AWAKENING
IN
BENGAL

EDITED BY
GOUTAM CHATTOPADHYAY

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHERS

AWAKENING IN BENGAL

IN EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

Awakening in Bengal

in Early Nineteenth Century

(Selected Documents)

VOLUME ONE

Edited by

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CALCUTTA

PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHERS

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PREFACE

Ever since my early youth, I have been attracted by the awakening in Bengal in the Nineteenth Century, especially in its first half. My father, the late Professor Kshitish Prasad Chattopadhyay, who was the great-grandson of the illustrious Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, infused in me this interest, at a very early age. However, it was only in 1962, that I could devote time and energy to carry on a systematic investigation into the phenomenon, usually known as the Bengal Renaissance. In course of this investigation (which still continues) my conviction grew that many of the records, periodicals, journals and other publications of early neneteenth century, connected with awakening in Bengal, which were considered lost for ever, still lie hidden in a number of large and small libraries strewn in the districts and mofussil towns all over West Bengal as well as in some private collections. This conviction now rests on solid foundations as is borne out by the publication of the present volume—materials of which I came across during my search for old documents.

The first and the third volumes of the Discourses given at the Society for the Acquisition of General knowledge, a remarkable radical organisation of the enlightened youth of Bengal in the thirties of the Nineteenth Century, were dug out from the Serampore college Carey Memorial Library, which is a veritable treasure-house of knowledge, so far as the first half of Nineteenth Century in Bengal is concerned. Along with these two volumes were found two complete lists of membership of the Society as well as its prospectus and rules—all of which throw much light on the mind of the educated Bengalee youth of that period. The second volume of the Discourses was missing and I went ahead with the work of printing and publishing an edited volume containing the existing materials. It was at this stage, that we came across, the missing second volume in a tattered condition in an open shelf of the once magnificent but now dilapidated library of Raja Radhakanta Dev at Sovabazar, Calcutta. In consequence, I have been unable to maintain the normal sequence of the three volumes—the first and the third coming one after the other and the second following them. I hope to be excused for this irregularity because really speaking I had no control or grip over this development.

Most of the papers were read in English but a few were in Bengali. All of them reveal a wide range of knowledge, of depth and growing social awareness, of the members of the Society (SAGK). For the convenience of readers all over India and abroad, English translations, of the Bengali originals have been given in the text of the Discourses, while the Bengali originals have been placed as appendices at the end of the volume. I have also compiled Biographical notes of about one hundred members of the Society and included it at the end as additional information.

Other materials already found in course of the investigation includes the prospectus, rules and activities of the Calcutta Mechanical Institute (1839), the Deshahitaishinee Subha (1841) and the Bengal British India Society (1842) but we felt that these should be edited properly and published as a separate volume in the near future.

I would like to take this opportunity of conveying my thanks to the Principal, Serampore College and the entire staff of the Serampore College Carey Memorial Library for the kind co-operation they have always extended to me. My thanks are also due to Mr. K. C. Basu, Trustee, Raja Radhakanto Dev Library at Sovabazar, Calcutta for giving me all facilities. Among those who gave me constant encouragement are two of Bengal's outstanding Scholars—Professor Susobhan Sarkar and Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose—to both of them I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Sri Chinmohan Sehanobis, who is like an elder brother to me and my young friends Dr. Blair Kling of the University of Illinois, U.S.A. and Dr. Barun De of the Calcutta University have helped me in many ways—formal thanks can never repay their generous acts of friendship. Prof. Dilip Ghosh of Surendranath College, Calcutta translated into English some of the Bengali originals—my thanks to him for this kind act of friendship. My young students have always keenly followed my efforts and their youthful eager faces have ever acted as a prime force in driving me on with my investigation.

This book would never have been possible without the kindness and energetic initiative of Messers Progressive Publishers, Calcutta. To them in general and to Sri Sushil Kumar Basu and Sri Buddhadev Bhattacharya in particular, I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Finally, my warmest sentiments to one who need not be named but without whose incessant prodding, this entire investigation would perhaps have never begun.

I shall always be thankful for any additional information regarding this period and the Society and shall make necessary addition (or alteration as the case may be) in my next edition. At the end, let me express the hope that this and the subsequent coming volumes, by placing much new data at the disposal of all students of history, shall be able to rescue the *Young Bengal*—the radical youth of the angry 'thirties of the last century coming out of the portals of the Hindu College and similar institutions—from misrepresentation and slander and present them to all in their true glorious colours.

GOUTAM CHATTOPADHYAY

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INTRODUCTION

The 'thirties and the 'forties of the nineteenth century were restless, creative years so far as Bengal was concerned. The political vaccuam in Bengal had been filled effectively by the British by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The old economy of Bengal had also been shattered. The headquarters of British power in Bengal, the city of Calcutta had become a great metropolis where flocked the wealthiest of Bengal's citizens and where gradually sprang up a professional middle-class, having close contact with Western ideas and the Western system of education. By 1820, a number of schools and the Hindoo College had been established in Calcutta at the combined initiative of a handful of enlightened Bengalees like Rammohun Roy, Dwarkanath Tagore, Russomoy Dutt etc. as well as such progressive Englishmen as David Hare.

What was the Society like, at that time in Bengal? On the one hand, centuries of stagnation in Social life had transformed a large chunk of Bengalee society into a superstitious, ignorant bigoted mass. Obscurantism and blind faith was the order of the day. On the other hand, the over-zealous European Christian Missionaries, under cover of spreading light, were interested mainly in converting the "heathen natives" into the Christian faith. They were no less dogmatic and conservative than their counter-part among the Hindoo orthodoxy. It was in the midst of such a dark and dismal situation, that the Hindoo College and its complementary educational institutions sprang up in Calcutta like tiny specks of light in the darkest of night.

Within a decade or two of its existence, the Hindoo College had become the centre, round which gathered the young radicals of Bengal, holding aloft the torch of a social awakening that never wholly petered out. No doubt, this radical section of the youth was but a mere fraction of the total population of Bengal and they too were mainly confined within the limits of the city of Calcutta. Even then the role that they played in spreading ideas of rationalism and liberty in Bengal cannot be and should not be under-rated.

Here is an authentic description of the then Calcutta by a contemporary. The Rev. T. Long writing from Calcutta on the 15th October 1842 states: "Calcutta as regards education, in some respects resembles Cambridge or Oxford. Thousands of youths come and lodge in Calcutta for the purpose of attending school—their parents live perhaps fifty or a hundred miles in the country. Among educated young men a great sphere of usefulness is opened. There is greater activity of mind among natives in Calcutta than in the country. *There are five or six thousand educated youths with mind unshackled by prejudice.*"[1] (italics mine—Ed.)

These educated youth, with "mind unshackled by prejudice" were fervent patriots from first to last. They had a deep and abiding love for their country, whose past greatness they were eager to re-discover. At the same time they were no narrow nationalists—they drank deep into the fountains of Western Culture, admired the industrial as well as the French Revolutions and tried to take concrete lessons from the American War of Independence. All these formulations are not mere subjective airing of my views but are borne out by solid facts. Take

[1]*British Friend of India Magazine* (London) vol. iii, May 1843, p. 327.

for example the letter written by a young Bengalee radical to the Editor of the *Reformer* (a journal run by Prosunna Coomar Tagore, a friend of Rammohun Roy) in February 1831, from which I propose to quote at some length :

"It is asked—is India possessed within herself of all those productions of nature which render her independent of foreign resources ? Strictly speaking, there is no civilized nation, which does not in some way or other depend upon foreign resources : ..... Therefore to answer this in the affirmative, I must qualify what I said before, by adding that I do not think India has any dependence on foreign resources for those productions of nature which are required for sustenance of life.

... I am not aware of any history which informs us that before the Europeans came to India, she was a barren desert, inhabited only by a few savages, but on the contrary, we know that India has been from the earliest ages a wealthy and populous kingdom.....whichever nation has traded with her, has flourished during the continuance of that trade and at present we find England not the worse for being engaged in it. If, therefore, India in the time of her independence was reckoned the grand emporium for all the merchants of Europe, if her inexhaustible stores could glut all the markets with luxuries and if her trade was capable of successively raising to preeminence so many great nations, is it groundless assumption to say that India can maintain her sons without the aid of foreign resources ? I acknowledge India in her dependent state is incapable of such efforts but I vow she is more than what at present she appears to be.

The second and the Third questions, I here place together, for I think the same answer will apply to them both. Does the nation under whose yoke India is, depend

upon her resources? Would England without India dwindle into insignificance? Perhaps England does not depend upon India for her necessaries of life; she would not without the possession of India dwindle into absolute insignificance. Her internal powers and her sovereignty over the ocean would remain uninjured but the extent of her territorial possessions would certainly dwindle into insignificane, the brightest gem would be torn off from her radiant crown and her glory would suffer at least a partial eclipse.

... This is the light in which I view the connection between England and India and I think the dependence of European nations upon the latter has been and is to this day, of sufficient importance to justify my saying that it is problematical why India should groan for ages under foreign yoke? .....When I speak of India being isolated from the rest of the world, I do not mean that she is to cease all communications with the rest of mankind and as it were shut herself up in a nunnery. All I mean is that without her dependence on England as her conqueror and possessor, her political situation would be more respectable and her inhabitants would be more wealthy and prosperous. The example of America which shews what she was when subject to England and what she has been since her freedom, must naturally lead us to such a conclusion....."[2]

This is indeed a revealing letter, for it clearly indicates as to which way the minds of educated young men of Bengal were working then. Moreover, this is no stray write-up in just one issue of a paper. Similar articles and letters to Editors were written by the scores in the

[2] "*The Capabilities of India*" by 'A friend to improvement' published in *Reforms* and reprinted in full in the *Calcutta Monthly Journal*, Feb. 1831, pp. 114-117.

years 1830-34 as can easily be seen by going through carefully the pages of *Reformer*, *Eequirer*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Indian Gazette*, *Calcutta Monthly Journal*, *Bengal Chronicle* and so on.

The dawn of nationalist consciousness among these radicalised youth of Bengal could also be seen in their sharp protests against all forms of racial discrimination practised by the European overlords, particularly by the arrogant *Chhota Sahibs* in India. At that time many Bengalees—men of wealth, position and education—used to be invited on various occasions to the Government House in Calcutta but there absolutely different treatment used to be meted out at the gates by the European officers to Europeans and natives of this country. Many letters and articles were published in the periodicals and newspapers of the 'thirties against this shameful system of discrimination One example will suffice.

"This at ıce shews that the order (of discrimination) is founded upon no other ground than an invidious distinction between the conquered natives and their more favoured conquerors."[3]

A remarkable instance of this growing patriotic and nationalist fervour of the young men, emerging from the portals of the Hindoo College, is an article in a Calcutta journal by Kylash Chunder Dutt, a young student of the Hindoo College (and later on a founder member of the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge). In this article, Kylash Chunder draws a vivid pen-picture of an imaginary desperate armed struggle between Indian patriots and the oppressive British rulers in Calcutta, a century after his time. Space does not permit me to

[3] "*Admission to Government House*'—Letter by an Indian to the Editor of the *Reformer*—reprinted in full in the *Calcutta Monthy Journal*, July 1831, p. 119.

quote at length from this fascinating article and I shall have to remain satisfied with only these few lines :

"The people of India and particularly those of the metropolis, had been subject for the last fifty years to every species of subaltern oppression. The dagger and the bowl were dealt out with a merciless hand and neither age, nor sex nor condition could repress the rage of the British barbarians. These events, together with the recollection of the grievances suffered by their ancestors, roused the dormant spirit of the generally considered timid Indian. Finding that every day the offences instead of being extenuated were aggravated, that no redress could be obtained by appeals either to the Lords or Commons, he formed the bold but desperate resolution of hurling Lord Fell Butcher, Viceroy of India from his seat and establishing a government composed of the most patriotic men in the kingdom.....with the rapidity of lightening the spirit of Rebellion spread through this once pacific people. It is easy for the historian and the bard to depict in the most lively colours the excesses committed by the revolutionary parties, but he only can truly judge of their situation who has been a fellow-sufferer with those whose families, friends and companions have been butchered in cold blood—who has seen villages and towns laid waste by fire for illumination—who has beheld thousands of human beings compelled to desert their home and country and seek refuge in dens of the earth, in clefts of rocks or in the hollows of trees."[4]

The Rebellion was ultimately crushed and the patriots faced death with unique courage. There is a magnificent description of how an Indian patriot faced death. Just

[4]Dutt, Kylas Chunder—"*A Journal of Forty-eight Hours of the year 1945*"—*Calcutta Literary Gazette* (Calcutta June 6th, 1835) p. 355.

before the executioner's axe struck off his head, the patriot spoke out in ringing terms to the people gathered there.

"My friends and countrymen ! I have the consolation to die in my native land and tho' heaven has doomed that I should expire on this scaffold, yet are my last moments cheered by the presence of my friends. I have shed my last blood in defence of my country and though the feeble spark within me is about to leave the frail frame, I hope you will continue to persevere in the course you have so gloriously commenced."[5]

A whole series of public meetings were held from 1830 to 1835, on such advanced demands as trial by Jury, Indianisation of the services, freedom of the Press, amendment of the Charter Act of 1833 and protests against coolie emigration under semi-slave conditions. In all these meetings, the radical-minded student-youth formed the back bone and the driving force. Compared to the speeches of their elders like Dwarkanath Tagore, their speeches were much more forceful and reflected a greater political awareness. Russick Krishna Mullick, a pupil of the Hindoo College and a direct disciple of that great radical H. L.V. Derozio, was in his early twenties when he delivered a famous and fiery speech in a packed public meeting held in the Calcutta Town Hall, on the 5th of January 1835.

Rising to second a motion, criticising the Charter Act of 1833, Russick Mullick said :

"The Act was passed not for the benefit of India, but for the benefit of the Proprietors of Indian stock and the benefit of the people of England while the welfare of the millions who inhabit these vast regions were not at all cared for (cheers).

..... It has been asked if there is anything in the Act

[5]*Ibid*, 358.

to which a rational Englishman can object. Not being an Englishman, I cannot judge the feelings of Englishmen but I do see a great deal to which I as a rational native of India do object (cheers and laughter).....The best schools for those who are to hold office in India, is India itself (cheers). All the lessons they receive at Hayleybury can lead them but little to a practical acquaintance with the wants and feelings of the people of India. It must be by communicating with the natives, by speaking with them, by entering the wretched hovels, that any man can acquire that knowledge without which his best intention will be in vain (cheers).

..... There is another subject to which we hoped, but hoped in vain the British Parliament would have given some attention. In this Act, there is not one word about the subject of education (cheers). Two additional bishops have been provided for the comfort of the civil and military servants but there is no provision whatever for the education of the people of India (loud cheers)."[6]

Nor was Russick Mullick an exceptional and solitary critic. A couple of years later, the *Reformer* in an Editorial in 1837, criticised the Charter Act of 1833 in no uncertain terms. It said :

"Within the first two years of the Charter, the revenue remittances to England have mounted to Six Millions sterling or six crores of rupees and it is likely that the two succeeding years will require as much more. But the worst feature of this drain is that the Presidency of Bengal .....is the only part that suffers..... Had only a tithe of this annual loss been expended on works of improvement,

[6]A verbatim report of the Town Hall meeting, Calcutta, held on 5th January 1835, (Samuel Smith & Co. Calcutta, Sept. 1835)— a supplement of the *Bengal Hurkuru* published in the form of a pamphlet.

what advantages would India derive, not only in the construction of public works but also in the establishment of schools and colleges for the instruction of the People."[7] It is to be noted that the term "Drain" of wealth from India is used in this letter.

In fact, it was the conviction of these early nationalists and democrats that spread of modern education, especially through the medium of the mother tongue, was the one sure guarantee for the generation of the country and the rejuvenation of her people. How great was the hunger for higher education among the middle classes of Bengal can easily be seen from the following facts. In 1836, as many as 407 students studied in the upper classes of the Hindoo College while in the Hooghly College, as many as 1500 students rushed to get admission within 4 days of opening of the college in August 1836. An eminent Bengalee of that age who chose to remain anonymous, wrote a letter to a Calcutta newspaper which was reprinted approvingly by a London journal, friendly to the Indian people and it reads as follows :

"The knowledge which the Committee (of public Instruction) are labouring to disseminate with such honourable assiduity, may in the course of fifty years give us fifty thousand tolerable scholars—perhaps scarcely that number—out of the seventy millions who compose this presidency ; but knowledge must be acclimated in India through the Vernacular tongues before the nation can rise in the scale of civilisation. Of this truth the committee appears to be aware when they say ; 'We are deeply sensible to the importance of encouraging the Vernacular languages—we conceive the formation of vernacular lite-

[7] "Ill effect of the New Charter in India". Quoted by *Alexander's East India and Colonial Magazine*, London, July-Dec. 1838, pp. 38-39.

rature to be the ultimate object to which all our efforts must be directed.'

Why then are no efforts whatever directed to the ultimate object to which all present efforts must be considered as only subsidiary? Why is not the foundation yet laid of a Vernacular literature? Because fore sooth, the Corinthian capital and the elaborate frieze is not yet ready. The Committee have determined to lay out 27 thousand rupees on the importation of foreign works to form a library in the various cities of India. Would not, only half this sum, judicially bestowed, have secured for this country an ample supply of works in the popular language sufficient to unfold to thousand a new world of thoughts and ideas?

.... Try the languages of the country and see how rapidly their plastic elements may be moulded into any form of beauty and expression. Talk not of centuries—our duty is to learn the value of the moments and to improve them.

.... It is not by periodical compliments to the importance of the Vernácular languages, that the Education Board can discharge their sacred duties to the people. The habitual neglect to those duties, while the obligation is acknowledged will in time bring greater discredit on that body than the steady public denial of all necessity for popular literature could do. The public will judge them by their own recorded opinions and promises and if the vernacular languages be neglected during the next five years, as much as they have been during the last five, public indignation will draw its keenest weapon from the profession of the present report."[8]

[8]"The progress of Native education in India". *Alexander's East India and Colonial Magazine*, January-June 1837, pp. 535-36.

Many more such examples could be quoted but that is surely not necessary. It is abundantly clear that the radical-minded Bengalee youth of the 'thirties of the last century especially the educated youth of Calcutta and the suburbs, were no servile creatures, nor were their eyes or minds dazzled so much by the achievements of Europe, as to be blinded about the reactionary features of imperialism of the West. Their sharp and courageous criticism of various aspects of British misrule in India is too clear and pointed to be missed or misunderstood. However, the wrathful criticism of these young radicals, was directed not merely against British misrule in our country and the arrogance of the European vested interest in India—it was also turned equally, if not more heavily on our own social backwardness, bigotry and obscurantism. As a result, they drew upon themselves the full blast of the venomous attack of the Hindu orthodoxy of that age—representing the powerful forces of medieval reaction. Proofs of this are also strewn about in the columns of newspapers, periodicals and records of that decade.

In the autumn of 1830, the young radical-minded students of the Hindoo college, inspired by the teachings of H. L. V. Derozio, brought out a progressive periodical called the "Parthenon." The first issue contained articles advocating the cause of female education, denouncing idolatry and superstition among Hindoos and so on. It also supported the political demand of trial by Jury. This roused the ire of the entire Hindoo orthodoxy and the reactionary *Dhurma Sabha.* Their mouthpiece the *Chandika* demanded immediate action to suppress such heretical thought. As the editor, publishers and all the writers of the "Parthenon" were pupils of the Hindoo College, they were under the discipline of the "Parents' Committee," dominated by members of the Hindoo ortho-

doxy. They promptly issued a fiat demanding that the journal be immediately discontinued as it was "subverting" the basis of society. The second number was actually in the press, when the "Parthenon" was extinguished by this repressive order.

It is interesting and educative to note that the *John Bull* organ of the European vested interests in Bengal (and normally no friend of the Hindoo religion), warmly supported this action of the Hindoo orthodoxy. Why? This is what it wrote on that occasion :

"This publication (i.e. Parthenon) it seems, was avowedly the production of Hindoos and such it appears has been the rapidity with which the native mind has progressed of late years, that the writers of "Parthenon" belong to that clan 'that are yet under the guardianship of Parents and friends,' that is in plain language, they are children and their fathers and mothers have taken it into their heads that they have got into their hands, play things of rather a dangerous kind and thus have put their veto upon these intellectual recreations.... The little ones can no longer deliver their puny oracles through the "Parthenon" and tell the world that the propagation of dangerous doctrines and erroneous sentiments cannot do any harm in society. ..... Give these native children but an inch of free discussion, they will soon take "an ell." Their parents and guardians have acted wisely in putting down such mischievous precociousness."[9]

Here is unmistakable proof of collusion between the forces of English vested interests in India and the forces of Hindoo feudal reaction against their common enemy —radical ideas. The real face of "Parthenon" and its

[9]Excerpt from '*John Bull*' reprinted in the '*Asiatic Journal*', vol. 3, Sept.-Dec. 1830, p. 5.

courageous young writers come out sharply in an editorial written by the liberal *India Gazette*, a day before the already quoted editorial of the *John Bull*. It says :

"It concerns us to state that the "Parthenon", the first number of which was published about ten or twelve days ago, *has been discontinued, not however from want of support* (italics mine : Ed.) but from circumstances of a different nature. The publication was avowedly the production of Hindoos and as the writers were under the guardianship of the parents and friends, who became alarmed at the propagation of such liberal sentiments as the "Parthenon" contained, they interposed their authority to effect its suppression..... The liberal party has nothing to apprehend. Force cannot produce change of opinion, while it may lead many of the orthodox to doubt the virtue of orthodoxy, when it is supported."[10]

The Bengal Spectator—organ of the radical youth of the angry 'thirties in their maturer years in the 'forties, commenting on this episode, wrote in 1842 :

"It (Parthenon) startled the orthodox Hindoos and their might and influence crushed it in the bud. The second number was in type, although it was never circulated. But the spirit of enquiry was not—could not be checked. The good old men took fright and the sound of alarm was trumpetted forth by the *Chandrikaa*—the organ of the orthodox. *Boys were removed by their dozens from the Hindoo College.*"[11] (italics mine—Ed.)

The attack of the Hindoo orthodoxy was really against the growth of the free spirit—against the quest for truth —and the attack on the "Parthenon" was but one link in the chain. Derozio was forced to leave the Hindoo

[10]Excerpt from the *India Gazette* reprinted by the *Asiatic Journal*. vol. 3 Sept.-Dec. 1830, p. 5.

[11]*Bengal Spectator* (Calcutta)—Sept. 1842, pp. 81-83.

College as his teachings were *dangerous* from the point of view of the conservative old guard. His ardent devotees and staunch radicals were persecuted and often socially ostracized. Here is a typical letter by a liberal Bengalee which clearly shows what the Hindoo orthodoxy of the age was upto :

"I am shocked at the bigotry and ignorance of some Hindoo parents who attempt to encroach upon the private opinions of their children and permit themselves to be guided by the secretary of a certain Humbug Societv, to the extent of preventing any connection between their sons and some literary associations recently formed by educated young Hindoos."[12]

All this, however, failed to daunt this vanguard section of the educated youth of Bengal. They re-grouped their forces repeatedly, (although the forces were small compared to the vast support of the orthodoxy) brought out a number of journals, held meetings and set up different societies, schools and other institutions. One such venture was the Hindoo Eree School, which was set up mainly at the initiative of such eminent pupils of Derozio as Duckinaranjan Mukherjee, Madhab Mallick and Russick Krishna Mullick and with the active cooperations of Derozio himself. On the occasion of its first examination, a Calcutta journal wrote :

"The rays that have emanated from the Hindoo College and that are now diverging to other places, must eventually dissipate the mists of ignorance and superstition. When knowledge once begins to march, it cannot without greatest difficulty, be retarded in its progress. Prejudice and bigotry are hostile to truth and therefore to know-

[12]A letter to the Editor of India Gazette reprinted in the *Calcutta Monthly Journal*, February 1831, 55-56.

ledge—they cannot reign for any length of time. The young boys, who we observed the day before yesterday evinced much dexterity, and acuteness, will after a few days' instruction, be added to the liberal party..... The liberal, though now persecuted by the brutal tyranny of priestcraft, will soon have occasion to seal his triumph, in the overthrow of ignorance."[13]

In 1833, a number of these young radicals, together with some of the elderly liberals united to form an association dedicated to the cause of advancement of the Bengali language and literature. This was the *Sarbatatwa Deepika Sabha* where the members took the pledge to speak to each other only in Bengali during meetings of the Society. Among its founders were Romaprosad Roy (younger son of Rammohun Roy), Debendranath Tagore, Nobin Madhab Dey, Dwarkanath Mitra, Shama Churn Gupta, Joygopal Bose and a host of other students of the Hindoo College.[14]

Many-sided were the interests and activities of these young radicals—the *Young Bengal* as we may call them. In the same year, i.e. 1833, they brought out a journal to spread the knowledge of the Sciences—a bi-lingual (Bengali and English) monthly called the *Bignan Sar Sangraha* (A miscellany of best scientific articles). In the very first issue, the publishers wrote :

"The aim of the conductors is to communicate chiefly among the natives of Bengal, such selections from works of European literature and science as may tend to enlarge the sphere of their moral sentiments and infuse a spirit of activity and enterprise in all those pursuits which conduce to the happiness or glory of man. .... It is on this ac-

[13] *Calcutta Monthly Journal*, Sept. 1831, pp. 14-15.

[14] *Cf. Reformer* Feb., 1833. *Sambad-Kaumudi* Calcutta, 19th Jan., 1833.

count that we have decided to establish this paper. *It is not our intention, however, to err, as it is said Solon did, in leaning too much on the prevailing weakness of the people. Our object is not so much to amuse as to instruct, not so much to lull them into self-complacency as to stimulate them to greater exertions and nobler purposes.*" (Italics mine—Ed.)[15]

General enthusiasm about the cultivation of science was also growing in this period, as is clear from the controversy around the importance of the study of higher mathematics, which was carried on in the columns of the liberal newspaper, *The Reformer*. True to the predictions, the mists of superstition, blind faith and obscurantism spread by the priestcraft and the feudal orthodoxy, were being slowly pushed back and efforts were being made to replace them by the sunshine of knowledge and truth. It was a hard and continuous battle and the progressives of today may well be proud of their distant fore-fathers, the courageous *Young Bengal* of the thirties and early forties of the last century, who fearlessly waged the two-fronted struggle against our own social backwardness as well as the evil effects of alien rule in India.

II

By 1838, the first flush of enthusiasm was over and the young radicals, now a little maturer and wiser, were no longer satisfied with sporadic meetings and small organisations. They now wanted something stabler—an organisation which could direct their creative activities for a period of years and channelise their energies for the spread of knowledge far and wide in this country. To achieve this end, some of the leaders of the *Young Bengal* movement, as we call them, issued a printed appeal to hundreds of educated citizens of Bengal, both young and

[15]Book review in *Calcutta Magazine* 1833, p. 176.

old, on the 20th of February, 1838. The appeal in its entirety may be seen elsewhere inside this book. It is an extremely illuminating document and in part runs as follows :

"..... We have ever sincerely regretted the want of an Institution which should be the means of promoting frequent mutual intercourse among the educated Hindoos and of exciting an emulation for mental excellence. There is at present no occasion whereby we are ever called upon to congregate on an extensive scale for the purpose of mutual improvement and whence we may receive an impetus for applying ourselves to useful studies. Is it then not desirable to unite in such a laudable pursuit by which the bonds of fellowship may be strengthened, the acquisition of knowledge promoted and the sphere of our usefulness extended ?

With a view, therefore, to create in ourselves a determined and well regulated love of study which will lead us to dive deeper than the mere surface of learning and enable us to acquire a respectable knowledge on matters of general and more especially of local interest, we have thought it expedient to invite you to meet in order to consider the proposal of establishing an Institution which in our humble opinion is eminently calculated not only to effect this great end but likely to promote mutual good feeling and union—an object of no less importance...."

We come to learn from newspaper reports, that responding to this appeal, about three hundred native inhabitants assembled at the Sanskrit College Hall on the 12th of March, 1838 and unanimously resolved to establish an organisation called : "The Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge." In the standing rules of the Society (for complete rules, see inside the book), it was stated at the outset "that it is highly desirable that a society be es-

tablished among young natives with object of promoting mutual improvement and this society be named the society for the Acquisition of General knowledge.

2nd: that for this purpose monthly meetings be held, at which written or verbal discourses be delivered on subjects previously chosen by the deliverers, excluding religious discussions of all kinds."

This last point is significant. Religious bigotry of the orthodox Hindoos, as well as the anti-Indian attitude of certain christian missionaries, tended to polarise divisions in the Bengalee society and confuse real issues. The organisers of the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge (henceforth referred to as the SAGK) were conscious of this problem and hence they excluded religious controversies from the sphere of their discussions. This shows at the same time their tactical wisdom as well as their embryonic secular approach to problems.

Th members were very serious about the functioning of the Society. By another (No.10) standing rule the SAGK stipulated that a regular sitting of the Society shall be held on the second wednesday of every month. Rule No. 5 further stated that "with a view to secure the delivery of discourses at the stipulated time, such member as shall fail without satisfactory reasons to deliver his promised discourse, be liable to censure to be expressed by the committee."

For nearly six years, from 1838 to 1843 the members (numbering over one hundred and fifty from the very inception) of the SAGK met regularly and oral or written discourses were delivered in all these sittings. The organisers very wisely published a number of selected discourses in 3 separate volumes in 1840, '41 and '43. Together with the Discourses were found the printed appeal, the standing rules and 3 full lists of members of the SAGK in

1838, 1841 and 1843. All these have been included in their entirety in the present volume.

Before we start analysing the character and nature of the membership of the SAGK as well as the content of the "Discourses," it would be helpful for understanding better the mental make-up of the organisers of the Society, for us to look into what they themselves thought about this organisation. The first discourse of the SAGK was delivered by the Rev. Krishna Mohan Bannerjee, a non-conformist radical youth, a student of the Hindoo College and a direct disciple of Derozio, who had embraced christianity as a form of personal protest against the bigotry and ugliness of orthodox Hindoo Society. (For details about Krishna Mohan see Biographical notes at the end of the book).

At the very outset Krishna Mohan clearly states his own assessment about the SAGK :[16]

"The formation of a society like this, ought by no means to be passed over as a common occurrence in India. The young men of our country had long been known to pursue only vicious and unworthy objects when they met in a body. The social feelings of our nature had thus been turned to serve only base ends—and this had given to our friends much occasion for regret and to our enemies many opportunities of slander. I hope the existence of the Society for the Acquisition of General knowledge will produce a different effect and refresh the former with joy and fill the latter with confusion. I hope this association will prove to the world that however vicious and unworthy the state of society might have been before in our country, a change has been effected to a considerable extent ; and that *natives are not now wanting, who meet upon friendly terms*

[16]"Discourse" pages 1-2 in the present volume.

for the purpose of intellectual and moral improvement. I hope this fact will cheer the hearts of those who have long been wishing our emancipation from the bondage of ignorance and vice and that it will stop the mouth of calumny, ever bent upon looking for Hindu faults merely to enjoy a vain triumph against us. (italics mine: Ed.).

..... I do not remember any object for which the educated Hindus had ever met in such a large and respectable assembly as the one which I rejoice to behold this evening. While therefore we ought on the one hand to congratulate ourselves that such a spirit has been infused into our community, let us take heed on the other that we do not quench it by negligence and apathy. We have already raised the expectation of our friends high enough by commencing meetings of this kind and a disappointment under present circumstances will lead to the most grievous results. Accordingly I entreat you with every feeling of respect and deference to be circumspect and to unite with one mind in furthering your common interests —laying aside all differences on extraneous matters."

If we scrutinise the "Discourses" carefully and also scan the membership lists, we shall be convinced as to how correct was the estimate of Krishna Mohan about the importance of the SAGK in the then Bengalee society. Go through the contents and you are bound to be amazed at the range and rich variety of the subjects discussed. Here you have the "Importance of the Study of History" and then the very next occasion the SAGK is seriously debating whether the mother tongue (i. e. Bengali) should be both the medium of instruction as well as the official language of Bengal. Among other subjects of discussion are the condition of Hindu women in the then society and the question of civil reforms. Peary Chand Mitra is seen making a Herculean effort to reconstruct the History of

Hindoostan while others seriously try to write the geography and history of the districts of Bankoora, Chittagong and Tippera. There are literary discussions ("On Poetry") and abstract Philosophising ("On Knowledge"). There are scientific discussions on anatomy, on diets as well attempt to simplify the problem of spelling different words. There were many more interesting discussions to be sure, but of these we have no clear idea as these were not included in the volumes that have come down to our times. From 1842 onwards, political or semi-political discussions used to take place in some meetings of the SAGK, but of this, more at a later stage.

Apart from the articles published in the 3 selected volumes (1838 to 43) and reprinted in full in this book, we do know of certain other discourses that were delivered in 1840-41 in several meeting of the SAGK. In a forwarding note to the second volume of the Selected papers from the Discourses given at the SAGK, their committee of Papers states :

"The discourses selected for publication in this Volume and those which a list is subjoined, constitute the literary productions of the SAGK, April 1840 to May 1841.

1. A short topographical account of Chhota Nagpur —Taraknath Sen.
2. On Matter—Ganendra Mohan Tagore.
3. On the Cultivation of Staples of Chittagong—Khetra Mohan Mookherjee.
4. On the Anatomy of the Eye—Saut Cowrie Dutt.
5. On Truth—Kishori Chand Mitra.
6. On the Anatomy of the Ear—Prosunna Coomar Mittra.
7. Account of Singhbhum—Tarak Nath Sen.
8. On the Present condition and Future prospect of educated natives—Kishori Ch. Mitra.

While the Committee of Papers on behalf of the Society, beg to tender their best thanks to the author of the discourses, they deem it due to some of the papers enumerated above, especially those "on Matter," "On Truth" and "On the Present condition and Future prospect of the educated natives," to say that they exhibit much talent and that they have been withheld from this volume only to give place to others of a more interesting nature. The oral discourses on the anatomy of the Eye and the Ear, were of an interesting and instructive character and it is to be hoped that Baboos Satcourie Dutt and Prosunna Coomar Mittra, as well as other students of the Medical College will continue to give the same evidence of the interest they feel in the prosperity of the Institution. The Committee of papers also earnestly hope that other members of the Society will, according to the nature of their different studies, contribute to the promotion of that purpose of Mutual entertainment and instruction, for which the Association was established."

This foreword further proves how wide and varied were the interests of the young progressives rallied round the SAGK and we can only regret that due to lack of space (or funds?), the Committee of Papers of the SAGK, denied us the privilege of going through such interesting papers as "on Matter" by Ganendra Mohan Tagore or "On Truth" by Kishori Chand Mittra.

Not only was the choice of subject so interesting—the contents of most of the papers reveal remarkable depth, insight and forward-looking ideas. Reading a paper on "the Nature and Importance of Historical studies," Krishna Mohan Bannerji, in the very first meeting of the Society, drives home from a number of angles, the importance of the study of history to progressive mankind. At the end he sharply puts the query to the audience:

"If the study of history be of such immense consequence to mankind in general, it is by far the more so to persons of our present situation. We are by no means satisfied with the state of things around us. We wish, we were not surrounded with such wretched and degraded fellow-men and that ourselves could boast of wiser and more perfect heads and were inspired by a stronger public spirit. Dissatisfied with our present intellectual and moral condition and desiring to improve ourselves and countrymen, we have come to the determination of organising this very society. We profess to be instructor of our own selves and desire also to guide and direct others. Can we then consistently neglect a branch of study which is so essentially useful to all mankind and which could be peculiarly beneficial to us? Our case is by no means without parallels in the records of history. There are nations that at one time groaned under wretched degradation but who stand conspicuous now for everything that is good and great. Shall we not then in all probability come to the possession of many means of raising ourselves and our country if we attend closely to the lessons of history? Can we observe with attention the rise of European Communities from the lowest depth of barbarism without getting some insight into the secret of human emancipation from corruption and misery ?"[17]

Or take for example the speech of Uday Chandra Addhya in June 1838 putting forward the proposal for the cultivation of the Bengali language and its necessity for the natives of this country. In this speech delivered in Bengali Addhya points out that Europeans have advanced so much thanks primarily to the spread of modern education and this has been conducted in the mother tongue of

[17]"Discourse"—pp. 22-23 in the present volume.

each country. On the other hand we continue to remain subject and backward. So, Addhya passionately asks :

"Oh Shame ! Does not all this inspire the people here to become equals of Englishmen ! Shall they even now remain dumb as cattle and eat and drink what others continue to supply ? ' Oh my friends, please do not think that my object is to pour ridicule. Rather my heart bleeds and tears stream down my face when I think about the lack of knowledge in mother tongue among the natives of this country. All that I have said have but one aim—to do away with the present state of affairs as soon as possible.

.... The superiority of men lies in their efficiency. Please do not misconstrue my proposal and think that I am suggesting that this cannot be achieved by means of the English language. *But try to understand that only when the people of this country learn properly the language of this country—then and then alone will they acquire that efficiency which can enable them to shake off the present slavery and became master of their own land.*"[18] (italics mine—Ed).

Then there was that remarkable paper read by Mohesh Chandra Deb in January 1839 on the condition of Hindoo Women. Without mincing matters, Mohesh Chandra hits the nail right on the head when he declares :

"Nothing can be more strikingly deplorable than the wretched situation of the companion of man in this part of the terraqueous globe. Women who was allotted to man as his inseparable companion during his journey through life to participate his dangers and sorrows, to alleviate his distresses, and share his joys and happiness, leads indeed a wrethed life in this country. Penned up in her eternal prison house, she is doomed to pass her days in misery and confinement. Condemned to moulder away

[18]"Discourses" pp. 26-27, present valume.

her fair form which is all delicacy under one cheerless sun and among the self-same objects that greeted her eye, when she first saw light, she is sentenced to perform all the degrading offices of a cook and scullion at once.

..... They (menfolk) suppose women were born only to minister to their comforts and luxuries and consider that man is absolute lord not only over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air and the beasts of the forests, but over the female world. They, therefore, look upon their wives as household slaves and treat them with a degree of superciliousness which even the Sultan of Turkistan does not show towards his meanest serf."[19]

Commenting on the lot of Hindoo widows, Mohesh Chandra states :

"The death of their husbands cut them off from every comfort and enjoyment. A constant round of fasts and vigils becomes the business of their existence. They are ordained by the shastras to feed upon rice and simple vegetables once a day and to wear course and unostentatious garment. They must not decorate themselves with any sort of jewels. In short, they are doomed to lead a life of stern privation, the parallel of which is scarcely met with in the history of the most austere monk or ascetic. They are condemned to additional household drudgery and drag on their existence, a burthen alike to themselves and their surviving relations. Thus melancholy and friendless, they journey on in life's weary pilgrimage, each of them a solitary wanderer on the face of the earth. But the most trying evil which they are obliged to undergo is the perpetual celibacy to which they are subjected. Many of them young and beautiful and unable to subdue nature give way to those temptations which beset them on every

[19] *Ibid*—pp. 92-94.

side. I would fain draw a veil over this part of my subject. These unfortunate victims of a monstrous system are led to commit every species of crime. To conceal the consequences of their guilt, they have recourse to the most harrowing means. Thousands of innocent babes are smuggled into the grave from the womb, thousands of widows too commit self-destructions to fly these miseries and crimes. Thus the land is filled with pollution and the most hideous vices."[20]

It is well to remember that Mohesh Chandra Deb read this paper and the enthusiastic members of the SAGK warmly applauded it in 1839, a full decade before the great Vidyasagar was to launch his crusade against the wretched condition of Hindoo widows. Mohesh Chandra also lashed out against the system of Kulin marriages and tried to point out the way forward. According to him education for the Hindoo women "alone furnishes a remedy to all those heavy evils, which I have endeavoured to delineate above."[21]

The members of the SAGK not only discussed, they felt and expressed time and again the urge to introduce manifold reforms in this couutry. How strongly they felt on this score, is most strikingly illustrated in the paper read out by the Rev. Krishna Mohan Bannerji before members of the Society, entitled "On Civil Reforms." It is a remarkable document, reflecting accurately the throbbing pulsating minds of *Young Bengal* and hence, it would not be taxing too much the patience of the readers, if we quote from that document at some length :

"I will not dwell any more upon particular examples of the evils by which we are surrounded. Our minds are

[20] *Op. Cit.*—p. 104.
[21] *Op. Cit*—p. 105.

full of their practical effects and our daily observation and experience are sufficient to bring them constantly to our recollection. I pass on therefore to the ultimate object of my discourse, which is to call upon you to set seriously, about their improvement: .... who will come forward to India's relief in this respect if her enlightened children indulge supine indolence and thoughtless inactivity? Are the ignorant, the illiberal, the unenlightened, the uninstructed and the illiterate to lead the great work of reformation? Can the blind lead the blind? No! Gentlemen, that shall not, that cannot be. To you it is that the conutry looks up with eagernesss—and from you it is that she expects her realize from one of the most galling yokes—even that of superstition, ignorance and evil custom. The work of domestic and moral reform must begin with and be conducted by the inhabitants of the soil. Foreigners may at best aid and encourage you—but you must personally bear the heat and brunt of the battle .... You must yourselves exert your energies if you wish to see better days in your country. ...

The difficulty with which under present circumstances attempts at reform are likely to be attended ought not to deter us from the task. Great works generally involve corresponding troubles and even dangers—which try our zeal and put our moral energies to a severe test. .... The educated portion therefore must meet with opposition and in some cases with persecution too, if they attempt a renovation. You cannot calculate upon a bed of roses for a long time if you apply your mental powers to action and protest against monstrous and mischievous practices that are in fashion.... This prospect however should not damp your spirits—since in the struggle between truth and falsehood, principle and prejudice, even if the advocates of the former be called upon to renounce their very

lives, still they must be acknowledged to be more than conqueror, though the defenders of the latter seem for a time to prevail.

.... Will you harbour cowardice and weakness in the cause of certain and solid reform ? Will you tolerate and sanction customs and Institutions which you consider to be positively injurious to the well-being of your country, through fear of difficulty and troubles, while your memory is stored with numberless instances of valour and energy lavished after comparatively trivial subjects ? *Where have you known of a reformation springing naturally from the abuses it was intended to destroy ? Where have you known of a renovator lull altogether in a bed of down ? Did Socrates loath the destructive cup when it came to him during a course of conscientious conduct ? Did not Luther suffer when he set himself in array against the corruptions patronized by the great and opulent of the world ? Did not Ridley and Lattimer send up to the sky, volumes of smoke at the stake ? Will it then be too hard, if Hindoo reformers suffer ?*"[22] (italics mine—Ed.)

It would be wrong to suppose that only the maturer section of the members of the SAGK (i.e. its leadership) felt so keenly and showed such a social awareness. Even the teen-aged students of the Hindoo College showed clear stamp of this awakening in their speeches and writings. Shama Churn Dutt was a member of the SAGK and a young student of the Hindoo College. How deeply had the work of the SAGK impressed him is clearly proved from his prize-winning essay, composed in 1845 on "The duties of man as a subject of the state and as a member of society." Driving home his argument, Shama Churn wrote :

"As subjects of the state, we should be loyal ourselves to a good king and good government and encour-

[22] *Ibid*—pp. 193-96.

age loyalty to others..... We should love our native country.

.... But though we should be loyal to good kings, we are by no means bound to pay allegiance to a tyrant. On the contrary, *it is our duty, I am persuaded, to rid the world of tyrannical monarchs and to subvert despotic governments.* (italics mine : Ed).

.... Our duties as members of society consist also in doing good to mankind. Countless benefits have accrued to man from the acquisition of knowledge.... It has enabled him to control the elements even: the raging tempest hears his call ; the boisterous ocean obeys his mandate. In short, all the machines and engines which contribute immensely to our happiness, are the fruits of knowledge. Thus knowledge is one the most efficient means of human happiness. It is therefore our duty to contribute to the diffusion of knowledge."[23]

Let us now have a look at the composition of the membership of the SAGK. Complete lists of the membership of the SAGK are in our possession upto now—that of 1838, 1841 and 1843. All three lists show a membership of over 150 persons—ninety percent of whom are common to all three lists. A more detailed analysis shows interesting facts. Of the total members, more than half (nearly 80) belong to the Hindoo College, Calcutta. They are either ex-students of the College (like Ramgopal Ghosh, Radhanath Sikdar, Dukhinaranjan, Ramtonoo Lahiri etc.) or present students. About a score of members belong to the newly-founded Calcutta Medical College and they are among the best students of the institution. There are a dozen or so who were direct pupils of Derozio (Ramgopal,

[23]Scholarship examinations of the Students of Hindoo and Hooghly Colleges, 1845-46. (Military Orphan Press, Calcutta), pp. 39-40.

Radhanath, Peary Churn, Ramtonoo, Mohesh Deb, Madhab Mullick, Russick Krishna, Dukhinaranjan, Krishna Mohan etc.). The older generation liberals are represented by Tarachand Chuckerbutty, Rajen Dutt etc. There is Debendranath Tagore, son of Dwarka Nath as well as young Iswar Chandra Bannerji of Sanskrit College, later to become the great Vidyasagar—the most resplendent star of the Bengal Renaissance. A look into the religion and caste reveals that there are Brahmins, Kayasthas, Vaidyas etc.—as well as youth from the business community—all of them attracted by reformist idealism. There are almost all the important christian converts. There are also the staunch disciples of Derozio, who are agnostic and secular in their outlook. Further, we find that though the bulk of the members lived in Calcutta, there were quite a few members from the mofussils—not only from nearby Howrah, Hooghly etc. but also from far off Dacca and Mymensing. These members from the mofussils were invariably centres of progressive and reforming activities in their own areas. They set up many schools and other progressive institutions and sometimes even started an organisation like the SAGK in miniature, like the "Timir Nashak Sabha" of Dacca—the society for fighting against ignorance. Thus a careful analysis of the three membership lists of the SAGK clearly reveals that all the radical and progressive strands of the 'thirties of the 19th century both in Calcutta as well as in the rest of Bengal, converged into a common stream to make the SAGK a united platform for national awakening in Bengal.[24]

As more and more discussions took place in the meetings of the SAGK, the consciousness of the members of the society sharpened and gained in depth. The subjects

[24]For greater details see Biographical Notes at the end of the Book as well as the three complete lists of membership.

also tended to become more and more political. In the meanwhile, these restless young men had joined forces with liberal East Indians and Europeans to form another organisation exclusively for the learning of the sciences and engineering. This organisation was called the Mechanical Institute and was established in Calcutta in 1839. Among its founder-members we find such names as Tarachand Chuckerbuttee, Peary Chand Mitra, Ramgopal Ghosh and so on.[25] In 1841, over 200 enthusiastic young men gathered together in North Calcutta to form the Deshhitaishanee Sabha or the Society for the improvement of the country. This was frankly a political organisation and the organizers made no secret about it.

Delivering the main speech on the occasion of the foundation of the Deshhitaishanee Sabha, Sarada Prosad Ghosh, then a headmaster and previously a student of the Hindoo College as well as a direct disciple of H. L. V. Derozio, said :

"Ever since the commencement of the British supremacy in this country, the policy of our present rulers has been to deprive us of the enjoyment of political liberty. ... our deprivation of the enjoyment of political liberty is the cause of our misery and degradation. The losses of happiness follows the losses of civil liberty as shadow does substance. ...our present rulers pay a superstitious adoration to mammon and scruple not to adopt any means by which they can enrich themselves and reduce us to squalid poverty. Need I undertake the painful task of harrowing up your tender feelings by an enumeration of all the

[25]The detailed reports about the foundation of the Calcutta Mechanical Institution, its prospectus, the series of lectures delivered there etc. have also been collected and these shall come out in a similarly edited form in the next volume, now in preparation—Editor.

instances of grinding oppression exercised over us ? No, because they are too numerous to be detailed before you and too glaring to escape your observation. ... Such being the nature of the constitution of this country, are we not prompted by all that is dear to man to adopt measures calenlated to improve our condition ?"[26]

The rules of the new association, a brief summary of which was published by the same issue of the "Hurkaru" further reveals the growth of political consciousness among the educated young Bengalees. One of the first point among the rules is that the Subha will keep close and regular contact and move in co-operation with the British India Society of England who were trying to focus British public's attention on the grievances of Indians. Secondly, the new Subha was to be open to all natives of India, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sect—this is a remarkable step forward for that age.[27]

In the very next year, i.e. in 1842, the *Young Bengal* group brought out a political bi-lingual (English and Bengali) journal called the "Bengal Spectator." Writing a letter to his friend Gobinda Bysack, on the 10th January 1842, Ramgopal Ghosh, Vice-President of the SAGK and a leader of the progressives, clearly states why such a journal is necessary. He writes :

"The necessity of establishing a paper, I had long been convinced of and I have never failed to agitate the subject on all suitable occasions.... On last Tuesday evening the 7th, Tara Chand (Chuckerbutty), Peary (Chand Mitter), myself met at Krishna's (Rev. K. M. Bannerjee) house

[26] *Bengal Hurkaru*, October 6, 1841.

[27] *Ibid.*

Fuller details about the "Desh-hitaishanee Subha" and the complete text of the speech of Sarada Prosad Ghosh will be published in the next Volume, now being prepared by the Edittor.

and we resolved upon establishing a monthly magazine in Bengali and English.... The magazine is to keep up a spirit of enquiry amongst the educated natives ... and to discuss such subjects as female education, the re-marriage of Hindoo widows etc. *It is in short to be our peculiar organ.*" italics mine—Ed.).[28]

The "Bengal Spectator" came out and was soon converted into a fortnightly. In the meanwhile the tone and temper of the *Young Bengal* became sharply critical about British misrule in India. On the 8th of February, 1843 (the scheduled wednesday), more than 150 "native gentlemen" had come to attend a regular meeting of the Society for the Acquisition of the General knowledge. Tarachand Chuckerbuttee, the President of the SAGK was in the chair and among the non members present was Capt. D. L. Richardson, Principal of the Hindoo College. At this meeting, Dukhinaranjan Mookerjee, already famous as a fiery orator, came forward to read a paper on the present state of the East India Company's criminal judicature and police under the Bengal Presidency. When he had delivered half of his speech, he was interrupted by Capt. Richardson who characterized the essay as "treason." The chairman objected to this remark and asked Capt. Richardson to apologise. The meeting ended in a state of great heat and tension.[29]

This meeting of the SAGK constitutes a landmark not only in the history of that association but also in the history of social and political awakening in Bengal in early 19th century. Hence, it would be worthwhile to examine

[28]Sanyal, Ramgopal, "Project for a native newspaper," *Bengal Celebrities*, vol. I, p. 181.

[29]From a correspondent's detailed report in *Bengal Hurkaru* of 13th February, 1843. The entire report has been reprinted in this book.

the whole incident at some more length. During the course of his speech, Dukhinaranjan said :[30]

"British power in this part of India had existed for four-score years.... a time amply sufficient for the purification of the streams of justice, had there been a sincere desire to bestow the benefits of a just judicial and police administration upon the people.

This, however, had not been done. The courts in the interior were notoriously and shamelessly corrupt... it would be flattery and an untruth to say that the present system of police was one in which the natives could repose the least confidence."

At this point Capt. D. L. Richardson jumped up and interrupting Dukhinaranjan said that he condemned "the tone and spirit in which the writer had conveyed his sentiments, nor the conclusions which had been stated. The sentiments which had been expressed, were calculated to create discontent. Capt. Richardson, therefore; could not permit the Hindoo or the Sanskrit College being "converted into a den of treason" and he would "close the door against all such meetings."[31]

But neither the word "treason" nor the angry tone of Capt. Richardson was able to intimidate the meeting of the SAGK. Rather the effect on its members was just the opposite. Correctly reflecting their mood, the chairman Tarachand Chuckerbuttee declared:

"Capt. Richardson, with due respect I beg to say that I cannot allow you to proceed any longer in this course of conduct towards our society and as the president of the Society and on behalf of my friend, Baboo Dukhin, I must say, that your remarks are anything but becoming..., You

[30] *Benga Hurkarul*, Feb. 13th, 1843.
[31] *Ibid.*

are only a visitor on this occasion and posssess no right to interrupt a member of this society in the utterances of his opinion. I hope that Capt. Richardson will see the propriety of offering an apology to my friend, the writer of the essay and to the meeting."[32]

After this, Dukhinaranjan again rose to defend his essay. Refuting the charge of Capt. Richardson he said that "he and others had been accused of treason but he maintained that it was no treason to point out the faults and crimes of those who exercised a delegated authority of persons who were either unable or unwilling to do the duties, which they had undertaken on behalf of the people of England.... Let the evils referred to be removed and all present would become the admirers and not the accusers of the East India Company."[33]

At the end of the meeting, all those present generally agreed with the views of Dukhinaranjan and also upheld the conduct of the Chairman, Tarachand Chuckerbuttee. It was the unanimous feeling of the house that after Capt. Richardson's acrobatics, meetings of the SAGK should be held elsewhere.[34] From press reports we learn that the headquarters of the SAGK was shifted to 31, Fouzdari Balakhana in February 1843. It was here that George Thompson came to address members of the SAGK in March 1843 and it was here that on 18th April of the same year, members of the SAGK and others aided by Thompson founded the Bengal British India Society—the first full-fledged political organisation in this country.[35]

Thus, one phase of the awakening in Bengal in the first half of the 19th century, came to an end while a new phase

[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Op. cit.*
[34] *Op. cit.*
[35] *Bengal Hurkaru, 20th April,* 1843.

had already begun. The Society for the Acquisition of General knowledge in its span of life (1838 to 1843) had served a tremendously useful role by keeping together the young radicals of the 'thirties and by stimulating the spirit of enquiry. Commenting on this period, Soshee Chunder Dutt, a member of the SAGK, wrote in his maturers years :

"We indeed are not converts to the dogma that the Hindoo mind is entirely deficient in the loftier sentiments of patriotism, nor are we blind to the fact, that as in everything else, in courage and boldness also, young Bengal has attained a haughtier cast than had ever been noticed in the cowed servility of his predecessors. The day is now gone by when a Hindu could be struck even by an Englishman with impunity. We have ourselves more than once seen the blow instantly returned.... Societies and associations have been formed, in which indignant members have spoken menace and defiance while alluding to the British name and portrayed in lurid colours the treachery, perfidy and aggression, the oppression, extortion and injustice of the British power. This has afforded a handle to the bitter enemies of the mature youth..."[36]

Among these bitter enemies of the *Young Bengal* we find not only the arrogant imperialist Englishmen like the kind of Capt. D. L. Richardson, but also the champions of the Hindoo orthodoxy. They too cried out "treason" against the members of the SAGK but for different reasons. Many years later, looking back on the angry 'thirties Kishori Chand Mitra, a prominent member of the SAGK wrote :

[36]Dutt Shoshee Chunder—*Essay on Miscellaneous Subjects* (Calcutta 1854) pp. 40-41.

"The native managers of the College, cradled in superstition, were alarmed at the progress which Derozio's pupils were making.... the seed which had been sown had germinated and developed into a stately tree and was to bear goodly fruit.

The youthful band of reformers who had been educated at the Hindoo College, like the tops of Kanchanjunga were the first to catch and reflect the dawn.... *They were the first to go into the breach and carry the ramparts. They felt and they asserted in their lives that what is morally wrong, cannot be theologically right. The foundations of the fabric thus opened and examined and its outworks thus sapped seemed to be tottering to their fall. India, which had been buried so long under the ashes of prejudice, seemed to be overtaken by a new resurrection and to be casting about to rise on her feet."*[37] (italics mine—Ed.)

III

It is surprising (or on second thoughts, not so surprising) how much the *Young Bengal* and the 'thirties of the nineteenth century have been neglected and underestimated by scholars and historians. Dismissing the *Young Bengal* contemptuously in one sweeping sentence Biman Bihari Majumdar observes that they were mainly aristocratic Indians who "failed to rouse political consciousness even among the limited circle of educated men in Bengal"[38] Another scholar, Benoy Ghosh, recently wrote in well-known Bengali monthly, that the main characteristic of the radical youth of Bengal in the 'thirties of the last century was "extreme progressivism,

[37]Mittra Kisori Chand, "The Presidency College" *Bengal Magazine* (Calcutta), vol. II. pp. 132-33.

[38]Majumdar B. B.—*History of Political Thought in India from Rammohun to Dayananda,* (Calcutta University) p. 174.

frivolity and recklessness"[39] as well as "their love of the West and intoxication with the English."[40] The few foreign scholars who have recently started showing interest in this period, have mostly not cared to wade through the vast untouched data strewn about in newspapers and records and merely dittoed the arguments of the Indian detractors of the *Young Bengal*. For example, Charles. H. Heimsath, Associate Professor of South Asian studies, school of International service, the American University, Washington D. C. in a book published at late as 1964, approvingly agrees with Indian estimates of the Young Bengal in following words :

"Most extreme were the students of the Hindoo College at Calcutta who adopted an aggressive attitude ... there was a rush for everything English ... immorality, licentiousness, riotous living were the order of the day. De-nationalising emasculation was the prevailing characteristic".[41]

That all these opinions, both Indian and foreign, on the radical stream of awakening in Bengal in the 'thirties and the early 'forties of the 19th century are utterly baseless and have no connection whatsoever with the realities of that age, should already be clear from the facts marshalled in the first two sections of my introductory comments. These so-called estimates of Indian and foreign *pundits* are not based on objective historical scholarship, but on heresay, myth, half-truth and distortions. Why is this so? The reasons should be pretty ovbious to critical, discerning readers. The critics of to-day slander the *Young*

[39]Ghosh Benoy—"Maharshi Debendranath Tagore", *Parichay*, Feb. 1965.

[40]*Ibid.*

[41]Heimsath, C. H.—*Indian Nationalism and Hindoo Social Reform* (Oxford, 1964) pp. 12-13.

Bengal and try to send them to obscurity for the same reasons as the Hindoo orthodoxy of the 'thirties of the last century suppressed the "Parthenon" dismissed Derozio and cried out "treason" against the truly liberal and nationalistic activities of the students and ex-students of the Hindoo College. Benoy Ghosh lets the cat out of the bag when in an unguarded moment he states that "the newly educated youth were leaning towards agnosticism, turning away from the path of religion."[42]

Here is the truth at last. As I have shown in the two preceding sections, the educated youth of Bengal of that age had committed the "unpardonable crime" of launching a two-fold courageous attack on the citadel of Hindoo conservatism as well as on British misrule in India. Far from "denationalising emasculation," a strong patriotic feeling, deep love for the country and sense of national self-respect were their main characteristics. That is why they sharply condemned racial arrogance, corruption, extortion and oppression by European vested interests in India. We have also shown how the educated youth tried to apply the concrete lesson of American indepedence and dream about the independence of India. Far from being "intoxicated with English," they sharply criticised the neglect of the vernacular languages and advocated the cause of the mother tongue in a forthright manner. They were conscious enough to point out the link between cultivation of the mother tongue in Bengal and the question of our political liberation.

At the same time, they were no revivalists, no narrow nationalists who glossed over their own weaknesses. Hence they mercilessly lashed out at the superstitions, bigotry and prejudices of our own society. Reform everywhere

[42]Ghosh Benoy—*Parichay*, Feb. 1965.

was their motto and they raised the cry for monogamy among Hindoos as well as widow re-marriage, full one decade before Vidyasagar's great crusade got under way. They also outspokenly advocated education for women as well as equal right for all, irrespective of religion or caste. This type of fearless secularism is even today like a bitter pill to Hindoo conservatives of our country and there are too many persons whose real grudge against Nehru, was the secular, modern social outlook of Jawaharlal. No wonder then, that such progressive modern social outlook would evoke the fury of the orthodoxy then and of their standard-bearers among the scholars now, in the present age. That is all the more reason why we should make a deeper analysis and a proper estimate of these "first radicals" of our country in the modern period of history.

What were the main streams along which national awakening surged forward in Bengal in the second half of the Nineteenth Century,—the period of flowering of our 'renaissance'? One was the stream of intellectual enquiry, of spread of rationalism and modern education through debating clubs, societies, schools and journals. Another was the stream of social reform, destroying the fetters of social and religious conservatism which acted as a brake on all social progress. The third was the cultivation of the Bengali language and development of Bengali literature. Finally there was the stream of direct political consciousness starting with exposures of British misrule in India and culminating in the demand for self-government. Now, if we go carefully again through the facts put in the first two sections of my introductory comments as also through the contents of this volume (leave alone other data), what do we find? The free spirit first appeared, like a nor'wester no doubt, in the class-rooms of the Hindoo College and in the debating-clubs of the disciples of Derozio and his

like. Shattering the stifling atmosphere of servility and blind-faith created by the Mantra-chanting, hypocritical, feudal orthodoxy, these stormy petrels of our first awakening fearlessly declared that "what is morally wrong cannot be theologically right."

They correctly realised that acquiring and spreading of knowledge was the central task. Not to obey the Shastras but to follow the mandates of truth and reason became their watchword. This way alone, they realised, the country could be rejuvenated and reformed. This is our country, degraded now but we shall resurrect it—if such was the keynote of their ideas and actions, what else were the *Young Bengal* if not our first nationalists and patriots? Why else should Peary Chand Mitra try to rewrite the history of Hindusthan and why else should so many leading members of the SAGK try to present a clear socio-economic picture of the Districts of Bengal and Behar? The article of Mohesh Deb on conditions of Hindoo women and that of Krisna Mohan Banneiji on Civil Reforms, are like tocsins, calling on the restless youth to come forward and carry out all reforms in practice in order to rejuvenate the society in Bengal, without which progress or freedom would never be possible.

Their "peculiar organ" *Bengal Spectator* in its very first issue campaigned for widow re-marriage and other crying social reforms. This reforming spirit became a crusade a decade or two later in the hands of Vidyasagar and others but the credit of being pioneers even in this respect must surely go once again to the *Young Bengal*. The newspapers of that period, one and all report, that the entire membership of the SAGK enthusiastically backed Uday Chand Addhya's call for cultivation of Bengali and its adoption as the official language of the state. Here too then, the young men coming out of the Hindoo

College did not display any "frivolity" or "intoxication with English" but acted as trail-blazers and pathfinders.

The sharp criticism by these young men about British misrule in India and their strong sense of national self-respect were bye-words even then. Shoshee Chunder Dutt in his essay on the *Young Bengal* in 1854 clearly admited that "as in everything else, in courage and boldness also, young Bengal has attained a haughtier cast than had ever been noticed in the cowed servility of his predecessor.[43]" The clash in the meeting of SAGK in February 1843 between Capt. Richardson and Tarachand Chuckerbutty, Dukhinaranjan Mookerjee etc. have already been mentioned. These are clear pointers as to which way the mind of these young men were travelling and travelling very fast indeed. The fact that George Thompson came to address the SAGK in April 1843 and soon after the Bengal British India Society was born mainly consisting of members of the SAGK, is no mere chance coincidence but the logical culmination of a process—a phase—which had begun in Bengal in the angry 'thirties of the nineteenth century.

However, another important problem yet remains untackled—why did not the progressive stream of the 'thirties and the early 'forties become the broad river of our national awakening in the second half of the Nineteenth Century? I have not attempted nor do I intend to attempt in this introductory note to go elaborately into the heart of this matter. One point, however, is clear—most of the members of the SAGK came from the landlord class or from the ranks of the people who acted as middle men to European merchants. Very few of them showed any inclination for industrial or commercial adventures.

[43]Dutt Shoshee Chunder—*Essays* (Calcutta 1854), pp. 40-41.

Still fewer had real sympathy and understanding for the masses of Bengal's peasantry, although the records of the Bengal British India Society in 1843 do reveal such an embryonic trend. This inevitably narrowed down the social base of the *Young Bengal* and later on stilted their growth. All this however does not take away from their glory but merely puts them in the proper perspective. Anyway, I propose to deal with this and other connected problems when the next volume comes out, where all the documents relevant to this problem shall also find their due place.

Before closing this note it must be acknowledged that among the outstanding scholars and historians of the older generation, two had earlier recognized the worth of the *Young Bengal.* Prof. Susobhan Sarkar, the eminent historian, had drawn our attention some years back to the importance of this age in his brilliant but all too brief article.[44] Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose, outstanding Indian anthropologist also made the forthright observation that "the mind of Young Bengal was aflame with love for the twin gods of liberty and rationalism."[45] According to him, they "drew inspiration from the secular atmosphere which was built up in the neighbourhood of College Square, which became the home of various educational institutions in the city of Calcutta."[46]

Today, when forces of a conservative social order, of obscurantism and revivalism are once again rearing their ugly heads in Bengal and in India, it would be of more than academic interest to analyse and re-assess the role

[44]Sarkar, S. C.—"*Derozio and Young Bengal*", *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance* (Calcutta, 1958).

[45]Bose, N. K.—*Modern Bengal,* (Vidyoday Library, Calcutta 1959) p. 47.

[46]*Ibid.*—p. 48.

played by the heroic youth of the Hindoo College and their compatriots, of their titanic two-front struggle against the indignities and oppression heaped upon India by the Imperialist British rulers as well as the reactionary back-pull of a decadent, hypocritical old social order, represented by the Hindoo orthodoxy. The Young Bengal were no cynics who rebelled against tradition for the sake of rebellion only—they had a deep and abiding faith in their country, in humanity and in the march of civilisation itself. It is time that we sweep aside the garbage of lies, maligning campaigns and slanders that keep their great contributions hidden from the generation of today and it is the fervent hope of the writer of these lines, that this volume (and the subsequent ones) will contribute a little in that direction. This is the minimum that we can do to repay our debts to the glorious *Young Bengal* who despite all their limitations were the first to "Catch and reflect the dawn" of the modern age in India.

GOUTAM CHATTOPADHYAY

SELECTION

OF

DISCOURSES DELIVERED AT THE MEETINGS

OF THE

SOCIETY FOR THE ACQUISITION OF

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

VOL. I.

CALCUTTA:

PRINTED AT THE SUNOBAD POORNO CHUNDRODOY PRESS,
BY MESSRS THOMAS CASTELLO AND DANIEL FERMIE.
No. 20, OMRATOLLAH.

1840.

PREFACE

—:o:—

In pursuance of the following invitation about three hundred native gentlemen assembled at the Sanscrit College Hall on the 12th March, 1838 and unanimously resolved to establish the proposed Society.

PROPOSAL

FOR ESTABLISHING IN CALCUTTA AN INSTITUTION

TO BE CALLED

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ACQUISITION OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

TO THE RISING GENERATION OF THE HINDOOS.

COUNTRYMEN,

Though humiliating be the confession, yet we cannot for a moment deny the truth of the remark so often made by many able and intelligent Europeans, who are by no means inimical to the cause of native improvement, that in no one department of learning, are our acquirements otherwise than extremely superficial. We need only examine ourselves in order to be convinced of the justice of the remark. After the ground-work of our mental improvement has been laid in the school, and a school tuition seldom does more, we enter into the world and never think of building a solid superstructure. The fate of our Debating Associations, most of which are now extinct, while not one is in a flourishing condition, as well as the puerile character of the native productions that appear in the periodical publications, are lamentable proofs of this sad neglect. If a tree is to be known by its fruits, where, with but one or two solitary exceptions are the fruits to which we can point with pride and satisfaction as manifesting any degree of intellectual energy or extent of learning? We have ever sincerely regretted the want of an Institution which should be the means of promoting frequent mutual intercourse among the educated Hindoos, and of exciting an emulation for mental excellence. There is at present no occasion whereby we are ever

called upon to congregate on an extensive scale, for the purpose of mutual improvement and whence we may receive an impetus for applying ourselves to useful studies. Is it then not desirable to unite in such a laudable pursuit by which the bonds of fellowship may be strenghtened, the acquisition of knowledge promoted, and the sphere of our usefulness extended ?

With a view therefore to create in ourselves a determined and well-regulated love of study, which will lead us to dive deeper than the mere surface of learning, and enable us to acquire a respectable knowledge on matters of general, and more especially of local interest, we have thought it expedient to invite you to meet in order to consider the proposal of establishing an Institution which in our humble opinion is eminently calculated not only to effect this great end but likely to promote mutual good feeling and union—an object of no less importance. We cannot of course within the limits of a circular give a detailed account of the plan we propose to lay before you, but allow us to state the following brief outline.

Such members of the proposed Society as may be willing should undertake to deliver at its meetings written or verbal discourses on subjects suited to their respective tastes at such times as may be previously fixed by them with a view to their convenience and to the degree of research and attention which the subjects may require, and if they should fail without satisfactory reasons to fulfil their pledges, they will be liable to pay a pecuniary fine. The purpose of this circular is to call a general meeting, to consider of the propriety of establishing the proposed institution and to arrange the details.

It is at this General Meeting, Gentlemen, that we most earnestly solicit your attendance. You must be well aware that the success of a public object like the one we propose must depend on the degree of cordial cooperation we may receive from the members of our community. We cannot believe that in such a cause coldness will be manifested by any person that entertains the least regard for his own improvement or breathes any love for his own country, and we flatter ourselves with the hope that we shall meet with your hearty support in a proposal, which none can look upon with indifference unless lost to all sense of duty or sunk in apathy. Those who may from circumstances be unable to take an active share in our proceedings, can at least countenance the object by their presence, for which they may be assured of our thanks.

We have through the kindness of Baboo Ramcomul Sen, Secretary to the Sanscrit College, obtained permission to use the Sanscrit College Hall for our meeting, where precisely at 7 o'clock p. m. on Monday the 12 March next we earnestly intreat and hope that every one of you, Gentlemen, will have goodness to try your best to be present.

TARINEY CHURN BANERJEE,
RAMGOPAUL GHOSE,
RAMTONOO LAHORY,
TARACHAND CHUKERBUTTEE,
RAJKRISHNA DAY.

Calcutta February 20, 1838.

The association actually commenced its operations on the 16th of *May* 1838, since which date up to 12th *February* 1840, twenty nine discourses have been delivered, out of which the Committee of Papers appointed for the purpose have selected such as will be found in this Volume to be printed for the use of the members.

The following are the standing rules of the society.

1st. That it is highly desirable that a society be established among the young natives with the object of *promoting* mutual improvement and this society be denominated the *Society* for the *Acquisition of general Knowledge.*

2nd. That for this purpose monthly meetings be held, at which written or verbal discourses be delivered on subjects previously chosen by the Deliverers, excluding religious discussions of all kinds.

3rd. That one President, two vice Presidents, two Secretaries, one Treasurer and a managing Committee consisting of six members besides the above officers be elected to conduct the affairs of the society.

4th. That all office bearers be annually elected.

5th. That with a view to secure the delivery of discourses at the stipulated time such member as shall fail without satisfactory reasons to deliver his promised discourse be liable to a censure to be expressed by the Committee.

6th. That the members have the power of voting by proxy when necessary.

7th. That at any meeting at least one member shall deliver a discourse and that the name of the member and the subject of discourse shall be made known at the immediately preceding meeting—the name having been ascertained previously by the standing Committee.

8th. That after a discourse has been delivered any other member shall be at liberty to express his sentiments on it.

9th. That all written discourses shall be preserved by the Society and open for reference by the members, and it shall be competent to the writers of discourses to demand and have copies of them ; but the names of discourses shall not be printed and published without the express consent of the writer and the authority of the Committee.

10th. That the meetings of the society shall be held on every second Wednesday of every month.

11th. That a question once discussed upon shall not be resumed within six months after such discussion.

12th. That a member shall be proposed at one meeting and elected at the next, and the election shall not be considered valid unless made by a majority.

13th. That the Committee shall have power to add to their number to the extent of six above the present number if necessary and to fill vacancies.

14th. That the deliverer of discourse shall be the only person for the admittance of visitors.

15th. That the subscriptions required from the members to meet the expenditure of the society be *voluntary*.

LIST OF MEMBERS
1840
David Hare Esqr.—Hony. Visitor

A

Baboo Anund Chunder Mullick

B

,, Bany Madhub Mittra
,, Bany Nauth Bose*
,, Beer Chunder Bysack
,, Beharilal Dutt
,, Bemola Churn Dey
,, Bholanauth Bose
,, Bholanauth Chundro
,, Bholanauth Mittra
,, Bholanauth Mullick
,, Bholanauth Sen
,, Bhobun Mohun Goopta
,, Bhobun Mohun Mittra
,, Bhaugobut y Churn Sen
,, Bissessor Cur
,, Bissonauth Singh

C

,, Chintamoni Dey
,, Cheyttun Churn Dutt
,, Chunder Cr. Chatterjee
,, Chunder Cr. Mukherjee
,, Chunder Shekur Dev*

D

,, Debendra Nauth Tagore
,, Degumber Chatterjee
,, Degumber Roy
,, Dhurmo Doss Mitter
,, Denno Bundhoo Dey
,, Doyal Chundro Roy*
,, Doyal Chundro Seal
,, Doorga Churn Sen
,, Doorga Churn Dhur
,, Doorga Doss Ghosh
,, Dwarkanuth Mittra
,, Dwarkanauth Seal
,, Dwarkanauth Sen
,, Dwarknauth Banerjee

E

,, Esher Chunder Bose

G

,, Gobind Chunder Bysack
,, Gobind Ch. Bysack*
,, Gobind Chunder Dutt
,, Gobind Chunder Seal
,, Gobind Chunder Sen
,, Gobind Chunder Sen
,, Goluck Nath Dey
,, Gopal Chunder Dey
,, Gopal Chunder Dutt
,, Gopal Chunder Mittra
,, Gopal Kissen Banerjee
,, Gopal Kissen Bose
,, Gopeenauth Mokerjee
,, Gopeenauth Sen
,, Gopeekrishna Mitter
,, Gooroochurn Chatterjee
,, Gooroochurn Dutt
,, Gooroochurn Dutt
,, Gooroochurn Mittra*
,, Gourmohun Doss
,, Greesh Chunder Bose

H

,, Hemnauth Roy
,, Hullodhur Laha
,, Hurrish Chunder Dhur
,, Hurris Chunder Ghosal
,, Hurro Chundro Ghose*
,, Hurro Mohon Chatterjee
,, Hurro Chandro Dutt
,, Hurrenaraun Dey

I

,, Isshur Chunder Banerjee
,, Isshur Ch. Chatterjee
,, Isshur Chunder Day

*In the Mofussil.

,, Isshur Chunder Bose
,, Isshur Ch. Chatterjee
,, Isshur Ch. Ganguley
,, Isshur Chunder Ghosal
,, Isshur Chunder Sen
,, Isshur Chunder Shaha

J

,, Jadub Chunder Bose
,, Judub Chunder Chunder
,, Jadub Chunder Dharra
,, Jodoonauth Dey
,, Jogesh Chunder Ghosh
,, Joygopal Sen*
,, Joygopal Sen
,, Joykissen Dutt

K

,, Kalla Chaund Bose
,, Kalla Chaund Dey
,, Kalla Chaund Sett
,, Kallee Churn Dutt
,, Kallee Churn Lawhree
,, Kallee Doss Mookerjee
,, Kallee kisshun Mittro
,, Kallee Mohun Mookerjee
,, Kashenauth Addhya
,, Kasheshur Mittro
,, Khettro Chunder Dutt
,, Khettro Mohun Mukerji
,, Kissore Chaund Mittra
,, Koylas Chunder Bose
,, Krishna Mohun Banerji, Revd.

L

,, Luckhun Ch. Mullick
,, Lokenauth Seal

M

,, Mahdhub Ch. Chucker-buttee
,, Madhub Chunder Ghose
,, Madhub Ch. Mullick*
,, Madhub Ch. Roodro
,, Modoosooden Dutt
,, Mohes Chunder Banerji
,, Mohes Chunder Deb
,, Mohendronauth Bose
,, Motelal Mittro
,, Mothooramohun Mittro

N

,, Neelmonny Muttilol
,, Nobin Chunder Bose
,, Nobin Chunder Ghosaul
,, Nobin Chunder Mukerji
,, Nobin Chunder Paul
,, Nobin Madhub Day
,, Nondo Coomar Bose
,, Nursing Chunder Bose
,, Nursing Chunder Dutt

O

,, Obhoy Churn Bose
,, Obhoy Churn Laha
,, Obhoy Churn Mullick

P

,, Peary Churn Sircar
,, Peary Chand Mitra
,, Pearylol Goopta
,, Peary Mohun Bose
,, Peary Mohun Dey
,, Prankissun Bagchy
,, Prosonno Chunder Sircar
,, Prosonno Coomar Bose

R

,, Radhamadhub Dey
,, Radhanauth Sen
,, Rajender Dutt
,, Rajendro Nath Sen
,, Rajnarin Dutt
,, Rajkrishna Deb*
,, Ramchundro Mittro
,, Ramchnndro Mittro
,, Ramcoomar Dutt
,, Ramgopal Ghose
,, Ramnarain Muttylal
,, Ramsabuck Chundro
,, Ramtonoo Lawhoory
,, Russicklol Sen
,, Russick krihna Mullick*
,, Rajaram Roy

S

,, Shama Churn Bose
,, Shama Churn Dey
,, Shama Churn Dutt

*In the Mofussil.

,, Shama Churn Dutt*
,, Shama Churn Sircar
,, Shamlal Sen
,, Sharodaprosad Ghose
,, Shib Chundro Deb
,, Shib Chundro Dass
,, Shusry Chundro Dutt

T

,, Takoorlol Mullick
,, Tara Chand Chuckro-butee
,, Tarenee churn Banerjee*
,, Tarucknauth Bose
,, Tarucknauth Ghose*
,, Tarucknauth Ghose
,, Tarucknauth Sen*

U

,, Udhub Chunder Banerji
,, Udoy Chundra Addhya
,, Umachurn Mittro
,, Umachurn Sen

*In the Mofossil.

