখানি মধু
করেছ গ্রহণ দেব তুমি
জীবন পিষিয়া তার স্নিগ্ধ ছিল যতটুকু রস
নিঃশেষিয়া লইয়াছ তুমি,
আর মোর জীবনের বাকী নাই দিতে কিছু তোমা’
আমার যা’ ছিল দিনু সব

তোমার চরণ তলে নিঃশেষে দিলাম উপহার

আজি মোর শেষ পরাভব ।

ইহার পর আর পা’ চলে না । দেহ অসাড় হইয়া পড়িয়াছে, মন মূঢ়ের মত তাকাইয়া আছে । ইচ্ছা হয় এখানেই বসিয়া পড়ি নতুবা যে স্বৰ্ণতোরণের পথে রাজপুরীতে প্রবেশ লাভ করিয়াছি—সে স্বৰ্ণতোরণের পথেই ফিরিয়া যাই, কিন্তু পারি না ; অনিচ্ছা সত্ত্বেও পথ চলিতে হয় ! হায় রে তরুণ পথিক ! নিজের দেহটাও আজ তোর বোঝা হইয়া উঠিয়াছে !

এমনি করিয়া বেদনার খাতে মন্দগতিতে বহমান জীবনধারায় পর্দানশীনের জীবন প্রতিফলিত হইয়াছে—

প্রেমিকের বক্ষতলে গোপন কথার মত ঢাকা

নিরাপদ জীবন তাহার,

ছুষ্ঠ নয়নের দিষ্টি কভু তারে দেয় নাই দাগা

সূর্য্য কিংবা বাতাসের ভার ;

রূপের রহস্য তার কেহ নাহি করে উন্মোচন

কাল তবু খুলি ফেলে তায়,

ছুঃখ বাধে বক্ষে বাসা কালেরে করিবে বারণ

রাধিকার অশ্রু মুকুতায় ?

কিন্তু বেদনা চিরদিন থাকে না । কালের প্রভাবে হৃদয়ের ক্ষত আপনি আরোগ্য হইয়া গিয়াছে । কবি তিনি—বুঝিয়াছেন জীবনটা কেবল অতীত বেদনার বিলাসশয্যায় কাটাইয়া দিবার জন্তু নহে । অস্পষ্ট গভীর আশা ও সন্দেহের তীব্র বেদনা লইয়া অপরিচিত ভবিষ্যৎ সম্মুখের দিকে অঙ্গুলি নির্দেশ করিতেছে । কবি আবার পথ চলিবার জন্তু প্রস্তুত

হে হৃদয় হেথা আজি দাহ করি মৃত স্বপ্ন মোর—

পরাগ ঝরিয়া-পড়া ঝরা-পাতা লোহিত বরণ,

তা’ দিয়ে রচনা করি চিতানল হেথা আজি ওর

মধ্যাহ্নের জ্বলমান আগুণেতে করি তা’ দাহন

ক্রান্ত মোরা ওরে প্রাণ এতদিন এসেছি বহিয়া

মরে-যাওয়া স্বপনের ভালো-লাগা প্রিয় বোঝা-ভার

কেঁদে নিই ক্ষণতরে ভস্ম তার উড়াইয়া দিয়া

ক্ষণিকের অবসর ধূসরিত ছায়ার এপার ।

আবার উঠিতে হবে তাড়াতাড়ি চলিবারে পথ
জগতের রণক্ষেত্রে জনতার সংগ্রামের বৃকে,
জেগে ওঠ প্রাণ মোর তুলে নিই বাকী স্বপ্ন যত
জীবনের দুঃখ যত জয় করি সঙ্গীতের দুখে ।

এমনি করিয়া কবি নূতন উত্তমে যাত্রা শুরু করিয়াছেন ।

এই ত কবির প্রয়াণ-কাহিনী । চলিয়াছেন কবি এই ধরণীর পুষ্পোত্তানের
মধ্য দিয়া । গন্ধ ভাসিয়া আসে—কাঁটাও পায়ে বিঁধে । কবি উভয়কেই গ্রহণ
করিয়াছেন—হৃদয়-পেটিকা তাঁদেরি স্মৃতিতে পূর্ণ—