LIST OF MEMBERS
1842
David Hare Esqr.—Hony. Visitor

B

Baboo Bany Mad .b Mittra
,, Beer chandra Bysack
,, Bimala churn Biswas
,, Biharilal Dutta
,, Bholanath Bose
,, Bholanath Chunder
,, Bholanath Mullick
,, Bhooban Mohan Goopta
,, Bhooban Mohan Mittra
,, Bisweswar Cor
,, Biswanath Singhee
,, Bhabani Churn Mittra

C

,, Chyntamony Day
,, Choytan Churn Dutta
,, Chunder Cr. Chatterjee
,, Chunder Cr. Mukherji
,, Chunder Saikhar Deb

D

,, Debendranath Tagore
,, Digambar Chatterjee
,, Digambar Roy
,, Dhurma Doss Mittra
,, Dinabandhu Dey
,, Doyal Chunder Roy
,, Doorgachurn Dhur
,, Doorgachurn Dutt
,, Doorgadoss Ghose
,, Dwarkanath Goopta
,, Dwarkanath Mittra
,, Dwarkanath Sen
,, Dwarikanath Bannerji

G

,, Ganendra mohan Tagore
,, Gobinda chunder Bysack
,, Gobinda chunder Dutt
,, Gobinda chunder Sen
,, Gobin chunder Guptoo
,, Goluck chunder Dey
,, Gopal chunder Dutt
,, Gopal chunder Dey
,, Gopal Lal Mittra
,, Gopal kissen Bannerjee
,, Gopal kissen Bose
,, Gopeenath Mukherjee
,, Gopee kissen Mittra
,, Gopeenath Sen
,, Gooroochurn Chakra-vertty

,, Gooroo churn Dutt
,, Gooroo churn Mitter
,, Gour mohan Das
,, Geerish chunder Bose

H

,, Hem nath Roy
,, Harish chunder Ghosal
,, Harro chunder Ghosh
,, Harro mohan Chatterjee
,, Harinarayan Dey

I

,, Issan chunder Bose
,, Iswarchunder Bannerji
,, Issurchunder Dey
,, Issur ch. Bose
,, Issur ch. Gooptoo
,, Issur chunder Chatterji
,, Issur ch. Gangooly
,, Issur ch. Ghosal
,, Issur ch. Sen
,, Issur ch. Dutt

J

,, Jadab ch. Bose
,, Jadab chunder Chunder
,, Jadab ch. Dharra
,, Jadunath Dutt
,, Jogesh ch. Ghosh
,, Joygopal Sen
,, Joy kissen Dutt

K

,, Krishna mohan Bannerji
,, Kalachand Bose
,, Kalachand Dey
,, Kalachand Sett
,, Kally ch. Dutt
,, Kally ch. Lahiry
,, Kalleedhon Mookherjee
,, Kallee kissen Mittra
,, Kasiswar Mittra
,, Koylash ch. Bose
,, Koylash. ch. Dutt
,, Kailash ch. Ghosh
,, Kaseenath Addhya

L

,, Luckhan ch. Mullick
,, Locknath Seal
,, Luckeenarain Mittra

M

,, Madhab ch. Bysack
,, Madhab ch. Chukravarti
,, Madhab ch. Ghosh
,, Madhab ch. Malick
,, Madhab ch. Roodra
,, Madhusoodan Dutt
,, Mahesh ch. Bannerji
,, Mahendranath Bose
,, Mahendranath Bysack
,, Mottelal Mittra
,, Mathoor mohan Mittra

N

,, Neelmony Bysack
,, Neelmony Moteelal
,, Nabin ch. Bose
,, Nabin ch. Mookherjee
,, Nobin ch. Paul
,, Nunda coomar Bose
,, Nursing ch. Dutt
,, Nabin madab Dey
,, Nabin chunder Mittra
,, Nabo ch. Chatterji
,, Nursing ch. Bose

O

,, Obhoy churn Bose
,, Obhoy churn Mullick

P

,, Peary churn Sircar
,, Peary chand Mittra
,, Pearal lal Goopta
,, Peary mohan Bose
,, Peary mohan Dey
,, Pran kissen Bagchi
,, Prosunna ch. Sircar
,, Prosunna ch. Mittra
,, Prem ch. Chowdhury

R

,, Raj kissen Mittra
,, Rajendranath Dutta
,, Rajendranath Sen
,, Radhanath Sikdar
,, Ramchandra Mittra
,, Ramnarain Doss
,, Rajnarain Dutt
,, Rajnarain Roy
,, Ram kumar Dutt

,, Ramgopal Ghosh
,, Ramnaraiu Motelal
,, Ramtanoo Lahiry
,, Rasiklal Sen
,, Russick krishna Mullick

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,, Satcowri Dutt
,, Shama churn Bose
,, Shama churn Biswas
,, Shama churn Sirkar
,, Shama churn Dutt
,, Shamlal Sen
,, Sarada prasad Ghose
,, Shib chunder Deb
,, Shib chunder Doss
,, Sostee ch. Dutt
,, Sreenath Mookherji

T

,, Thakarlal Mullick
,, Tarachand Chuckervutti
,, Tarinee churn Bannerji
,, Taraknath Bose
,, Taraknath Sen

U

,, Uma churn Mittra
,, Uma churn Sen

W

,, Wooday chunder Bysack
,, Wooday ch. Addhya

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1843

George Thompson Esq. Honorary Member

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Baboo Anund Ch. Seromonee

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,, Bany Madhub Mittra
,, Beer Chunder Bysack
,, Bemola Churn Biswas
,, Biharilol Dutt
,, Bholanauth Bose
,, Bholanauth Chunder
,, Bholanauth Mullick
,, Bhoobun Mohun Goopto
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,, Bissessor Kor
,, Bishonauth Singhe
,, Bhobojanoo Ch. Mitra*
,, Bhobhanee Churn Dutt

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,, Calachand Sett
,, Chintamony Day
,, Choytun Churn Dutt
,, Chunder Cr. Chatterjea
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,, Dhurma Doss Mittra
,, Dinobundhoo Dey*
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J

„ Jadub Chunder Bose
„ Jadub Chunder Chunder
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„ Modoosoodun Dutt
„ Mohesh Ch. Banerjea*
„ Mohendro Nauth Bose
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„ Mothoor Mohun Mittra

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„ Obhoy Churn Mullick

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„ Prosono Coomar Mittra
„ Prem Chaund Chowdry*

R

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„ Rajkrishna Mittra
„ Rajendronauth Dutt
„ Rajendronauth Sen
„ Radhanauth Sickdar*
„ Ramchunder Mittra
„ Ramnarain Doss
„ Rajaram Roy
„ Rajnarain Dutt
„ Ramgopaul Ghose
„ Ramnarain Motelol
„ Ramtonoo Lahiree
„ Russicklol Sen
„ Russick C. Mullick*

S

„ Sautcowrie Dutt
„ Shamachurn Bose
„ Shamachurn Biswas
„ Shamachurn Sircar
„ Shamachurn Dutt*
„ Shamachurn Dutt
„ Sham Loll Sen
„ Sharadaprosaud Ghosé
„ Shib Chunder Deb*
„ Shib Chundro Doss
„ Shib Chunder Doss
„ Shoshe Chunder Dutt
„ Sreenauth Mokerjea
„ Sreenauth Sickdar

T

„ Thakoorlol Mullick
„ Tarachund Chuckrobur-ttee
„ Tarinee Churn Banerjea
„ Tarucknauth Bose
„ Tarucknauth Ghose
„ Tarucknauth Ghose
„ Tarucknauth Sen*

U

„ Uma Churn Mittra
„ Uma Churn Sen

W

„ Woodoy Ch. Bysack
„ Woodoy Ch. Adhya

*Denotes that those gentlemen are in the Mofussil.

DISCOURSE

On the Nature and Importance of Historical Studies; delivered before the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge.

By the Rev. Krishna Mohun Banerjea.

—:o:—

Gentlemen,

Although I could sincerely wish that the task of delivering the first discourse to this association had devolved upon a worthier and wiser head than mine, yet since circumstances have entailed it upon myself I do not shrink from my duty, but proceed to discharge it in dependence upon your indulgence without any further apology.

The formation of a society like this, ought by no means to be passed over as a common occurrence in India.—The young men of our country had long been known to pursue only vicious and unworthy objects when they met in a body. The social feelings of our nature had thus been turned to serve only base ends—and this had given to our friends much occasion for regret and to our enemies many opportunities of slander. I hope the existence of the *Society* for the *Acquisition of General Knowledge* will produce a different effect, and refresh the former with joy and fill the latter with confusion. I hope this association will prove to the world that however vicious and unworthy the state of society might have been before in our country, a change has been effected to a considerable extent; and that natives are not now wanting, who meet upon friendly terms for the purpose of intellectual and moral improvement. I hope this fact will cheer the hearts of those who

have long been wishing our emancipation from the bondage of ignorance and vice, and that it will stop the mouth of calumny ever bent upon looking for Hindu faults merely to enjoy a vain triumph against us.

With the exception of two occasions upon which the educated Hindu youth had met several times in large assemblies for the purpose of testifying their gratitude to two distinguished individuals whose exertions in the cause of native education had given them every title to our respect and gratitude and have rendered their names sacred in our estimation—whose portraits are at this moment gracing the two extremities of this hall and calling upon us not to render futile by our luke-warmness their laudable efforts on our behalf—and one of whom is still in the midst of us spending and being spent for the welfare of this land of his adoption and love—with the exception, I say, of these two occasions, I do not remember any object for which the educated Hindus had ever met in such a large and respectable assembly as the one which I rejoice to behold this evening. While therefore we ought on the one hand to congratulate ourselves that such a spirit has been infused into our community, let us take heed on the other that we do not quench it by negligence and apathy. We have already raised the expectation of our friends high enough by commencing meetings of this kind, and a disappointment under present circumstance will lead to the most grievous results. Accordingly I entreat you with every feeling of respect and deference to be circumspect, and to unite with one mind in furthering your common interests—laying aside all differences on extraneous matters.

The subjects of my discourse this evening is the nature and importance of historical studies. The term "historical studies" embraces the reading of all those

books wherein the events of human life are recorded. Although the study of the nature and instinct of the animal creation, being generally called natural history, might seem to claim a portion of my attention upon the present occasion, yet since that would give a latitude to my theme which an address of his kind could not properly admit, I have thought proper to confine myself to that division of my subject which is distinct from Natural History.

The study of history is in some respects very different in its nature from that of the abstract sciences. When we are engaged in the prosecution of Mathematics or Metaphysics the theorems and theories of which we read are ultimately addressed either to our external sense or our intuitive understanding—insomuch that we become in our intellectual capacities witness to the truth of our speculations. When a certain proposition of Euclid is offered to our consideration we may not immediately apprehend its truth by intuitive perception, but if we go over the former propositions upon which it is built, as a superstructure upon its supporting stones, we find that the principles which supported the proposition were certain self-evident axioms to which we could not deny assent without renouncing our nature itself. Almost all the speculative sciences being built upon similar axioms we may be said to bear personal testimony to their truth when we discover their conception with those self-evident principles. The study of history is however different in its nature. The lessons of this important branch of knowledge cannot be reduced to any self-evident axiom—nor can we testify to their truth independent of other considerations. We cannot with all our ingenuity demonstrate means of axioms that Alexander the Great put a period to the empire of the Persians or that Julius Cæsar

planted the Roman standard in Britain. We can never solve in our closets why and how these facts should be so. We can no more succeed in measuring time by space than in proving historical facts by scientific deductions. The reason of this is that history does not like mathematics offer itself to our independent and abstract speculations. Whatever necessary conception there may have been between human events and the Providence of the Almighty Dispenser—that is a state-secret revolving only in the counsels of the Deity. But so far as our observations extend—and that is all we can appeal to on such a subject—the events of human life of which history treats have proceeded from incidental, and as it were, casual circumstances. No blind fate has dictated them—no necessity has linked them together—no heavenly phenomena have preceded or followed them as necessary antecedents or consequents. It is therefore impossible for a man—be he never so ingenious or scientific—be he never so great a fortune-teller or star-gazer—it is impossible for him to render the dictates of history demonstrable by human understanding or to know anything concerning past ages unless he condescend to receive instruction from historians in the proper way.

History addresses itself not to that faculty of the intellect to which the sciences address themselves, but to that principle of our moral constitution which may be termed, *faith*, *belief*, or *credulity*, if this last expression does not necessarily imply a blind and unreasonable assent. Neither things that are tangible and concerning which our senses may bear testimony—nor scientific propositions deducible from known and evident truths—nor yet probable inferences from certain fixed *data* are objects of *belief*. This principle has been so ably and fully illustrated by Bishop Pearson that I cannot withstand the

temptation of quoting a few words from his exposition of the creed upon the present occasion.

"Now that is properly credible, says the learned prelate, which is not apparent of itself, nor certainly to be collected, either antecedently by its cause or reversely by its effect, and yet, though by none of these ways, has the attestation of truth. For those things which are apparent of themselves, are either so in respect of our sense, as that snow is white, and fire is hot; or in respect of our understanding, as that the whole of anything is greater than any one part of the whole, that everything imaginable either is, or is not. The first kind of which being propounded to our sense, one to the sight, the other to the touch, appear to themselves immediately true, and therefore are not termed *credible* but *evident to sense*; as the latter kind, propounded to the understanding are immediately embraced and acknowledged as truths apparent in themselves, and therefore are not *credible*, but evident to the understanding. And so those things which are apparent, are not said properly to be *believed* but to be *known.*

"Again other things, though not immediately apparent in themselves, may yet appear most certain and evidently true, by an immediate and necessary connexion with something formerly known. For being every natural cause actually applied doth necessarily produce its own natural effect, and every natural effect wholly dependeth upon, and absolutely presupposeth its own proper cause; therefore there must be an immediate connection between the cause and its effect. From whence it follows, that, if the connexion be once clearly perceived, the effect will be known in the cause, and the cause by the effect. And by these ways proceeding upon principles evidently known by consequences certainly concluding, we come to the knowledge of propositions in Mathematics, and conclu-

sions in other sciences, which propositions and conclusions are not said to be credible but scientifical ; and the comprehension of them is not faith but science.

"Besides, some things there are, which though not evident of themselves, nor seen by any necessary connexion to their causes or effects, notwithstanding appear to most as true by some external relations to other truths ; but yet so, as the appearing truth still leaves a possibility of falsehood with it, and therefore doth but incline to an assent. In which case, whatsoever is thus apprehended, if it depend upon real arguments, is not yet called credible, but probable ; and an assent to such a truth is not properly faith but opinion.

"But when anything propounded to us is neither apparent to our sense, nor evident to our understanding in and of itself, neither certainly to be collected from any clear and necessary connexion with the cause from which it proceedeth, or the effects which it naturally produceth nor is taken up upon any real arguments or reference to other acknowledged truths, and yet notwithstanding appeareth to us true, not by a Manifestation, but attestation of the truth—and so moveth us to assent not of itself but by virtue of the testimony given to it ; this is said properly to be credible ; and an assent unto this upon such credibility, is in the proper notion of faith or belief."

This principle of receiving facts upon testimony which is so clearly and perfectly defined by the author just quoted, and upon which we believe in the veracity of historians is the peculiar stay of human society. How sadly would all our affairs be embarrassed if we did not credit the testimony of each other but demanded occular proof or scientific demonstration for matters of every day occurrence ? Where we not naturally endowed with the principle of belief in the veracity of our friends and fellow-

creatures, society could thrive no better among us than it does among the brute creation—nay our communities would perhaps be far worse, for per-adventure there is a sort of faithful understanding even among the beasts.—"*Nihil denique est,*" says a prelate * of the 3rd century, *quod in vita geri posset non si credulitas ante praecesserit.*"—No transaction could be performed in life if belief or credulity did not precede it. A confidence in the faithfulness of our fellow creatures is the very bond of human society and the very safeguard of human civilization—Without it the son could not be assured of his filiation from his proper father † as the Greek philosopher has acutely remarked, nor the friend be certain of his friend's love ; and all reciprocal duties would therefore be at an end. Men could not in such a case jointly contribute to their common and public welfare—nor carry any projects into execution which needed their united counsels and efforts. It is therefore no reproach to history to depend upon such a principle—neither ought assent to be grudged to it because it does not bring self-evident or scientific proofs to establish its reality.

I have entered into this lengthy explanation because the importance of my theme calls for clear views on the subject, and because an understanding of this principle is the more necessary to us whose early education had a tendency to confound in one mass history and mythology —facts and fables—truth and fiction—receiving them all indifferently as true or else rejecting them all as wholly false—sweeping the gold away with the dross. This mode of dealing with the writings bequeathed us by historians

* *Cyprian Symb. apost.*

† Δεινοι γαρ ουδεις οιδε τον πατ' εγγυτατο αλλ' υποτευομεν παντες η πιστευομεν.
Menander Quoted by Pearson.

is extremely unsound—and would be inexcusable did we not take into consideration the lamentable want of authentic records in our own literature and the absence of any document calculated to call forth and exercise our assent. The mythological legends with which our venerable language abounds demonstrate the high estimation in which poetry was held in our country in the days of her pristine grandeur—but they do not in any way recommend themselves to our belief as historical compositions. For the natural principle of faith in the veracity of historians does not insist upon our assent to the fictitious and romantic fancy of poets and novelists. This leads me to consider the circumstances which limit our belief and in the absence of which an assent to written fictions would degenerate into blind credulity.

Since we cannot satisfy ourselves of the truth of history by self-perception or scientific investigation, the principal ground of our belief is the testimony of the writers that have recorded the events of past ages for our instruction. The strength of this testimony is proportionate to the authority of the testifier. This authority involves among other things two great qualifications—viz., ability and integrity. A historian may deceive posterity in either of the two following ways. He may allow himself to be misled into error and then by unhappily dressing falsehoods in the sacred garb of truth may impose upon his readers without even intending to do so. Or he may, although himself in full possession of the truth, wilfully deceive posterity by publishing known falsehoods in order to serve certain base ends. In the first instance he would deceive for want of ability—in the latter he would do so for want of integrity. We must therefore be satisfied that a historian is both able and ready rightly and faithfully to instruct us, before we can be called upon to yield our assent

unto his instructions. His first qualification, namely his ability to teach posterity, involves a critical examination of the local circumstances in which he was placed. If we find him relating the events of the country in which he lived permanently as a fixed citizen or sojourned for a season as a traveller—if he treat of the manners and customs of a people with whom he was personally familiar or of events which he had many opportunities of knowing from self-inspection or undoubted tradition we may be satisfied of his ability. When Caesar describes the wars in Gaul in which he was personally concerned—when Xenophon records the retreat of the Greek auxiliaries of Cyrus the younger in which he himself sustained an important part—when Livy writes a history of his own country or when Josephus relates the transactions of the eventful war which terminated in the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem—their several writings are like depositions of eye-witnesses in a court of justice and no exceptions can be justly taken against them on the score of ability.

With reference to the other qualification that constitutes the faithful historian, it is pleasing to reflect that human nature is generally averse to impositions when it is not under the influence of temptation—In the midst of the corruptions which disfigure the exploits of man, there exist to a certain extent, certain fair and amiable principles, which like the ruins of a grand and magnificent edifice transport our thoughts to the golden age of our primitive innocence, and which even under the present rage of wickedness preserve our species from fraud and deception, when these vices do not promise a return of seeming advantages. Men are not naturally fond of speaking lies although they do not hesitate to do so when their interest is at stake, unless their moral principles be proof against

temptation. A Greek writer with reference to our natural propensity to receive nothing but what we consider to be true says ; φιλαληθης ἡ ψυχη ουδεποτε κατα το ψευδος ανεχομενη διατιθεσθαι, αλλα παντα φαυλα αληθεσι παντως και ευθυς The mind ever fond of truth never suffers itself to be any way disposed towards that which is false—but towards a proposition evidently true it does so promptly and by all means. I may extend the remark and declare that the φιλαληθης. mind is likewise averse to offer anything to the reception of others but what it looks upon as true. We may therefore always form a tolerably correct estimate of the principles which influence human actions in general—and it is unnatural to believe that any of our species would without any adequate motives coolly sit down to fabricate stories for the deception of posterity. In the absence of any temptations to mendacity we may reckon upon the veracity of a historian without much danger of imposition. Nature herself has implanted the principle of faith in our minds and we find ourselves disinclined to suspect the sincerity of a man when insincerity does not seem to involve his interests ; and it would imply a tacit charge against the Dispenser of all things if facts were not suited to this principle or if it only tended to render us dupes of wickedness and fraud.

The ability and integrity of an Author being unexceptionable we are bound to receive his statements when made seriously and earnestly.—I add the words "seriously and earnestly" because we are not called upon to believe for truth what the writer himself does not seem to intend that we should ; and this will enable us to distinguish true and authentic history from fables and fictions.

The literati of our country are very fond of stigmatizing us with an undue partiality in favour of foreign docu-

ments and an unnatural prejudice against our own literature. We are charged with an unreasonable predilection for the western literature to the neglect of our own. So far as this charge involves the unwillingness of the rising generation to pursue the study of the oriental languages many are justly culpable—and I sincerely wish that we would all in a body redeem our characters by attending to our vernacular dialect more than we are accustomed to do. But the charge is false and unreasonable when it extends further than this, and touches our reception of the authentic histories of Europe to the neglect of Indian legends. Not a single work can be found in the ancient language of our country which purports seriously to treat of facts;—excluding for the present the consideration of the writer's personal ability and integrity. Take the *Rāmāyana* for an example—a work which with regard to its literary and poetic merits yields to no composition in the Sanskrit language. But how does it stand as a historical guide? no better than the Iliad of Homer or the AEnead of Virgil. The prefatory portion of the poem itself manifests its true character—and if the reader find himself disappointed in his expectations of historical information, the fault is his own, since the author never gives him the least intimation of a serious intention on his part to recount authentic narrations of facts. Vālmīki never pretends seriously and earnestly to note the exploits of Rama for the information of posterity—but he freely and frankly, though not very modestly, calls his effort a "Divine poem" promising temporal and spiritual blessings to those that having mounted on the branch of poesy was chanting like a bird the sweet and melodious name of Rama.

Rāma Rāmeti Rāmeti kūjantaṃ madhurakṣiraṃ
Ārūḍha Kavitāśākham Vālmīki kokilaṃ

Can we then if we attach all due merit to compositions of this poetic character be justly culpable for withholding our implicit credence to their narrations ? The authors of such works did not expect or wish our reception of them as histories that inculcated facts, but as poems that were replete with sublime and romantic thoughts and exihibited a fruitful imagination a flowing style and a powerful command over language.

Sobriety and simplicity of style as they are striking marks of seriousness and earnestness in the writer, so are they great proofs of the truth of his statements—and the want of them is proportionately calculated to create suspicions in our minds against the authenticity of his narrations. It is owing to the poetic strain that pervades it that the Cyropaedia of Xenophon has been justly called a historical romance. Not that the author wanted ability or integrity to inform his readers of the interesting events relating to the life of Cyrus the great ;—but his style, as a great comment upon his design, renders it highly probable that his object was more that of the moralist than of the historian—and that he wished to instruct more extensively and largely than incidental facts would allow him to do.—Wherever there is simplicity of language we may depend upon correct and true relations of facts—since in such a case the historian has no temptation to deviate from his plain path. Hence it is that poetry is an unhappy dress for historical compositions—and no sober historian has ever had recourse to it, knowing the many diverting restrictions it contains of measure fancy taste &c.

With reference to marvellous and super-natural statements which history in some of its parts contains, much confusion of ideas exists. Men generally go into opposite extremes on the subjects regardless of that sobriety which

alone should influence our judgments and decisions on all matters. Some receive such preter-natural narrations all as truths without considering closely the authority upon which they stand and without notice of the common maxim that marvellous accounts need a greater exercise of our belief and ought therefore to come with stronger evidence than narrations of an ordinary nature. We naturally feel more averse to receive extraordinary than ordinary stories—and therefore when there is no more than common authority for the former, it is no breach of the original principle of belief to withhold our assent. But there are men again on the other hand to whom every account of an extraordinary nature appears totally false. This opposite extreme is as far from sobriety and true philosophy as the one just noted—and prudence dictates the renouncement of both these dangerous habits of blind credulity and over-strained scepticism. We ought not to reject every statement that surpasses our fancy merely because it does so—although we should for this reason sift it more strongly to the bottom and narrowly examine the authority upon which it is founded. If the principle of rejecting every thing that appeared impracticable were adopted, man could never acquire new ideas —neither could the child when come to mature age gain one hundredth part of what he now acquires if he renounced whatever narration appeared marvellous to his infant mind.

Our duty therefore upon being presented with a marvellous statement is not to pronounce it false by prejudication but closely to examine its authority and to see if any suspicions could be justly entertained against the ability and integrity of the historian. If upon examination we find him to be unexceptionable on these grounds, if we see that he seriously and earnestly relates it without

any possible motives to mendacitv but on the contrary under every circumstance that could approve his honesty —and if his style be that of a simple historian rather than of a romantic novelist—then true philosophy requires that we should receive his statements as facts. We would otherwise be over turning the first principle of historical studies and giving occasion to every historian to complain against us with Sallust ;—"quæ sibi quisque facilia factu putet, æquo animo accipit, supra, veluti ficta, pro falsis ducit," *whatever a person looks upon as easily practicable he receives in an impartial and kind spirit ; but whatsoever surpasses the standard of his own fancy he pronounces to be false as if it were a mere fiction.*

Most of those marvellous accounts which the learned have been led to reject, cannot stand the test of investigation. Some have been related by authors concerning whom little is known and whose authority has never been cleared—others are adverted to by sober historians but in such a style as sufficiently shows that they did not themselves receive them as facts—for an example of which I would refer to Livy's remarks concerning the origin of the Roman nation. Besides such statements, however there are accounts of prodigies which have come down to us with such unexceptionable authorities that it is impossible not to receive them without offering violence to all history. As an instance of this I would allude to the prodigies which distinguished the seige of Jerusalem uuder Titus in the reign of Vespasian—authentic narratssis of which are found in Josephus and Tacitus.—

I pass on to the second division of my theme and that is the *importance* of the study the nature of which I have just been considering. The first and most palpable thing that strikes me on this head is the pleasure which hitorical researches yield to the student. I do not undervalue

the entertainment which the other branches of rational and useful intellectual employment afford to the scholar, and I know that the great Cicero himself stated as one of the reasons why he engaged so much into philosophical speculations, the pleasure which such a pursuit gave him, in his moments of leisure and inactivity. But the prosecution of a course of historical study is in my humble opinion perhaps more aptly calculated to interest our minds. To transport our thoughts back to the infancy of human society—to survey man in his rude and barbarous habits while he yet lived in huts and fed herds of cattle, —to view him existing without letters and without law under the primitive patriarchal dispensation—to follow him in his slow and gradual progress to civilization and enlightenment—these are occupations of a highly delightful character. We hereby enjoy without stepping out of our clos s a great deal of the pleasure and entertainment which travellers purchase at an immense expense of trouble and anxiety. History restores to our fancies those great and good men of antiquity whom we so fervently desire but in vain to see with our physical eyes. We are carried back to the age of Asia's pristine glory. We see population increasing—civilization commencing—letters flourishing—forms of government being projected—laws being enacted—and men asserting and testifying their superiority over the brute creation first in the regions of the East. We find Nimord burning with monarchical ambition and reducing the rude but independent families of men under his dominions—We observe the foundations of Ninevah being laid and Egypt coming into notice and consequence. We behold a woman enriching the city of Babylon and giving it an aspect of magnificence the like of which has never yet been equalled. We discover the same Semiramis leading a

large army into our own territories but returning discomfited by the valiant sons of India. Our attention is then shortly attracted by the origin and rise of the Grecian republics. Our eyes gaze with intense interest on the foundations of Athens being laid by a colony from Egypt. We observe with wonder and amazement the rapid strides of learning and civilization in this happy country. We are stuck with admiration at the progress of philosophy. We see the building of Rome upon the hills. We wonder at the powerful effects produced by the suicide of a woman and we see Tarquin expelled by the influence of that very man whom he had before treated as a fool and a brute. We silently approve or condemn (as we read on) the good or bad actions of our fellow-creatures. We find constitutions after constitutions failing in the right direction of human affairs, and the ultimate failure after long trial of the several systems of monarchical, oligarchical, aristocratical and democratical governments almost extracts a desponding sigh from our hearts and leads us for a time to give up with Xenophon every hope of that *incorrigible wild animal*, man, being ever tamed by means of law.

In the mean time we see a large empire forming in the effiminate east under the great Cyrus who answering to the mule of the Delphic oracular response puts a period to the kingdoms of Lydia and Assyria and lays the foundation of the Persian monarchy. We then hear of wonders being accomplished on the plains of Marathon the straits of Thermopoly and the sea of Salamis. The overpowering millions of Persia are put to flight by a few thousands of Greece. Our hearts pause here for a time. We review with tremorous pleasure the eventful battle of Salamis. The possibility of a defeat to Themistocles calls us to contemplate the awful probable effects of Persian

rule in case of Xerxes' victory. This would have put a direful end to all Greecian philosophy and literature and mankind and perhaps never possessed that civilization which came into Rome from Athens and thence spread into Europe. The chain of events brings us to the Roman commonwealth and though that to the Augustan age. We then view the greatest of empires in its decline, —ill able to support itself under its own weight. The conversion of Constantine arrests our attention and forces us to reflect on the rise and progress of the new religious body which being built on the foundation of the Jewish economy by one whose outward appearances was that of "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" and which having withstood, without any temporal advantages to back it, the united and reiterated shocks of heathen and Jewish persecutions as well as the force of ten imperial edicts against it, had slowly though surely extended itself among all ranks of people until it finally found its way into the imperial palace itself and received shelter and protection from that very throne which had before exerted its powers in vain to suppress it.

It is not necessary for me to follow up this detail to a tedious length.—What I have already stated will justify the assertion that the study of history is calculated to afford an intellectual gratification the like of which can be yielded by very few pursuits. It is therefore always a characteristic of a weak and vitiated intellect when tales and romances are sought in preference to true and authentic narrations. I do not by any means condemn novel-reading by whole-sale—I know that in certain cases a good novel may prove a great treat. But when a man is habitually fond of perusing tales and fables to the neglect of historical studies his mental energies must be at a very low ebb.

But it is not merely an entertainment under the langor of idleness that history promises to the inquisitive student. It is impossible for us to reflect upon the eventful records of individuals and nations without imbibing the most important lessons. We cannot survey the actions and exploits of our fellow-creatures without very considerably expanding our intellectual powers and without rectifying our judgment. The literary legacies of historians enrich our minds with the experience of the whole world—and being in full possession of the operation of the various projects and schemes tried and executed for the advancement of human nature we may easily distinguish for our own use those that worked successfully from others that were attended with failures. We benefit by the dear-bought experience of the sages that have gone before us —and although we do not pay the price of failures and disappointments as they did yet their fates warn us to avoid those evil principles which upon calm consideration we discover to have been generally followed by unfavourable consequences. The three thousand years that have rolled over this sublunary globe since the commencement of real and authentic history have not rolled in vain. They have seen the rise and progress, declension and downfall of many and vast empires. They have marked the prevalence and extinction of opinions and systems without number. They have given birth to and then subsequently caused the abolition of projected schemes and laws of many and various kinds ;—And can we observe all this without advantage ? Can we observe so many interesting things without learning the most important lessons ?

History has been called philosophy teaching by example. There is no profession in life which may not find a parallel in the records of past ages—and consequently

there is no description of men to whom the study of history would be a mere amusement. The scholar cannot review without considerable benefit the different turns which literature had taken at different periods. The invention of letters in the East—the Hebrew language giving a character to Chaldic Arabic and its cognate dialects and finally leading to the invention of the Greek alphabet—the venerable Sanscrit attaining to a perfection which in some respects has never yet been equalled by any dialect—the gradual formation of the Greek literature from poetry and fiction to history science and philosophy—the laudable exertions of the great Cicero to enrich his native Latin tongue which in his time was as much despised by his fastidious countrymen as Bengalee is in our days—the eclipse under which literature was obscured for a time during the dark ages—the revival of learning and its establishment upon an ever-lasting firm basis by the invention of printing—the formation of societies and associations in modern times for the perpetuation, advancement and diffusion of literature,—are topics the study of which will return to the laborious scholar not only pleasure but considerable benefit and instruction.

Neither is the study of history of less essential service to the man of science. He reaps the fruits of speculations made long before his time. The detection of error in one age secures the next from running into the same. The observations made but left imperfect in one century is followed up and perfected in another. History preserves the link between successive generations and so what could not owing to the shortness of life be accomplished in one age is taken up and brought forward in the next—and by that means perfected in the third or perhaps the fourth. Did the immortal Newton when he demonstrated things in the Leavens derive no aid from the experience of those

that had gone before ? Had the thoughts of Pythagoras and Ptolemy been recorded without any benefit to posterity? Had Galilio exercised his mighty mind and suffered in the dungeon to no purpose ? Can then the man of science read without any interest the history of his study from very commencement of human speculations ?

The Philosopher too draws his share from this rich and inexhaustible mine of instruction. He reviews man from his very infancy. He sees what human nature has been and still is—how that it is capable as of great refinement so of deep barbarism. He notices the wickedness and weakness of his fellow-creatures—how they have been for the most part slaves to their corrupt passions and lusts. He blushes at the abuse men have made of all their affections—at the mistaken and false glory which heroes sought in the destruction of their species—at the impunity with which the mighty oppressed the weak. His soul faints under the savage ferocity which prevailed even in the midst of Greek and Roman civilization. He surveys with deep interest the attempts of philosophers and sages to stem the torrent of wickedness. His heart beats on beholding Socrates fall a sacrifice to the popular rage, and expects that his blood would advance human society —but finds himself sadly disappointed. The lectures of the philosophers were confined within a small circle of desciples and that only so far as mere speculations were concerned. No considerable change in practice was visible even among the sages who deemed it prudent to run with the tide of popular opinion. The people, the mob, no way influenced by doctrines which did not produce any practical effects even on their propounders continued to commit the grossest enormities and carried wickedness to its utmost pitch. A great disparity is however observed in this respect in modern times. In these days although

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wickedness does undoubtedly exist even in the enlightend portions of the globe ;—yet it is neither to the extent nor in the manner in which it prevailed in ancient times—Now vice rages *in spite of principle*—it then did in conformity to the tone of public opinion. Now it is ashamed of itself and the least light pains it—then it was committed by men who gloried in its perpetration. These are observations which history suggests and which the philosopher can never contemplate without benefit to himself.

And as for the politician, remark the *high* use of which history must prove to him. The vast empires of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Macedon and Rome—the lives of Alfred of Charlemaign of Charles the 5th of Henry VIII of Louis XIV. of William III and of a host of kings princes and ministers—may operate as warnings as encouragements to every statesman. The manner in which kingdoms arose —the principles by which they were best fostered—the causes of their declension and downfall as they may all be gathered by the thoughtful inquirer so they are of the utmost consequence to those that wish to manage the politics of their country. The good and evil that attended almost every system of government would teach a cautious adoption of any exclusive opinions. The inflated pride and insolence which undue elevation had given to many a vicious king warns a person against seeking an absolute monarchy too earnestly ; while the expedition with which business was conducted would somewhat incline us towards the principle of having a presiding head endued with power to use his discretion upon emergencies. The haughtiness with which the patrician was ever fond of treating the plebian indisposes us towards investing an aristocracy with exclusive privileges ; while the ignorance and irregularity of the vulgar would call for the establishment of a nobility with certain peculiar rights

—a measure however which in countries like England where knowledge has been so extensively disseminated is no longer a desideratum. The endless troubles and dissensions which owing to the weakness and instability of the Commons were constantly experienced in the Athenian democracy would caution a statesman against reposing much authority in an unruly and heedless multitude—while the just rights of humanity and the disposition of the kings and nobles to neglect the comforts of the poor demand that the greatest majority of citizens ought not to be altogether without a voice in the government of their country. Considerations of this kind are of the last importance to those who may have the responsible task of helping in the administration of government-affairs.

If the study of history be of such immense consequence to mankind in general, it is by far the more so to persons of our present situation. We are by no means satisfied with the state of things around us. We wish we were not surrounded with such wretched and degraded follow-men and that ourselves could boast of wiser and more perfect heads and were inspired by a stronger public spirit. Dissatisfied with our present intellectual and moral condition and desiring to improve ourselves and countrymen we have come to the determination of organizing this very society. We profess to be instructors of our own selves and desire also to guide and direct others. Can we then consistently neglect a branch of study which is so essentially useful to all mankind and which would be peculiarly benificial to us? Our case is by no means without parallels in the records of history. There are nations that at one time groaned under wretched degradation, but who stand conspicuous now for everything that is good and great. Shall we not then in all probability come to the possession of many means of raising ourselves and our

country if we attend closely to the lessons of history? Can we observe with attention the rise of the European communities from the lowest depth of barbarism without getting some insight into the secret of human emancipation from corruption and misery ?

But I have already trespassed long enough gentlemen upon your time and attention and will therefore bring my essay to a conclusion with but very few words more. I cannot sit down without calling upon you again to reflect upon the absolute necessity of persevering in the good cause you have undertaken. Already have you been insulted in public print by certain individuals with a want of energy and perseverance. I do not call upon you to retaliate by showing the partial error upon which the charge is founded, but I wish you to falsify all unadvised innuendoes by your manly behaviour. I wish our secretary's record always to contain sufficient evidence that the *Society for the acquisition of general knowledge* has not been buried in the "grave of the Capulets" but that on the contrary it is proceeding onward with fresh vigor and operating powerfully in the case of intellectual and moral improvement.

KRISHNA MOHUN BANERJEA

A proposal for the proper cultivation of the Bengali language and its necessity for the natives of this country—read by Sri Uday Chandra Addhya at a meeting of the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge.

Mr. President Sir and Honourable Members,

Sometime back you have held a meeting where you discussed what you have done so far and what you propose to do in the future. I have read about all that in the newspapers and also heard a lot from friends and this has filled my heart with joy. You are a band of well-educated Bengalees who have devoted their energies to the task of increasing the knowledge of their compatriot youth. I was present in the last session of your society and listened to the speeches of several of you honourable sirs. This has further convinced me that my earlier faith in the members of the association is more than justified.

Due to all these reasons, I felt a strong urge in my mind to become a humble servant of your noble society. Because it is my desire to prove to you in the meetings of this society, firmly and squarely by means of facts and arguments how much harm is being done to the boys of this country due to lack of proper education as also to point out the slur that is being hurled against these unfortunate children. In this connection I would like to put forward the proposal for proper education of Bengalees by means of the mother tongue. Let us, so many friends, devise right here, the ways and means to achieve this object. Coming to know of this, you sirs became very glad and the president permitted me to express my

point of view and asked me to place my case in writing. That is why I have dared to take my place here to-day, and make some observations on the subject.

The doors of education have been closed for these Bengalee children, from the time of the dethronement of the Hindoo monarchs. Because as soon as alien kings ascended the throne, the enslaved Bengalees were forced to learn the alien tongue, in order to serve them. Due to the same reason they have learnt English only now that the English are our rulers. Alas ! from that time onwards it has become the firm conviction of most Bengalees that nothing more can be done through the medium of the Bengali language. They never think otherwise. That the Bengalee gentlemen have given up learning chaste Bengali is proved first of all by the fact that discussions in the native tongue by them have almost disappeared. The children do not receive their education in Bengali by means of books. They learn a vulgar variety of this language in their childhood from the servants, e.g. "*Jabi, Here, Oi, Bolisne*" etc or such incorrect words as "*Tor Kache Koechi, Thaor Peyeche, Dhore an*" etc. If perchance any young man writes a book in good Bengali and starts talking in correct Bengali, that only makes the average person laugh and the masses ridicule all such elements.

Secondly, the urge that existed among the people of this land to learn this language in the ancient and even the later middle ages, has practically disappeared now. It is all but extinct today. Now-a-days, people rarely read the excellent books on history, poetry and other things written by such eminent men as Kabikankan Chandi, Kasiram Das, Kirtibas Pandit and Bharat chandra Roy etc. Moreover, we never hear of modern writers in Bengali who possess even an iota of the excellence, depth or sweetness of language of the afore-men-

tioned writers. Alas, is this not a matter of deep regret ! Glory to England and its adjacent countries where knowledge grows by leaps and bounds and people are acquiring more and more knowledge every day. This knowledge is enabling them to compose new literary works that continue to amaze the people of other countries. How can I praise them adequately ! You are showing the excellence of your knowledge in various countries and are gaining control of their resources and wealth. Oh shame ! Does not all this inspire the people here to become equals of Englishmen ! Shall they even now remain dumb as cattle and eat and drink what others continue to supply ? Oh my friends, please do not think that my object is to pour ridicule. Rather my heart bleeds and tears stream down my face when I think about the lack of the knowledge in the mother tongue among the natives of this country. All that I have said have but one aim—to do away with the present state of affairs as soon as possible.

If some of you differ with me and think that it would not be possible for us to prosper if we receive our education by means of any language other than English, whose knowledge enable men to become so much energetic and prosperous in life, I would like to tell them that this is a mere illusion, fostered in your minds by the present vast wealth of the English. Can we really argue that the post that the English are now offering to Bengalees, are really of a superior type ? I cannot agree with that. Our people never learnt Bengali so well as they are learning English now. As a result the English are giving them some good posts. But if they acquire knowledge through the medium of mother tongue, then is there any doubt that they can win still greater laurels ? We have to realise that when Bengalees are winning admiration and prize-posts by learning the national languages of other

nations' is there any doubt whatsoever that once they acquire knowledge by mastering the native language, then they will get the highest posts ? Further, the government has recently notified that official work will be conducted in future in the native tongue throughout the country. When this order becomes effective, what shall be your duty, sirs ? You can never conduct business now so effectively in Bengali as you can do in English.

The superiority of men lies in their efficiency. Please do not misconstrue my proposal and think that I am suggesting that this cannot be achieved by means of the English language. But try to understand that only when the people of this country learn properly the language of this country -then and then alone will they acquire that efficiency which can enable them to shake off the present slavery and become master of their own land. For proof of this, see how many countries run their entire affairs with the help of the mother tongue. Their efficiency is many-sided—connected with industry, agriculture etc. These affairs cannot be properly tackled unless people are well-versed in the mother-tongue. For example many people in our country do not understand the problems of production of certain crops etc. because of lack of knowledge of the native tongue. Alas ! when many people living thousands of miles away are traversing the whole world, exporting agricultural products and home-manufactured goods, people in this country remain steeped in ignorance. Moreover, the peasants living in our villages go on cultivating only certain specific crops and we never see any new one. The great wealthy natives considers this to be trifling work and do not realise the importance and necessity of such activities. Nobody cares to think how much knowledge is necessary for this purpose. Any comparison will reveal that Bengal produces relatively

less amount of crops and very little manufactured goods. Is it not due to the lack of knowledge of the Bengalees ?

Efficiency is the main basis for the expansion of the prowess of man. Without it a man is powerless and efficiency can never be achieved by worthless persons. As a proof, may I point out that the English have come here from a foreign country, more than 4000 miles away and showing us their marked superiority—this is no mean achievement. Has any section of the Bengalee people even a fraction of their mighty power ?

There are various ways of spending one's life—first to while away time in the midst of comfort, secondly somehow to eke out of daily existence. The natives of this country belong to the second category. No doubt, some people here do spend their lives in the midst of plenty but their wealth is not self-earned but heriditary. I am now referring to wealth and power earned by one's own prowess. So we have to examine how many people here are spending life in ease by virtue of self-earned wealth. Practically there is no such person. Happiness can exist only when you are not a slave and when you stand firmly on your own feet.

In order to overcome this sorry state of affair, my proposals are : firstly to survey the system of native education. The centre of Bengal is Calcutta and hence we have to examine carefully and properly the system and state of education here. I have done a little work in this direction on my own—I shall speak on that now. I have found that here the initiative for teaching Bengali is next to nil and there is no arrangement for any specialized training. Moreover the government has spent a lot of money in setting up an institute of higeer learning. It was the intention of our British rulers to impart the best education through that centre of learning. For this pur-

pose they sought the opinions of many learned natives and some English well-wishers of our country. After that they came to the conclusion that it should be a centre of Sanskrit studies because Sanskrit constitutes the base of the Bengali language. That is why the Sanskrit college was set up in Calcutta. The rules that have since then been framed to govern that institution in order supposedly to ensure lasting happiness to us, have simply astonished me. For example take the rule that only Brahmins and Vaidyas may study Sanskrit and learn the Vedic and other religious scriptures there. They have further stipulated that others (e.g., Sudras) shall have no right to study even the Grammar in that institution. Perhaps the framers of such rules did not even stop to consider whether this would not lead to keeping all such youth permanently steeped in the morass of ignorance. Moreover, what shall I say about the benefits bestowed upon those for whose education this centre of learning has been set up ! For I find that the Brahmin boys who study there, hardly even think that this would be beneficial to them. Some of them quickly become such pundits that they quote at random from the Sanskrit scriptures or may at best give opinions on caste etc. Otherwise these Sanskrit-versed students write such resolutions, which compared to what can be composed by others even slightly versed in English or some other language, seem utterly ridiculous. As for knowledge of life at large i.e., trade, commerce, official work, national peculiarities etc., they know nothing and are totally worthless. They may be called versed in scriptures but they are so inefficient that they put 2 zeros at the back of the figure 1 and call that a thousand. What else the founders of this institution have done ever since the institution was set up, I have failed to find out.

These people can do no useful work in this country nor

can they create any new initiative here. Only a meagre 5 percent of them may become pundits attached to the provincial judiciary or sometimes they give a few quotations from the scriptures in case of dispute among Hindoos. For these types of work, the pay that they get evokes contempt when that is placed on the right side of their titles. To sum up, what benefit they have brought by virtue of the education they have received from their Calcutta centre of learning and whether the founders of that college are satisfied with, I cannot say, despite my best intentions.

Now let me tell you how far the students themselves are attracted to that kind of education. Previouly, there was a rule that all students studying in that institution would get Rs. 5/- to Rs. 8/- stipend per month. On learning this, the institution became filled up with poor brahmin boys. The college lacked sufficient funds to provide for the stipend of so many pupils. Hence a new order was issued that pupils studying there shall not get any stipend. From then on new students are no longer thronging that institution and the student roll strength has dropped from 200 to 140.

Secondly, according to ancient custom, only those brahmins who professionally study and interpret the scriptures, have the right to get the ritualistic dues. To keep themselves in public notice, these people have set up a kind of centres of sanskrit studies where they teach only the 'Shastras'. Unfortunately these people do not get such pupils who would study at their centres but eat at their own places. All pupils who study at these places have to be fed by the teachers and have to be maintained from their incomes. As a result the education received by the youth at these centres do not enable them to become useful members of society but more fit to practise religion in the solitude.

Thirdly, there are some schools *(Pathsalas)* in the houses of some fortunate wealthy or middle-class persons residing in this city of Calcutta. Here the system is that a certain type of assistants are engaged here as teachers at Rs. 3/- to Rs. 8/- per month. They teach the children the letters and elementary arithmetic. They do not know the Bengali grammar properly and give faulty lessons to the children. We can well imagine what kind of education the children receive from such assistants and no wonder their knowledge of Bengali language and grammar remains full of mistakes and shortcomings. They sometimes read the noble works of the past but often fail to grasp their meaning. I am ashamed to state that such people cannot even properly pronounce words and spoil the sweetness of the language.

Fourthly, there are a number of institutions in Calcutta and elsewhere run by missionaries and backed by ample funds given by many native and European gentlemen. At these centres, education is imparted through the medium of the Bengali language. But here too this education is given by the same type of assistants and their capability is naturally no higher. Hence they dish out the same stuff as is given in the third type of schools. Rather it is an inferior type of education for in the schools run at private houses, the gentlemen there often test the students, their parents keep up constant enquiry and so on. Here at the missionary schools, the children of backward and uneducated folk receive education, the teachers know that the pupils are studying there gratis, and hence they neglect their own work even more. The parents of these children think their offsprings are learning a lot but they lack the capacity to test their knowledge. A missonary is the visitor in all such schools. Among them a few are well-versed in Bengali and we learn that are well-intentioned regarding

the education of these children. But they know little about the energy that need be spent by teachers to teach the language to these young people. Their rule is that each missionary must go to one such school once or twice a week, stay there for 2/3 hours and impart religious education to the pupils. But they care little for other type of education. This type of education has earned such notoriety that no children of gentlemen's families ever take admission in these schools. They want religious instructions, they spend some money for it too, but no young man becomes truly religious minded by studying at these places. After some years, these young men learn their own trade i.e., shoe-making, driving carts etc. and later take to drinking, running after other people's wives and generally go astray. So we can well realise what are the results of such type of religious instructions! Rather where educated gentlemen are imparting religious instruction to young men, then the result is invariably positive.

I have already shown why the natives of this country need proper education. I have also shown why that should be imparted through the medium of the mother tongue. Then I have showed with regret what types of educations are being served out now and how useless these effects are. Now we have to find out ways and means for teaching native children properly through the mother tongue. I hold that the English educational system is excellent. Their children receive education in general schools where they learn the letters and the scriptures but at the same time they acquire useful knowledge for being effective in society. They become useful technicians as well as intellectuals. They can do any work if they stick to it for some time. Hence I propose that an educational institution be set up at the heart of Calcutta on the lines of such an educational system. We all have

also to decide what type of teachers are to be engaged there, what type of books should become texts for the children from the beginning till the end of their cause in that institution. We have also to decide how we all together can start such a centre of learning.*

UDAY CHANDRA ADDHYA

* *Translated from the Bengali original by the Editor. For Bengali original, see Appendix— I.*

ON POETRY

BY BABOO RAJNARAIN DUTT.

GENTLEMEN,

The object which we propose to ourselves in this evening's discourse, is to investigate the nature and principles of poetry, to speak first of the subject matter of it, and next of the forms of expression and the harmony of language to which it gives birth. Though inadequate to the task have set myself to, I am proud to have this opportunity of expressing my sentiments poor as they are, on a topic of such incalculable interest, and I congratulate myself on the occasion of being associated with so many honorable and intelligent young men, and of addressing an audience so respectable. I regret much that want of time and attention and chiefly the want of talents have prevented my doing justice to a subject, which by the common consent of philosophers, and the unanimous voice of all nations, have been styled divine and of hallowed origin ;—but I hope, my dear friends, that those by whom I have the honor of being heard will lend a partial

ear to my failures, and that to them even the effort may be acceptable.

One principal reason for my choosing this topic is, because the meaning of poetry has been vaguely understood, and if I mistake not, greatly abused by a considerable portion of mankind. I know that even many educated people can discover no difference between the poet and the rhymster, and that when poetry is spoken of as one of the loftiest exertions of the human intellect, men are apt to stare in wonder. It has been often represented as calculated only for the frivolous amusement of a few idle hours, nay there are many who suppose it to consist in metrical lines with the like endings ; and many persons of ordinary knowledge and education laugh to scorn the pretensions of the poet as an instructor of mankind, and cannot conceive how it happens that "Song is but the eloquence of "truth :" "The vulgar notion of poetry," says a critic "is the same as Falstaff's notion of honor ; they ask if it can set a broken leg or cure the gripe of a wound ; and on receiving an answer in the negative ; they exclaim that it is a word—air,—a trim reckoning and therefore they will have none of it." Now leaving aside all other insults that have been offered to the muses, these are sufficient to provoke the dullest appetite. I cannot understand how any man of ordinary acuteness should so confound the most positive distinctions as to identify poety with its mere accompaniments, the mechanism with the spirit. If poetry be a thing to be found only in books, how is it that among the innumerable productions with which the world abounds, three thousand years have elapsed without producing a volume like the Illiad of Homer ; or if it be so mean a thing as to consist in the jingling of rhymes and the strict observance of the rules of criticism, why does the holy Scripture which

boasts of neither rhyme nor metre abound with such rich and genuine poetry.

Poetry therefore does not consist in words or syllables or in the harmony of syllables produced by a particular arrangement of them, for it may very well exist without all these ; it is of so spiritual a nature that to attempt to limit it by a definition is perhaps impracticable. The best general notion that I can give of poetry is, that it is the expression of the emotion or sentiment raised in the heart by imagination, in bold and passionate language. The emotions of sublimity and beauty, of power and harmony are uniformly ascribed both in popular and philosophical language to the imagination ; the fine arts are considered as the arts which are addressed to the imagination, and the pleasures they afford are described by way of distinction as the pleasures of the imagination. Imagination is that faculty of the mind which lends to everything a glowing and unearthly aspect. It is that aspiration for something purer and lovelier—something more lofty or thrilling than what ordinary life affords, and by which we enjoy whatever is beautiful and sublime in the works of nature and art. The perception of these qualities is attended with a peculiar emotion very distinguishable from all others, and which may accordingly be considered as the source of poetry. Wherever there is a perception of beauty or grandeur, there is the origin of poetry—whenever the imagination is kindled, and the fancy busied in pursuit of fine thoughts, whenever we feel ourselves as it were unearthly and enter into regions more lofty and thrilling then are our minds truly poetical. Thus in contemplating the grandeur of natural scenery, the gay lustre of a morning in spring, or the mild radiance of a summer evening, the savage majesty of a wintery storm or the wild magnificence of a tempestuous sea,

the observer is conscious of a variety of images in his mind very different from those which the objects themselves present to the eye; trains of pleasing or of solemn thought arise spontaneously within him; his mind loses itself amid the number of images that pass before it, and swells with emotions of which the objects before him afford no adequate cause; need I repeat that the emotions which such a scene produces give origin to genuine poetry; and that every bright image that rises in the soul is a crystal of the Castalian spring. The influence of associations also on the human mind is very powerful; they enhance the beauties of nature and give rise to the most ecstatic emotions and poetic fits which the mind is capable of enjoying. There is no man who has not some interesting associations with particular scenes and who does not feel their beauty enhanced to him by such connections. The place where one was born, the school where one was educated, the miniature resemblance of a dear friend, or a lock of hair belonging to the fair object one has adored, all these can be indifferent to no person; they recall so many images of the objects of past affections and are connected with such bright passages in life that the soul forgetting all present sorrows, flies over each happy scene of by-gone years whose charms are hallowed and doubly endeared by memory.

And, what is it that constitutes the emotions of sublimity and delight which every man of sensibility feels at sight of a celebrated but fallen object; who can for instance gaze for a moment "on Greece but living Greece no more," and not feel his heart rise kindling within him. It is not, however, the desolate appearance of the country,—it is not Thermopoly or Salamis diminished in his imagination to a petty rock and stagnating stream; —it is not the Adriatic weeping for its lord nor the

triumph of superstition over the wreck of humau greatness, that throws a spell on the scene and gives rise to solemn emotions in the soul; but it is ancient Greece which grasps the observers mind; it is the country of Demosthenes of Homer and Miltiades which lies before him; he observes the nursery of learning and the birth place of liberty; he traces in its ruins "the shining footsteps of the Deity"—he breathes a purer air as "Standing o'er the Persian's grave."

He cannot "deem himself a slave."

All his classical learning and studies of maturer age rush in the mind's eye with the agility of lightning and present him with a field of imagery that never can be exhausted;—his ideas are by no means limited to the scene he beholds, from appearances of decay he is led to think of the inevitable fate which will bring on the destruction not only of lives and empires but of nature itself. Such motions are truely poetical; and as long as man shall feel the beauty and harmony of the creation and acknowledge the power of an Almighty architect, poetry will continue to refine and enchant us. Let him therefore that despises poetry as a trifling art conceal his opinion that his sensibility and good nature may not be questioned.

It is not authorship which constitutes a poet; the man that never gave utterance to his thoughts in writing,—who has never committed the sin of rhyming, may, for aught I know, be as great a poet as Shakespeare; and he who thoroughly understands the Paradise Lost of Milton, who enters into the spirit of the production, and yielding his mind's reins to the poet, soars with him over the heights of Parnassus or dives with him into the recesses of hell, is not inferior to Milton in poetical genius.

The astronomer that gazes entranced the blue vault of heaven, and is roused to a sense of the infinite good-

ness and wisdom which the creator has displayed in his works, is a poet in fact; the botanist is a poet, who traces in the silken petals of a flower the unbounded power and exquisite skill which are exhibited in the minutest as well as the mightiest parts of the world. The soldier and the lover, the philosopher and the shepherd, the child and the man, all live in a world of imagination. The essence of poetry may be found in every class of the objects of human knowledge, in every variety of external scenery and in the diversities of disposition and affection in the mind of man.

Human life abounds in the materials of poetry and the gifted eye can discern among the gross objects of the earth their purer elements, and find food enough for contemplation; the calm and innocent pleasures of childhood, the buoyancy of youth, the warmth of early friendship, and the unutterable affection and throbbing of the soul as if it would burst its prison gates when opening to the ardour of first love, "woman with her linaments divine,"—the tumult of outrageous feelings, and the remembrance of past happiness, are all poetical.

It is a prejudice to think that the poet describes scenes which do not exist; he only extracts the honey from the weed, gathers whatever is beautiful or excellent, and always present to our view the bright side of objects; he overlooks the casual distinctions of country and condition, as a painter satisfied with the figure neglects the drapery; he is conscious of a divine inspiration and cloathes his freest thoughts in the boldest language, his great end being not to amuse but to instruct mankind; —he spiritualizes our nature and has an alliance with our best affections.

> "The poet's eye in a fine phrency rolling
> Doth glance from heaven to earth from earth to heaven

> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shape and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name :
> Such tricks hath strong imagination".

Every man is by nature possessed of some degree of imagination, and every man therefore is more or less a poet. Poetry is the spirit of human passion ; it is the stuff of which our life is made ; it is blended with our nature and existence and lies buried in the secret recesses of the soul ; it comes home to our bosoms and touches every chord of sensibility ; and it contributes to our happiness by awaking the most delicate feelings of the heart. The muse is no false enchantress, no deceiver in disguise ; her pleasures are neither trivial nor grovelling, they are unceasing and various ; her lessons are not partial nor affected, but useful and universal, fiction may be her dress, but her face beams with truth ; she holds up the mirror to nature, in which are portrayed the sceneries of life, and if these be false, accuse nature not her, for poetry and nature are the same. She elevates and refines our nature, teaches us to look upon earthly things as insignificant, and leads us to scenes more hallowed and etherial than "the cold world infuses or proud art inspires."

I do not envy the sentiments of that man who thinks that art and practice could make a poet; it is a blasphemy to think so; genius of the highest and rarest order is essential to poetry. Though many have disputed the existence of genius, I do indeed believe that nature, as if tired of the dull monotony of life and disgusted at the slow advance of intellect, does sometimes but very rarely take a pleasure to invest some favourite spirit with the uncommon power of producing excellences which are out of the reach of the rules of the art ; a power which no

precept can teach and no industry acquire ; thus do we observe that while the generality of mankind struggle painfully to comprehend obvious truths, men of superior genius glance like lightning through the most remote consequences, and by universal consent hold a station at once exalted and transcendent. It is to the strength of this amazing quality that we are to attribute that unequalled fire and rapture which are so obvious in the productions of master minds ; they see the beauties of nature with warmth and fancy ; everything lives and is put in action. The poet the statuary and the painter have produced images that have left nature far behind.

Poetry is an art unteachable—untaught ; and persons of talent and learning cannot with all their labour acquire it with success : the exertions of years and the devoted application of a life to rhyming would not strike out a poetical idea. Nothing can be more erroneous than the supposition that in the fine arts such as poetry, painting and sculpture, relative perfection is the result of gradual improvement and repeated effort. Things which are mechanical or capable of demonstration are progressive and admit of improvement, but the flights of genius are very often stationary ; they are few and far between. We see what wonderful advances are made in science, in chemistry, mechanics, geometry, and astronomy, things depending on inquiry and experiment or on absolute demonstration ; but to conclude that the endowments of the human intellect which depend on feeling taste and incommunicable power, have a tendency to improve by repetition and to grow perfect and mature by time, is at once false and absurd—these pass at once from infancy to manhood,—from obscurity to dazzling lustre. The theories which Newton invested have been improved by posterity, and his discoveries are daily extended by indus-

trious individuals ; but the painting of Raphael and the poetry of Shakespeare remain and will perhaps ever remain unrivalled.

Nor is imagination, which is almost another name for genius, confine to the poetic art alone ; philosophers and men of science have as much required its assistance as poets, and Newton, Bacon and Laplace are perhaps indebted to as large a share of imagination for their extensive discoveries and luminous illustrations in philosophy as Tasso, Dante or Shakespeare.

They lie who say that there is a natural opposition between poetry and truth; nothing can be more false and absurd. Poetry, as is well observed by Cowley, is "Truth severe in fairy fiction drest."

"The fictions of genius are often the vehicles of the sublimest truths" says another writer; indeed poetry consists mostly in the imitations of nature, hence it has been defined by many as the imitative art. Like all other arts it derives its materials from the elements it finds in nature, but it gives to all objects a passing grandeur, combines and blends them into new forms, and endows them with shapes which a delicate fancy throws over them ; it soars beyond the boundaries and distinctions of nature and forms things according to its wishes and fancy. A being like man, endowed with the inestimable power of reason and conception, and framed for higher ends than merely to live and die, must possess creative energies and powers of ever-growing thought ; and poetry therefore, taken in its widest sense as the power of creating what is beautiful and presenting it to the mind, must be a universal gift of Heaven shared alike by the civilized and the savage.

Poetry is the most perfect language for the energies and creations of the mind ; it imparts to material objects,

life sentiment and emotion ; suffuses a spirit of joy and activity over the universe, and in all its images manifests its affinity to a more exalted and joyful existence. It is a glorious prerogative of this art, that it gives us a respite from the care and drudgery of life, reveals to us the loveliness of nature, and brings back the freshness of feeling and enthusiasm which warmed our hearts in the sunny morn of life. By describing the mind in its tenderest and most lofty attitudes, it make us attached to society and spreads our sympathies over all classes of men, refines our friendships and doubly endears to us the objects of lone.

Poetry therefore far from being injurious to the world tends greatly to refine and spiritualize it. It does not abound in illusion and deception ; there is more truth in genuine poetry than in history or philosophy. "Poetry," says Aristotle "is a more philosophical and excellent thing than history, for poetry is chiefly conversant with general truths, history with particular." In poetry the garb may be falsehood but the spirit is truth and wisdom ; it has a natural alliance with our best affections, and its great tendency and purpose being always to carry the mind to a purer element, it brings us nearer to our Creator, knits us by closer ties with universal being, and augments our faith in religion. "I am always religious," said a celebrated poet, "on a sun-shiny day, as if there was an association between an internal approach to greater light and purity and the kindler of this dark lantern of external existence." Emotions of this sort are felt I believe by all men, the beauties of nature lead us insensibly to nature's creator, and in proportion as our admiration of his work increases, our veneration for him becomes firmer and more deeply rooted.

True, poetry has been applied by wicked and ignorant

men to evil and licentious ends, but when genius thus stoops, says Doctor Channing, it dims its fires and parts with much of its splendour ; and even when poetry is enslaved to licentiousness, she forgets her true vocation. If there are bad poets, as undoubtedly there are, are there not bad philosophers and historians to match; and should the art be accused for the fault of unskilful artists ? A good poem abounds so much in strains of pure feeling and sympathy, and pictures of tenderness and innocence, shows how hard it is for poetry to divorce itself from what is good and to forsake its etherial element.

Tragic and impassioned poetry which is the best species of the art is an emanation of our nature ; it carries our feelings to the utmost point of sublimity and pathos, and portrays with life and energetic spirit the workings of mighty passions and the excesses of deep-wrought feeling ; it lays bare and shews us the inmost recesses of the heart, excites in our breasts a deep though shuddering sympathy and rouses the whole man within us : in every poem which aims at immortality human nature should be introduced, for the actions character and conduct of men most powerfully touch our hearts and delight our understanding. Human actions are the colours that give poetry stability and elavation, they are the true enjoyments of life : When we see before us the agony of separated love, the wild ravings of ambition, and the maddening phrenzy of jealousy, the depravity of vice, and the exaltation of virtue, we cannot help indulging our violent passions to excess—of making a torment of our fears, and luxuriating in our hopes of good ;—the objects of terror or pity as well as of love or beauty exercise the same despotic control over our hearts ;—we are prone to yield to our passions, be it love or scorn, admiration or hatred, and we naturally dwell upon and exasperate our ideas.

"Masterless passion sways us to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes."

Hence it is that Dramatic poetry has attained a position so eminent and popular, and those that excelled in that department of the art are immortalized by the world. Those great masters of nature are not the less good philosophers who are enabled so entirely to forget themselves, to enter into the hearts of men and portray them exactly as they are in every change of position and with all their inconstancies both real and apparent. It has been reverently and well spoken of the immortal Shakespheare by a critic who, as I am told, says, that should the world be visited by another deluge and should all the productions of science and art perish with mankind, except the works of Shakespeare, a future race could with the assistance of his writings alone, trace the course of events and know what human nature was and always is.

Poetry is the finer spirit of all knowledge ; it is the essence of philosophy ; the historian the orator and the philosopher address themselves primarily to the understanding, their direct aim is to inform or to instruct ; but the ambition of the poet is to please and to move and therefore it is to the imagination and the passions that he appeals ; he has and he ought always to have it in his view to instruct and to reform ; but it is indirectly and by pleasing that he accomplishes this end;—his mind is animated by some interesting object which communicates to his style a peculiar loftiness very different from common language. To every one who desires a rational amusement and instruction the study of poetry is invaluable. Poetry is strictly the language of imagination, it blends all objects into new rules and according to new affinities and represents and moulds them as it were into an infinite variety of shapes and combinations of power ; the sense

of beauty is weak and confused and requires a bright colouring to catch the attention. The infant energies of the human mind and its aspirations for relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal beauty are all manifested in the best form by poetry; the poet is at liberty to invert words, change them from that order in which they are commonly placed and coin them to the form most suited to his train of imagination and the cadence of the passions by which he is moved; under the influence too of a strong emotion he does not view objects as they really are but such as passion makes him see them; he seeks to interest all others in what causes his emotions, and in order to effect this compares the smallest things to the greatest, calls upon the absent as well as the present and addresses himself to things inanimate and ideal. It is true that he magnifies and exaggerates, and instead of defining the limits of sense or the distinctions of the understanding, gives us the excess of imagination beyond the real ordinary impression of objects and feelings; but because this language does not coincide with facts, it cannot be false, it is the rather the more true and natural, for it conveys to the mind the most vivid description of the objects it describes.

Nothing can be more absurd than the complaint of frigid and pedantic men regarding the extravagance and facility of the poetic style: it is not the aim of the poet to define nature by literal truths, by demonstration and abstract reasoning; he describes the surrounding universe in colours which the passions throw over it, and invests things with unreal powers and ideal splendours. To do justice therefore to the animated thoughts and flashes of passion in the poets breast, he should and he must have a separate language from that used in common conversation; it is as impossible for a poet to speak with indifference and in cool prosaic language the impressions of sub-

limity and beauty, as for a painter to represent a murderer with a calm and placid countenance. Things do not strike men equally, that which is interesting to one may be indifferent to another, and even disgusting to a third party ; people view things with more or less sympathy according as they are interested in them ; a lone ship for instance striding the tempestuous ocean and struggling to the last with its crest of waves, will be an object of incalculable interest to the poet,—he would enter into the feelings of its wretched inmates, and emotions of sympathy and heart-rending woe would rise spontaneously in his breast—but will such emotions be felt equally by all men, —the merchant will probably calculate the amount of its freights, the politician, the decrease of wealth which its loss may bring about,—the philosopher would coldly reason on the instability of life and nature,—and the mathematician not a jot interested in the sad destiny of the living race within, may in the creaking mast and quivering ropes find a ready made figure to demonstrate some precious theorem. Impressions of passion and indifference, of imagination and reasoning are always distinct. "Let the naturalist" says a critic "carry a glow-worm in a box and find it next morning but a little grey worm, but the poet would visit it at evening, when beneath the scented hawthorn and the crescent moon it has built itself a palace of emerald light."

Poetry, considered as an art is the imitation of nature in musical language. Milton has very well expressed his idea of poetry in a line.

"Thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers."

It is the music of language corresponding to the harmony of thoughts which charms and elevates the soul. Poetry and music are combined by nature ; the same impulse which prompts the enthusiastic poetic style prompts

a certain melody or modulation of sound suited to all the emotions of the human mind. There is a power in sound which, either from habit or association makes such lively impression on the fancy as delights even the wildest barbarian. Music and poetry therefore are often united, and they tend naturally to exalt and heighten each others effects, as one idea gives a tone and colour to others, and one feeling suggests others of similar nature—there can be no doubt that the emotions of the soul blend themselves into harmonious language.

Poetry supplies the inherent defects of harmony in the mechanism of language ; it makes the sound an echo to the sense, and mingles the tide of verse with the tide of feeling and emotion ;—it avails itself of the bright coincidence and the unexpected return of syllables, and produces the same movement of harmony, sweet, sustained, and varied occasionally in accordance to the sounds that express it. Wherever an idea deeply impresses itself on the mind, melts it into tenderness or lifts it to sentiments of enthusiasm ; wherever is the play of imagination and the passions giving rise to the play of harmony and the golden cadences of verse,—there is poetry. It is the elevation of thoughts that naturally leads to elevation and music of language and changes the words of Mercury into the songs of Appollo. That which lifts the spirit above the earth and which draws the soul out of itself with ardent aspirations is poetry in spirit, and it is fit to become the art by being married to immortal verse. An orator that spiritedly enters into his theme and declaims warmly and with feeling rises into a sort of blank verse or poetic language. Poetry makes even all the jerks the breaks and the harshnesses of language ; it has a magic power over words ; they come winged at its bidding and seem to know their places,—they are struck out without labour,

at the moment of inspiration, and possess all the truth and vividness which arise from the actual impression of an object. Each epithet and single phraze are like bits of diamonds that sparkle with dazzling lustre. Every line breathed by the muse is a hallowed thing. Take any stanza of good poetry and try all you can to displace one word, a letter,—you cannot do so without entirely murdering the sense; you are greatly at a loss to substitute other words for them equally expressive of the feeling, and though you may feel justly the meaning of the author, you can never well express it in any language but what he uses. It is allowed that poetry quickens the fancy and greatly assists the memory; an excuse therefore might be made for rhyme as it is so delightful and valuable.

The language of poetry is of all the most select and expressive, for a poet is obliged to ransack every corner of the queen's language to find expressions that would do justice to his warm and animated feelings; his numbers must be majestic if the story be sublime,—and mellifluous, harsh, swift, or smooth according to the tenderness or energy of his subject. To those therefore that would learn a foreign tongue I would mostly recommend the study of the poems in that language, for the proper accents of syllables and modulations of sound, the just meaning and arrangement of words and phrazes, and the peculiar beauties of expression can be learned best and with the greatest facility from poetry alone.

It has been often said that poetry is older than prose: the concurring voice of antiquity and the records of all nations affirm this. I do not know how far this strange paradox holds true, for surely the first tribes of men did not converse together in poetical numbers. Ignorant and uneducated as they were, it cannot be believed that they carried on intercourse among themselves regarding the

wants and necessities of life in verse, rhyme, and metre. So far however is probable that, from the very beginning of society there were occasions on which they entertained themselves with music and song : the perception or remembrance of interesting events and the enthusiasm of fancy or passion suggested to untaught men those rude and wild effusions of song which should be ranked the beginning of poetic composition. Poetry, as it always speaks the language of the passions is equally welcome to the civilized and the savage ;—and we accordingly see among rude nations, the art of poetry is held in great esteem and those who signalize themselves in it,—the bards are universally admired. It is in songs that they celebrate their religious rites, lament their public and private calamities, express their joy for victory, record the actions of their heroes, and excite each other to fight with intrepidity or die with fortitude. No wonder then that in the wild and artless strain of the first poetry of all nations, there is that which elevates and transports the mind. I have no doubt that many of the lays of the first ministrels contain specimens of the true poetry, for they were the native effusions of the heart and the ardent conceptions of the passions breathed in the boldest and most animated language. Science is progressive, and knowledge admits of improvement ; but the pulse of the passions assuredly beat as high and the depths and soundings of the human heart were as well understood *ages and ages ago,* as they are at present; poetry then which owes its birth to passion and fancy was as much relished and felt by the savages of antiquity as by the sages of our day. A question naturally aises here,—whether the march of learning and civilization in the world have produced consequences unfavourable to the spirit of poetry ?—Has refinement a tendency to fix limits to imagination or to clip the wings

of poetry ? I cannot think so—knowledge may take off the grosser parts of it, but can never injure the spirit. The poets of ancient times spoke of the adventures of heroes and knights errant and the actions of monsters and giants, but the present age is little disposed to believe such inconsistencies.

"The time has been" says a sneering critic "that our fell hair would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir as life were in it, but the police spoils all and we now hardly so much as dream of a midnight murder." Macbeth, continues the same person, is only tolerated in these times for the sake of the music ; now were this not a gross and palpable insult to the manes of Shakespeare I could have remained silent ; to speak thus profanely of one of the best tragedies in the English language is deadly presumption ; the same argument would make us prefer a game at cards to a lecture on ethics on the score of amusement.

It is true that trained to perceive a regularity in the works of nature, we are greatly hurt on seeing distortions and monstrous appearances we stand now in less dread of the preternatural world and are less exposed to the vicissitudes of good and evil. The incursions of Genii and the feats of demigods continue no longer to affect us, and happily ; for whatever comes not within the sphere of belief ceases to be interesting, and what but the most ludicrous sensations are excited by them in our minds. Many of the ancient poems and old school romances are for this reason rejected by the present generation, for instead of preserving the consistency of the characters, their authors make them subservient to their own capricious wishes and thereby render them worthless caricatures ; it is necessary therefore that the poet should not extend the mania of exaggeration beyond certain limits :—I do not mean however that the flights of aspiring genius

should be confined ; some little deviation from the plain truth, provided it be agreeable to the dreams of fancy, is not only allowable but pleasing. The greatest poets have sometimes taken advantage of this licence to render their productions elegant and picturesque. Homer has introduced in his poems Gods and Goddesses, but this far from making his works ludicrous has greatly heightened the other beauties of composition : we are to consider that in the times when Homer lived the existence of many deities was generally believed, and even to this day, whatever divines may assert to the contrary, we cannot but think that there are superior beings forming another link between man and his Creator, who interfere in our actions and befriend our virtuous resolutions and heroic enterprizes. We see Shakespeare often borrowing the wing of romance and revelling in the wildest fancies without passing the bounds of possibility ; the monster Caliban, the dark Hecate, the lovely Ariel and the charming Titania are exquisite pictures of malignity and innocence ; a spectre timely introduced, as that in Hamlet, or the appearance of witches on a lone blighted heath, greatly adds to the picturesque beauty of poetry without trespassing at all on our belief ; it makes the heart all expectation and suspense and strains our hopes and fears to the highest pitch for trained by early habits to think on supernatural appearances, our fancies are awake to traditional stories and nursery romances, and we believe in the truth of them even against our will.

The introduction of these creatures of fancy heightens in many cases the effect of poetry. The claims of Pope himself as a genuine poet would have been much disputed were it not for the exquisite creation of the Sylphs in his admired "Rape of the Lock."—So long as a poet passes not the bounds of consistency, he is at liberty to add a

thousand fanciful charms to a delightful scenery, he may make mountains more grand, and terrific rivers, more meandering, grots more romantic, and seas more agitated by storms than they are ; fancy and sensibility should be his principal supporters, but nature should be made the standard ;—in representing human life he must give us the feelings as they are, nor exalt one passion at the expense of another. To a man of unpoetical character the mind may seem lawless in its workings, but to the poetic vision it manifests unerring laws—the laws of immortal intellect and he therefore depicts it in those moods of repose or agitation, of tenderness and sublime emotion, which show his aspiration for ideal excellence.

The arts of poetry and painting are in many respects similar. Both are conversant with the passions of the mind and the views of external nature, with what we know and see and feel intimately. Both flow from the shrine of our breasts and derive their origin from the hand of nature. Painting is a picture in colours,—poetry the same in words ; painting gives the object itself, poetry what it implies ; the one gives the events as they are and delineates the human face divine in such faultless excellence as makes our heart reel with its fulness "dazzled and drunk with beauty," but the other has a wider field and a more intimate connection with the imagination and passions ; it gives us not a scene by itself only but also everything connected with that scene, not event a single but the progress of events, and it is in following this progress that the breast throbs with expectation and suspense, and the hopes and fears of men are strained to the highest extent. We gaze on a good painting and are satisfied with its harmonious symmetry and exquisite distinctions of light and shade, but we are not so courteous to the poet,—we are not contented with the isolated descrip-

tion of a flowery mead—a coral cave or a starlit sky—he must powerfully touch our hearts and delight our understandings—he must show us the inside of all things and lay bare the rich depths of the human soul,—bring before us by contrast the whole of our existence, and rouse the springs of our thought and feeling to play with redoubled force. Such are the requisites to make a good poet and such the Herculean labour that leads to a dear-bought laurel.

Poetry therefore is for many reasons superior to painting ; it is true that a good painter could copy the finest pieces of poetry and paint with colours what the poet describes with words ; the objects of both are the same, but they act with different materials, and each exerts his best to represent nature as faithfully as possible. Such a scene as the following for instance would have equal justice at the hands of a good painter as a good poet.

"The moon is up and yet it is not night
Sunset divides the sky with her ;"&c.

But I defy any painter in the world to throw on the canvass such a spirit-stirring prospect as.

——"Far along
"From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
"Leaps the live thunder ; not from one lone cloud
"But every mountain now hath found a tongue.
"And Jura answers from her misty shroud
"Back to the joyous Alps that calls to her aloud."

No ! the flights of painting are only limited to description :—the pencil sketches but the figure ; but it is poetry which endows that figure with life and spirit, gives it a tongue to speak and a heart to move. In poetry, a word, an epithet describes a whole scene, and throws us back ages past by or brings into view whole years to come : you do not see the mere representation of characters but you feel them standing before you in flesh and

blood : years are reduced to moments and every instant teems with suspense and expectation ; the whole depends upon the turn of a thought, and a word—a look transports the passions. Could ever painting do the like.

It is not my intention, gentlemen, to trespass on your attention by quotations from good authors ; they are known to most of you. I will conclude only with remarking that as poetry is deservedly the best of all arts which dignify human nature it is also the most lasting. The music of Handel, the whispers of Kean will be mute ; the landscapes of Claude Lorraine, the marble of Chantry will be destroyed by the hand ; of time, but the songs of Shakespeare and Milton, of Byron and Wordsworth will be read with admiration after ages have past away amid the din of arms and the fall of empires ; "the wreck of elements and the crush of worlds."

A TOPOGRAPHICAL AND STATISTICAL SKETCH OF BANKOORAH.

By Baboo Huracchunder Ghose, Late Sudder Aumeen of that District.

To furnish a full and complete Topographical and Statistical account of a place, is beyond the power of any who possesses not some share in every department of knowledge. To comprehend the nature of the soil and air, and the changes they undergo in their various properties by a combination of adventitious causes, is the province of one who is intimately acquainted with the sciences. Not possessing all the requisite qualifications for a complete account of the topography and statistics of Bankoorah, it is impossible for me, in this part of the country, where there is scarcely to be found, in the whole station, a single volume for reference, to undertake so important a task, but as I may at least hope that I am qualified by local observations and experience to give a cursory sketch of Bankoorah, and the attempt, if it should not answer any other purpose, may at least tend to promote my own improvement, and in that respect, as I am a member of the association, be considered compatible with the object of the Institution.

Not having any maps at hand, I cannot state exactly the geographical position of Bankoorah, but I believe it is situated in latitude 23° 14′ north, longitude 8° 30′ east and is in a north-east direction from Calcutta from which place it is 123 miles distant by the Burdwan road. It's elevation is about 170 feet above the level of the sea; rising gradually from Burdwan which lies in an almost

direct eastern line from it ; the surface of the Country from Calcutta to Burdwan is almost a plane, but when a person crosses the Damooder, about three miles from the latter place, the sandy soil, the dry atmosphere, the desert-like appearance and the elevated surface become more and more perceptible to him till he reaches Bankoorah which rises in a sloping manner in a south-west direction from the banks of the *Gundessury*, a rivulet running to the north and nort-heast of it. From the bed of this streamlet the ascent is so high, that Bankoorah looks like a Cupola and the small patches of ground of oblong shapes, each elevated above the other, and all intervening between the bank and town, seen from a distance, have the appearance of a flight of stairs.

The town is a mile long and towards the middle and the western extremity is as much in breadth ;—the middle part being well stocked with shops. The Salkea road runs in a western line through the town, cutting it into two portions ;—it is 35 feet broad, and there is on both of its sides, from one end to the other, a range of shops, almost all of which are of thatched roofs, and these shops constitute the Bazar of Bankoorah. This road is the principal one , and according to the milestones upon it, Bankoorah is distant of 100 miles from the government House. Besides this there are five or six cross and side-roads, but none of them, are so broad or so much frequented as the main road. Beyond the western end of Bankoorah, a little to the south of this road, there is a fine open spacious piece of ground, and upon it are erected the Houses in which the civil courts are held—to the east and southeast of which the Jail and the Hospital are situated; and a lillte beyond the court House, towards the north-west stands a most splendid dwelling Houses, on a elevated spot, which has generally been occupied by the

judges. At a distance of more than a mile to the west of it, there are, besides the Government Foujdarry Cutchery, four other House built and occupied by private individuals. Most of these Houses, have a garden attached to them, but none can equal the one belonging to the Judge's Houses, in it's position near the banks of the river, it's great extent, it's beauty of stately trees, and its production of an abundance of summer fruits.

There are 1598 Houses in this city of which only 56 are Pucka ones, (these being mostly simple one-storied rooms) and 540 shops. Out of this total number the house-tax of 64 Rs. 8 Ans. is levied upon 1056 houses—the remaining 542 are exempted from paying it in consequence of the persons occupying them being in the most indigent circumstances so as to be able to pay a *piece* a month, the minimum rate at which houses are assessed. No census has yet been made, but supposing each house to contain 5 persons, the inhabitants, on an average, may be estimated at 7,990 men, of whom about 100 families consist of mahomedens and the rest Hindoos. There are only 56 ponds and reservoirs of water but most of them become dry, and none are remarkable for containing light and clear water.

There are two rivers in this place, the Dwarkassore and the Gundhessory ; the former is situated to the south of Bankoorah, while the latter running from the north, takes an eastern course and discharges itself into the Dwarkessore, which at it's confluence with the other, runs exactly to the east, at about 2 miles from the town. The bed of the Dwarkessore is 165 yards or 495 feet in breadth, and is dry in all seasons of the year except in the rains. The same may be said of the other stream, which is a smaller one, the bed measuring about 450 feet in width. Both of these do not retain their water in hot season, but

during the rains, they are filled from bank to bank and become generally between 2 and 3 feet deep. Their beds are full of sand, but for the purposes of obtaining drinking water, the people make a hole in it, about 1 and half foot deep and a foot in diameter, where a sufficient quantity of water is allowed to accumulate, when it is taken out with a common brass pot. The water thus distilled from the sand is clear and is said to possess very salubrious properties. After a sufficient fall of the rains, the stream becomes very deep and rapid and would drown a person by it's violence, should he attempt to swim across it.

Their banks are not very high, nor thickly covered with weeds and bush, the withered leaves of which being swept away, during the rains, by the force of the torrent, they are not deposited under water for a sufficient time so as to undergo decomposition, and give out *miasm* the inspiration of which is so injurious to health.

The soil of Bankoorah is dry and is chiefly composed of *silex*, which in it's various forms of quartz, mica gravel, and sand abound in it. There is also to be found a great quantity of limestones, which are burnt down for the purposes of mortar. It is also often impregnated with iron which gives it a faint yellow colour. I collected once about a pound of this useful metal from the sands of the bed of the river, where I found it in small particles, running along with the stream which was then about 2 inches deep. The little pieces of flintstones, scattered all over the surface, intermixed with a great quantity of this metal, as also with small particles of mica which shine like silver and give them a brilliant appearance. There are no hills in Bankoorah, but small rocks in detached masses, are here and there to be seen, all of which are formed of sandstone whose outer surface is blackened and hardened by oxidation from exposure to the air. There is a pretty

large hill, about 12 miles to the northwest of this place, called the *Chatue Hills* whose top is covered with Jungles and infested with wild ferocious animals. At the foot of this Hill, there runs a stream to bathe in which the people of the surrounding parts assemble every year in the month of March when a fair is held at this place.

Higher than this there is a range of hills to the west of Bankoorah which was formerly included in this District but are now annexed to the Manbhuoom Division. They commence from Roghunathpore about 32 miles from Bankoorah and stretch a great way to the westward—where they assume the name of Pareshnath Hills, supposed to be the mountains of Paris of the Greeks. On their Peak stands a most ancient and celebrated temple of Paresnath the favorite Deity of the Jat tribe who in immense numbers resort to the temple from the remotest parts of India, once a year, when a great fair is held here for 3 days ;—and such a vast concourse of people is said to be assembled, that I am told, though I cannot vouch for the fact, that upwards of 50,000 rupees worth of sweetmeats alone are sold daily on this occasion.

The surface of Bankoorah is of an undulating nature which favours the running off of water as soon as it falls from the clouds. This process is also promoted by the nature of the soil, which being of deep sand, absorbs the rainwater even if it falls in large quantity. Hence the ground in no part, excepting a few places is crowded with huts, becomes muddy, at any time, nor is there anywhere the slightest appearance of a marsh or a swamp.

The climate of Bankoorah, excepting during the hree hot months, is not uncongenial to health. The cold season sets in early in October when while the nights are yet oppressive in Calcutta the cold is rather severely felt here. This I have myself experienced ;—for while the nights

were still hot in Calcutta I once left it for Bankoorah and reached this place on the third night which I felt so very cold that I was obliged to wrap myself up with a blanket. Winter continues here to the end of February, during which period the atmosphere becomes dry and clear, the sky calm and serene, and the weather very agreeable. The elevation and openness of this place render it, at this time, very delightful and give it many advantages which few stations of Bengal enjoy in consequence of which it is much liked by Europeans whose minds, during the cold season, the undulating surface, the open fields, and the dry bracing atmosphere bring the thousand pleasing recollections of their home and their country, it's climate and it's landscapes. In January sometimes a sharp and keen wind blows for some days, rendering the nights very cold but not at all so intensely as to be unsupportable.

The most disagreeable season is the hot season; which commences in the middle of March and is sometimes protracted to the 15th June and even later, if the weather be not relieved by refreshing showers at the beginning of this month. At this time, all the tanks and reservoirs of water of which there are a few only, are dried up ; the atmosphere becomes heated, and the sun shoots forth his fiery rays and the fierce heat is augmented by radiation from the arid soil. A haziness also prevails which obscures the atmosphere, the sun looking dim and a hot parching wind blowing from the northwest dries up the surface, and destroys all vegetation. The hot winds last till the first fall of the rains which generally occurs towards the end of June, when the air is cooled, and the intensity of the heat is in a great measure abated.

I have not been able to keep an extended series of thermetrical observations, but such as I had the opportunity of making, has during the hot weather, exhibited an

excess of between 6° and 7° degrees of heat over that which prevails at the same time in Calcutta. For the temperature observed in the shade, during the greatest heat, from thermometer which I had suspended in the hall, protected from the direct influence of the solar rays by a thatched roof, and screened from an exposure to the parching winds by an intervention of Purdahs, was so high, that the mercury rose to 107°. This was observed on the 26th of May when at sunrise the mercury stood at 96° of Fahrenheit; and generally from the 26th of April to the end of May which may be considered the period of the greatest heat, the mercury never, except in the rainy days ranged below 97°. Occasional showers of rain fall towards the end of May, but excepting the rainy days when the mercury is considered lowered, it generally stands between 97° and 98°. The minimum heat of this station therefore may be stated at 107° of Fahrenheit.

But the people are relieved from this oppressive heat by the setting in of the rains which generally happen towards the middle of July; the weather becomes then pleasant and though the sun sometimes shines powerfully so as to raise the mercury to 90° or 91° still this high temperature does not last long :—the clouds gather immediately and an abundant fall of rain ensues :—when a sudden change of temperature takes place, and the thermometer often exhibits a reduction of 6 or 7. The rains after their fall are passed off in consequence of the undulating surface, or absorbed in, by the nature of the soil, and consequently the station seldom in any part becomes muddy. On the whole the rainy months, though sometimes close and oppressive are by no means unsupportable.

The prevailing wind is from the northwest in which direction it blows almost all the months of the year :—

and towards the commencement of the hot season, storms sometimes occur, attended with thunder and lightning—but though Bankoorah itself stands in a hill and there are many hills in its vicinity, storms are not of very frequent occurence nor their ravages so great as to deserve particular notice.

Bankoorah may be said to be one of the hottest stations of Bengal for during the scorching summer the plains feel the desolating effects of hot winds and vegetation almost ceases. But the rains in a manner, give life to it for it seems to be in a dormant state till the fall of the rains after which all of a sudden spring up with luxuriance giving the lawns a verdant appearance and rending the scene green and beautiful.

There are not many forest or fruit trees in Bankoorah, —their absence gives an appearance of bareness to the land. But while people lose one of the great comforts of life by their want of summer fruits of which there are almost none to be had in the market, they enjoy a security perhaps from breathing those noxious exhaltations which the rich towns decorated with garders, replete with flowers and fruit trees, would otherwise produce. For I conceive that moist land studded with vegetable production, must render a place unhealthy by the constant decay and decomposition of vegetable matter which would soon change into a purifying state and must impregnate the atmosphere with *malaria* so destructive of human life.

Gardening is not much known among the people, and the market, during the winter, is merely supplied with the common kind of the country culinary vegetables. Potatoes are sometimes brought from Burdwan but they do not find a ready sale among the inhabitants. Sweet mangoes, oranges, lemons, guavas, pineapples, and all the "sweets that the garden yields," are not to be met with.

Cultivation has hitherto been carried on to a limited extent and except the scanty production of rice, cotton, sugarcane and indigo (the latter being entirely cultivated by foreign Planters) very little of the other kinds of corn or puls are grown. But this District seems to be peculiarly adapted to the cultivation of the sugarcane which thrives very much in all parts of it,—particularly near the banks of the river where the soil is most favourable to the growth of this plant. On the more elevated spots however nothing will grow but by means of irrigation for which purpose people are obliged to dig wells in ponds close to their ploughed grounds. Stick lac is brought from the Jungles abounding to the south, west and north-west of Bankoorah where also Tussore, a kind of wild silk is produced, and the breed of the Tussore silkworm is also propagated. Coachneal insects are found growing wild upon the caetus: I once collected about a pound and sent a small quantity to the agricultural society where it was pronounced to be of the Grana Sylvester kind ; but I suppose there breed may be improved with care :

Having given some account of the soil and climate of Bankoorah, a brief notice of the diseases that prevail in it, may be useful. They are comparatively a few and not of any malicious origin. Bilious remittent and intermittent fevers, rheumatism, the syphillitic affections, and a variety of mental disorders are commonly met with ;—and during the change of seasons, cholera and smallpox sometimes break out ;—but are not very widely diffused or destructive, and the former indeed generally yield to English medicine to the use of which the people have a great aversion, but when the diseases make a progress and assume a dangerous form, they are obliged to have recourse to it, though too often at a period when the remedy sought for, proves unavailing. In the course of 12

months no less than 19 cases of intermittent fevers had come under my treatment, of which besides 2 or 3, all had been attacked with the malady during their residence in Manbhoom and other places in the Jungles, where the heat, moisture and the putrid exhibitions give birth to fevers, commonly called the "Jungle fevers." These fevers generally yielded to calomel (submuriate of mercury) and quinine, and it is gratifying to state that by this simple remedy I succeeded in curing all the patients who applied for my assistance.

Besides the above, most men are afflicted with the *hemorrhoides,* which seem peculiar to a dry climate: but the bowel complaints, the affections of the liver and spleen, the glandular swellings and all such chronic diseases as originate in a damp place are almost unknown. From every variety of endemic diseases also this station enjoys a perfect immunity in consequence perhaps of the sandy soil, from which, miasm in it's effects has never been traced out, and the great heat which seems destructive of deleterious exhalations. Upon reference to the Hospital returns it appears that during the last 12 months among 1351 prisoners in the jail, 220 sick persons were admitted into the Hospital, and of these only five persons died. Considering therefore the number of prisoners and the very few deaths that aoccured (being even less than half a percent) the healthness of the station may safely be pronounced upon.

There being no inland navigation, very little intercourse has hitherto existed between the inhabitants of this place and those of the other parts of Bengal :—the only commerce carried on by *Benjaries* consists chiefly of iron, mustard, sesamum and poppy seeds, catechu, Kochra oil (empressed from the seeds of Bassia) buffaloe ghee &ca these are brought upon bullocks from the jungle Districts

of Chotenagpore, Singhbhoom, Soorgoojee &co and in return they take away salt chiefly from this place. Corn is not produced here in sufficient quantity to meet the consumption, and the only commodity sent down from this place is a small quantity of goor (unrefined sugar) which is sent down to Calcutta where for its superior quality, it meets with a ready market.

There being no navigable rivers as stated above, and this district not being remarkable for the production of valuable articles, the Jungles and the sterility of the soil, have never excited the cupidity of the adventurers to visit or settle in it, and while the tracts watered by the Ganges, have from time immemorial been celebrated for the civilization of the inhabitants, the unfortunate people of this part of India, not having these physical advantages, and being situated on the north-west boundary of Bengal, have hitherto remained in a state of utter ignorance. Being in the vicinity of the hilly countries, covered with Jungles and inhabited by a barbarous race, hitherto supposed to be the aborogines of this country, those people have imbibed the rude manners and habits of the neighbours, and continue in a state of moral degradation. They are generally of a dark colour and possess superior physical strength to the Bengalees;—but are not endowed with a proportionate degree of mental qualifications nor possessed of the improved manners and enlightened habits of the latter. Their females are of a dark colour, very robust, and of a low stature and are destitute of that softness and delicacy which in general adorn the tender sex. A desire of plunder seems to be innate in the minds of the majority of the people, particularly among the Mullos —and other Rajpoot tribes who form the bulk of the population and among whom, morality and social virtues have not made any progress. Assassinations consequently are

not of uncommon occurrence, and the person who becomes oppressive soon falls a victim to their rage.

At the head of these Rajpoots, are the Rajahs of Bissenpoor, who being also of the *Mullo* tribe, this District derived from the name of the tribe, the denomination of "Mullobhoom"—or lands of the mullos. These Rajahs are descended from a most ancient family who in regular successsion governed the country for upwards of eleven hundred years—with a degree of savage cruelty unparalled in the history of a more civilized people. They were generally mean and illiterate and were altogether destitute of the exalted notions of humanity which they degrade by their actions—often massacering human beings for the slightest faults. So hardened were they in this inhuman practice that they even did not spare their head officers or Dewans who for the slightest real or imputed charges, suffered the amputation of their heads, noses or ears. Connected with this cruelty one practice obtained however which is sufficiently ludicrous though a source of further cruelty. When any of these Dewans, thus deprived of a member of his body, render any service which pleased his master, he was rewarded with silver or gold noses or ears as his merit deserved, and had them struck to those parts by wires which not only deformed the face but inflicted additional pain on him.

Being fond of a rude independence they seldom or reluctantly owned supremacy to the ruling powers and though possessed of a small estate, they considered themselves equal to kings and entitled to display all the people and pride of royalty;—and led away by this ideal greatness, they not only exacted most servile homage from their subjects, but observed on stated days of the year, certain celestial ceremonies of coronation which Indra in his capacity of the King of Heavens had performed.

Bissenpoor, their capital, has a number of Temples erected at different times by these Rajahs—almost all of whom possessed the Bisnoo faith and were so intolerant in religion, as they were in every other thing, that they would not allow any of their subjects, on pain of severe punishment, to do any temporal action without previously turning the head and performing the ceremony peculiar to their sect. So afraid were people of disobeying this injunction that children and even common labourers observed these rites,—and all the lower orders of the people, though of opposite principles, were obliged, once every morning, to turn the bead. Besides a mud fort and a few cannons still to be seen here, there is nothing remarkable in this city which is worthy of being recorded.

I have thus given a short sketch of the District among the inhabitants of which no efforts have hitherto been made to ameliorate their condition:—an English school house however had been recently established under the auspices of a few benevolent Gentlemen, but the institution which was the only one of the kind, soon failed for want of support. Two or three missionary schools in vernacular languages which were conducted by a reverend Gentleman have also shared the same fate.

The locality of this unfortunate District, the sterility of it's soil, want of internal navigation, and the utter indigence of the people all combine to bar every improvement, and that unless most active exertions are made by Government to elevate their character by establishing educational institutions, these people will ever remain in ignorance and would commit great mischief by their seditious disturbances which are constantly occuring. I have nothing more to add to the sketch of Bankoorah but to express my hope that some effort will soon be made to improve the condition of it's inhabitants which is, for the

causes described so melancholy, as to be a disgrace to civilization and a reproach to the enlightened Government to which India is now subject.

Bankoorah :
The 18th July, 1838

ON KNOWLDGE

GOUR MOHAN DAS

Let me first make the humble statement before this august assembly of learned, noble-hearted, wise intellectuals that I have taken upon myself a most difficult task. Before embarking upon that project I would like to state fearfully that I am new and inexperienced in this work and might make a laughing-stock of myself. Yet I am feeling somewhat enthusiastic because of the encouragement received from you and because I know of your many qualities. Hence my humble prayer to this meeting, to all members as well as the president is that by virtue of your own knowledge and modesty, instead of pouring scorn on the daring effort of this humble person, give me courage. Let my effort be not damped by your ridicules. Rather let it be strengthened by your encouragement. Fear and courage are alternately creeping up in my mind—fear because this assembly is brilliantly lit up like a happy night rediant with the silvery light of the moon and the audience here are enchanted by the delightful speeches which are usually delivered here by some of the eminent scholars present now. It is here that I may croak like a frog and my none too sweet language might spoil the beauty of the meeting like a speck of dark

cloud and this might well imitate the listeners. My courage emerges from the fact known to all that noble souls, out of the goodness of their hearts, forgive the folly in others and make a mountain out of a molehill of virtue of others in a most liberal manner. Anyway, now let me place my statement before you.

It is the duty of all men to acquire knowledge. Education is at the root of knowledge. Hence all learned discussions lead to awakening of knowledge. That is why spread of education among the masses is the most excellent of all work, because in this wide world, there is no greater friend than education. Education is a great benefactor and it opens the gates for acquiring fame. Education is as beneficial as the regard of a father as well as the affections of a mother. Education nourishes us at every step and like a lover gives us happiness all the time. Education is admired at home and abroad. Education drives away all ignorance and evil thought, clears up the pettiness of mind and makes knowledge shine like pure gold. It makes wealth, desire, virtue and salvation easily available and the other three invariably follow virtue.

On the other hand, there can be no acquiring of knowledge without education. What is life worth to a man who is bereft of all knowledge ? Such a man will no doubt possess a human body but being a foolish person, he will be no better than a beast. His only difference with a beast will be a bodily one—he shall lack four legs and a tail. However mentally they shall hardly be different. Hence cultivation of education leads to amassing of knowledge and increase of virtue ; while neglect of education leads to ignorance and results in man becoming a depot of vice. To man, education is beauty and wealth. Education awakens knowledge. Intelligence leads to defeat of enemies, extinction of vices and conquest of wealth

and happiness. Cultivation of education leads to the sunrise of knowledge in the mind and dispelling of the darkness of ignorance. It enables men to stick to the path of virtue and saves them from falling a prey to follies and vices. The path of virtue gives them solace and enables them to lead a happy life. An ignorant man is like a blind person. He often falls into a blind pit i.e., he can fall a prey to all kind of vices.

Sense of duty is rooted to education. Education is more precious than all other riches because our ethies clearly state that education is one wealth that never disappears. It cannot be stolen or robbed by the trickery or the use of force by king's officers or even by the use of the royal sceptre. It cannot be pocketed by the thieves, rascals and hypocrites. It cannot be burnt by fire nor be drowned by water. It cannot be distributed among relatives after death, nor does it disappear even after death. The significance of this comment of mine is that if a great and gifted learned person composes a grand book of verses or if some virtuous, noble, great religious man writes a book of morals or some other noble book—such authors become immortal. Their books also win immortality. Among such authors who have won eternal fame we may mention Byasa, Yagna-balka, Jaimini, Vashistha, Kapila, Gautama, Patanjali, Panini, Chanakya, Katyayan, Valmiki, Vishnu-sharma, Kalidasa, Bararuchi, Dhanvantari, Baraha-Mihir, Bhababhuti, Shankaracharya, Bharabi, Bopadeva, Hemchandra, Madhavkar, Lilavati, Amar singha and others. Hence among all wealth, education is the greatest. For all other riches get exhausted if you give them away but education increases each day all the more, if it given away to others. Education increases intelligence, modesty, patience, sobriety, glory, courage, sweetness, piety, spirit of forgiveness,

truth, peace, faith, love and kills hate, lust, anger, desire, illusions, malice etc. Hence there is no greater thing than education.

The wisemen of the world have praised above all knowledge the knowledge of arms and the ethics. The cultivation of knowledge of arms is admired only in youth —One merely laughs at this folly when one reaches a mature age. Knowledge of ethics is good at all times. Cultivation of ethics with regularity lead to sharpening of the intellect and enable men to decide precisely what is good and what is evil. By knowledge of ethics I mean that education which enables men to decide what is right and what is wrong. The knowledge that comes normally to folk is called earthly knowledge while the knowledge born out of education, may be called real or divine knowledge. A man lacking this knowledge is usually considered to be foolish. That is why all men try to sow the seed of education in their minds, irrigate it with the water of hard work and nurture the wonderful tree of knowledge, in order to obtain from it the fruit called the heart's desire. Otherwise the normally fertile soil of the mind becomes strewn with thorny shrubs and bushes known as vice and drives away from the heart all such elements as respect, peace, compassion. Such minds become bereft of all joy and are universally condemned.

There are five ways of acquiring knowledge, e.g., determining what is right and what is wrong ; study of the 'shastras', listening to great works, live together with noble persons and practising of knowledge already acquired. By the capacity to determine what is right and what is wrong, I mean our capacity to find out the causes of events, analyse them and calculate future possibilities. This capacity in part may come spontaneously to us even in our boyhood. For example, when we see a fire, we

may think about the great virtue of purification by fire. When we see the sun, we may remember its capacity to drive away darkness. Similarly, if we look at the condition of our fellow-men, we may feel deep remorse and realise how much of our duties we have neglected and spent our time in selfish pastimes.

We all know that our body is mortal and shall not remain for ever. It will disappear sometime or other, in the morning, evening or at night and merge into oblivion. That will not hurt God's creation. Because by God's will the sex-union of man and woman lead to birth of a new human being and in this way are all lives and deaths governed. There are five senses e.g. shapes, taste, sound, scent and touch. By shape we mean all that we can see e.g., village, mountain, ocean, rivers, the moon, the sun, the stars, the sky, earth, trees, men, beasts, birds, insects etc. By taste we mean all that can be felt by the tongue e.g., sweet, bitter etc. By sound we mean all that can be heard by the ears. By scent we mean all that we can smell out with our nose; and by touch we mean all that can be felt by contact with the skin. The cultivation of these five senses and constant thought about their assets, shall destroy all mental weakness and generate enthusiasm. Constant thought about these can only increase our knowledge.

The second type of method for acquiring knowledge is by studying. This means study of books, written in both verse and prose by many wise and mature scholars on a multiple of subjects. It leads us away from the path of evil and encourages us to keep ourselves engaged in honest labour. By study of learned books we acquire knowledge about many things, which include among others, the customs of various countries, official matters, the different methods of warfare, modes of justice, relation between husband and wife, educational systems,

liquidation of vices, reward for good work etc. we should also try to learn all the wonderful new discoveries, extension of the frontiers of knowledge both in English and in Bengali. All this is bound to awaken knowledge and those who love this type of life may rightly be called lovers of education.

The third way of acquiring knowledge is by way of listening. If one listens very attentively to lectures on various subjects connected with education, and if one constantly cultivates what one has heard, that also leads to increase of knowledge and sharpening of intellect.

The fourth way of acquiring knowledge is to stay together with honest pious men. There is no doubt that stupidity etc. disappear as soon as it comes into contact with honest persons. Just as under special circumstances a bit of glass can also take the hue of gold, so also close contact with scholars drives away all foolishness of even a fool.

Finally, comes the constant study of what one has already learnt. It is not correct only to repeat parrot-like the words that one has read in various books. What is necessary is to understand their real meaning and study them carefully again and again. This would result in sharpening of intelligence and opening up of the eye of knowledge. Such a person can then make a penetrating study of all things on earth and have great faith on the power of the Almighty, who pervades all things, even small pests and insects. The root of this type of acquirement of knowledge exists but we do nothing about it.

We always say that we have very little time to spare. But think how much knowledge can be acquired even in a little time ! Instead of trying to do that, we spend our time uselessly in idleness. This creates many hurdles in the path of our duties. We only say on the surface that

our life on earth is short but our desires and activities are mapped out on such a vast canvas, that it seems as if we believe that our life would never come to an end. In childhood, we crave for the youth ; in our youth we desire that our posts in offices or trade bring up great wealth. If we become rich, then we desire even more glory and in this way we while away our precious time. We do not even think of acquiring knowledge.

Yet, it is our duty to extend the frontiers of our knowledge, to do work in the light of such knowledge and to determine by intelligent debate our mutual relations. We also keep this precious gem of knowledge secure in the treasure-chest of our heart and shedding all miserliness, spend it in honest work according to need. Our time is being wasted in a useless fashion. Hence let us not idle away all our time but shed laziness for some time and devote ourselves to the acquiring of knowledge. This is sure to lead to much good.

If we divide our time by twenty, then we shall find that we spend nineteen parts of it in idleness and earthly pleasures. Only very rarely do we spend the other one-twentieth part in useful labour. Hence it is our duty first of all, to do such good work that shall bring benefit to the whole world. These may include giving good advice to fools, to give alms to the poor and to give solace to the sorrowful one etc. Mind has great power but evil men using a sweet wily tongue lead it to paths of evil which alas can but bring temporary joy. Hence, if we can keep our minds away from such temporary paths of joy, then we can escape such a dire fate. We should debate in our own minds about the results of good and bad work. Then we should make a list of our daily work, and learn to hate all the vile, unjust things that we may have done, so that we may overcome our weakness in future. That is the

way to decrease our weaknesses and increase our virtue and talents. That is the way to win public honour.

We should be always on guard against the natural errors of mankind and constantly discuss the ways of men. Then we can know clearly what customs dominate the lives of men, how do scholars lead their lives. A thorough and careful scrutiny of all these will reveal clearly that most of the evil acts and crimes are committed by people who have no education. Such a conclusion can help us to detest all vices but cannot give us real enthusiasm and happiness of the mind. However, if there is a sense of repentance for all the evil work that has been and if that leads to efforts to overcome the vices and weaknesses of others as well as one's own self, then it is of some use. One should also think what evil results might follow in the wake of such evil practice and what punishment has been meted out to such evil-doers and what is the fate of those who have broken away from the path of evil and what social status they do or do not enjoy now. If we find that those who have broken away from the ways of evil, are now honoured much more than before, then why should we not emulate them ? That is surely our duty but we should never be misled by flattery. We should never pin our faith in flatterers—this is certainly the duty of all wise men. For if we put faith in impossible and unbelievable words, then all our education becomes useless, what then is the benefit from education and knowledge ?

This is one of the best ways of acquiring knowledge. This should be taken to heart and no seeker of knowledge should disagree to follow this path. They should study all arguments for and against this path and settle all doubts on this score in their own minds. This would surely result in great satisfaction of the mind and deepening of our knowledge. It is absolutely necessary to study

books containing all kinds of useful knowledge like engineering, mechanics, chemistry, geometry and mathematics. The specialists in these fields can manufacture excellent watches, armaments, dye and so on. They can also construct houses, with strongly-built stairs, walls and so on. Those who are engaged in metal-work know very well what are the qualities of particular metals, how they respond to heat and what are their effects when coming in contact with certain other metals. If cultivators knew the qualities of soil, manure, and seasons, they could have become happy by growing more crops. Moreover, if we learn Natural History, we can know all about the habits of beasts, birds and fishes as well as about trees and plants. There are many other useful branches of knowledge like grammar, astrology, astronomy, geography, mathematics, physiology, commerce, politics, aesthetics, history, logic, poetics, medicine, physics, chemistry etc. If we delve deep into these, we shall find that we know next to nothing about these. This is so because knowledge is like an ocean and no man jump across it—no person can be a master of all branches of knowledge. The more we study, the better it is. It is childish to think that it is unnecessary to cultivate all the branches, because each branch of knowledge has a particular quality of its own.

Although there are no other books for school-use in the Bengali language apart from Kasidasa's Mahabharata etc, yet one must carefully study the few Bengali books recently written by scholars and those published by the Society. There may be serious printing mistakes in such books and certainly you should correct those mistakes. But you cannot blame the great scholars for such printer's devils, for they have spent much time and taken great pains to collect facts and write these volumes.

One of the ways of acquiring knowledge is to give up

all sense of jealousy and malice. But I dare say, and I hope members present here will not take it amiss, that in certain cases it is better to be jealous—e.g., to feel jealous about education and knowledge. If a learner is not jealous on this score, but remains indifferent, he may become lazy and may suffer in many ways. His arrogance about his knowledge can only make him look foolish. Always keep yourself free from demagogy and banterings for these are not the ways to acquire knowledge. Only knowledge leads to wisdom and this knowledge can be acquired by diligent study—this has already been stated. It is better to be a good listener of intelligent debates than to be an empty-talker, for the former gives much satisfaction and happiness to the listener. Talkative persons are naturally clever and use facts skilfully only to prove their own points. They use arguments only to hurt their opponents. When scholars coolly and calmly place their cases, these talkers are not ashamed to trick the listeners by uttering lies and distort facts in a clever manner.

If we carefully read the same thing over and again, it leads to a lot of good. Discussions give a permanent place to the subject already studied in the mind. If these are committed to memory, that is also very beneficial. But only to read on and repeat parrot-like is useless. Real knowledge cannot be acquired without entering deeply into the subject. Hence one cannot be an expert only by collecting books and filling up the library. If study of various subjects cannot lead to utilisation of the same in practice, then such education is false and such knowledge has no meaning. Whatever be the subject, before one begins to study that, one should realize that it cannot be mastered without much care. If you do not lose all enthusiasm in realising this, if your mind does not turn its face away because of the labour involved, rather

if it becomes even more diligent and patient, then you master the subject and acquire considerable knowledge. Never give up hope as a learner, although it is difficult hope, for if you work hard with confidence, your hope shall bear fruit.

It is childish to express definite views on a subject or to advise how to use it without knowing it properly and without giving it a well-considered thought. This is not proper for a well-educated person. If one is very particular and attentive about one's own subject and if one knows all about it, then pursuit of that knowledge cannot lead to any ill-effect but can only bear excellent fruits. Do not express satisfaction or anger as soon as you see any thing or incident. Make a thorough enquiry about the same, obtain accurate proofs, give up anger and malice, use proper arguments according to time, age and country and then pass favourable or unfavourable judgment as the case may be. What is correct according to the principles of ethics, cannot ever bring repentance, nor can it bring any misfortune. Rather we can get many good advices each day and by learning them to heart, we can well realize what evil practices are to be condemned and how evil-doers should be punished. It is but natural for men to err. That is why we must always be on guard that we may not fall into the pit of erring ways. We must not only guide our present activities carefully, but we should also try to analyse our past activities—their good and bad aspects. If we realize that by mistake we have committed some wrong, we must take care never to do it again. If we have committed some mistake by accident, we should own it up. This will not make us object of ridicule; rather it will have beneficial effect on us. If we refuse to own up our mistakes, that will be thrice wrong. Firstly, it may lead to recurring of

mistakes. Secondly, it shall prove us to be liars, for we are trying to conceal something in order to cover up our shame. Thirdly and consciously we shall be calling a wrong thing right.

It is very much improper to constantly lash out with and acid tongue. For sometimes, men are pleased with bantering gibes but many others are hurt by the same. Hence it is outrageous to hurt so many only to gain the pervert pleasure of pleasing some others for the time being. If we acquire useful knowledge, then such knowledge should be imparted to seekers of knowledge. The good things that we have learnt, should not be hoarded up like miser's wealth, for that would lead to demoralization and sapping of enthusiasm. Among all things, what we need to analyse most are the different activities which embrace our daily lives. We should constantly debate on these and be on guard against the forces of evil and carefully devote our energies to the carrying out of such tasks which may bring excellent results. First of all, we should settle in our own minds what we are going to do and that write down those resolutions, couched in fine words. We can then determine our duties in the light of our judgment of the aforementioned resolutions. We can then decide what activities shall lead to increase of wealth, prestige and fame and what activities may bring about notoriety—all these shall then become clear. No doubt, we can learn a lot by studying books; but the deep study of the book called the life of man brings far greater benefit and certainly no harm. No doubt, it is but proper for a wise person to follow a man who has studied a little and even then have been able to form respect and hate towards virtues and vices by means of deep inquiry. However, it would be highly improper for a person not to pay heed to the results of the activities of a man who has

both studied books as well as delved deep into the ocean of life in order to determine what is good and what is bad.

If we think our education is primarily for earning money and that where there is learning, there is wealth and that uneducated people are usually poor and that if one works properly according to the principles of morality, then that person shall become wealthy and famous as a rich man and that if anyone misbehaves and commits a wrong, then all his accumulated wealth shall disappear and he shall daily get poorer—alas ! reality is completely different in this world ! There are reasons for this but I shall desist from going into those now. Some other time I shall not hesitate to discuss about them. Just see how many uneducated lying, cheats, by committing so much wrong and so many crimes, have yet accumulated vast wealth by forbidden and illicit means and are spending their time together with their families in peace and comfort, having in their possession, vast wealth, palaces and cars. They are even being applauded by the people and winning fame. On the other hand, thousands of honest religious men who study ethics deeply and act according to the tenets of morality, are living a miserable life full of hunger and want.

Hence, while acquiring knowledge, we should first consider what I am, how did I originate, why was I at all born, what is life, what is matter, what is the relation between our body and life. Those who do not believe in life after death, would find it difficult to come to a definite conclusion about this subject. But those who believe in life after death, would characterise God as the source of all life. The knowledge that we acquire by means of such debates, is real and by this we earn lasting happiness. Only then can we consider temporary pleasures

born out of our desires to be inferior. In this we can keep control over our desires and make our minds dispassionate. Knowledge enables us to search for truth and careful efforts in this direction gives us shelter of truth and enables us to win with little effort, the greatest of all happiness—namely, excellence. Truth is priceless yet it can be obtained by virtue of knowledge. Hence, if we possess this priceless treasure called knowledge, then at every step we can become happy.

It is necessary for all and sundry to acquire knowledge. Some boys and young men steadily get education at famous schools and colleges. Leaving aside these people, others, who have neglected education and who express contempt towards knowledge, due to various reasons, namely, due to the poverty of the parents or due to the miserliness of the parents or due to their own laziness or some other reason and who have only little knowledge with which they earn money, or carry on business or official work—these people should study some of the basic books to extend the frontiers of their learning and knowledge. They should also discuss about the books. Many people have such honest intentions and many follow them in practice too. However, recently changes have taken place in the time-shedule of official work and people in service get no rest from 8 a.m. in the morning till dusk. In the intervening period there is hardly any gap even to drink a glass of water. Such tremendous pressure of work would of course destroy all mental determination. Loss of energy leads to loss of real happiness. This in turn leads to giving up of efforts to acquire knowledge resulting in getting submerged in the fathomless depths of the ocean of sorrow.

There are certain offices, where one gets a rest-period of 2 to 3 hours. It is quite possible to increase our know-

ledge in this period by reading useful books; but in most cases the officials condemn such attitudes and reprimand people engaged in study with such harsh words like "you get pay for your work here. You shall to do only work here—this is not a school for reading books." Such words have a validity for after all when we are getting wages, we should work properly. But it is of no harm to the employer and of much good to the employee, if one does not spend the rest-period like a dumb lazy person and instead usefully spend the time in acquiring some learning. Alas ! the bosses of most offices do not even allow employees to read newspapers. If any is ever seen reading a book or a newspaper in the office, the officers would declare that these persons never do any work and instead only read book and newspapers. The officers then try to transfer such persons elsewhere and make such complaints against them that those unfortunate persons never again dare so much as to speak about books. May be the officers think that if employees are kept strictly confined to their work and if they are not allowed to come in contact with books—then they would become better workers. This is absurd for only that work is done well which is done with enthusiasm. No work can be done properly with resentment in one's heart. Hence ways and means have to be devised so that none becomes the loser but the employee gains some knowledge. There is no doubt that many men violate discipline but that is done usually out of spite or greed or malice. But there is no doubt that honest, noble and wise persons will always be very careful on this point.

If this is done, then many persons will gain a lot by acquiring useful knowledge. They will be gladdened to read about various scientific subjects in the newspapers. There is no doubt that newspapers can be read only to

get the news and that one is benefited even if there is no good news there about one's native country. Yet it is better to read such subjects as will bring common good to all and sundry. One should move about in all sectors of society and listen to speeches aimed at improvement of the lot of all. People should also look after the education of one's own children. This way, by cultivation and increase of knowledge, people are bound to achieve nobility.

Many a young man do not act in this way. As a result, despite having eyes, they lose their eye of knowledge and rejecting the path of joy in the city, fall into the cheerless pit of a dark well by traversing the thorny path of evil. This causes them a lot of pain in the mind. Apart from such persons, others like those in the building industry, those making golden ornaments, welders, smelters, millers, weavers, oil-press workers and other artisans should also acquire some knowledge and education by making special efforts. Englishmen have imported various kinds of machines to Calcutta and its suburbs and this has lessened the hardship of these toilers to a considerable extent. From this it is clear that the Almighty, in a gesture of kindness, has brought these machines and given them sufficient leisure so that they study a little and acquire some knowledge. Hence all men should study as much as is possible, take frequent examinations to check upon such studies and become seriously devoted to the task of acquiring knowledge.

One can acquire knowledge by way of recreation too. No doubt it is rather frivolous to enjoy fight between sheep, birds, cocks or monkeys' acrobatics, tricks by snakes, kite-flying, wrestling etc., there are many other type of sports that enlarge the frontiers of our knowledge. For example, let us take the case of the flight of a gas-balloon in the sky with some animate or inanimate object inside it. If one

explains while giving a practical demonstration, how the gas-balloon had been prepared, why it went up and kept going in the air and so on, that surely increases the knowledge of the listeners. Secondly let us take up the case of projectors with which one can see pictures many times enlarged. With such projector one can show people pictures of cities old and new, of rivers and valleys, building, temples, ships etc and then explain all about the machine i.e. how it was manufactured, of what use it is and so on. This surely increases our knowledge quite a lot. Thirdly telescope, which the hindusthani people call Durbin, with which one can see things which are far away. Particularly if people are shown stars etc by means of giant telescopes, then surely their knowledge too mounts.

Then again, with the aid of chemistry, one can explain in an interesting way how various compounds can be created and so on. This can result in both expansion of knowledge and give joy to the audience. Fireworks may be a bit dangerous but that also can add to our knowledge. Astrology can be a recreation. It can also teach people to count days and seasons, know the time of tides and eclipses etc. Then again, if libraries are set up by means of public donation, it can increase the knowledge of the public. Because after all, not every person has the means to purchase books on one's own. That is why is a library is set up by raising funds from the public and if enough books are purchased and kept in racks in a particular place, then people can take the necessary books from this centre to their homes for study.

Then again, if duties on newspapers are abolished, then various native and foreign journals can travel to various places and thus help extend the frontiers of knowledge. Also, if we give up anger and hatred towards all other civilised nations and talk with them on equal foot-

ing, that too may lead to expansion of knowledge. It may not be wise to get involved into religious discussions with such nations as are totally differt from us in religion and customs ; but there can be no harm and chance of much benefit if we discuss with them their politics and social life and cordially accept from them what is good and reject with contempt what is unjust. An educated person should never hate another person just because he is a foreigner. Rather if we behave properly with a foreigner, we may learn from him a lot of things about which we know nothing and after due consideration of the merits and demerits of the same, extend the limits of our knowledge.

It is also useful to set up associations, to join such associations with enthusiasm, to do their works regularly, to try to make such associations permanent, to carry on debates there on different issues, to keep records of the same, to take to heart the essence of the discussions or papers read out in all such meetings, and in this way enlarge the mind. But such associations mean a lot of expenses and this cannot come from one but from many persons. This too is possible for there are many rich persons who are quite sympathetic. But there are some rich persons who are uueducated and who waste their money in a useless fashion and ridicule all attempts to set up school or learned societies.

Before concluding my discussion on this aspect, let me talk a little about the satisfying result of study and acquiring of knowledge. The Almighty God has combined the mind and the body of man. But despite this merger of body and mind, the two are really different and we do not know the exact link and the exact difference between the two. As we know other subject, we have also to know the mind. As the body is alive, so too is the mind. As

the body is necessary to us, so too is the mind. The mind too becomes happy independently and suffers pain. The Almighty has given us different powers e.g. hand and feet to work. Similarly the kind Almighty has also given us consciousness and an alert mind. That mind gives us far greater happiness than the body can ever give. So if we cultivate the mind, we can spend all our time in everlasting happiness. Hence, we should not spurn general and scientific knowledge for these are very useful and give us much happiness.

Ordinary people who earn their livelihood by means of their own efforts, should be so active as they can not only earn their livelihood but also discharge their duties towards their relatives. They should shed laziness and work hard to earn such wealth as can give them a little leisure to acquire some education. This will be very useful to them. One should not argue in this way that of what use is knowledge to ordinary craftsmen, artisans or ironmongers ? There is no such profession in the world that does not brighten up when connected with education. Study and education increases efficiency and excellence in work. Hence it is essential to be educated, for this alone gives man intelligence which in turn enables him to acquire proficiency in work and that way alone can man lead a happy life. God has given every man the strength to acquire knowledge. The two qualities of the heart are (a) to acquire knowledge and taste it and (b) to become joyous by getting educated. If any person is not satisfied by getting educated, then the blame must be laid either at the door of the person or at the method of education. The more we know about a subject, the greater is our satisfaction. Practice of education is also satisfying. Increase of education increases satisfaction of the mind. Who can deny this ? All accept the correctness of this proposition.

Uneducated, unconscious or ill-educated persons may study certain books which are useless. Almost all persons get joy by studying History. Some get happiness by reading fictions. Yet others get joy by reading about miracles. But all these merely give pleasure, while study of fictions is mere waste of time. We read newspapers but usually only those portions which contain items about miracles, poetry or the life-story of a man called Pratapchandra. We get pleasure out of this. The study of all these as well as History lead to a certain happiness. Ghost-stories merely captivate us, although we know them to be false. This does not lead to the possibility of acquiring real knowledge leading to real happiness. Rather we fritter away priceless time and this confuses our intelligence. From this, it is clear that colourful history, ghost-stories and miracles cannot increase our knowledge.

But if we study the various sciences and all about industries, we shall find so many wonderful things. This will also give immense happiness to the mind. Such subjects include the optical science, technology and what the English call chemistry. This last named science enables us to know all about metals and compounds. Then there is Astronomy which unravels to us the secrets of the sky and helps us to determine tides etc. Then there is Geometry which also is bound to give us much joy. Then there is Electricity which is a wonderful science. When we know all about these, it gives us much entusiasm and satisfaction.

Now let me discuss the obstacles that lie in the path of education. If one lives in a crowded place and listens to all kind of small talks, acquiring of knowledge becomes very difficult. A man who is interested only in satisfying the stomach, can also hardly acquire knowledge. One who is over-interested in roses, scents and candle-

sticks, can also hardly concentrate on education. Then again if one is over-attracted by the company of young women and develops sexual vices, it will inevitably lead to degeneration, loss of honour, wealth and even life. Hence, such a state of affair cannot but be detrimental to the cause of education.

Then take the case of useless travels. This leads to idleness of the body and the mind—a person becomes frivolous and cannot cultivate knowledge. Attention to music and dancing distracts people too much and these are also harmful for education. Certain games like cards, chess, dices etc are also very harmful for they lead to inordinate wastage of time. Alcoholic habits are also damaging to education for they lead to vulgarity, indecency and certainly not advancement of the cause of learning.*

GOUR MOHAN DAS

* *Translated into English by the Editor from the Bengali original. For the Bengali original, see Appendix—II.*

A SKETCH

OF

THE CONDITION OF THE HINDOO WOMEN

Read By Mahesh Chundra Deb

At a meeting of the

SOCIETY FOR THE ACQUISITION OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Held at the Calcutta Sanskrit College Hall.

January, 1839.

> ——Am I yourself,
> But as it were, in sort or limitation,
> To keep with you at meals comfort your bed,
> And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I, but in the suburbs,
> Of your good pleasure. If it be no more,
> Portia is Brutus, harlot, not his wife.
>
> SHAKESPEAR.

The subject which I have the honor to address this evening to you, Gentlemen, is of a nature that may at first sight appear trivial and uninteresting. But when you reflect on it's importance as it is connected with the physical, moral and social improvement of India I am confident you will not only forgive the presumption which you may fairly impute to me in endeavouring to handle it, but extend your indulgence to those imperfections of style to which I am but too liable. Indeed, Gentlemen, had not my theme been of such paramount moment to the progress of civilization and refinement in our dear native land and did I not feel myself called upon by the voice of humanity to agitate it, I should have hardly thought of obtruding upon your notice this crude and feeble at-

tempt. But I am sustained by the conviction that however crude and feeble it may be, it cannot fail to awaken your attention and rouse your sympathies in behalf of a class of your fellow-beings whose wretched situation makes upon you the most emphatic call, enforced by ties of blood and country, for the most energetic efforts to rescue them from that depth of misery, that total debasement into which they are sunk. I am conscious also that in discussing the subject, I am spared the necessity of appealing to the understanding of my hearers, or employing elaborate reasoning to produce conviction in my audience. In order to illustrate it, I need only refer them to what passes under their eyes every day and hour of their existence within the precincts of their own respective domiciles. Perhaps in all that I shall state there will not be a single fact with which every one of you is not more or less familiar, yet I do not fear you will pronounce my labor gratuitous. You will admit, Gentlemen, that habit renders us callous and indifferent and reconciles us in a great measure, to those disadvantages which we have been accustomed to endure from our very birth. This is likewise equally true of those blessings with which we have been surrounded and which we have enjoyed from our infancy. In order to appreciate duly the benefits of those benign civil and religious institutions, those magnificent discoveries in art and science which have wrought such a wonderful and sublime change in the physical and moral condition of man, we are obliged to contrast the past with the present. It is natural therefore that under this peculiar tendency of the mind to accomodate itself to whatever privations it has long been subjected, we should to a great extent overlook and become habituated to those evils under which we are born and have grown up. It is under this conviction and not to enlighten you

with what you already know that I have undertaken to embody in language the miseries of our country-women and to paint them in vivid but faithful colors. The first step towards the redress of those grievances under which we have groaned for ages but which long usage has in a manner taught us to regard with apathy, is to annihilate this lethargy of habit under which the mind labors by frequently exposing to it those grievances. The only way therefore that seems to me calculated to direct our attention to the degraded and miserable condition and to enlist our sensibilities in favour of the companion of man in this country, is to depict as often as we can her sufferings with all the eloquence of truth and feeling. And I may here be permitted to remark *en passunt* that all questions, enquiries and information conducive to local improvement should of all topics be an object of the most primary consideration to this Society. Being fully impressed with these ideas, I have ventured to present you with a rude and faint sketch of the lamentable state of misery and degradation to which our county women are reduced, assured that I could not plead their cause so becomingly and so earnestly anywhere as before an assembly composed of my countrymen foremost in moral and intellectual worth—who have burst the shackles of prejudice and superstition which still cleave to the mass of their illiterate brethren—whose understandings have been cultivated, and whose feelings have been refined by education.

In whatever light, then, we view the situation of the Hindoo women—whether we look to their physical or mental condition—we shall find to our great mortification that it is truly deplorable. The more we meditate upon it, the more are we induced to forget the divinity of our nature, the more powerfully are we persuaded to

think that Newton, Laplace, and Milton, Bacon, Shakespeare and Socrates—beings who "have actually exalted the nature of man above its destined sphere"—were of a higher and superior order. The contrast is powerful. While the one class leads us almost to lose sight of the dignified rank we hold in the scale of being and tempts us to believe that we were made to pass our days in misery and ignorance and in all manner of imperfections, the other furnishes us with the most exalted notions of human capacity, affords the most satisfactory evidences of the degree of perfection which is accessible to us, holds out the most pleasing prospects of human bliss and yields the most incontrovertible proofs of the pre-eminence of our nature. It is much to be regretted and no less to be wondered at that a subject of so much vital importance, so intimately connected with the welfare and regeneration of fallen unhappy India should have so long remained almost untouched. It is equally a matter of great sorrow and astonishment that no powerful impulse has yet been given to the cause of these miserable and unhappy creatures; that no efficient project has yet been set on foot to ameliorate the condition of the Hindoo women.

Nothing can be more strikingly deplorable than the wretched situation of the companion of man in this part of the terraqueous globe. Woman, who was allotted to man as his inseparable companion during his journey through life to participate his dangers and sorrows, to alleviate his distresses, and share his joys and happiness, leads indeed a wretched life in this country. Penned up in her eternal prison house she is doomed to pass her days in misery and confinement. Condemned to moulder away her fair form which is all delicacy under one cheerless sun and among the self-same objects that greeted her eye when she first saw light, she is sentenced to perform all

the degrading offices of a cook and a scullion at once. Her occupations during the day are confined to those of a low menial. A Hindoo woman rises early every morning and after performing all the survile functions of a common drudge in civilized countries, such as sweeping the house and cleaning the metallic vessels and dishes that are used by the Hindoos instead of China ware and glass as by the Europeans, she bathes herself ; she then goes to the kitchen and cooks for her husband and relatives. Besides, there are innumerable other duties equally degrading incumbent upon her. She must in order to gain the approbation of the family who are uniformly both her judges and her awarders discharge her duties with care. A bare catalogue of all the survile duties and functions which a Hindoo woman is as if it were destined to perform every day would indeed appear tedious to my hearers tho' I have endeavoured to present them with those that are most prominent and generally known. Suffice it to say that every man who has carefully examined the condition of the Hindoo women cannot help pitying the benighted and miserable situation in which they are placed. Notwithstanding all their kind attention, their pious and dutiful conduct, their submissive behaviour towards their husbands they frequently meet with severe scoldings and are even sometimes cruelly punished from ungrounded jealousy or a tyrannical whim. Notwithstanding all their laborious drudgery to please and win the stubborn hearts of the inhuman wretches with whose fates *their* destinies are indeed identified, I say notwithstanding all this they are very often wantonly left to enjoy a *solitary bed* during the night, for I blush to confess that owing to the low ebb to which morality is reduced adultery is looked upon by our countrymen as a crime, light and fashionable. They suppose women were born only

to minister to their comforts and luxuries and consider that man is absolute lord not only over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air and the beasts of the forest but over the female world. They therefore look upon their wives as household slaves and treat them with a degree of superciliousness which even the sultan of Turkistan does not show towards his meanest serf. Indeed it inspires one with mingled emotions of pity and indignation to see how they trample upon women 'those sweet flowers that are placed here to heighten the complexion of nature !'

I have confined my remarks to the lower and middling classes. But it is nevertheless true that though there might be a little improvement in their physical condition in the higher grades the state of their minds presents one uniform deplorable scene of sad prostration. One of the most melancholy vestiges of that now-no-more power which had for centuries domineered over the bosom of India, is the degradation in which her daughters are involved. Though the iron hand of Mehomedan despotism is now cut off by the interposing arm of gracious providence and India is delivered from its trammels, yet will it be some centuries ere she can recover from the shock which she has sustained. Not to speak of her political degradation, not to speak of the decline of her ancient fame and grandeur the prostration of the minds of her children caused by the baneful influence of this hateful power is alone sufficient to draw upon it the curse and indignation of every honest lover of freedom.

But upon nothing has the pernicious influence of this cursed power operated so powerfully as upon the codition of the Hindoo women. The cause of that state of seclusion and imprisonment in which the females of this land are preserved, may be traced to the tyranny of the Mehomedan Emperors.

"The Musselman is raging through the land
Prayer on his tongue and murder in his hand;
Farewell! the city's joy, the country's rest,
Farewell! the happy sunshine of the breast
Farewell! the bright heroic hopes of youth.
Farewell! the love of excellence and truth;
Farewell! the scenes where aged virtue prayed,
While fearless beauty sported in the shade."

I have introduced the above lines remarkably descriptive of the Moslem power to convey to you, in more emphatical language, an idea of its baneful effects. The state of constant alarm and anxious suspense in which the poor natives lived, made them regard their safety always at the expense of their other duties and occupations; the fear of brutal ravishment suspended the social intercourse between females. To shield them from the hand of ruthless power, they were withdrawn from society by their fond parents, and from that time, they were kept in a state of strict seclusion in a Zenana which since ratified by time, has now become an irresistible and fatal custom. Hence proceeded the first institution of a Zenana and consequently the cessation of all native female education—hence that degenerate and miserable condition of the Hindoo women which we have now the inexpressible mortification to behold. But to conclude the discussion.

The state of their minds is indeed lamentable. Ignorance, with all its concomitant train, holds now the despotic sway over their minds. Credulity the parent of superstition, bigotry, envy, jealousy, and all the wild passions of the human heart unrestrained by self command or the placid influence of education, divide them. "Dark misery is now their being's lot." They know of no other enjoyments beyond the gratification of the senses. They are strangers to the pleasures of novelty of imagination and of intellect. They derive no enjoyment from a contemplation of the sublime and the beautiful. The field of nature

which is at once calculated to please and instruct, is wholly shut out from their view. The range of their minds is indeed limited. The only scope which their imaginations have, consists in the range of their fancy to a future world, and even of this they have a dim representation to which they look through the mists of superstition which envelope their eyes. The influence of superstition over their minds cannot be better exemplified than in reference to the horrid and revolting rite which they perpetrated so often but lately. I allude to the self-immolation which they committed on the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands. They have no aspirations to fame which to use the words of the poet.

> "Is the spur which the clear spirit doth raise
> To scorn delights and live laborious days.

The only ambition which they seem to be actuated by is to gain the name of a GOOD COOK and indeed she is looked upon in the limited circle in which she moves as a woman of no ordinary accomplishments! They are entirely destitute of all those refined intellectual attainments which render woman doubly amiable, makes her society a delightful refuge from the thrall and tedium of business and adds double force to the resistless and captivating charms of beauty. But a minute detail of the sufferings and miseries, both physical and mental of the Hindoo women, would fill a volume of no common bulk and far exceeds my slender capacity. In short, such is the degradation to which they are reduced, that they can scarcely be classed with the human species.

I have perhaps too severely animadverted upon the Moslem rule as the most prominent cause which has induced those sad and deplorable effects that I have faintly and partially protrayed above. While upon the subject, in justice to those who had held this power, abhor it as

we may, I should notice one or two circumstances which as is vouched by experience, have proved no less prejudicial to the interests and well-being of the Hindoo women than detrimental to their solid and permanent happiness —which, as is attested by fact and observation, have no inconsiderable share in engendering all those evils under which the native females at present labor. I allude to the existence of the Hindoo Shastras. It is these religious codes of our countrymen which render their wives literally slaves both in body and mind to their will and caprice. By this I do not mean to condemn that refined piety which every female ought to show towards husband and which it is her bounden duty to maintain not only because it is one of the highest recommendations and one of the brightest ornaments in a woman but it is ordained by nature. But I am free to declare that I abhor from the very core of my heart those abominable principles, the inculcation of which makes women emphatically called the better half of our species merely "the slaves to a tyrant's will, the passive subjects of transient dalliance and casual enjoyment." It is the holy tenets of these sacred codes that by instilling various prejudices into the minds of the Hindoo women have barred the passage of light to their souls by shutting out the cheering beams of knowledge from reaching them to enlighten and to illuminate the gloom with which they are surrounded and have cast around them a veil of cloud from which they cannot emerge.

The last topic with which I shall trespass upon your time, Gentlemen, on this occasion is that which entails the heaviest evils, moral and physical, upon the Hindoo women and crowns their unhappy situation. I mean that execrable marriage system which prevails in this country. You will in vain look for anything similar, in the domes-

tic economy of any nation on the face of the earth not absolutely barbarous, that is productive of so much unmixed evil. But to enter into a minute and full description of the crimes and miseries of which it has become the fruitful source, would alone occupy more time and patience than the rest of my subject and require a greater command of language than I can boast of. I shall therefore content myself with giving you but a brief outline of the wretchedness that it inflicts on the fair portion of the creation in this land and of the iniquities that it leads them to commit. And first of all I shall notice the custom which confers on our parents the privilege of providing matches for their sons and daughters. It is well known to you all that all the important preliminaries of a marriage are managed by the parents and guardians on either side. Far from consulting our choice or willingness they denounce any dissent or opposition to their will as the height of imprudence and disobedience and it not unfrequently happens that they exercise this absolute discretionary power which they derive from their paramount paternal authority with a vengeance. We as well as our sisters are thus in a manner *compelled* to form a union which of all other things in this life requires the utmost caution and prudence—a union which, while it increases the sphere of our responsibilities, is capable of affording us the purest and the sweetest joys destined to man in this existence without having the slightest previous acquaintance either with the characters or persons of those on whom so large a share of our happiness depends. Indeed we are married at an age when neither the graces of the mind nor of the body are sufficiently if at all developed. We have not a single opportunity of judging for ourselves with respect to either of these until it is too late. It is after the nuptial knot has been tied and the priest has administered half

of the bridal ceremonies that our eyes behold for the first time, the outward figure of the partner of all our future troubles and afflictions of our joys and comforts. I shall not stop here to enquire whether such a system in which the assent of both parties in an affair which concerns them so nearly is positively dispensed with, should be binding upon them or not, and whether it does not leave them free from all those solemn obligations which marriage imposes upon us, so that they may each of them, again marry and replace their respective partners. My business at present is with the evils to which it gives birth. I need not tell you that personal or intellectual accomplishments are of secondary moment to our parents. Whatever be the physical or mental recommendations of a youth, they are scarcely taken into account, if unaccompanied by that most important qualification *Kul*. This is a requisite of supreme importance and every consideration of beauty and worth are sacrificed to it. Thus the ugliest and the most mis-shapen beings are united to the loveliest and the most graceful creatures as well as the gentlest and the most amiable dispositions are joined to the sourest and the most disagreeable tempers. The result of these incongruous matches is that absence of all conjugal love and consequently of domestic felicity which is so universally observable amongst the natives. It is however the women that are by far the greatest sufferers from these ill-assorted marriages. When the grievance is on the side of the men, they resort to various means to indemnify themselves. The world is open to them. They can seek enjoyment abroad. They have recourse to licentious gratification which is however not confined solely to those who have been unhappy in their marriage. I may, here, remark, by the way, that this circumstance is independently a source of bitter suffering to the women. You can not

but be too painfully aware of the general prevalence of that most detestable crime adultery the avowed practice and open toleration of which strikingly marks the utter degeneration of our country. Happy or unhappy in their nuptials, there is not perhaps one in a thousand of our countrymen who preserves the sanctity of the marriage bed. They know that their wives are poor helpless creatures. The voice of their complaint cannot reach beyond those walls that confine them. They therefore tyranise over them with unrelenting cruelty. They even not unfrequently strip them of their ornaments to support the expenses of their debaucheries. And whenever these weak and unfortunate beings venture upon remonstrance they are either answered by volleys of abuse or cudgelled into silence. Thus they have no other alternative than that of patiently suffering all those grievous wrongs which they cannot redress. I leave you gentlemen to conceive the evils which a treament so brutal, to use the softest epithet, is calculated to produce. Suffice it for me to observe that it gives rise to numberless miseries and crimes the least of which is capable of rendering existence burthen-some and endangering the immortality of the Soul. But to pursue the thread of my discourse. There is another practice which compensates to the men for an unfortunate marriage. It is sanctioned by their religion though it is in direct opposition against the manifest design of Nature and certainly criminal in the eyes of a purer and more refined ethics. In Europe, vile is condemned both by the laws of God and man. The shastras concede to the men the privilege of wedding more than one woman. They often take advantage of this invidious right not only on the score of connubial infelicity but from various other motives such as passion, prejudice and the like. There is no creature more impatient of a

rival than woman. The very idea of sharing the affections of her husband with another is gall and worm-wood to her. It stirs up the worst passions of her soul and brings into play all the energies of her mind. It fires her with invincible hatred against her competitor, and, subduing the softer qualities of her sex, breathes into her a degree of fierceness which is foreign to her natue. It inspired the queen of England with implacable malice, and arming her with a dagger and bowl led her seek her gentle foe the fair Rosamond through all the intricate labyrinths of a mazy wood. Yet our countrymen too often forget the impossibility of reconciling two rivals to each other and making them live in harmony under the same roof. They render their homes a scene of perpetual discord and thus banish all domestic peace and happiness. It is impossible that they should be able to regard both their wives with the same degree of love and attention. And even if they were to divide their affections equally between them, who would be satisfied with a half for a whole heart ? Still however this would mitigate much of the evil of polygamy. But the case is otherwise. They generally dote upon one and consign the other to absolute neglect. Thus the animosity which naturally subsists between them is aggravated in a tenfold degree and they frequently meet like birds of prey and tear each others face and tresses. If their husband be a weak and effeminate being they let loose the fiends of rage, malice and jealousy but if he is manly his favourite spouse invariably proves victorious in every contest. Thus subdued and subject to the taunts and the contumely of her proud and triumphant rival, nay too generally denind of the very comforts of life, the slighted wife is placed in a forlorn situation and pines in misery. Under such an aggravation of misfortune, can it then be wondered at that her

un-tutored mind frequently loses a sense of its dignity, steps beyond the boundaries of modesty and innocence and ultimately becomes inthralled to vice. Urged by a feeling of revenge against her husband and led by a hope of bettering her condition, she places her affections upon another and indulges in unlawful pleasures. Thus she is driven through despair to lead a life of shame and dishonour and to ruin her eternal happiness. Some of our country women, however, are endowed with extraordinary patience and exerts, be it spoken to their honor, a remarkable degree of long-suffering. They bear up against their evil lot with stoical fortitude. But, alas ! these, too, oftentimes commit a deed which consigns their souls to everlasting perdition. The good graces of her husband are every thing to a Hindoo woman in this world. If she then becomes to him an object of hatred and indifference what is it that there remains to endear life to her. When, therefore, every prospect on this side of eternity is dark to her and a ray of sunshine remains to cheer the gloom and hopelessness of her condition, her power of endurance becomes exhausted and she flees to the presence of her Maker uncalled. Such are the disastrous consequences that too often flow from the practice of polygamy.

That absurd and pernicious system of early marriage amongst the Hindoos is another mighty evil to which the unfortunate women of this country are exposed. You will however, understand, Gentlemen, that I do not refer to marriages with those who have attained their youth or with grown up boys verging upon that period of life. I maintain that the proper season, in this country, for us to marry is between the fourteenth and the eighteenth year of our age. A girl should be married between the tenth year and the second of her teens. But I mean those marriages which take place between infants. You know

that our first-rate *Kulin* countrymen always marry their first born to the daughters of one of equally distinguished caste. Both the husband and the wife are frequently yet in the nurse's arms and are suckling babes. I would to heaven, however, that they were always married after they had seen the light. They are generally either wedded or betrothed to each other, while they are in their mother's womb. The parents perform the bridal solemnities conditionally that is if they would get one of them a daughter and the other a son their offspring shall be husband and wife. Thus in every case of abortion, in every case of a still born child the devoted innocent is born to all the bitter and hard privations of a Hindoo widow. Even if she had not been actually married before her birth it is sufficient that she had been betrothed for according to the spirit of the Hindoo shastras, if a female loses her affianced bridegroom she becomes a widow. It fills me with horror to think how this monstrous system dooms thousands of unborn infants to utter misery. When we consider the immaturity (injurious no doubt) of the season—when we consider the uncertainty of human life, especially in our days of infancy—when, above all, we consider that the loss of her lord to a Hindoo woman is the greatest possible calamity which can betide her, I have no hesitation in thinking that the voice of every feeling and rightly-constituted man shall be loudly sent forth against a system fraught with so much misery and mischief to a class of beings whom providence had intended our constant companions.

I now come to a other source which produces unmingled suffering to the Hindoo women and though it but affects a certain portion of them yet it is so replete with misery and horror that it were unpardonable in me to pass it over. I allude to the prohibition of the remarriage of

widows. The miseries and crimes to which it exposes them beggar all description. The death of their husbands cuts them off from every comfort and enjoyment. A constant round of fasts and vigils becomes the business of their existence. They are ordained by the shastras to feed upon rice and simple vegetables once a day and to wear course and unostentatious garment. They must not decorate themselves with any sort of jewels. In short they are doomed to lead a life of stern privation the parallel of which is scarcely to be met with in the history of the most austere monk or ascetic. They are condemned to additional household drudgery and drag on their existence a burthen alike to themselves and their surviving relations. Thus melancholy and friendless, they journey on in life's weary pilgrimage each of them solitary wanderer on the face of the earth. But the most trying evil which they are obliged to undergo is the prepetual celibacy to which they are subjected. Many of them young and beautiful and unable to subdue nature give way to those temptations which beset them on every side. I would fain draw a veil over this part of my subject. These unfortunate victims of a monstrous system are led to commit every species of crime. To conceal the consequences of their guilt they have recourse to the most harrowing means. Thousands of innocent babes are smuggled into the grave from the womb, thousands of widows too commit self destructions to fly these miseries and crimes. Thus the land is filled with pollution and the most hideous vices.

Gentlemen, there remains but one topic connected with the sufferings of the Hindoo women. I mean the marriage system which prevails amongst the *Kulin* brahmins. This is another prolific source of the most heneous crimes and the most poignant miseries. But I refrain

from entering upon it to-night. The best mode of illustrating it appears to me to be the collection of some of those numerous anecdotes which are extant amongst us. But these would swell this paper to a tedious length. I have therefore thought it proper to defer the consideration of this subject until my next, in which I intend also to treat cursorily of female education, for that alone furnishes a remedy to all those heavy evils which I have endeavoured to delineate above.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF CHITTAGONG

By Baboo Gobind Chunder Bysack,
Deputy Collector of that District.

Chittagong in former times—The district of Chittagong or Islamabad, commonly called Chuttogram, was in the times of the Mahomedan Government but recently cultivated and settled, a fact of which the name of Islamabad or "cultivated by Islam," being attached to it, is an obvious and significant proof. Before this era, its situation at the eastern extremity of India and subjugation to *Muggy* rule, had in a manner cut it off from general communication with the rest of Bengal. Bordering on the east north and south by the wilderness partly those of Tipperah, Assam, and Rershung, Chuttogram was but another jungle, inhabited by an illiterate race of people, neither Hindoos nor Mahomedans, but allied to the Mugs, and subject to their King. On the exten-

sion of the Mahomedan arms into this country the operation of causes which have elsewhere led to emigration, war, oppression, a spirit of adventure or of change, led to the settlement of Chittagong by the people of the western parts of Bengal. Almost all the Hindoo families in the district came from Dacca, Tipperah, Sylhet, and other adjacent Zillahs. Those with whom I have conversed on this point can only give an indefinite idea of the original place of their ancestorial abode which they say was in *Raur* Bengal; but I believe the districts I have named may be pretty safely assumed as the quarter indicated. Mahomedan population flowed in with the tide of conquest, and settled in the country. Those of wealth and rank established themselves as landholders, while the men in power and station conferred grants of various kinds upon their poorer countrymen. In subsequent years those old navigators of the world, the Portugese whose achievements in this line are well-known, began their visits to this part of India, and not unfrequently came into this district; the large mouth of the Cornofully presenting itself at the head of the Bay of Bengal, and giving free entrance to their vessels. Proverbially this granary of the east, Chittagong even then had attractions for its European visitors, who formed settlements on the coasts, the remains of which are yet to be traced in the numerous Portugese residents in the Zillah. When the country with the other parts of Bengal eventually came under British possession, it presented an aspect of but partial cultivation and settlement. This event forms an epoch in the history of Chittagong from which is to be traced that subsequent improvement in its physical and moral bearing which can only follow the union of one nation with another of superior civilization. In this manner each successive class of settlers brought with

them the knowledge and arts of their native place.* Not many years after this event Chittagong was subjected to a general measurement under the superintendence of Mr. John Reid, a gentleman who is styled Zummindar† in the Records of the time. The decennial settlement in 1793 was formed upon the basis of this measurement and conferred upon the inhabitants the blessing of a fixed land Revenue, to the encouragement of agricultural improvement and the general prosperity of all landed Proprietors. I shall elsewhere insert in a separate paper detailed particulars of the decennial settlement in Chittagong and the principles upon which it was formed. In this place it is only necessary to observe that the benevolent objects of the Founder of these settlements, have been fully accomplished during the lapse of more than half a century that has since taken place. That confidence which a limitation of the Public Revenues creates in the Zammindar has led to the cultivation of a large proportion of the waste lands of the country and though a great deal remains to be reclaimed, there is no doubt that ere long, under a liberal system of Revenue administration, cultivation will make rapid strides with the progress of population, and the old wastes will disappear, leaving health plenty and their concomitants behind.

* This took place in the Maggy Sun 1126 and 27 corresponding with A. D. 1764-5 and 1765-6.

† The title appears old enough at present, but I suppose it was given to a Company's officer from the opinion then entertained by Government that the Proprietary Right in land was invested in the Ruling authority, an opinion to which it is needless to add, the Father of Indian Legislature Lord Cornwallis has given a death blow by the Decennial settlement enactment. But it is worthy of remark that the claim to the Proprietary Title has been all along recognized and Government invariably recorded as Zammindar in all Measurement and Settlement papers relative to the Nowabad or new-cultivated lands in Chittagong.

PRESENT ASPECT OF THE COUNTRY. To a stranger viewing the country at the present time its aspect is far from humble. He would behold on every side villages and hamlets, studed with the cottages of the cultivators and the Earth verdant with variety of productions. The hills where erst tigers crowded in their lair and elephants paced in their majesty, are being gradually thinned of their jungles, and many a cluster of them are entirely shorn and either become the scene of human habitations or the scene where Jurmooabs, their inhabitants vie with their brethern of the place in the number and abundance of their plantations. On the other hand every facility is afforded to the produce of the country being brought to the best markets for sale by the intersection of rivers, *khalls* and canals. The Cornofully in the first place divides the district into two parts the *Duckhin* and the *Wooter kool.* It is a large navigable river—is frequented by shipping and trading crafts from different places and is a blessing to the country. Various tributary streams fall into it from either *kool*, and thus carry the high road of Commerce to the very doors of the agriculturists and manufacturers all over the country. Marts are also established in various villages by which the facility is still further increased.

With all the external and physical advantages which are unmistakeable pledges of the growing prosperity of the country, the people do not appear a healthy and happy-looking race. Meager and ill-fed in their countenances, these outward accountrements do not improve their appearance. The land-holding community, which everywhere appear genteel and in easy circumstances, are here but a degree raised above the level of the mass of cultivators, and are shabby and unclean in their persons. Nor do their habitations indicate in their owners

any taste for commodiousness, airiness, or neatness. Constructed entirely of bamboo and straw which their forests produce in abundance, but few among the richest have any predeliction for brick-built houses which I believe are not generally to be met with beyond the precincts of the town. All these signs of poverty, however, do not appear to be genuine, as you may often find a man to all appearances a common cultivator, who is the master of several villages. In fact the spirit of the people continues almost the same as before under the Mahomedan Government, afraid to expose a bold exterior, and unacquainted with or unwilling to avail themselves of the comforts of civilized life. Much of this is attributable to local oppression, and more to the little progress of European knowledge.

HILLS &c. The district is of a decidedly hilly character. Look on which direction you may, you will find your view bounded by hills running in all points of the compass. The banks of the Cornofully in some places present parallel ranges of hills on either side, and in others only on one side. And the same with lesser streams and *khalls*. Small unconnected elevations of various heights are innumerable generally jungles except when situated in the midst of villages. These have an appearance at once novel and beautiful. In Mourah Narutillah for instance (which as its name implies consists of Zillahs or elevations or hillets) the tiers of cultivation rising above each other like steps, planted with small shrubbery and rows of large trees with the villagers' cottages at the top have not only a most cheerful aspect but show how far the labor of man can convert the barren red hills into scenes of productiveness and human habitation.

RIVERS AND RIVULETS. The Cornofully is the only large river in the district ; there are numerous small

streams and rivers that fall into it or the Bay of Bengal from both *kools.* These serve by annual inundations to fertilize the land and are navigated by Balaws, Doorgahas, and other small crafts of various denominations. I do not know the names of all the principal ones, but those that have come under my observation, are the Halda, the Issamutty, the Character, the Magdai, the Krotah, the Gogra, the Sunker, &c. &c. &c. They all descend from the hills, become furious torrents in the rainy season, and, except the Halda, dwindle away in the summer months.

PRINCIPAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES. The Sudder station or the principal Town is, as is well known, named after the district. The principal villages, I should think, are the 12 Thannah stations, which as I shall more particularly notice in another place, I need not mention now. Besides these I am not aware of any village, except Coxe's Bazar, which may with propriety, for local reasons, be named here by way of distinction. All are seen much upon a level that there is no feature in one which is not traceable in all. This Bazar I believe made some figure at the time of the Burma war, and is at present perhaps the only place where the largest Mug population are located, numbering (if I recollect right what I read in an official letter on the point) several thousands. It is further the only mart in the Moffussil (being superior as some say to the Sudder one) for the sale of imported Europe goods. It is in Thanna Ramoom.

This sudder station of Chittagong is beautifully situated on the north bank of the Cornofully at about 10 or 12 miles distance from its mouth. The town being built on the hills and the low lands, the effect on the spectator from the river is novel and imposing. The thick residences below, the innumerable trees and jungle between,

and elegant mansions above, appear to much advantage to one accustomed to the sight of level ranges of buildings however grand or magnificent. Walking through the interior the descending and ascending streets, their freedom from uncleanliness, the absence of all putrid and stagnant water (a principal cause of the unhealthiness of towns) and the number of springs of pure water, issuing from the hills, furnish at once further proof of the novelty of the place, and a pledge of good health to the inhabitants. Some of these springs are beautifully built up by the people, and some are used by washermen who are skilful in their profession.

The respectable residents of all descriptions live in the hills—on which also all the Government Offices are held. There are seven or eight Bazars for the sale of vegetables, fishes, &c. one of which is held every day of the week. The permanent shopkeepers expose their goods in Chuk Bazar, and other places, including most kinds of necessary articles. There are many tradesmen, but respectable merchants are few. There is a Dockyard for the construction of ships &c, and numerous large and small crafts are to be seen afloat abreast the town indicating activity in trade.

The town is not however thickly peopled excepting the following localities viz., Sudder Ghant, Chuk Bazar, Catholgung, Zumalkhan, Under Khilla &c. There are large tracts of unoccupied lands and hills near the cantonments which may be advantageously laid out.

There are some English schools (of which I shall take seperate notice) and a resident Missionary (the Revd. J. Johannas) at the station. Most of the townspeople of the upper class are employed in the Government Offices. There are two or three Hindoo achras, i. e. places for feeding religious mendicants, the Mehaunts whereof have

the resources of some rentfree Muhals at their disposal. The resumption operations of government, will, I am afraid, soon put an end to their existence.

On the whole, the town of Chittagong is not a place altogether without its attractions, though a resident of the western parts of Bengal without other comforts than those procurable in the district at his command will hardly find himself quite agreeable there.

SIX SEASONS. The seasons I should think are very marked, being divided into the rainy and dry seasons; the middle of April may be generally reckoned as the commencement of rains which continue till the middle of October, being rather scarce towards the latter months. The cold is slightly perceptible in October, in November it is clear cold and in December at its height. In January a slight dimunition is felt and so on till in April it may be fairly assumed to cease. The heat is very intense in May and June, and even in September. I have experienced very hot nights. I have unfortunately no Thermometer to record the exact rise and fall of the weather. The cold months are very pleasant, as the hot ones are sultry and uncomfortable, the difficulty of procuring khus-khus being very great. But the heat is not productive of ill-health to the inhabitants particularly to those who are residents along the sea shore and the banks of the Cornofully. In the hilly parts it is unusually intense, owing to the interrupted circulation of the air, and continues longer than in the plains. The cold there is in a similar ratio and while it lasts serves to benefit the inhabitants.

WINDS. During the hot months, the winds blow constantly from the south, and during the cold months from the north. In these it is generally light and refreshing. When the rains commence, the wind increases in strength,

and is variable, blowing now from one quarter and now from anotner, sometimes it is a regular gale.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING. In the rainy season, the most awful thunder is heard, accompanied with heavy showers. In the season of 1838 I heard the loudest claps I ever heard.

CLIMATE AND DISEASE. The climate appears to me superior to that of most districts of Bengal. Exposed to sea-air all along the western coast, and with a large navigable river, the temperature throughout the year, might be pronounced on an average to be cool. Availing themselves of innumerable springs which issue from the hills, flowing with the purest water, the inhabitants have no complaints of indigestion (the fountain of all other hills) and generally enjoy good health. If the heat of the summer months be sometimes unusual, it is only a temporary evil, producing no lasting injury on the constitution. It is only the Jungly parts where the heat is aggravated by the exhalations from putrid vegetable matter, unwholesome to breathe and producing difficult diseases. In these localities accordingly, the people are habitually afflicted with indigestion, *Pillay* and redness of the eye &c. of remittent and intermittent fever which I believe go by the name of the jungly fever. In body they are shorn of all fair proportions, being dwarfish in stature, lean in the circumference of their legs, hands and breast, and with a protuberent belly. I have heard people declare, that there have been examples of many residents who have died without generation, and that it is their belief that the influence of the climate has a tendency to destroy the power of generation. I think there is some truth in this observation from the scantiness of jungle residents, and their bodily infirmities.

The reader must not suppose that the above descrip-

tion of the effects of the jungle atmosphere applies to all classes of its residents. It is only applicable to the emigrant laborer of the plain, who flies to the jungle from poverty to clear out new lands for himself or is employed by some Zemindar on Jungle-boory tenure. The Jumooah and other Hill tribes are strong-bodied and healthy looking people; they live on the top of the hills, breathe a purer atmosphere and grow healthy in spite of the jungle beneath with which as I shall elsewhere describe, they are at eternal war.

I have thought it proper to say thus much in justice to the country where I have lived for nearly the last 12 months, that the unfounded prejudice which is entertained against its climate in most quarters may be removed. The people of western Bengal consider the climate of Eastern Bengal as most humid and unwholesome, but I think Chittagong is an exception which may be favourably brought forward against the wholesale assertion.

ALIMENTARY PLANTS AND FRUITS. Rice of various sorts but mostly connell, are grown in the country; there are two well known distinctions however, which should be noticed, viz. lowland and the upland rice. The lowland rice is grown on the plains, by Mug, Musalman and Hindoo peasants under the Zemmindars. The upland rice is grown on the hills and hill sides by Jumooahs, a class of Mugs, and other Jungly tribes who raise no other kind. Indian corn and brown corn are cultivated to a small extent, both in the plains and in the hills. The maize is also grown but of inferior quality. Sweet potatoes are pretty common, but common potatoes are only raised in a particular locality about the sudder station, and those of a small and very inferior quality. Beans and onions Belatee and Deese Kuddo are plentiful and very superior. The cucumbers are very large and are used as a culinary

vegetable. Red Pepper, Ginger, Turmeric, being used in curries, are particularly abundant and suffice both for the consumption of the inhabitants and for export. Limes, tamarind, pineapples, wood apples, and plantains are to be found generally throughout the district. Branjes of a superior kind are grown only in a single village of the banks of the Cornofully, viz. Howala, and will thrive nowhere as found by repeated experience. Citrons, Melons, Water melons, and Muskmelons are very excellent and of the finest flavor. The jak and mangoe are common, as black berries, but decidedly inferior, particularly the mangoe which is found generally worm-eaten. Papaya, Guavas, Pomegranates and inferior plums are in great plenty.

The Chalda grows wild in the Hills, and is unknown to be a culinary fruits. The Palur tree is scarce, the Cocoanut is not always grown, being generally destroyed by the ants. Should the tree attain maturity, the fruit is scarcely free from their attacks. The Cocoanut therefore, though one of the greatest blessings in a warm climate, is hardly used for its cool beverage, the market being supplied with ripe ones from the Island of Sundeep, &c.

Besides the above, there are many other kinds of alimentary plants and fruits of which mention would be superfluous.

As an object of natural curiosity, the existence of the fountain tree in the southern *kool* of Chittagong, is worthy of particular notice. I have not seen the tree myself, but I have been told the following circumstances regarding it by a very respectable native gentleman in the uncovenanted service. Being out in his moffussil excursions, he felt himself very thirsty, at a place where there was no water to be found but an arid soil and barren Hills all around. Inquiring for water, a shepherd came up and

pointed out to him a tree to which he had often resorted to allay his thirst. Under the shepherd's advice a part of the tree was lopped off with one stroke of the *Daw* whence flowed to the surprize of my informant, a glass-full of limpid stream cool and delicious to the taste. For a description of the tree I would beg to refer to the Penny Magazine in which I recollect having read an article on the subject.

PLANTS USED IN THE ARTS. Cotton is extensively cultivated on the Hills and is an article of export. Flax and hemp are largely grown in the plains. Tobacco, betel and the Urica nut (the last very excellent) are grown sufficient for the consumption of the place, and the same remark is applicable to Castor, Teel and Rye plants. The forests produce bamboos and coarse rattans in great variety and abundance,—as also a tree called Karaug from the seeds of which a cheap oil is extracted. It is said that even indigo is grown in a particular locality but I have not seen any in the course of my experience.

STAPLE PRODUCTS. Under this head may be included Rice, Mustard seed, red pepper, Tilseed, Hemp, Flax, Cotton, Gurjon oil, and Timber. The last two abound in the Hills.

SOIL. The soil of Chittagong is not generally of alluvial formation, is generally the case in other districts of Bengal. There is a large admixture of sand everywhere even in the lowest level of the plains, for this reason, that the deposit of annual inundations are not as elsewhere the washings of inundated fields, but of innumerable Hills composed of sand and red earth. The natives on ploughing their fields, can scarcely dig knee deep with any advantage to their crop ; as I am informed such a course would entirely spoil the soil by mixing up with it the sand and pebbles which compose the stratum lying

immediately beneath. The ploughing is therefore a mere scratching up of the upper surface of the earth. In case of churs and increments, the difference is but little, for the sand still forms a component part, the soil being rich, light and dark. The Hills where cultivated, have a reddish soil, mere sand Hills being few.

MINERALOGY. I am not aware of the mineralogical resources of the district, where I believe no mines of any description have been opened or known to exist. There are some hot springs near Sitakoond of which one is salt. These I believe may be properly noticed under this head, but as I have put in their particulars in a distinct chapter on pilgrimages, I refrain from touching on them.

CLASSES OF PEOPLE AND THEIR CHARACTER. There are four classes of people, Chittagong Mugs, Mussulmans, Hindoos and portugese. I believe their proportions are unequal. I think the Mugs are not the largest in number, but next to the Mussulmans and Hindoos who I think, are much on a par, and last, the Portugese who form the fourth, but a very small community. I have no data to state in round figures the probable number of these classes of people, but I may observe generally that the district is by no means thinly populated. One remark, however, I think it necessary to make with regard to the number of the Portugese class as estimated by a very high authority in the district, the late commissioner Mr. Dampier, viz., that they do not by any means appear so numerous as 4000 with all deference to Mr. D's opportunities of knowledge, I must say, that I could not after much enquiry learn that they amount to half the number given. The comparatively less proportion which the Mugs form in the population of a district originally peopled and formed by them, I cannot satisfactorily account for unless I suppose it to be true what has been stated to me by

by the other party who feed and entertain them. On the approach of night, the affianced pair are placed side by side and made to pronounce the *Munter* which is administered to them either by a Rooli or by a member of the family who may be instructed for the purpose. This done, the pan are considered to be united and pass the first night together. The next morning they separate and the two families send presents to each other. The period of the honey-moon is spent in this fashion, after which the wife goes to the home of her husband of which she thence forward becomes a member.

Domestic slavery prevails to some extent in the district as a part of the grand system existing throughout India, the nature of the evil is essentially the same, more or less alleviated by the manners and customs of the place and the disposition of the slaveholder. From what I have observed I do not think that rigorous treatment is the lot of the slave. They are not the unalienable serf of the soil, but can be sold from one master to another like any goods or chattels. They are not numerous. They are generally employed in domestic duties and scarcely in the labor of the field. The hill chiefs have doubtless large numbers of them, and may ill-treat them, being little emerged from barbarism, and removed in a manner from the check of the Law. Be that as it may, the circumstance of slavery existing in this district (and in fact in every other district of British India) in the face of the order of the Imperial parliament for its abolition, is a striking shame, and a plain manifestation of the little care of the local authorities for its eradication.

THE ANIMAL KINGDOM. Under this head I cannot say much, having had very little experience of the Jungle. There are I am sure elephants to be found in pretty good abundance, as the East India Company have a stud here,

for catchling, rearing, and breeding, these animals. Of the existence of tigers I am equally sure from the frequent slaughter they commit among the cattle of the peasantry. They occasionally seize the woodsman, but instances are rare. Baboons and Monkeys are to be observed in great variety and number. They inhabit the hills. Deer I have observed sometimes break in from the jungle and are caught by the villagers. They are said to be numerous. Squirrels are to be seen jumping about wherever there are clumps of trees in uninhabited and inhabited places. Besides these I dare say the other usual residents of the jungles such as wolves, wild hogs, buffaloes, &c. &c. are to be found in this Zillah as elsewhere.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS. There are plenty of cows, oxen, goats and buffaloes to be seen. Excepting the last, their breed is much deteriorated. Ground hogs are numerous, being an essential article of food of the Mugs. Parriah dogs are a regular nuisance, in such large numbers do they abound. Cats are rather scarce.