এই যে পেটিকা হের মনোরম কারু
কাশিয়া ফুলের মত সুকোমল চারু
কোমল স্বপন মোর এমনি হৃদয়ে
ললিত সুখের ভাব আছে আঁকা হয়ে
সেখানে সঞ্চয় করি স্মৃতির মশলা
সুগন্ধি অতীত স্মৃতি পশলা পশলা
দারুচিনি লবঙ্গের উপমা চন্দন
দুঃখ সুখ প্রেম গান সিঞ্চিত জীবন ।

দুঃখ এবং সুখ, আনন্দ ও নৈরাশ্য কবি সকলই বরণ করিয়া লইয়াছেন । তাই
কবি জীবনকে ভালবাসেন, তাই কবি চিরতরুণ । এই চিরতারুণ্যের লক্ষ ছুয়ার
খুলিয়া কবি ধরণীর আলো বাতাস গ্রহণ করিতেছেন । মানবের চিরন্তন তৃপ্তিহীন
তৃষা তাতেই মূর্ত্ত হইয়া উঠিয়াছে । যুগ যুগ ধরিয়া সৌন্দর্য্যের সোমরস পান
করিতেছি—তবু ত তৃপ্তি নাই । অগস্ত্যের মত এক চুমুকে বিশ্ব-চেতনাকে পান
করিতে চাই । লক্ষ জীবন কাটাইয়াও আবার এই দুঃখ-সুখের চেউ-খেলানো
মাগরতীরে ফিরিয়া আসিতে চাই । আবার ধরণীর মলিন ধূলায় গড়াগড়ি দিতে
চাই । জ্ঞান চাই না, মুক্তি চাই না, ইন্দ্রহ চাই না—ধরণী মাতার নাড়ীর বন্ধন
ছিন্ন করিয়া শিবহও চাই না । অশ্রুতর উৎস এখনও শুষ্ক হয় নাই, আনন্দ এখনও
পূর্ণতা প্রাপ্ত হয় নাই, তাই মৃত্যুকে অপেক্ষা করিতে হইবে । এই প্রেমের শক্তিতেই
কবি মৃত্যুকে বলেন—

থাম মৃত্যু ক্ষণকাল মরিবার কাল আছে বাকী
বসন্তে সুন্দর মোব যৌবন মেলিছে ওই আঁখি

সরোজিনী নাইডুর “স্বর্ণতোরণ”

তরুণ যৌবন মোর শাখে শাখে বাজিছে সঙ্গীত
 দধিকুল গাহে শোন গীত ।
 থাম মৃত্যু ক্ষণকাল মরিবার কাল আছে বাকী
 আশা-কলিকার মোর এখনও খোলেনি বোঁজা আঁখি
 আনন্দ হয়নি পাওয়া—সুরু হয়নিক মোর গান
 অশ্রুতে ডাকেনি মোর বান ।
 থাম মৃত্যু ক্ষণকাল প্রেম শোক ধরণী আকাশ
 পান করে পূর্ণ হই বুকে নিই দক্ষিণ বাতাস
 অন্তরের ক্ষুধা তৃষ্ণা আমি আজ পূর্ণ করে সারি
 মৃত্যু আমি মরিতে না পারি ।

এমনি করিয়া মৃত্যুর অতীত জীবনের সহস্রদল পদম আজো একটি একটি
 করিয়া তার পাপড়ি খুলিতেছে ।

শ্রীপ্রভাতকুমার শর্মা
 ৪র্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ ।

তপ্তি

কুসুমের মালা, প্রদীপ উজ্জল,
বিবিধ বরণ সাজ,
তা'রি মাঝে আসি' দাঁড়াইলে হাসি',
সন্ধ্যায় তুমি আজ ।

গোলাপী বসন ঘেরি তনু দেহ,
জড়ায়ে রয়েছে জননীর স্নেহ,
সন্ধ্যা সোণায় ভরিয়া গগন,
ঘনায় ধরণী মাঝ ।

তোমা'রে ঘেরিয়া প্রদীপ উজ্জল,
কুসুমের মালা আজ ।

কুতূহলী শত নয়নের আগে
কেমনে তোমা'রে ডাকি ?