SERPENTS. I have not observed many serpents during my residence here. That they abound in the hills there can be no doubt. Common snakes are sometimes seen about the house.

REPTILES. Alligators, Spiders, Lizards, Tortoise and Turtles &c. &c. Bugs are a most thriving race and rapidly multiply in every whole and creek of a thatched house. They are sometimes known to be so troublesome, and impossible of riddance, that people have been sometimes induced to set fire to their huts to destroy them effectually.

FISHES. Mangoe fish, shrimps, oysters, proutt, mullets, sole, rhooe, bhetky, bowal, magoor, &c. &c.

INSECTS, ARE ABUNDANT OF ALL KINDS. Bees are common in the jungles. Ants are really a great nuisance, but the white ants destroy everything.

Birds are to be observed in great variety and numbers, far more indeed than I know the names of. Those well known are the peacock, parrots, perroquets, snipes, partridge, bats, vultures, herons, kites, Bhuneraj, Moyna, Doyals, sparrows, crows, small and large doves, paddy birds &c. &c.

Domestic fowls are also numerous in kind and deservedly esteemed for their size and delicacy.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF CHITTAGONG

STATE OF EDUCATION AND SCHOLASTIC INSTITUTIONS

By Baboo Gobind Chunder Bysack,
Deputy Collector of the District.

The people of Chittagong, Mug, Hindoo, or Mahomedan, are not, generally speaking, on a par with the people of the other parts of Bengal, in the cultivation of letters. If, because of the same creed and nation, the Hindoos and Mahomedans of this district are to be respectively classed in the same rank to which those nations have elsewhere raised themselves, the conclusion would be most fallacious. The fact is that these classes of people in Chittagong are very poor in intellectual cultivation and scarcely have any Pundits or Moulovees among them to whom the title can be properly given. Those who can read and write are the people about the Courts and Cacherries and the Omlah of the Zamindaree and Tallookdaree Establishments. Their attainments do not rise above

a mediocre proficiency in accounts and a set hand in writing. Those who are acquainted with Persian, have a tolerable knowledge of the language and can even read and write it with fluency. But an accurate knowledge of the Bengalee language is rarely to be met with in any. Accustomed to speak it with a mixture of Persian, Muggee, and Hindoosthance, they write it as they speak it, woefully disfigured and unintelligible. The rich and eminent among the Mugs do not study their own, but the Bengalee language, and write and speak it, like the rest, if not worse.

The causes of the non-cultivation of the Bengalee language in this district, appear to be many. In the first place, it may be observed, that Chittagong is not a district originally peopled by the Hindoos, or one in which Hindoo supremacy ever prevailed. As such, it was never the seat of Brahminical learning and their scholastic Institutions. Recorded in the Sanscrit Classics as the accursed of the Pandoos, the holy feet of Brahmin Pundits never rested on its plains, and the natives therefore have always continued in extreme ignorance of their national lore. Brahmins there are, it is true, in Chittagong, who officiate as family priests, and perform the common ceremonies of the people, but these are only versed in the mere routine of their profession, and do not aspire to expound the doctrines of the Vedas and Poorans.

Another reason of the little attention paid to the cultivation of the Bengalee language, is the little use hitherto made of it in the transaction of Public business in the Government offices, except in keeping accounts. This was owing no doubt to the strong predilection of the official people and official heads in favor of the Persian, added to the scanty knowledge possessed by the people of the Bengalee language, a circumstance that is even yet felt as a

stumbling block to the fair operation of the abolition order, for now that Persian is abolished the greatest difficulty is experienced in procuring competent officers to carry on business in Bengalee.

From the short opportunities I have had of observing the mode of instructing children among the people, I have little indeed to say on the subject. I have no copy of Mr. Adam's invaluable Report on Education in Bengal to consult, but I believe his researches did not extend to Chittagong. In villages which are comparatively large, the heads of the community employ one or more tutors to teach their children in writing and accounts. When the pupil has learned to decipher the characters, and to put them together, the *chittahs* or measurement papers are given him to copy; this is followed by other forms of Zumindary papers and accounts, by a constant study of which he acquires not only a familiarity with the mode of writing them but also an insight into the way of calculating areas. This done his education is completed, unless he be intended for Government service, in which case a little of Persian is also taught him. The abolition of this language will no doubt cause a corresponding change in the course of instruction, but there are suspicions in my mind whether Bengalee can be thoroughly introduced into every department of business in the course of another five years. In villages where there are few inhabitants of some rank there is but one tutor to two or three villages. But the extent of learning imparted is invariably the same everywhere. The only books of Literature properly so called, used by the Hindoos, are the apopthegms of Chanakya, the Gooroo Duckkhinna and some other commonplace *pootees* in the sing-song style. Printed books there are none. The circumstance is curious but no less true that such a thing as a multiplication table is generally un-

known in this country, and the work of multiplying sums is effected by adding them up, which by getting into a habit, results in the same knowledge which is otherwise acquired by learning the table by heart. This is the sum total of instruction given to the youth, and who can wonder that under such circumstances, the pronounciation, mode of speech, and composition of the Hindoos of Chitagong are equally corrupt and uncouth. To such a degree do these defects prevail, that on my first arrival here, I could with difficulty understand the people. To assist other judgements than my own, I would have with pleasure annexed a few specimens of the common mode of speech, but I confess it is beyond my power to do justice to the subject.

Among the Mahomedans, however, there is a slight improvement perceptible over the Hindoos in the instruction of youth, and I further understand, they have a Mudrusa among them supported by the resources of some rent-free lands, where a higher order of instruction is imparted to a limited number of pupils. As the only thing of the kind, more than for any other cause, this institution deserves to be noticed, for it has nothing else to recommend it. I am not aware of the existence of any other scholastic establishment on a more extended scale than the village schools already described existing in the district.

There are three schools for the instruction of the people in the English language in the town of Chittagong. It will appear from the following extract from the 20th Report of the Benevolent Institution in Calcutta that one of these dates its foundation so far back as 1818.

"The condition of the native Christian families at Chitagong, who were equally in a state of destitution, appeared to call for an additional effort, and in the year 1818 a school upon the plan of that in Calcutta, was opened in

that ancient port, the first settlement of Europeans in Bengal, which still continues under the able management of Mr. Johannes, to spread the light of divine and secular truth, among its benighted population. The European community at that station have, from time to time, aided in subscriptions for the erection of a suitable school house, which is now nearly completed."

The School Rooms which stand at the base of the Rung Mehol Hill, are now used for assembling the boys, though not as above stated, entirely completed. The number that daily attend there, I hear, do not amount to more than fifty, a great many who formerly belonged to this, having joined the Government School, subsequently noticed. The instruction given is I believe only in the elementary branches of learning—Scripture of course included. The pupils rarely attain proficiency, at least, I have seen none whom credit for it can be given. The cause must be either in the system, or the short time for which the youths continue under the teachers' management. It does not appear, however, that the Evangelical purposes, for which it has been established, have in any way been accomplished among the Chittagonians, Mug, Hindoo or Mahomedan. The Portugese Christians are all Roman Catholics, and the only community who have benefited by the School.

The second school is one which did not exist before, but has been, as I am given to learn, set up by the Roman Catholic clergyman of the station, only a short time ago, for the education of the children of his flock. I do not know what is the number of students attending there, nor the nature of the studies pursued.

The third and last is the Branch school of the General Committee of Public Instruction. This school, it would appear, was originally established by Mr. Henry Walters

of the Civil Service, who was in 1834 and 35 Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit in the district. This gentleman whose liberal disposition in affording encouragement to the cultivation of learning and to agriculture, is well known in many other districts, conceived the idea of setting up an English School in this distant station, and succeeded by his influence and example to raise a sufficient sum by private subscription to carry it into effect. For the time Mr. Walters continued in the district, the new school was conducted by a Mr. Marshall, under his fostering superintendence. It is evident, however, that the infant school, on so insecure a basis as private charity, in a moffussil station, could not long stand, or continue to be efficiently managed after the departure of its founder. It was fortunate, therefore, that Mr. Commissioner Dampier in 1836 applied to the General Committee of Public Instruction to take it under their control. The following extract from his letter to the Committee explanatory of his object though long publised to the world, would not be, I hope, uninteresting in this place.

"I have the honor to request that you will place before the Committee, my request that they will aid in the establishment of an English School here for the purpose of affording the people means of acquiring a competent knowledge of the English language and literature."

2nd "I am of opinion that there is considerable desire amongst all the respectable classes here to avail themselves of an English education for their children, and if means to ensure a good master were provided, the school would be rapidly filled."

3rd. "There is at present a school under the control of the Serampore Baptist Society established here, reading, writing, and a degree of arithmetic are taught, but the abilities of the master do not extend beyond the rudi-

ments of education, and this together with his known anxiety to make converts render the attendance at the school under his control, not so great as might be expected, but still in spite of objections, his school is respectably attended by many who are anxious to obtain the rudiments of the English tongue."

4th. "About 4000 Portugese reside in or near Chittagong in a most deplorable state of ignorance, and I fear vice, without any moral education, excepting what a few may glean from the Baptist School Master above alluded to; and without any knowledge of anything beyond a little Bengalee; putting aside the necessity for increasing the knowledge of the native inhabitants here, it would be a great benefit to these Portugese to diffuse general education among them, and by the influence of those amongst them, who are possessed of property, something might be effected to better their moral condition."

5th. "I beg to intimate to the Committee that there is a sum of three hundred rupees raised for a school, which failed here for want of a good master, now in deposit, which might be carried to the credit of any aid they could afford us. I know many of the residents and native gentlemen would subscribe for the expense of the school, and I am ready to give a parcel of ground near to a garden I rent without any payment, for the erection of a school house."

6th. "The school would of course be managed under the control of the Calcutta Committee, by a committee of the English and native gentlemen of the place."

The result of the above communication proved successful. The General Committee of Public Instruction deemed it advisable to send down an able teacher. Accordingly Mr. Pascal Derozario was appointed and managed the school for some time. His unsatisfactory

conduct, however, induced the Committee to remove him from the school. After his expulsion, the school was left without any teacher for sometime till the Committee thought proper to appoint Mr. J. Mac Cullum of Goruckpore as head, and Mr. Haid as second teacher on salaries of Rs. 250 and 150 respectively, under whose able management the Institution is now, I am happy to say, flourishing, mustering 100 in the list, with large attendance every day. Besides these two English teachers, there are two Pundits, elcves of the Calcutta Sanskrit College, also attached to the school, whose duty is to instruct the boys in Bengali literature and generally to assist the English teachers in the English department. They are paid Rs. 25 per mensem each. This arrangement appears to be most judiciously made with advertence to the little progress of correct knowledge of Bengali among the people of Chittagong.

Having been furnished by the kindness of a friend (Baboo O. C. Mullick, an uncovenanted Deputy Collector of Chittagong, now transferred to Nuddea) with copies of a "Report of method of teaching" by the head teacher, and the Committee's Proceedings thereupon, I beg to refer those who may be curious to know the details of Classes, studies &c. in the school, to those papers as annexed hereto. In judging of the progress of the youth as developed in the Report, it is to be borne in mind that they commenced their lessons when Mr. Mac Cullum first took them under his charge. The absence of all restrictions to admission is also worthy of notice.

The school house, a neat elegant building, stan ls in an elevated position, a few paces distant from the Judge's Hill. It was erected last year, is square in form, with open Verandahs on all sides, and contains two pretty large rooms in which the boys assemble. It is commodi-

ous enough for the present, but I think when the respectable of all classes in the district will begin to resort to the School as the nucleus of Instruction, additional rooms will be required.

On enquiring from several respectable people as to whether Government is the only supporter of the above school, I was informed, that there was an endowment granted for educational purposes to one Meer Yahea by one of the old Nabobs of Morshedabad with 80 Doons of rent-free land for its support. Of the former operations of the Madrusa thus patronized, my informant does not depose, but it would appear that at the time of the establishment by Mr. Walters of the school which was afterwards made over to the General Committee of Public Instruction, the lands of the endowment came under the resumption process, and were partly resumed and partly *bahalled* that is confirmed as rent-free. The Madrusa met with a silent death, and the produce of the lands were appropriated by Government. How long this state of things continued, is not made out, but I suppose, the promulgation of the order of Council in 1836 for the application of such produce to the purposes of Education, must have led to the support, which the School under notice now derives from this source. The lands of the Endowment, equal to about 1520 Beegahs of Calcutta, yield a revenue of upwards of Rs. 1200 per annum. There is no doubt that under a superior system of management, the turns will be considerably larger.

STATE OF HINDOOSTAN UNDER THE HINDOOS, No I.

READ ON THE 14TH SEPTEMBER 1839.

By Baboo Peary Chand Mittra.

When we remember that the early history of Hindoostan is blended with fiction and the few historical works which have been brought to light through the exertions of some distinguished oriental scholars are meagre and do not contain a connected and a full narrative of the past occurences of the country—the rise and progress of its commerce, agriculture, literature and philosophy—the growth and decay of the forms of government that prevailed at different times—the dissemination and decline of the religious systems which succeeded each other and the alterations and the improvements which the revenue and the judicial systems had in some points undergone in several places, we must find ourselves at a great loss to dwell upon the *ancient* state of India so elaborately as might be desirable. In attempting to write an essay on such a subject I have indeed to labour under great difficulty and disadvantage and therefore hope that the errors and the imperfections which it may be found to contain will be overlooked. Among the different departments of study which engage our attention, the past history of this country is no less interesting than important. It is a study which feasts our imagination with the cheering pictures of its former grandeur and magnificence, which recalls to our mind that it was once the mansion of civilization and learning which teaches us that it was at one time the scene of glorious exploits and actions, which is fertile in valuable instruction in regard to the nature and the apti-

tudes of man in the different circumstances of life and affords much intellectual gratification which minds enlarged by philosophy can always better appreciate.

The Hindoos possess historical works. It has been the complaints of some individuals that the Hindoos have *no history* and that the books which they possess are rich in poetical embellishment and cannot enlighten us as to how *India was* in early ages. In making such an assertion they should in the first place bear in mind that the history of every ancient nation on whose minds superstition could more easily exercise its influence and who in some instances received and recorded the occurrences of the age without sufficient examination even when they were contrary to the course and constitution of nature "contains almost an equal admixture of truth and error, of probabilities and improbabilities, of coinage and contradictions which must have been obvious to every unprejudiced person who has ever made history a part of his study. The earliest accounts of most of the ancient countries in the world are more or less involved in fable and it would therefore be the height of unfairness to throw the *whole blame* on the Hindoos."—When we peruse the first histories of all nations "says Hume" we are apt to imagine ourselves transformed into some new world where the whole frame of nature is disjointed and every element performs its operations in a different manner from what it does at present. Battles, revolutions, pestilence, famine and death are never the effect of those natural causes which we experience. Prodigies, omens, oracles, judgments quite obscure the few natural events that are intermingled with them. But as the former grow thinner every page in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages, we soon learn that there is nothing mysterious or supernatural in the case but that all proceeds from usual propen-

sity of mankind towards the marvellous and that though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from sense and learning, it can never be exterpated from human nature." It has also been observed by Lord Bolingbroke that "the nature of man and the constant course of human affairs render it impossible that the first ages of any new nation which forms itself should afford authentic materials for history" and when we recollect that the Hindoos are one of the most ancient nations who we find were all fond of the marvellous should we not make some allowance for their history being interspersed with fiction? But because their history is so defective, are we therefore to declare that they have *no history* and that what they have cannot in any way tend to our edification? The histories of the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and Romans are in many places marvellous and are fit to be laughed at, but should we therefore consider them as one unprofitable mass of fiction unworthy of being read or incapable of serving any earthly purpose? If we were to come to such a conclusion we would deprive ourselves of a great portion of useful knowledge which we now possess respecting the past state of several ancient countries and which has been acquired by legitimate deductions being made from the very records in which faults of the above description have been found.

The Ramayana of Valmiki, the Mahavarata of Vyasa, the Puranas and the Uppa Puranas composed by different writers are interspersed with a good deal of information which concurrent testimony and the researches of late years induce us to receive as true but should this even not have been the case, would it have been prudent on our part to have rejected all of them as false because they in some places appear inconsistent? The works of some of the Egyptian, Persian, Grecian and Roman historians

are in some parts as extravagant as the Hindoo works to which we have just adverted: the accounts respecting the births of Achillis Aeneas, Romulus and Remus and of several other personages have been given with as little regard to fidelity as those of Rama, Yudister and their respective brothers. Herodoties (the father of history) is not free from the faults for which we condemn Valmici or Vyasa. Justinius and Ctosius have in some places betrayed their love for the marvellous and there are several other historians whose integrity may be also questioned. If we therefore believe in the correctness of such portions of the writings of the Western historians as are not tinged with fiction and are "unvarnished" why should not those parts of the native histories be received as true which we have no reason to doubt? It might have been a fashion at one time to pass a sweeping condemnation upon all the books of the Hindoos but the numismatical researches of the last thirty eight years and the literary labours of some distinguished Europeans have silenced that prejudice. Many of the events related in Ramayana and Mahavarata are now admitted as true and I perfectly concur with Col. Tod in thinking that "we must discard the idea that the history of Rama, the Mahavarata of Krisna and the five Pandava brothers are allegory; an idea supported by some; although their races, their cities and their coins still exist."

Supposing that the Ramayana, the Mahavarata, the Puranas, &c. are fictions from begining to end which in reality they are not and the perusal of which says M. Remusat "would be of inestimable service to learned investigation" for the sake of geographical and historical information in which they abound, how can the Hindoos be said to possess no history when in the course of a few years three works of no common interest have made their

appearance? I mean the Rajah Taringini which is a history of Cashmere composed by different individuals at different period for which it is to be the more esteemed. It is in the Sanscrit language and has not yet been translated into English but an epitome of it with a critical notice written by Dr. Wilson is to be found in one of the vols. of the Asiatic Researches. The next work is the Mahavanso written in the Pali character by Mahanovo and translated into English with the original in Roman character placed in juxtaposition by Mr. George Turnour of Ceylon, Civil service. The first Vol. of this book has only been published. The third work is entitled "Oriental Manuscripts" which is a collection of historical fragments and Puranas in the Tamul character, translated into English by Mr. W. Taylor of Madras. They throw a good deal of light on the history of the southern India and specially on that of the Pandyon kingdom. In the collection of Mss. made by Col. Mackenzie at a great expense, of which a descriptive catalogue was published by Dr. Wilson in 1828, and to complete which the Government has I believe engaged Mr. W. Taylor, a list of several historical works is to be found, to which an addition will no doubt be made when it is rendered perfect. But are there no other literary records except what I have enumerated? The late enquiries into the matter enable us to answer in the affirmative. Col. Tod in his annals of Rajahstan states that "Immense libraries in various parts of India are still extant which have survived the devastations of the Islamite. The collections of Jessulmer and Putton for example escaped the scrutiny of even the lynxeyed Allah who conquered both these kingdoms and who would have shown as little mercy to those literary treasures as Omar displayed toward the Alexandrian Library. Many other minor collections consis-

ting of thousands of Volumes each exist in central and western India, some of which are the private property of princes and the others belong to the Jain communities. Some copies of these Jain Mss. from Jessulmer which were written from five to eight centuries back, I presented to the Royal Asiatic Society. Of the vast numbers of these Mss. books in the libraries of Puttun and Jessulmer many are of the remotest antiquity and in a character no longer understood by their professors but only by his Supreme Pontiffs and his initiated librarians." Lt. Webb writes in a letter published with the proceedings of the Bengal Asiatic Society in April 1835 in the following manner. "You are yet all in the dark and will remain so until you have explored the grand libraries of Patan a city in Rajputana and Jessulmer a town north west of Joadpoor and Cambay ; together with the travelling libraries of the Jain Bishops. These contain tens of thousands of volumes and I have endeavoured to open the eyes of some scholars here on the subject. At Jessulmer are the original books of Bhanda (Budda) the Sybilline Vols. which none dare even handle. Until all these have been examined, let us declare our ignorance of Hindoo literature for we have only gleaned in the field contaminated conquest and where no genuine record could be hoped for. The testimony of Col. Tod and Lt. Webb with respect to the existence of "immense libraries in India is no positive and satisfactory that it is utterly unnecessary to spend any more words on the subject. Mr. Turnour has also observed that "there does not now exist an authentic connected chronologically correct Hindoo history ; and the absence of that history" proceeds not from original deficiency of historical data." We must therefore conclude that the rich mine of Hindoo literature still remains to be examined and though the gold which is to be found in its

different sections may be mixed up with dross, there can be little doubt of its being purified in proportion, as this task is successfully prosecuted. I have only to add that admitting that the Ramayana, Mahavarata &c. are fabulous throughout for arguments' sake, the discovery of the Rajah Taringini, Mahavanso, Oriental Mss. and other historical works mentioned in Mackenzie's descriptive catalogue is alone sufficient to disprove the assertion—*that the Hindoos have no history* and when we learn that extensive collections of books are to be found in several parts of the country, can we not reasonably anticipate that some of them at least contain the remains of past ages which are likely to form a rich accession to the literature of the Hindoos ?*

* Since this essay was written I have met with a notice of another Hindoo historical work in Col. Tod's travels in Western India lately published, which I cannot help quoting here bearing it as does strongly on the point under discussion. In speaking of Kumer Pal charitra or the history of Anhulwarra (the modern Puttan) Col. Tod observes "this work consisting of thirty eight thousand Slocas or stanzas the original of which is in Sanscrit, was composed by Sailug Soor Acharjya a celebrated teacher of the Jains in the reign of the prince whose name it bears, who ruled from A. D. 1143 to 1166 and whose life it is chiefly intended to illustrate. In order however to connect the history of the dynasty to which he belongs, the Solankhi with the chaura which preceded, the author commences with the establisment of the latter in S. 802 (A. D. 746) the epoch of the foundation of Anhulwarra passing over very succinctly the princes prior to his own and what he does insert is from the *Vans Raju charitra* or history of the founder of Anhulwarra a work whose existence I ascertained and only through a mistake failed to take a copy of it. I shall neither follow the order in which it is written nor give it *verbatim* but take such extracts as suffice to develope the past greatness of this kingdom commencing with a chronological table of its dynasties with a few comments on such of the princes whose actions were remarkable I am too well aware that such details can afford little general interest; and they are therefore more especially addressed to those who continue blindly to assert that the Hindoos have no such thing as historical work of any kind."

Again after giving the detail of the above work the same author says "To some this meagre chronicle will present little more than a

Having made these preliminary observations with a view to demonstrate that we are not so destitute of historical records as is generally supposed by those that are apt to express their opinions on such matters without due enquiry or deliberation, I shall now proceed to consider.

1stly. Whether the Hindoos or in other word the Bramins who are said to be the oldest of all the castes are the aborigines of India. If not whence did they come and who are the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and whether the Buddists and the Jains are of older institutions than the Bramins ? 2ndly. What was the nature of the Hindoo constitution, their courts of judicature, police, and revenue system ? 3rdly. What was the nature and extent of their trade and public works ? 4thly. What was the state of literature, arts and sciences under the Rajahs ?

record of ascents to the *gadi* and descents to the grave ; but those who look beneath the surface will observe that it contains hints, allusions, names of things as well as persons—ideas in short, which, to those who can follow them out, afford valuable matter for all that is styled the philosophy of history—whether on religion and the singular sects of this period ; on commerce and its probable extent with the nations of antiquity ; on the emigration of tribes ; on the arts, especially of architecture, sculpture, numismatics, on war, on geography, political and physical and the international intercourse of the Rajpoot princes during a period of eleven hundred years."

Again, in another place he says "Now if from the foundation of Anhulwarra in S 802 (A. D. 746) to its destruction by Alla-udin in S. 1354 (A. D. 1208) we can establish an unbroken chain of princes, contemporary with Charlemagne the caliph Haroun and the Saxon Heptarchs down to the Plantanet Jhon, shall we still be told that the Hindoos have nothing even approaching to history ? If it be meant that the Philosophy of history is not intermingled with the narrative of events *a labonne henrue* ; but because the jain monk in the year S 1220 did not deem it necessary to draw deductions from the facts which led to Kumar Pal's assumption of the crown of the Balharas, are we therefore entitled to say these facts do not belong to history? Look to the Saxon, the Ulster and the French chronicles of this period—the foundation of the superstructure of Hume, Hallan Vernet &c :—are they materially more copious or philosophical ?"

I trust I shall be able to show from an examination of the questions just enumerated partially if not satisfactorily what was the state of the country under the Hindoos in a political, commercial and literary point of view though I must acknowledge that the information which I have collected on the subject is not so full as it ought to be and I am afraid we shall have to continue complaining of its being incomplete as long as the desiderata in our history are not supplied by the discovery of new facts either from numismatical investigations or from such of the Indian works as have not been properly studied or discovered.

ORIGINAL COUNTRY OF THE BRAHMINS. The primitive history of the Hindoos represents the Brahmins as the first creation of Bramah from whom they derive their name and the original inhabitants of the northern Hindoostan. The three other castes Khattris, Vaishoes and the Sudras were afterwards formed. In some books the above four orders are said to have been created from the face, hand, thigh and the foot of Bramah respectively. The former account is no doubt more consistent and probable than the latter and that the northern Hindoostan has from time immemorial been the seat of the Bramins is what has not only been upheld in our ancient works but has actually been proved by the united testimony of several European travellers. In the Surga Purva Yudister and his brothers are represented as having penetrated into the very heart of Hymalia, visited many temples of Shiva and held conversation with Rishis or pious Bramins on subjects connected with the "hallowed empire" of Vishnu and celestial felicity. In 1807 Lts. Webb and Raper had gone on an expedition to discover the sources of the Ganges and proceded as far as Buddinauth and Gongoutri N. lat 30°. Mr. Fraser being desirous to reach the Gomookee or Cows-mouth through a hole of which representation the

river is said to rush had walked further than the above two gentlemen but he met with so many obstacles that he was obliged to return. In 1817 Cap. Hodgson succeeded in reaching the spot where he saw "the stream issuing from under a perpendicular wall of frozen snow with numerous depending icicles not very dissimilar to that which Indian report had led him to expect." No one has I believe been yet able to go further than Cap. Hodgson (perhaps Cap. Johnson of the 11th Dragoons expected) in consequence of the passage being filled up with huge masses of snow and "tremendous glaciers" from the southern side of which flow the Ganges and the Indus and from the east the Berampootra or the Sampo. Devapryage which is in north lat. 30. and Buddinauth are both the abode of the Bramins. The latter has more than seven hundred opulent villages subject to the sway of its chief priest. Temples of Shiva have also been discovered in Buddinauth, Gongautri and other contiguous places which fully confirms what has been stated from the Surga Purva, and though I admit that it cannot positively be affirmed from the foregoing proofs that the northern Hindoostan or the Hymalia mountains is the place where the Bramins originally resided, yet when we see in the very recesses of the latter, dilapidated *mundirs* bearing every stamp of antiquity, the worship of Mahadeba carried on by an establishment of hereditary priests of the oldest standing and a host of Bramins located in its different parts and leading a comfortable life which plainly indicates their having been hardened to the climate, it is impossible to avoid concluding that these Alpine regions must have been the seat of the Hindoos from time immemorial.

All the European writers whom I have read on the subject maintain that the Bramins the oldest of all the

classes of the Hindoos are not the aborigines of India but when and whence they came is a question on which much difference of opinion exists. According to the classification which the zoologists have made of mankind, the Hindoos would come under the Caucasian variety and might therefore be supposed to have come from the Caucasian mountains. M. Abbe Dubbois asserts that in Tartary and the environs of the Caucasius the *seven Risis* whom the Hindoos say the God had created first, lived and their descendants who afterwards spread over Hindoostan were so distinguished in those sequestered regions for upwards of 900 years B.C. that Lycurgus visited them about that time. There are others who view the question in different lights. Hartly in his observations on man opines that "it is probable that the ancient Bramins were the offspring of Abraham by Keturah, that they derived their name from him and worshipped the true God only." Mr. W. Taylor supposes that Samarcanda which was before denominated Marcanda is the earliest seat of the Bramins as the name of this place corresponds with that of a celebrated Moni who flourished soon after the creation of the world. Col. Briggs declares that they came from Thibet owing to there being a close resemblance between the alphabet of that country and the Sanscrit. Col. Tod and Bailly place them "somewhere to the north of India. It is the opinion of Schlegel that the Hindoos formed one family with the Persians, Greeks, several Germanic and other races and resided in a certain place to the east of the Caspian sea whence they came in a south-eastern direction. W. Sir Jones concludes from the contents of *Dabistan* a work composed by Mahsan surnamed Fani who was a native of Cashmere and a traveller that "a powerful monarchy was established in Iran long before the Assyrian or Pishdadi government; that it was in truth a Hindoo

monarchy though if any one choose to call it *Casian Sasdean* or Cythian we shall not enter into a mere debate of names ; that it subsisted many centuries and that its history has been engrafted on that of the Hindoos who founed the monarchies of Ayodhya and Indraprastha." "This opinion is founded upon the circumstances of the people of Iran having been divided into four orders viz. the Religious, the Military, the Commercial and the servile under their first monarch Mahabad, upon their believing that fourteen Mohabads had appeared or would appear in human forms like the Menus of the Hindoos, upon then worshipping the planets which now forms a portion of religion in India and maintaining that they had received *Desatar* a sacred book from the Deity. It will perhaps he not deemed irrelevant to mention that Col. Vans Kennedy states "that the Bramins belonged originally to the priesthood of Babylonia, whose emigration was occasioned by the subjugation of that empire by Ninus and whose Vedes and sacred works were the productions of the Chaldeans. He has been led to draw this inference from there being (according to him) a similarity between the Sanscrit and the Greek, Latin and the Teutonic languages which came from Asia Minor peopled by Babylon and also from the Sanscrit bearing no affinity to the Vernacular dialects prevalent on the north or south of the *Krishna* but being intimately allied with the language of Babylon. There are some who opine that the Sanscrit was created by the Brahmins from the Greek which they had learnt when Alexander invaded India. Duguld Stewart whom we highly revere as one of the best metaphysicians is unfortunately an advocate for this theory but in lending his name and authority to it he was guided by men who had little or no acquaintance with the Sanscrit and were consequently not competent to judge of the matter.

From a review of the authorities I have quoted in order to throw some light on the point under consideration, the opinion of Col. Vans Kennedy appears to me to be cogent and well-supported if the data on which it is founded be correct. Sir W. Jone's statement that the Hindoos are a colony from the Western Persia (Fars) is grounded on the contents of a work of a Cashmerian traveller who says Mr. Taylor "derived some of his information from hearsay evidence" but is ingenious in what he has advanced. The theories of Col. Briggs and Schlegel are also plausible but all others are fanciful and imaginary. It is indeed difficult on our part to come to a decision on this subject but one fact however is evident, viz. that the Hindoos from whatever land they might have come must have been the earliest if not the first residents of the Northern Hindoostan.

THE ABORIGINES OF INDIA. From the accounts that have been given of several of the hill and forest tribes living in the different parts of India, it is thought by persons of no common judgement that they are the aborigines of this country. In the Mahavarat they are described under the names of *Kiratas* and *Parvatias* as having fought with the brothers of Yudister when they had set out on an excursion to exact tribute and allegiance from the Rajahs of the four sides of Hindoostan, and having yielded after desperate fighting. We also learn from the same work that they had Rajahs and regular Governments. How and when they came to be the first occupants of this country and who was their great progenitor are questions which it is difficult for us to determine but it has been agreed on all hands to designate them "the aboriginal tribes" owing to the dissimilitudes existing between them and the Hindoos in regard to religion, language, manners and customs and to the former being found

an *older race* than the latter. In Pragjotice or Gohatti in Lower Assam the country of the well-known Bhuggodutta the father-in-law of Durjadhona, people of this description are said to have abounded—a statement which the topographical account of Dr. Mc Cosh the late assistant Surgeon of that place has fully substantiated and must therefore be now received as an authenticated fact. There are several kinds of hill tribes in Assam such as Akas, Duphlas, Kappachors, Miris, Abors, Bor Abors, Mishmis, Singphos, Nagas, Kassias, Garrows, besides others who are now observed to follow the Buddhistical or the Bramanical faith. The first three tribes are known as great plunderers and no further account of them has yet been received. The Miris feed on all kinds of *Jungly* animals, use bows with poisoned arrows and speak a language which does not resemble the Assamese in any respect. The Abors, Borabors, and the Mishmis are great lovers of conviviality, and hospitality, eat cows, look up to the skulls of animals as a great treasure and trade in certain articles which they procure from the Lama country. The Singphos are very formidable, observe some distinction in caste, practise poligamy, use a language peculiar to themselves and believe in a religion which they have manufactured from that of their neighbours. With respect to the Borkantis I can say nothing further than that they are "a numerous and powerful race." Of all the tribes the Nagas are considered the "most barbarous" and most "ruthless robbers and murderers." They are said to walk quite uncovered and when they choose to appear decently in female society they have "a fold of the praeputium drawn through a small ivory ring and worn in that predicament." The Kasseyas live in that tract of the land which extends from the plains to Gohatti. They are bold and vigorous and are no less fond of freedom than indolence.

Between the Kassya hills and the Berrampootar the Garrows who are an industrious and agricultural set of people are to be met with. The skulls of men are in their opinion "the greatest treasure. Their ladies are fond of loading their ears with brass rings which coming in contact with the shoulders is thought to heighten their fascinations.

Such Hill and Forest tribes also reside in other parts of Hindoostan. The Santals are to be found in Beerbhoom, Bhuglepoor, Jungle mehals or west Burdwan, Midnapoor, Ramghur—&c. The Danghurs many of whom we often see in Calcutta and who are a species of the Coles living in Singhbhoom reside also in Beerbhoom. The Cookies or the Lanctas are the inhabitants of the north-eastern mountains of Chittagong. They feast on cows and other animals adore two gods (one Superior and the other Inferior) believe in a future state, practise monogamy, are addicted to hunting and use not only bows and arrows the common missile weapons of all such people but also arm themselves with "spears and das." They are generally taken as a species of Mugs and their customs respecting funeral rites are somewhat curious. No corpse is allowed to be burnt before the "Bengalees Beessoo" or the 11th April. The dead bodies of those that die before that period are kept under a shed and "a regular supply of food and drink is laid before them." In Orissa there are three different aboriginal races, viz. the Coles, the Khounds and the Saurs. The Coles believe in none of the Hindoo Gods, feed on all sorts of grain roots and flesh, always pri ing much that of the hogs and follow no religion at all. The Sahajna tree, paddy, mustard oil and the clay are much venerated by them, and on the occasion of transacting every affair they rub their bodies with that oil bringing a leaf of the Sahajna tree before them. The place where

they first lived is called "Rolaul Des" but they have now spread their progeny over several parts of Chota Nagpoor, Jaspur, Tymar, Pactura and Singbhoom. The Khounds are said to have come from the Doda mountains in the south and are notorious for their inhuman practices. The description which has been given of their committing human sacrifices in one of the Nos. of the Christian Observer is indeed revolting to our feelings and demonstrates the necessity of adopting measures for the suppression of such barbarous customs. The Khounds adore the earth, the sky, and the elements, but have no Mundirs, Poorohits or any other paraphernalia of sanctity. They adhere to the distinction of caste and have no written characters. The Gonds whose description almost answers to that of the Khounds live in a contiguous part. They are of smaller stature. The Saurs are not so ferocious as the Khounds but would destroy a human being with as little compunction as a wild beast. They worship "stumps of trees, masses of stone or clefts in rocks" and take every kind of food. Their language is totally different from that of the Ooreas. The hills of Rajamahal and Bhuglepoor occupied by tribes who have been made tractable by Mr. Cleveland by adoption of means which endeared him to them. In Malwa and eastern part of Gujurat reside the Bheels who are considered to have been the primival race of the Central India and have been displaced by the Rajpoots. They are very faithful and vigilant and feel always inclined to exact *choute* or tribute from the travellers, which they consider their most ancient and unalienable right. They have no prejudices against any food or beverage but worship many of the deities of the Hindoos. The Coolies and the Ramoosees who resemble the Bheels in many characteristics are more civilized. The former live below the Ghauts and in its northern part, and the

latter reside in the south of Poona. The Meenas, Mynas or the Mainas are considered the aborigines of Rajasthan. They first of all lived in the Kalikho mountains running from Ajmere almost to the Jumna where they had several cities such as Khogong, Mauch &c. There are two classes of these mountaineers, viz., the pure and the original of which only one tribe can now be found, i.e., the *Oosaroa* and the mixed or those that have been descended from the "Rajpoot blood" consist of no less than 5,200 clans. The Mairs or Meras a branch of the Chutas an order of the Meenas occupy the chain of the Aravalli between Kamulmer and Ajmere and are as numerous in point of subdivision as the Rajpoots. These races are extremely eager to free themselves from foreign yoke, instances of which can be found in the chronicles of Mewar, Kotah, Boondi &c. They were powerful even till the time of Baber and Hemayoon. Naen, one of their ancient cities had "forty two strong-holds and fifty six gates" which were levelled by Rajah Baharmull Cuchwa and on the ruins thereof the town of *Lowain* has been built.

In the Peninsular India the Todas a bold and athletic race of people who profess great attachment to truth and who from their mode of worship, habiliments, religious opinions and language can be said to bear no affinity to the Bramins, inhabit the summit of the Neilgherry hills at the foot and other parts of which, various other tribes possessing different manners and customs are also to be found—I mean the Erulars or the barbarous (who are divided into two classes, viz. the Urali and the Curutalei) the Curumbars, the Cohatars, the Burghers and the Furawars who form the smallest number. Among these the Curumbars and the Burghers may be ranked as Hindoos since they observe some of their ceremonies. In several of the hilly parts of the Peninsula species of the Etulars

and the Curumbars are to be found. The languages of most of these people are a compound of those of the nearest places and are somewhat different from each other. The Cohatars eat beef and worship "ideal Gods of their own" which shows that they are not the votaries of the Hindu Shastre. The Deccan has been from time immemorial the abode of such races of people, who most likely had no sort of communication with the Hindoos when they were recently settled in the northern Hindoostan and being not well known to them have been represented in the Ramayun as apes, monkeys mleches and Rackhases. Col. Brigg stated at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society that he could confidently declare that the Hindooism had not till a late period spread in the *Peninsular India* and that it was occupied by tribes of men who were not Hindoos. Mr. Gleig in his History of India asserts that "the Hindoos had not penetrated to the south of the Vindhaya Range before 880 B.C. when a compilation of the Institutes of Menu was made by one Kulla Bhutta who appears to be his authority for forming this opinion. The Mahavarut however mentions the names of several kingdoms ruled by Hindoo Rajahs in the southern India, which Sahadeva in the Dwapur Yug had conquered and rendered tributary to his brother Yudister. Without endeavouring to find out the exact era when Deccan was settled by the Hindoos, I shall for the present content myself with only observing that from all accounts it seems to be a more recent Hindoo settlement than the northern Hindoostan. The above is but a desultory and imperfect sketch of the aborigines of India whose forefathers must have retired into mountains and fastnesses as they were ousted by the Hindoos and are therefore now found in hills and jungles in the primitive state.

BRAMANISM, BUDDISM AND JAINISM. Having consider-

ed at some lengh the question respecting the origin and settlement of the Bramins and pointed out from authorities to which I could obtain access that they are not the aborigines of the country, I shall now proceed to offer a short account of the Buddists who have attracted the attention of several oriental scholars. The Bramanism and the Buddism have been two rival religions in India for a very considerable time but as the early history of both is shrouded in a veil of mystery, there is a difference of opinion with reference to their respective antiquity. Some ascribe the origin of the Buddism to the nineth Incarnation of Kishna or to certain Hindoos who are said to have been dissatisfied with the idolatrous practices of the Bramins and thus maintaining that it is of a later formation; while others allege that when the Bramins arrived in India, they found that the worship of Budda had already been settled and perceiving that the aborigines were favorably disposed towards them amalgamated it with their polytheism. Mr. Hodgson whose researches concerning this subject have been very extensive and profound informs us that the Buddists themselves acknowledge that their religion is not so ancient as the Hindooism which the ecclesiastical chronicles he had to examine fully corroborate. In *Hari Bungso* we find that Budda was the great progenitor of the *Chundro Bungso*—Whether he was the originator of this religion as it is named after him is a question which I am not prepared to answer but it appears to me that the Buddists were either the offspring of the Bramins or of the aborigines or the descendants of both if the antiquity of the Bramanism be admitted "The Buddas says Colebroke" wholly deny the identity of their deity with the *Avatar* in question. They admit the divinity both of that God and others of the Vedantic faith ; but they insist that they are greatly subordinate to Budda,

the worship of whom they carry back to a period far anterior to that of the Gods of the Hindoos. They do not acknowledge a creation of the universe ; but they admit that it has been destroyed many times, and by some extraordinary operation has been reproduced. Each of these regenerated worlds was governed by Buddhas of whom they enumerate twenty-two. The present universe has been successively ruled by four of whom Gautama or Gaadama whose doctrines now prevail in Ceylon, Java and some other places where the religion of Budda is acknowledged is the fourth. "A fifth maetre Budda is yet to come." It is difficult to fix the exact time of the growth of this religion but that it was in existence when the Ramayana was composed appears from a passage contained in that work in which an allusion to Buddo as synnonymous to an atheist is made.

Gautoma a name-sake of whom was the author of the Nyaya philosophy whose doctrines says F. Schlegel are "of a kindred nature and like origin with the confused metaphysics of the Buddists" began to execute his divine mission in B.C. 588 when Bimbasara was the King of Magadha who became a convert to this faith. Since that year it was adopted as the religion of that Empire and subsequently of several other countries in Asia, such as Japan, China, Tartary, Thibet &c. where the Brammanism is thought to have been the original form of belief from the circumstance of the remains of Hindoo Temples and Gods having been found as abundantly as those of Budda Images that have been discovered in the excavated caves of Salsette, Elephanta &c. The dissemination of the Buddism was so great for some time that it is supposed to have extended so far as Scotland and Ireland which is inferred from the close architectural resemblance of the "litttle steeple at Brechin" in the former and of

the "Round Towers" in the latter "to a Buddist monument."

Buddism may be properly said to have been nursed and cradelled in Maghada where Pali literature was carried to a pitch of perfection after it had taken its root. On the demise of Gautama three convocations had been held at different periods for the purpose of suppressing schisms in the Buddistical church and establishing the religion on a firmer basis by dint of *attha hatha* or dissertations which were delivered on those occasions. In 307 B.C. a dispersion of the Buddists took place owing to their proceeding to different countries in order to inculcate their creed. In Asoka or Dhamasoka then Emperor of Maghada the Buddism had found a zealous and enthusiastic supporter and it was from his Empire that it began to make rapid strides. Mahindo son of Asoka was deputed in the above year to introduce the cherished religion of his father into Ceylon and missionaries were also sent to Kashmira, Ghandhara, Mohesamandalam, Wanavasi, Aparantaka, Marhatta, Yona, or Yavona (Greek) countries in India, Himawanta country, Sowanbhumi in Egypt then governed by Ptolemy Philadelphius (B. C. 260) and in the countries of Magas half brother of Ptolemy Philadelphius who reigned over a great part of Lybia and was the son-in-Law of Antiochus the first. The names of Ptolemy and Magas have been discovered by Mr. J. Prinsep in one of the edicts of Asoka found both in the rocks of Girnar in Guzerat and Dhaulia in Cuttuck. Cashmere at that period belonged to Asoka and was therefore soon apostolized. The reception which the Buddist missionaries met in other places was so cordial and encouraging that they succeeded at last in supplanting the Brammanism and remained triamphant wherever they took their stand. A difference of religious persuasion was in India as in other countries

the cause of deep rooted animosity and hatred between the Bramins and the Buddists. The insults and the injuries which they heaped upon each other had only tended to aggravate their malice, inflame fanatical zeal and sectarian bigotry for their respective tenets. The Brahmins after a lapse of some years regained their former ascendency by dint of continued persecutions and warm exertions in their sacred cause while the Buddists retired into the coasting and distant places where there was less fear of opposition and resistance from their inveterate opponents and its existence in Nepal, Thibet, Ceylon, Java and such bordering countries is thus accounted for. When Alexander invaded India he met with the Buddists who were then called Samaneans which is their native name in Central Asia but which the writers of his expedition have converted into *Schamans.*

That the Buddism which had indeed a rapid rise soon felt the shock of dissolution and was gradually checked in its career after it had been established in the different parts of Hindoostan is a point on which the Foe Kue Ki or Travels of Fa Hian a Buddist priest who had come to India from China at the end of the fourth century for the purpose of visiting the places where his religion had prevailed has thrown a good deal of light and the clever account of this work by Dr. Wilson has placed several important facts within our reach, of which I shall not fail to avail myself in those parts of my future essays, where they may be necessary. At present I shall content myself with quoting a passage from Dr. Wilson's article on it, in order to illustrate the condition of the Buddism at the time of Fa Hians coming to India. "With regard to the Budda religion" says the Dr. "we find it flourishing on the borders of the great desert—prosperous on the upper-course of the Indus on either bank—declining in the

Punjab and in a languid state although existing on the Jumna and the Ganges. In its most sacred seats east of the latter River, the birth place of Sakya and scene of his early career it had fallen into irreparable decay and, its monuments were crumbling into those mounds of rubbish which are still found in Goruckpore and Tirhut although a few columns then standing are yet erect. Even in Magadha or Behar it had fallen off and Budda Gaya was deserted, although some monasteries remained where Buddist books were preserved." In Tamralipti, in the Easern part of Hindoostan and Ceylon it was in a flourishing state but in Java it was not even known at that period.

The Jains follow the Bramins in some respects and the Buddists in others as to what regards their customs and sentiments and have therefore been very properly said by Frederic Schlegel to "steer a middle course between them." With respect to the plurality of heaven and hell, the rewards and the punishments being awarded there in accordance with the good or bad acts of men and the high or low births of mortals being dependant on their virtuous or vicious deeds during the past lives they agree with the Buddists. The chief point of difference between them and the Bramins is that they like the Buddists do not admit the divine authority of the Vedas notwithstanding their worshipping some images of the Vedantists in their own temples. They believe like the followers of the Vedas in the existence of a Supreme Being but adore idols of some of their *Maha Poorooshes* which are of a totally different nature from those which the Buddists treat with divine honours. The religions of the Bramins, Buddists and Jains so strikingly coincide with one another in many points that there can be little doubt of their being of the same origin. In none of the Hindoo works any notice of the Jains is to be found. It appears from a *sloka*

in the Sreemut Bhagabut* as well as from Amorcosh's Dictionary that they and the Buddists were considered by the Hindoos as *one* religious sect a mistake which very likely might have arisen from their being not so conspicuous as the Buddists when they commenced their divine career and from the word *Jin* being "applied to the chief saints of the Budda Sect in the same manner as those of the Jains." A number of Jain inscriptions has been collected and the deciphering of them shows that they did not rise into notice previous to the 9th century though they might have existed before as a division of the Bramins or Buddists. There is however one inscription which records the grant of some land by a Jain in the 600th year of their Coli Yug, corresponding with the 50 or 60 years B. C. but Dr. Wilson seems to attach little importance to it and questions its existence resting as this statement does "on the oral testimony of the head Pontiff at Belli Gola." We also learn from the learned Doctor that no Jain writer lived earlier than the 9th century which added to the fact of their religion being but a mixture of the Brammanism and the Buddism and to the evidence deducible from the dates of the grants of land recorded in hundreds of inscriptions, inclines us to believe that they cannot be older than the Buddists or the Bramins—a points which struck me forcibly when I set out in making the enquiry and on which I am glad to find Major Delamaine, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Colebrook, Mr. Abbe Dubois and Dr. Wilson who have treated of the subject are all unanimous. It seems to me that the Jain religion made little or no progress in the northern India but in the southern and western parts it met with a better fate and is still to be found there growing in luxuriance and attracting the gaze and atten-

* "*Tataḥ kalau Sampravṛtte Sammohāya Suradviṣām* /
Buddho nāmnā'ñjana sutaḥ kīkaṭeṣu bhaviṣyati" //

tion of the surrounding people. The Jains are ludicrously benevolent to all the animals, reptiles, insects and worms for which they have hospitals where they take a delight in feeding them. The anecdote related in Major Seely's Wonders of Ellora of a Jain discovering animalculii in the water he had drunk through a miscroscope, his breaking the instrument in a rage and at last dying in an excess of grief arising from this sad discovery, fully illustrates what the feelings of this sect are towards all sentient beings. That this is *a principal characterstic* of the present Jains is a fact to which Mrs. Portans bears testimony in her "Cutch". "Their dress" says she "is a simple white garment descending in fall folds from the shoulder to the feet ; their heads are bare and closely shaven ; their walk is peculiarly slow, and their eyes are fixed on the ground in apparent abstract contemplation ; they carry in one hand a bunch of feathers and in the other a small earthen pot. The most striking peculiarity in their appearance is given by a piece of gauze which they wear over the mouth, to prevent as they believe the possibility of any insect entering with the air they breath. To destroy life however unintentionally is considered by the Jains to be an inexpiable sin ; and lest they should ignorantly commit such, it is their custom to abstain from food after sunset, to use no water which has not been previously strained, and to sweep the ground before their footsteps lest they should cause death to some minute insect."

CONCLUSOIN—Such are the religious systems that have been nurtured in India but none can boast of having ever maintained its power *interruptedly* for any great length of time. Every one of them had struggled hardly to establish itself on a permanent basis and to spread its influence throughout the country ; but such exertions were never completely crowned with success. The Brammani-

cal creed must however be pronounced to have camparatively led a triumphant career though fiercely opposed by the rival sects—to have been most fertile in inventing and diversifying the forms of its worship—to have been most successful in gaining popularity, in extending and defending its own dominions and in heightening its fascinations to secure the love and admirtion of its votaries.

It is astonishing that amidst the gloom of superstition in which the Hindoo mind was enveloped—the frequent and reiterated scowlings of the Priestcraft on every freedom of enquiry and freedom of thought—the rage and violence of the Persecutions arising from the jarring interests of the Religionists and the battles and broils which constanly rent the kingdoms of the Rajahs, the *light of Knowledge* had so much illuminated the face of the country with a halo of glory as to excite the curiosity of the foreigners to approach her with every feeling of respect and esteem to receive instruction at her hands. That epoch was certainly a glorious one and it is astonishing I say again that notwithstanding there being so many impediments to the cultivation of learning, India can boast of men whose delight it was to be absorbed in the mysteries of heaven—to examine its mechanism and deduce inferences from its awe-striking phenomena—of men whose days and nights were devoted to the acquisition and propagation of the sublime doctrine of Philosophy—of men who stored their minds with the truths of Physical and Mathematical sciences—of men who have left monuments of their skill and proficiency in architecture, music and other fine arts—of men whose imaginative powers could steal the happiest ideas from the flowery banks *of Poesy*—could depict the operations of the mind with the accuracy of an artist—could felicitously blend the charms of the materials and the intellectual worlds in painting

the scenes and actions of their heroes—could move and enrapture every heart by the magic of that *Inspiration of Genius*—that *divine gift* of the muse which has justly been said to "refine the stream of life."

STATE OF HINDOOSTAN UNDER THE HINDOOS, NO. 2.

BY BABOO PEARY CHAND MITTRA

Read on the 13th November, 1839.

ACCOUNT OF ITS REMARKABLE COUNTRIES AND CHIEF CITIES, AND HOW THEY WERE GOVERNED.—In ancient times India constituted (as it now is) of a number of petty kingdoms the internal management of which was conducted by their respective Rajahs with a number of officers in every department of Government but there was generally a *Maharajah* residing in some conspicuous part of the country, who was looked upon as the supreme lord though he treated his subordinates with every mark of equality—more specially when they were invited to attend the celebration of any festivals and never exercised any control over their dominions other than that of advising or encouraging them to discharge their duties faithfully and of requiring their assistance on occasions of war. It appears from the native accounts that the monarchical form of Government prevailed among the Hindoos from the earliest times. Iksako the eldest son of Baibutsut Menu is mentioned as the first king of Ayodya which is considered

the oldest kingdom in India. Of the two races of kings, viz. the Solar and the Lunar which stand in high repute in the annals of history and whose descendants are still to be found in some parts of the country, the former sat on the throne of Ayodya but the *Moharajahship* does not seem to have lodged in their hands after the death of Rama the hero of Ramayana. Ayodya which from Valmici's description appears to have been a well improved kingdom existed more than fifteen centuries and its decline may be properly atttibuted to the removal of its seat of Government to the famous city of Canouge or Kanyakubja founded by one of its kings and destroyed by Mahamud of Ghizni in 1018 B. C. According to Ramayana, Kanyakubja is but the modern name of Mahadya founded by Cushanaba a descendant of Hasti of the lunar race and so called from the circumstance of his daughters having been made crooked (or Kubjā) by Pubana (God of Wind) who had fallen in love with them. In the reign of Dasaruth, father of Ram there were kingdoms in Casi (Benares), Sindhoo (Sind), Sowbira (on the Persian frontier), Magadha (Behar), Soorastro (Surat), Auga (Assam and Ava) Mithila (Tirhoot) Kakooee or Cecei whose capital was Giribrojo (in the north western part) and in Duccin (Deccan) the Rajahs of which were invited to witness the solemn performance of his *Putro-ashti Yuggo* and who after the completion of the ceremony were we find from Dussoruth's speech requested to return to their respective dominions and attend to their duties properly—a fact which proves the supremacy of the Ayodya kings at that period. Among the kings of the Lunar race Yojati who lived long before Dasuruth or Ram was probably the Maharajah for some time having the whole or the greater part of Hindoostan in his possession which was divided among his five sons when he retired from the world but what particular place

was his capital I have not yet been able to learn, nor am I certain who reigned in Ayodya when Yujati lived. Probably the latter might have grasped at the supreme authority by the force of arms but it must have reverted to the original race of Maharajahs when he died.

The commencement of the Dwaper Yug may be dated from the death of Rama and in that age the exercise of Imperial power was centered in the Kings of Hustinapoor and Indroprastha—the former was "about 20 miles S. W. of Darinagore on a branch of the Ganges formerly the bed of that river" and the latter is but the ancient name of Delhi. Hustinapoor was older than Indroprastha and could boast of having produced a rich succession of heroic Rajahs who made every part of India tremble with fear. The sons of Dhrotorastra and Pandu, the kings of that renowned city had reigned conjointly like their fathers for several years but disputes having taken place between them, the Pandovas or the younger branch removed to Indroprastha where they became so powerful by several acts of uncommon valor and virtue that the Rajahs from every part of the country which at that time contained innumerable states are said to have not only owned allegiance and paid tribute but to have flocked to their palace as a mark of submission on the occasion of the Rajshooy Yuggo*. After the great war in Kuruckhetra (Thanesur a few miles from Kurnal) between the Curus and the

* When the Indroprastha was the chief city of India there were a number of kingdoms in every part of it which a reference to Shava Purva in Mahavarat will satisfy us all. Previous to the celebration of *Rajshooy Yuggo*, Vima, Arjuna, Nokoola and Sahadeva had visited and fought with the Rajahs of the different kingdoms in the Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern parts of Hindoodstan in order to extort tribute and allegiance from them as well as to ensure their attendance on the occasion of the festival for the satisfactory performance of which such proceedings were thought necessary. The list

Pandubs, Hustinapoor began to dwindle into insignificance while Indroprastha continued to be the chief city of Hindoostan until the reign of Janamejaya in 1300 B. C. about which period the Magadha Empire which existed for a considerable time and where several dynasties of Kings had ruled rose into notice. Patala Putra was the capital of the Magadha Emperors till the conquest of Prachis or "all the country from Allahbad to the eastern limits of India" by Jarasanda (belonging to another branch of the lunar race) who removed to Baliputra its chief city where he was killed by Bhima one of the brothers of Yudister in a single combat in 1180 B. C. according to Bentley. It was nine miles long and fifteen miles broad and "enclosed by a wooden wall pierced with loop holes and a ditch." Jarasanda was so great a hero that his memory is still commemorated by an annual performance of martial games in some part of his extensive territories.

The throne of the Magadha Empire was occupied by Nunda when Alexander invaded India in 328 B. C. At that time India was inhabited by a number of nations most of whom had regular Governments independent of each other. The accounts containing the names partly of their countries and partly of their own, which are to be found

of the kingdoms &c. given in the Shava Purva is too numerous to be inserted here.

In the Kiskinda-kando of Ramayana we also meet with the names of several of the places mentioned in Mahavarut and we may therefore conclude that when Ayodha was the capital of India there were many kingdoms and chief cities whose situation and history are in a state of obscurity—Col. Tod has discovered the sites of several places such as Arore the capital of Sindhe on the Indus. Soorpoora on the Jumna, Barolli on the Chumbul, Chandrabhaga in Haronte. Mundoni capital of the Puriharas, Chandravatee at the foot of the Aravalli mountains, Baliabhipoora capital of the Balica races in Gugerat &c.

in the works of Ptolemy, Arrian and Strabo do not tally with each other in every point owing to a difference in orthography and probably to their being not equally informed on the subject. Porus and Taxiles, the Rajahs of Punjab and Taxila are supposed to have been the Viceroys of the Magadha Emperors who were in the habit of creating such offices to administer the affairs of their Empire. Chundergupto or Sandrocottus one of the sons of Nanda, who was raised to the throne in 315 B. C. through the intrigues of his father's minister Chanacya who was instrumental in the destruction of all the other sons of his master and whose sins and repentances are the subject of several poems, visited the macedonian Hero in 327 B.C. when he pitched his tent on the banks of the Hyphasis where he was so much enraged at some of the uncivil expressions of the Hindu Prince that he would have destroyed him had he not seasonably left the spot. After the death of Alexander Seleucus Nicator one of his generals appeared as his successor to the dominions which he had conquered in India but Chunder Gupto marching against him with a numerous army, a peace was concluded between them by which the former married his daughter to the latter and received annually fifty elephants in return. In order to cement their friendship Megasthenes was afterwards sent as an envoy to reside at the court of Chunder Gupto who was subsequently beloved by his subjects. The friendly relations that subsisted between these two monarchs did not die away with their deaths. On the accession of Bindusara, son of Chunder Gupto, Seleucus had also sent Diamochus as an ambassadar to establish the alliance on a firmer basis. When Seleucus died and Antiochus the Great became the ruler of the provinces of Parthia, Bactria &c. he became an ally of Asoka the son of Bindusaro, and an intercourse

of this nature was afterwards kept up between the Greeks of Bactria and the Emperors of Magadha. While Bindusaro was weilding the Imperial rod, Asoka who has been the favourite theme of discussion for several years in the oriental world was sent as a subking to Ougein or Avanti from an apprehension of his committing a parricide but on his (Bindusaro's) death, his son who had not little disturbed the peace of his mind, came back to Pataliputra and putting to death all his brothers caused his inauguration solemnized in 247 B.C. while his wife whom he had left at Chityagiri, (being in a hurry to see his father) continued to live there and sent her son Mahindo (who was subsequently deputed to introduce Buddism into Ceylon) and her daughter Sangha matta to him. On Asoka's (or Piyadasi) embracing the religion of the Buddists, he changed his name to Dhurma Asoka (or Dhamasoka) and distinguished himself much by his religious and political edicts proclaimed at different periods of his reign. He fed daily sixty thousand Bramins and caused medical establishments to be instituted in his own dominions, as well as in those of his ally Antiochus the great, king of Syria, whose name has been discovered in two of his edicts found in the rocks of Girnar in Guzerat and Dhalia in Cuttuck. The crown of Cashmere which must have originally belonged to the Magadha Emperors devolved on Asoka in consequence of one of its kings dying without issue. His character had latterly undergone so great a change that he established his reputation as a good monarch and himself inculcated the great doctrines of the Buddism to extend the dominion of *Virtue*, Viz.— "Honor to father and mother, charity to kindred and neighbour, and humanity to animals." After the extinction of the race of Chunder Gupto, Vicramadytta who is said to have been one of the Surja Bangso Emperors of

Magadha but whose geneology is so involved in fiction that it is difficult to disentangle it, rose like a meteor by a series of brilliant exploits to dazzle the names of his predecessors in point of heroic glory and love of literature. "The principal seat" says Heeren "of his Empire was in the land of the Ganges on both sides of that river ; and his residence seems to have been established alternately at Palebothra and Conouge. He was also lord of Benares whether he convened the already mentioned assembly of Bramins. He rebuilt Ayodya so celebrated in the ancient history of the Hindoos but then in complete ruin.' His dominions embraced north-ward as far as Cashmere and south-ward as far as Tagara. He fixed his residence at Cugein in Malwa where he commenced exercising the sovereign power in 56 years B.C. and the new city which was before but a dependency of Indropastho and afterwards of Magadha and where we have already seen Asoka lived as a subking became the focus of learning and civilization. Pataliputra somewhat shorn of her glory was gradually crumbling to ruins while Ougein began to beam like an isolated star with an increasing splendour and from the rapidity with which it drew around it, the awe and admiration of the surrounding kings it could easily be thought capable of being one day able to outshine all the ancient cities of which India had felt proud. But with the death of its illustrious founder whose reign forms an important era in the annals of Indian history, its greatness and magnificence vanished—its nobles usurped the diadem and none of his successors is worthy of record except Bhoje Rajah who flourished in 483 A.D. The throne of the Magadha Empire was filled by the Andhra dynasties so called from the ancient name of Telinga where they had first reigned but it began to languish at their hands and its fall may be reckoned from the death of

Puliman in 648 A. D. The Gangetic provinces which constituted the Empire were afterwards divided among several Rajahs, and "Patna, Benares, Allahabad, Maithela or Trihoot, Oude Kanouje, Curnadesa, Tumlook (Tamralipta) in Bengal and Gour.—"each became the capital of a petty monarchy." The kings of Gour went on making acquisitions of territory and increasing the size and importance of their kingdom and called themselves Maharajahs even till the fifteenth century.*

The Southern India though not so old a settlement as the Northern or the Peninsular can also boast of having had several powerful principalities. The oldest states formed there were according to our Puranas, Pandya Chola, Kerala and Chera called after the names of the four great grandsons of Dushyanta father of the famous Sacantala. Pandya Chola and Chera on the Coromoundel coast constituted the Dravira Desa and Kerala and six other Konkans or provinces (the foundation of which is attributed

* The Balla Kings who are supposed to be the descendants of Rama and ancestors of the Ranas of Mewar reigned with power in the western India. Their metropolis was thrice changed and the number of their dynasties was nearly six. They first resided at Dhauk or Moongy Puttun whence they found Balibhi in A. D. 319. When that city was destroyed in the fifth century "the Isle of Deo and Somenauth Puttun in the division termed Larica" became the capital and on its sharing the same fate in the middle of the eighth century, the seat of government was transferred to Anhulwarra which was built in A. D. 746 and so named in consequence of Anhul a shephard having determined its site. The Balla dynasty was succeeded by the Chaura or Sama when Anhulwarra became their metropolis, to which we find eighteen countries become soon subject viz. Guzerat, Carnatica, Malwa, Maroodes, Soorut (Saurashtra) Sindhu, Concan, Sewaluc, Rushtra-des, Bhansher, Lardes, Sunkuldes, Cutchdes, Jhalumder, Mewar, Deepucdes, Ootch, Bunber, Kaerrdes and Bheerak. There were few cities which enjoyed the benefits of an extensive commerce both internal and external as Anhulwarra for which reason it is called "the Tyre of India". The Ballas reigned as lords paramount of the Western India till the destruction of their proud city Anhulwarra which took place in A. D. 1298 and is attributed to Alla-u-din.

to Parus Ram who I believe lived in the Treta Yug) were on the Malabar coast. They were subsequently all united and divided into two great parts viz., Tulva lying on the north and Kerala on the south. Among these states, Pandya (the Regio Pandonis of Ptolomy) whose celebrated capital was Madura, maintained its power and grandeur for a long time and comprehended a great portion of the Coromondel coast. Since the first Mahomedan invasion of the Deccan in the thirteenth century it began to loose its importance and territories and was at last reduced to a low state. With respect to its origin Mr. Taylor thinks that the name of Pandya was derived from the Pandavas one of whom (Arjuna) visited the place about 1000 B.C and married the daughter of its then reigning king, when he was obliged to roam as an exile for twelve years in consequence of his having entered the room where Yudister and Dropadi were sleeping for the purpose of obtaining a bow and an arrow to punish a thief who was taking away some cows from a Bramin. Dr. Wilson who seems to doubt the circumstance of Arjuna's having ever come to Madura which none of the Mahavaruts in the Deva Nagri character containing the account confirms, is of opinion that when Dandakaronya or that vast tract of desert which we now see in the Corromondel provinces on the eastern Peninsula from the Godavery to Cape Comorin and where Rama and Sita had lived during their banishment attracted the notice of the people of the Northern India after the conquest of Ceylon, a Baishe named Pandya settled in that part of it which was afterwards called Pandya Desa. None of the states in the Southern India had ever attained such greatness to entitle any of their Rajahs to claim the *Maharajaship* which great dignity as we have already seen was never stationery in one place or heriditary in one family but was acquired

and enjoyed by such of the Royal blood as could combine with popularity, virtue, valor and learning or could distinguish themselves in any other way.

HINDOO REPUBLICS—None of the native works contain any notice of there ever having been in India any other form of government than the monarchical but the writers of the Alexandrian expedition speak of having observed several republican states on the western part of the country. Nysa on the left side of the Indus, the countries of the Malli, the Catheri (in Moultan) and the Oxydracae (below Moultan) were all republics governed by a senate whose number in the first mentioned place was three hundred and in others equally considerable or perhaps more. That the people of the above countries which were and have been the residence chiefly of the military class (Pattula being the earliest seat of Ixwaku the first king of Ayodhya) were brave and high spirited is a fact which their continued and determined resistance to the Macedonian Emperor and open manifestation of their feelings not to submit to his yoke fully attests. The Marhattas and the Sikhs are considered as their descendants and are said to have imbibed the political principles of their forefathers. Though the Marhattas are governed by Rajahs, yet it is by no means an unusual practice with them to divest them of their authority and to establish democratical or aristocratical forms of government. The constitution of the Sikhs says Mr. Eorstor who wrote in 1798 "has at first sight the appearance of being aristocratical but on a nearer inspection it appears to deserve rather the name of a democracy. No member of the state enjoys any title or honorary distinction, the chiefs are only military. In common society an equality of rank prevails which no class however rich and powerful darest venture to abolish. The assemblies of the people are altogether military; each

member has a vote, and the majority decide." The Rajpoots who are also one of the principal branches of the military class possess a government which is somewhat based upon representative principles. Col. Tod in his annals of Rajastan observes, "It will hardly fail to strike the reader how perfect are the elements for the formation of a representative government in these regions; for every state of Rajwarra is constituted *ex uno disce omnes*. The Pateis would only require to be joined by the commercial body, and these are already formed of Rajput blood deficient neither in nerve or political sagacity compared with any class on earth; often composing the ministry or heading the armies in battle. It is needless to push the paralell further; but if it is the desire of Britain to promote this system in the East to enthrone liberty on the ruins of bondage and to call forth the energies of a grand national *Punchaet*, the materials are ample without the risk of innovations beyond the mere extent of members."

These facts are sufficient to show that the accounts of the Greeks respecting the existence of some republics in India when it was invaded by Alexander are by no means "exaggerated" and it is therefore not at all improbable that its constitution might have in the course of time undergone changes in some parts; vestages of which already adverted to are still to be found. Frederic Von Schlegel who seems to deny that such a statement was entirely true, attributes this wonderful phenomenon in the Indian government first noticed by the Greeks to our "system of castes" which he says is in many respects more favourable to institutions of a Republican nature or at least Republican tendency than the constitution of any other Asiatic state."—Whether we admit the correctness of the testimony of the Greeks or of the opinion of this celebrated German author on this subject; one thing appears very

clear to us, viz. the absence of despotism in the Hindoo constitution* and that such was the case I shall endeavour to show from the following facts :—

CONSTITUTION OF HINDOO KINGDOMS—Each Kingdom was governed by a council consisting of a Rajah (who always stood at the head of government) and seven or eight ministers who were sworn before they took their seats and who possessed a fair knowledge of theology and law. With such ministers the Rajah always consulted "on peace and war, on his forces, on his revenues, on the protection of his people and on the means of bestowing aptly the wealth which he used to acquire." It was the custom with the Rajah to take the opinions of his councillors on subjects connected with the state "first apart and then collectively" after which he passed his decision. They were chosen generally from among the Bramins who though known as *the religious class* had we find to guide the Rajah almost in every department of business, in accordance with the principles of the holy books in which they were versed. In every age their opinions and advises have been much respected and the Rajahs looked upon them with so much

*I perceive from a note of Mr. H. H. Wilson in his Edition of Mill's History of British India which has just come out from England (15th June 1840) that in making the above remark I am borne out by him. He says "Had Mr. Mill sufficiently considered several passages which he presently quotes or to which he refers, he would have been satisfied that their descriptions of kingly power are mere generalities and that in practice Hindoo despotism did not exist. The Rajah was not above the law." "Law" says Sankara "is the king of kings, far more powerful than they"—Preface to the Digest. He was not a law giver: the laws to which he was amenable as well as the meanest of his subjects emanated from a higher "God who having created the four classes, lest the royal and military class should become insupportable through their power and ferocity, produced the transcendent body of laws. *Ibid.* He was not even permitted to administer it without legal advisers, let not a prince who seeketh the good of his own soul, hastily and alone pronounce the law"—*Manu* VIII. 281.

veneration that they were always afraid of doing anything without their knowledge or consent. When a Rajah died without issue or leaving an infant child it was they who took a principal part in electing his successor. When Dasarath died, and his sons were not in Ayodhya.—Ram and Luchun being then near the Chittrakoote mountain as exiles and Varato and Satrooghuna at Giribrajo the city of Keykooya Rajah their maternal uncle, the respectable Brahmins all assembled in the palace of Ayodhya and determined that Varuta should be requested to come back and sit on its throne. We learn from Arrian who wrote from Megasthenes that when Alexander came to this country he found three classes of Bramins. The first class consisted of men profound in wisdom and perhaps led a purely religious life—the second class of "those called Episcopi or overseers : they inspect whatever is going on in the country or in the city, and give information to the king in place where a monarchical government is established or to the magistrates in independent cities. It is reckoned criminal in them to make any false report nor has any accusation of this description been brought against them." The third class consists "of" persons who consult with the king on public affairs or with the magistrates in independent states. The number of this class is small; but for wisdom and integrity they are most distinguished. From this body are selected the magistrates including governors of districts, Deputy governors, Treasurers, Commanders, of Troops and of Ships, Store-keepers and the Superintendents of rustic affairs." Admitting as I do that the Rajahs in some cases blindly followed the precepts of the Bramins, I must at the same time observe that this sacerdotal influence was a great restriction on the legal power and was productive of much benefit to the people who I do not think had ever any occasion to interfere in

the business of the state or petition against the deprivation of any rights or privileges, always attended to their respective occupations—leaving the whole care and management of the government to the king and the clergy. Dr. Robertson tells us that "in some accounts princes are mentioned who having violated the privileges of the cast and disregarded the remonstrances of the Bramins, were deposed by their authority and put to death.* Of the four classes of the Hindoos Viz. the Bramins, the Xattris, the Vaishos and the Sudras, the Xattris were only entitled to wield the sceptic though there are instances of the Bramins having enjoyed that privilege but they are too few to admit of this practice being denominated general in their case. Besides the checks of the Bramins on the royal power it was also circumscribed says Dr. Robertson "by the ideas which those who occupied the stations in Society entertained of their dignity and privileges. As none but the members of the caste next in rank to that which religion has rendered sacred could be employed in discharging any function of the state, the sovereigns of the extensive dominions anciently established in India found it necessary to entrust them with the superintendence of cities and provinces too remote to be under their immediate inspection. In these situations they often acquired such wealth and influence that offices conferred during pleasure continued heriditarily in their families and they came gradually to form an intermediate order between the sovereign and his subjects; and by the vigilant jealousy with which they maintained their own dignity and privi-

*This statement has been supported by Dr. H. H. Wilson in a note to his edition of Mill's History of British India—"The authority of the Bramins," says he "was not a nominal restraint. In early times they undertook to depose princes for tyranny and impiety". See the legend of Vena, Parasarama and Devapal, Vishnu Purana 99, 401, 458 and the Mudra Rakshasa. Hindoo Theatre, Vol. 2nd.

leges they constrained their rulers to respect them and to govern with moderation and equity."*—The Rajahs kept a number of officers to discharge the various important functions of the state. It is difficult to say what was their precise number but from Mr. Wilkin's translation of an ancient inscription found at Mungeer it appears that the following twenty-nine were the officers of Rajah Deb Paul Deb : viz.,

1. Prime Minister—Omatyo.
2. Chief investigator of all thing—Mohaa Kaartta Krecteeko.
3. Chief officer of Punishments—Mohha-Dando-nayk
4. Chief keeper of the gates—Mohaa-Protee-haar.
5. Generalissimo—Mahaa-Saamonto.
6. Chief obviator of difficulties—Mohaa-dow-Saadhon-Saadhoneeko.
7. Chief instructor of children—Mohaa-koomaara-amatyo.
8. Keeper of the records—Promaatree.
9. Patrols—Sorobhongo.
10. Viceroy—Raajostaaneeyo.
11. Superintendent—Ooporeeko.
12. Investigator of crimes—Daasaaraadheeko.
13. Thief catcher—chow-rad-dho roneeko.
14. Mace bearer—Daandeeko.
15. Keeper of the Instruments of punishment—Dondo paseko.

* There were also other checks upon regal power in a heriditary nobility, "men of high lineage whose ancestors were servants of kings" for at a very early period, officers of state seem to have become heriditary and the heriditary minister was often more powerful than his master. The great Kshatryas represented by the Samants of Prithu Rai and the present Thakurs of Jaipur and Jodpur seldom allowed despotic power to their princes. See Madra Robstrasa, Tod's Rajasthan ; Duff's Marhattas.

Wilso'n Ed : of Mill's History of British India, 1st. Vol.

16. Collector of Customs—Sowl-keeko.
17. Commander of a small party—Gowl meeko.
18. Supervisor of cultivation—Kyottropo.
19. Guard of the suburbs—Praan-to-paalo.
20. Commander of a Fort—Koth-to-paalo.
21. Guards of the Wards of a city—Kaandaa rokyo.
22. Chief guard of the Wards—Todaajoostoko.
23. Director of affairs—Beenee-jookloko.
24. Chief of the spies—Dooloprysoneeko.
25. Messengers—Gomaa Gomeeko.
26. Swift messengers—Ohhee voromamo.
27. Governor of a city—Beefoypotee.
28. Superintendent of the Rivers—Toroptee.
29. Chief of the Boats—Toreeko.

The deciphering of this Inscription may be said to have somewhat dispelled the darkness that hung over the point adverted to and we may now conclude that officers of such descriptions were most likely in the employ of the Rajahs generally, knowing as we do that what one did was followed by another. The Greek writers however do not furnish us with the particular names of the different officers who performed the different functions of the State but designate them all *Magistrates*, which evidently proceeded from their want of acquaintance with the minute details relating to every branch of service but which by no means does in any way affect the fidelity of their account as to the nature of duties discharged by the different classes of functionaries. We learn from them that "the magistrates have the regulation of markets, city and soldiers. Some clear out the rivers and measure the land as in Egypt and have the care of the reservoirs from which water is distributed to the canals so that each person may have the necessary supply. The same magistrates have the direction of the huntersa nd award recompences or

punishments to those deserving of them. They collect the taxes and superintendent the workmen employed on the land as wood-cutters, masons, braziers or smiths. They have also the care of the roads and erect a stone at every ten stadia (i.e. every half cos) making the cross roads and distances. There are six companies of Aediles or Police magistrates consisting of five each. Some inspect the different trades, others have the care of strangers, providing them with lodgings, sustenance and companions and forwarding them or if they die their property to their houses ; taking care of the sick and burying the dead. A third class of Aediles enquire into the births and deaths when and where they took place on account of the revenue and that the births and deaths in the different ranks may not be unknown. A fourth class has the superintendence of the sale and barter of eatables &c. looking after the measures and the goods sold, to see that no fraud is practised. The same person is not allowed to deal in more articles than one unless he pay double duty. The fifth set presides over the sale of manufactured goods, taking care to prevent fraud and to keep the new separate from the old ; fining those who mix them together. The sixth and last are those who collect the tithe of the articles sold ; a fraud on the revenue being a capital offence. Individually each has these duties to perform but collectively they regulate both public and private transactions, the repair of works belonging to the state, prices, markets, ports and sacred rites. After the Aediles or Police magistrates, there is a third magistracy that which has the care of military affairs. It also consists of six companies each having five members ; one of these companies is attached to the admiral of the fleet ; another to the officer who superintends the yokes of oxen employed in conveying arms and provisions for man and beast and all

other necessaries for the army. These also provide drummers and bell men, grooms and engineers and their servants. They also station the sentinels and send out at the sound of a bell grass cutters; who are trained to expedition by rewards and punishments; a third company has the management of the Infantry; a fourth of the Cavalry; a fifth of the elephants; a sixth of the charriots and the royal armoury; for the soldier returns his arms and accoutrements to the armoury, his horse to the mews and his elephant in like manner.

DAILY DUTIES OF THE RAJAHS.—With respect to the diurnal duties of the Hindoo king we find that "early at break of day he rose from couch and paid a visit to the Bramins who possessed the three Vedes after which with the assistance of the priest of the household, he offered the proper sacrifices and prayers; then he devoted himself to the affairs of state and deliberated upon them with his minister in council. At midday he retired to his apartments in order to take refreshment composed only of lawful meats and previously tasted by his servitors. The consequences of poison were further obviated by the use of medicaments and amulets. After dinner he amused himself a short time with the beauties of his harem; then he engaged in public business as before and reviewed his army, steeds and elephants. Immediately after sunset he resumed his devotional exercises, listened to the reports of his ambassadors and again withdrew to the privacy of his harem where he partook of a slight repast enlivened by the sound of music until the hour of retirement for the night." These are the duties which in compliance with the dictates of Menu were generally attended to by the Rajahs but there were of course some who discharged them partially or in addition with others created according to the exigency of the time.

No SLAVERY IN INDIA.—We are happy to find that though institutions respecting caste have prevailed in India from the earliest times and were calculated as they still are to debar, all classes of people from participating in all the privileges equally, yet the growth of slavery which existed in Greece, Rome and does still exist in all the Mahomedan and some of the Christian countries has never been encouraged. The Sudras the most degraded of all classes enjoyed certain rights which were distinct and defined and of which none could deprive them.

"Of all strange customs prevalent among the Indians," says Diodorus (ii. 39) that (the absence of slavery) may be considered by some as the most strange which was established by their ancient Philosophers; for it hath been enacted that there should be no slave whatever among them and that being free themselves they should respect equality in all; since those who had learned to domineer over nor crouch to others would lead the best and the happiest under all circumstances. It was folly they added, to make laws equally binding on all, and at the same time to make their condition unequal" (Arrian Ind. 11).

ENJOYMENT OF SECURITY BY THE HUSBANDMEN.—The Rajahs held great encouragements to agriculture by affording to the husbandmen every security in the possession and enjoyment of their tenures and considered the produce of land as the chief wealth of the state. From several laws of Menu it appears that great attention was paid to the rights of the agricultural class, who consequently found every facility in attending to their interesting avocations. Dr. Robertson says that "in a more remote period before the original institutions of India were subverted by foreign invaders, the industry of the husbandmen on which every member of the community depended for subsistence was as secure as the tenure by which he held

his lands was equitable. Even war did not interrupt his laborers or endanger his property. It was not uncommon we are informed that while two hostile armies were fighting a battle in one field, the peasants were ploughing or reaping in the next in perfect tranquility."

The native as well as some of the European writers are of opinion that under the Hindoo administration the Hindoos owing to several political institutions and usages to which I have already adverted led a happy life and we learn from Macpherson that "at the time of Alexander's invasion the jurisprudence and police of India were regulated with admirable wisdom matured by the accumulated experience of many centuries of civilization and established government." The Ramayan and Mahavarut contain proofs of the Rajahs taking a warm interest in the improvement of agriculture.

RAJAHS SOUGHT THE HAPPINESS OF THEIR SUBJECTS, AND THEIR POWER OF RESISTENCE—Every old work treating of the duties of kings such as the first part of Menu, Rajdhurma Purva a part of Santi Purva in Mahavarata and the portion of Ramayan (in Ayodhya kanda) containing the interrogations of Ram on his meeting Voruta in the Chittrokoot mountain a few miles distant from *Pairag* (Allahabad) inculcates that the Rajahs should deem it a duty encumbent on themselves to increae the comfort and happiness of their subjects whom they should look upon as their sons and pay due attention to the concerns of their states. The Rajahs who generally had the greatest respect for such works did in compliance with their doctrines devote good deal of their time to the performance of their duties, and though often engaged in civil wars for the maintenance of their rights or supporting the cause of their allies, they never took it into their heads to pass beyond the limits of their country on any military excur-

sion and much less to encroach on the dominions of any foreign power. They were however never backward in resisting the invasions of those who allured by the wealth and grandeur of the country came to bring it to subjection and if we turn our eyes to the pages of history, we shall find ample testimony in corroboration of this fact.