নীরবে তোমা'রে শুধু ডেকে যায়
আমার নীরব আঁখি ।

নয়নে নয়নে ক্ষণিকের তরে,
নীরবে প্রাণের প্রীতিরশি ঝরে,
নিমেষের শেষে নয়ন ফিরায়ে
বাহিরের পানে রাখি ।

নীরব নয়ন মেলিয়া নিয়ত
নীরবে তোমা'রে ডাকি ।

তারপরে যবে সভা ভেঙে যায়,
প্রদীপ নিবিয়া আসে,
ধুলায় লোটানো ছিন্ন দলিত
ফুলের গন্ধ ভাসে ।

অন্ধকারের অস্তুর তলে
আপনার কাজে পথে সবে চলে,

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুরু

আমি আসি সখি নীরবে নিভূতে
 দাঁড়াই তোমার পাশে ।
 বাতাসে দলিত ফুলের সুবাস,
 প্রদীপ নিবিয়া আসে ।

তারায় তারায় ছেয়ে গেছে এবে
 রজনীর নভতল,
 জনহীন পথে চলিতে চলিতে
 ঘনায় নয়নে জল ;

প্রসারিয়া কর লইলাম টানি',
 তোমার কোমল করতল খানি,
 নিমেঘে সকল দ্বন্দ্ব ভুলিল
 অন্তর চঞ্চল ।

আঁধারে ঝলিছে তারায় তারায়
 রজনীর নভতল ।

হুমায়ুন কবির

“ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুরু”

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুরু

ঘরকে এসে শোন্ সবে ;
 চুপ্ কর্ ভাই কাজল মেঘে
 বৃষ্টি-ঝরা গান হবে ।

সন্ সন্ সন্ সজল বায়ু
 বল্ছে কথা সব কাণে ;

ভয় নেই আর গরম যাবে,
 মেঘ জমেছে আস্মানে ।

দশদিক আজ আঁধার লেপা,—

সুঘিয়ামা! তেজ কোথা ?

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুরু

৩৯

কড়্ কড়্ কড়্ দারুণ বাজে

হাড্ডি ভেঙে খব্ব তা' ?

ভোর দিন রোদ আগুণ হাণা,—

বাপ্‌রে সে কি ঘাম বরা !

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুরু—

ঠাণ্ডা হল সব ধরা ।

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জল থই থই রাজার দীঘি,

পুষ্করিণী নদ নদী,

খাল বিল সব উছল হবে

ভর্গা ভাল হয় যদি ।

দূর প্রান্তুর গাঁয়ের শেষে

আসছে ভিজ়ে কোন্ ছেলে

ঘর দাওয়ায় মায়ের চোখে

অশ্রু আসে বাঁধ ঠেলে ।

ঐ দেখ্ ভাই পারুল ডালে

ভিজ়ছে বসে বুল্বুলি,

ঝড় বাদলায় নিঝুম হয়ে

ঝাপ্টা খেয়ে বুল ভুলি ।

টুন্ টুন্ আর বাবুই পাখী

বাব্লা গাছে মুখ ঝেপে

ঠক্ ঠক্ ঠক্ বাদল শীতে

হচ্ছে সারা ঠায় কেঁপে ।

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জল হাওয়ার পরশ লেগে

মুঞ্জরিল গাছ গুলি ;

পৃথিব়র বুক সরস হল ;

উঠল লতা ছল্ ছলি ।

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুর

ঝুর ঝুর ঝুর বকুল যুথি

পড়ছে ঝড়ে বনতলে ;

ফুল-সস্তার চরণ-ঘায়ে

আর বা কত যাই দলে !

বেল ফুল আর পারুল চাঁপা

আস্তে ধীরে ফুটতেছে ;

মহুর বায় সুবাস টুকু

অম্নি এসে লুটতেছে ।

পুষ্পল আজ কদম তরু

হাসছে হাসি কাশ কেয়া ;

ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ ঝুপ্ বাদল সুর

নীল আকাশে ছা'য় দেয়া ।

শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায় ।

চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, কলা বিভাগ



রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ

২৭শে অগ্রহায়ণ (১৩ই ডিসেম্বর) মঙ্গলবার শ্রীযুক্ত রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর মহাশয় পরিষদের চতুর্থ অধিবেশনে উপস্থিত হইয়া এবং পরিষদের অধোত্বন্দকে তাঁহাকে সম্বন্ধনা করিবার সুযোগ দিয়া দিনটিকে পরিষদের জীবনে স্মরণীয় করিয়াছেন। প্রাচ্য-আদর্শানুযায়ী বেশে ফিজিক্স থিয়েটার সাজান হইয়াছিল। শ্রীযুক্তা সরলা দেবী, শ্রীযুক্ত যত্ননাথ সরকার, দেবপ্রসাদ সর্বাধিকারী, অবনীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর, প্রমথ চৌধুরী প্রমুখ বহু কৃতবিদ্য বাঙালী অনুষ্ঠানে যোগদান করেন। পরিষদের পক্ষ হইতে শ্রীযুক্ত হুমায়ুন কবীর স্বরচিত একটি কবিতা দ্বারা কবিকে অভিনন্দিত করেন। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় শিল্পী নন্দলাল বসু মহাশয় কর্তৃক পরিকল্পিত একটি রৌপ্য-চিত্রিত তাম্রপাত্রে পুঁথি আকারে লিখিত কবিতাটি রবীন্দ্রনাথকে প্রদান করেন। তিনি একটি বক্তৃতায় পরিষদেব শ্রদ্ধা ও প্রীতির কথা উল্লেখ করিয়া, পরিষদের উদ্দেশ্যের কথা বলেন। কবি তাঁহার কাব্যের শ্রেষ্ঠ ব্যাখ্যাতা কি না, এ প্রশ্ন সম্বন্ধে তিনি বলেন যে কবি ধর্মরাজ নন, তিনি কবিরাজ ; এবং প্রত্যেকেরই নিজ স্বাতন্ত্র্যে কবিব ব্যাখ্যাকে উল্লঙ্ঘন করিবার অধিকার আছে।

রবীন্দ্রনাথ উত্তরে কাব্যের রসগ্রহণের উপায়, কাব্যালোচনার শ্রদ্ধার প্রয়োজনীয়তা, নিকটে থাকার অন্তরালে কাব্যের রসগ্রহণের অসুবিধা, নবীন সাহিত্যের রীতি ও তাঁহার কাব্যের প্রতি নবীনের প্রীতির উল্লেখ করিয়া যে অনবদ্য, চিত্তস্পর্শী অভিভাষণ প্রদান করেন তাহা পরিষদের প্রথম নিষ্কাশিতরূপে প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে। কবি বক্তৃতার পর তাঁহার তখনও অপ্রকাশিত “নূতন শ্রোতা” কবিতাটি পাঠ করেন। শ্রীমুশীল দে ও শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ গান গাইয়াছিলেন।

১লা মাঘ (১৫ই জানুয়ারী) পরিষদের পঞ্চম অধিবেশনে অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত “রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যের প্রথম স্তর” সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার তৃতীয় অভিভাষণ প্রদান করেন। সাক্ষাৎকারের স্বরূপ আলোচনা করিয়া তিনি ভানুসিংহ ঠাকুরের পদাবলী সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করেন। তিনি দেখান যে, প্রকৃতপক্ষে বৈষ্ণব-কবিতাব একমাত্র ভাবে প্রচণ্ড উচ্ছ্বাসের সহিত প্রকাশের চেষ্টা ইহাতে নাই। উপমা টানিয়া টানিয়া ভাবগুলির ভিতর সুসমঞ্জস যোগরক্ষার চেষ্টা বেশ বোঝা যায়, এবং হৃদয়কে বৈষ্ণব কবিতার মত অধিকার করে না। আলোচনার পর আট ঘটকায় সভাভঙ্গ হয়।