Semiramus the celebrated queen of Assyria whose dominions extended as far as Bactria advanced on the banks of the Indus (where she kept vessels previously constucted for the purpose) with a large number of elephants made of cow hides to keep the real war elephants of the natives in awe and though she in the commencement of the battle gained some advantage over her enemies she eventually suffered a sad defeat at the hand of Shabrobates the Indian king who had four thousand boats on the River and fought with an army greater than that of the Assyrian q· een. Darius was the next person who invaded India and is said to have taken Moultan, Lahore and probably Guzerat but having no regular history of his military operations, we are unable to say how the Hindoos fought with him or how did he come to obtain the possession of those places. The example of Darius was followed by Alexander the great who arriving on the banks of the Hydaspes found in Porus "a formidable enemy" and had to fight with men who were more courageous than the Persians whom he had easily vanquished, and who to use the words of Arrian were "by far the most warlike of the then inhabitants of Asia."

It has been stated by Plutarch "that the last battle with Porus took the edge of the Macedonian courage : nd hindered their further progress in India. They were told that the Gandaritans and Pracsians (the Gangarides and Prasii) were expecting them with an immense army of no fewer than 3,000 elephants ; the capture of Sangala was

a dear bought and bootless conquest ; and a few more such victories must have proved fatal to the conqueror." —Rooke's Arrian Vol. II. pp. 50,51.

In descending from the Hydaspus to return to Babylon Alexander had dreadful engagements with the Malli and people of the other adjacent places. Seleucus one of the generals of the Macedonian Emperor who had obtained after the death of that hero Syria as his share and advanced his claim to India as its dependency did not also find it an easy task to take hostile measures for its subjugation and however fierce might be the war he waged against Chunder Gupto then emperor of Magadha and however great and excellent a commander he himself might have been, it terminated in his relinquishing his right to "all the provinces eastward of the Indus—that is all that were purely Indian"—a fact which speaks volumes of the Hindoo heroism and power of resistance in that rage. Such instances are not wanting in modern times. When Subuktagin and Muhumed rushed from Ghuzni to pour desolution over the plains of India, who will say that the Hindoos shrunk from displaying boldness and valour in withstanding the reiterated attacks of the latter ? This fact must be amply confirmed when we read of the Rajahs of Punjab, Delhi, Kanoaj, Kalangar, Goaliar, Ajmeer and Ujain assembling in the neighbourhood of Peshwair (in A.D. 1,008) to check the cruelties and atrocities of Mahamud who was of a much more barbarous character than his father Subuktagin and so gallantly did they fight that the Mohamedan invader thought of retreating from the field and would perhaps have been crushed to death had not the elephant of Anangpal the Lahore chief and the leader in the battle been frightened and fled.

THE XATTRIS WERE GREAT WARRIORS.—The Xattris were the only people who could learn the Hindoo tactics

and practise war, which in fact formed the principal branch of their education and it was almost from their cradle that all ideas of martial magnanimity were infused into their minds. That this country was often the scene of "domestic fury and civil strife" and warriors had often to call forth their energies is what we learn from our own Books but the description that has been given of the battles, sieges, single combats and other military operations is in some cases so extravagant that we can hardly attach any weight to it. There is however every cause to believe from what we have read of the Xattris and of the Rajpoots and the Marhattas who are but their descendants that they were altogether a fiery and a noble spirited set of Hindoos.

ARMY OF THE RAJAHS AND WEAPONS OF THE WARLIKE CLASS—Every Rajah was required to defend his own kingdom and maintained a *Chatorangini Sena* or an army composed of Infantry (Cavalry, elephants, and *Ruths*) whose number varied in different places and at different times. That some of the Rajahs kept an immense army is what has not only been borne out by *Mahabarut* but by some of the Greek writers. It is said that when the intelligence of Alexander's hostile intentions reached Nanda, he was "prepared on the banks of the Ganges to oppose the Macedonians with an army of twenty thousand cavalry, two thousand armed charriots and a great number of elephants." Porus is also said to have appeared "at the head of 4,000 horses, 300 charriots, 200 elephants and nearly 30,000 foot." The Balhara kings possessed "eleven hundred elephants, fifty thousand war charriots, eight lacs or eight hundred thousand foot soldiers and eleven lacs or eleven hundred thousand horse." Megnerthess relates that when Chunder Gupto gave an audience to Seleucus he was "encamped with 400,000 men." It is well known to many that the missile weapons of the Hindoo warriors

were chiefly bow and arrow, Guddas or iron-clubs, swords &c. The use of armours and shields was made by them for defensive purposes. I am not certain whether they were acquainted with the *Gun* but the frequent mention of *Agni Ban* in our books inclines me to suppose that they were not strangers to the art of firing. Mr. Blagdon in his Brief History of India states that "for many centuries previous to the invasion of Alexander they (the Hindoos) had become acquainted with Gunpowder and fire-arms; and at the time of this invasion, the Macedonian armies on the banks of the Hyphasis were disconcerted and appalled by the artillery of wood and iron, with which the Hindoos defended their walls and by the rockets which they threw in among them; the effect of which was attributed by the assailants to super-natural agency."

CONCLUSION—In drawing this sketch to a close I can not help observing that when we recall to our minds that India was at one time studded with a cluster of kingdoms and cities emulating each other to earn renown and reputation—persevering to afford every security to the lives and properties of the people and to augment their prosperity and happiness—conducting the operations of government with a degree of exactitude peculiar to themselves—possessing a race of kings who were prevented by the peculiar usages of the country from being despotic and were ready at a trumpets warning to brave every danger in "flood and field"—to risk their own lives for the welfare of their subjects and to fight and bleed "as heroes descended from heroes" who will say that in those remote ages when enlightenment had only commenced its bright career in the world and the science of Legislation was not so well studied as in modern times, the political institutions of India were not calculated to fulfil the chief ends of a good government? But where are those celebra-

ted countries and cities—those scenes of wonders and exploits which once adorned the banks of the Ganges, the Jumna, the Indus and the Nerbudda—whose blue waves rapturously caught their shadows as they gently rolled upon each other—whose sacred waters flowing in different directions replenished their fields and gardens with plenty and exuberance—whose barks and boats gliding from port to port diffused the comforts and accommodations of life ? They have ceased to exist and are now but heaps of ruins—those silent historians of their former grandeur and the awful inspirers of melancholy emotions in the minds of every moralizing spectator. With *them* their citadels and forts which glittered with the blaze of arms and where heroism and valour were exhibited in every shape—then *Toles* and schools where the beauties of learning and Virtue were admired through different avenues—their public works bearing in some instances the vestages of a thick population, an active commerce and an extensive agriculture—their numerous buildings for the exercise of generosity and benevolence to the travellers—their "solem temples" rich in architectural embellishments, have all decayed—a picture sad as it is must produce lamentable associations in the minds of those that indulge in anticipations of human improvement and however triumphing may be the retrogradation of Learning in this land to the cause of *Ignorance* that has since been rearing its dominion to brand us with the infamy of *barbarians* and of men born *naturally inferior* to the Europeans—assertions which the experience of the last few years has proved to be mere dogmas, the names of our h roes, our Philosophers, our poets and our Litterati will remain as "splendid beacons"—as lasting monuments of our former claims—our former exertions and former achievements in the field of intellectual glory and of moral eminence.

REFORM, CIVIL AND SOCIAL

By the Revd. Krishna Mohana Banerjea

Gentlemen,

I owe an apology for having thrust myself upon your notice this evening with scarcely any previous preparation, and with crude and undigested meditations in rough. The fact is that circumstances, of which it is needless to trouble you with a detail, called upon me to set to this task without delay, and I am accordingly obliged to lay before you thoughts over which I could not exercise myself even for two full days. I must therefore solicit your pardon for any untenable positions that I may advance before you, as well as for those defects and imperfections of which I am afraid this discourse is too full.

The subject of my intellectual offering to you upon the present occasion is *Reform, civil and social*, among the educated Hindoos, and the reasons which led me to its adoption are its absolute necessity on the one hand, and the want of attention, on the other, which is paid to it, and consequently the spacious room there is for improvement and exhortation respecting it. Few matters are of more solid importance so far as the sublunary interests of our country are concerned ; and therefore few topics can deserve more immediate and constant attention from the members of a society which is composed of the flower of the rising generation, and which may tell very strongly on the future improvement of Bengal. Before domestic, civil and social reform in a moral point of view takes place in our community, it would be preposterous to expect our rise as a nation, and the advantages which might accrue from our exertions in other respects would be greatly hin-

dered and interrupted by the countless spots which stain our lives as a body and which nip every effort at our advancement in the very bud.

In order the more clearly to open my thoughts on this subject, I must take the liberty of asserting that the *Reform*, of which I have spoken, implies the improvement of our *civil* and *social* institutions—and it is these to which we must chiefly attribute the national evils under which our community labours at present and which stand as a bar to our rising in eminence and civilization. After some introductory observations on the way in which these institutions originated, it will be my endeavour in the sequel of this essay to illustrate their pernicious effects on our country by citing some conspicuous examples, and to glance over the facilities and difficulties which exist in our way to reform. The former should encourage, and the latter instead of dis-spriting should rather animate us in our exertions under a full conviction of the paramount importance of our undertaking.

The attentive inquirer into the human mind and the diligent student of human history must have been struck at the influence which the opinions of the few exercise upon the minds of the many,—and at the strictness with which institutions that have had the sanction of antiquity are observed by the great majority of our species.—The respect which talents command leads us to attach importance to the opinions of the man who broaches them—and so the institutions of philosophers meet with easy reception from the vulgar. When antiquity adds its force to the recommendations of learning, the tenacity with which customs are followed can only be equalled by the jealousy with which innovations are viewed. The tendency of human nature, being repugnant to striking out a new path, and the majority of men being deterred by the prospect

of mental labour and of bodily exertion which reform renders indispensable, the tide of corruption runs on with unabated vigor when once set in by the example and precept of a distinguished person—so that it becomes a task of no little magnitude to stem the powerful current. Men are fond of reposing under the sanction of those eminent predecessors whose memory they revere, and a sufficient answer they think is given to those that would lead them otherwise, when an appeal is made to antiquity and custom.

Not that the principle of being guided by the decisions of those whom we respect and especially of our own revered ancestors is wrong in itself. So many are the mistakes and inadvertencies to which uncultivated minds are liable to fall, that society could never enjoy order and prosperity if some diference were not allowed to the erudite and the learned. The generality of men have neither time nor ability to frame laws for the proper regulation of their lives as members of society, and therefore the duty of drawing up rules for the guidance of civil and social life devolves upon the few that are capable of discharging it with any success. And when customs are found to have been set on foot by wise men and have prevailed from time immemorial, the favourable voice of venerable antiquity may justly attach some degree of importance to them. That a law has been in force from times past, is a presumption that it ought to continue ; and the examples of those whose recollections are precious to us are justly entitled to our regard unto a limited extent. Did we act upon the principle of discarding every thing that was ancient, society would rather retrogade than advance in point of civilization and enlightenment. Unless we availed ourselves of the improvements made by our predecessors, we should always have to set out from the first point ;

and since our short lives would leave our efforts unfinished, man could never attain to the consummation of any desirable object. Instead of starting from the highest pitch where civilization was left in the preceding age and so improving upon the experience of our ancestors, we should have to begin the work anew and retrace the steps that were already trodden. Those persons therefore that would sap the foundations of existing systems *vi et armis*, advocate a most pernicious principle, and would if they succeeded overturn the main pillar of human happiness.—But when corruptions are actually found to prevail, they ought by all means to be bufletted, and all real rubbish ought to be speedily removed that a sound superstructure may have room for its foundation and be raised to the prosperity of nations and individuals.

If our powers of judgment and discernment and servile submission to the institutions imposed upon our observance by the weakness or craft of those that went before us would be unworthy of our nature. That indolent and lazy habit of the mind which thinks not for itself but solely depends upon the decisions of others and to which our constitutional imbecility renders us constantly liable, has always checked the course of improvement in many countries. Civilization meets with a dead stop when it is not allowed to make any further progress than antiquity chose to assign to it—and men live and die as if they were only capable of being led by others but were never competent for any original thought or action. It is therefore a point of peculiar importance to be constantly reminded of our natural right to think and act for ourselves—and to study non-sbmission to any system which we may have discovered to be pernicious to the interests of humanity.

The origin of institutions in our own country is a striking illustration of the remark we have already made that

the few lead the many. Individuals succeeded in enforcing their own opinions upon the belief and observance of whole tribes and bodies—and as darkness covered over the minds of the vulgar, who in an ignorant age had neither time nor ability to help in the organization of society, the glimmering light of a few twinkling stars rendered passage through this stage of life somewhat tolerable. The tenets of Menu and Vyas were accordingly found to be profitable to a certain degree, and mental despotism was tolerated in order to avoid the more insufferable evils of anarchy and confusion. But what was useful in a barbarous and a grossly dark age, may be a plague in times that are more cheering—and absolute dominion must degenerate into tyranny when men begin to understand and appreciate their rights. And it is as criminal now to submit to a demoralizing system when we can strike out one more worthy of our age, as it then would be to refuse obedience to the only rule, however corrupt, that was available. Our conduct should keep pace with our knowledge and experience ; and it is no more graceful in an enlightened age to sanction customs that have a tendency to degrade us, than it would be for a full grown man to affect the crawling and the babbling of impotent childhood. If we see more clearly and understand more perfectly on the subject of moral right and wrong, our actions should be marked by corresponding improvement —and it would betoken a callous disregard to our conscience, did we not manifest our rise in knowledge by a suitable reformation in practice.

Whatever may have been the reasons which dictated the adoption of the institutions which have prevailed in our country, certain it is that they have retarded the course of human improvement. It is not for us to sit in judgment over our ancestors so far as their wisdom and

probity are concerned. We may take both these for granted, if we choose, without any injury to our practical advancement. They have left us certain maxims and ordinances for our observance, and these we may try before the bar of our reason without any slur upon their characters. We have to do with the customs and opinions which are at present in vogue, and not with the characters of the persons from whom they originated. Only in matters of history is it necessary to consider the *character* of the author upon whose testimony we receive them as facts—but in matters of *opinion*, since we are not bound to repose implicit faith in the judgment of any earthly teacher we are at liberty to think for ourselves and to follow the dictates of our own reason ; and we may consequently call in question the wisdom and policy of the systems under which we are groaning, although these originated with men whose memory is entitled to our highest respect as that of *predecessors* and ancestors. We feel ourselves burdened with a most painful yoke—we see that our hands are fettered by the most galling chains—and we have every right to seek for release and freedom. Our domestic happiness is poisoned—our national character is lowered—the bond of union is torn amidst us and although we may number among ourselves countless millions who are of the same country and under the same laws, yet we find ourselves scattered as separate puny tribes that are unconcerned in each other's welfare—and all these evils we can attribute to no cause but the ill-judged and discordant customs to which we are subject ;—and are we not at liberty—nay are we not bound, to look for redemption from this ignoble bondage ?

Much as the assertion of our privilege of thinking and acting for ourselves is needed wherever there is human breath, it is particularly called for in our own

country where custom has long been every thing and where the progress of improvement has been considerably retarded by a servile obedience to prevailing institutions. Did you live in more favoured lands and under the influence of more enlightened habits, it would still be necessary for you personally to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good"—but you are then more bound to do so here where evil preponderates so much over good—and consequently where there is particular need of constant discrimination between what is profitable and what is not. So much of positive evil has been bequeathed to us by our forefathers that it is necessary to call all the powers of the mind to bear upon the task, and not only unsparingly to eradicate whatever has a tendency to upset the well-being of society among us—but also energetically to introduce and uphold whatever is likely to prove a better and more useful substitute. It is impossible for us to see happy days dawning over our country if we continue idle and inactive—and this consideration ought to move us to the performance of duty and the assertion of mental liberty.

It is perhaps needless for me to trouble you with a detail of such customs and institutions as have proved drawbacks upon our welfare. Were I now addressing an European assembly it might be interesting to detail the practices that were in use among us—but the contrary being the case, it would be a tedious and prosy narration to repeat what every body is perfectly conversant with. But for the sake of striking your attention the more strongly, I will advert to some more glaring and common evils which require a speedy removal and under which millions of our countrymen are daily groaning. The first instance to which I will advert is the way in which matrimony is conducted. This is the most important and sacred bond

in human society by which two individuals are linked into one, and on which a great deal of our temporal happiness mainly depends. But the customs and feelings which have gained ground in this country render it too often a source of trouble rather than of peace and enjoyment. So much of this contract as is purely religious it is not my purpose to render a matter of controversy here—since the limits of our society will not permit my meddling with a theological question, and since in an essay which purports to treat of *civil* reform, it might be irrelevant to enter into the ceremonial part of matrimony. It is with the civil part of this contract—that which influences the happiness of the parties and which may be rectified without violence to religion—with which the priest has nothing to do notwithstanding the sanctity such custom has attached to it—it is with the corrupt habit of joining two parties that never knew each other and of multiplying wives which Hinduism though it allows, it does not enjoin as an indispensable act upon any person—that I am meddling this evening; and I will be bold enough to declare, upon the broad and unquestionable principles of moral right, that when a contract is effected between parties that never knew each other, and one of whom at least, if not both, is utterly incapable of thinking and judging for herself, every person that becomes an instrument of putting such a yoke upon them acts in a highly reprehensible manner. The father who gives away his daughter without waiting until the dawn of reason in her, and the husband who marries her, are both culpable—inasmuch as they act upon a maxim that can never be defended, and poison in too many cases, the happiness of their unhappy victim for life. It is not from a sense of duty, or at the shrine of any imagined god, however false, that they sacrifice her—for then there might be some aspect in which the act might

be favourably viewed and for which it should be very delicately assailed;—but it is at the shrine of custom, it is for the fear of man and a desire of *false* reputation, it is to screen themselves from the sneers of the vulgar, that they sacrifice her mental freedom and liberty of choice. This therefore among others is a matter which loudly calls for reform—and to which it is the paramount duty of the educated Hindoos to turn their attention. Is it possible for an enlightened individual to plead *not-guilty* before the bar of moral principle if he ever allows himself to be joined in wed-lock with a creature under the age of puberty, and if he thereby enslave for life, as it were, a person who has the same right to think and act for herself that we assert? Or can a father that has any notion of moral freedom, bring any plea whereby to defend his conduct if he deal away his daughter without her express and deliberate assent when she is principally concerned in the contract and ought to be allowed a reasonable voice?

The general treatment which custom has assigned to the female sex is a topic which may also be cited in order to illustrate my essay and to move you unto action. It would be insulting the good sense of this respectable assembly to dwell on the necessity and expediency of female education—an object which I know is pretty well appreciated and which few will have the hardihood to oppose. But because nothing has been done by our *body* on this subject—and perhaps little is being attempted by *individuals*—I conceive there is room for mutual advice and exhortation. It is impossible that a nation can take rapid strides to civilization while half the members that compose it are sunk in ignorance and degradation. The very persons who are to instil the first elements of knowledge into the tender mind—and after whom the little infant learns to lisp broken sentences are suffered to continue un-

educated and uninstructed. Can the nation then make any high progress towards refinement? Can the people reap the advantages and enjoy the blessings of education to a considerable extent while their partners in life grovel on the dust of superstition and darkness? Can the tide of improvement run on with progressive strength from generation to generation if the infant mind can never be educated and if we can never impart instruction to those "that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts?" The fact can never be so—and therefore we must educate our daughters with the same care as our sons, if we are to expect the advancement of our country in the scale of happiness. We must treat our female children as human beings, endowed no less with capacities for thought and action than our male children, and we must attach the same importance to their instruction and training that we do to that of our sons. That there are difficulties in our way I do not deny—but then I feel convinced that these difficulties are not insurmountable—and that if we will only earnestly and seriously set to the business we shall have help and succour which will surpass all our expectations. I have now in my study a list of questions on the most feasible method of promoting female education to which my answers have been solicited by a gentleman, who, though a foreigner, feels nevertheless more keenly than ourselves, the degradation of our females, and intends by exciting the attention of his friends in Europe, to afford whatever aid his agency can, to such of our enlightened countrymen as may be desirous of improving their daughters.

The division into castes and tribes may also be adverted to in order to impart strength to my call upon you tonight. Here too I desire my intention to be perfectly understood of not transgressing the bounds of my subject

which embraces civil life and not religious ceremonies. I do not intend to level my observations against the original institution of caste into four principal and distinct orders—but I wish to bring to your recollection the evils which have emerged from the numberless minute little distinctions which have arisen in later times and have no countenance in the Shasters. In fact if we speak properly and strictly we find it very difficult to discover in Bengal traces of those orders of which the Shasters treat; and if the sacerdotal tribe are accustomed to repose under the protection of Menu and others, it is easy to falsify their pretensions by detecting their total want of the qualifications necessary to the maintenance of the Brahminical station. What Brahmin can pretend that he strictly observes those duties the neglect whereof would, according to the Shasters, entail a forfeiture of his dignity ? Consider the barefaced audacity of those, who while infringing the tenets of the Shasters themselves, dare to raise their voice against us. Since however this is a delicate point to the handling of which objections may be raised at such a meeting, I will dismiss the hierarchy from my observations to-night, and dwell upon the universally acknowledged caprice that has, without any conutenance from the Veds and Purans, caused myriads of arbitrary divisions amongst us. How far these multiplied distinctions tend to weaken the national character may be understood from the consideration that every person's rank in life is immutably fixed at his very birth by the operation of such a system. Should it then receive the least encouragement from a body of enlightened and educated men ? Should they set their seal upon such a monstrous scheme ? No ! gentlemen, that ought not to be. We that profess moral principles ought not to help in the perpetration of an evil that is so pernicious to our country's welfare. We that

detest the theory of respecting persons, not for talents but for birth, should repudiate the prevalent maxim by which many minds with the best capacities are forced to remain wild and for which India is losing many a genius which if cultivated would perhaps have proved a jewel to her crown. But I will not dwell any more upon particular examples of the evils by which we are surrounded. Our minds are full of their practical effects and our daily observation and experience are sufficient to bring them constantly to our recollection. I pass on therefore to the ultimate object of my discourse which is to call upon you to set seriously about their improvement. The necessity of achieving this object on your part arises from the advantage which Providence has vouchsafed to you of a liberal education by which you have been enabled to detect some of the diseases that keep our society in an unhealthy and enfeebled condition. Did you not possess better notions and had you no knowledge of the abuses which exist, you could not be called upon to reform what, you did not feel, required reform. But since you have risen superior to the prejudices by which your countrymen are shackled, you are highly responsible to your country for every opportunity that you neglect of delivering her from her present thraldom. Who will come forward to India's relief in this respect if her enlightened children indulge supine indolence and thoughtless inactivity ? Are the ignorant, the illiberal, the unenlightened, the uninstructed, and the illiterate to lead the great work of reformation ? Can the blind lead the blind ? No ! gentlemen, that shall not, that cannot be. To you it is that the country looks up with eagerness—and from you it is that she expects her realize from one of the most galling yokes—even that of superstition, ignorance and evil custom. The work of domestic and moral reform must begin with and be con-

ducted by the inhabitants of the soil. Foreigners may at best aid and encourage you—but you must personally bear the heat and brunt of the battle. Strangers, if they be favourably disposed, may at best become your supporters and patrons—the British India Society may watch over your political interests and attempt to introduce a more liberal policy whereby the *blacks* are to be respected as much as the *whites*—the Ladies' Society for the education of our Females may disseminate instruction within a limited circle—but you must yourselves set to the task or the work will never be finished. You must yourselves exert your energies if you wish to see better days in your country. Reform at home must commence with and be carried on, by those who are of home—and before this reform can take place, and before you act your own parts, you cannot with good grace enforce your claims upon the sympathy of those that are abroad.

The difficulty with which under present circumstances attempts at reform are likely to be attended ought not to deter us from the task. Great works generally involve corresponding troubles and even dangers—which try our zeal and put our moral energies to a severe test. But placed as the educated Hindus are in very responsible situations—and privileged with talents for conferring inestimable blessings upon their country, it would betray culpable weakness on their part to shrink from trials in the performance of duty. Dangers and difficulties are certainly not objects of desire themselves—but when they lie in the path of right conduct and oppose the enforcement of principle they ought and must be encountered with boldness and fortitude. It so happens that the most influential members of the Hindoo community are extremely averse to every idea of reform, and desire fervently the continuance of the plagues which custom has intro-

duced. The educated portion therefore must meet with opposition and, in some cases, with persecution too, if they attempt a renovation. You cannot calculate upon a bed of roses for a long time if you apply your mental powers to action and protest against monstrous and mischievous practices that are in fashion—but you must expect thorns and briers in your way. This prospect however should not damp your spirits—since in the struggle between truth and falsehood, principle and prejudice, even if the advocates of the former be called upon to renounce their very lives, still they must be acknowledged to be more than conquerors, though the defenders of the latter seem for a time to prevail. Bear in mind gentlemen and be moved by the many examples of fortitude which causes much less urgent and of much more questionable propriety than yours had called forth in ages that have rolled over us. Did Brutus draw his sword at the peril of his own life in order to rid his country of a Cæsar—and will you relax your courage when you are to expel what is much more pernicious to the happiness of society than any Cæsar had ever been—even the monstrous abuses of tyrant custom? Did fanatics and enthusiasts raise up the standard of opposition in the vain attempt of displacing monarchs that answered not their fancy—and will you harbour cowardice and weakness in the cause of certain and solid reform? Will you tolerate and sanction customs and institutions which you consider to be positively injurious to the well-being of your country, through fear of difficulties and troubles, while your memory is stored with numberless instances of valour and energy lavished after comparatively trivial objects? Where have you known of a reformation springing naturally from the abuses it was intended to destroy? Where have you known of a renovater lull altogether in a bed of down? Did Socrates loath the destructive cup

when it came to him during a course of conscientious conduct? Did not Luther suffer when he set himself in array against the corruptions patronized by the great and opulent of the world? Did not Ridley and Latimer send up to the sky volumes of smoke at the stake? Will it then be too hard if Hindoo Reformers suffer? Will it be unnatural if, in the eradication of errors that have taken deep hold in the country and gathered strength by the lapse of ages, some difficulty—some contending obstacles —be encountered?

The difficulties with which the following up of principle on your part may be attended, will after all amount only to certain ineffectual brow-beatings and threats from the friends of error—and there cannot be much apology for diffidence where fortitude is not very hazardous. No reformer in our country will perhaps be ever called upon to suffer at the stake or the scaffold—nor have to pay even the price of confiscation and exile for the sake of principle. Shall then mere threats silence you? Shall the prospect of perhaps being taunted and jeered by the thoughtless and the vulgar deter you? Will you dread the idea of being roughly named by people that are professedly unprincipled? How will you bear the recollections of the noble characters who preferred death to the abjuration of principle—how will you hear without shame the charming names of those personages whose zeal for truth endured through evil report and good report, who would sooner and more cheerfully submit to murder or assassination, imprisonment or exile, the stake or the scaffold, than consent to the commission of wrong or the omission of right;—how will you hear their names without taking shame, if your courage prostitutes itself for fear of jestings and jeerings?

Your course becomes still easier when you consider

that in the prosecution of your views as respects civil and social reform, you shall not be necessarily called upon to transgress the dictates of the Shasters—and as your combat will principally be against customs and practices which the corruptions of time have invented, you shall be unassailable even upon the enemies' own ground. In fact even if you did transgress the limits of their revered writings, still no human contemporary could with any grace proceed against you—since there are numberless practices now tolerated and sanctioned by your opponents which are open violations of the law which they hold sacred. My call however at present is of a civil and social character—and so I pass over those things which are connected with religion. To the reformation of the abuses I have instanced no argument can be advanced even by the most rigid follower of Hinduism. Many examples may be quoted of women entering into the state of wedlock after they had passed the age of puberty, and these will destroy the indispensable necessity of performing a marriage contract while one or both the parties are incapable of thought and reflection—and no text can be produced which absolutely dooms our females to irreparable ignorance. Why then may not the educated Hindoos, if they take any reforming steps, plead the innocence of their course even so far as the Shasters are concerned, and the propriety of their conduct so far as the happiness and prosperity of their country extend ?—And shall not this plea, even if it do not wholly disarm our opponents, at least stop their mouths and expose their bigotry ? May it not perhaps produce a reaction in our favor with some ? May it not approve the reasonableness of our conduct to others—and persuade them probably to follow your examples ?

Pardon me gentlemen if I have said anything that is offensive. Treat me with indulgence if you find me wrong.

I had very little time for the preparation of this essay having been suddenly called to undertake the discourse this evening—and I chose rather to call your attention to a point of duty which was generally understood and needed no laboured arguments, than to produce an original treatise on a learned subject, which would require longer time and greater ability than I happened to have and on which it would be presumptuous in me to give a meagre discourse before such a respectable assembly.

HISTORY OF INDIA

In this country, books like Puranas and fables, written in verse, are more popular and we lack books written in prose. That is why we do not have any books narrating the events of history. But now many people desire to know the ancient history of our native land and that is why we urgently need to-day, books on history. Conscious of such a nccessity, I have started this venture, which for me is well nigh an impossible task, namely the writing of history. If I can advance even a little bit along the vast expanses of water known as history, aboard this small raft of a book, then at least I shall be satisfied in my own mind. Later on, scholars far superior to myself and much more talented, shall ride on the crest of the waves of this ocean with much greater glory.

The ancient books like the Ramayanas and the Mahabharatam describe elaborately and in various styles the glorious achievements of the kings belonging to the royal families of Manu, Satyabrata, Ikshaku, Surya and Chandra, reigning in the Satya, Treta and Dwapar ages. The

story of their fights with the gods, demons, yaksas and raksasas is strange and totally unbelievable. So, this book leaves that out, and limits itself with the history upto the reign of Maharajah Vikramadiya in the Age of Kali.

About eighteen hundred years ago Maharajadhiraj Rajpal, was the emperor among the kings of India. He was eventually attached and dethroned by king Shakaditya. Shakaditya ruled for sometime and was consequently defeated by Maharajah Vikramaditya in the battle-field. Vikramaditya brought under subjugation the enemy kings of many countries, ruled wisely and paid proper respect to the wise and the learned people. His great achievements are still very vividly recalled by the people of the present time. Kalidasa, the greatest and most respected of all the poets, was the best among all the *Navaratnas* in his court. Vikramaditya was defeated by Shalibahan, the king of the South, and died. Shalibahan anointed Vikramsen the king of the Ujjain, and then crossed the Narmada and returned home. The descendants of Maharajah Vikramaditya succeeded in retaining royal powers for some time, but were finally driven out by an enemy. A king, who was a descendant of that enemy, made Delhi (or Hastina) a beautiful city. The historians of the country are silent about the way in which the succeeding kings ruled for the next three hundred years. King Basudeva conquered Bengal and Bihar (or Magadha), declared himself the king of kings, and lived in Kanauj which contained beautiful palaces comparable only with the ones in the city of the gods, and ruled for a long time. It was then that the Persian king, Bairam, in the disguise of a merchant, came to his capital to learn the rules of administration as well as the codes of religion of the Hindus. His true identity came out after he had been suddenly attacked by a wild

animal on a street of the city. He gathered all his strength and hit and smashed the elephant's head with his (*shul*) spear. After the king had heard the news, he asked the man to be brought into his court. King Basudeva had gone to Persia before to meet king Bairam ; so he recognised Bairam the moment he had seen him, and stood up and embraced him. Bairam stayed with Basudeva for some days, married the latter's daughter and went back to his own country.

The sons of Basudeva ruled for eighty years. The last king of the family died when his son was just a child. At once the rule of law and order disappeared from the kingdom. Ramdeva, a prince from Raitoor, was then famous for his great courage and learning. He was made the king for the purpose of restoring peace. King Ramdeva subdued the rebellious princes, greatly extended the boundaries of his kingdom, ruled for fifty years wisely and achieved great fame and then died. The historian from Ferasta in Persia wrote that Ramdeva, in spite of his great powers and glory, used to pay tributes to the king of Persia. After his death many deceitful persons tried hard for ascending the throne. The king's military chief, Pratapchandra, killed the other contestants, and with cunning and skill finally became the king.

Victory is always for the virtuous. The dishonest people have ultimately to pay for their crime. The kingship gained in an immoral way is only short-lived. After Pratapchandra's death, the so long subdued princes dethroned his sons, and became the kings of their respective lands. Among them king Anandadev and king Malladev were famed for their wealth and wisdom. King Anandadev came of a wild-race. After he had become the king of Manaya, he fought a great battle and conquered Berar and Gujrat under Maharastra. King Malla-

dev came of a low family. But because of his great wisdom and intellectual powers he succeeded in becoming the king of Hastina and the lands associated with it. Kanauj became the capital of a vast kingdom and attained greater glory than even Hastina. It is said that there were six thousand groups of singers, dancers and musicians there, and three hundred thousand shops used to sell tobacco. But the downfall of both the kingdoms was as quick as their ascendency. Anandadev died after sixteen years, and Malladev after forty. After that the other kings either went in for conquering distant lands, or started taking care of their own kingdoms.

At that time the Arabian kings like Mahammad conquered the Mecca and Madina, and defeated the kings of of Egypt, Persia, Syria and the nearby countries. The places like Kabul, Kandahar and Kashmir were under their respective nanional rulers. The kings of Lahore and many other countries on the eastern bank of the Sind paid tributes to the Persian king. The kings of Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer were very powerful, and individually none of them was strong enough to resist the attacks launched by the Yavanas. The freedom-loving people of Rajputana, a place surrounded by dense forests and situated within the hills, kept the Muslim soldiers away by their strength and courage and thus succeeded in keeping their country well-guarded for twelve hundred years.

If one goes through the history-books written by the Arabs, one learns that the story that the Muslim races that came down to India eleven hundred years ago tried to conquer her is not wholly acceptable. However, there is no denying the fact that the Muslim merchants used to buy and sell many things in India, earned a lot of money, and on return home offered to their own people a much

exaggerated description of the wealth of the Indians and thus inspired the heroes of their land into a great desire for acquiring the Indian wealth and conquering the Indian cities with their great buildings. Those merchants had also talked to those heroes about our jewels, precious stones, fragrant spices, our graceful and beautiful women and also about the great hatred of the Hindus for the Muslim religion. On hearing them and also on reading their descriptions, the courageous and luxury-loving among the Arabs experienced a great desire. Moreover, the Arab historians had written many strange and interesting stories about India.

Before the Muslims could attack India, the powers of their emperor had greatly eclipsed because of the increase in number of the enemy kings. One of them, the king of Bakhara, was very powerful. One of his army-chiefs used to live in Gijni, the capital of Kabul for keeping a safe distance from the Afgans. The Muslim emperor died 976 years ago, leaving behind him his child. At once his brother and many more persons started a fight for the throne. The kings of Khoradan and Kabul joined the fight, in fear and anxiety, to support the emperor's brother. Finally, he defeated the emperor's army, and ascended the throne ann ruled peacefully. After he had died, his son was poisoned by the enemies to death. After this the Tartar Sabuktagin became the king and assumed for himself the title, Nasiruddin. He knew that his subjects were restless and war-loving. So, he wanted to keep them busy with something engaging. He became, afterwards, tempted by his self-imagined great wealth of India, and crossed the Sind. In India he destroyed many temples belonging to the holy places. Many kings without initiative were defeated by him. He amassed a great fortune and went back to Gijni with that.

At that time Jaipal was the king of Lahore. He was a wise and brave king. In order to destroy his Muslim enemies as well as to prevent their return he got himself greatly equipped militarily and planned to cross the Sind to go to Khorasan. But the soldiers of Sabuktagin came prepared and halted close to their enemies in the night in the hope of fighting with them in the morning. On that deeply dark night a big storm started blowing with a great noise, and the rains came down in incessant measure and flooded the land. The Hindu soldiers became very alarmed and started running amok. Some of them blindly ran into the river and some others ran against the water-falls, coming down the hills and died. After Jaipal had seen all this in the morning, he wanted to sign a treaty, with Sabuktagin, but Mahmud, the latter's son, stood in his way and expressed his desire to attack and conquer India. At this Jaipal became very angry and said that he would rather slay his people with his own hand and throw his treasures into the ocean than bow in allegiance to the Muslims.

Sabuktagin was greatly impressed with this declaration. He underwent a treaty with Jaipal after the latter had promised to him a great many treasures and fifty elephants. Jaipal, then, returned to Lahore and sent the promised things to the Badsah. But his ministers felt unhappy about it. When the Badsah had learnt this, he became furious. He crossed the Sind with his soldiers and attacked India. He defeated an infantry of three lakhs of Hindu soldiers, plundered great amount of money and treasure ; and went back home. Then he fought with his enemies at different places, and victory was his on all the occasions. But he did not attack India any more. The Muslims became very sad at his death. After this, his sons Mahmud and Ishmael started fighting among themselves

for the throne. Finally, Mahmud ascended the throne and imprisoned his brother who consequently died behind the bars. On being crowned Mahmud swore in the name of God that he would know no rest until he had destroyed all the Hindu temples and their divine images. Not that he was very devoted to his own religion, but his sole aim was to extend his supremacy over India. He had entertained the desire from his childhood days. Now he wanted to translate it into reality. So, he laboured hard and enthusiastically, took a huge army and moved from Gijni to Lahore.

It is of no use to describe in detail the condition of the places where Mahmud fought. The blood coming out of the wounded men, horses and elephants flew in streams and the rich cities were burnt into ashes. King Jaipal was defeated and captured by Mahmud. He bought his indemnity with much of money. Then he entered a pit of fire and died. The places conquered by Mahmud became well-fortified and guarded by his soldiers. All the kings got afraid after they had witnessed the show of his strength and valour. They got their armies prepared and planned to fight back. All the great heroes of India gathered together. The kings of Ujjayin, Goaliwar, Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer joined hands in the battle-field. This was something unique in the history of India. The Hindu soldiers, because of their spite for the Muslim religion, gladly entered the battle-field with the singular purpose of ousting the enemies from their country. But the strong, powerful and trained Tartar and Afgan soldiers defeated the Hindu soldiers in no time. They, then, plundered heaps of gold, diamonds and many other precious stones, put those on the backs of thirty elephants, and got moving. They fought in many other places and conquered the greater part of India. Because of all this they came to be

considered invincible. It is said that after Mahmud had ravaged a city and was about to destroy its temples and the divine images, the Brahmins came to him and offered him a great amount of treasures if only he would kindly agree not to destroy those images. Mahmud told them that stones could never contain God and it would be a sin against God to spare the stones for the sake of money. He told them further that he was not willing to forego his religion for anything, and so he could not grant them their prayer. Then he broke a divine image, which he was holding in his hand, into pieces and priceless jewels, so long hidden within, came out of it. At this the Badsah's hatred for the images of the Hindu gods increased. He conquered India, forced all the kings to pay him tributes, and finally returned to Gijni, his capital, once again. For all his misdeeds he suffered greatly at his dying hours. He regretted his past actions, but death did not let him go. He, of course, was a good administrator, he knew very well the art of war too. But, he had never been concerned with his spiritual development. Because of his sensuality and greed, he could never have the knowledge of the Absolute. However, after his death, his enemies became very happy, and his friends greatly mourned the loss.

After this, Mahammad, one of Mahmud's sons, superseded his elder brother and sat on the throne. But, the people loved Mamud, and many warriors supported his cause, and he launched a fight against Mahammad. He won, accused his brother of illegally putting on the crown, took his eyes out, and kept him imprisoned for the rest of his life. When Mahmud had still been living, his son had shown every sign of incompetence with regard to ruling the kingdom. He had invited a race called Senjuk and offered them a land to live in. The rapid increase of the members of that race made him alarmed and he tried to

oust them. But his death kept his task incomplete. His sons fell out among themselves. The Senjuks took advantage of the situation and forcibly conquered Samarkhand and Bosora. Mamud fought against and defeated them and gathered all his strength and attacked India. But he had to come back to his country on learning that the Persians and the Senjuks had become offensive again. The Persians were defeated in no time, but the Senjuks had their victory over the Badsah's army. After this, in many places of India the enemies became formidable. To subdue them the Badsah went to India. When he was away, the Tartars attacked his kingdom with a lightning speed and caused it great harms. He came back to drive away his enemies. But fortune was against him. He had to face defeat in many battles. So, he left his country, wanted to settle for sometime on the bank of the Sind, and started for Lahore with his blind brother and the army as well as with all his wealth carried by three hundred elephants. But, on the way, his ungrateful soldiers and servants robbed him of his wealth and distributed the same among themselves. Mamud was kept imprisoned for sometime. After that he was murdered by his nephew. But, this nephew in his turn, and his father too, were soon killed by Mamud's son, Modad.

The Indian kings, when they had learnt of the strifes among the Muslim kings, once again wanted to stage a fight, but the attempt was frustrated. Then, all the princes of Gijni went on fighting with one another for the throne and started killing not their enemies but their own people. The powerful Senjuks launched attacks on various parts of their kingdom. The Badsahas, for quite sometime, were thus engaged in internal strife ; they had to fight back the Senjuks as well. So, they could not attack India. But 869 years ago, Badsah Ibrahim, famed for his

religious-mindedness and love for peace, fought with the Hindus and came out victorious. But, the glory of Gijni was about to disappear. Misrule and injustice quickened her ruin.

From then on the hands of the kings of the city of Moor became more and more powerful. According to the Persian writer, Ibn Hakan, the city of Moor was the capital of Khorasan. About 809 years ago the king of Gijni was driven out of his kingdom by Yasuddin, the king of Moor, and his brother Mahammad. He took shelter in India to save his life. But his enemies chased him even there. The Indian kings wanted to save him, but they were not equal to the task. They were defeated successively on the battle-fields of the Punjab and Multan. The Moor warriors were defeated by the king of Gujrat, so they did not attack Gujrat any more. Lahore had so long remained free in spite of repeated attacks on her. But by an abominable act of treachery the Moor army took her over. The history of Gijni came to its end with the death of Badsah Khasru. Her glory had disappeared long ago ; now even the royal family went out of existence.

But the Moor-rule over India had no special significance to the Hindus. These new rulers from Gijni—equally cruel, murderous and destructive. Mahammad, the brother of the Badsah of Moor, became the army-chief. Then he killed Khasru, and entered Multan with a huge army. He was defeated by the king's soldiers there, and ran back to Gijni. But, once one experiences the desire to conquer, one lose's one's head. Indifferent to the circumstances, the Badsah with a big army once again crossed the Sind, took away the kingdoms from 150 kings and handed these all over to his slave, Kutb. Then ravaged the provinces of the northern India and proved his strength. Kutb attacked Delhi and cleverly took possession of

the forts there. The historians consider him the founder of the Muslim emperor in India. After sometime, a race of people called Jats from the dense forest in Gujrat started creating troubles in the hope of plundering wealth. Kutb met them in a battle with his army and defeated them. The next year he crossed the Jumna, took over the fort at Khola and turned Delhi into his capital. Then, in the hope of conquering the eastern countries he joined hands with Badsah Mahammad. The king of Baranasi was struck and killed by an arrow hurled by Kutb. Then Mahammad entered the city and destroyed many divine images there. After this Kutb went to Western India. He showed great strength in Rajasthan and Gujrat. Mahammad was greatly impressed by this and so before starting for Gijni he gave Kutb the power to rule over the conquered lands in India. Just after this his brother died, and Mahammad sat on the throne of Gijni. He, for the rest of his life, fought many battles. Finally, he was killed in secret by a race called Gaukeya. In the meantime Kutb had become the unchallenged emperor of India. Still, he paid some nominal tribute to Mamud, Mahammad's nephew, who had succeeded his uncle to the throne. Mamud loved feminine company more than anything else, and so he greatly neglected his duty as the king. A man called Nasiruddin took advantage of this situation and took over the rule of Multan. Another man named Endos, who had been appointed in the administrative service of Gijni, forcibly became the ruler there. Then in the hope of dethroning Kutb, he attacked the Punjab with a big army. The attempt was frustrated. What was more, he lost his ruling power in Gijni. Kutb was elated for having brought Gijni under his control. His joy was so great that his administration suffered neglect. Endos launched a sudden attack and freed Gijni from his clutch.

This misfortune brought Kutb to his senses. He refrained from conquering Delhi, ruled his subjects wisely, gained fame for his kindness and died.

Kutb's son Aram was dethroned by his own brother-in-law Altamas. Altamas was born in a famous Tartar family. His brothers became envious of him when he had become his father's favourite and they sold him out. But with the help of his own intelligence and learning he soon got himself appointed in a high post and consequently married the Badsah's daughter. At that time Endos, the king of Moor, being driven out of his kingdom by Mahammad, the Badsah of Khoarejom, attacked India but nothing came out of it. He spent the rest of his life in the prison and died there. With his death came the end of the supremacy of Moor which was situated on the western bank of the Sind.

A DESCRIPTION OF INDIA

Every educated person must have some knowledge of the cities, villages, rivers and products of his country. Now that India is completely under the British rule, the people move from one part of country to another on business and they have commercial link everywhere. A study of one's own country brings in greater knowledge and joy. So, I consider such study worthy of the troubles to be taken, and for the same reason I am making this attempt to offer a description of Banga, Behar and the Oudh.

Our motherland Banga is like a temple built by God. It is so well fortified by the forests, rivers and hills that

the enemies have to take great pains to enter its cities. The northern and the eastern boundaries of this land are guarded by dense forests, wild waterfalls and small ranges of hills. The southern end of the country is watched over by dense forests and wild oceans, and a big desert stands on guard at the western limit of this land. It is divided by the Vagirathi flowing southward. The land on its eastern bank is completely inaccessible to the enemies. The southern portion of this country becomes flooded in the rainy season and produced large quantities of paddy and wheat. The forests here are full of Tigers, bears, buffaloes and wild animals of many other types; the rivers here are full of a variety of fish.

From the southern part of the place where the Bhagirathi branched off into one hundred tributaries upto the shores of the ocean stretches a strange and fearful land called Sunderban. It is occasionally flooded by water and is full of trees. From here the Ganges, dividing itself into hundreds of rivcrines, flows into various directions. The earth, here, is thoroughly covered with tall trees. The long branches of some of the trees in the forest hang over the rivers and keep the water under their shade. The cooing of the doves and some other birds, the cry of the deers and some other animals and the noise made by the monkeys as they jump from one branch of a tree to another are the only sounds that break the sombre silence of this dense forest. The banks of the rivers are the places where sharks and crocodiles are very often seen basking in the sun. Ferocious tigers approach water to quench their thirst; sometimes they kill the woodcutters and *Malungis*, sometimes they swim over the water to attack the men in the boats.

Some Fakirs have built their huts here on the banks of the rivers. They accept alms from the passers-by and

maintain themselves in this way. They know the magic art of taming the ferocious animals; but, strangely enough, ultimately they become prey to the tigers. The land is so very rich with salt that it is impossible to raise any crop here. It is not advisable to fell the trees, since the wood supplied from here is so very important to the people of Calcutta for lighting ovens and building boats as well as many other purposes. Moreover, this forest is like a well-guarded fort. It dissuades the enemies from launching attacks from the south.

In Bengal, Burdwan and its nearby places are very fertile and bear the richest crop; and Midnapore, as it is surrounded by the forests of Pechcta and Birbhum, looks like a beautiful garden. In 1760 this land was handed over to the British crown by the Nawab of Murshidabad. Since then agriculture has greatly been developed. Various products such as sugarcane, cotton, indigo, betel, tabacco etc., are brought, in the absence of any navigational link, through three very good roads to Hooghly, Katwa and Kalna.

It is a land of six seasons. In Phalgoon a gentle breeze blows from the south, the cuckoos coo, the bees sing, and the lotus blooms. The summer is the season of hailstorm and lightnings when at the end of the day the western sky becomes cloudy, the winds blow wildly and the rains come down. Thus, the rains somewhat reduce the heat. Finally the rainy season comes, the rains know no break and the rivers and the fields become full of water. The after-effect of the summer is felt in Bhadra and Aswin when diseases spread like anything. In the winter the mist settles all around and the dew drops down. The places close to the hills become cold and ice is prepared in earthen pots.

Bengal stands in the east of Behar, the Oudh and

Prayag (or Allahabad) in the west, Nepal in the north and Gondwalla in the south. Excepting some portions of Behar which stand close to the hills, most of the land here is very fertile and consists of many cities and men. Because the summer-heat here is pleasant, this province is a sort of health-resort. The products of Bengal and many other provinces move for sale to western India through this land. In some places a hot air-stream starts blowing from the west during the daytime, but a cool eastern wind blows in the nights and offers comfort to all. Opium is the main product of this land. Sora, clothes, sugar, scent and many other scented materials are exported from here. Formerly the city of Behar was the capital of the province, but now Gaya has taken its place. At present Patna is more populous and wider than Delhi. Gaya is divided into two parts; in one of them, which is more developed than the other, live the Brahmins; in the other is inhabited by ordinary people. Here the roads are clean and well-preserved. Trees stand on both sides of the roads. The pedestrians and the carriages have separate lanes to follow.

The Oudh is a very small province. In the west of the Oudh stand Delhi and Agra, Nepal stands in the north, Behar, Allahabad stand in the west and the south respectively. The province has no mountain or hill. It is full of rivers. The land here is very fertile. It yields agricultural products like wheat, Barley, paddy, etc., and also sugarcane, Indigo, poppy and almost all the good staff that is available in all other parts of India. Because of the peculiarity of the climatic conditions, Sora grows in plenty even without any human care. That water mixed with Sora undergoing the process of evaporation under the sun, produces excellent salt.

Lucknow, which stands on the Gomati, is now the

capital of this province. The roads passing through the localities inhabited by the lower people are unclean and so narrow that barely two carriages may move easily side by side. The houses are ugly and are mud-built and numberless beggars mendicants and stragglers move around everywhere. But the locality of the cultured and the rich is full of beautiful buildings and contains good roads, markets and shops. The Nawab's palace and cemetery have been built at great costs. These and all the mosques are of surprising, artistic beauty. Inside imambara or the main mosque there is a school where one can study the Muslim scriptures. There in one of the great verandahs of the mosque lies the dead Nawab Asadaulla within a coffin made of diamonds, glass, silver and many other rich jewels. The richness and the beauty of this house as well as of the nearby Roman gate make pleasing sights to the visitors.

The city of Oudh, which had once been built by God Narayana in the human guise of Rama, is now shorn of all beauty. The dilapidated buildings, of course, still stand there, and still the Yoti, Sannyasis from the planes come there, bathe in the holy water, move round the temples and perform proper religious rites. The poet Balmiki has thus described the Oudh in his epic, 'The Ramayana' (and even if there some exaggeration in this description, it is not all fiction by any chance):—

> *Kosal is a prosperous land. It stands on the bank of Saraju and is rich with paddy, cattle and wealth. The city of Oudh, among all its cities, is the most famous. It was built originally by the king Manu. etc.*

Or, in other words, the Oudh, with a breadth of 12 'yojans', was situated in the Rajmarga built by king Khanu. This Rajmarga, in its turn, was a part of the vast Kosala. The merchants rushed towards this city; chariots, drawn by horses and elephants, ran along its roads;

big fortreses with trenches around them, mango-gardens, and sky-high buildings stood inside this city; and sweet music came out of the houses and filled the air. The city was free from cheats and atheists. The women here were beautiful and virtuous; they dressed well and put on rich jewelleries; they were faithful to their husbands. The men here were truthful and respectful to their forefathers. They treated their guests well and lived a holy life.

One of the ranges of the Himalayas has bifurcated itself into two. After covering a long distance the separated parts have met again. Kashmir stands within these two arms of that range. Tibet stands in the north of this land, Netak stands in the east, and in the south and the west stand Lahore and Pakheli respectively. This land is 100 miles long and runs along a breadth of 60 miles. They say that this land was originally a lake surrounded by hills; but a sudden earthquake forced the hills down as a result of which the lake went dry and consequently became habitable. The beautiful forests and gardens of this country are full of sweet-scented flowers in all the seasons, and the rivers here are always full with clear water, the hills are decorated with ever-green foliage of the trees, and deers and many other animals graze on these hills. Here the snow-covered peaks of the Himalayan ranges are sometimes, like the waves, they shoot up, pierce through the clouds, and touch the sky. The poets of this land write in the Puranas that here on many inaccessible spots stand the beautiful buildings of the immortal gandharvas. From the feet of those buildings flow many streams. They come down with a murmuring song. They break the barrier of the stones. And finally they reach the plains and irrigate the gardens and the bowers there. These streams unite with one another in Kashmir, and that united flow is known as the Jhilam in India. This land is not only beautiful with flo-

wers, hills and streams; at the same time its climatic conditions are very much congenial to human health. Here, on the southern side of the hills, are seen many beautiful flowers and tasty fruits; the northern part is adorned with a variety of European fruits and flowers. Cows and goats graze on the green grassy plots of the hills; the bees murmer sweetly. For all this, one is tempted to consider the land as the garden of God.

Bernier, during his visit to this place, was surprised with the great personal beauty and intellectual attainments of its people. Really, these people possessed great skill in various artistic activities. The wooden carriages and beds made by them used to be exported to distant countries. All these were very costly. But the Kashmiris were chiefly famous for their beautiful shawls which had always been highly praised and greatly sought by people all over the world.

Emperor Aurangzeb travelled widely over this land with his family and ministers. He climbed over a hill-top to see the waterfalls leaping down from Avuri to the dark caves below with thunderous sounds. Bernier had earlier spotted a beautiful spring here. Badsah Jahangir built in a good shelter in the hill with the purpose of having a good view of the spring. Aurangzeb, later on, built a dance-hall there. He used to have a good time here in the company of his courtiers and enjoyed the sight of this divine creation. From this dance-hall one can see the spring flowing under the shades of the trees standing on the gradual slope of the hill. After reaching the edge of Avuri, it gathers great speed and swells up and goes down with a great sound.

ABOUT THE KINGS

Badsah Mahammad of Khojarejam, who had destroyed the royal family of Moor, was the emperor of Persia, Khorasan, Bektrien, Kabul, Gijni, Moor, Mebarool, Lehore, Lahore and hundreds of other lands. His victories filled his heart with great pride and turned his head. At this time a hero namad Zangis Khan was causing a great disturbance by burning the villages and torturing the people of Tartar and many more places. A vakil sent by him was either harassed or killed by Mahammad. For this Mahammad incurred his displeasure. This was followed by a great battle between Zangis Khan and Mahammad at Kubyartis. Not less than 3,50,000 soldiers died on the battlefield.

Zangis Khan was initially defeated in the battle. But the ultimate victory was his. Badsah Mahammad unwisely left the battle-field in the hope of spoiling the zeal of the enemies by delaying the fight. But as he turned away from the war front, his soldiers became jittery. The enemies took advantage of this and launched a severe attack. The Badsah had no alternative but to run away. Zangis Khan divided his army into divisions. He took charge of one, and his four sons were made chiefs of the rest. Those five divisions, through five different routes, suddenly marched into Khoalejam and conquered Bokhora, Samarkand and Khojarejam. After this they conquered Persia, Turkestan and the capital of Kabul. Mahammad died in a small island in the Caspian. After his death, his son Jalaluddin became the Badsah. He was very brave and spirited. He was as great a warrior as Zengis Khan was. He was much superior to the latter in respect of wisdom

and other virtues. He scored many victories over his enemies inside the kingdom. But, because of ill luck, he was defeated by the Moghuls and ran away to the bank of the Sind. After sometime, Zengis Khan, with a huge army, came to the same spot. Jalaluddin fought with great courage with the Moghuls. 20,000 soldiers belonging to his camp died in the battle-field. The rest were confronted with the huge army of Zengis Khan. They could not run away as their going back was prevented by the wild river. So, they fought with desperation and without rest. Jalaluddin ordered his soldiers to refrain from killing Zengis Khan. So, the Tartar soldiers never aimed at the latter.

The Badsah realised what was at the back of heart of Zengis Khan. But he preferred death to imprisonment. So, when he found the situation beyond his control, he threw his own horse into the Sind. Zengis Khan, coming over to the bank of the river, found the brave prince fighting with the waves and still the prince was throwing arrows at him. Zengis was charmed at this. He praised the prince greatly and asked his men who were ready to chase him to refrain from the task. The prince mounted his horse again and with the help of the Badsah was quickly and comfortably settled on the eastern bank of the river. He gathered his weak, surviving soldiers once again to launch an attack on Zengis Khan, but the latter did not like to fight back. Dethroned, impoverished and shorn of all former glory, Jalaluddin fought in various ways to gain supremacy over India. But his enemies were great in number and strength. Therefore. he lost the fights and was compelled to run away to the bank of the Sind. Later, he succeeded in regaining a part of his own kingdom. In 1231 he went to Khardisthan. He was assassinated in secret by an evil-doer there.

The Moghuls, who had come upto the Sind while chasing Jalaluddin, did not enter India because of many difficulties. Their invasion started later. However, the Badsah of Delhi, in the meantime, considered himself immune to dangers, and sent his entire army out to conquer Bengal, Behar and the lands on the eastern bank of the Sind. He dethroned the king of Goaliar, conquered the Ujjain, and like Badsah Mahammad destroyed many divine images of the Hindu in order to uproot Hinduism totally. For this he gained only a bad reputation. Badsah Altamas died in 1235. Then his son Firoj sat on the throne. He reigned for a short time. He was consequently dethroned and murdered according to the desire of his own sister, Rijia, who, in her turn, wore the crown. Among all the children of Altamas, she was the cleverest and the bravest. She fought incessantly, and ruled for 3 years and a half at the end of which she was murdered by her brother, Bairam who was of weak character and foul heart. However, he became the Badsah then. At this time one of the sons of Zengis Khan came to India with his Moghul army and attacked Lahore. He killed Bairam and offered his kingdom to Mamud, another son of Firoj. When the Moghul army had marched into Bengal, Mamud started fighting with them. The Moghuls were defeated and they ran away. But the victorious Mamud was dethroned and imprisoned by a man called Mamud who had so long received his care and affection. This Mamud displayed such great administrative wisdom after he had sat on the throne that his subjects became very happy with his rule and forgot all about the ungrateful act by which he had become the Badsah. He offered paternal care to his people. He showed proper respects to the wise. He did all that he could do to lessen the suffering of the poor. Thus, he became very famous.

Sultan Mamud fought in Multan and in the hilly land of Panchal. Over a long time he kept himself engaged in fighting in many places of Northern India, and victory was his on all the occasions. The Rajputs fought with him for the independence of their country. But many of their soldiers lost their lives and the rest were kept in subjugation of the Sultan. Even the Moghuls, for the time being, dropped the idea of entering India. In 1259, the grandson of Zengis Khan, Hoolegoo, the then emperor of Persia, sent a vakil to the court of Delhi. That man was a spy in disguise. However, he was treated respectfully by the court. Balin, a minister of the Sultan, sensed the design of the Persian emperor. In order to impress the said vakil with the great wealth of the country as well as with the great valour of the heroes, he took 50,000 mounted soldiers and went to meet him. 3,000 carriages loaded with cannons, 2,000 wild elephants and an infantry of 2,00,000 strength were placed in order on both sides of the road. When the vakil appeared, these soldiers displayed their skills. At that time the mighty court of Delhi was full of the Hindu and Muslim princes of many places and the city was crowded with the cultured and the rich. When the Moghul vakil and his attendants saw all this, they became all praise for the Sultan. From then on the Sultan reigned happily upto the end of his life. His death in 1265 was greatly mourned by all his subjects.

His early days had been spent in great poverty. He used to copy the holy Koran then and thus earned his bread. Even after he had been crowned, he did not give up the practice. One day he handed over a holy book copied by himself to a scholar. The scholar pointed out a word and said it was a mistake. The Badsah at once deleted the word and took down what the scholar

suggested in its place. After the man had moved out of the court, the Badsah reinstated the deleted word, but all this made the page look clumsy. The members of the court were very surprised at this and wanted to know why the Badsah had acted thus. He told them that he was sure that the scholar was very wrong, but he did not like to hurt his feelings.

Balin, one of the Sultan's ministers, succeeded him to the throne. Earlier Balin had been involved in a conspiracy against the crown. He was assisted by a few people then. He found out the survivors, killed them, and started reigning, and he reigned kindly and wisely upto the end of his life. The Moghuls had in the meantime started disturbing the countries in the immediate vicinity of India. So Balin prepared himself for keeping them in check. Apart from this, he readily took all measures to crush the rebellious activities of the Subedar of Bengal.

In the battle against the Moghuls his son Mahammad lost his life. The news filled his heart with great sadness. Then he decided to hand over the sceptre to another son named Kira. But the prince incurred the displeasure of the father because of his ungrateful activities. So, the old Badsah gave the crown to Mahammad's son, Kai Khasru. After a few days he died in his ripe old age with great fame and glory attached to his name. After his death, Khasru was removed from the throne and Kira's son, Kai Kobad, was made to sit on it. All this took place according to the evil design of some courtiers. The new Badsah was idle and of a lusty nature. His own abominable activities brought in the ruin of his family and made him a pauper. He and his son were killed in 1289. With that ended the 117 year-old reign in India of the Moor Kings. After this, Firoj, belonging of the Khilji race of Afganisthan, became the Badsah. Like Balin he also came into

power through cruel and dishonest means. But the course of his life changed and he ruled wisely and well for a long time. His subjects became very happy. Only some evil designers went on creating disturbances. But as the Badsah grew older, his virtues became more expressed. This dissuaded them from committing any sedition. Firoj was really very kind and powerful. He had fought many battles inside and outside his kingdom with great courage and strength. But his victories did not turn his head. He had remained free from greed and did not deviate from the path of justice. That was why he was respected and praised even by his enemies. He defeated a Moghul army in Multan. But instead of taking away the lives of the soldiers he appointed them in his service according to their qualifications. He gave his own daughter in marriage to their chief Hoonegoo. They were given a land to settle in and the land was turned into a city called Moghulpuri. After sometime, the Badsah's nephew, Allah, equipped with an army, started for the south to conquer it. But the attempt was frustrated. However, he plundered a great fortune. Then, with the purpose of dethroning the uncle, he went to Bengal to raise a big army. Firoj, unaware of the intention of Allah, his own nephew and son-in-law, came with his courtiers to meet him. As he was talking affectionately to Allah, the assasins appointed by Allah, appeared, attacked and took his life away.

After this Allah wore the crown. He encouraged music and gay functions; he offered high posts to the princes; his charity knew no bounds. Thus he captured the hearts of the people of Delhi and attained greater fame than even Firoj. The Moghul soldiers, who had infiltrated in Lahore, were defeated by his brother. Most of them died in the battle. He conquered Gujrat and took the wife of its king away. He also captured Khoja Kafoor, one of the

king's servants, and brought him to his kingdom. This Kafoor, because of his cruelty, incurred the displeasure of the people and gained quite a notoriety. The Moghuls once again attacked India. But Allah defeated them everywhere. Proud of his great strength, he became desirous, like Mahammad and Sikandar, of conquering the whole world. He also wanted to found a new religion. He changed his name into Sikandar II, and the coins bore this new name of his. Only the really inspired with a heart keeping goodness, patience and courage in great proportions can conquer the world and found a new religion. But Allah was not a man of that metal. So, soon he refrained from founding a new religion. He knew the art of beheading people well, but he knew nothing of administration. Therefore, when once he found that no fight was on, he felt sad, and made preparations for conquering the south. But he did not have to go to the South to satisfy his desire for fighting. The Rajputs, living within well-guarded forfresses in the hills were still unvanquished. Allah sent an army to subdue them. But it took his army a very long time and cost it great pains to capture a few Rajput cities and forts. Now he was convinced that if the people of any country would fight like the Rajputs, it would be impossible to get them defeated in the battle. The captive Rajputs, the Badsah ordered in anger should be killed mercilessly. At this the other Rajputs took the oath of fighting with him till death. The Badsah, at the time of looting in Chitore, the former capital of Mewar, had behaved cruelly and taken away the lives of all the great army-chiefs there. In order to conquer the South, he ordered his slave Khoja Kafoor to march with 1,00,000 mounted soldiers and a big infantry. On reaching the South Kafoor plundered a great fortune and came back to Delhi with that. Allah became immensely pleased.

From then on he spent all his time indoors in the company of young women, and Kafoor ran the administration on his behalf. The common people soon became very disgusted with all this and rebellion broke out here and there. The Badsah became very angry when he learnt that even some of his vanquished enemies had regained their freedom. But he could do nothing since death devoured him at that time.

Then his son, Omar, ascended the throne. He was only 7 years old. He could supersede his elder brothers on the strength of a letter of inheritance, forged by Kafoor. Actually Kafoor went on running the administration. He ruled for 35 years and was murdered then. Alla's third son, Mabarik was then appointed in the post of Kafoor. But entire administration remained as oppressive and disorderly as before. After a short while he took out the eyes of his youngest brother, the Badsah, and wore the crown himself. An army-chief called Khasru in collusion with some evil-designers killed him and sat on the throne. He was so cruel that the subjects, to safeguard their own lives, made plans to dethrone him. At this time a Pathan called Vaganag Gaji came with an army and attacked Khasru. Khasru was defeated. He ran away and hid himself within a grave. As a reward for bringing an end to the rule of despotism Vaganag Gaji was offered the crown. He was a good ruler. He did his best to improve the condition of his subjects. He appreciated the worth of the cultured and artistic people. He established many schools for the spread of education among the young people of his kingdom. Unfortunately, he was soon killed by his own son, Jola. Jola had built a tent and placed a throne inside. It was so designed the tent would give in and come down on the head of the person who would sit on the throne. He then invited his father with the pre-

tence of offering a reception in his honour. Vaganag Gaji, thus, lost his life. His son then changed his name into Mahammad III and ascended the throne in 1324. This patricide ruled cruelly and without any propriety. When the Moghuls attacked him, he bribed them away. It is a matter of great surprise that though his subjects had suffered great insults and tortures, they never stood against him. However, one night he was found dead in his bed. His uncle's son Firoj was crowned then.

The historians feel sad when they have to write about the bad kings and their evil doing. But their hearts became elated as they come to describe the glory and the noble achievements of the good kings. What is more, this purifies their hearts and they feel grateful on the score. King Firoj started ruling cautiously and with care. He removed from the royal army the Moghul soldiers who had been bribed and thus tamed by Jola. He did it on the ground that those who could be so easily bribed would never be trustworthy. He offered unbiased justice to his people. He mitigated the miseries of the people and punished the evil-doers. He lessened the amount of taxes, and this was a great relief to the poor. But a great Moghul army came down the northern mountains and attacked his kingdom. They were defeated by the royal army and ran away. But the lands attacked by them had been turned into ruins. The Badsah vanquished his other enemies and once again concentrated on doing good to his people. He ruled upto his ripe old age. When he became very weak and old, could see death closing in on him, he handed over his charge to his son Mahammad and retired.

But the prince was greatly addicted to wine ; and his weakness for women was great. So, he failed to keep his enemies under control and ran away. At this, the old Badsah offerd the throne to his grandson, Vaganag II.

He died at the age of ninety. He had, during his life time, never showed any great strength in the battle fields, but his sweet nature and his constant effort to lessen the sufferings of his people had brought him an immortal fame. He had never been interested in fighting and killing. He took real interest in having roads built, schools founded, wells dug and trees planted. Vaganag II was as bad as his uncle. So, soon, he became an object of wrath to his people. He ruled for five months after which he was killed. His nephew, Abubakar, then succeeded him to the throne.

Firoj's son Mahammad was still alive. He was, by this time, totally impoverished. He was living in the forests and the hills. Still, he had not given up the hope of founding his empire in Hindusthan. When on the throne he had of course been very much given to pleasure. But the consequent miseries knocked all nonsense out of him. With the help of his son, Humayun, he fought many times for regaining his kingdom. Repeated failures could not despirit him. If his army had been destroyed, he would raise another army again and fight again. At times he would score a victory against his enemies. Sometimes the enemies would come out victorious. Thus passed a long stretch of time. Then fortune favoured Mahammad. He entered Delhi and ascended the throne. He ruled for 6 years and a half, but he had to face many miseries. After this, he died of some disease. His son Mamud inherited the kingship. Since he was very young, his ministers fell out among themselves on selfish grounds, and death became rampant.

Thus the people of India were forced into a bad time. The young king could not rise upto the occasion. So, disturbances increased. At this time, a man called Taimur conquered Persia and reached the western bank of

the Sind with a powerful army. The people bccame frightened at the mention of his name. Or, they experienced fear at the sight of his glistening weapons. And they came running to Delhi and announced his arrival. That great warrior was undoubtedly very brave and strong, but basically he was bad at heart. Men like him only dislocate the peace of others and make them suffer.

Many kings of the world became famous for their great strength and valour, and not for any real virtue of their own. This Taimur topped them all. He had no human virtue of his own. He believed in the efficacy of the sword alone, and tried to destroy human races, religions and wealth. Full of pride, he considered himself the master of the world oppressed the people under him, ruthlessly murdered men, dethroned the kings who were not upto his liking and curbed their pride and destroyed their palaces. As the clouds pour water down on earth in the rainy season, so he poured down human blood on the soil of India. He never cared for what was just or proper. He wanted to become the ruler of the entire world and for this he was prepared to adopt even the vilest means. He had reached the bank of the Sind in 1398. Within ten years from then he killed all his enemies and became the emperor of the whole of India. He looted numberless cities and burnt them; during the battles he killed people of all ages without number. The populous Delhi was turned into a desert by him. The Badsah of Delhi ran away and remained underground until the Taimur's powerful army had marched towards the northern Himalayas and gone out of sight.*

BY SRI GOBINDA CHANDRA SEN

**Translated from the Bengali original (See Appendix III) into English by Professor Dilip Ghosh.*

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ON TIPPERA

By Baboo Gobind Chunder Bysak

(Read on the 14th July, 1841.)

General Observations—Boundaries.—This zilla, parts of which were formerly called Roushunabad, derives its name from the Independent hill tract belonging to the Raja of that name, and is situated to the north of Chittagong. The eastern boundary of this district consists of this hill tract, which is throughout jungly, for, it is said, seven or eight days' way. The river Fenny divides it from Chittagong toward the south. A number of churs and increments, lying on the broad bosom of the Megna, are also included within this zilla.

The tract of country which, together with the islands of Sundeep and Hattia, now go by the name Bhulloah, Soodaram, or Noacolly, was formerly included in this district, and has been separated, I think, from the year 1829. It is, however, subject to the civil jurisdiction of the parent zilla, having only a Deputy Collector and Joint Magistrate at its sudder station—Noacolly.

Aspect of the Country—This district may be safely pronounced to be a reclaimed swamp and jungle, situated at the bottom of the hill territory to the east, and nearly over against the head of the Bay of Bengal, down which rush mighty rivers, which meet and confluent and proceed to the Bay. The general level of the whole district is more than ordinarily low ; the soil is consequently as moist as can be conceived, and extremely well fitted for rice cultivation, propagative of a rank and luxuriant vegetation wherever neglected, which, if continued for any

length of time, grows into impassable jungle. The country is intersected by numerous petty khalls and nullahs, hardly wholly dry during any part of the year. In the rainy months, the greater part of the district is laid under water ; the khalls, &c. overflowing their banks, and craft of even pretty large dimensions sailing through their magnified streams. In the villages, the people move from one house to another in canoes, and traverse over the corn-fields in every direction, without injury to the crop. In dry weather, the water recedes from the fields to lower levels, to the beds of khalls and nullahs ; but even then, the spectator though he may view with pleasure the widespread greenness of the scene, here and there broken by meandering streams, the numerous topes of village fruit trees, and scattered and tree-obscured cottages of the community, will not find at his rising wish for a quiet walk among the fields, the means of such locomotion at command, unless he would like to break the continuity of his vision of the prospect before him by coming into contact with cold clay, puddle, leeches and all the realities of a rice-growing, unfoaded *maidan.*

Sudder Station and Principal Places of note.—The Sudder station of Comilla is a straggling town, thinly populated, and situated on the banks of the narrow Gomutty. It has neither abundance of tradesmen, nor of rich residents. The inhabitants are composed principally of the amlahs of Government offices, and of those who have business to transact in those offices. It is said that the town has lost in its importance and population upon the creation of the independent jurisdiction at Noacolly, and the separation of the pergunnah's trade appertaining thereto. If this be true, it is the more confirmatory of the unfitness of Comilla, in a commercial point of view. The Gomutty is a shallow river, with a remarkably tortuous course, which

renders its navigation tedious and unprofitable, if not impracticable for boats of reasonable burden, except in the rainy season. Judging from recollection, the town is of an oblong shape, the dawk road running through its centre. On both sides of this road, are ranges of *moodees* and other shopkeepers' huts, and the bazar is held in the middle. There are several *pucka* buildings and bungalows, besides those occupied by Government officers, in the town, and among its residents may be noticed Dr. Row and Mr. Courjon, the former a medical gentleman previously in the East India Company's service, who has turned a landholder and trader; the latter is a French gentleman, who has risen from a very small beginning to great eminence, and holds extensive farms from Government. A large number among its resident shopkeepers consists of Marwaree and Buxar *Khottahs*. They are mostly cloth merchants. This is an enterprising class of people, and appears to have overspread themselves in most parts of Bengal, occupying a forward station, to the prejudice of the tame and spiritless natives of the country.

Mogul Merchants—Though the Marwaree and Buxar shopkeepers above noticed, generally supply Europe cloths, chintz, lace, silks and similar other articles, this station is occasionally visited by Mogul merchants, who combining in themselves the business of pedlars and of the boxwallahs of Calcutta, sell all kinds of articles of miscellaneous comfort, such as Europe and Gazeepore perfumes and oils, musical boxes, Europe and Benares toys, shoes, buttons, gloves, garters, stockings, knives, paper, quills, Cabool fruits, wines, spirits, (these secretly) and other similar knick-knacks. These people move about from one station to another, in the neighbourhood, such as Sylhet, Mymunsing, Noacolly, and draw a profit of cent. per cent. The gentlemen of the station, however, jointly employ a

boat, which constantly makes trips to Calcutta to bring their necessary supplies.

In appearance the station is kept very neat and clean, the roads are in good order, and no masses of jungle or low vegetation are to be seen. There are several very large tanks and *deegis*, which during the rains are brimful of water, and have a fine appearance. But it is a great pity that their water is not generally fit for drinking. There are only two tanks of good water, and these are used by the principal Natives and Europeans of the place.

Principal Places—Correctly speaking, many of the Mofussil village stations exhibit far more activity in trade, and the busy hum of population, mercantile and labouring, than may be observed at the Sudder station, notwithstanding that the latter, as the seat of authority, attracts as to a nucleus, the most respectable people from all parts of the district. Witness Hajigunj, Pachpokeria, and Dawdkundy. The two latter places are not unimportant rice marts. At Hajigunj, Chundpore, Mohbutpore, considerable sales of betel-nut are effected. Besides those mentioned, there are many other rice marts ; viz., Ahargunj, and Jaffergunj. In Pergunnah Serail, there are many places where good cloth is manufactured. Luckipore is the name of an extinct cloth factory of the Honorable Company, once very considerable, situated towards the south-west of the district, but I believe beyond, though just touching its jurisdiction.

Rivers and Rivulets—The Megna, the Gomutty, the Dakatia, the Dhonagodee, the Muchookhalee, Bural, Sitassia, &c. &c.

It is worthy of notice, that a comparatively important local improvement can be effected at little or no expense in the course of the river Gomutty, at a place about twenty miles from Comilla, where the river taking a circuitous

course of nearly five hours' journey by water, passes by the same place again. The space between the two beds of the river in dry weather may be about forty yards, but when the rains set in, about ten yards only of a narrow slip of land is visible, which occasions so much difference. The junction between the two streams, therefore, may be most easily effected, only beneficially to its navigators, but also to the Zemindars and Government, who will have in a short time the whole deserted bed of the river form a fertile and extensive chur.

Roads, facilities for Trade, &c.—The Sudder station has been already noticed as ill-calculated to be a flourishing place of trade. It is hard to say, what were the reasons for its selection as the seat of Mofussil authority, when its situation is neither centrical, nor commands good conveyance by water. The other stations already noticed, as showing comparatively considerable commercial activity, possess generally good facilities by water for conveyance of goods. Rivers excepted, the district is woefully devoid of Mofussil roads. Though quite unlike Chittagong in this respect, this district, like the other, hardly exhibits a single cart or bullock to be had for hire for the carriage of goods.

But so badly off is the whole district in respect to not only public, but even *village* roads, that living apart the rainy months, when people go from one place to another in canoes, a stranger will find it difficult in the dry months of the year to trace his way, go wherever he may, throughout the Mofussil. The only form in which the village roads (if roads they can be called,) are found, is in foot-paths, which are generally so narrow, from overhanging and encroaching jungle, that a palkee can hardly make its way unimpeded. There are no village pools, (bamboo bridges cross over nullahs,) and the nullahs must be wad-

ed through wherever occurring. But what is most curious of all is, that these footpaths often wind through the private yards to the houses of the villagers ; and a stranger in the district is surprised to be thus wending his way, sometimes obstructed by opposition from the alarmed house-holders, and often from the cones and corners of such domiciles, hindering the free passage of the traveller's conveyance.

These observations do not apply to the dawk road, which runs from Dacca to Chittagong, &c.

Seasons:—The seasons in this district, unlike Chittagong, are not very marked, the atmosphere being generally moist throughout the year, except the summer months, when it is *miasmatic*. During the winter months, the cold is not greater than at Chittagong, though the geographical situation of the place is, I believe, in a somewhat higher degree of northern latitude. The rainy months are excessively moist.

Climate and Diseases—From what has been observed in preceding paragraphs, it may be easily inferred, that the climate is not the best. In the first place, it is extremely damp, rendering residence in the first floor of a cutcha-built house highly dangerous. A cold, moist, impalpable vapour constantly rises from the ground, in all seasons, when not actually raining, in which case the atmosphere is worse. Except the regular cold months, the exhalations from the ground are generally charged with *malaria*, the abundant source of the most malignant fevers. These are the characteristics of the atmosphere and the climate. But constituted as society is, and, as but little art is exhibited in their domestic life, in respect to the adoption of safeguards against the causes of disease, it is proper that some notice should be taken of the water drunk by the community. In Europe and other civilised countries within the

temperate and frigid zones, where from natural causes liquid element is not generally found in a state to do of itself any positive harm to the human body, if drunk unmixed with liquor or spirit, geographers rarely take notice of water in noticing the climate of a place as affecting the health of its inhabitants. In countries under the torrid zone, "where streams run turbid from their source," and particularly in India, "hawa and panee," or "aub and hawa," are immemorially and characteristically the first points of enquiry in regard to a place, influencing as they do in the most positive manner the state of health and sickness in a community, wherefrom the general absence of good houses, entire dressing, and the non-use of filtered or purified water, the evils of an inclement atmosphere and unwholesome water are least counteracted. These remarks strictly apply to this district, where good water is hardly to be had, from the liability of all tanks to be overflowed in the rains, and thus being thoroughly impregnated with decomposed vegetable matter from the plains. Filtering apparatus of any kind is not in vogue, being unknown, and the people drink the "unsophisticated element" in the state in which it is procured; the only precaution observed by the fastidious few, being a simple boiling, or singeing the water with a red hot iron. But the first process so far from precipitating the vegetable matter, makes the water worse, for it assumes a yellowish tinge, in taste like a decoction, and the intrusive matter remains in full solution. Bad water, therefore, is the certain and prolific source of complaints of the bowels, such as indigestion, diarrhoea, dysentery; and thus give birth to various acute diseases. The dampness of the atmosphere is a constant check to perspiration; bad humours rapidly accumulate, the blood runs cold, and rheumatism, gout, elephantiasis, attack the victim of the cli-

mate. The atmosphere, again, heavily charged with *malaria*, scatters fevers, spleen, and other concomitant evils. Rheumatic complaints, or as they are termed *russ*, are so common, that most people so afflicted, prefer having a "*gul*," that is, a putrid sore in some part of their body to carry off the superfluous humours which, without such a vent, would soon exhibit themselves in some dangerous shape or other. Fevers are likewise "*tame*" complaints, being so general, and so tenacious against cure, that they are regular visitors with most people, who otherwise eating and drinking like other hale men, on perceiving their fevers approach, quietly leave off what they might have been doing, and covering themselves up with a blanket, retire (to converse with their visitor?) to some corner, or lay themselves down to sleep. Cholera, that frightful disease, is rather unfrequent, except in the months of June and July.

The people of this district, as a corrective against bad water, use large quantities of long pepper, and in cases of fever, drink *dhye* and other like articles. On them, the effect of the climate, though not certainly lenient, is still mitigated. But a native of Western Bengal where long pepper is not much in fashion, can never bear up against the climate. On the European constitution, its ill-effects are not so rapidly perceptible, from obvious causes. We use "flesh and drink wine," said a fellow labourer of this race to the writer of these drafts, when in the jungles of Mohbutpore, "and there our safe-guard lies."