২৭শে ফাল্গুন (১১ই মার্চ) পরিষদের ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী মহাশয় “চিত্রাঙ্গদা” সম্বন্ধে একটি সুচিন্তিত প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। কাব্য ও দর্শন শাস্ত্রের সম্বন্ধ, সমালোচকের কাজ এবং কাব্যের প্রয়োজন সম্বন্ধে সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যিকদের মতের আলোচনা করিয়া তিনি চিত্রাঙ্গদার বিরুদ্ধে “Thompson নামক জনৈক ইংরাজ মিশনারী”র মন্তব্যের সমালোচনা করেন। “চিত্রাঙ্গদার ভাষার সৌন্দর্য্য এবং ঐশ্বর্য্যের” কথা আলোচনা করিবার কালে তিনি সংস্কৃত আলঙ্কারিকদের মানদণ্ডে বিচার করিয়া দেখান যে “চিত্রাঙ্গদার কবি আলোচ্যাদিক দিয়া কবি।” চিত্রাঙ্গদা অঙ্গীল এবং কবির জীলোক সম্বন্ধে ধারণা জঘন্য এই দুই বিষয়ে তিনি উল্লিখিত সমালোচকের মতের ‘ছন্নতা এবং মূর্খতা’ দেখাইয়া বলেন “যা spiritual হিসাবে অমৃত তা যে moral হিসাবে বিষ একথা শোভা পায় শুধু জড়বুদ্ধির মুখে।” তাঁহার সুদীর্ঘ প্রবন্ধ পাঠের পর শ্রীযুক্ত অতুলচন্দ্র গুপ্ত মহাশয় বলেন যে জীলতার বিচার আমরা করি সামাজিক হিসাবে এবং আনন্দলাভই কাব্যের পরিমাপ ; এবং আলঙ্কারিকরা বলিয়াছেন যে সুকবি যে কোন বস্তু লইয়াই কাব্য সৃষ্টি করিতে পারেন। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত বিনয়কুমার মেন চিত্রাঙ্গদার কবিত্ব, নাটক হিসাবে গুণ এবং মনস্তত্ত্বের ব্যাখ্যার আলোচনার পর বলেন যে চিত্রাঙ্গদার অনুবাদ প্রকাশের পর বিলাতে কবির জীজ্ঞাতির প্রতি

ধারণা অত্যন্ত আধুনিক বলিয়া, অভিনন্দিত হয়। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় বলেন যে রস ও ধর্মবুদ্ধির মূল একজায়গায় এবং অ-সার্বজনীন বিষয়ে সামাজিক বিচার উঠিবেই। কবি চিত্রাঙ্গদায় রূপের আবশ্যিকতা যে আর এক রাজ্যে বাইবার সেতু হিসাবে, তাহা দেখাইয়াছেন। রাত্রি সাড়ে আট ঘটিকার পর সভাভঙ্গ হয়।

শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্র নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

সম্পাদক।

বঙ্কিম-শরৎ সমিতি

গত ৬ই চৈত্র, সোমবার, এই সমিতির উদ্বোধন হ'য়ে গেছে। শ্রীযুক্ত যত্ননাথ সরকার, শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী, অধ্যাপক নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, অধ্যাপক মন্মথমোহন বসু, অধ্যাপক শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, অধ্যাপক ললিত মোহন বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয়চন্দ্র মজুমদার, শ্রীযুক্ত অতুলচন্দ্র গুপ্ত, শ্রীযুক্ত দীনেশ রঞ্জন দাস, শ্রীযুক্ত নরেন্দ্র দেব প্রভৃতি বিশিষ্ট সাহিত্যিকগণ উপস্থিত ছিলেন। শ্রীযুক্ত যত্ননাথ সরকার মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করেন।

উপনিষদ হইতে একটি প্রস্তাবনা সঙ্গীত গীত হইয়া সভা আরম্ভ হয়। তৎপরে শ্রীমান্ জনিলা ভট্টাচার্য্য রবীন্দ্রনাথের 'অভিসার' নামক প্রসিদ্ধ কবিতাটি আবৃত্তি করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত হুমায়ূন কবির তারপবে সাহিত্যে বাস্তব এবং কাল্পনিকের স্থান সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। সমিতির স্থায়ী সভাপতি অধ্যাপক শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় তাঁহার বক্তৃতায় বলেন, বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র এবং শরৎচন্দ্রের সাহিত্যের আলোচনা ও অনুশীলন করাই এই সমিতির উদ্দেশ্য। বঙ্কিমসাহিত্যে Romanticism এর যে প্রাচুর্য্য আছে, তাঁর ভেতর দিয়ে, এই দীন দুঃখী বাঙ্গলা দেশেও, একটা adventurous বাস্তবতার যে ছবি উঁকি মারে, তার পেছনে আছে শুধু একটা অথগু সত্য, একটা ঐতিহাসিক প্রাকার আর তাঁর নীরব বাণী। শরৎচন্দ্র সম্বন্ধে তিনি বলেন যে, সাহিত্যক্ষেত্রে উপস্থাসের যে ধারা অবরুদ্ধ হইয়া আসিতেছিল, শরৎচন্দ্র তাঁর অতুলনীয় লেখনীর প্রভাবে সেখানে এনে দিইয়েছেন একটা নতুন স্রোত—যা থামেনা, শুধু ব'য়ে গিয়েই যার আনন্দ।

শ্রীযুক্ত মন্মথমোহন বসু মহাশয় বঙ্কিম শরৎ মিলনকে, প্রাচীন এবং নবীন, পীত এবং সবুজের মিলন বলিয়া অভিহিত করেন এবং ইহাকে হরিহরের সহিত তুলনা করেন। ছাত্রগণের এই মিলন প্রচেষ্টাকে অভিনন্দিত করিয়া তিনি তাঁহার বক্তৃতা শেষ করেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয়চন্দ্র মজুমদার মহাশয় বলেন—যাহা জীবন তাহাই সাহিত্য। আদর্শবাদ ও বস্তুতন্ত্র-বাদ—টিক্ এইভাবে সাহিত্যকে বিশ্লেষণ করা যায় না। যখন আমরা আমাদের জীবনের ক্ষুদ্র ক্ষুদ্র বিষয় তিল তিল করিয়া তাহাকে একটা নূতন রূপ, একটা নূতন ভাব দিয়া, সাহিত্যক্ষেত্রে একটা তিলোত্তমার সৃষ্টি করি, তাহা কি জীবন হইতে পৃথক বস্তু হইতে পারে? বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র টিক্ এমনিই একজন সাহিত্যিক ছিলেন। তাঁহাকে সাহিত্যের একটা বিশিষ্ট বিভাগে ফেলা যায় না। শরৎ-চন্দ্রের লেখা অসাধারণ। চরিত্রাঙ্কন, সাহিত্য জগতে তার একটি অপূর্ব দান। তাঁর মত চরিত্রকে অত নিখুঁতভাবে ফুটিয়ে তুলতে, এবং আমাদের নিত্যজীবনের সঙ্গে গেঁথে দিতে এপর্যন্ত কেউ পারেন নি।

শ্রীযুক্ত শরৎচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় সভায় উপস্থিত থাকবেন, কথা ছিল। কিন্তু শারীরিক অসুস্থতা নিবন্ধন তিনি আসতে পারেন নি। এজন্য দুঃখ প্রকাশ করে এবং যুবকদের সাধু প্রচেষ্টাকে অভিনন্দিত করে, তিনি একটি পত্র লিখে পাঠান। সভাপতি মহাশয় উক্ত পত্র পাঠ করে তাঁর বক্তব্য বলেন।