Alimentary Plants and fruits.—This is decidedly a rice-growing country, and rice therefore comes the first under this head. Its growth is most abundant, and includes the superior kinds. It is largely exported. Urhar dhall is also abundant, and of a superior kind. Sweet potatoes, *belatee* and *desee codoo*, plantains, tamarinds, wood apples,

brinjals, melons, jack and mangoes, *papyas*, plums, and guavas, all these are found everywhere; but only small quantities of ginger, long pepper, or turmeric. Pulwul grows jungly, and is not in use, being foolishly deemed poisonous. So was *urhar dhall* a few years before, the people making flax of the rind alone, and throwing away the corn. No sugar canes, except at the Sudder station. Limes, beans, and onions, scarce. Cocoanuts are grown in small orchards, but not largely. A superior kind of betel-nut plantation is generally reared towards the south-west part of the district in Thanah Jubgibagrah and its neighbourhood, in Mohbutpore, Singergaon, Chandpore, Hajigunj and Ahargunj. Betel-nuts are exported. The *Huritoky* tree grows wild.

Plants used in the Arts.—No cotton is grown in the district, but some are brought from the Rajah's hill territory. Wild hemp grows luxuriantly without the care of man. *Paut* and flax are not attended to, but would easily succeed. Little of tobacco, or rye, or mustard. Rattans abundant.

Staple—Rice.

Soil—Generally rich, and adapted for wet cultivation. Varieties few.

Mineralogy—I have no information under this head. Geology ditto; but it is said, in the Mynamutty hills, gigantic petrifactions have been found. The Hindoos declare these petrifactions to be connected with some mythological story, which I have forgotten. Some say, they are the remains of an extinct race of huge animals. It is generally believed, however, that they were originally trees. I have seen one or two specimens, which did not appear like fossil bones, though somewhat resembling them. Be that as it may, I am no judge on this point.

Population—I have no data to fix the population of this

district, but from my experience in the Mofussil, I have reason to believe, that it by no means contains the general average of people. When proceeding from Chittagong to Comilla, on official duty in February 1840, I was struck with the strong disparity exhibited in this respect as soon as I had crossed the river Fenny, and set my foot on the shores of Tippera. Along the whole of my way, no less than about fifty miles, the appearance of people was scarce, and their habitations scattered and far asunder; to say nothing of the large tracts which lay totally waste and uninhabited. When in the prosecution of my duty, I proceeded to the south-west part of this district, the same observation was forcibly brought to my recollection. A *haut* is a place, where the largest number of people congregates in the Mofussil. Of the multitudes I had observed in a single *haut* in a Chittagong village, of which there were three or four within a mile, I did not find one-fourth the number in a *haut*, held only twice a weak in a village in Tippera, and where there was no other *haut* within four miles. Coolies are hardly to be had for hire; and bearers, &c. must be sought for from a distance. These facts indubitably prove the thinness of population in this district.

Classes of People and Character—Hindoos and Moselmans; nothing peculiar. The jungly tribes live beyond the jurisdiction of the district. A few of them visit the Sudder station to sell and buy. They bring cotton in the pod, and a kind of coarse striped cloth, of which purdahs may be formed.

Manners and Customs—Characteristics.—Nothing particular is observable under this head. But it may be generally stated, that a slight difference is perceptible in the pronunciation and intonation of the people, different from those of the people of Chittagong, and verging rather closely to those of the people of Dacca, the principal town

in Eastern Bengal. Under the head of customs, one thing is remarkable ; viz., that people of rank, who want to testify their piety and religion, do not, as is usual elsewhere, build and dedicate temples, but cause them to be erected after their death over their remains, which are *buried* in the spot selected for this purpose. These jungles are called *muths*.

Cost of Living and price of Labour—Although the population is thin, the price of labour is within the average of neighbouring districts. Though producing but a small variety of articles, "the staff of life" is abundant and cheap, as also some kinds of pulse and vegetables. These obtained, the necessities of the labouring classes are satisfied. Add to this, by way of luxury, abundance of milk and ghee and *dodhee*. Verily in these points, Tippera is "a land flowing with milk and honey." Milk is to be had at forty seers per rupee in the villages, and honey-combs are not uncommon in the jungles. As to other articles of consumption, they are scarce, and sold at high prices. Flour, for instance, sells at eight seers per rupee, and is procurable only at the Sudder station.

Revenue and Judicial Administration and Police—There is one Collector, one Magistrate, and one Judge, at the station. Till lately, and that for the purpose of aiding in the measurement and settlement duties, no uncovenanted Deputy Collector was appointed to this district. The Magistrate has twelve Thanahs, and as many Darogahs under him, to preserve peace in the Mofussil. I forget the names of the Thanahs. There are one Principal and one Sudder Ameen, and about twelve Munsiffs, for the disposal of civil business. In general, business is by no means heavy in this district. The state of crime is low.

Criminal Jails—It is worthy of notice, that the Magistrate encourages the salutary practice of making the cri-

minal prisoners pursue in Jail the same course of labours, as manufacturers or artisans, as they did before. The materials are supplied by the Government, and the articles made by them are sold, and the surplus proceeds go I believe, under some restrictions, to the pockets of the prisoners.

They are also allowed, wherever any person wishes so to employ them, to prepare and burn bricks, for which there is a rate fixed by the Magistrate. In a station like Comilla, this is a very praise-worthy proceeding, independently of its expediency in other respects.

The Branch School at the station dates its existence but a few years back, not being older I believe than 1838. The school house is a pucka building, adapted to contain about 150 boys, with garden ground, out-offices, and a spacious tank. The attendance does not muster more than fifty boys. These are not all of the district, but contain a large complement of the children of the residents of the station, and who, for various reasons, often absent themselves, prejudicially to themselves and the school, During the months of June and July in particular, a large number keep themselves away on account of the epidemic fevers, &c, which prevail during those months, so much so, that the school is closed for days. The headmaster is a Mr. Keppon, a gentleman, who it would appear, was formerly in the service of the Raja of Tippera. The junior teacher is baboo Callydoss Mojomdar, an eleve of the Hindoo College; there is besides, a Pundit attached to the school, to teach, I suppose, Bengali to the students. I am sorry I cannot give my testimony to the progress made by the boys in English, as I had not the pleasure, during my residence at the station, of seeing them examined.

The experimental Garden at this station deserves some notice. I do not know how long this garden has been in

existence, but at the time I was at Comilla, I observed several patches of ground cultivated with superior sugar cane. The cultivation has fully succeeded, and will, it is hoped, serve to introduce the sugar cane into the Mofussil, where it is hardly grown. The cultivation of superior kinds of articles of value, as tobacco or cotton, should be likewise attempted, for the benefit of the country. Perhaps cotton, as being largely cultivated in the hill territories, may deserve earlier attention. The Secretary is the Civil Assistant Surgeon. Dr. Foaker.

The Animal Kingdom.—The jungles are full of tigers, wild hogs, and buffaloes. Baboons, monkeys, deer, squirrels, otters, porcupines, and jackals are also numerous.

Domestic Animals.—Plenty of cows, oxen and goats, but few buffaloes. Hens and ducks are common, but have nothing remarkable. As a nut for the curious, it may be mentioned, that a strong belief prevails among the people, that no entirely white cow or ox is to be found on the other side of the Megna. It originates in a mythological story.

Serpents.—Various and numerous. Some are large sized, and look something like boas, beautifully spotted. They attack young calves, dogs and old cows by the legs. Some are so cunning, as to catch hold of the nimble monkey. One was shot while I was at Mohutpore, (it had half swallowed a monkey in a tree) by Lieut. P. the Surveyor.

Reptiles.—Alligators very commons, Spiders, lizards, &c,

Fishes.—In abundance, of all kinds, and cheap as dross.

Insects and Birds.—The common kinds generally to be seen, but I do not know of any thing peculiar about them.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF TIPPERA.—No. 2.

The Raja of Independent Tippera.

By Baboo Gobind Chunder Bysak.

[Read on the 11th August, 1841.]

The territory belonging to this Raja, consists of a long range of hills and forests to the east of zilla Tippera, and are held independent of the British Government. Without pretending, (unable as I am to refer to maps,) to define their extent or boundaries, I may remark, that these jungles are very extensive, and seven or eight days' journey long. The inhabitants go by different names, and are I suspect, (some tribes of them) naked savages. They pay a kind of poll tax to the Rajah, whose revenue is said to be a worth a lac and fifty thousand rupees per annum. The revenue. I understand, is assessed much in the same manner as among the Jumoahs of Chittagong. The Rajah has a zamindary, Pergunnah Noornugur in the zilla, paying a revenue of about a lac of rupees, and is in that way under the jurisdiction of the Company's courts. The name of the present incumbent is Maharaja Krishna Manykyo. He has a brother and a large family, including some Ranees. He is very fond of the chase, and practises Hindoo devotional austerities, keeping bramin priests in his pay. I hear nothing of the mode of his administration, except that all civil and criminal cases are heard by him in person, and his awards executed by his people, whether affecting property, person, or life. For the purpose of administering affairs of inferior importance, and settling disputes, and so forth, among his jungle subjects, as also to manage his zemindary in the zilla, and hear the complaints of his ryots in his capacity of a Company's zemindar, the Rajah has a *cutchery* at comilla, in which his

second and third dewans preside. The first dewan is Mr. Wise, the Indigo Planter, and the third is Krishna Chunder Roy, late Serishtadar of the Collector's office, dismissed, but a man of ability. I forget the name of the second.

The existence of this and similar petty Rajahs in their independent capacity, ruling and exercing sovereign authority within their respective territories, which are closely surrounded by the East India Company's dominions, without exhibiting in their administration, or the condition of their subjects, any change for the better, is a curious fact, worthy of examination. Here we have the Rajah of Tippera ; in Cuttack there is the Rajah of Moinbhunj and of the Mogulbundy territories ; and Up-the-country, in Hindoostan, there are others, whose political existence, however insignificant, has been confirmed by the forbearance of their all-powerful British neighours, and who have been pursuing unmolested, equally amidst the din of war around, or the slow course of peace, the even tenor of their way, as if like eaglets in the crevice of a mountain, unconscious of the roaring storm. Without any cares for the safety of their territory, with long course of time before them, and with every reason to be convinced of the benefit of cultivating peace, and encouraging the promotion of arts and manufactures, these Rajahs, it would appear, have, with I am afraid but few exceptions, everywhere neglected their advantages, and remained nearly in their primitive position. It is true that in some instances they have introduced the forms of courts, collectors, and magistrates, and fixed punishments for crimes and awarded them ; but excepting these forms, nothing else is perceptible ; the spirit of improvement is yet unfelt, and their subjects, no better than they were before. The Rajah of Tippera in particular, though he maintains an establishment of dewans at the Sudder station, has no

officer of similar intelligence and capacity in his own capital Agratallia, except, perhaps, for sometime a European gentleman of the name of Keppon, who was invested with the title of Captain. The hills continue to present the same appearance of jungle and waste, and their vallies are equally destitute of the marks of human handicraft. Everywhere the tiger and buffaloe pursue their destructive course, within the limits of their natural domains ; while man, who associates with them, has left every sign of his fellowship with his civilised species, who dwell in the plains. While these are the characteristics of these petty Rajaships, independent of their evil, their existence in the centre of the Company's dominions is an evil to their neighbourhood. They become, as it were, a safe receptacle for all abandoned and desperate characters, who rush out upon the poor people in their immediate vicinity, owing subjection to the British Government, and plundering them on a sudden, make a rapid and secure retreat. Thus the neighbourhood of two opposite extremes, of cultivated villages with the wilderness, and of peaceful husbandmen with jungly savages, instead of producing mutual benefit, results in unmixed evil.

The British Government, so solicitous for the education of its subjects, particularly the land-holding community, have taken no steps, that I am aware of, to regenerate these petty Rajahs, many of whom are also their Zemindars, and who exercise sovereign jurisdiction, "Pity it is, 'tis true." It is useless perhaps to lament the evil, when the same is observable in respect to the other tributary and pensionary princes, equally under the control of the Honorable Company. I therefore leave the subject, perchance, to call forth the sympathy of others, and the advocacy of abler pens than my humble goosequill.

The 12th September, 1840.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF CHITTAGONG—No. 3

BABOO GOBIND CHUNDER BYSAK

[Read on the 11th August, 1841.]

The Cornofully and the trade of the Capitany.—The ancients had certainly some shew of reason, when they magnified rivers into deities, and conferred on them those honors, which in their opinion, belonged soley to celestial beings.

The Ganges and the Bromopotre in India, are examples of the same style of veneration. Though the Cornofully has not been, to my knowledge, classed among rivers of that kind, the people of Chittagong revere it in an equal degree.

There is no doubt, that as in barbarous ages extraordinary abilities in war, medicine, or legislation have conferred on their owners a name among the tutelary divinities of their country; trees, rivers, springs, and fountains have alike had their share of the credulity and veneration of the superstitious, for actual or supposed properties for benefiting mankind. As regards the present subject, it is certain, that independent of the healthfulness, fertility, and wealth which mark its course, it is the spontaneous high road to the jungles from the plains, and in that way the source of widespread benefit to the people, as I shall try to put on record in this place.

I have elsewhere observed, that Chittagong abounds both in hills and jungles, and that the former are the scenes of the labors of the Jamoahs. In the prosecution of their agricultural pursuits, these people cut down the jungle on the hills and hillsides during the dry season. As soon as sufficiently dried, the low underwood is burnt up

to manure the soil, but the big timber is left to dry and harden. When the rains begin to pour, the hill torrents dash down and carry along with them innumerable pieces of timber, large and small, including an immense quantity of bamboos, rotten wood, &c. &c. &c. cut down before, or torn up by their roots, by the force of the rushing waters. This is the time for the timber people to be on the alert. Those who are fortunate enough to secure contracts for the supply of timbers, or those who have some spare money in hand, loose no time in hiring a small company of labourers armed with axes, and having equipped themselves thus, they set out for the jungles in the dinghees of the country. Reaching the hills, they scour in all directions, and pick up the best trees they can. Much of their work is prepared beforehand by the Jumoahs, who now find a good opportunity of disposing of their wood. A great deal of timber also may be picked up floating down the tide, without any proprietor. Each party collects and forms into rafts as much as it can. This done, they cut down bamboo and straw, and put them above the rafts ; and then they float themselves with their rich booty to their different destinations.

Thus with but little labour, and less money, any one who chooses, may be master of a good exchangeable and and useful commodity, which puts money into his pocket, and brings comfort into his home and hearth.

At the same time, the villagers on both sides of the Cornofully, in the neighbourhood of the jungles, who are not hardy enough to go to the hills, are not idle spectators of the vast quantity of wood floated by the tide before their eyes. They cruise about in canoes, and collect the inferior kinds of timber, which are used for the construction of rude cottages, posts, &c., or for consumption as fire wood. Go where you please, the banks of the Cor-

nofully everywhere present piles of wood heaped up by industrious hands, as far as the eye can reach. Thus the Cornofully becomes the source of considerable benefit to the poor people of Chittagong; putting within their reach the means for the annual repair of their cottages, the daily consumption of their ovens, and occasional sale of fuel at the *hauts* when pinched through necessity.

The leaders of wood-cutting parties above described, are called *Capitongs*, I suppose from a corruption of the Portuguese word, *Capitaine*. They make considerable profit by their trade, and there are some I know, who from little beginnings, have become heads of villages and *matubbars*.

The successful prosecution of this business, and the sudden fortune attending it, has served considerably to thin the jungles on the hills nearest the cultivated parts of their district. The descriptions of wood found, are in named as follows; viz.,

Toon, fir, gambier, sorutbet, checkarossy and tilsor. Teak is scarce, and mohogany and other valuable kinds of wood, hard and susceptible of polish. Gambier is strong and heavy, but coarse. Tilsor is a species of wood, the trees of which are found of the largest dimensions, and are used for the construction of *doongahs*, which are cut out of a single piece, the width averaging from not less than two to three and four cubits in the centre. Sorutbet is a good species of wood, red and useful.

Rangonia, the 15th September, 1838.

STATE OF HINDOOSTAN UNDER THE HINDOOS—No. 4.

By Baboo Peary Chand Mittra

[Read on the 8th September 1841]

REVENUE AND POLICE

Sources of Revenue.—The principal sources of revenue to the kings of Hindoostan were a share of grain and all other agricultural produce as well as that of cattle, and several other commodities; taxes on the personal profits of the mercantile class, a very small annual imposition on shopkeepers and petty traders; market duties, town duties, sea customs, and duties on great roads.* Among these different descriptions of the royal income, raised no doubt for the purposes of the State, the land tax was considered the principal source of emolument, celebrated as India has ever been as an agricultural country; and I shall, therefore, proceed to offer a brief exposition of our revenue system, and endeavour to shew what were its probable effects.

Constitution of a Village.—Every kingdom was divided into a number of *deshes*, (towns,) each of which consisted of several *grams*, or villages. In every village, "comprising some hundreds or thousands of arable land," there existed an agricultural corporation, consisting of a *gramadhikar*, a *gramleykhuk*, and of one of the following twelve classes, whose company and assistance were thought of great importance, for the purposes of agriculture and the accommodations of a rural life :—1. Carpenter; 2. Blacksmith; 3. Shoemaker; 4. Mhar or the Watchman; 5. Cord-

*Menu vii. 130 to 132 chap. x. 120; and Elphinstone's India, p. 40 and 140.

wainer ; 6. Potter ; 7. Barbar ; 8. Washerman ; 9. Priest of the temple ; 10. Schoolmaster and the Astrologer ; 11. Bard or village poet ; and, 12. Distributor of the water.* In the fifth Report of the Committee on East India Affairs, dated 1812, it is said, that in addition to the above, there were a boundary-man, a cow-keeper, a doctor, and a dancing girl. We find that the *Mhar*, or watchman, "was the guardian of boundaries, public and private ;" and the establishment of the other classes of persons, which *was only local*, was evidently a matter of subsequent improvement, as was the *Alawtay* institution of the Marhattas.† It is not probable, that every village corporation was composed of each of the twelve enumerated officers,‡ or that their number could have been the same in all places, or equal at all times.

The *gramadhikar*, who was the headman of the village, (which appointment was originally made by the people, and became hereditary after being confirmed by the king,) was the representative of the village and the State. He had to perform the duties of a collector and of a magistrate. In the former capacity, he saw that all the lands within his jurisdiction were properly occupied and cultivated ; that no part of his "petty republic," which had been before brought under tillage was suffered to become waste ; that none under such circumstances evaded the payment of rent ; that lands were allotted to new settlers ; that revenue due to the State by the cultivators was duly collected. He also held out such encouragement to the agricultural improvement of his village, as lay in his power. He discharged his duties in a fixed place, and in all matters concerning public interest, "he used to have a

*Brigg or Land Tax, p. 36.
†Brigg, p. 36.
‡Elphinstone's India, vol. i. p. 124.

free consultation with the villagers."* In addition to his duties as collector, head farmer, commissioner in petty debts, and magistrate, he had to convene *punchayets*, for the purpose of settling disputes, and such other matters as were cognizable before that tribunal. The appointment of men to compose the *punchayet* was made from that class of men who were best qualified to try the case to be submitted to their decision. When the case was of a commercial nature, the jurymen were appointed from the mercantile class, and in like manner, the selection of arbitrators was made, "according to the religion or occupation of the parties."† The *gramleyhkuk* was the accountant of the village ; and kept "an exact register of the quantity of land held by each ryot ; the part of it cultivated ; his means of cultivation ; the actual produce ; the proportion he was entitled to receive from the crop, whether by agreement or by usage ; the shares actually received from him on the payments made by him ; as well as an account of other transactions in the village that respected the tenures under which the lands were held."‡ This officer, whose accounts were of a minute and detailed nature, and could always be seen, served as a check on the *gramadhikar*, and whenever any dispute arose regarding any land in the village, his evidence was of great importance in coming to a correct conclusion. The duties of all the other village officers, with the exception of the *mhar*, (of whom I shall speak afterwards,) are denoted by their names. The *gramadhikar*, the *gramlekhuk*, as well as the other officers received a contribution from each cultivator, and were allowed the occupancy of lands free of rent by the Govern-

*Elphinstone's India, vol. i. p. 122.

†Selection of Papers from the Records of the East India House, Judicial, vol. iv. p. 121.

‡Fifth Report, p. 84.

ment, as their remuneration. Mr. Elphinstone has stated, that the artisans had likewise a fee, which "was generally a handful or two out of each measure of grain." The description which has been given of a township by that author in his "India," is concise and graphic, and the quotation of it here will give a better idea of it than I can afford. "A township is a compact piece of land, varying in extent, inhabited by a large community. The boundaries are accurately defined and jealously guarded. The lands may be of all descriptions; those actually under cultivation, and those neglected; arable lands never yet cultivated; and land which is altogether incapable of cultivation. These lands are divided into portions, the boundaries of which are carefully marked as those of the township; and the names, qualities, extent, and proprietors of which are minutely entered in the records of the community. The inhabitants are all assembled in a village within the limits, which in many parts of India is fortified, or protected by a little castle or citadel. Each township conducts its own internal affairs. It levies on its members the revenue due to the State; and is collectively responsible for the payment of the full amount. It manages its police, and is answerable for any property plundered within its limits. It administers justice to its own members, as far as punishing small offences and deciding disputes in the first instance. It taxes itself, to provide funds for its internal expenses; such as repairs of the walls and temple, and the cost of public sacrifices and charities, as well as of some ceremonies and amusements, on festivals."

Ten Villages constituted a Town.—Ten such villages as have been described, constituted a *Desh* (town), which was placed under the superintendence of a *deshadhikar*, assisted by *deshleykhuk*, both of whom were "usually conciliated by the villagers, by assignments of land from each, and were

paid by the government a certain percentage on the collections." As the *gramadhikar* had the management of his *gram*, so the *deshadhikar* exercised his control over the affairs of his *desh*. It was the duty of the *deshleykhuk* to receive all accounts from the *gramleykukhs* subject to his jurisdiction, and present abstracts of them to the king in council.

Ancient Revenue Divisions.—According to Menu, there were "lords of 10 towns, lord of 100 towns, and lords of 1000 towns," traces of which fiscal divisions "are still to be found, especially in the Deccan;"* but it appears to me, that such arrangements could have suited only populous and extensive countries, and there can be little doubt but that they were superseded by the less complicated system of revenue management by the *gram* and *deshadhikar*, which though of comparatively modern organization, was, it will appear, universally adopted.

Historical Notices of the Village Officers, &c.—The village and the district officers of whom we have spoken, are still to be found in the exercise of their authorities, but under different appellations in all the parts of Hindoostan, which were, or are, governed by Hindu kings. In Ceylon they are called Vidan (*gramadhiker,*) Lecam (*gramleykhuk,*) Desaves and Adigars (*deshadhikars*). In the northern Circars they are called Reddy and Naidoo. Mr. Stirling in his account of Cuttack, says "according to the uniform system of India, Orissa was divided into grams, townships, or village societies. The larger revenue allotments, or circles of villages, known to the Hindoos of Orissa, were denominated *khund* and *bise* or *bishi*, words meaning literally, a portion or division. Each of these was under the management and control of two descriptions of revenue offi-

*Menu, vii. 152-120, and Elphinstone's India, vol. i. pp. 117 and 476.

cers. The officer vested with police and revenue functions is the *khund adipate. Bishwya* or *bisoee*, (words signifying chief of a division,) who was the principal man, and the *bhoi mul* of the karun or writer caste, who had the more particular charge of keeping all the accounts and registers connected with the land. These discharged the same offices in their villages as the superior officers did in regard to their circle of villages." With respect to the land tenures in the Nizam's dominions, Col. Briggs, who for several years resided there, states, that they are of a like nature, and the "Hindu local officers are everywhere present." The Marhatta country on the west of the Nizam's dominions exhibits the same picture as regards its fiscal constitution and police. Mr. Elphinstone in his Report, says, "A turf is composed of an indefinite number of villages. It is under no particular officer ; several turfs make a Pergunnah, which is under a *Desmook*, who performs the same functions towards the Pergunnah as the Potail towards the village. He is assisted by a *Despandia*, who answers to the *Koolcurney*, or village registrar. It is universally believed in the Marhatta country, that the Desmooks, Despandias, &c. were all officers appointed by some former government ; and it seems probable, that they were the revenue officers of the Hindu government." We also learn from Col. Sykes' Statistics of Duckun, that all its lands "were classed within some village boundary or other," and that "every village had a constitution for its internal government ; it consisted of a *potail*, or chief, assisted by a *chowqullah* ; the *koolcurnee*, or village accountant, kept the village records and details of assessment and revenue; and there were twelve hereditary village officers, the well known *bara bullvooteh*, whose number was complete, or otherwise as the population was capable of supporting them. All these officers and the chief land owners

formed a village council called *pundieh*, which managed the external and internal relations of the village, whether with respect to raising the government assessment, managing its police, or in settling civil disputes ; excepting in cases where *punchayets* or *juries* of five persons were specifically appointed to arbitrate, by mutual consent of the litigating parties ; and it is somewhat remarkable, that this isolated and internal government has withstood the shocks of dynasties, invasions, rebellions, and the destructive anarchy which have so frequently disgraced the annals of India. A certain number of villages constituted a *naikwaree*, over which was an officer with the denomination of *naik*. Eighty-four villages constituted a *desmookee*, over which was an officer called *desmook* or governor, possibly equivalent to our lord lieutenant of counties ; this officer was assisted by a *desh chowgullah* ; and for the branch of accounts there was a *deshpandeh*, or district accountant and registrar. The links connecting the *desmooks* with the prince, were *sur deshmooks* or heads of the *desmooks* ; they were few in number. It is said there were also *sur despandehs*." Rajastan presents a similar aspect in regard to the points under discussion. The division of its territory into towns, has been noticed since the days of Alexander the great, and "the officers of the townships are the same" as have been before described. Malwa is also constituted of villages, each of which, says Malcolm, "has its regular establishment of hereditary officers, with stipendiary lands attached. The village magistrate and registrar are everywhere found to exist, as also the county magistrate and registrar ; the former here denominated *mandhoi*, and the latter *pandia*." In the northern parts of India, such as Kachar, Assam and Sylhet, proofs of the village community, or *bhyachara*, have been lately found,* and we have therefore not the least

*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, for 1840, p. 824.

doubt in thinking, that this system must have been universal in this conutry.

How business was done in a Village when its Population increased.—The sketch that we have given of the constitution of a *gram*, refers only to its infantine state; but as population increased, an augmentation in the number of men following different crafts and trades, must have taken place, and a community of persons of each class was thus formed, who, like the agricultural corporation, elected a headman or representative from among themselves, and it was through him that all matters connected with the body were settled.

Right in the Soil.—It is evident, from the information that we possess, that the proprietory right in the soil was not in the king, but in the cultivator. The king could only claim a portion of its produce as revenue, but had not the power of selling it. Menu says (Chapter ix. 44) "sages who know former times, consider this earth (Prithiva) as the wife of king Prithi; and thus they pronounce cultivated land to be the property of him who cut away the wood, or *who cleared and tilled it*, and the antelope, that of the first hunter who mortally wounded it." There are also other laws as to the observance of certain forms in the sale or alienation of landed estates.* Colonel Sykes, in his statistics of Dukhun, has observed, that "the proprietory right of the soil was (and is) in the people, and not in the sovereign."† It will also appear from the translation of an ancient inscription, that the land which was granted with some money by Chundro Gupto, "for the endowment of a large tope or *choitya*, and for the support of five ascetics connected with it, was purchased by one of his agents at the legal rate in the current coin of

*Heeren's Asiatic Nations, vol. 3d. p. 347.

†Asiatic Journal, for July 1840.

the time."* It has been further stated by Colonel Sykes, that the piece of ground for a garden to be attached to a Buddist temple, was purchased by king Prasena in 543 B.C., to which fact, Fa Hian, a Chinese traveller, bears testimony. In Malwa, Rajastan, Marhatta country, Orissa, Vignyagur, and other parts of Hindoostan, abundant proofs of the recognition and enforcement of this practice are to be found.† Frequent transfers of land from one hand to another have taken place, which has at all times met the sanction of the king, whose only claim against the agricultural class was confined to a portion of the produce. The emphatic saying of the Bhoomias of Rajpootana ; viz. "Bhogra dhanny raj ho, bhoomra dhanny maj ho—the tax belongs to the king, but the land belongs to me,"‡ expresses the strength of feeling for the ownership of the land, and a clear conception of the royal demand, serving as it does at the same time, as an additional proof of the right in the soil having not existed in the king.

There are a few passages in Menu, (viii. 39 and 243,) which might lead some to think, that the king had the absolute right in the land, but after the explanation which Dr. Wilson has offered on this point,§ such an opinion cannot be fairly formed—"He is not lord of the soil, he is lord of the earth, of the whole earth or kingdom, not of any parcel or allotment of it ; he may punish a cultivator for neglect, in order to protect his acknowledged share of the crop ; and when he gives away lands and villages, he gives away his share of the revenue—no Donee would ever think of following up such a donation by actual occupancy, he would be resisted if he did. The truth is, that

*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. vi. p. 454.

†Brigg on Land Tax, pages 63, 73, 77, 99 and 102.

‡Tod's Rajastan.

§Wilson's edition of Mill, vol. i. p. 205.

the rights of the king are a theory, an abstraction ; poetically and politically speaking, he is the lord, the master, the protector of the earth (Prithivipate, Bhumeswan, Bhumessa) ; just as he is the lord, the master, the protector of men, (Narapate, Nareswara and Nrissa.) Such is the purport of the common title of a king ; but he is no more the actual proprietor of the soil than he is of his subjects ; they need not his permission to buy it, or to sell it, or to give it away, and would be very much aggrieved if the king or his officers were to buy, or sell, or give away the ground which they cultivated."

In conclusion, I beg to add the authority of Col. Tod, who gives a clear and concise exposition of this subject : "the proprietor of the soil, *i. e.* he who redeemed the soil from sterility, is the ryot cultivator, by whom a rent or land tax in kind was paid to the prince. It is this rent, this tax, this tribute of the land, with which the prince enfeoffs ; it is this alone which he alienates or can alienate, because it is this alone over which he possesses dominion."

Rate of Rent, how collected, and the probable effects therefrom.—The rate of rent taken under the Hindu government, was one-eighth, one-sixth, one-twelfth, or in cases of a war taking place, one-fourth part of the crop, according to the differences of the soil, and the labour necessary to cultivate it.* In the time of Rama and Yudistir, the respective kings of Aydhadhya and Indroprastha, one-sixth part of the crop was taken as the revenue of the state, of which we have proofs in Ramayana and Mahabharut.† Dusmanta and Dileepa appear to have taken

* Menu vii. 130, and x. 118.

† *Adharmaḥ sumahābhāga bhabettasya mahīpateḥ |*
yo 'lared valiṣaḍbhāgaṃ na ca rakṣed imāḥ prajāḥ ||

Oh, most fortunate man ! the king who takes one-sixth part of crop as revenue, and does not protect his subjects, is not virtuous.

the same portion.* In Cashmere, Northern Circars, Vignyagur, Tooloova or Canara, one-sixth of the produce was also the share of the royal revenue,† and it will not therefore be a hasty conclusion, if we say that this rate was generally adhered to. That it was increased to one-fourth when wars took place is a statement which appears true, when we recollect that Porus having had to fight with Alexander, levied this tax.

Security given to the Agricultural Class.—Besides a *fixed rate of land tax*, which, to use the words of Lieut. Briggs, was "comparatively light," the agricultural class received every security in the enjoyment of their property, and encouragement to cultivation, owing to great attention having been paid to the creation and preservation of land marks in every village, and to the decision of all boundary questions in a satisfactory way.‡ The Rajahs we have already said, (in No. 2) were much interested in the agri-

Arakṣitāraṃ rājānaṃ valiṣaḍbhāgahāriṇaṃ /
tamāhuḥ sarvalokasya samagraṃ pāpacāriṇaṃ //

The king who takes one-sixth part of crop as reveune, and does not protect his subjects, becomes the recipient of the vice of all men.

The first sloke was recited with several other moral precepts, by some Munis before Rama in the Ashrama of Sharabhanga, and the second was loudly uttered by a Bramin, having been robbed of his cows.

*While Dusmanta was meditating how he could go to the Ashrama of Kunva, where he had seen Sacontala, his facetious courtier Bidoosaka, recommends him to appear there, making the following pretext: *Nibāracchaṣṭhabhāaṃ tābasā me uvaharantutti //* Let the devotees give me one-sixth of the rice growing wild.—*Sacontala*, P. 57.

Dileepa speaking to Kamadhenoo, says, *Oudhasyam icchāmi tavo pabhoktuṃ ṣaṣṭhāṃśa mūrvyā iva rakṣitāyāḥ /* I wish to drink thy milk, as I take one-sixth part of the produce of the protected Earth.—*Raghu 2nd Surga, sloke 66.*

†Brigg on Land Tax.

‡Menu, Chapter viii. 237 to 265 ; and Sykes' Statistics of Dukun, p. 281.

cultural improvement of their country, which they looked up to as the national wealth; and when a husbandman commenced his interesting occupation in the field, no war, whether waged in an adjacent or in a distant place, could even "interrupt his labours." The abundant growth and prosperity of the grain, was a matter of great importance to all classes of people.

How rent was collected, &c.—Land tax was originally collected in kind, and was subsequently commuted into money payment in some places. How far the business of valuation and of collection, in cases where the tax was paid in specie proved a source of oppression or otherwise, it is difficult to express an opinion with any degree of certainty at this distance of time; but it is presumed, that no such grievance could have existed, owing to "the division of the country into townships and village communities, which rendered the business of valuation easy, and protected individuals from exaction."* It has also been maintained, in No. 21 of the British and Foreign Review, (p. 165), that the Hindoo revenue system "is simple, perfectly adapted to the habits of the country, and by which as much revenue can be collected as the ryot ought fairly to pay." I remember having read a warm advocacy of the village system in Westmacott's "Russian Intrigue and Prospects of India," which being not obtainable in Calcutta at present, I cannot quote from the work the arguments on which he builds his conclusion. It, however, appears to me, that the collection in kind, though somewhat troublesome, was less unobjectionable, being free from the uncertainties and the fluctuations of the market, to which the collection in money is subject.

I am not, however, certain, whether this mode of col-

* Wilson's edition of Mill. vol. i. p. 294.

lection suited the state of the country in early ages better than the other; but in the absence of any complaints against it, and on account of its being a more unvarying and certain manner of making payment, it may be presumed, that it must have worked under general approbation. The people knew that they had to pay a fixed rent, and no contributions could be levied against them other than what was allowed by usage. We thus find that agriculture, slow as her progress is when she has to struggle with any physical or political evils, was unrestricted in her career, and bountiful in her gifts on the soil of India.

Population of India, the effect of its Agricultural Prosperity.—As a proof of the continued agricultural prosperity of India in ancient times, we have to notice its thick population, which is evident from the circumstance of its having been studded with an infinite number of cities abounding in the activity of commerce, and from the Rajahs of its different countries commanding, nay having brought into the field immense armies, which is not only mentioned in the Mahabharut and Mahawanso, but in the Greek writings containing accounts of India.* And unless, to use the words of Dr. Vincent, "the produce of the field, the work of the artisan, the city without walls, and the defenceless village were declared sacred and inviolable,—unless, 'those only who used the sword were to perish by the sword,'—unless, the people were free from the rage of exaction,† the busy hum of a thick population could scarcely have reached any ear."

Police.—In each village, which was a "petty republic," there was an hereditary watchman, who was the executive officer in regard to matters connected with police, next to

* Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. vi. p. 30, and Vincent's Commerce of the Ancients, vol. i. p. 82.

† Wilson's edition of Mill, vol. i. p. 320.

gramadhikar, to whom he was of great use, and the mention of the existence of such a functionary is made in the 6th Chapter of Sacontala. The watchman bore different appellations in the different parts of India. "He watches," says Elphinstone, (India, p. 123.) "the crops; is the public guide and messenger; and is, next to the headman, the principal officer of police. In this capacity, he keeps watch at night; observes all arrivals and departures; makes himself acquainted with the character of every individual in the village; and is bound to find out the possessor of any stolen property within the township, or to trace him till he has passed the boundary, when the responsibility is transferred to the next neighbour." With respect to the qualification and efficiency of the watchman, Colonel Munro bears a high testimony:—"There is perhaps," says he, "no race of men in the world who are equally dexterous in discovering thieves. No war or calamity can make them abandon their inheritance. If driven from it, they always return again, and often live in the village when every one has forsaken it. This long and constant residence, together with their habits of life, make them perfectly acquainted with the character, and the means of livelihood of every person in it."* Besides "the establishment of regular patrols and guards," the Rajahs had recourse to the services of spies for expediting the detection of thieves. When murder or any other crime of a heinous nature was committed, a *punchayet* was generally employed by the *gramadhikar* to carry on the investigation, and the report which they transmitted to the king through, I believe the district chiefs, on the guilt or innocence of the party accused, was generally confirmed, and

* Selection of Papers from the Records of the East India House, Judicial, ii. vol. p. 107.

ordered to be enforced accordingly.* For the police of every village, the *gramadhikar* was held responsible, and he had of course the assistance of all the subordinate officers, and of the inhabitants in general, in preserving the peace and order of his "petty republic."

It appears from the account of the Marhatta police, that the district chiefs had the same power of control over the *gramadhikars*, in matters relating to police, as they had in those respecting revenue.† It is difficult to offer any decided opinion as to the merits or demerits of the Hindu police, as my information on this subject is very imperfect; but I perceive, that in addition to native traditions, eulogizing the former state of the country in regard to security of life and property, there are European writers who have come forward to take the same view, though perhaps not to that extent to which the oriental authors go. "The kaveli system, or the Hindu police," says Mr. A. Falconer, "viewed as a branch of the ancient constitution of their government, was doubtless well adapted to the end of its institution in a form of government such as that of the Hindu Rajahs."‡ "There is already an ancient police," says Colonel Munro, in his answers to the queries of the Court of Directors, "which answers every useful purpose, and which requires no other aid unless that of being restored to its former state in some places, where it may have been destroyed by violence. As the whole territory of India is divided into villages, it is evident that if every village is properly guarded by its own hereditary watchman, the whole country is guarded against the depredation of internal thieves or banditti,

* Family Library, British India vol. i. p. 37.

† Selection of Papers from the Records of the East India House, vol. iv. p. 176.

‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 107.

for they cannot remain in it without being discovered." In an article published in the 21st No. of the British and Foreign Review, discussing the merits of Mr. Shore's Letters on Indian Affairs, it is maintained in p. 190, "that to the village police was committed the state of the village, and if held strictly responsible by the dread of losing their hands, they performed their duties admirably well. There was not one person, nor two, nor four to each village; but every member of the families who held the lands was alike employed in the duty, while the heads were alone responsible. They existed proportionately to its size in every village in the country, whether on a high road or not; and in every large town, there was a town police in addition. As far as the foundation went, the native police was excellent, and perfectly adapted to the purpose; where it was deficient, it was in the ability and method to carry it out, by the superintendence of efficient superior officers, so as to make the minute detail of every village applicable to districts and provinces." Again in p. 98, it continues, "the native systems which existed before our rule, might have been bad from the neglect of the previous governments; but wherever they have been continued efficiently, and we could mention many places, they have been found to answer well, and to satisfy the people."

Conclusion.—We thus see from this succinct and imperfect account, that the Revenue and Police of India under the Hindus, were regulated by a village community,—an institution of the most ancient formation, exhibiting in its structure every simplicity, legislative sagacity, congeniality with the habits of the people, and adaptation to purpose, and appearing to have in several respects proved satisfactory in its operation. It is somewhat remarkable, that though this system was in certain points, and in certain places modified with a view to improvement, it will

be found to have suffered supercession in no part of the country, and that wherever it grew, it prospered amidst the change of dynasties and the convulsions of revolutions, strengthening the villagers with one tie of fraternization, and infusing into them an unextinguishable love for their "petty republic," which they were ready at all times to defend from aggression; but when a powerful and unconquerable enemy appeared, and continued to turn its green fields, "smiling with plenty," into a scene of desolation, the sounding a retreat was their only alternative. Let the tumult of conquest and the horror of devastation cease, and they are sure to return with a rapturous heart to enjoy again their "home and hearth."

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF CHITTAGONG

PART IV

BY BABOO GOBIND CHUNDER BYSAK.

[Read on the 13th October, 1841.]

HILL AND JUNGLE TRIBES

Under this head, it is well known Chittagong exhibits several classess of people, more or less reclaimed from their original barbarity. The district however, well and extensively cultivated in the plains, contains tracts of jungle upon its hills, and is bounded by forests on the east, deep and impenetrable, the abode of tigers, elephants and other beasts, where civilization has made no progress at all. Originally a jungly country, akin to Assam and Arracan, the district yet contains the remnants of those savage tribes, who, with the advancing progress of its cultivation, have returned to the latter provinces. The principal of these are, the Jumoahs, the Kookees, the Kheongs, the Droongs, &c. They have their own chieftains, and except paying a kind of poll tax, there are some among them who know no subjection to any subordination to the British Government. These chieftains, so to call them, are, as I understand, only responsible, besides the revenue already mentioned, for any murder or other equally heinous crime, which may be committed by these people upon a resident of the plains, and which may happen to come under the cognizance of the district authorities. In case the occurrence takes place among themselves, the courts of civil judicature have no provision to arrive at a knowledge of of the act, much less to prosecute the offender, and to extend the hand of protection to the sufferer. The govern-

ment, say the people, are satisfied while the chieftains pay the stipulated share of revenue. My information, however, regarding these people is but brief, as I do not pretend to know, or to have seen much about them. Indeed, much like the scholar of Europe, who in suppert of his pretensions to oriental literature, boasted that he had in his possession the genuine Kalilien of the East, I can only say, that in the course of my sojourn in the district, I have been little more than fortunate enough to have had a sight of the Jumoah, and the scenes of his labours, and a snatched glance at the alleged Kookees of the jungles. The Kheongs and Droongs, &c. I have only heard mentioned by name, and suppose they form a branch of the same brotherhood. I shall therefore refrain from speaking about them separately, from what I have to say regarding the Kookees. What I have seen of the Jumoahs is as follows :—

The Jumoahs are a class of Mugs forming a large community. Like the woodcutters of America, the Jumoahs are a wandering people, who cultivate and live on the hills. Their mode of life is peculiar. In the dry months, towards the close of winter, each party chooses a particular hill, or number of hills, whereon to commence operations. Having cut down the large trees and small shrubs, they allow them to wither and dry, removing a part of the large timber, if there be any, which is afterwards taken away by traders. When the rest have become sun-dried, they set fire to them, and you may frequently observe whole ranges of hills on fire in one night. The soil thus burnt and mixed up with the ashes, becomes fertilised and fit for cultivation. Constructing a bamboo hut, or *tong*, upon a suitable spur of the hill, they take advantage of the first fall of rain sufficient to moisten the earth to commence their agricultural operations. This

duty generally devolves upon the females, who first opening the ground with a small spade in one hand, throw therein handfuls of seed, of rice, teel, cotton, maize, Indian corn, marpha, cheenar,* &c. from a large basket slung upon their shoulders, with the other. All these are annual plants, and are harvested as they successsively fructify, or put forth their corn and ripen. While the females are thus engaged, the men employ themselves in carrying the produce of the last year to the market, or in cleaning, carding, and basketing the cotton for the same purpose. Those women, again, who are not busy at the hill cultivation, spin the cotton into threads, and these are woven by the men into clothes, and cut as they use among themselves. Annually shifting their ground, they form a moving society, and are essentially useful in reclaiming the jungle on the hills, with which the district is interspersed. You may frequently see a community of this kind in a manner springing up amidst the forest in hills and valleys, as if spontaneously, with their slight cottages newly built up, their watch-dogs, females and children; the males waging eternal war with the trees and jungle, armed with the heavy *daw*, which they constantly carry about their waist. They are the principal, and I fear the only cultivators of the cotton plant, and from the peasantry of the hills. A large number of these people are the ryots of Kalendee Ranee, widow of Raja Dhurmbux Rhai, a rather distinguished sort of personage, who stood conspicuous among his tribe in Chittagong some years ago for social advancement and manners. Next to his widow, I understand a man of the name of Suttumproo, may be noticed among the hill Mug chieftains. Like the cultivator of the plains, the Jumoahs

*The cheenar and marpha, are a species of melons, large and good-flavoured, in much esteem among the people of Chittagong.

contribute their share to the revenue of government. The mode of assessment is various. It is neither in the poll tax, nor the land tax form, though essentially the former. The tax is levied upon the number of *daws* a Jumoah may command. Each *daw* is taxed, as I am told, at the rate of from five to ten rupees, and upwards. Bachelors, holders of that instrument, are an exempted class ; and so are those who live under the head of a family. The chieftains of the tribe contract farming engagements for the hills ; or as they are called, Kuppan's Mehals, with the government, subject to new adjustment after quinquennial investigations. The quantity of cotton annually produced in the district, is said to be considerable. The quality, however, is coarse. An improved description could be easily introduced, if means were provided for insuring a supply of the necessary seeds. The writer hereof, having in 1838 brought out with him some Fgyptian and other superior cotton seeds from the depository of the Agri-Horticultural Society, had the pleasure of distributing them among some of the Jumoahs, who pronounced the cotton produced from them to be of a far better quality than their own.

The Kookees are a race of people, who live entirely in a savage state, in the hills and jungles to the East of Chittagong. They wear no clothes ; a little slip of rag being girt round the loins of but few. They build their huts on the tops of trees, feeding on all sorts of carrion and garbage. A recent writer, Dr. Spry, having published an account of these people to the world, I cannot do better than give an extract from it in this place, particularly as it is full and detailed.

"The division of Chittagong appertaining to the Eastern portion of the Province of Bengal, has been selected for the depot established for the purpose of taming and

rearing the Company's elephants. The Superintendent of the Stud dispatches men skilled in the pursuit into the neighbouring Blue Mountains in the direction of Ava, who hunt down and secure the valuable animals. Many, however, are born and reared in the Company's establishment. The pursuit of wild elephants in these regions, has brought us acquainted with a race of cannibals, scarcely to be distinguished from the monkeys with which they herd. Were not the information," continues Dr. Spry, "relative to these people so strongly authenticated as to leave no doubt upon the mind of those who desire to make enquiries into this subject, the reader might justly refuse to credit the existence of a race of savages scarcely worthy of the name of man. But having gathered the following particulars concerning them from the able and enterprising officer who holds a staff appointment from the Governm' ,t, as Superintendent of the Stud, I am enabled to offer to the public, as facts, which can be corroborated by the testimony of all who are connected with the elephant depot at Chittagong. The Kookees, as these brutal wretches are called, have, according to the account afforded me by Major Gardiner, protuberant bellies, they are low in stature, with set features and muscular limbs. They speak a dialect peculiar to themselves, and build their village on the boughs of forest trees. They do not appear to have any settled abiding place, but wander from one wilderness to another. When a site fabourable to their purpose has been found, the whole community immediately set to work to collect bamboos and branches of trees, which are afterwards fashioned into pl .tforms, and placed across the lofty boughs of the different trees. On this foundation, the rude grass superstructure is raised which forms the hut. When these sheds are completed, and every family provided with a habitation, the women

and children are taken into their ærial abodes. The men then lop off all the branches within reach of the ground, and having constructed for themselves a rough ladder of bamboos, they ascend the trees by means of this rude staircase, drawing it up after them to prevent the intrusion of strangers, and as a necessary precaution against the encroachment of their four footed companions of the forest. In this manner they repose, floating on the branches of trees and cradled by the wind, partaking more of the savage ferocity of brutes, than the milder characters of man."

The above is a sufficiently horrible picture for a race of savages. But Dr. Spry, in support of his opinion, that the Kookees are cannibals, refers to certain incidents which I quote. They openly boast of their feasts of cannibalism, shewing with the strongest expressions of satisfaction, the bones and residue of their fellow-creatures who have fallen a prey to their horrible appetites. So intent are they in their search after human flesh, that the Superintendent was always obliged to send out the men employed in hunting the elephants armed, and in not fewer than parties of ten. One poor man they unfortunately caught while off his guard, and devoured him almost before his life-blood had congealed in his veins. Attempts had been made to subdue and civilise these people, and one of their head-men was won over and employed by Major Gardiner, at the Elephant depot, but he could not be induced to relinquish his old habits. In a short times, he was detected in the commission of a murder, and was executed by the civil authorities of Chittagong. When the tidings of this man's fate reached the ears of his former associates, they became greatly incensed, and for a long time exerted themselves, happily in vain, to obtain possession of the person of the Superintendent,

who had frequently occasion to cross their path in the execution of his duty. These people, strange as it may appear, are living within 150 miles of Calcutta, the metropolis of British India, and the seat of Government, and yet their existence even is scarcely known by the people who are not in authority ; comparativety little imformation from the woods and jungle of the savage portions of Bengal finding its way to the Calcutta newspapers. The existence of cannibals in India, is a fact only recently established, and many were of opinion, that these races were extinct."

To the above positive statement regarding the cannibalism of the Kookees, it would be idle on my part to say anything in positive contradiction, not having had the opportunity of personally scouring the jungles, and seeing the live-blood of a fellow creature glut the horrid appetite of the brutal Kookees. I shall, however, observe, that Dr. Spry's information anent this point is really new to the people of Chittagong, Mug, Hindu, Mosulman, high or low, townsmen or jungle-cutter, the followers of the elephant hunting excursion. I have consulted the oldest inhabitants, as well as the most intelligent. I have familiarly conversed with the Capitany, whose trade is in the jungles, and with those who have occasionally followed the *hatti khada*, upon this feature of the Kookees, character, and have been equally and invariably disapointed in every quarter in eliciting the smallest particular which would go to stigmatize the Kookee as a man-eater. Every other point of Dr. Spry's lucid description fully corresponds with what all people know and say concerning this race of savages. I am, therefore, the more surprised, that a *discovery* which Dr. Spry, with great *naivete* calls as new to men not in authority, (a phrase which from the tenor of the passage would seem to imply the public of India)

should not have been made by those who from contiguity, and not unfrequent contact, should be the first to be aware of such a characteristic in these remarkable neighbours. However new and novel the fact of their existence may be in other parts of Hindoostan, the people of Chittagong cannot be said to be, or have been, ignorant in this respect. Nor is the Kookee race a rare sight in some parts of that district, so as to render them an object of mere guess and imagination. While the Kookees, however, are thus maintained to be no cannibals, according to my information, they appear to be no better than man-killers. Like the Thugs and Goands, (the latter a hill tribe in Goomsur,) the Kookees are described as entertaining a religious belief in the extreme merit of offering human victims to their horrible deities. This is by no means wonderful. Living within the inclement precincts of the jungles, which are unhealthy without parallel, and brought up without one ray of light, in ignorance, barbarism, and superstition, the Kookee, doubtless esteeming man to be the lord of the created world, conceives a man alone can superlatively satiate the vengeance of the deities, and remove the evils which "flesh is heir to." What then can hinder his uplifted arm against his weaker brother, in the absence of the protective laws of society ? But for this, and this alone, I am convinced the guilt of offering up human sacrifices would have been more widely spread, sorry am I to say it, even among the civilised people of the plains of Hindoostan. This view of the question appears to be confirmed by an occurrence, which took place towards the commencement of the year 1838. This is no other than the notorious case of Joymuni, and others, which excited no inconsiderable sensation in Chittagong. These people were arraigned under the charge of having abetted and participated in the

murder of two travellers in the Rangamutty hill, the residence of Kalindy Ranee, a woman of the Chukma race, who, as the widow of Dhurmbux Rhai, elsewhere mentioned, has under her control a large number of the savage people under notice. This Joymuni is her brother. He had been informed by a certain seer, (Tunoo Fukeer,) of the place, that a large treasure was to be obtained by offering up there human sacrifices to a certain idol. The place of the concealed treasure was foretold, the required number of travellers inveigled, and two of them were cut down, the third escaping, and disclosing the horrid tale of murdr to the civil authorities at Chittagong. Unfortunately for the cause of justice, the crime was not, in the opinion of the highest court of judicature, sufficiently brought home, and the alleged offenders were released.

I would fain conclude this desultory sketch of the jungle tribes of Chittagong, with an earnest wish that it were possible to ameliorate their condition—to thin the forests, which now form their habitation, and to introduce among them, little by little, the habits and customs of civilised life. The Government has recognised the duty of educating its subjects; but it is evident, it will be long ere these nominal and humble tax-payers of the Hon'ble Company are indebted to the ruling authority for the dawn of learning. The missionaries may do something, unless indeed they have lost the zeal which animated them once, when the jungle was no bugbear to their labours. They have long been labouring in the plains of Hindoostan, as it were upon an ungrateful soil, with but indifferent success; but I dare say, these children of nature, if properly awakened to a sense of their condition, will more willingly respond to an invitation to enter into reformed modes of life and existence than those of the people of India, to whom the Missionaries are fruitlessly preaching the Gos-

pel. The Karens of Assam now-a-days, as I am informed, are a race of wild people to whom a Missionary has introduced the welcome light of improvement and knowledge, and the same success has followed similar labours elsewhere in India, among those separate communities of jungly men who are to be found, like the jungle tribes of Chittagong, in the jungles of their districts. I may as well quote here, an instance which fell under my own personal observation while on circuit duty with the Commissioner of the Moorshedabad division. I had the pleasure, in 1836, to visit the Sudder station of Beerbhoom. During the time I stayed there, I observed a large number of natives, brought thither by some calamity, entirely professing the Christian religion. Upon enquiring from several respectable individuals, I was informed, that they were the members of a pretty numerous community, peopling several villages in the Mofussil. It further appeared, that the Missionary gentleman, who has a school in the district, and his predecessor, were alone instrumental towards bringing about this state of things into existence. The converts, some of whom had received their faith from their parents, were reputed as peaceable in character, and fast rising into prosperity, notwithstanding the adverse elements around them. These people were *Saontals*, a race of hill people, between parts of Beerbhoom, Bhaugulpore, Jungle Mehals, and other contiguous districts.

The same agency that has led to good results among the *Saontals*, will doubtless produce similar fruits among the Kookees, Chukmahs, and other jungle tribes of Chittagong.

Rangonia, the 5th Sept. 1838.

A few desultory Remarks on the "Cursory Review of the Institutions of Hindooism affecting the interest of the Female Sex," contained in the Rev. K. M. Banerjia's Prize Essay on Native Female Education.

By Baboo Peary Chand Mittra.

(Read on the 12th January, 1842.)

Preface.—The paper which I have the honor of reading this evening, has been composed from the materials I could gather from books, and the assistance of friends; and as a good deal of information is required to give it a sort of finishing stroke, I was in the first instance disinclined to appear before you as its author. more especially, as a portion of it is devoted to the consideration of the first chapter of an able production of my talented friend, the Rev. K. M. Banerjia, and I thought my communicating to you, in an anonymous shape, the little that I knew of the subject, would lead to further enquiries, and to a satisfactory elucidation of the points embraced in the Essay. But some of the gentlemen of the Committee being of opinion, that the name of the author of a paper of this description should not be concealed, I cannot maintain the secret I intended to have done, and have to solicit your indulgence for the blemishes and imperfections which it may be found to contain. Should my esteemed friend, the Rev. K. M. Banerjia, or any other member of the Society, kindly point out any inaccuracies in the following pages, I shall really feel very thankful to him.

I have to express my grateful acknowledgments to my esteemed friend, Baboo Tarachand Chuckroburttee, the worthy President of this Society, and Pundit Mooktaram

Vidyabageesh of the Hindu College, for the information they have communicated to me on the subject.

Some Ceremonies to be observed after the birth of a Daughter.— After offering a brief sketch of the diurnal duties inculcated to be performed by the sacerdotal class, in order to shew, that "if the chains of corrupt antiquity have galled the lives of *men*, how much more must they have done those of *women*," the Rev. author enters into the ceremonies observed after the birth of a male and female child, and from the circumstance of the mother being confined ten days longer in the *Sutikagriha*, in case she brings forth a daughter, and of the goddess *Shosthi* being worshipped on the sixth night after the birth of a son only, he concludes that there must be "a marked and invidious distinction between the male and female children." Whatever might have been, or may now be the feelings of some Hindu parents on the birth of a son, which I imagine must have been, and is still a greater source of congratulation than that of daughter, on account of a (*putra*) son being considered the preserver from (*poom*) hell, it is to be questioned whether there was, or is generally any difference in parental anxiety for the life and health respectively of sons and daughters, or that any such "marked invidious distinction" has been sanctioned by any of our ancient institutions. If the observance of impurity on a great and small scale by the father and mother, after the birth or death of a child, be the criterion for judging of their disregard or regard to it, a son in some instances may be considered as being a minor object of affection.

Jāte putre pituḥ snānaṃ sacelantu vidhīyate |
mātā śudhyet daśāhena snānāttu sparśanaṃ pituḥ ||

"When a son is born, the father should bathe with the clothes put on his person, after which he is purified and

can be touched; but a mother's impurity terminates after ten days."—*Sumburtà.*

It thus appears, that the birth of a son spreads impurity on a wider scale, viz.; it renders the father impure, which the birth of the daughter does not.

With respect to the impurity caused after death, it is said,

Jātamātrasya bālasya yadisyānmaraṇaṃ pituḥ |
mātuśca sutakaṃ tat syāt pitātvaspṛśya eva ca ||

"If a son being born dies within the limited period of impurity observed after his birth, the impurity of the father and mother will last till the end of that period, and the father should be untouched."—*Koorma Poorana.*

Ājanmanastu cūḍāntaṃ yatra kanyā vipadyate |
sadyaḥ śoucaṃ bhavettatra sarvavarṇeṣu nityaśaḥ ||

"If a daughter dies within the ceremony of tonsure, (i.e. within two years,) the impurity of all the castes should end immediately."—*Brahma Poorana.*

It will be perceived from the above authorities, that to draw inferences as to preferential regard to the health and life of a male or famale child, from the observance of impurity on a limited scale, is not safe; because a son in one instance may appear to be an object of greater concern, and a daughter in another.

With respect to the worship of *Shusthi*, it is evident that the practice is of recent origin. Menu, who (iv. 185,) describes a daughter "as the highest object of tenderness," inculcates, (in ii. 66,) "the due performance of the same ceremonies, except that of the sacrificial thread, for women at the same age, and in the same order." We thus see, that as far as the ceremonies are concerned, they are not to be omitted after the birth of a daughter.

Female Education.—The next point to which the Rev.

author adverts in corroboration of his view, is the absence of institutions obligatory on parents to educate their daughters, and the prohibition of women from reading the Vedas. The education of sons being made a duty incumbent on parents, was obviously a matter of more importance than that of daughters. The improvement of every country in civilization depends in a great measure on the enlightenment of its male population, and though the development of the female mind bears an intimate connection with the happiness of mankind, it is generally the work of a more refined age, and seems to have been left to the progress of society.* Had the Hindus been hostile to female education, injunctions prohibitory of attempts in furtherance of that object would have been found in our books, and the literary attainments of no woman who had signalized herself in the field of learning, would have met with due appreciation and eulogy.

In *Koomar* (Journal of the Asiatic Society, vol. 2nd, p. 337,) and in *Vicrama Urvasi*, mention is made of *Bhurjuoch* the leaves of mountain *birch* being used as a sort of paper by the females in writing epistles. *Sacontala*, (p. 50,) in one place exclaims, "how should I commit to writing the *song* I have composed—the materials for the purpose being not at hand?" *Shri Bhagbhut* speaks of Rukmini, the daughter of Bheesma, king of Bidhurva, (Behar,) having transmitted a letter to Krishna, Rajah of Dwaraka, expressing her wish

*I have accordingly found in the Mahanirban Tantra, since this essay was read, the following precept, inculcating the education of females.

After dwelling on the education of sons, it says—

Kanyāpyevaṃ pālanīyā śikṣaṇīyā'ti yatnataḥ |
deyā varāya viduṣe dhanaratnasamanvitā ||

"The daughter should likewise be nursed and educated with care, and married with gifts of money and jewels to a learned man."—*8th Woollash.*

to marry him. Instances of a like nature can, I dare say, be multiplied, if they be searched for; but what has been submitted is enough to shew, that the females, though not expressly enjoined in the *shastras* to be educated, were not ignorant of letters.

Besides Leelavatee,* there were many females of literary and scientific attainments. The Tamuls boast of having possessed four female philosophers; viz. Avyar and her three sisters, Uppay, Vallie, and Uruvay, (Asiatic Researches, vol. 7th, p. 344.). Avyar was the daughter of one Bhagavan, a brahmin, and outshone all her brothers and sisters in learning. "She was contemporary with Kambun, the author of the Tamul Ramayan, and he employed her elegant pen on various subjects, such as astronomy, medicine, and geography; her works of the latter description are much admired. Avyar remained a virgin all her life, and died much admired for her talents in poetry, arts, and sciences."† She was a good chemical scholar, and has left several treatises on morality, which are read in the Tamul schools, among the first books which children learn to read. Upp-ay, or Uppaja, who was born at Uta kadu in the Arcot district, wrote a work on morality, entitled *Nili Patal.* The two other sisters wrote poems on miscellaneous subjects. They flourished in the ninth century, and were the contemporaries of Leelavattee and Shancara Acharya. I am given to understand

*"There were two women by the name of Leelavatee, one was the wife of Munduna Misra, and acted the part of arbitrator in the controversy held between her husband and Shancara Acharya, with whom she had also a literary battle subsequent to the defeat of Mur luna." —*See Shancara Bijoy, 8th Surga.*

There was another Leelavatte, who was the daughter of Vaskur Acharya, (author of *Siddhante Siromonee,*) and wrote two works entitled *Patee* and *Beej Leelavatte.*

† Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society vol. i. p. 140.

by an intelligent Hindu gentleman, that he knew of one Huttee Vidyalancar, a female scholar at Benares, who was versed in *Smriti* and *Naya*. We also hear of the literary proficiency of the wives of Caleedass and Cornat Rajah, of Khona, who was conversant with *Jowtis*, and who is well known by the *bochuns*, (sayings,) she has left behind; of Gargee, the wife of Yagnyabalkya, who is said to have possessed a good knowledge of *Yog Shastra*.* It appears from the *Nataks*, and Menu, (xi. 123,) that the Pracrit was the language of the women, (though of course there were exceptions as is the case in all matters); but because the generality of them were unacquainted with the Sanscrit, we are not to suppose that they were shut out from all sources of knowledge, especially as we find that the Pracrit, which to quote the words of Sir W. Jones, "is little more than the language of the Brahmins melted down by a delicate articulation to the softness of the Italian," was not a poor vehicle of instruction, but was rich in several departments of literature. Dr. Wall and Colonel Sykes are now endeavouring to prove, that the Pracrit is older than the Sanscrit; and if the antiquity of the former be satisfactorily established, the circumstance of its having

*I have since met in a Bengali work, entitled *Strīśikṣāvidhāyak* printed by the School Book Society, with the names of several other female literary characters; viz. 1. Anasooiah, wife of Atri Mooni, who was versed in several *Shasters*, and imparted instruction to others; 2. Drowpudee, wife of Pandubs, distinguished for possessing a good judgment, and highly cultivated moral feelings; 3. Bhagabatee, wife of Shiva; 4. Daughter of Bahbhut, who is well known as the author of some medical works; 5. The wife of Luckmun Sen; 6. Chundrakula, who is known to have delivered a lecture on morality to Prince Madhub, son of Vicrama; 7. Soolochona, who corresponded with Madhub on the subject of her marriage; 8. Vidya, daughter of Beera Singho Roy of Burdwan; 9. Ranee Bhaobanee of Moorshedabad; 10. Shyama Soondoree, wife of a Brahmin in the zillah Furreedpore, she read grammar, logic, &c.; 11. two daughters of one Siddhant Bhattacharya of Woola Gram; 12. Malatee; 13. Uhhoolya of Maharatta, who could speak Sanscrit.

been the medium of the exchange of ideas among the bulk of the women and men in former times, can be easily accounted for.

I do not comprehend the object of the women having been prevented from reading the *Vedas*. Whatever may be the cause of this interdict, which certainly betrays a want of judgment on the part of its framers, the proficiency of several of the female literatii in the subjects embraced in our sacred books, is a proof of this unfair prohibition having been weak in its operation, and as a sort of compensation for it, Vyas, to whom we are indebted for the arrangement of the *Vedas*, and the compilation of *Itihas* and *Purans*, "reflecting that these works may not be accessible to women, and *Sudrus* and mixed castes, composed the *Bharut*, for the purpose of placing religious knowledge within their reach."—(*Wilson's preface to Vishnu Purana, p. 83.*)

In my humble opinion, the Rev. author is wrong in assuming, that the women were excluded from a knowledge of the *Vedangas*, containing several elementary and useful branches of learning, on accout of their having had "no business with the text of the *Veda*." The *Vedangas* are a separate depository of instruction from the *Vedas*, and it is not fair to include them in the prohibition.

The monuments of female genius, that with our limited means of access to the records of the past ages we have been able to glean, cofirm the view we have taken of the question, and if any doubt is to be entertained as to the women having possessed a knowledge of the "description of sacred rites, and the glossarial explanation of obscure terms," we can have no scepticism in regard to their conversancy with the four other members of the *Vedas*, viz. Pronunciation, Grammar, Versification, and pure and mixed Mathematics.

The ancient practice of educating the females, though almost extinct in Bengal, has been creditably kept up in other parts of India.

In vindication of the characters of Rajpoot women, Colonel Tod, (Annals of Rajastaun, vol. i. p. 642,) states, "there were very few of the lowest chieftains whose daughters were not instructed to read and write, though the custom of the country requiring much form in epistolary writing, only the signature is made to letters. But of their intellect and knowledge of mankind, whoever has had to converse with a Rajpootni guardian of her son's rights, must draw a very different conclusion. Though excluded by the Salic law of India from governing, they are declared to be fit regents, during minority ; and the history is filled with anecdotes of able and valiant females in this capacity." He adds, that he had often conversation for hours, "with the Boondi queen-mother, on the affairs of her government and the welfare of her infant son, and her sentiments shewed invariably a correct and extensive knowledge, which was equally apparent in her letters, of which he had many, and he could give many similar instances."

It is well known to us, that some of the lower orders of the Hindu women used to learn dancing, music, and singing. The only instance that we have found of instruction in these arts having been imparted to the inmates of a palace, is in *Birat Purba.* When Arguna appeared beforore Birat, king of Matsya Desh, with an offer to communicate to his daughter Uttura, her comrades, and attendants, a knowledge of music, *sungit* and dancing, he was entertained for that purpose, and discharged his duties for the period of one year, under the name of Brihonola.—(*See Mahabharut. vol.* ii. *p.* 13.)

Marriage.—The nature of the climate of this country

tends to the early development of the animal propensities and the fecundifying powers of both sexes, and the women become mothers at an age, when English girls would scarcely dream of being married. To this circumstance is to be traced the cause of the system of our early marriages. And as the judgment of the girls when married, i. e., between seven and ten years of age is unsound, and might mislead them, if they were allowed the option in the selection of husbands, it has therefore been deemed safer to leave the task of making every arrangement regarding their matrimony to their parents. This I believe is the *rationale* of our ancient institutions as regards the power invested in parents to select bridegrooms for their daughters. In order to guard against their capricious or unjust conduct in the discharge of this important duty, Menu (ix, 88 and 89) provides, that every one should "give his daughter in marriage to an excellent and handsome youth of the same class, and that it is better that the damsel, though marriageable, should stay at home till her death, than that he should ever give her in marriage to a bridegroom void of excellent qualities."

Though the parents generally chose parties to marry their daugters, yet the entire power of selection was not taken away from the latter. Every girl was at liberty to make advances to a man of high class, and it was only when she addressed a "low man," that she was constrained to live in her house well guarded. (Menu viii. 356.) She could also select her bridegroom if she was not bestowed in marriage or passed three years after being marrigeable. (ix. p. 90 and 91.)

Of the eight forms of the nuptial ceremony enumerated by Menu (iii, 20 to 34) the Gundharba kind allowed ample latitude to every man and woman in forming matrimonial alliances of their own accord, and we read of

many such marriages having been contracted. The practice of *swayambara* which I believe was a modification of the Brahma, or the first kind of nuptial ceremony, did also invest the females with a discretionary power in the choice of husbands, and when they appeared before a host of competitors convened for the purpose, they do not seem to have been influenced in their selection only "by the external appearance of suitors;" but had to be acquainted with the genealogy, character, accomplishments, wealth and heroism of every one of them. A *swayambara* bride was for that purpose accompanied by a *dhatree*,* capable of communicating such information, and as she took her from one suitor to another, she mentioned all that she knew of them. If the mere handsomeness of a man was the only consideration to the bride for placing the garland on his neck, why did a *dhatree* offer an analysis of every character present on the occasion? And that comeliness alone was not the sole recommendation to the females, will appear from the sentiments of Rukmini, expressed in her letter to Krishna.†

*See Mahavarut, vol. iii. p. 370. Raghubungsa 6th Surga, and Naishud 11th Surga, containing accounts of the nuptials of the daughter of Chitrong-gada, king of Culinga, Indromottee, and Damayuntee respectively.

† *Śrutvā gunān bhubanasundara śṛnvatānte*
nirviśya karṇavivaraiḥ harato'ngatāpaṃ |
rūpaṃ dṛśāṃ dṛśimatāmakhilārthalābhaṃ
tvayyacyutāviśati cittamapatrapaṃ me || 28 ||
kā tvā mukunda mahatī kulaśīlarūpa
vidyāvayodraviṇadhāmabhirātmatulyaṃ |
dhīrā patiṃ kulabatī na vṛṇīta kanyā
kāle nṛsiṃha naralokamano'bhirāmaṃ || 29 ||

Oh ! thou handsomest man in the world !—Having heard of thy virtues which assuage bodily pain when they enter the ear, and of thy beauty which forms the most agreeable object of the visual organ, I cannot but unblushingly allow my heart to be dedicated to thee. Oh ! Mokunda, (the giver of Mookti,) what high-born and intelli-

The military class, to whom probably the practice of *swayambara* was confined, sometimes determined to give away their daughters to those who would perform a certain heroic act; viz. break a bow, or pierce with an arrow a certain object placed at a great distance.

The nuptial anecdotes of Sceta, Drowpadee and Bhanoo Muttee are illustrative of this practice.

It also appears, that a girl well bred up, or possessing "best qualities," was considered as having one of the qualifications of the wife;* and we thus see that the selection of a consort by a man or a woman, had not therefore the sole reference to external appearance. Whilst on this subject, I may take the opportunity of observing that the sale of daughters, now a source of great profit to the *Koolins*, is expressly prohibited by Menu (iii, 51. and ix. 98 and 100) and Kashyup, and that no class of people can take any gratuity, however small, on such an occasion.

Seclusion of Women.—It has been urged, that the total seclusion of women from society is the Hindu practice, and that it did not originate with the Mahommedan conquest. Though a Hindu house was always divided into two apartments; viz. one for the males. and the other for the females, and they lived distinct from each other, attending to their respective avocations; it does not appear to me that they "were consigned to a close imprisonment in the seraglio." Besides the "nearest relations, and the mendicants and encomiasts, men prepared for a sacrifice, and cooks and other artizans," (who were considered the privileged classes. Menu. viii. 360.) every man

gent woman equal to thee, in point of caste, character, beauty, learning, age, wealth, and the possession of a house will not wish to marry thee? And oh Nrisingha! thou can'st please every heart!—*Shri Bhagbut 10th Scandha.*

*Wilson's Vishnu Pooran, p. 299, and Menu vii. 77.

could have the liberty of speaking with the wife of another, till he was forbidden by her husband or father. (Menu vii. 361).

The close confinement of women was not advocated by Menu. who says. (ix. 12.) "By close confinement at home, even under affectionate and observant guardians they are not secure; but those women are truly secure who are guided by their own good inclinations;" and that women cannot be wholly restrained by "violent measures" but such women as are addicted to debauchery, drinking, rambling abroad, &c. are recommended to be guarded well. (ix. 10. 13 to 15.) The proofs of our women not suffering close imprisonment in former times, are to be met with in Mitakhara, Menu, and other books.

Krīḍāṃ śarīrasaṃskāraṃ samājotsavadarśanaṃ |
hāsyaṁ paragṛhe yānaṁ tyajet proṣitabhartṛkā ||

A woman whose husband is abroad, should refrain from having amusements, beautifying her person, attending assemblies and jubilees, and going to any one's house.—*Acharadhya.*

Again in the rules to be observed by a widow, it is said, that

Anuktvā gṛhāt na nirgacchet na anuttarīyā na tvaritaṁ vrajet.

A widow should not go away from the house without leave, the outer garments, or with rapidity.—*Acharadhya.*

If women had been accustomed to confinement, Menu would not have recommended it as a punishment for a wife leaving the house with indignation, after being legally superseded, nor a word would have been said about their chastisement for being addicted to intoxicating liquor at jubilees, or "mixing in crowds at theatres." (ix. 83 and 84).

The authorities quoted in the Rev. K. M. Banerjia's Prize Essay, from Bhatti. Shri Bhagbut, Naishad and

Mahabharut, shew, that the female apartments of the Hindu Rajahs were well guarded, and were not easily accessible; but they do not prove that the ladies of the higher classes could not go out with their husbands and relations. To call the females of the ancient times, *asuryam pashya*, (not seen by the sun.) is a mistake; for they not only trod the "outer courts upon special occasions," but accompanied their husbands in distant journeys for pleasure or pilgrimage; partook of their banishment in woods and forests; and practised riding, encouraged by the good example of their gallant lords.*

As an existing evidence of the females taking equestrian exercise, we have to cast our eyes on the Mahratta country, where every liberty is given to women.

In corroboration of my view on the question, I beg to quote the authorities of Dr. Wilson and Elphinstone, whose opinions on such matters are no doubt entitled to great consideration.

*Soorpunoka, to whom the epithet of *asuryam pashya* was applied by Luckmun, perhaps as a sort of compliment for her beauty, is said to have rambled from one place to another. Vanapurba gives an account of Ghosh Jattra, a festival for the observance of which the princes and princesses of Hustinapoor accompanied Dooryadhana, his brothers, and friends to a place near the forest where Pandubs were living as exiles. Kontee, Madree, Seeta and Drowpadee were the companions of their respective husbands wherever they went. Maug states, that the kings who were travelling to visit the Rajsooa Yagnya of Yoodistir, were accompanied by their wives riding on horseback.

Karṇāvasakta mṛdu bāhulatāḥ turaṃgāt
rājāvarodhana badhūravatārayantaḥ |
ālimganānyadhikṛtāḥ sphuṭamāpureva
gaṇḍasthalīḥ śucitayā na cucumburāsāṃ ||
Māgha kāvye pañcamasarge ||

"The attendants to whose necks the tender hands of the queens were clung, and who were bringing them down from horses, did openly receive their embrace; but could not venture to kiss their cheeks, owing to their purity."—*Maug 5 Surga, Sloke* xviii.

"It has no doubt been always the custom for the women of Hindus of rank and respectability to live in some degree apart, but not in seclusion, nor guarded with the same jealousy as by the Mahommedans. Menu provides for their being decorated 'at festivals and jubilees,' and many of the poems and plays describe their appearance openly in public at religious and other festivals, and at public games, and the admission of men, other than their kinsmen, to their presence on various occasions.—*Mahabharut, Ramayan, Vishnu Purana, Malati Madhava, and Ratnavali.*" (Wilson's Mill.)

"Women under the ancient Hindus appear to have been more reserved and retired than with us; but the complete seclusion of them has come in with the Mussulmans, and is even now confined to the military classes. The bramins do not observe it at all. The Peshwa's consort used to walk to temples, and ride or go in open palanqueen through the streets with *perfect publicity*, and with a retinue becoming her rank."—(*Elphinstone's India.*)

Before we conclude from what has been advanced, that the practice of immuring women was introduced in this country after the Mahommedan invasion, and was in all probability adopted by the Hindus, partly from imitation and partly from fear; it will establish our position on a firmer basis, if we shew that the seclusion of women did and does still form an original part of the Moslem manners. It will appear from the accounts of Persia and Constantinople, by Chardin and Tournefort respectively, that "in the East from the remotest times females have been jealously secluded from the other sex," (*Herodotus, vol. 2nd note page* 81.) and though some modern travellers give a more favourable report of the countries where the religion of Mahomet is honoured, as to what regards the point under consideration; the practice, how-

ever modified with the progress of civilization and knowledge, still savours of its original severity. "The Arabs seldom allow their women to be seen; and when a stranger is introduced, the cry of *Tarik* (or retire) warns them instantly to disappear. It is mentioned as a breach of decorum to salute a lady, or even to look her steadily in the face."—(*Edinb. Cab. Lib.*)

Mahommedan Alum, the monsiff of Nowasarye, who was lately in Arabia, states, that the honour of the females of the higher classes of people of that country consists in their not being seen from the zenana. Lane, in his modern Egyptians, (vol. i. p. 225.) observes, that in Egypt where the female sex are "generally under less restraint than in any other country of the Turkish Empire," the women of the higher and middle classes, though sometimes dissatisfied with the state of seclusion to which they are subjected, are apt to complain of being neglected, and not sufficiently loved, if allowed "unusual liberty," and such wives of their husbands as are kept and watched with greater strictness, become objects of envy to them.

Polygamy.—Though the practice of polygamy was allowed by the *shastra* under certain restrictions,* it does not seem to have met with so much encouragement as it has in modern times. The consent of the wife was necessary for the marriage of her husband with another woman, if he was justified in making such a proposal; and though

* Menu ix, 72, 73, 77, 80 and 82.

Yagnabalkya says

Surāpī vyādhitā dhūrtā vandhyārthaghnya priyamvadā |
strīprasūścādhivettavyā puruṣadveṣiṇī tathā ||
ājñāṃsampādinīṃ dakṣāṃ vīrasūṃ priyabādinīṃ |
tyajan dāpya strīyāṃśamadrāvyo bharaṇaṃ striyaḥ ||
Mitākṣarā Ācāradhyāya ||

"A wife who drinks spirituous liquors, is incurably sick, mischievous, barren, makes frequent use of offensive language, brings forth

"she was superseded by another wife." she was respected, and allowed to hold the principal rank in the family if she was "amiable and virtuous, though afflicted with illness."

Civil Rights.—The ancient laws regarding women appear to have been framed evidently with some anxiety to protect them in the comparative helpless relations of life.

The unmarried daughter, according to Menu, (ix. 118) Vrihuspati, Vishnu, Yugnavulkyu, and Katyayuna. (quoted in "Rammohun Roy's Female Rights.") is entitled to one-fourth of the allotment of her brother's heritage. With respect to maternal property, unmarried daughters receive an equal division thereof with their uterine brothers, and "each married sister shall have a fourth part of a brother's allotment;" and "even to the daughters of those daughters," it is fit that something should be given from the assets of their maternal grandmother, on the score of natural affection," (ix. 192 and 193). Vishnu, Yugnavulkyu, Narada, Katyayana, and Vrihuspati enjoin, 'that a mother should share equally with her sons the property left by their father; and Vyasa has made the same provision for the wives of a father, by whom he has no male issue, and all the grandmothets (including the mothers and step-mothers of the father."* A wife superseded by a mother, should be provided with a competence for her maintenance.

only female offspring, and manifests hatred towards her husband, may be superseded by another wife. But he who forsakes a wife, who is obedient, skilful in business, who produces strong male children, and uses agreeable expressions; will be made to make over to her one-third of his state, and if indigent, will be obliged to maintain her."

* Jeemutabahana and Raghu Nundana, the respective writers of Dayabhaga and Dayatuttwa, are of opinion, that the childless widows of a deceased man are entitled to a share of his property, if it is divided during his life time; but if such be not the case, and if nothing is left to them, they cannot have any share.

Adhibinnastriai dadyādādhivedanikaṃ samaṃ /
na dattaṃ stridhanaṃ yasyai dattetvardha prakīrttitaṃ //

"A wife superseded by a mother, should receive a property equal to what is given to the latter; but if a *stridhun* had been given her before, half of what is bestowed on the second wife, should be given to the first."—*Yugnavulkyu.*

In addition to these rights, there are others which are enjoyed by daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, grandmothers, and great-grand-mothers, &c. by the regular course of inheritance, &c. which amply demonstrates that an attention to the interests of the female sex did not escape our legislators.

The women received every protection in the enjoyment of their property. Such women as were in a condition requiring support, were taken care of by the king. No male relations could take or appropriate to his own use the estate of a woman, without being subject to a social or religious punishment; nor could any individual, "*stealing of woman above all*," or killing her, escape without forfeiting his life; and it will be seen from the expression made use of by Menu, in what a great estimation they were held.*

The character of no virgin, no wife, and of no mother could be maliciously attacked by any individual without being visited with a punishment. The king finding a woman guilty of the "vice of gaming," had to order for her the same punishment which was inflicted on the old, the children, &c. convicted of that crime—a circumstance which manifests the regard shown to the fair sex.†

Political Rights.—The women of this country were so much respected, that they were allowed to wield sceptres

* Menu ix. 232; viii. 28, 29 and 323.

† Menu viii. 225 275; ix. 230.

over the destinies of nations. In the conversation which Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasa had with Yudhistir, after the conclusion of the great war at Kurakhettra, on the subject of filling the thrones of the deceased kings of the different countries of Hindoostan, he enjoined—

Kumāronāsti yeṣāñca kanyāstatrābhiṣecaya |

Where a son does not exist, cause a daughter to sit on the throne. —*Mahabharut Sante Purva, vol. 3d, p.* 370.

This practice, if not prevalent before, of which I am not certain, seems to have been continued in the subsequent ages.

Hiuan-thoang, (who came here in the 7th century,) speaks of a "kingdom governed by a female, called the *Kingdom of the women of the East*, 100 miles to the north, in the mountains about the sources of the Jumna and Ganges."

In Renaudot's Ancient Accounts of India, by two Mahommedans, who came here in the 9th century, the Maladive Islands were governed by a queen. The throne of the kingdom of Ceylon was filled at different periods by several *Ranees*, (Forbes' Ceylon, vol. 1st.). The Rajah Balli speaks of Premdevee, the wife of Gobind Chunder, having held the sovereign power at Delhi before the Mahommedan invasion.

In Nepaul, Sutty Naik Deby, grand-daughter of Un Wunt Mull, her daughter Raj Letchmi, and Rajender Letchmi, "a woman of extraordinary character and talents," were entrusted with the reins of government.—(Kirkpatrick's Nepaul, pp. 265, 273 and 274.)

The History of Rajpootana, where I cannot account for the women being not allowed to govern, is "filled with anecdotes of able and valiant female regents."

Rules about the treatment of Women. &c.—There are several rules in Menu, (v. 151, 154 to 158.) obligatory on

every woman to honor her husband, to preserve her chastity, and to do nothing unkind to him, be he living or dead. It was also her duty to pay solicitous attention to her offspring and household management, and to resort to spinning and other blameless arts, "when her husband was abroad, leaving her no support (vii. 75.). But she was always to remain under the protection of her father, husband, son, relations or sovereign," having lawful and innocent recreation, (v. 148, and ix. 2.). The husband should, on the other hand, have "no strife with her," and consider her as his "own body." If she committed any faults he could punish her, if he liked, with a twig, (vii. 8 and 299) ; but Col. Tod has supported the *bachun* of another sage ; viz. "Strike not even with a blossom a wife guilty of a hundred faults," which militates against the law of Menu. The *Tantras** inculcate shewing great respect to the wife. The mild and respectable expressions used in addressing a woman, the regard shewn by "making way for her," and rendering her one of the first objects of hospitality, whether she was a damsel, a bride, or in that interesting state in which "ladies like to be, who love their lords,"—the lessons inculcated for decorating her with ornaments, honouring, and keeping her in a contented and happy state ; the dedication of one's life for her preservation being thought meritorious, and killing justly for her defence, passing as "no crime;" are sufficient verifications of chivalry having once brightened the

* Mahanirban Tantra, in 8th Woolash says,

Na bharyām tāḍayet kvāpi mātṛvat pālayet sadā |
na tyajet ghorakaṣte'pi yadi sādhvī patibratā ||

"Wife should never be chastised, but nursed like a mother, and if chaste and loyal, should never be forsaken, even under most difficult circumstances." Again,

social horizon of India, and smoothed the speech, the behaviour, and the feelings of man with her *talismanic* spell.*

History distinctly exhibits before us instances of her dominion not having been of short duration. Though the cloud of Moslem oppression has checked the evolution of her harmonizing influence— an influence still pervading the manners of the Rajpoots and the Maharattas—every support that she receives from the progress of civilization will work as a magic in dispersing its surrounding gloom, and cause a diffusion of her genial beams. Females appear to have exercised influence on society in all ages. It was *woman* who was the cause of the wars of Lanca and Kurruckhetra, the banishment of Nula, the battle for Dhundee Rajah and of several other equally momentous events in the annals of Ancient History. In modern times, her "voice potential" did not die away. The loyalty of Dewalde in exciting a martial animation in the council of Mohoka; the spiritedness with which Sangobta philosophized when called upon by her lord, Pritthu Rajah, to express her opinion as to "the best mode of supporting the Sultan of Ghizni," the Spartan conduct of the queen of Jessunt Sing, in shutting the gates of the castle against him when she found him making a retreat, instead of opposing Arungezebe, when he had determined to bring him to his senses for having deposed Shah Jehan, and murdered his brothers ; the firm adherence of Kurn Devi to the cause of Sadoo, and the fierce battle to which it led between that chief and the heir of Mundoo; the independence and bravery of Durgovati, queen of Gurrah, in

Yasminnare maheśāni tuṣtā bhāryyā pativratā |
sarvaṃ dharmmaṃ kṛtaṃ tena bhavati priya eva saḥ ||

"Oh Moheshani ! the man who satisfies his loyal wife, performs every virtuous action, and is sure to be beloved by all."

* Menu ii. 129, 138 ; iii. 114, 55 to 59 ; viii. 389 ; and x. 62.

"defending the rights of her infant son against Akbar's ambition," and the other occurrences of a like nature abounding in the Rajpoot chronicles, unfold the strength of female power, and the past state of Hindu society.* Such was the picture of Rajastan, though contaminated with Mahommedan intercourse. In Maharatta the "women," says Duff, "are well treated, they are the helpmates, but by no means the slaves of their husbands; nor are they in the degraded state in which travellers have described the condition of the women of other parts of India."

Character of Women.—That the character given by the Rev. author of the Hindu women from Halhed's Gentoo Law, which I believe is considered an unsafe guide, may not be unhesitatingly received, as a faithful portraiture, I deem it in justice to them, to quote the opinion of Dr. Wilson, whose acquaintance with our literature and ancient manners must incline us to repose every confidence in his testimony.

"The literature of most countries, even in modern times, would furnish passages abusive of the weaker sex; but no one would think of quoting occasional sarcasms as the language of universal opinion. If instead of the language of law or satire, we look to the portraits of women painted by the Hindus themselves in their tales, their plays and poems, we shall find them invariably described as amiable, high principled, modest, gentle, accomplished and intelligent; as exercising a very important influence upon men, and as treated by them with tenderness and respect. The English reader will find ample proofs of this, in the Cloud Messenger and Hindu Theatre, and Mr. Milman's Nala; and it may be confidently asserted,

* Tod's Rajastan.

that in no nation of antiquity were women held in so much esteem as amongst the Hindus."—*Wilson's Mill, vol. i. p.* 450-1.

Comparative view of the condition of Women among the Hindus, and some other nations.—There are some persons who are ready at all times to find fault with every thing relating to the Hindus, and not to make due allowances. If they be pleased to pass a sweeping condemnation on our institutions respecting females, which we have endeavoured to shew were in many respects of an enlightened character, I must beseech them to turn their eyes to the history of some civilized countries, with reference to this subject.

Here a question may be raised, where should they begin their enquiries? The Asiatic countries are said to partake more or less of one character. The manners of the Egyptians.—the only African nation deserving of notice,—were very much similar to those of the Hindus, owing to there having existed a constant intercourse between them; and the customs regarding females appear to have been concordant in many points. The Egyptian women were indulged with great privileges, could attend jubilees and public meetings, and assume the reins of government. It therefore remains to institute an investigation in the ancient European countries; viz. Greece and Rome.

According to Herodotus, the Greeks sold by public auction the young women that were unmarriageable; but Gillies denies that such was the practice, and explains it by saying, that the "dower" which was given for the wife's provision, was by a mistake called "price."

But be that as it may, the Grecian ladies, says Gillies. "married or unmarried, were kept in equal restraint; no pains were taken to render them at any one period of

their lives agreeable members of society; and their education was either entirely neglected, or confined at least to such humble objects, as instead of elevating and enlarging the mind, tended only to narrow and debase it. Though neither qualified for holding an honourable rank in society, nor permitted to enjoy the company even of their nearest relations, they were thought capable of superintending or performing the drudgery of domestic labor, of acting as stewards for their husbands, and thus relieving the men from a multiplicity of little cares which seemed unworthy of their attention, and unsuitable to their dignity. The whole burden of such mercenary cares being imposed on the women, their first instructions and treatment were adapted to that lowly rank, beyond which they could never aspire. Nothing was allowed to divert their minds from those servile occupations, in which it was intended that their whole lives should be spent; no liberal idea was presented to their imagination, that might raise them above the ignoble arts in which they were ever destined to labor. The smallest familiarity with strangers was deemed a dangerous offence; and any intimacy or connection beyond the walls of their own family, a heinous crime; since it might engage them to embezzle the furniture and effects committed to their care and custody. Even the law of Athens confirmed this miserable degradation of women, holding the security of the husband's property a matter of greater importance than defending the wife's person from outrage, and protecting her character from infamy."

Lycurgus seeing that women thus degraded could do no good to the Republic, framed his code of laws, and however conducive it might have been to the breeding of a vigorous and athletic race of men, it could scarcely promote the moral and the social improvement of the

females, when "promiscuous concubinage" was practised, and it was considered sinful in young men to be seen in company with girls, and even with their wives.

Mitford has also given an equally sad picture of the Athenian ladies, who were surrounded by every favourable circumstance.

"The ladies to avoid a society which their fathers and husbands could not avoid, lived with their famale slaves in a secluded part of the house; associating little with one another, scarcely at all with the men, even their nearest relations; and seldom appearing in public, but at those religious festivals in which ancient custom required the women to bear a part, and sacerdotal authority could insure decency of conduct towards them. Hence the education of the Grecian ladies in general, and particularly the Athenian, was scarcely above their slaves; and, as we find them exhibited in lively picture in the little treatise upon domestic economy remaining from Xenophon, they were equally of uninstructed minds and uninformed manners."

In Rome, where women were not so much secluded as in Greece, the consent of the parent was necessary to the validity of the marriage. The bride was bought by the husband, and was defined "as a thing." Her husband "exercised the jurisdiction of life and death" over her, and could dicharge or withhold the "conjugal debt." "Wives were dismissed," says Browne (in his Civil Law), "not only for want of chastity, or for intolerable temper, but for the slightest cause. Women were never considered to have attained the age of reason and experience, and were condemned to the perpetual tutelage of parents, husbands, or guardians." Such was the condition of the females in Greece and Rome. How far it was better or worse than that of Hindu women, I leave it to the consideration of the reader, without any comment.

But before we bid farewell to the subject, we may perhaps make the contrast more complete; if we speak a few words as to the laws of the English respecting the female sex. Admitting as we do, that they are an enlightened nation, we cannot give them any credit for the laws by which their women are placed in an inferior position. Blackstone says, that in some instances wife is considered inferior to husband, "and acting by his compulsion." The husband, by the old law, might give her moderate correction, and that if "she be injured in her person or property, she can bring no action for redress without her husband's concurrence, and in his name, as well as in her own."

But there are several other laws of an equally, if not of a more harsh character, whereby the females are judged in England,* and none who reads Dr. Christian's "impartial statement of the account," with any degree of attention, can never think that they exhibit a partiality or even fairness toward the fair sex. If such be the lot of women in a country, where the immortal labours of Bentham and other eminent jurists have shed a flood of light on the science of legislation, where civilization has caused a refinement in the manners of men, and the practice of gallantry is in every social circle lauded with enthusiastic cheers, no great astonishment ought to be expressed at the defects that may be found in our institutions respecting the female sex; especially, if we consider the time when they were framed, and the fact, that the laws of no country suit the state of society equally in all ages.

* See Christian's edition of Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 445.

ON THE PHYSIOLOGY OF DIGESTION

BABOO PROSONO COOMAR MITTRA.

[Read on the 13th April, 1842.]

Gentlemen.—The subject to which I wish to draw your attention this evening, is the anatomy and physiology of the organs of Digestion, a subject of no ordinary difficulty and intricacy, especially in the physiological part of the inquiry. You will excuse therefore any crudities that may be contained in this essay, in spite of my endeavours to render it as correct in its details as I am able to do. You will recollect, that the inquiries relative to anatomical truths are founded upon the certain and firm basis of observation and experiment; while those concerning physiological facts are for the most part built upon mere hypothesis and conjecture. Experiments in aid of our physiological researches have indeed been performed on the lower animals, but they have in general led to very unsatisfactory results. This will not appear wonderful, when you are aware, that even in anatomy, where you have your eyes to guide you, difficulties have often occurred, that have led to a difference of opinion even amongst inquirers renowned for the extent of their knowledge, and the acuteness of their judgment. To give an example or two of this uncertainty in anatomy, the structure of the uterus is deemed by some authors to be muscular, and by others to be fibrous. The iris, in the notion of some, is muscular, and of others vascular. The nerve that supplies the tongue with the power of taste, has not been ascertained to this day; one anatomist ascribes the office to the glosso-pharyngeal nerve, another to the *parvagum*, and a third to the fifth pair of nerves. Such points will

perhaps remain for ever in the dark. If such obscurity cover the horizon of anatomy, what must be the difficulties through which the physiologist has to grope his way?

Of Digestion nothing was known until lately, when much light was thrown on the subject by the researches of Galen, Hunter, and other physiologists of celebrity.

Much we owe also to Dr. Beaumont, who explained satisfactorily, the mysterious process of digestion as it goes on within the stomach unseen. A man had a wound on his side caused by a musket ball, which exposed the interior of the stomach, and Dr. Beaumont took him into his house, kept and supported him for eleven years, and devoted much of his time in observing the changes which the food underwent within the digestive organ.

Nature seems in this instance to have been assiduous to add something to the knowledge of man, for the case was such, as to give to Dr. Beaumont every facility for examining minutely what was going on within; just at the opening of the wound, a valve formed, and it was so directed, that every thing inside could be seen from without by pushing back the valve with the finger, and at the same time it prevented the escape of any thing from within.

In this way, the whole mystery of the process of digestion has been unveiled to the eyes of the physiologist.

Before I proceed, however, to the physiology of digestion, it is necessary to give you some explanations regarding the anatomy of the organs concerned in that vital action, and this I will now do with as much brevity as I can command.

Anatomy of the Organs of Digestion

The digestive organ in man consists of a long tube, which extends from the mouth to the anus. Its length is

about six times the size of an ordinary man, or in other words, about thirty feet. It is called the alimentary canal. The proper intestinal canal, however, commences from the stomach, and ends at the anus, and is wider in some parts than in others, the dilatations being called receptacles or reservoirs. It is a well known fact in animal physiology, that the length of the alimentary canal differs in different animals according to the nature of the food on which they subsist. Thus carnivorous creatures have a small alimentary canal; but the animals of the graminivorous kind are possessed of a large and complicated one.

This canal is destined to receive the food, to prepare it for nourishment, and expel any rejected matter by an opening in the other end. The whole tube is surrounded by a muscular coat, internally lined by a thin membrane called the mucus membrane, and externally covered within the cavity of the abdomen by a serous membrane, called the peritonium. The first part of the alimentary canal that I shall describe is the mouth, which contains the organs of mastication.

The Mouth

The mouth is a cavity surrounded by bones and muscles, and lined by the mucus membrane. The contents of it are the teeth, tongue, and the openings of the salivary glands.

The Teeth

The teeth are the first parts of the alimentary canal, and their office is to divide the food into small pieces. They are thirty-two in number, sixteen in the upper and

sixteen in the lower jaw, and named according to their respective uses; namely, the four incisors, meaning cutting teeth; two canine or cuspidatus teeth, meaning tearing teeth; and the four small molares, or small grinders; and six large molares or large grinders. It is partly by the appearance of the teeth that we can say that man is an omnivorous animal, or that he lives on flesh as well as on grains; the teeth in him partaking of the nature of those of both the graminivorous and carnivorous animals.

The Tongue.

The tongue is the organ of taste. The processes of deglutition or swallowing, and that of sucking, are performed by its motions; together with the teeth, it forms the chief organ of speech.

The Salivary Glands.

By these are meant glands which secrete the saliva or spittle. They are three in number, and placed in three different situations; one close to the ear, another under the jaw, and the third under the tongue. Each of these glands has a tube, (or duct as it is called,) which opens under the tongue. The office allotted to these tubes, is to carry the saliva from the glands to the mouth. Of the use of the saliva, I shall speak to you in another place, when treating of the process of digestion.

Organs of Deglutition.

Next to the mouth are the organs of deglutition; these are partly the tongue and the pharynx and oesophagus.

The tongue has been already described, and I shall proceed at once to

The Pharynx

The Pharynx is a muscular bag extending from the lower part of the bone of the skull, as far as the upper part of the chest, where it terminates in the oesophagus. It is internally lined by the mucus membrane, and externally composed of muscles. This bag is exceedingly contractible, and it is this property that impels within, the food that reaches it from the mouth.

The Œsophagus

The oesophagus is a long muscular tube, extending from the lower part of the pharynx along the neck, and passing through the thorax or chest. It terminates in the left side of the stomach ; it is lined internally by the same membrane which lines the pharynx, and is externally composed of longitudinal muscular fibres. In the middle are seen the circular fibres of a muscle. This tube has to perform two offices, one depending on its dilatation, and the other on its contraction. By the former the food is received into the oesophagus, and by the latter it is propelled down to the stomach.

I now proceed to say a few words respecting the organs of Chymification.

This process is performed by the stomach, which is the largest and first dilatation of the alimentary canal, and is situated at the upper part of the abdomen. It is capable of holding four seers of water. It has two curvatures, two extremities, two openings, and three coats.

The first part of the stomach is the left or cardiac end,

(called so because it lies to the side of the heart). It is in this end that the oesophagus terminates. The lower part of the stomach is called the right or pyloric end, pyloric, because it guards as it were the entrance to the stomach.

Of the two curvatures of this organ, the inferior is called the great curvature, and the superior the lesser curvature.

The openings of the stomach are named according to the borders to which they belong, as the cardiac or the left opening, and the pyloric or right opening.

The coats of the stomach are, first the peritoneal, derived from the lining membrane of the abdomen ; secondly, the muscular, extending from the oesophagus ; and thirdly, the mucus or villous coat, which is the continuation of the mucus lining of the oesophagus, and is called villous, because when the stomach is empty, it forms a a number of folds, which seem to be designed to give a large surface within a narrow compass. A peculiarity in the formation of the right opening should be mentioned in this place. It is so contrived, that the muscular coat within this opening thickens and forms a valve which allows the passage of food out of the stomach into the intestines, but entirely bars its return again into the stomach. Certainly this is one of the most wonderful and beneficent contrivances of Providence

The stomach is highly organised, and supplied with many nerves and vessels. It is extremely sensitive, so much so, that the least injury to the brain affects the process of digestion. The organs connected with that operation of our animal nature, are the first part of our frame that sympathizes with any affection of the brain. This sympathy communicated to it by a large nerve, which extends from the brain to the stomachic region, immediately or in

a short time results in vomiting and a diseased state of the intestines.

Such is the stomach in the human species; but if for a moment we turn our eyes to that of the ruminating class of animated creation, as for instance to the cows, we find a most curious construction of this important organ.

We observe, that the stomach in those animals consists of four bags; the first is called the paunch, which is merely a receptacle or reservoir of food; the second which is rather smaller, has in its inside the appearance of a honeycomb, and is composed of a number of cells; the third consists of a number of folds, and is called manipli; and the fourth is the regular stomach, like that of a man. Thus, Gentlemen, you can easily conceive the complex nature of this organ in those creatures. The food from their mouth goes to the first bag, from thence to the second, and from the second to the third bag, from thence again it is brought back into the mouth to be well masticated, and then returning from the mouth it at once goes to the fourth or regular stomach, where it undergoes the proper process of chymification. The third bag to which I have alluded, is well observed in the camel, in which it is composed of a number of cells, each surrounded by a muscle; these cells contain water of the purest kind. In the Arabian deserts, where people seek in vain in other quarters for water to quench their thirst, the traveller's last resource lies in drinking this pure fluid contained in the stomach of these animals.

Organs of Chymification.

We now proceed to the organs of chymification, which consist of the intestines, the liver, and according to some, of the spleen also. The intestines are divided into two

portions, namely, the small and the large ; the former destined for the reception of chyle, and the latter for that of the fæces.

The small intestines are divided into three portions namely, the duodenum, jejunum, and ileum.

The first portion is called the duodenum, from a Latin word signifying twelve, because it is twelve fingers in breadth and length. It is so situated, that it forms two angles and three curvatures ; its coats are similar to those of the stomach ; externally is the membrane lining the abdominal cavity, called the peritoneal ; in the middle is the muscular coat, and internally is the mucus coat : between the first and second turn of the duodenum, there open two small tubes or ducts, one the biliary duct, carrying the bile from the liver to the duodenum, and the other the pancreatic duct, which forms a passage for the pancreatic juice

Next are the jejunum and ileum. These form one continuous canal, and are composed of the same coats as the duodenum. The ileum terminates in the cæcum the commencement of the large intestines, near which there is a small valve, called the ileo-caecal valve, which is evidently designed to prevent the return of the rejected portion of the digestive matter into the small intestines.

The liver is the largest gland in the human body. It is situated on the right side of the stomach, and its office is to secrete the bile. An excretory duct proceeding from this gland opens between the first and second curvature of the duodenum, into which it discharges the secreted bile, which mixing with the chymified matter, changes it into chyle.

The pancreas is a large gland situated behind the stomach, and is just like the salivary glands above described ; from it proceeds a duct which opens in the same

place with the biliary tube, and carries the pancreatic juice into the intestines.

In the neighbourhood of the small intestines, there opens a number of absorbent vessels, whose office is to absorb the chyle. These absorbents terminate in a receptacle, from whence a large duct proceeds upwards as far as the clavicle, near which the duct opens into a large vein called the sub-alavian vein.

Next to these, are the organs of excretion, or the large intestines, which are divided into three portions: the cæcum, the colon, and the rectum.

The first is a large bag, which is the second dilatation of the alimentary canal, and terminates in the colon, which consists of three parts, namely, the ascending, the descending, and the transverse arch; the descending colon terminates in the rectum, and this again in the anus.

Process of Digestion.

Digestion is a function which takes place in all kinds of animals from the lowest to the highest grade.

It is that procéss by which foreign substances introduced into our body, are subjected within it to the action of a peculiar fluid called the gastric juice, and then gradually assimilated into the different parts of our corporeal frame; for what we so take within us being changed by the operation of the gastric juice into a new compound capable of affording us nourishment, ultimately forms the basis of the animal matter which composes our body.

Whatever substance affords nutrition to our body, or in other words, whatever material is capable of being acted upon by our organs of digestion, is called aliment, or food.

The aliments which nourish animals are obtained either from the vegetable, or the animal kingdom. The mi-

neral kingdom also in some instances furnishes us with food, but it yields us medicines for the cure of diseases, in greater abundance, than aliments for our sustenance. There are, moreover, certain mineral substances, chiefly amonst the class of salines, which are mixed with our food, and which though not contributing to the nourishment of our bodies, as aliments, nor to the preservation of life, as ingredients in our Pharmacopia, enter in the composition of our dietetic preparations as secondary materials.

These different kinds of food are in daily requisition by us. It is by their means that our bodies are supplied with those ultimate principles of our corporeal frame, which are necessary to the preservation of our lives, and which enable our animal nature to repair the losses we are every moment suffering, from the operation of material causes that are constantly acting around us. These ultimate principles are the four following; namely, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon; by a union of which, the proximate principles of our nature, such as gelatine, fibrin, sugar, albumen, osmazium, &c. &c. are formed in due course. The proximate principles here mentioned, are taken into our stomach with the different substances which compose our food, and being converted into chyle, nourish the system.

It should be remarked, that all our food may be divided into three kinds; namely, the saccharine, albuminous, and oleaginous. The first class comprises substances characterised by the presence of sugar, and is very nutritious. Of this kind are starch, gluten, &c. Albuminous means substances containing albumen, which in the highest degree are nutritious, as fibrin, gelatine, and osmazium. The last or the oleaginous kind of food is not nourishing, such as oil, ghee &c. Thus although many of my countrymen are very fond of ghee, and are led by their

fondness for it to consider it very nutritious, philosophy would divest it of its nutrimental properties.

Food is also divided in another way into two great classes; namely, nitrogenous or azotized, and non-nitrogenous or non-azotized; the former which contains nitrogen is nutritious, and includes by far the largest portion of the substances we use for our food; the latter does not contain any nitrogen, and is less nutritious; it forms but a small portion of our alimentary substances. The azotized food is mostly derived from the animal kingdom; but there are, nevertheless, plants, which contain nitrogen to some extent, such as the mustard, and the plants yielding rice and potatoes.

Amongst animal food, flesh is most nutritious; but flesh of a young animal is less so, than that of a full grown one. As to the birds, they are less nutritious than quadrupeds. The opinion, therefore, which seems to prevail amongst many of our countrymen, that the flesh of pigeons and sparrows is very nutritious, is erroneous. The flesh of female animals is more nutritious than that of males. Eggs are not very nutritious. In the vegetable kingdom, those substances are nutritious, which contain sugar, starch, and gluten. The farinaceous kind of food, such as sago, arrow-root, &c. &c. is also nourishing, and easily digested. Next to these are bread and rice.

Most of the substances which we eat, undergo a degree of previous digestion in the process of cookery, a process of great importance to us, for many substances cannot be properly disgested in our stomach, without being cooked in a fit manner. Cookery, however, should not be carried too far, for that would destroy the nutritious particles of the food. It has chiefly two varieties, one called roasting, and another boiling. In the process of cookery, certain substances are added, called condiments, such as

cardamum, pepper, and other spices, which merely stimulate the power of the stomach, and thus exhaust its functions.

The food of man should, and in fact does, vary, according to the nature of the climate he inhabits. Thus for instance, the inhabitants of warmer climates prefer a vegetable diet; whereas people inhabiting a cold climate, live mostly on animal food.

The Hindoos, the inhabitants of the Canary Islands, and of the Brazils, live almost entirely on herbs, grains, &c. In the digestion of these substances, little heat and irritation are generated in the stomach.

If, on the other hand, we turn our eyes towards the inhabitants of the northern climates, we are astonished at their apparent voraciousness, which enables them daily to swallow with impunity such an enormous quantity of animal food, as in warm climates would act as an active poison. Our wonder, however, will cease if we consider, that in temperate and frigid climates, the people have to stand against the violent effects of cold, which render the use of large quantities of flesh and spirituous liquors almost necessary to their well-being.

As aids to our appetite for food, an appetite of vital importance to our very existence, Nature has given us certain sensations, of which we daily experience the working, whether we are in the enjoyment of health, or otherwise. The first of these is taste, next are hunger and thirst, the chief agents which excite in us a desire for food. Taste must be derived from a certain nerve, but what it is, we do not yet know. We are equally ignorant of the causes of thirst and hunger.

When a man refrains from taking any food for a length of time, he is said to be undergoing starvation, the effects of which are, first, diminution of the weight of the body,

general debility, suspension of the secretions delirium, and finally death. There have been instances, however, of prolonged abstinence, though the accounts given of many of them are suspected of exaggeration; and persons have been known to pass eighteen months, nay two, three, four, five, six, seven, and ten years without eating any thing, that deserves the name of nourishment.

In the memoirs of the Edinburgh Society, is found the history of a woman, who lived on whey only, for fifteen years.

Theories concerning the nature of Hunger and Thirst.

Some physiologists tell us, that hunger results from the coats of the stomach rubbing on each other. Others describe it to be a nervous sensation, and others again consider it to be produced by the pressure of the liver and spleen on the intestine. With respect to thirst, even hypothesis has ceased to give any account of it; such is the abstruseness and difficulty which beset us in our investigations regarding it.

Mastication and other operations of Digestion.

The first operation of digestion is the mastication of the food; but all I need tell you about it is, that it is nothing more than chewing and dividing the matter composing our aliments into minute parts. This is effected by the alternate action of the muscles attached to the jawbones. The second process of digestion is insalivation, which consists in the divided food being probably mixed with the saliva, the object of which seems to be to make the particles thin, whence some physiologists suppose, that the food undergoes a kind of digestion in the mouth. As soon as the food is well mixed with the saliva, it undergoes the process of deglutition, which though it appears to be so easily ac-

complished, is effected in a very complicated manner, being brought about by a number of muscular dilatations and contractions following each other in slow order. The divided food when well mixed with the saliva is swallowed, and the mouth is closed by the approximation of the jaws. By the contraction of different muscles, it is then carried between the tongue and the soft palate, the former acting as an inclined plane. In this way a morsel of food is pushed into the pharynx. When it reaches there it is slowly propelled into the oesophagus by the gradual contraction of the muscular fibres that compose the pharynx. The top of the oesophagus is dilated to receive the morsel, and then immediately contracts to push it downwards. The pressure of the food now dilates the lower part of the oesophagus, which again then contracts and forces down the contents, and thus by alternate dilatations and contractions of its muscles, the food is propelled through the oesophagus, or gullet, into the stomach.

As soon as the food enters the stomach, it begins to be acted upon by the gastric and mucus secretions of that vessel. The former is a most important principle of our body, for it is by the aid of the acid and alkaline matters contained in the gastric juice, that the food is digested, or reduced to the state of what is called chyme. The action of this secretion on our food was clearly proved by an experiment performed by an Italian physiologist, who introduced into the stomach of animals pieces of sponge containing meats, which being taken out after a few minutes, were found to have been changed into chyme, or food digested in a proper manner. A small degree of heat also is requisite in the process of digestion.

When the food has been duly acted on by the gastric juice, it passess towards the centre of the stomach, and finally to the inner surface of its walls, to which it is pro-

pelled by the contraction of the muscular coat of the stomach. It should be mentioned, however, that that portion of the food only is digested, which lies in contact with the mucus membrane, and has been acted on by the gastric juice, the principle endowed with the power of converting our aliments into chyme. This digested matter ultimately passes through the pyloric orifice into the duodenum. As soon as the food is in this part of the alimentary canal, it is acted on by the bile and pancreatic juice, and when that is properly done, it goes into the intestines. In its course within these, it is divided into two portions, namely, chyle and fæces. The former is absorbed by the small absorbent vessels, which are distributed in the neighbouring parts, and carried into the large tube called the thoracic duct, through which it ascends into the vein placed just below the clavicle or collar bone, where it mixes with the circulating fluid, and forms what is called the blood, the life of our body. In the passage upwards of the chyle through the thoracic duct it assumes a reddish hue, which increases in deepness when mixed with the venous blood. The other portion of the chyme, named the faeces, passes through the large intestines, and finds its way out by the opening, called the anus.

Conclusion.

I shall now, gentlemen, conclude this brief account of the physiology of Digestion, which is one of the most important functions of the animal economy, and of essential necessity to our lives, the preservation of which entirely depends on the efficiency with which this vital action is performed by the proper organs of our body. The greater part of our diseases, especially in this country have their source in the disturbance of some of the operations connected with this function. Among the poorer classes of

our countrymen in particular, what numbers are every day dying of diarrhoea, dysentery, &c. and need I tell you, that that scourge of humanity, the cholera asphyxia, takes its rise also from the perennial source of maladies lying within our alimentary canal.

The violent forms of fevers, by which so many lives are every day carried off, mostly owe their origin also to some derangement of the parts of our body concerned in this vital function.

I would therefore earnestly advice every one of you present here, to observe strictly the regularity of your diet to see that you eat nothing that may prove noxious, and to take care that your organs of digestion are in good order.

April 13th, 1842.

STATE OF HINDOOSTAN UNDER THE HINDOOS.—No. 3.

By Babǫo Peary Chand Mittra.

(Read on the 21st October, 1840.)

Introduction.—To attempt to offer a regular and consecutive account of the rise and progress of commerce under the Hindoos, is a task which is beyond my power, as I have not met with any book which properly treats of the subject, or contains all the information that we require. What I have been able to collect, will be found classified under different heads in this essay, which, scanty as it is, will nevertheless convey some idea of the nature, and extent of our trade in former times.

The mass of the people of Hindoostan never lived in a *high style*, and being the citizens of a country intersected by a number of rivers, affording every facility to the development of its agricultural resources, and possessing a rich variety of soils from which the necessaries of life could always be raised, with little exertion on the part of the labouring class, they lived content with thus deriving their subsistence, and scarcely thought of commanding those comforts and enjoyments, to which the active and enterprising people of Europe and America aspire. It must have struck every reflecting mind, that in countries which are not of an agricultural character, the people being impelled, as it were by nature, to find employment in some way or other, have generally recourse to manufacture, and as intelligence among them spreads far and wide, they are excited by a desire to effect a saving in the capital, labour, and time; discoveries, and inventions leading to the attainment of that object are made; an impetus is given to

scientific ardour and ingenuity; wealthy markets for the goods wrought by machinery are searched after and discovered; an increased supply and consumption take place; and thus they go on ameliorating their commercial and intellectual condition. But India, favourable, as has been her situation in a physical point of view, derived assistance in the accumulation of her wealth more from *nature* than from *art*; and the rich store of her bountiful productions being sufficient for the simple wants of her sons, she did not feel the necessity for turning more attention to manufacture than what was requisite for the sake of home consumption, or of seeking foreign markets for the disposal of her goods, with a view to augment her opulence, or improve her taste for luxuries. And though the Hindoos had for some time lived in such a quiet and peaceful state, prosecuting their mercantile vocations and enterprise within the walls of their country, her riches and magnificence became gradually so well known to the world, that nations from its different points vied with each other in securing the trade of India. Hence commenced the intercourse of the Hindoos with the foreign nations, which we find was productive of much reciprocal advantage.

External Commerce of India.—From the account of Periplus, India appears to have had mercantile connection with China from the earliest times. There were two roads, by which commodities, consisting chiefly of raw silk, spun silk, and silk stuffs, were transported from China to India, viz. one through Bactria to Baragaza, and the other to Palibothra. Pliny and Colonel Wilford are of opinion, that an intercourse between China and India was opened about the commencement of the Christian era. It is not certain in what year it began, but that it existed long before the reign of Claudius, which commenced in the 44th year of the Christian era, appears from the testimony of

a Hindu, contained in a passage of Pliny, noticed by Col. Wilford (in the Asiatic Researches, vol. ix. p. 40), in the following manner: "A certain king of Ceylon sent once four ambassadors to the Emperor Claudius; and the chief of this embassy was called *Rachias*, who being asked whether he knew the Seres or the Chinese, answered 'that the Seres lived beyond the Himalayas, or Snowy Mountains, with regard to Ceylon : so that the Seres were often seen or visited by his countrymen, and were well known to them through a commercial intercourse,' which we find was regularly carried on by embassies from the commencement of the second century to a late date."

Among the countries on the east, Ava, (Anga,) Pegu, and Malacca (Yamalacca,) had a trade with India, which was carried on only by sea, and in which the Hindoos are considered by Heeren to have taken an active part. This intercourse existed at the time of Periplus, or in other words Arrian's coasting the Erythrean sea,* which is evident from his saying, that "the passage was usually made from a place on the Coromandel Coast to Chrysa or Malacca," Massie, in his Continental India, has added his testimony as to the existence of such intercourse in early times, and the names of the places he supplies are Anga and Chrysa on one shore, and Masaulipaton and Mavaliperam on the other.

Ceylon was in former times in a very flourishing state, and its agriculture and commerce were very prosperous, which its "immense artificial tanks," capable of irrigating lands which could produce "upwards of forty million pounds of rice."—the number of coins found there, and

* I fancy Erythrean sea was the ancient name of the Indian Ocean. The work of Periplus must have been written in the second century, when Arrian flourished, to whom the authorship of it is attributed. See Watts' Bibliotheca Britannica, vol. i. p. 47.

the records of its early history, fully attest. The accounts that have been given of Ceylon by Pliny, Periplus, Ptolemy, and Cosmas, are all concurrent as to its having been a great emporium of trade. Vessels from several Parts of India, Persia, Arabia, Phoenicia, Egypt, and Ethiopia traded with Ceylon, which was, in fact, the place of *rendezvous* of the merchants of different countries, and was the busy scene of a carrying trade. The principal staple commodities of this celebrated island were cinnamon, pearls, gems, turtle shells, muslins, ivory, &c. Its trade with India was by far the most important and extensive, and the ports where Orrhota (Surat,) Colliana, (Collian near Bombay,) Sibor, Mongaruth, Salapatana, Nalapatana, and Pudlapatana—the last five places were included in the province of Mali in Malabar.* Ceylon maintained a numerous fleet of ships, which were principally employed in taking ambassadors to the Indian Continent and the Eastern Peninsula for political purposes, or for bringing "betrothed princesses from the Indian courts, which usually supplied the consorts of the sovereigns of Ceylon." It is said, (in Forbes' Ceylon,) that when an expedition was sent against the king of Arramana and Cambodia in A.D. 1169, in the 16th year of the reign of Prak-Ramavahoo, "seven hundred vessels were equipped for that service in five months."

The western part of India had commercial relations with the countries on, or contiguous to the Persian and Arabian Gulfs. In proportion as her capabilities and riches became known, her external trade rose higher and higher, and like a stream unfettered and unbounded, threw plenty and exuberance from its lap on the places where it flowed. Arabia being placed between India and Egypt,

* Macpherson's Commerce.

appears to have availed itself of its favourable position in the prosecution of a carrying trade from the earliest times. The perfumes which the Arabians took away from India, were reported to have been procured from almost inaccessible countries at a great peril of their lives, and were supplied to Egypt and Syria. The geographical position, and the physical situation of India and Arabia have been such, "as the wants and necessities of the one found a supply or balance from the other." The principal articles which the Arabians imported from India, were the spices and aromatics which were generally obtained by trading caravans, owing to violent winds standing in the way of making a passage in the ocean.

The Babylonians carried on a trade with the northern India chiefly with a view to secure supplies of dogs,* dyes and different kinds of precious stones, (for the use of their seals, rings, &c.) which were brought by a road running towards Bactria.†

The Phœnicians of Sidon and Tyre, who had been bred up as navigators of the Mediterranean, and were bold and adventurous, were not ignorant for a long time of the value and importance of a trade with India, and being desirous of availing themselves of it as much as they possibly could, settled on the borders of the Arabian Gulf, and dispossessed the Idumæans of some harbours whence they

* Dogs of India are said to have been of a large size, and could attack tigers. According to Marco Polo, they could overcome lions. —Heeren's Asiatic Nations, vol. i. 207.

It appears from a sloke of the Ramayana that they were kept in the palaces of the Rajahs.

Antargṛhasthān puṣṭān Vyāghrasaṃhanan dyūtīn |
Tīkṣna daṃṣṭrāyudhān śūrān śunaścāpālayadvahūn ||

Ayodhya Kynda.

Heeren's Asiatic Nations, vol. i. p. 210.

carried on an intercourse with India, as well as with Africa.

The example of the Phœnicians was followed by the Jews, whose trade with India was only by land. The Egyptians commenced their mercantile operations in this country by the Red Sea, in the reign of Sesostris, 1659 B.C. Since Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, making Alexandria the seat of government, and paying due attention to the improvement of the naval affairs, the trade between Egypt and India began to flourish, and received great encouragement at the hands of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who had built a city called Berenice, which he turned into a great commercial mart. During the reign of the Ptolemies, an active commerce subsisted between the Egyptians and the Hindoos; the former allured by the prospect of enriching their country, frequented the ports of India as often as circumstances would permit, and must have employed a large number of ships for the purpose; which we presume, from "one hundred and twenty-five sail of India shipping" having been seen lying once in the ports of Myos, Hormus, and Berenice. Since the invasion of India by Alexander, an overland trade by Egypt and Syria was opened for the western world, from which period the first mentioned place was for nearly three centuries the seat of an uninterrupted commerce. The ships that used to come from Berenice, generally frequented Musiris or Merjee, and Brace or Barcelore, on the Malabar Coast, where they discharged and were loaded with cargoes. On Egypt's becoming a Roman province, in the reign of Augustus, the productions of India attracted the attention of the people of that celebrated empire, who came forward to avail themselves of the sources of wealth which their conquered country had enjoyed. So fond were then the Romans of luxury and of costly articles, that they felt

necessitated to increase their dealings with India through Egypt, and this trade became in a short time so extensive, that a sum equal to *four hundred thousand pounds* was annually remitted to India in payment of investments ; and the goods imported into the Roman Empire from Egypt were in so great a demand, that they began to be transmitted by another route, viz. by Palmyra, from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, a circumstance which was conducive to the aggrandizement of that city. The different ports of India, with which merchants from Egypt carried on commerce, may be named as follows : Pattala on the Indus, Barygaza or Baroach on the Nerbudda, Musiris or Merjee on the Malabar Coast, and a few places on the eastern part, which may be now traced in the Coromandel Coast. Barygaza was by far the greatest emporium of all the above enumerated ports. The Rajah of the country to which it belonged, invited all the foreign traders to concentrate their business in it ; and his love for this place was so great, that he kept the other ports, Acabarus, Uppara, and Calliena regularly shut against the Greek merchants, who if arrived at any of them, were sent to Barygaza with a guard.*

The Romans derived from their mercantile relations with India immnse advantages. It is difficult to say, how that nation could have satisfied its desires for luxuries, if it had been ignorant of the wealth, the fertility, and the vast capabilities of Hindoostan. So opulent had the Romans become, by their commercial connection with India, "that a Roman fortune frequently exceeded 200,000*l.* sterling ;" and Lallia Paulina, the niece of one of their governors, decorated herself, on ordinary occations, with jewels valued at more than 300,000*l.*†

* Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. i.

† Taylor's Letters on India.

Among the ports of India frequented by the Egyptian vessels, there are only two or three of whose imports and exports we have any correct knowledge. The articles imported into the Barbaric emporium, or in another, palata, consisted of—

Drapery, chiefly plain,
Chrysolites,
Corals,
Storax,
Frankincense,
Glass Vessels,
Silver Plates.
Money,
Wine, in small quantities.

And the exports from it were,

Costus, an aromatic root,
B'dellium, a fragrant gum,
Lycium, a drug, or dyeing Stuff,
Callien stone (perhaps found in the river Callien at Goa,)
Sapphires,
Skins, from the country of the Seres,
Silk Thread or raw Silk from the same,
Calicoes,
Indigo.

Barygaza was inhabited by an industrious set of people, and was the *entrepot* of merchandize from China, the southern India, (carried by land over the Balaghaut mountains,) and Africa, to the "farthest east, imported by vessels of the country." It had a number of pilot boats, which conducted all foreign ships to the city. All mercantile transactions were so speedily managed in this port, that a vessel's cargo could be disposed of, and a fresh one placed on the board in three days. It possessed a large number of extensively engaged dealers.

The imports from Egypt were,

Wines of Italy, Laodecea and Arab,
Brass,
Ointment of ordinary quality, and in small quantity,
Money of gold and silver, in

Tin,
Lead,
Coral,
Chrysolites,
Garments, plain and counterfeit, of all kinds,
Sashes made of many threads, perhaps net-work,
Storax,
Melilot,
White Glass,
Sandarack,
Stimmi or stibium, (perhaps black lead,)
exchanging which with the money of the country there was considerable profit, and these were presented to the king in lieu of tribute or custom,
Precious Silver Vessels,
Musical Instruments,
Beautiful Virgins, for the seraglio,
Wine of the first quality,
Plain Dresses of the finest fabric,
The most precious Ointments.

The exports were,

Spikenard of various kinds, brought from Proclais,
Costus,
B'dellium,
Ivory,
Onyx stones from Plithana and Ozene, (believed to be Ougein,)
Silk Stuffs,
Molochinum (supposed cotton cloth of the colour of mallows) from Ozene,
Silk Thread or raw Silk,
Murrhine stones from Ozene,
Myrrh,
Lycium,
Muslins from Tagara and Ozene,
Calicoes of all sorts (or perhaps figured,)
Long Pepper,
Calicoes of inferrior quality brought in great quantities from Mennagara and Tagara, with many other articles.

Nelkynda, the first port of the kingdom of Pandion in the North of India, was the market for goods from several places of this country, and was often visited by the Grecian traders.

The goods imported into it were,

Chrysolites,
Plain Clothing in small quantities,
Stimmi,
Corals,
White Glass,
Brass,
Tin,
Lead,
Wine in small quantities,
Sandarach,
Arsenic,
Considerable sums of money to make up the purchase of their homeward cargoes.

The exports were,

Pepper and Malabathrum, which, of a superior quality, were abundantly found there.*

In addition to the ports above enumerated, the Island of Bate, "on the opposite shore of the Gulf of Cutch," whence the learning of India is said to have been carried away by the Egyptians and the Arabs, was, I perceive, from Mrs. Postans' notice of it in her Western India, "a great mart of commerce for other nations, both from the east and south," and was the depository of excellent shells, for which it was designated *Sanka-dhara.*

Time, and a regard to reciprocal benefits, had in a measure matured the intercourse of India with Rome, which would have proved more advantageous if it had been nursed with greater care and attention for a longer period; but the Goths and other barbarians breaking out in the fourth and fifth centuries, despoiled the all-conquering and powerful city of Rome of its magnificence and glory. Constantinople, which from its favourable situation could well secure the advantages of the India commerce, soon attained to a state of greatness by directing its exertions towards the accomplishment of that object.

* Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. i. p. 169 to 227.

Upwards of two centuries Constantinople carried on a trade with India by land and water carriage, "from the banks of the Ganges and Indus to the south-east quarter of the Caspian Sea, and from thence to Trebisond on the Black sea, and also from the Persian Gulf, by the deserts of Syria and Arabia, assisted by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris." The appearance of the Mahomedan religion in Constantinople gradually undermined its greatness, and its activity in the Indian commerce died away.

It is said, that a commercial intercourse subsisted between the western part of India, and eastern Africa. The imports from Concan and Barygaza, were rice, ghee, oil of sesamum, cotton, muslins, sashes and sugar. Some suppose that this trade was carried on by the Arabs in consequence of the vessels employed in it coming back to Arabia, after having been unloaded in Zanguebar. Lieutenant Burnes, in a paper published in the—vol. of the Royal Geographical Society, has discussed the subject, and has come to the conclusion, that the trade in question was carried on by the Hindoos, and not by the Arabs, in consequence of the former being still found to suffer every privation for the sake of adventure in commerce. There are other writers, who are opposed to this opinion.

Internal Commerce of India. Though we are equally unfortunate in not meeting with any work treating of the rise and progress of the internal commerce of India, I must confess that from what I have read, I see abundant proofs of its having been carried on with every activity. Merchants in all ages lived almost in every part of Hindoostan, and an exchange of commodities took place among the people of its different countries as the utility of cultivating such an intercourse became known, and as physical impediments to it were removed. "Trade" (says Huet in p. 213) "was so flourishing among the Indians,

that they traded with one another by land, and made use of waggons for that purpose." In Samarcand, the Indians used to meet annually with the Persians, Tartars, and the Chinese, in order to "deal in very valuable commodities." Cabul was, at the time of the Macedonian invasion, inhabited by the Hindoos,* who had a great spice trade.†

There were several markets, (some of which were of an extensive nature,) where goods met with a ready and an advantageous sale, and where mercantile transactions were carried on extensively. On the banks of the Ganges there were several flourishing cities, celebrated for being the seats of commerce, which was nourished and encouraged particularly by the Magadha Emperors, whose merchants were "bold, enterprising, and at the same time cautious and circumspect." (Asiatic Researches, vol. ix.) From the modern Oude to the Punjaub, a home trade was (according to Massie,) "carried on along the course of the Ganges," at the mouth of which stood a city famous for pearls, betel, fine muslins, malabathrum, and Gangetic spikenard, which were carried by water, chiefly to southern parts of India. Between Ceylon and several countries of Hindoostan, a regular intercourse subsisted, of which I have already spoken. In Western India, there were several places of note for internal traffic. Ozene, the capital of Scindia, Chandravati, (near Abo.) out of whose ruins Ahmedabad was built in the fifth century, and which was for some time the chief city of Western India and Callien or Kalian, were places which at one time abounded in the activity of commerce. With regard to Chandravati, Colonel Tod speaks as follows in his Travels in Western India: "However intelligible its position may

* Vigne's Guzni, Cabul, &c. p. 193.

† Huet's Commerce, &c. of the Ancients, p. 215 and 217.

now appear as a commercial mart, we must, on the other hand, remember, that religion and traffic are twin sisters in the East, and that every place of pilgrimage is a place of trade, and being in the centre of several and little out of the rute which served to convey the maritime commerce of both Peninsulas over India, this must have insured its prosperity. Were proof of it required, we have only to look on the merchant brothers of Abo." Arriving at Sarota, and finding a road through a deep forest, the author continues, "no better proof can be given of the abandoned condition of this country, once the highway of commerce between the sea ports and northern India, than this relapse of civilization into a state of nature. Here with all the wonders of Abo, Taringi, and Chandravati around us, the one fallen, and the other sinking, into decay, we can speculate upon the Hindu doctrine of the destruction of worlds, and the passions of their lordly inhabitants ; their roads once crowded with caravans of commerce and of pilgrims, resounding to the tramp of the war horse, were now little trodden, save by the savage *Koli*, who finds shelter amidst his own indigenous woods and rocks."

In the middle of the 8th century, Anhulwarra became the capital of Western India. It was a very opulent city, possessed "eighty-four bazars," which always abounded in merchandize, and enjoyed for several centuries the advantages of an extensive commerce, for which reason it was called the "Tyre of India." Barygaza, of which we have already spoken, was one of its "eighty-four bazars," but its chief port was Gujna, or Cambayet. Among the principal articles which used to be sent to Barygaza for sale from other parts of India, we notice muslins (sindones) of the colour of mallows which were exported from Ozene, and nard

(sumbul) long pepper, myrrh, onyx, which came from Minagara, evidently by the Indus. Silks of various descriptions were sent from Tagara, as well as from the silk marts of Moultan, Sirhind, and other northern places.* Tagara, or the modern Deogir, contiguous to the celebrated caves and grottos of Ellora, was a very famous city, and its manufactures consisted of different kinds of muslins and cotton, both of a coarse and fine character.† The goods of the different parts of Deccan were in the first instance sent to Tagara, and were thence conveyed in carts to Baroch, which was a very active market. Plutanah, which was not far from the present Ahmednuggur, "was the greatest market for onyx stones." Ptolemy represents the southern part of the Coromandel Coast, as having been "thickly studded with commercial towns," and at his time "the port or city," says Massie, "now called the Seven Pagodas, was deemed a place of commerce ; and thus the archaeologist may account for its yet wonderful relics—its almost mystical pavements on land and under water." Nelkinda, or Nelisserim, standing on a river between Malabar and Canara, was a central mart between the countries east and west of Cape Comorin. There were several ports to the southward of Barygaga ; viz. Semylla, Mandagora, Palaepatma, Melizigara, Byzantium, Taporn, and Tyrannibus, which, like the ports of Lymirica, were visited by country ships.‡

In the South of India, there were a number of ports ; viz. Balita, Comar, Colchi, (adjoining to which a great pearl fishery was carried on,) Camara, Paduce, and Sopata, in which an extensive coasting trade was prosecuted,

* Tod's Western India.

† A. R. vol. i.

‡ Macpherson, vol. i.

"partly by vessels belonging to other parts of India, and partly by their own. From Limyrica, and other northern parts of India, they received various articles imported from Egypt, as well as the native productions and manufactures. Some of their vessels, consisting of large canoes, joined together, were called *sangara* ; and others, called *kolandiophonta*, which were of the largest size, were used in the trade with the river Ganges, and the countries beyond it."* We thus see, that the internal trade was carried on by land as well as by water, and that it was not confined to any particular place or division of the country, but was all activity throughout—improving and ameliorating its condition and character, in proportion as facilities to an inter-communication were increased. We have no means of knowing the *details*, concerning the imports and exports, into and from, the different countries of Hindoostan in early ages, but that several of them carried on mercantile business on an extensive scale, is almost certain. Most of the Gangetic countries enjoyed the benefits of a long continued and an active commerce. In our own books, as well as in Greek writings, we read of the different parts of India having been thickly populated, which must have inculcated the necessity for making frequent and numerous sales and purchases. The city of Canouge, had 20,000 shops of betel-nuts. When Alexander visited the ancient sites of Moultan, Attock, and Lahore, he found them all in great affluence ; and fond as he was of mercantile adventure, he gave every encouragement to those whom he found engaged in trade. Dr. Burnes, in his Narrative of the Court of Sindh, says, that when Nadir Shah visited Tatta, he found there, "no less than forty thousand weavers of calico and loongees, or silk embroi-

* Macpherson, vol. i.

dered clothes; besides artisans of other descriptions to the number of twenty thousand, exclusive of the bankers, grain dealers, and shop-keepers, who were estimated at sixty thousand." It is not at all improbable, that if we can collect the mercantile statistics of the opulent and powerful kingdoms of Hindoostan, we shall meet with similar information as to their commercial advancement, to which Huet has borne testimony in his interesting work, (p. 212). "The great number of trading towns" says he "that were formerly in the *Indies*, was an undoubted proof of its commerce; I speak only of its trading towns. For if we searched after the number of all their towns in general, and depended upon Strabo, Pliny, and Plutarch, we should find five thousand of them in that part only which Alexander conquered; and even some of the first magnitude, according to Solinus. And, Arian says, that the number of the rest was so great, that they could not be named."

Ancient rules for the mercantile class.—In Mitakshara, I have found several rules, which men belonging to the mercantile class were called upon to attend to, evidently for the sake of the public good; but how far they were *strictly followed*, is a question which it is not easy to answer with any degree of certainty. The rules I allude to, are as follow :—

If merchants, knowing that the king has reduced, or raised the price of articles, combine through desire of gain to fix a different value, to the detriment of workmen, (as washermen, &c.) and of artificers, (as painters, &c.) they shall be find one thousand panas (*Sloke* 252, *p.* 312.)

If merchants wishing to buy the articles of another country at reduced prices, prevent the same from being sold, and sell their own articles at an exorbitant price,

punishment of the first kind will be inflicted on them.* (*Sloke* 253, *p.* 312.)

Articles are to be sold and purchased according to the prices determined by the king, and whatever profits accrue therefrom, will belong to the merchants. (*Sloke* 254, *p.* 312.)

The merchants can take five per cent profit on any article of their own country, being immediately sold, and ten per cent. on the articles of another country sold on arrival in the course of a day ; but if either of these two kinds of articles be sold after the lapse of any time, the proportion of profits will be regulated according to its shortness or length.—(*Sloke* 255, *p.* 313.)

The charges incurred in the transit of any article from one country to another, on account of carriage, customs, &c. shall be added to its value, and that such a price will be affixed to it as may yield a profit of ten per cent. (*Sloke* 256, *p.* 313.)

He who having taken the value of any article does not deliver it, will be made to do so with the interest, or with the profit which would have been obtained at the time of delivery by the foreign merchants in their country from the sale thereof (*Sloke* 257, *p.* 314.)

In consequence of the king's determining the value of commodities, he is entitled to a custom of one-twentieth part thereof: such articles as have been ordered not to be sold in a foreign country, or worthy of a king, being sold are liable to confiscation (*Sloke* 264, *p.* 320.)

If the merchants speak a falsehood about the weight of any article, or pass by stealth the places where custom is levied, or such as sell or buy disputed articles, are lia-

* Punishment is of three kinds—the first kind impossing a fine of 250 panas, the second 500 panas, and the third 1000 panas.

ble to a fine eight times the value of such articles (*Sloke* 265, *p.* 320.)

The officers in charge of the department of transit duties, levying land customs, are to be fined in ten panas (*Sloke* 266, *p.* 321.)*

Roads.—Another proof of the activity of the home trade can be safely adduced from the care and attention bestowed on the construction and repair of the roads to facilitate internal communication. It appears that the trade by caravans was carried on from the earliest times, from which must have arisen the necessity of forming roads in the different parts of the country. When Damaanti, the heroine of *Noyshud*, forsaken by her husband in a wilderness, was bending her steps towards Chedi (modern Chanderi ?) she came in sight of a body of merchants passing by that way, some of whom were destroyed by wild elephants, and those who survived this sad catastrophe, and whom she accompanied in her journey to that kingdom, consisted of Bramins learned in Vedes,† which shews that men of the religious class were not averse to mercantile business, and joined caravans either to assist them with their counsel, or take a part in it.‡ Be that as it may—the above fact from *Noyshud* corroborates our statement respecting the trade by caravans having been carried on in ancient times. Megasthenes is the first who mentions that there was "a royal high way extending from Taxila on the Indus, through Paparomisia to Palibothra on the

* We have no idea of the amount of duties collected in the different parts of India ; but in Anhulwana "the daily amount of duties was" according to Colonel Tod (in W. I. chap p. 157) "one lac of takhas," or in other words, 5,000 rupees as daily import duties, independent of those of its eighhty-four ports.

† Mahabharut Vana Purva, vol. 1.

‡ I have since found that the Brahmins could become mercha nts. See menu X 82 and 85 and Rajdhurma Purva of Santi Purva.

Ganges, which was ten thousand stadia in length"* and the frequent notices of which are to be found in Ramayana. In Mahabharut, the brothers of Yudister are said to have travelled in *ruths* previous to the performance of the *Raujshaie Juggo*, which added to the circumstance of the Rajahs of different kingdoms visiting each other, and that of a commercial intercourse having subsisted between them, confirms our belief that the roads must have been levelled, if not perfectly *Macadamised.* When Alexander visited India, he met with no impediment whatever in the progress of his journey as far as the paths which he had pursued were concerned. Macpherson in his annals of commerce, adverting to the history of this period, observes that "their (Hindoos') roads were kept in repair, and regularly furnished with milestones." In another place he says, "a few of the traders from Egypt appear however to have penetrated into India as far as the Ganges, but it is most probable that they travelled overland upon the magnificent royal highway extending across the country from the Indus to the Ganges." That the kings of this country had in their employ a class of men who took care of the roads, is evident from a passage of *Ramayana*, in which a distinct mention of the people "who superintended the different parts of the roads" is made. The same work contains passages corroborative of the royal highways having been properly watered, and shaded with trees.

Besides the construction of the roads, the excavation of tanks—the formation of temples—*Atitshalas*, bridges, embankments, &c. were considered public works, in which those who wished to establish a good name, and acquire virtue, assisted ; and from the remains of which, found in

* A coss is equal to 10 stadia, or 1.23 miles British.

different parts of the country, it is evident that acts of such liberality and public spirit were not uncommon among the Hindoos.

Navigation of the Hindoos.—It has been asserted by many persons, that the Hindoos were utter strangers to maritime trade, and were unacquainted with ship-building. That such an opinion as this is a mere assumption, and is founded on no legitimate data, I shall endeavour to shew. In several of our works, we find passages illustrative of the former adventurous character of the Hindoos. In Ramayana, we read of "merchants trafficking beyond sea, and bringing presents to the king." Accounts of such adventures of our countrymen are also to be found in the Hitapodesh, Sacontola,* Retnavali,† and other writings. In the Institutes of Menu, a law with respect to bottomry is mentioned; and Mitakshara, in p. 63, contains a rule about interest being taken from those who borrow money for the sake of making adventures on the sea, which clearly establishes the fact of the Hindoos having been navigators in early ages. It has been stated by Strabo, that the natives navigated the Ganges from the sea up to Palibothra; and Periplus speaks of merchants having settled on the north side of the island of Socotra, for the purpose of carrying on external commerce. Pliny informs us, that the natives of Ceylon "commonly made the passage in vessels of very slight build, like those used on the Nile," and in consequence of some oceans being shoaly, and of their having to pass channels, the vessels "which were generally of three thousand amphoræ burden, were built sharp and flat." In Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, we meet with similar proof of the adven-

* Premchand Turkabagees' edition, 8vo. Calcutta, p. 130.

† Retnavali, 8vo. Calcutta, 1832, p. 4.

turous spirit of our countrymen in former days. We learn, that in the second century, "the natives of India extended their voyages beyond the former limits, and took an active share in the trade with Egypt. It appears probable, from Agatharides, and certain from Periplus, that they traded to Arabia probably from the remotest ages ; we know from Pliny, (L. I. c. 17,) that they sailed up the Red Sea, as far as Egypt, where he conversed with some of them who were from Timula, an emporium on the west side of India, called Symalla by the Greeks." In the sixth century, continues the author, "the merchants of India mastered themselves of the above trade, and in their outward voyages, they generally called in at the ports of Persia, for the chance of a nearer market, and they scarcely ever failed of having their whole cargoes bought up by the Persian merchant." We also know, that when Semiramis invaded India, "she was opposed with four thousand ships upon the river Indus, in a passage that was six leagues in breadth. These ships, although they were made of single pieces of wood, were nevertheless very large, for the trees of that country are of an excessive bigness."* Periplus mentions, that a number of conutry ships could be found in the harbour of Musiris at all times, and the inhabitants of the Coromandel Coast traded with those of Malabar in vessels of their own. The Balharae kings of Anhulwarra possessed ships, by which that city enjoyed an enriching maritime trade. In Mewar chronicles, noticed in Tod's Rajastan, navigators are said to have resided in the ancient city of Anhulwarra, which "was a place of universal commerce." Mrs. Postans, in her Western India, speaks of the mariners of Cutch in high terms. "The Cutch mariners," says she,

* Huet, p. 23.

"however satisfied with their security, are a most fearless and enterprizing race, trading, as their forefathers have done, for centuries, to all parts of the Red Sea, and even stretching out to the eastern coasts of Africa, Ceylon, and China Sea." From Dr. Wilson's account of the Foe-Kue-Ki, or the travels of Fa Hiam in India, in the forth century,* we have been put in possession of several valuable facts, relating to the maritime commerce of this country, which will serve as a strong confirmation of the views I entertain on this subject. We learn that this Chinese traveller, after spending six years in visiting different parts of India, came to Tamalipta or Tamlook, which was then a place of great commercial importance; and "at the end of his residence, the merchants," says Fa-Hiam, "were embarking in large ships, to sail to the south-west, and in one of them he took a passage." In fourteen days he arrive at Ceylon, where he remained for two years. He then went to Java, in "a merchant vessel, large enough to contain more than two hundred persons, and provisioned for the long voyage across the India Ocean." He lived for five months at Java, and returned to China in a country ship. Now it must be quite clear from the above narrative of this Chinese traveller, as well as from the other proofs adduced above, that the *Hindoos navigated the seas, and that they were not strangers to maritime trade.* I should observe at the same time, to silence all doubts on the point, that the mariners of their ships were their own countrymen, and not any foreign people, which is evident not only from the notorious prejudice of the Hindoos in regard to living and eating with persons of any other nation, but from the account of Fa-Hiam himself. After his leaving Java and voyaging a month, "a frightful

* Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. v.

wind and a violent rain came on in the second watch of the night. The merchants and passengers were all equally terrified; Fa Hiam immediately, and with all his heart prayed to Ku-an-shi-in, and to all the religious of the land of Hiam, imploring the Gods to succour them, and make the heavens tranquil. When the weather became calm, the Bramins took counsel amongst them, and said, "It is the presence of this Samanean on board that has brought all this danger upon us. Let us leave him on some island or sea—and so would they have done had not the Tan-quei, (the benefactor, the patron from the Sanscrit Dava, a gift,) of the pilgrim taken his part, and threatened the merchants with the anger of the king of China if they abandoned him." It will be perceived from the above extract, that Bramins were on board the ship with merchants voyaging to China, and were the advisers of the crew, who from the circumstance of their blindly following the superstitious dictates of men of the religious order, and employing Fa-Hiam on arriving near Loa to interpret their language to the inhabitants, could be no other people than the Hindoos. In addition to what has been stated, there are other facts, some of which we may proceed to notice, proving as they do, that our countrymen navigated seas and visited foreign countries. I need scarcely mention, that our rajahs and aristocratical class took a delight in wandering from one place to another for the sake of adventure or war, and kept up communication with each other by embassies, which were sometimes sent to the emperors of Greece and Rome. "Some of these ambassadors," says Capt. Wilford, (Asiatic Researches, vol. xi. p. 105,) "were off as far as Spain—others visited Alexandria and Egypt, where Ptolemy in the third century saw and conversed with them. Some of these ambassadors had long con-

ference at Babylon, or rather Seleucia, with the famous Bardesanes; and pilgrimages to the SC'han of Mohabhaga, now Mabog or Bambyke in Syria, were very common, according to Lucien, "as cited by the author of the Ancient Universal History." In another place he says, that the Hindoos of both sexes in the capacity of servants were not uncommon in Greece. Several emigrations took place from India, and we find some tribes of Hindoos settled in Colchis, where they are Hindoos to this day; and Heschias asserts, that the Sindi of Thrace came originally from India. Historians of Alexander's Expedition state, that when the Macedonian hero went to Persia from India, he was followed by a number of Hindoos, who stepped out of the walls of their country, from a fondness of travel. In Persia, Arabia, and Java, Hindoos are still to be found. The writings of Ibn Abu Usaibiah shew, that many a Hindoo physician lived at the court of Bagdad in the days of Haroun-al-Raschid.* Such facts as these, throw no little light on the voyaging and travelling of our country men in former days; and when in addition to the above arguments we learn from Ma-Twan-lin's Chinese Account of India, that even as late as the sixth century, "India carried on a considerable commerce by sea with Tatsin, (the Roman empire,) the Anse, (or Asæ Syrians;) and some of the Indians came as far as Foo-nou and Keaouche (Tonquin) to traffic in coral necklaces and pearls of superior quality," it is impossible to deny the claims of the Hindoos to maritime trade from the earliest times, or to consider them as having been apathetic to travelling by land or water in all ages.†

* Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, No. xi.

† Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. v.

With respect to the Hindoos being acquainted with the art of ship-building, and making it a part of their profession, I have to cite the authority of Arrian, who derives his information from Megasthenes, that well-known resident at the court of Palibothra. After describing several tribes of Hindoos, Arrian observes, "another tribe consists of artisans and petty traders, and of persons who live by manual labour. Of these, some pay tribute and perform stated works, make arms, and build ships ; for which they receive stipends. Of this tribe are the ship-builders and sailors, who navigate the rivers." Heeren speaking of the trade of India with the Eastern countries, has also stated, that "the Hindoos were in the habit of constructing vessels in which they navigated the coast of Coromandel, and also made voyages to the Ganges, and the Peninsula beyond it. These vessels bore different names according to their size."

Monetary System.—It is almost a proverbial saying, that gold and silver have been the medium of exchange in this country from the remotest ages ; but whether they were coined is a point on which some persons entertain doubts. If we refer to our works, we shall find mention made in several of them* of coined money, and there are laws to be found in Menu with respect to the rates of interest at which it was lent. An account of the different weights of the copper, silver, and gold coin is also to be met in that work. In Mitakshara, p. 308, there is a law enjoining punishment for those who made and used counterfeit coins. Huet in p. 10, states, that "the Indians having gold and silver of their own produce, had learnt among other customs of the Egyptians, the art of making money to facili-

* Ramayana I, 606, Sacontola, in Jones's Work, vol. vi. p. 280. &c.

tate their trade." Hindoo coins of different dimensions, shapes, metals, and descriptions, have been found in the different parts of India, such as Nepaul, Assam, Rungpoor, Cooch Behar, Tippera, Jayantipoor, Munepoor, Central India, Andhra, Rajpootana, Indraprastha,* &c. Some of them bear the names of Ramchunder and Vicramadyta. Colonel Tod in his Annals of Rajahstan, (vol. i.) speaks of the coins of Pandavas having been discovered.

The Hindoos had mints, for which we have the evidence of Mrs. Postans and Colonel Tod. The former has found vestiges of Porogurd, (a city of great importance in Western India) having had a mint, and the latter distinctly states, that Anhulwarra had mints for gold and silver coin, and that the characters on the coins of its kings were Buddistical, which religion was much like that of the Balharas.

The author of the Commerce, Money, and Banking of India, states, that "bills of exchange have been known to the Hindoos from very remote periods." It is difficult to trace when or how the circulation of paper money originated in this country. It has, however, been in use under the name of *Hoondee* among the up-country merchants for a very long time, and few of their remittances are made without its medium.

The rates of interest at which money was lent are as follow, (see Mitakshara 62 to 65) :—

On loans granted on the mortgage of any property, interest at the rate of one per eighty was charged a month. On loans granted without any security, interest at the rate of 2 per cent was taken from a Bramin, 3 per cent. from a Kattri, 4 per cent. from a Boishoe, and 5 per cent.

* Marsden's Numismatica Orientalis, and Journal of the Asiatic Society, vol. ii. p. 412.

from Sudra ; but it was equally binding on men of every class to pay interest at *whatever rate* they negotiated with the lenders, which plainly indicates, that there were no *anti-usurous laws*, whose inefficiency, inexpediency, and mischievousness have been so ably discussed in a series of letters by Jeremy Bentham, and it is satisfactory to us to find, that the Hindoo legislators had a correct view of the question.

Interest was paid daily as well as monthly. The practice of charging compound interest seems to have been prevalent.

On loans taken under a promise of being repaid within a few days, and remaining overdue for a long time, interest was allowed after six months from the date of their being granted, in cases where they were not acknowledged to have been borrowed at interest. If any person borrowing money (without interest) to be returned in a short time, went away to another country, he had to pay interest after a year ; but if being asked to repay the loan, he did not attend to the request of the lender (previous to his going on such a journey) he was bound to pay interest after three months.

If any person taking such loan and living in the same place did not repay it on being asked, he had to pay interest from the time its re-payment was demanded.

Persons who borrowed money for employment in mercantile business, had to pay interest at the rate of 10 per cent. per month, if they had to travel with it by a dangerous road, and 20 per cent. in case of their going on an adventure in the sea.

On articles sold, no interest was charged ; but according to *Bibad Chintamoni*, it was done after six months.

Having so far dwelt on the state of commerce under the Hindoos, let us now endeavour to offer a short sketch

of the productions and manufactures which constituted the principal branches of industry, and invigorated the mercantile operations of the country.

Mining.—The demand for gold and silver which were used by almost every class of people on different occasions, and in different ways, could not be of a limited nature, and hence we see that they attracted so much attention from the earliest times. People of several places must have been engaged in working the mines of those metals, which did not escape the notice of the Greeks, as Pliny touching on this subject, says, "the Dardaneans inhabit a country the richest of all India in gold mines, and the Sileans have the most abundant mines of silver. In the country of the Naraeans, on the other side the mountain Capitalia, (the highest of the Ghāt range,) there are a number of mines in which the Indians work very extensively. Just without the mouth of the river Indus, there are two islands, named Chryse and Argyre, so called as I think, from the mines of gold and silver which are found there; for I cannot believe what some have asserted, that "the soil of them consists wholly of metals." Jacob, in his work on precious metals, says, "Herodotus notices those people as employed in searching for gold, who live in the country of Pactijica, near the sources of the Indus, and are said by him to resemble the Bactrians. This district, fertile in gold, is on the eastern border of Great Bactriana, where the chain of the Taurus mountain divides into two ranges, which almost surround alike Bactriana and the desert stepples of Cobbi. The rivers which descend from these mountains give sufficient evidence by their washings, that gold was abundant." It has also been stated by Heeren, that the natives of countries contiguous to Little Thibet, &c. used to form caravans, and travel armed into the desert of Cobbi, "bounding Tangut on the

east, and China on the north," which abounded in gold, and it was from that place that gold and gold dust were procured. Periplus speaks of having seen gold and silver mines in the Lower Ganges, and when we recollect that gold at one time formed the tribute of the Hindoos to the ancient Persians, and was regularly imported by the Babylonians, its mines must have been under active operation. Besides gold and silver, the supply of other metals could not have been inconsiderable, especially those which are subservient to most practical uses. Tod in his Western India, says, "the seven metals *(heftdhat)* were found in Anhulwana, but the tin could be procured nearer home than the Cassiterides, for India had abundance, as the mines of Jawan in Mewar indicate that they have been worked from the earliest ages, and the hills abound in lead, copper, tin, and antimony."

The precious stones constituted the principal part of accoutrement among the nobility of India.* It was a fashion, as it still is, to decorate the females with pearls, rubies, emaralds, and diamonds, which were also required for medical purposes. Periplus states, that the precious stones of every kind were brought from the interior to the port of Nelkynda or Neliceram, (situate to the north of Calicut in 120° latitude,) where such articles were principally sold. From the accounts of Ctesius and other authors, we learn that precious stones were in early ages taken away by the Babylonians from the northern parts of India, as well as from the Ghat mountains. Diamonds, sapphires, pearls, &c. are said to have been regularly sent by Arabian and other ships that used to come from Egypt, and we must therefore conclude, that the mines of gems

* When *Rama* was proceeding to Dandakaranya, he saw merchants who dealt in jewels, which no doubt proves the antiquity of this trade.

must have been numerous, and under constant working. In the first supposition that they were numerous, we are borne out by the testimony of a late writer. Malte Brun in his Universal Geography, says, "in no part of the world are diamonds so numerous or so beautiful as in India, especially in the provinces of Bengal, Bundelkund, Allahabad, Orissa, Berar, Vijapoor, Golconda, and the Carnatic." We further learn from the same writer, that the diamond mines of Pannah in Benares alone fetched eight lacs of rupees per annum under Ackbar, and was a "considerable source of public revenue and mercantile profit under the native chiefs and the Marhattas." With respect to the other jewels, they are noticed as being principally found on the banks of the Mahanuddy, which corroborates the accounts of the Greek writers.

Cotton.—Cotton has in all ages formed an important article of trade in this country, and its growth, manufacture, and weaving have been one of the chief employments of the people. India is said to be the birth-place of this necessity of life. Herodotus, who wrote about the year 445 B.C. speaking of the Indians, says, "they possess likewise *a kind of plant*, which instead of fruit produces wool, of a finer and better quality than that of Strass: of this the Indians make their clothes." When Herodotus gave this account, "the cotton manufacture existed," says Baine, "westward of the Indus." Nearchus, the admiral of Alexander, who was employed in 327 B.C. "to descend the Indus, and to navigate the coast of Persia to the river Tigris," says, "the Indians wore linen garments, the substance whereof they were made *growing upon trees*; and this indeed is a flax, or rather *something much whiter and finer than flax.* They wear shirts of the same, which reach down to the middle of their legs; and veils which cover their heads and a great part of their shoulders." Its

name, he says, was "*tala.*" Strabo states, on the authority of Nearchus, that the Indians had "flowered cottons or chintzes," and enumerates the various and beautiful dyes with which their clothes were coloured. Cotton was one of the principal articles of the home and foreign trade, and as its consumption in various shapes was considerable among all classes of the people, and as it was regularly exported to other countries, its cultivation and manufacture must have been carried on extensively, and the Hindoos have thus become distinguished for their ingenuity and celebrity in weaving.

Silk and Wool.—Silk and wool were articles of great consumption in India. The former is said to have been reared in Hindoostan from China, where its utility was discovered by the wife of the Emperor Hoang-to, and appears to have been since cultivated with no common interest. Its use was great in various ways. I observe from several passages of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharut*, that it formed a part of the nuptial presents, was used in making dresses for royalty and the nobility, as well as for the ladies of rank, and was worn by the rajahs on occasions of religious performances.

In Ma-Twan-lin's account of India, which contains a consecutive narrative of the embassies sent here by the kings of China, we meet with a notice of the habiliments of our rajahs and nobility, which serves to corroborate what has been stated in the native books with respect to that point. "Their king," says he, "and his ministers have a vast number of silk dresses and fine woollen fabrics." It has been said by Arrian and the author of the *Charitra*, that "silks of various fabrication" occupied one of the bazars of Anhulwarra. There were extensive marts of silk in Mooltan, Sirhind, Tagara, and other places. It was one of the "staple articles of export," and as it was consi-

dered one of the necessaries of the people of higher ranks, it was much encouraged by them. "It was on account of the silk trade," says Colonel Tod, "that the prince named Porus, sovereign of Ougein, sent an embassy to Augustus; and a letter *written in Greek*, shews the footing they had in Central India."

Wool being a cheaper commodity, and possessing in a great measure the qualities of silk, was sought after by the lower orders of people, and was subservient to many of the uses of the latter. Ctesius speaks of a class of Indians, whose sole business was to rear cattle, and especially sheep, which were of a larger size than those of Europe, and gave abundant supplies of wool. Their superior breeds was attributable to their having been fed with a plant called *Silphium*, which Dr. Royle has identified with *Prangos*, (an excellent and valuable fodder in Ladack,) which abound d on the western side of the Paropamisus, or the mountainous countries of Candahar and Cashmere, where I believe wool was principally produced.

Dyes.—We learn from Heeren, that "several natural dyes, particularly the cochineal, were indigenous in this country; and robes of such extreme beauty and splendour were exported from it, that they were worn by the kings of Persia themselves." Ctesius also speaks of cochineal and lac, as well as of indigo having been seen as articles of trade in this country when he visited it. Cochineal, or Indian lacca, was indigenous to places near the Indus, and the red produced from it was so brilliant, that the Persians and the Babylonians got their supplies of it from India. Whether the valuable insect from which cochineal was produced, and which was grown here was of the Grana Fina or Sylvestra species, is what we can hardly determine. Probably it was an improved sort of the latter, as the colour obtained from it was brilliantly red.

Indigo was a production of India, to which Pliny has borne his testimony, and its colour was so deep blue, that it was much admired by the Romans. It formed one of the principal articles of export from the "Barbaric Emporium," near the mouths of the Indus to the places westward of India. Some say, that it was not indigo, but Indian Ink; but there are others, who on a due examination of the properties of the article in question, have pronounced it to be indigo. India has always been famous for producing several excellent dyeing substances.

Sugar.—No nation has perhaps been so great a consumer of this article, and has been so much in need of it, for its religious, domestic, and social purposes, as the Hindoos. There can be little doubt of extensive plantations of sugar-cane having existed in India in early times, when we consider *in what a great demand it was*, knowing as we do, that sugar formed, as it still does, the principal part of the food of all the classes of Hindoos, and the multifarious uses to which it was applied. It ts needless to furnish any proof of such having been the case from any ancient works. Sugar seems to have been a production of India from the remotest ages, and "although the Arabians cultivated the sugar-cane, and supplied the city of Rome with a produce, yet it is well known that they were indebted to the orientals for it, as well as for the knowledge of its manufacture."* The Greek physicians designated the sugar of this country "Indian salt," which then grew in the different parts of Bengal, and in the several islands of India. It was introduced into Greece and Rome, "from India within the Ganges and Arabia," but it was neither cultivated nor manufactured in either of those countries. When the Indians used to carry sugar† to Musiris,

* Morewood on Inebriating Liquors, 8vo. p. 152.

† Porter on Sugar-cane, p. 4.

Ormus, &c. they stated to several foreign merchants, that it was extracted from a reed, which had roused the people of two or three countries to be engaged in the discovery of this useful plant. For some time, great difference of opinion existed with respect to the identity of "the Indian salt" with the sugar ; but in the year 1250, Marco Polo removed this doubt on the subject, by declaring, that *sugar* grew in Bengal abundantly. and it was consequently not a different article from the "Indian salt." Massie in his Continental India, has observed, that the Phoenicians traded to Ceylon and Peninsular India for the "sweet cane," the demand for which, however great in the home markets, must have risen among other nations as its excellent qualities became known.

Wines and spirituous Liquors.—Though the drinking of wine is now considered derogatory to one's honour, and productive of moral guilt, even when it is taken moderately for the benefit of health, it was in ancient times our principal beverage ; and I have found proofs of such having been the case in our old books. *Madya* (Madua,) the generic name of all the intoxicating liquors was of twelve kinds :—*1. Mādhvīka* (Maddhika,) prepared from honey; *2. Pānasa* (Panasa,) from *Kutàl* ; *3. Dṛākṣa* (Dracha,) from raisins; *4. Khārjūra* (Kharjura,) from dates; *5. Tāla* (Tala,) form toddy ; *6. Aikṣava* (Woyeckhaba,) from sugar-cane ; *7. Maireya* (Moyraya,) from plum, wood-apple, and sugar; *8. Mākṣika* (Makhika,) from beehives; *9. Tāṅka* (Tanka,) from *ahta* and *koetbell* ; *10. Madhuka* (Madhuka,) from the saccharine matter of fruits ; *11. Nārikelaja* (Narikelaja,) from cocoanut; and *12. Surā* (Soora,) from meal,* which was the ordinary drink of the lower orders of people.

* Prayschitta Bibayka and Tuntra, cited in Radhacant Deb's Shubdo Kulpa Drooma.

Wine was served at private and public entertainments, on occasions of religious festivals and war. In *Chundi,* a portion of the *Marcandaya Purana,* Doorga, a female warrior, is said to have exclaimed at the time of commencing combat with Mohishasoora, "*Garja garja kṣhaṇaṃ mūḍhaḥ madhu jābat pivāṃyahaṃ* (Roar, oh fool, whilst I drink the wine.) Our mythology is crowded with instances of Devas carousing in the feasts. The *Ramayana* states, that when Bishya Mittra dined at the house of Bashista, *Moyrayo* and *Soora* formed a part of the repast with which he was entertained. Wine was also added to the victuals given to *Bharata* and his companions by *Bharutdaj,* when they spent a night under his hospitable roof. The Arunna and Soondra Kandus frequently speak of liquors having been kept in the palaces of Sugriva and Ravana, the respective Rajahs of Kishkinda and Lanca. Mahabharat in several places also mentions wine as having been in use in early ages. Arjuna and Krishna are represented as having been intoxicated on one occasion.* Again Krishna, the king of Dwarika, at one time interdicted the drinking of wine in his kingdom; † and on the occasion of his going on a pilgrimage with the numerous members of his family to *Pravastittha,* it was taken with the provisions, and was so immoderately drunk, that all the Xattris belonging to the Yadava race destroyed each other, of which a full narrative is to be found in the *Mousul Purva.*

It is evident from the above authorities, that the drinking of wine was not considered immoral. Menu (v. 56,) says, that "there is no turpitude," in drinking wine, but "a virtuous abstinence from it produces a signal compensation." According to Yajnajawalcya, Bramins were pre-

* *Ubhou madhvāsava kṣīvou ubhou candana carccitou. Ubhou paryyaṅka rathinou dṛṣṭou me Keśavārjjunou.* Mahabharut quoted in Mitakshara.