বক্তৃতা প্রসঙ্গে তিনি বলেন—সাহিত্যের প্রকৃত আদর করিতে হইলে নিজে রসগ্রাহী হইতে হইবে। আমাদের কর্তব্য যাহা সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ সাহিত্য, তাহা প্রাণ মন দিয়া নিজস্ব করে নেওয়া। বঙ্কিম শুধু বাঙ্গালার নয়—তিনি সব দেশের সব সময়ের। তাঁহাকে বাঙ্গালার স্কট বলিলে তাঁহার স্মৃতির অবমাননা করা হয়। জাতীয়তার সন্ধিক্ষণে জন্মানাভ করে এই মহাপুরুষ তার ধমনীতে যে প্রবল উৎসের প্রবাহ বহিয়ে দিয়ে গেছেন—তাঁর সাহিত্যে তাঁহারই পূর্ণ বিকাশ। তাঁর আদর্শ ছিল আত্মসংযত বিদ্রোহ—যা তিনি ফুটিয়ে তুলেছেন তাঁর আনন্দমর্থে। ছাত্রেরা যেন বঙ্কিমের এই আরক কার্য সম্পন্ন করিতে পাবেন—এই বলিয়া তিনি তাঁহার বক্তৃতা শেষ করেন।

অতঃপর শ্রীযুক্ত সুনীল সরকার ও শ্রীযুক্ত যতীন্দ্র সিংহ চৌধুরী দুইটি গান করেন। দ্বিতীয় সঙ্গীত “বন্দে মাতরম” গীত হইবার সময় সভাস্থ সকলে দণ্ডায়মান হইয়াছিলেন।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় সভাপতিকে ধন্যবাদ প্রদান করিলে পর সভার কার্য শেষ হয়।

শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়

সম্পাদক, বঙ্কিম-শবৎ সমিতি।

বাংলা সাহিত্য সভা

চতুর্থ অধিবেশন—

বিগত ৯ই ডিসেম্বর বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার চতুর্থ অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত খগেন্দ্রনাথ মিত্র সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীযুক্ত হুমায়ুন কবির টমাস হার্ডির উপস্থাস সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন।

প্রবন্ধ লেখক বলেন যে টমাস হার্ডির উপস্থাস পড়িলে মনে হয়, এক অন্ধ নিয়তি আমাদের ভাণ্ডা লইয়া কি খেলা খেলিতেছে। আমাদের আনন্দ এবং বেদনা কিছুতেই তাহার নিকট হইতে কোনও সাড়া পাওয়া যায় না। কিন্তু মানুষের মন একথা মানিতে চায় না, সে আলোর জন্ম নিত্য উন্মুখ হইয়া থাকে।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সোমনাথ মৈত্র বলেন টমাস হার্ডির সম্বন্ধে যে কথা বলা হইয়াছে, তাহা তাঁহার উপস্থাস সম্বন্ধে হয়তো চলিতে পারে, কিন্তু কবিতার নয়। তাঁহার কবিতা পড়িলে মনে হয় প্রথমে তাঁহার ধারণা ছিল যে এক বিরাট অশুভ শক্তি বিরাজ করিতেছে। কিন্তু পরবর্তী জীবনে

এই ভাব ক্রমে দূর হইয়া আসিয়াছে। উপগ্রাসে সব সময় তাঁহার মনের কথা খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় না, কবিতায় তাঁহার অন্তরের বাণী ধরা দিয়াছে।

পঞ্চম ও ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশন—

বিগত ২৩শে ডিসেম্বর ও ১৩ই জানুয়ারী বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার পঞ্চম ও ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত নীলমণি চক্রবর্তী ‘পালিভাষা ও সাহিত্য’ সম্বন্ধে দুইটি বক্তৃতা প্রদান করেন। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত প্রফুল্লচন্দ্র ঘোষ সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন।

অধ্যাপক নীলমণি চক্রবর্তী মহাশয়, পালিভাষার উৎপত্তি, কোন কোন দেশে তাহার প্রচার ছিল, এবং তাহার ঐতিহাসিক প্রমাণ কি তাহা লইয়া অতি সুন্দরভাবে আলোচনা করেন। ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশনে তিনি প্রধানতঃ পালিভাষার ব্যাকরণ লইয়া আলোচনা করিয়াছিলেন। এই অধিবেশনে কবি ও উপগ্রাসিক টমাস হার্ডির মৃত্যুতে শোকপ্রকাশসূচক একটি প্রস্তাব গৃহীত হয়।

শ্রীপ্রতুল গুপ্ত

সম্পাদক