† Vide Mahabharut, vol. iv. p. 413.

vented from drinking wine. The *Xattris* and the *Baishoes* could drink all liquors, with the exception of *Poishti*, the sale and the use of which by "a soldier or a merchant," is also prohibited by Menu (ix. 225 and 235,) but the *Sudras* laboured under no such restraint.* If the Bramins did not attend to this prohibition, such of them as were detected, had an image of the bottle marked on their forehead.† In Sreemut Bhabbut, Tantra Shastra and Vedes, it is enjoined that the Bramins can drink wine after performing the *Sowtramoni Yuggo*, which afforded them an opportunity of indulging in that beverage‡ if they chose, and thus no class of people had to utterly abstain from it.

When Alexander invaded India, the natives made use of "a sort of wine, which is supposed to have been no other than toddy, or the unfermented juice of the cocoanut tree." It has been shewn elsewhere that wine was imported into several parts of India; and as the Hindoos were versed in chemical arts, "dealt largely in the importations, and as their acquaintance with a variety of native drinks shews the extent to which they had arrived in their manufacture,"§ the trade in that article could not have been very limited, which one might safely conclude from what has been premised.

Besides the above branches of industry, there must have been several others of different kinds, from the circum-

* *Traivārṇakānāmutpattiprabhṛti paiṣṭīpratiṣedhaḥ brāhmaṇasyatu madya mātra pratiṣedhopyutpatti prabhṛtyeva rājanyavaiśyastu na kadācidapi goudyādi madya pratiṣedhaḥ śūdrasyatu na surā pratiṣedhonāpi madya pratiṣedhaḥ.* Mitakshara—Prayschittadhaya.

† *Surāpāne surādhvajaḥ* Mitakshara—Babaharadhaya.

‡ *Loke Vyavāṣāmiṣa madya sevā nityāsti jantornahi tatra codna. Vyavasthiti statra vivāha yajña surā grahairāśu nivṛtti riṣtā.* Sreemut Bhagbut.

Soutrāmaṇyāṃ kulācārairbrahmṇo madirāṃ pivet. Tantra.

Soutrāmaṇyāṃ surāṃ gṛhnīyat. Sruti.

§ Morewood on the Inebriating Liquors.

stance of the Hindoos having been "proficients in metallurgy, the manufacture of sugar, indigo, dyeing, embroidery, working in ivory, engraving on precious gems and stones, in the production of the loom and the needle, in mechanics, architecture, astronomy, and mathematics," some of which employments I have already touched upon.

In the Ayodha Kanda of Ramayana, about 64 classes of men of different professions are enumerated as having accompanied Bharata to see Rama.

Conclusion.—It will appear from the foregoing pages, that the commercial aspect of this country was not so gloomy as is generally imagined. When we reflect that its intercourse with foreign nations was as extensive as its circumstances could at that period admit; when we learn from authentic sources that it had levelled and good roads, active markets, and numerous ports frequented not only by foreign vessels, but by country ships, constructed and guided by Hindoos, and trading home and abroad; when we find that many of its productions and manufactures were highly prized and sought after by other nations, and numbers of articles, the produce of its "land and labour" met with a ready and advantageous sale among its own people; when we consider that the blessings of commerce were diffused over every part of the country, and the means of transit "grew with its growth, and strengthened with its strength;" can we for a moment hesitate to conclude, that its home and foreign trade were carried on with that spirit and enterprize which characterised its rulers? And though it may be thought a great pity that we cannot obtain so full and extensive information on the subject as we might desire, it must be at the same time admitted, that the facts of which we have been put in possession, are sufficient to silence the doubts and the uncertainties that may be entertained respecting the ancient Hindu spirit of

enterprize, which the storm of Moslem oppression has entirely extinguished, but which I hope will now be kindled and burnt in the bosoms of the rising generation, who will find it their duty and interest to tread in the steps of their forefathers, with increased zeal and enthusiasm—to open sources of employment in the extensive field of commerce —to turn their attention to the development of the resources of the land they inhabit, that they may secure fortune, intelligence, honour and independence for themselves, and bring improvement and glory to their country.

STATE OF HINDOOSTAN UNDER THE HINDOOS—No. 4.

By Baboo Peary Chand Mittra.

(Read on the 12th May, 1841.)

Introduction.—The Hindu works on law consist of three divisions; viz. 1. Achar, or ceremonial and ethical laws; 2. Vybhahara, or jurisprudence; 3. Prayaschitta, or religious laws, relating to "expiation or punishment for crime." In none of the *Sankittas*, or text works, the number of which is said to vary "from eighteen to thirty-six and more,"* the *Vybhahara*, or the science of law, has been classified, an omission which can be easily excused when we remember, that at the period when they were written, the necessity for classifying, which is generally done when the mind is in a state of expansion and "high refinement,"

* The authors of the *Sankittas* are Menu, Atri, Vishnu, Harita, Yagnywalcya, Ushanas, Angeras, Yama, Aphastamba, Sanverta, Catyayana, Vrishaspati, Parasara, Vyasa, Sancha, Likheta, Dacsha, Gautuma, Salatapa, Vasista, Pittamaha, Shownuck, Deval, and Nareda. Parasara's *Sankitta* does not embrace the *Vybhahara Kanda.*

was not so much felt as that of devising, and that they have not since been remodelled. Next to the *Sankittas*, may be ranked the glosses, the commentaries, and the digests which were written at different periods in the different countries of Hindoostan, chiefly under the auspices of the Rajahs; and with the multiplicity of such writers, may have been introduced that diversity of opinion on some legal questions, which have not as yet been reconciled, and to which is to be attributed, I believe, the origin of the five schools of law existing in Bengal, Benares, Mitthala, Deccan, and in the Marhatta country,* which recognising, as they do the original *Smritis* as an invariable authority in all cases, are divided in their respect for the commentaries.

Law is well known to consist of three great divisions; viz. 1. Civil law; 2. Penal law; and 3d. the law of Procedure. On the Civil and Penal law of the Hindoos, much light has been thrown. Their Penal law has been pronounced unjust and severe in many respects, a fact which may lead many to think, that the people for which it was enacted, were in no way advanced in civilization; but it will be difficult to retain this opinion when the circumstance of the similar defects having constituted prominent features of the criminal code of such enlightened nations as the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Greeks, and of still characterising to a certain extent, that of the English, is presented to their consideration.† Legislation is, as has been lately shewn, one of the most difficult sciences, and it is beyond expectation that any of the codes of law,

* The works followed as authorities in each of these schools will be found enumerated in Macnaghten's Hindu Law, p. 21, and an account of their respective doctrines is contained in Mr. Ellis's Paper on the Law Books of the Hindus in the Transactions of the Madras Literary Society.

† Vide Wilson's edition of Mill, p. 253 to 260, and 268.

(the due formation of which requires considerable knowledge of man, and experience of past ages,) made during the infancy of the human improvement, should be free from the blemishes to which all first attempts of the kind are subject; more especially, when such codes have not been subsequently remodelled, or should completely approach the modern standard of perfection, or in other words, should be built upon the following properties:—1st, Notoriety; 2nd, Conciseness; 3rd, Clearness; 4th, Compactness; 5th, Completeness; 6th, Intrinsic usefulness; 7th, Justifiedness.* I shall however not enter into any lengthened disquisition on the Civil or Penal law of the Hindoos, as it does not strictly come within the scope of this essay, and as it has already been discussed by several distinguished European authors. It will therefore be my endeavour to offer a succinct exposition of the law of Procedure, that we may have some idea of the judicial system of the Hindoos; but it is difficult to ascertain whether the operation of it was efficient, destitute as we are, of the necessary data for arriving at any certain conclusion on the subject.

Punchayet.—The most popular, and perhaps the oldest institution of a judicial nature of the Hindoos is the Punchayet, consisting of an assembly of the most distinguished persons of a village, or of a town, those number varied from five to "any given odd number," and whose election was sometimes made by the parties in dispute, and sometimes by "the public authority."† In every village there was originally one Punchayet, but as it became populous,

* Vide Bentham's Paper relative to Codification, &c 8vo. London, 1817, p. 100.

† Gleig's History of British India, vol. i. p. 35.—By the "public authority," I understand the authority delegated to a Gramadikar, or a Deshadikar (of whom I shall speak more fully in my next essay) by the King, or a Court of Justice.

and assumed the character of a town, every class of people must "have had its own Punchayet," as was the case in every town.

In the *Smritti Chundrika*, (a work much respected in Southern India,) eleven kinds of courts of arbitration, or in other words, Punchayet, are mentioned, as having existed under the Hindu administration; viz. "1. Aranyasabha, an assembly of foresters; 2. Sarthikasabha, that composed of merchants; 3. Senikasabha, the members of which were appointed from among the military class; 4. Ubpayanu matasabha, that chosen by the parties themselves; 5. Gramavasisabha, composed chiefly of the villagers and partly of strangers, or of civil and military persons together; 6. Ganasabha, an assembly composed of all the four classes indiscriminately; 7. Srenisabha, an assembly composed of all the inferior classes or castes, such as washmen, barbers, &c. for deciding causes among their own tribes; 8. Chatarvidyasabha, that composed of persons learned in all the four shastras; 9. Vargasabha, an assembly of irreligious men; 10. Kulasabha, or meeting composed of persons of the same family; 11. Kulikasabha, in which the relation of plaintiff and defendant meet to discuss the matter."*

Mitakshara states, that there were three grades of arbitration; viz.

1. Puga, or assemblies of townsmen, or meetings of persons belonging to various tribes, and following different professions, but inhabiting the same place.

2. Sreni, or companies of traders or artisans, conventions of the persons belonging to different tribes, but subsisting by the practice of the same profession.

3. Cula, meetings of kinsmen or assemblages of rela-

* Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 248.

tions connected by consanguinity.* The different forms of the Punchayet enumerated in *Smriti Chundrika*, which is said to be a modern work, may be the sub-divisions of three principal gradations of arbitration, specified in *Mitakshara*, which professes to be a record of only the primitive institutions.

The decisions of *Cula* could be reversed by *Sreni*, and those of *Sreni* by *Puga*, from which an appeal could be made to the court of the chief judge, and thence to the king's court. The jurymen appointed to form a Punchayet, must have been of the same religious persuasion and situation in life as the parties,† who could select an equal number of arbitrators, leaving the appointment of an umpire to the Gramadikar, or Deshadikar, as the case might be, before whom all complaints were in the first instance lodged.

Gleig (in his History of British India, vol. i. p. 35,) mentions, that the Punchayets had to perform three distinct kinds of duties; viz. "in arbitrating disputes between man and man, in trying civil causes, and in investigating criminal cases affecting life or property." The way in which they discharged their functions of the first description, was to receive the statements of the parties at variance, examine the witnesses generally without oath, and to pronounce judgment after due deliberation, and there was no appeal against it. In the trial of civil cases, the same form of procedure was adopted, and the evidence of the Gramlekuk, who kept a register of every transaction regarding the lands of the village, was taken in matters concerning boundary disputes, &c. The parties were in this, as well as in the former instance, required "to give security that they would abide by its decision." The third

* Strange's Hindu Law, vol. i. p. 320.

† Selection of Papers from the Records of the East India House, Judicial, vol. iv. p. 121.

use to which the Punchayets were made subservient; viz. in the investigation of criminal cases, related to the maintenance of a Police. There are some, who say, that the Panchayets were "simple, effective, and above all local;" that they distributed justice in an expedious and cheap manner; that they produced "no incitement to fraudulent debtors to drag cases through court after court in appeals to avoid payment."* While others take a different view of the question, and maintain, that they were not efficacious for the ends for which they were instituted.†

Established Tribunals.—None of the *sabhas* or the courts of arbitration were of a stationary or established character, and were called on the spur of the occasion, for which reason they have been designated in the *Smritti Chundrika*, "aparatisthica, or temporary."‡ The permanent and the regular tribunals of justice were; Ist, the town and the village courts; 2nd, the court of the chief judge; and 3rd, the court of the king. The constitution and procedure of the town and village courts, and of the court of the chief judge are not so well known as those of the king; but it is believed, that the inferior tribunals must have been built upon the model of the superior.§

King's Court.—The *Nripasabha*, or the king's court, was held wherever the king lived or sojourned. It opened in the afternoon, and was shut on inauspicious days. It is said to have been "furnished with a throne decorated with wreaths, perfumed with fragrant resins, supplied with corn, embellished with gems, adorned with statues and pictures, and with images of deities, and accommodated likewise with fire and water." On entering the court, the

* British and Foreign Review, No. 21, p. 178.

† See History of the Adawlut System, part ii.

‡ Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 247.

§ Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii.

king sat facing the east, and his assistants and officers of whom I shall presently speak, took their seats around "gold and silver," and a code of laws, which was considered an inseparable companion of every tribunal.

In the administration of justice, the king was assisted by three, five, or seven assessors, a Bramin, the chief judge, and the *Poorohit.* Such persons as were conversant with grammar, vedes, jurisprudence, &c. were distinguished for a love of truth and impartiality, and did not belong to the servile class, could offer their services as candidates for *sabhasadships.*

It was their duty to check the king whenever he attempted to commit injustice, and if they through affection, love or gain or fear, ever departed from the *law* in the performance of their duties, they were liable to a fine, double the amount paid to the king, by the party who lost the suit.

The Bramin, who formed a member of the king's court, does not seem to have had any official designation. Whenever the king was busy with other affairs, and could not attend, the Bramin acted for him, and none who was not "experienced in all institutions, capable of restraining his passions, well born, serious, not rash and violent, dread of the next world, benevolent, dexterous, and free from wrath," could hold the office in question. I do not see what his particular duty was, when the king was present in the court.

The *Pradvivak*, or the chief judge, had to collect all the information connected with every case, from the examination of the parties and their witnesses, and to discriminate right from wrong. It was also his business to write and revise the answers of defendants, according to their directions. When the king was absent, the *Pradvivak* officiated for him, and with the assistance of the assessors,

could finally dispose of all civil suits, both of an original or appellative nature; but with respect to criminal cases, they were tried by the king, and "referred to him for confirmation; for the *Pradvivak* is not authorized to inflict any punishment beyond reprimand." The person holding the office of the chief judge, (from which the Sudras were excluded,) was required to be well conversant with law in all its branches, and to possess a good character.

The business of the *Poorahit* was to admonish and check the king, when he endeavoured to commit injustice.

The officers attached to the king's court were as follows :—

1 Accountant.
1 Scribe.
1 Keeper of claims and enforcer of judgments.
1 Messenger, or summoner of parties and witnesses.
1 Moderator of the court, whose business was to deliver discourses on Morality, for the edification of the suitors, the judges, and the officers of the court.

With the exception of the office of the keeper of claims and the enforcer of judgments, the Sudras could hold none of the situations which were open to the first three castes.*

Having thus touched on the constitution of the king's court, let us endeavour to treat of its procedure. When a person brought an action against another, the defendant was served with a notice bearing the seal of the king, or requested through the messenger of the court to appear, and state what he had to say in defence. Such as were ill, infirm, particularly busy, &c. could employ attornies

* I have drawn from *Mītakshara*, all the information on the subject. The *slokes*, and the pages which will be quoted in this paper for the satisfaction of the reader, have reference to that work.

to act for them, (Tika of the fifth sloke, p. 8,) and we find that the plaintiffs, as well as the defendants, were entitled to this privilege, (p. 13.) If a defendant denied what was set forth in the plaint, his person was so secured, that he might attened on the day of trial, (Tika of sixth sloke, p. 8.) On the defendant's appearing before the king, the plaintiff had to repeat what he had stated previous to the issuing of the summons, and if his prior and posterior statements proved contradictory, the plaintiff stood a chance of being fined, and having his case dismissed; but in criminal suits, the imposition of fine and the dismissal of the case in the event of such contradiction being found, were the inevitable consequences, (p. 10 and 23.) It was necessary that the plaint should be concise, clear, reasonable, circumstantial, &c. and was liable to rejection if found deficient in any of those essentials. It was in the first instance chalked on the ground, or on a plank by the chief judge, according to the directions of the plaintiff, and its revision and fair copying could be allowed as long as the defendant did not put in his answer, (p. 12.) If the assessors caused the answer to be put in without having the plaint revised or fairly copied, they were subject to a fine double the amount of the suit, (p. 13.)

It was also requisite, that the answer which in criminal cases was required to be immediately filed, (p. 26 and 27,) should be explicit, and contain a sufficient refutation of the statements set forth in the plaint. There were four kinds of answers; viz. Ist, *Sumpritiputti*, or confession; 2nd, *Mitha*, denial; 3rd, *Protabuskanda*, or *Karana*, or a special plea; 4th, *Praugnaya*, a plea of former judgment, (p. 14). If the *Mitha* answer was given, the plaintiff was called upon to adduce proofs in support of his case; but when the *Protabuskanda*, or the *Praugnaya* answer was made, the defendant was bound to establish the correctness thereof,

(p. 20.) When several claims were advanced in one plaint, the defendant had to make separate answers at different times, (p. 16 and 17.) Except in criminal cases, no defendant could file a cross-suit till the action brought against him was disposed of, (p. 24.)

When the plaintiff refuted a *Mitha* answer, the defendant had to pay to the king the amount of claim, and a fine equal to it; but in case the plaintiff failed, he paid to the king a fine double the amount of his claim. If a defendant, who made the *Protabuskanda*, or the *Praugnaya uttra* could substantiate it, the plaintiff had to pay to the king a fine equal to the amount of his claim ; but in the event of his failure, he was adjudged to pay to the king double the amount of the claim, and the amount of the claim to the plaintiff, (p. 26.) In criminal cases, the imposition of such fines, when such events took place, was regulated according to the law laid down in *Mitakshara*, (from p. 286 to 312,) into which it would be tedious to enter at present.

The parties of a suit depending in the court were required to give such securities, as were able to pay the amount of fine and claim aforesaid for their punctual attendance, and when sureties were not given, they were taken care of by the constables of the court, who received a fee from them every evening, (p. 25.)

Persons forcibly recovering any claim objected to by the party from whom it is due, or running away when requested to discharge an admitted claim, or making no answer in the court when summoned were fined, and being sued lost the suits, (p. 28.)

Proof.—Documents, testimony of witnessess, and possession, constituted evidence, (sloke 22, p. 37.) Documents were of two kinds, viz. private and public.*

* Macnaghten's Considerations on Hindu Law, p. 138.

Men of the village, *Pradvivak*, king's officers of the court, messengers of the plaintiffs, and men versed in the niceties of caste, could if they choose, become witnesses in suits on which they could throw light by their respective evidences, (p. 99.) In civil cases, men of noble extraction, virtuous, veracious, and wealthy, should be made witnesses, and their number should be no less than three, (sloke 70, p. 100;) but in criminal suits, though no such distinction was observed, yet persons notorious for lying, were recommended to be avoided. Besides the above precaution, used no doubt with a view to secure uninfluenced deposition, the following descriptions of persons were thought incompetent to give evidence ; viz. women, boys, old men, knaves, drunkards, fool, dancing women, forgers, blind, deaf, deformed, *putitas*, parties beneficially interested in the suit, friends, enemies, violators of rights, and speakers of untruth, (sloke 72 and 73, p. 102.)

Before a witness was requested to answer any questions appertaining to any suit, he was (if of the religious class) warned by the *Pradvivak*, that he would deprive himself of the *virtue cansisting in speaking the truth* in the event of his uttering a falsehood ; if of the military class, he was sworn by the missile weapons ; if of the mercantile class, with corn and money ; and if of the servile class, he was told of the sin he would incur on his violating the truth.

It is rather strange, that the administration of affirmations was done differently to different classes of people ; whether this course was adopted to make the affirmations more obligatory, or to shew the distinctions of caste even on such occasions, it is hardly possible to say ; but we perceive that the practice of swearing by the Ganges water, now prevalent among us, does not seem to have been in vogue in former times.

Neither the plaintiff was allowed to hold any private

conference with the witnesses of the defendant, nor was the defendant allowed to do so with those of the plaintiff, and he who did not observe this rule, stood the chance of loosing the case, (p. 117.)

If after the administration of oath, any witness from a love of gain tried to evade giving evidence, he had to pay a fine of eight times the amount in dispute, (sloke 84. p. 116.)

Witnesses found guilty of perjury, were compelled to pay a fine double the amount of the suit in which their evidence was taken, and the Bramins convieted of the same crime were transported, if it was of an aggravated nature, (sloke 83, p. 114.)

Though it is well known that the Bramins in some instances escaped with impunity when they did wrong, which no doubt must have arisen from a superstitious regard for their profession, it will be evident, that in the last quoted rule their punishment for committing perjury was explicitly laid down, and there are also proofs of a Bramin having been "condemned to death on a presumptive proof of murder;"* and of another having lost his hand for committing theft;† which inclines us to think, that the sacerdotal class did not always pass unpunished. Dr. Wilson goes so far as to say, that "the immunity of a Bramin guilty of crime, does not seem to have been attended to."‡

In numerous passages, the speaking of truth is inculcated; the only rule about uttering falsehood to be found in *Menu* and *Mitakshara* is as follows:—

"Whenever the death of a man, who had been a griev-

* Wilson's edition of Mill, vol. i. p. 262.

† See the story of Sancha and Likhita in the Santi Purva.

‡ Wilson's edition of Mill, vol. i. p. 277.

ous offender, either of the servile, the commercial, the military, or the sacerdotal class, would be occasioned by true evidence from the known rigour of the king, even though the fault arose from inadvertence or error, falsehood may be spoken; it is even preferable to truth."*

In a strict moral point of view, the enactment in question cannot be justified, nor can any thing be said in the way of palliation, and none who is a follower of the doctrine *that jurisprudence should be founded on ethics*, can think of advocating a particle of it. But we find that the license given by the Hindu law to the witnesses, is sometimes enjoyed by the British jury and the judges. Sir T. Strange speaking of it observes, "Even the pious perjury which the Hindu law has been supposed to sanction is resolvable, after all, into no greater liberty than what our juries, (not indeed with perfect approbation,) have long been allowed to take, where the life of a prisoner on trial before them is sometimes at stake." Dr. Wilson in discussing this subject remarks, that the speaking of untruth has been inculcated to save a man's life, "not for intentional crime, but for an act arising out of inadvertence or error; and not from the justice, but from the rigour of the judge; and that something very analogous to it is not unfrequent, where, in the opinion of witnesses, juries, and possibly even of judges, the punishment is unduly severe." "Our own criminals," adds he, "are almost compelled to plead "not guilty," even when they would disburden their consciences by telling the truth; and a Hindu may therefore be allowed to save his own life by telling a falsehood. These also, it may be observed, are not cases of perjury or false testimony; a man's life being imperilled, and his goods in danger of being spoiled, are events not likely to

* Menu, chapter viii.

befal him in the character of a witness, nor are transactions with women, part of legal procedure. They are not equivalent to perjury, therefore, and however reprehensible, are instances of a disregard of truth by no means peculiar to the Hindoos."*

On the subject of the judicial procedure of the Hindoos, Sir T. Strange, in his Elements of Hindu Law, vol. i. p. 309, has expressed the following opinion : "That Hindu pleading was noticed with commendation by Sir W. Jones, and that with some trifling exceptions, the Hindu doctrine of evidence is for the most part distinguished nearly as much as our own, by the excellent sense that determines the competency, and designates the choice of witnesses with the manner of examining, and the credit to be given them ; as well as by the solemn earnestness with which the obligation of truth is urged and inculcated ; insomuch, that less cannot be said of this part of their law than that it will be read by every English lawyer with a mixture of admiration and delight, and may be studied by him to advantage."

When the case was closed, the assessors, who says Ram Raj, "resemble the juries of the English court," gave their verdict, and in the event of their not being unanimous, the votes of the majority were taken ; after which the king pronounced his judgment, not "according to his arbitrary will and pleasure,"† but "conformably with fixed principles recorded by ancient sages, and agreeably to the established customs of the country," and "on his own responsibility."‡ Again, it is enjoined in *Mitakshara*, p 34 and 35, that when the laws laid down in different books

* Wilson's edition of Mill, vol. p. 278.

† Mill's British India, vol. i. p. 183.

‡ Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii.

differ on any point, it should be settled according to the principles of *Nyaya* or *Jookte*, i.e. (reason or common sense,) and that in the administration of justice, he should be guided by the *Dhurma*, and not by the *Artha* Shastra, *i. e.* by a love of virtue and impartiality, and not by a love of gain in any shape. Though there were directions chiefly founded upon physiognomical principles about reading the hearts of the parties and of the witnesses by their external appearances and general behaviour in the court, yet he could not lay much stress on them, and had to discharge his judicial functions in the usual way, unmindful of the trifling faults or omissions he might find in any of them, (p. 28.)

Before the passing of judgment, the king, who we find was bound to obey the law, and act according to the dictates of the deliberate judgment of the members of his court named before, had also to listen to any one who came forward, "to interpose with his advice as the Amicus Curæ does in an English court." Colebrooke says, "that the obligation of impartial justice incumbent on the sovereign and the judges, is earnestly inculcated in language forcible and expressive. Careful investigation, a candid avowal of opinion, and strenuous remonstrance against unjust decisions are strongly enjoined;" and judges found guilty of corruption, partiality, and collusion, were subject to fine, banishment, or confiscation of property. The works used in the *Sabas*, were very likely the Institutes of Menu, and other *Sanhittas*, with explanatory commentaries, in order to remove doubts and ambiguities to which the mere use of the text books might give rise; and though the Hindoos, says Mr. Ellis, have not preserved "reports," after the English fashion of the decisions of their courts of justice; but when the "definitions" of the English common law are sought for, no less a regard is paid to those

which are found in Lyttleton's Tenures, or perhaps in Lord Coke's Commentary, than to those which appear in the "reports of cases;" and the Commentaries of the Hindoos are considered more decidedly by them to be integral parts of the body of their law, than any Commentary is in England."*

We thus perceive from the testimony of Mr. Ellis, whose opinion on this subject is entitled to great consideration, that after the appearance of the *Vyàck Yànas*, (Commentaries) the assertion that "there are no definitions on Hindu law," cannot be correct.

With respect to several good qualities inherent in the Hindu mode of dispensing justice, there can be but one opinion. Mr. Macnaghten (in Hindu Law, p. 20,) observes, that "perspicuity and precision are continually enjoined in the pleadings, and litigation appears to have been attended with no expense." Mr. Mill has even admitted the truth of this remark in the following paragraph :—

"The qualities desirable in the forms of judicial procedure are: Ist efficiency ; 2nd freedom from delay ; 3rd, freedom from trouble and expense. In these several respects, the system of the Hindoos displayed a degree of excellence not only far beyond itself in other branches of law, but far beyond what is exemplified in more enlightened countries. 1. The efficiency of the Hindu system of judicial procedure is chiefly impaired by those rules of evidence, the badness of which has been already pointed out. 2. For preventing delay, it enjoys every requisite in its method of immediate, direct, and simple investigation. 3. In the same method is included all that is requisite for obtaining the judicial services, with the smallest portion of trouble and expense."

* Transactions of the Literary Society of Madras, vol. iv. p. 12.

Historical proofs of the existence of the Hindu Courts of Justice.—That regular Hindu courts of the above description existed in India, is a fact which is supported by historical proofs. In the dominions of *Pratapa Rudra Deva,* "one of the princes of the Kalinga dynasty," to whom is ascribed the compilation of *Saraswativilasa*—"a Digest of Hindu Law," and who reigned in the beginning of the fourteenth century of *Salivhan,* (whose era commenced in A. D. 78,)—in Vijayanagara, where the composition of *Dattamimansa* and *Madaviyam* was made,—in the territories of the Chola and Tanjore kings, notices of the existence of "regular courts" are to be found.*

In the Marhatta country, we see the ancient village court in that of the Potail; the city court in that of the Mamlutdar and Sirsoobadar; the court of the chief judge in that of the Nyaeedaish; and the king's court in that of the Peishwa.†

At Katamando, there are four courts of justice. The Ist is called Kot Sing, or the supreme civil court; the 2nd is the Inta Chapli, or the supreme criminal court; and the 3rd and 4th, are denominated Tāksār and Dhansar, or inferior courts. The chief judge, or the *ditha,* presides in the first and second courts, both having original as well as appellate jurisdictions, assisted by two assessors or *bicharis* in each. There are two *bicharis* in Taksar and two in Dhānsar, who can hear to a conclusion all cases except such as involve a punishment touching life or limb, "or total confiscation," which can only be tried by the *ditha.* At the close of every day, the *bicharis* have to report to the *ditha* the cases they were engaged in trying, and the aw-

* Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii.

† Selection of Papers from the Records of the East India House, Judicial, vol. iv. p. 188.

ards they intend to make on them, and if the *ditha* concurs with them, they pronounce their judgment next morning; but if otherwise, they are allowed to argue with him, and in case their arguments produce conviction, the *ditha* yields; but if he be not satisfied, he proceeds to the *bichari's* courts, and himself tries such cases.

In some cases, the *ditha* is required to obtain the sanction of *Bharadar saba*, (council of state,) for the execution of his sentences.

In each of the village courts, one *praja-naikiah* and four *prodhan projahs* preside, who are subordinate to the *dwariah*, or the government agent, who like the *ditha* of Katamando, exercises his control over them. It appears from the list of officers attached to the highest criminal court, that some improvement has been made upon the old model, and what one officer did before, is in some instances done by two.*

The designations of several of the officers are of Mahomedan origin, a fact which bespeaks of the Moslem influence having spread so far as Nepaul, though situated as she is *in the bosom of hills*, and to the like cause may be attributed the changes and the revolutions that have taken place in the ancient judicial system of the other parts of India, which can hardly be now found in a primitive state.

Those who will recall to their minds the different forms of the Hindu system of arbitration ; the multifarious uses to which they were subservient ; the high estimation in which they were held ;† the eagerness with which their assistance was sought ; and the expeditiousness with which they rendered their aid, cannot but think it almost certain, that they were most popular—that it was *by them* that

* Asiatic Researches, vol. xx. p. 99.

† History of the Adalut System, p. 150.

all questions relating to property, person, and *kool*, were chiefly decided, and that the regular and established tribunals of justice could not have been inundated with so much business as they were. That this supposition is not far from the truth, will appear by the following extract from M. Abbe Dubois' India, who, says Dr. Wilson, "possessed extraordinary means of accurate knowledge."

"Without any of the judicial forms invented by the spirit of chicanery in Europe; with no advocates, solicitors, or blood-suckers now become necessary adjuncts of a court of justice in Europe; the Hindoos determine the greater part of their suits of law by the arbitration of friends, or of the heads of the caste; or in cases of the very highest importance, by reference to the chiefs of the whole castes of the district, assembled to discuss the matter in controversy."*

We have therefore every reason to presume, that what has been stated, was the practice in ancient times; and however objectionable the Punchayet and the established courts of justice might have been in some respects, and it is impossible to expect that in those remote ages they should be free from every defect, enough has I hope been shewn to warrant us in concluding that they saved the suitors the dread of expense, and "the law's delay."

* Dubois' India, p. 494.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF CHITTAGONG

PART—III.

The Sitacoond Pilgrimages.

BY BABOO GOBINDCHUNDER BYSAK.

[Read on the 9th December, 1841.]

Under this head I shall give a succinct account of the three pilgrimages in this locality, far-famed, and deemed extraordinarily holy, it would seem, on the strength of the following verse from the Puranas :—

Biśeṣataḥ Kalijuge Bhūsvāmī Candraśekharaḥ

I would premise, that the Coond of Sita, from whence the locality derives its cognomen, has here no local habitation, but only a name. The Pandas pretend, that the Coond has vanished from the earth on account of the sinfulness of mankind.

The Pilgrimages in their order are,—

1. The Baroba Coond.
2. The Mahadeo Bati and the temple of Chundernath ; and
3. The Nobolokho and other Coonds, &c.

The Baroba Coond, which is about sixteen miles from the station, is situated about a mile to the east of the main road among a cluster of hills mostly jungly, and a few of them fast turning into transition slate stone. Many of them are of pretty good height. The road winds between the valley beneath, and is in some places cut on the sides of the hill. It is kept in repair by the Mohunt, and but for that, would be rather dangerous for travellers and conveyances. The Endowment of the Mohunt is built upon a small elevation or *tilla*, (as the term goes in Chittagong,) with a flight of old steps before you. It is

poor and not attractive, the only building, except the cupola over the Coond, being a two-storied one fast crumbling to pieces. This contains in all three or four rooms below and above, and you may see within them a number of *Sunnyasees*, attachees of the place, such as you often see at Juggernath Ghaut and elsewhere in Calcutta, travellers from Cassi and Bodrikasaram. On your left is a thatched house, with some idols and their worshippers in it, and before you is the Coond. The cupola, (rather too grand name I admit,) already mentioned, is led by a flat-roofed corridor by 21 feet, from the beams of which is hung a quadruple bell, that is, four bells suspended on a branched iron rod, each not large in size, and separately rung. Then comes the Coond, to reach which, you have to descend about 12 feet below the floor by a flight of about 9 steps, high, narrow, and dark, scarcely admitting of two men abreast. You descend into no cavern made by nature and impervious to light, but in artificial darkness amidst surrounding masonry to the level earth, upon which the Coond, true to nature's laws, has found its level, and which the superstition of the age has covered with the panoply of a massive superstructure. The Coond itself is nothing else but a spring rising out of a stony source, which has been worked into the form of a reservoir. It has no bottom at hand, nor has its depth been ascertained, but there is a convenience for bathers, (for bathing is deemed a great virtue,) in the shape of a slab of stone fixed breast deep to stand upon. The fire-place is on the right side of the Coond, and is furnished with two mouths, one perpendicular, the other horizontal, and on a level with the waters of the Coond. The flames break out in volumes from both the mouths. Those which issue from the horizontal mouth upon the water are of a blueish tint at the base, while the flames from

the perpendicular mouth are red, being only visible some moments after ignition. The horizontal mouth is made up, I think, with chunam and slate-stone, and the top of the perpendicular one has a *soorkey* plastering. Their flames to all appearance emit no smoke, and the ignition is attended with a snapping noise. The pilgrims feed the fire with *ghee* and *billiputtro* from the perpendicular mouth, and perform other ceremonies at a Coond. The *ghee* sets up the flames, and the Pandas declare it is a most propitious sign. The flames from the horizontal mouth occasionally appear to float upon the Coond, and the devotees wave it upon their person and consider the god must be of mighty power indeed to render them harmless in play. The Pandas improve upon this misconception, and say, that the flames of the other mouth will burn the daring sinner to ashes. Immediately over the Coond, the cornices have been worked into a sort of veranda open in the middle, from whence a view can be commanded of the scene below. The whole is topped with a massive roof of rotund form.

The Bashee Coond is only a continuation of the same spring or Coond, and stands to the right. The water in this, as in the other Coond, is of course cold, and flows thence into Cherra or streamlet.

II.—*The Mahadeo Bati, and the Hill of Chundersikur at Sitacoond.*

A few miles to the north of this place is Sitacoond, a Phanrce station, situated at the bottom of the Chundersikur hill. The village is populous with a well supplied market, and contains a great many Pandas and other worshippers of the temples. The pilgrim's attention is directed, 1st, to Jotimay; 2nd, to Calibarry; 3rd, the temple of Somboonath or Mahadeo Bati; 4th, the temple of Beroo Puckho; and 5th, and lastly, to that of Chunder-

nath itself, on the top of the Sitacoond hill. All these are to be successively seen as the pilgrim wends his way up the hill, which rises in the midst of the village.

The Jotimay, which literally means "full of light," rather too grand a name for the object designated, consists of a small fissure in the body of the hill on the right side of the way, a little blackened with smoke, out of which there is a constant issue of igneous gas breaking into flame when in contact with fire. This is all that is to be seen, but the devotee is made to perform *shraud*, contribute rice, doll, dhotties, ghee, &c. in the hope of meeting with peculiar grace.

2nd. Immediately to the left stands the Calee Mahee, without any thing remarkable, being a simple hut with the usual paraphernalia of a Bhli, and other painted mud, and melal idols. Above your head on the spur of the hill, stands a small ruined building, said to be the last abode of the goddess, and shewing how she had visibly fallen from her grateness in these evil days.

3rd. Up, up, you climb the sloping hillway, till the *nobotkhana* of the temple of Somboonath, where the drummers announce your arrival to the Mohant, appear in view. This signal, made only in case the visitor be of some rank, brings the Mohant out of the temple, to the paved yard in front, where you are received Gorrupte Cheelera, is a fine hale old man, and came from Hindostan. The temple stands before you, a flat-roofed square with several chambers. The outer one is occupied by the Mohant himself, who has his couch and hooka paraphernalia of state, the subordinate priest standing or sitting before him. Immediately next is the room in which the Mahedeb is ensconced in the middle, with numbers of inferrior gods and goddesses in separate niches on the side of the walls. The place is darksome, and just opposite

the stand of the worshipper, there is a horizontal hole across the wall opening on a bright chunamed surface, which dazzles the eyes, while the surrounding deadness of the temple holds the fancies of the superstitious into whatever visions of the glorious Mahadeb his mind may be predisposed to indulge.

The temple seems to you much inward and upward. There is a small neat garden on the limited level surface in front, watered by a simple contrivance from the stream falling from the hill. The Mohant has caused the water to be led from its source over jungles, along the precipices, and also leading the way to the hill-top for some distance, by means of betel-nut stems, slit into two, and excavated into the form of sluices. On these a small stream of sparkling water, pure and cool to the taste, continually rushes from above, and is welcome to the weary traveller on the parching ascent. We soon came up to the pucka step built by Gunganarian Sirkar of Calcutta, or as fame hath it, by his mother, in a fit of devotional piety, to smoothen the difficulties of the way to the pilgrims of Chundernauth. The work is now in good repair, and appeared to me to have cost the lady a large sum of money. I was soon fatigued, and frequently sat down on the way, and on the advice of the yielding Panda, betook ourselves to the natural footpath to the temple. This path is extremely narrow, and affords a bare foothold, which is in many places to be scrambled over; the least slip precipitating you through the hanging jungle to the depth below. The only circumstances which appeared as a mitigation, were, that each step was not of measured length, and that the path in its winding course gave to the traveller, with occasional downs and flats, a more gradual ascent. To cut short the matter, be it said, that about half-way from the Mahadeo Bati to Chundernauth, you meet with the renowned shrine of

Beero Puckho, a square flat-roofed building, hardly 9 feet by 12, broken and neglected, containing the Seeblika image of the god.

Higher up, and in the very highest pinnacles of the range, stands the temple of Chundernath. Like the last, the temple is small and ruined, and has the god for its sole inhabitant. I am afraid it will topple down the precipice ere long, as its base on one side lies bare from the falling of that part of the hill.

Here we would feign rest, after the tedious ascent, and cast our eye upon the various prospects beneath us. There lies the Bay of Bengal, with isles and rounded coasts on the west, and then the village of Sitacoond beneath your feet. Beyond the further are ranges of hills, whose green and foggy tops bound your view. But stop, we have yet to see the Nobolucko Coond, whose waters season the curries of of the people, and rob the Government of its revenue on salt.

III.—The Nobolucko Coond, or salt spring, is situated at the bottom of a cluster of hills, most of which are of slate stone. Essentially like the Baroba Coond, except the nature of its water, its exterior is pretty much the same; the same massive form of the masonry, to the dark enclosure into which the pilgrim is led. Though every thing wears a dilapidated appearance, betokening a decrease in the "loaves and fishes," which in former times were poured forth in abundance into the willing laps of the priesthood of the place. The fissure from which volumes of flames issue is perpendicular, and there is no contrivance for the escape of the flame, as in the case of Baroba Coond, on a level with the water. The usual appendage of a variety of images is to be found in the rough vault above the Coond. The salt water flows out there, a small sluice, into a small *cheera* which it has caused, and is carried by poor

people for miles around, who use it instead of salt in their food.

In the same neighbourhood, a few other natural curiosities are also pointed out. These consist of the Chunder Coond, the Burmho Coond, the Surjo Coond, the Dudh Coond, the Gooroodhain, and the Sohosro Dhara.

There is nothing remarkable about these Coonds. The two first are upon the top of the hill, and are sometimes dry. The third consists of a few pebbles over a mound of earth, out of which water and gas, inflammable on touch of fire, continually ooze. The fourth is a pitiful thing, only remarkable for its grand name, which means, "the well of fire," consisting merely of a bubbling circle of shallow water in the bed of the Noboluckho Cherra. The Goorroodhain, literally "loud noise," is a second edition of the Jotimoy, and exists in the side of a high range of hills.

There remains but the Sohosro Dhara to notice. Its name signifies the "thousand streams," indicating that it is a miniature waterfall. It is situated in the bosom of two ranges of hills, which unite near the place; the particular pile from which the water falls down, stands precipitous before, and strikes the beholder with its bold slate-stone formation. Masses of large rocks are beneath your feet, and form the channel over which the water passes away. At the time I visited the scene, the water fell in a continuous sheet stream, broken into circles in its way below. It is considered a virtue to bathe in its stream, but I am sure, that it would do one good to have his limbs in its sparkling element, so light, so pure, and so cool.

Chittagong, 9th February, 1840.

PLAN FOR A NEW SPELLING BOOK.

By Baboo Gobind Chunder Bysak

[Read on the 11th November, 1840.]

I have been a teacher, not perhaps in a right honourable profession, but in one perhaps requiring much of common-sense, patience, and perseverance, and consequently requiring many difficulties to be overcome,

"To teach the young mind rightly how to shoot."

This being premised, it would appear, that the difficulties will be greater, and the common sense, patience and preseverance required in a similar ratio, where the teacher and the taught are to labour in a foreign tongue. It is obvious that the pupils were natives of this country, and the language taught them the King's English of England.

In performing this task some years ago, I found great difficulty in making the elementary pupils thoroughly understand, and retain in their minds, the construction of words, their pronounciation, and lastly their meaning, so as not to be obliged to go over the same parts again. The utmost operation was given to the interrogatory system; explanation was copiously furnished; and every other possible aid was given by which the desired end might be attained; but I believe, my labours met with almost a general failure, which, be it remembered, consisted in not sufficiently imprinting the particular items of instruction already mentioned on the minds of the pupils, so that they might not be obliged to go over the same lessons again. In extenuation of any fault which may be imagined to be attachable to this failure of my object, I may give a learned chapter on the irregular and unsystematic construction of the language of our conquerors, and quote from learned

authors, how its plural parentage from Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French and all the tongues of Babel, serves to increase its difficult peculiarities; but my object is to set forth what I have to say in a common sense style, and is far from attaching or implying any charge of unfitness or incapacity to the writers of the multiplicity of School Books written for the instruction of English youth by Englishmen. And besides, the same circumstance is observable even in superior scholastic institutions, where Englishmen teach their own language to our countrymen.

Upon a consideration of all the circumstances of the case, and of the method in which the Spelling Books generally used in this city are prepared, I have come to the conclusion, that a more satisfactory result could be arrived at, if the lessons, both in spelling and reading, were arranged with a greater attention to classification, and to a strictly graduated scale from the easy to the difficult. They are, it is true, professed to be founded upon this principle, but the steps by which the learner is brought forward are much too abrupt and far asunder to adapt them to the study of those to whom the English language is not a mother tongue. This remark is applicable both to the Spelling Books current among the Indian Schools, written by European authors, and to those that have undergone the process of "indianizing," "to adapt them," as it is said, "to the necessarily slow progress," made by the natives of India.

Entertaining these opinions upon the broad facts above stated, it is necessary that I should set fourth the "means and appliances," by which I conceive the English language may be made more easily attainable to our countrymen—in other words, my plan for a New Spelling Book.

Classification.—In the first place classification must be studiously attended to, from the simplest combinations of

which language is capable, the lessons in spelling should be brought gradually and imperceptibly increasing in difficulty. No arrangement of letters, however rare, within the range of spelling must be omitted. In fact, it should be the aim to present to the young student every possible combination of letters, so that in his advanced study, he may not meet with any word, the integral syllables of which he may not be familiar with. With this view, much matter has been inserted which is generally omitted as useless. But we should remember how often we meet with students otherwise advanced, who stick at words beginning with two, three, or four consonants, some of which are silent, from an inattention to this part of the elementary study, and that although the price of the book may be cheapened by the rejection or omission of such matter, the object gained is of the utmost importance, inasmuch as the connecting link by which the lessons progress are throughout preserved, and as those abrupt gaps by which the analogy of construction is lost sight of in the young mind, are altogether prevented.

Exercises.—At the same time much that is generally inserted should be left out. The curtailment here alluded to, is not of a nature to affect injuriously the regularity of the arrangement, or the compactness of the lessons. It consists of words of similar constructions, such as bit, sit, lit, or band, land, wand. With regard to these sorts of words, the rule to be followed should be, after inserting a number sufficient to give to the reader an idea of other construction, to put the remainder into the question columns to be asked. The two-fold end gained by this arrangement is, that while the pupil is saved from the trouble of studying. and the teacher of teaching, the spelling of words which can be correctly learned from analogy, an opportunity is given for the trial of the pupul's mental powers,

whether he can spell words similarly constructed not in his lesson, to say nothing of the habit which this kind of exercise creates in the young mind of referring to the analogy in the construction. At the same time by the reduction of occupied space thus made, ample examples can be given of the innumerable cases of exception to the rules of analogy in the construction of words, so abundant in the English language, and which form one of the strongest barriers to its easy acquisition by the young learner.

The above design would be followed out further in the exercises to be appended to the spelling lessons. The plan I would recommend in this place has not been adopted in any of the Spelling Books which have come to my knowledge. It consists in placing before the reader words of two, three, four, or more syllables, each syllable standing by itself, and requiring him to spell them out altogether as so many monosyllables. When we consider that words of more syllables than one are composed integrally (integral-ly) of so ma-ny one syl-la-bles, there can be no difficulty (dif-fi-cul-ty) for a pupil, stu-dy-ing the lat-ter to go through the ex-er-ci-ses in question. The difficulty is but apparent. It vanishes on trial. The exercises have further the advantage of making the pupil prepared for what is to follow. That they will succeed I have no doubt, as I can vouch from personal experience in a public school.

Reading Lessons.—The reading part of the book should be framed upon the plan of progressive arrangement, like the spelling department. In most books, particularly those composed in Europe, the transition from reading lessons of two or three words to lessons consisting of pretty long sentences is sudden and abrupt, and is quite unsuited to the capacity of the learner. The arrangement, for the most simple becomes at once much too complicated, and he cannot thoroughly understand, break, and re-arrange

the sentenses; that he should do so, is of the first importance, and some attention is necessary for the formation of the sentences, so that they might be easy enough to be made out.

Meaning and Explanation.—Another change to be introduced into the book is, the insertion of the meaning in Bengali, of words used in the reading lessons. It surely will not be contended, that on commencing to study the meaning of words, it is indispensably necessary to put the pupil to the trouble and loss of time consequent on consulting the Dictionary or his master. By the arrangement proposed, the pupil from a previous knowledge of the integral parts of his reading lesson, is in a manner, self-enabled to explain it without much aid from his master, whose labour is thus lessened in this respect, to be more usefully laid out in pointing out how the different words, which the pupil understands separately, by being put together, give a rational sense.

Grammatical Arrangement.—In a elementary book, like the one of which a plan is under discussion, it occurs to me that it might be possible, without confounding the young mind with the technicalities of Grammer, to introduce the learner, if I might be allowed the expression, into the suburbs of those primary distinctions and classifications in words, which it is the object of the Philological Science to teach. The attempt, however, must be confined to the extent of teaching, by examples in the same manner, as real objects constitute a lesson on things to a child of three years in an Infant School, and every allusion to our mention of the principles must be carefully avoided For instance, the pupil may be taught to distinguish things from their qualities by placing before him in separate rows, a sufficient number of words of either class. And so on with most part of the rest of the first and second grand divisi-

ons of Grammar. Of course an elementary Spelling Book cannot afford any the least scope for the exercise of the pupil's mind in the complex uses, and arrangement of words, and the various rules for producing correct composition.

The above contains the primary heads in which change is called for in the preparation of Spelling books for this country. It is not necessary to go into minute details, which may perhaps occupy more space to be described, than exhibited and illustrated in a book of the kind I propose.

Calcutta, 1st. March, 1836.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIA

GOBINDA CHUNDER SEN

In this way, with the help of his terrible sword, the Emperor Timur cut off the heads of many a prince, conquered India and then through a narrow pass in the Himalays, entered the land of the Tatars and retreated to Samarkhand. The terrible power and skill in warfare of this monarch is known to all but he is hated and condemned by all mankind because of his many misdeeds and acts of cruelty. When he left this country, disturbances broke out and many wars took place. Thousands of weak and petty but wicked princes, swayed by greed and illusion, took to the path of wars and atrocities, following the trail blazed by Timur. These weak and inglorious princes sta-

ked high claims in screeching tones that pierced the ears of men everywhere.

Then a prince called Mahmud reached the city of Delhi and was crowned Emperor in the midst of a host of enemies. But he lacked talents to rule over the country and his minister ran the show on his behalf. The emperor spent all his time in his harem, pleasure-hunting with women folk, eating and sleeping—just like an animal. After ruling in this fashion for twenty years, he faced a crisis and died in disgrace. This emperor was not fit to rule in such a troubled age. He was incapable of behaving like a true king and took shelter behind petticoats.

After this, a Pathan named Daulat Lodi ascended the throne but he two was a coward and a weakling. As a result, he soon fell from this pinnancle of power. He was defeated in a battle by a man called Khizar and was imprisoned, where he was destined to breathe his last. His successor did not take upon himself the title of Emperor but ruled the country as viceroy to Shahruk, the son of Timur. He used to send priceless and valuable presents each year to Samarkhand as imperial dues. Why did he behave in this servile fashion despite the fact that he was an independent monarch? The main reason was that in this way he was able to keep the rascally nobles in check by dangling before them, the fearful possibility of recurrence of Mughal invasion. His expectations were fulfilled. Many princes were on the point of opposing the Emperor but the memory of the roaring, surging mass of the Mughal army, coming on like a tempest over an ocean, was enough to keep the nobles loyal to the Emperor, whatever might be their private opinions. The Emperor worked hard to carry out the work of the imperial administration in the period when he was not too deeply involved in settling the quarrels of the nobles. He constantly gave his

mind to rectifying the damages done to the country by incessant warfare. In this way he did much good work for the welfare of the people. Unfortunately, as was God's will, this emperor died soon, after bringing much prosperity to his subjects. He had ruled for only 7 years and 6 months.

After this, his eldest son, called Mubarak was put on the throne. He was constantly harassed by all kinds of disturbances. After ruling for thirteen years, his ministers murderd him. Now the grandson of Khizar ascended the thrones assuming the title of Mahammad V. During his reign too, that minister took into his own hands the reins of administration. He used to punish, imprison or banish innocent subjects as he pleased. Similarly, he used to honour others as he liked. This kind of oppression easily angered people and after some quiet years, this subdued anger burst forth like an angry flame of open rebellion. At this juncture, that clever and vile minister told the Emperor that these rebels would not only kill the Emperor if they win, they would also overthrow his heirs. Hearing this, the stupid monarch mistook the minister as a great well-wisher and assured him of all help.

Both of them remained inside the city of Delhi after closing its gates, for three whole months, surrounded by enemies. When he came to know of the villainy of the minister, he glossed over his own role and became determined to do away with that minister. In the meanwhile the minister too, came to know of this secret plan of the Emperor and tried to murder the Emperor in order to save his life. After this, both the Emperor and the minister took a terrible vow in their own minds and kept ready a bunch of tough bandits. The minister at first advanced with the bandit army but the bandits under the king were much more powerful and they emerged triumphant. At

the order of the Emperor, they beheaded the minister and dismembered his body into more than one hundred pieces and threw them away far and wide. Then the gates of Delhi were thrown wide open and when the people at large came to know that the enemies of Muhammad had perished, they accepted his overlordship. However, in the meantime, these people had managed to secure the best jobs and offices. The other emperor had ruled for a short while but nothing very serious had happened during his reign, excepting some rebellions and outrages, ultimately he was able to save his life by means of trickery. He fell ill in 1446 A.D and died soon.

After him, his eldest son, known as Alla II ascended the throne. This unfortunate, fickle-minded and weak prince started his reign with a war and was hated by all. He was greatly angered by the news of the power and unjust greed of Belalie, the king of Lahore and started on a campaign against him with his army—marching out of his capital. On the way, he came to know that he was sure to be defeated in case of a battle with Belalie, for it was impossible to conquer the overmighty army of the enemy. Then he ordered his army to disperse in diverse directions.

In the meantime, a rumour spread that the Emperor of Kanauj was marching on Delhi with his entire army. Without verifying this rumour, the Emperor gave up his campaign and swiftly returned to Delhi. Returning to the capital he found that the news of the impending arrival of an enemy had not reached anybody and official work was going on as usual. Seeing all this, the people thougt that the Emperor had utterly lost his head. The Emperor too felt grossly insulted in front of the citizens of Delhi and expressed his desire to build the capital elsewhere. His ministers dissuaded him from such a project after

much efforts but the people disliked him for his whimsical desires.

Seeing so many enemies of the Emperor, Belalie now approached the capital at the head of his army. Mischievous people told the Emperor that Belalie only wanted to destroy the minister under cover of the war. He would not put the Emperor to any trouble. Alla believed such wicked stories and ordered the arrest and imprisonment of his great benefactor, the minister. He himself fled in panic to a village. Those vicious enemies did not rest on their oars with the imprisonment of the minister. They came to the Emperor and told him that if he valued his own welfare, then he must at once destroy the minister. Then that foul prince agreed to such a cruel and shameful deed. The minister, on hearing this, escaped from the prison, and with the aid of his own allies opened the gates of Delhi for Belalie to enter.

Belalie now easily triumphed but showed great magnanimity and agreed to remain subordinate to the Emperor. But Alla, who had behaved all his life like an indiscreet monarch, at long last showed wisdom. He agreed to relinquish his empire and begged to be allowed to retain only the province of Budhjan. Belalie was overjoyed at this and made the gift to the Emperor. That prince then spent the rest of his life enjoying the sensual pleasure of the constant company of young girls. He lived for 30 years more after the loss of his empire.

Belalie crushed all his enemies and ruled in the same way as his predecessor muslim rulers had done. All the independent princes of the neighbouring areas were constantly up and doing—trying to do damage to him. The powerful monarch who had accepted previously the overlordship of Delhi, now started creating disturbances, seeing him on the throne. To save himself he had to cons-

tantly fight against his own subjects. Gradually he killed many men and carried out activities to defeat the enemies —activities that were cruel, sinister, vile, fierce and treacherous. He won in these necessary and just struggles and this resulted in great enthusiasm enveloping his mind. He also fought quite a few unjust wars. Then after many more battles, he came to detest war and went back to his capital to increase the welfare of his subjects. In this way he spent some years in happiness.

During his lifetime Belalie divided his kingdom among his two sons—Barbek and Nizam. That Nizam assumed the title of Sikandar and was crowned Emperor. Then he fought against his own brother Alam and defeated him. But contrary to the practice of the age, he forgave his brother and appointed him as governor of a province in his empire. In this way he placated his brothers and then started on a career of conquest. Soon he was able to conquer many countries like Bihar.

At this time, the foreigners residing in the country called Portugal, discovered the sea-route to India via the cape of Good Hope and arrived at Malabar. Then they established a kingdom at Malabar. In course of time, this kingdom grew in size. After some time, the foreigners picked up quarrels with the native inhabitants. The old king of the land, Zamorin, had welcomed the Portugese out of fear for the mussalmans. But the vile and treacherous Portugese soon attacked him and expelled him from his kingdom. They combined with the king of Cochin, the enemy of Zamorin. Then desperate struggles ensued both in land and in water and Zamorin was about to win. At this juncture two persons called Francis and Alphonso Albukirk arrived at Malabar. They were great warriors and with their help, the Portugese won easy victories. Zamorin was defeated and the king of Cochin

ascended his throne. All other opponents were also put down.

The victorious Portugese now obtained permission to build a fort in Cochin and occupied that city and all its palaces. Strengthened in this way, they constantly tried to increase their power and off and on picked up quarrels with the native inhabitants of the region, in order to extend their own dominion by fair means or foul. In this way, by unfair means and oppressive methods, they lorded over the coastal areas, regions, cities and islands for well over a century.

The Emperor Sikander was reigning in Delhi in this period. He conquered many countries and his subjects lived in peace and security for a long period of time. In this period of peace and happiness, he spent his time in the welfare of others and won much glory as a virtuous and just emperor. Fearing him, the royal officers, carried on the work of administration in an impartial way, for he heavily punished bribe-takers and rewarded the honest ones with money and honour. He left Delhi and ruled at Agra as his capital for 29 years. He passed away in 1516.*

* *Translated into English from the Bengali original by the Editor. For Bengali original. See Appendix—IV.*

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A REPORT OF CONTROVERSY BETWEEN DUKHINA RANJAN AND RICHARDSON AT THE MEETING OF THE SAGK

(From a correspondent)

At a meeting of the above society, held in the Hall of the Sanscrit College, on Wednesday evening last, about one hundred and fifty native gentlemen were present. Captain Richardson, the Principal of the Hindu College, and another European visitor were also in the Hall.

BABOO TARACHUND CHUCKUBUTTY, the president of the Society was called to the chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were read, and other business, connected with the Society, transacted. The President then called upon BABOO DUKHINA RUNJUN MOOKERJEE, who came forward to read an essay, of which notice had been given at the Preceding meeting, on the present state of the East India Company's Criminal Judicature, and Police, under the Bengal Presidency. The entire essay, will we understand, be hereafter delivered in another place, and ultimately produced in a printed form. In consequence of an interruption which took place in the progress of its delivery, half only of the essay was gone through. In order, however that the nature of the interruption may be understood, we shall state the substance of the lecture, as delivered, down to the point at which it as broken off—

The first consideration which entered into the minds of men, emerging from a state of barbarism, was, how they might establish a system for the security of property and the protection of each individual member of the Society in the enjoyment of his rights and privileges. The

early codes of mankind were of necessity comparatively rude; in the progress of Society towards perfection, they grew more in conformity with the popular rights of men. At the present time, most civilised governments recognised the principle at least of equal justice and impartial law. The essayist then referred to the laws of Menu and Jagyobulka; codes which contained evidences of anxiety for the welfare of the people, however their efficacy had been impaired by the arts of Priest-craft and the tyranny of conquerors. He next alluded to the state of India at the time of the Mohomedan conquest; and, finally, to the establishment of British power, which, in this part of India had existed for four-score years—a time, he contended, amply sufficient for the purification of the streams of justice, had there been a sincere desire to bestow the benefits of a just judicial and police administration upon the people.

This, however, had not been done. The courts in the interior were notoriously and shamelessly corrupt. They were a by-word among the poor, and instruments of oppression among the wealthy. He fully admitted, that except where revenue was sought, and offices and places of trust and emolument had to be bestowed, the laws and regulations of the company, from the year 1765, exhibited no fundamental errors; but, on the contrary, proved, that the aim of their framers was the weal of the people. In fact, scarcely any amount of security would succeed in detecting any faults of commission. The grand evil complained of was, the want of any salutary and effective check upon the abuse of power by the company's Civil Servants. The essayist proceeded to enlarge upon the functions of the darogahs, and the constitution and practice of the courts of Faujdary Adawlut. It could not be denied, that in these courts every man had his price, from

the peon up to the Sheristadar. This he proceeded to prove, by tracing the progress of a cause, in one of these courts, from its first introduction. The entire process was one of extortion and corruption, in which the weaker and poorer parties invariably went to the wall. It would be at once erroneous and unfair to deny that the lives and property of the natives of India were safer under the East India Company's Government, than under the rule of their predecessors, but it would at the same time be flattary, and an untruth to say, that the present system of police was one in which the natives could repose the least confidence. The essayist then referred to the practices of the police officer in the Mofussil. He next pointed out the difficulties in the way of approach to one of the civil servant of the company, by a native, however respectable. The zamindar himself must either assume the position of a humble slave, or expose himself to insult and degradation. The essay next referred to the character of the Hindoo people, the fertility of the soil, and tolerance of the prevailing religion, and the unwillingness of the population as in the case of the Parsus, to allow the persecuted of other countries, find an asylum in this country. The essay next pointed out the motives which had influenced the British in coming to these shores :—

At this point of the essay—

CAPTAIN RICHARDSON rose, and expressed himself to the following effect—He said, he had great pleasure in observing the growing intelligence exhibited by the rising generations among the native population, and in the witnessing its effects in the proceedings of the Society then assembled; the laudable object of which was, the acquisition of useful knowledge. He had ever been a sincere advocate of the cause of native education, and the progress of the Hindoo youths in European Science and lite-

rature. The British Government had cheerfully lent its assistance to the promotion of an object so desirable, the undeniable proof of which was presented in the college, the Hall of which was at that moment occupied by the Society. He regretted, however, to perceive that the spread of intelligence among the young natives, had taken a direction and resulted in effects, contrary to his expectations. It seemed to have led them to look rather upon the faults than the virtues of the company and to prefer the contemplation of the dark, in preference to the bright side of the picture. This opinion had received strength, on the present occasion, in consequence of the general sympathy manifested with the remarks that had been made by the young man, (referring to Baboo Dukhin) and the warm response which those remarks had apparently awakened in the hearts of the audience, a response that seemed to be unanimous. The essay, to which they had been listening, as a piece of English composition, was generally correct in its style and tolerably chaste and must be admitted to contain much information. In fact, it shewed considerable ability. ' He, nevertheless, could not sufficiently deprecate the tone and spirit, in which the writer had conveyed his sentiments, nor the conclusions which had been stated. The sentiments, which had been expressed, were calculated to create discontent. He would remind the meeting of the security the natives now enjoyed, in comparison with the condition of their ancestors, under the Mahomedan Government. They could now in safety deposit their twenty-thousand rupees in their chest, or invest large sums in Government's Securities, and travel hence to Loodhiana. Such was not once the case. This should not have been forgotten, while speaking of the corruption and oppressions of the darogahs. The Government were aware, that the universal spread of know-

ledge and intelligence, among the natives of India, would be fatal to the existence of their power, but, with this conviction, they were still doing all in their power to help the cause of education, that hereafter the people might be qualified to govern themselves. In England, the spread of information led the people to perceive, more clearly, than before, the defects of the government, and inclined the people to dwell upon the errors rather than the excellencies of their rulers; but the very discontent displayed was a proof of good government, the eyes of the people being opened to perceive the faults that existed. Such discontent was wrong in itself, because it was folly to expect perfection in any human institutions. Were the Governments in France, Prussia, Russia or any other country free from defects—nor did he mean to say, that his own Government was perfect. Perfection was not to be looked for. The abuses of the darogahs was rather the fault of the people themselves than of Government, and the writer of the essay was not entitled to lay the misconduct of these functionaries at the door of the rulers of India, nor to stigmatise that Government as composed of men, who were capable of breaking their solemn and recorded pledge. Evils existed under the very best forms of Governments. Did not robberies, violence and murders occur in Great Britain as well as India and were not life and property here now far more secure than during the reign of our predecessors'. These things, the writers might, he should have thought, have dwelt upon with feelings of gratitude, and those around him might have participated on such feelings. Instead of such a course, the essay had contained a catalogue of the defects of our administration, and a strong denunciation of the Government, under which they lived. His heart had been grieved, still more, by perceiving the response, which such sentiments had found in the

bosoms of those present, and he felt it his duty to use every means to discourage such improper conduct. To stand up in a hall of a city which was the focus of enlightenment, and there to denounce, as oppressors and robbers, the men who in his opinion amount to treason, and though himself a wig in not quietly witness such improper proceedings, more specially, on the part of those who either were, or had been, students of the Hindoo College—a noble and estimable institution, on which a valuable education was given, and which very institution originated with the Govt. that had been so loudly condemned. The college would never have been in existence, but for the solicitude the Govt. felt in the mental improvement of the natives of India. He could not permit it, therefore, to be converted into a den of treason, and must close the doors against all such meetings.

BABU TARA CHUND (the president) rose and said, Captain Richardson with due respect I beg to say that I cannot allow you to proceed any longer in this course of conduct towards our Society and as the president of the Society and on behalf of my friend Baboo Dukhin, I must say that your remarks are anything, but becoming. I am bound also to add, that I consider your conduct as an insult to the Society and that if you do not retract what you have said and make due apology, we shall represent the matter to the Committee of the Hindoo College, and if necessary to the Govt. itself. We have obtained the use of this public hall, by leave applied for and received from the committee, and not through your personal favour. You are only a visitor on this occasion, and possess no right to interrupt a member of this Society in the utterance of his opinions. I hope that captain Richardson will see the propriety of offering an apology to my friend, the writer of the essay, and to the meeting.

CAPTAIN RICHARDSON declined to apologise or to retract. He had no reason to depart, from the opinion he had expressed.

BABOO DUKHIN again presented himself, and said, the chairman had in his opinion discharged his duty in calling captain Richardson to order as he had done. As his essay had called forth the severe remarks, which had just been made; remarks, which were quite contrary to all the rules of such meetings, seeing the discourse was not half finished, he should attempt to convince the Captain of the erroneous of the course he thought it necessary to take him reference to himself and his countrymen. He conceived captain Richardson was quite unjustifiable in offering him interruption. Some member of the society might have invited him to the meeting, but as a visitor, he had no authority to interfere with the writer of an essay. Had Captain Richardson desired to refute any misstatements or arguments in the essay, he felt quite sure, that at its conclusion he would have been permitted to do so. It was not the disposition or practice of the society to find fault with the British Govt. unless they were faults of an obvious and injurious character, and forced themselves upon their notice. It was not naturally agreeable to look at the dark side of things but rather to dwell upon the pleasing aspect of the object presented. He was confident that neither himself nor his country men were wanting in gratitude to the Govt. for the efforts they had made in the cause of education. But he must say, that he bestowed of the boon of education ought not be referred to as a reason, why the faults of the administration should be concealed, and those who had received an education be prevented from exposing errors, and pointing out the remedies required. His essay was not one intended to compare the English and the Mussulman Governments. It

was not fair, therefore, to judge one according to the doings of the other. He judged the British nation, according to their own religion and professed principles, and not according to the maxims of an avowedly intolerant and tyrannical Govt. who proslyted by the sword; and not by argument.

The ages during which the Mahomedans ruled India, were just Govt. enjoyed at present by the subjects, of Britain. He had, in his essay, fully admitted the superiority, with all its fault, of the company's over the Mahomedan rule, in the principles of its laws and the security generally afforded to life and property. Such an admission, however was quite compatible with an exposure of existing evils, and a demand for a better administration of the laws which were good and the abolition of such as were bad. The people of India were in no way answerable for the acts of the darogahs, they had not placed them in power and consequently captain Richardson could not justly lay their misdeeds at the door of the people. Captain Richardson instead of regretting that the persons present were capable of sympathising in the wrongs of their countrymen, should have rejoiced in such a manisfestation. It was not one of disloyalty, but connected with a strong attachment to the imperial Govt. and people of England, since the people were always ready to believe that it was contrary to their wish, that their distant subjects should be made to suffer the many evils they now endured. Their object in exposing existing abuses, was to obtain redress from the supreme rulers of the country; who, while ignorant of their nature and extent, could afford them no relief. In present circumstances, silence itself would be disloyalty, as such evils would have the sure effect of ultimately alienating the hearts of the people, while free discussion and fearless exposure would save the country to the

British by leading them to establish justice for all classes. Captain Richardson had attempted to prove that the Govt. of India and that of England was the same. Such was not the fact. The East India Company are lease-holders, whose tenure expires in eleven years; and during that time, are constantly subject to the control of Parliament, that parliament in its turn under the permanent influence of the public opinion of England. If he were to speak, as though he aimed at a separation from the supreme Govt., he might be charged with rebellion; but while speaking with respect and attachment for the supreme authority, he discharged his duty in pointing out the defects of those who only executed a delegated trust, and were answerable to those who appointed them if they failed in their trust. If to mention the notorious violations of recorded promises, on the part of the authorities in India, were an offence, surely the violation of public faith itself must be an offence of still greater magnitude. Let good faith be preserved, and the tongue that had that right been employed to censure, should be taught to praise, while millions would echo the sentiments of gratitude which he would be the first to express. He was no enemy to British rule, nor to any other rule that was upright aad impartial. He would say with Pope:—

> "*For Forms of Government let loose contest*
> *Whate'er is best administered is best.*"

He could not adopt the very strange notion that discontent and dissatisfaction were proofs of good Govt. This was a doctrine, to which, he thought none present would subscribe. It was certainly a strange effect to spring from such a cause. He never entertained the utopian idea of a perfect govt., but he did require that there should be as near an approach to perfection, as the circumstances of

the case would admit. There was abundant room for amendment ere they reached that point, where they could be justly suspected of looking for perfection. He did not deny that the Govt. had erected the hall, in which they were assembled, and that they also largely contributed to the support of the college, but that the college itself owes its origin to the Govt., and would have had no existence without it was contrary to fact. The college existed long before the Govt. gave it what was its just due, out of the annual lakh of rupees, set apart by the British Govt. for national education. The effort which brougt it into existence, and its support for many years, was wholly independent of Govt. and therefore greater credit had been claimed for the Govt. than was due, although they were bound to be grateful for what had been done. He and others had been accused of treason; but he maintained that it was no treason to point out the faults and the crimes of those who exercised a delegated authority of persons who were either unable or unwilling to do the duties, which they had undertaken in behalf of the people of England. So far from it, it is true loyalty, and the unanimous response of his countrymen sprung from a conviction that when the things he had named were known, the justice demanded would be granted. In his essay, it would be found that he condemned all recourse to arms or any kind of physical force, and exulted that he did not belong to a native fond of carrying on aggressive wars against other nations. Every fact contained in the essay he was prepared to substantiate there or elsewhere. The essay would, at all times, he found in the records of the society and would also prepare a series of essays on the company's administration, and if they were found to contain a "catalogue of crimes," the fault would not be his, but theirs, to whom the crime were attributable. Let the evils referred

to be removed; and all present would become the admirers and not the accusers of the East India Company. It after what he had now said captain Richardson would retract his observations, he and all here would be perfectly contented, as far as it prefers to himself. But after what has occured it will be impossible to continue our meetings in this hall, and we must go where we shall not be at the mercy of a single individual.

BABOO CALLACHUND SETT expressed his concurrence in the sentiments of the Essay and remarks just made and approved of the conduct of the chairman.

CAPTAIN RICHARDSON said that he did not mean to say anything calculated to hurt the feelings of those present and retracted what he had said. It however appeared to be the unanimous feeling of the members to discontinue the meetings at the hall and to hold them elsewhere.

BENGAL HURKARU
February 13th, 1843.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ABOUT SOME OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE ACQUISITION OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

(COMPILED BY THE EDITOR)

1. BHOLANATH BOSE :

He was born in 1822 in Barrackpore near Calcutta. In 1840 he entered the Calcutta Medical College and studied medicine there for 5 years. In 1845 Dwarkanath Tagore announced two stipends for sending two Bengalee boys to England to become qualified doctors. Bholanath was selected along with Gopal ch. Seal. He won great repute as a brilliant student in England and his teachers there recommended his name for the Indian Medical Service. This was till then a close preserve of the Europeans and they raised a storm of protest over this recommendation. In 1848, Bholanath returned to Bengal, a full-fledged doctor and dedicated his life to fight disease and epidemics among his impoverished countrymen.

2. BHOLANATH SEN :

He became the editor of the Bengali journal "Bangadoot." He also worked under Dwarkanath Tagore. He was a consistent supporter of all reform movement.

3. BHUBAN MOHAN MITRA :

He was one of the few Indians, who acted as teachers in the Hindoo College. He was the first to draw up an atlas or the map of the country. It was used in all recognised schools of the age. Together with Ganga Churn Sen and Radhanath Paul, he set up the Hindu Free School and ran its affairs for a long time.

4. CALACHAND SETT :

He came from a business men's family and was the friend of the band of young men who rallied round Derozio and his radical views.

When the SAGK was formed, he was unanimously chosen to become one of its vice-presidents. Later on, he took active part in political activities and participated in the meeting that gave birth to the Bengal British Indian Society in 1843.

5. CHANDRA KUMAR CHATTOPADHYAY :

He was a nephew of Dwarkanath Tagore. In 1852 he revived and edited the well-known local newspaper "The Burdwan Chandro-

day". The paper's content and journalism won the praise from all and sundry.

6. CHANDRA SEKHAR MUKHERYA :

He was the editor of the "Sambad Jnanoday", which used to come out every week on Saturdays.

7. CHANDRA SEKHAR MUKHERJI :

In 1851 he brought out a paper called "Sambad Jnanodoy" and edited it for 10 years with success.

8. CHUNDRA SEKHAR DEB :

He was a young radical who was a fervent admirer of Rammohan Roy and supported all the progressive movements of his age. In 1843, he seconded the main resolution passed in a very important public meeting held on 20th April at Fouzdari Balakhana, demanding certain political right for the natives of India.

9. DEBENDRANATH TAGORE :

Born in 1817, he was the eldest son of the illustrious Dwarknath Tagore, a pioneer in the field of the reform movement in Bengal, a close friend and follower of the great Rammohun Roy. Debendranath was only 2[illegible] when he joined the SAGK. Next year in 1839 he established a socio-religious body called "The Tatwa Bodhini Sabha" to preach monotheism and oppose idolatory and superstitions. In 1843, together with 18 others, he formally became a "Brahmo" and revived Rammohun Roy's "Brahmo Samaj." He was also a founder of the "Tatwabodhini Patrika"—a Bengali journal devoted to religious and social reforms. His deep love of the country, the Bengali language as well as his universalism profoundly affected the mind and character of his youngest son—the great poet Rabindranath Tagore.

10. DOORGA CHURN DHUR :

He was a prominent merchant of Calcutta. We come to know from governmental records that he was engaged in exporting various commodities to England. In the early 'thirties of the 19th century, his company was one of the more famous Bengali Firms.

11. DUCKINARANJAN MOOKERJEE :

Born in 1814, he was the grandson of Surya Kumar Tagore of Pathuriaghata, Calcutta. He was a favourite disciple of Derozio and was actively connected with the first bi-lingual political journal in India—"The Bengal Spectator". He was a great orator and together with Ramgopal Ghose and George Thompson, was instrumental in

setting up the Bengal British Indian Society in 1843. He was also a great champion of the movement for emancipation for women and for his age, took the audacious step of marrying the widowed Maharani of Burdwan, in the teeth of frenzied opposition from powerful conservative circles. In the SAGK he became famous by giving a speech in one of its meeting in 1843 denouncing the misdeeds of the British rulers in India. The then principal of the Hindu College, Capt. D. L. Richardson was infuriated by the speech and asked the members of the SAGK to stop further discussion then and there. This brought back the famous retort from Tarachand Chakraborty, the President of that meeting that Capt. Richardson had no right to speak in that vein and should apologise for his rude remarks.

12. DURGA CHARAN BANNERJI :

He was born in 1819, near Barrackpore, in the suburbs of Calcutta. At the very early age of 10, he entered the Hindoo College and showed excellence in History and Mathematics. At the age of 21, he became a teacher in the English language school run by David Hare where Rajnarain Bose was one of his pupils. Through Hare's kind permission, Doorga Churn started reading Medicine for 2 hours each day at the Calcutta Medical College. Later on, he won great fame as a doctor and a street in Central Calcutta has been named after him to perpetuate his memory. One of his sons, was Surendra Nath Banerjii, one of the greatest of the early leaders of the Indian National Movement.

13. DWARKANATH GOOPTA :

He was one of the band of courageous young men who in the 'thirties of the 19th century, joined the newly-founded Calcutta Medical College. From newspaper reports we come to know that he was a brilliant student and in 1837 won a money-prize worth Rs. 75/-. Later on he became one of our first eminent doctors. In 1840, he started a pharmacy and tried to manufacture medicines for selling them to the local public at a cheap rate.

14. DWARKANATH MITRA :

A student of the Hindoo College, his essay on Francis Bacon won the first prize in the essay competition among the students of that college. In 1833, when a group of Bengalee youth set up a society called the "Sarvatatwâ Deepika Subha" for discussion in Bengali and the cultivation of the Bengali language, Dwarkanath Mitra became one of its active members from the very outset. In 1865, when the

famous rent-case came up before a full bench of 15 Judges, Dwarkanath pleaded on behalf of the tenants with clarity, vigour and eloquence that won the admiration of the public.

15. GANENDRA MOHAN TAGORE: (JNANENDRA MOHAN)

He was the son of Prosonna Coomar Tagore, a cousin of Dwarkanath and a friend of Rammohun Roy. Jnanendra Mohan accepted the christian faith and was denounced for this by his family. Later on he was connected with progressive movements at home and abroad and is well-known for his active sympathisation with the freedom struggle of the Irish people. He was a brilliant lawyer and for sometime worked as a lecturer in Hindoo Law in the University of London.

16. GIRISH CHANDRA BOSE :

He was a supporter of all progressive reform-movement. In January 1836, he brought out a bi-weekly Bengali newspaper called "Sambad-Gunakar". This soon established a reputation as a fearless journal.

17. GOBIN CHANDRA GOOPTU :

He was one of the first Bengalees to join the Calcutta Medical College. In 1837 he won a certificate of Merit and later on became a doctor of repute.

18. GOBINDO CHUNDER SEN :

A founder member of the SAGK, he attempted to write a chronological history of ancient India and read out his papers in 3 sittings of the Society. (See Appendix III for the Bengali Original).

19. GOPAL CHANDRA DE :

In December 1847, he brought a Bengali journal called the "Sambad Manoranjan".

20. GOPAL LAL MITRA :

Born in 1829, he joined the SAGK in 1843, at the tender age of 14. He was then a promising student of the Hindoo College. His great-grand father on the Mother's side was Raja Durlavram, who was finance minister under Alivardi, Nawab of Bengal in the first half of the 18th century. Gopal Lal became a lawyer of repute and was ultimately elected a Vice-Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation.

21. GOPINATH SEN :

In 1833, a special committee was set up here to go into the problem of poverty of the masses. Gopinath became one of the leading members of this committee.

22. GOUR MOHAN DAS :

A founder member of the SAGK, he read a thought-provoking paper on "Knowledge" in one of the sittings of the Society. The paper in Bengali is to be found in the Appendix—II of the book.

23. GOVINDA CHANDRA DUTTA :

He was the third son of Russomoy Dutt, of the well-known Dutt family of Rambagan, Calcutta. Russomoy was a fearless patriot and great champion of all reforming activities. Govinda Chandra inherited the qualities of his father and was connected with all progressive social and political activities of the time. Later on, he became a christian. He was the father of the celebrated Bengalee girl-poet—Toru Dutt.

24. GURU CHURN DUTT :

In early life, he was a teacher in the Oriental Seminery. In August 1851, he established the David Hare Academy at Bartolla in Calcutta. Later on it merged in 1853 with the Hindu Metropolitan College.

25. HARAMOHAN CHATTERJEE :

Together with certain others, he brought out the famous "Jnananwesan".

26. HURRO CHANDRA GHOSE :

He was a direct student of Derozio. He was 30 years old when he joined the SAGK. Later on, he became the Sudder Ameen of the Jungal Mahal. He was well-known for his scholarship and his integrity.

27. ISSHUR CHANDRA BANDOPADHYAY :

Better known by his title Vidyasagar, he is perhaps the greatest figure of the Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century. With literally the flaming sword of reform in his hands, Vidyasagar slashed his way through a forest of opposition and tremendous odds. Spread of western education, including education for women, putting Bengali prose on "granite foundations" and the heroic pioneering attempt to emancipate womenfolk from all forms of social bondage—these are but some of the activities connected with this human dynamo. He was also the main prop behind the two most outstanding Bengali weekly newspapers of this period—namely "Tatwabodhini Patrika" and "Som Prakash." His patriotic fervour and his courage are bywords even today to every schoolchild in Bengal. He was the patron of most of the talented young men of that age and time and again he

stood by the great poet Madhusudan Dutta during his many crises. When he joined the SAGK in 1838, he was only 18 and a mere student of the Sanskrit College. The portals of fame were to be opened to him two years later when for his vast scholarship, he was given the title of "Vidyasagar" (Ocean of learning).

28. ISSHUR CHANDRA CHATTERJI :

He was a member of the SAGK from the Mofussils. He lived at Konnagar in the district of Hooghly. He is well remembered for the sustained agitation that he carried on for improvement of roads and communications in his own district.

29. ISSHUR CHANDRA DUTT :

He was also another brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College. In 1837, he stood second in the college examination and won a money-prize worth Rs. 120/- awarded by Dwarkanath Tagore. He also edited for sometime a Bengali weekly named "Sambad Saudamini."

30. ISSHUR CHANDRA GANGULY :

He was also one of the early students in the Calcutta Medical College. In 183 , he stood first in the college examination and obtained the money-prize of Rs. 270/- awarded by Dwarkanath Tagore.

31. ISSHUR CHANDRA GHOSAL :

He was a student of the Hindoo College in 1834. From press-reports we learn that in the prize-distribution ceremony, he played in the role of Henry VI. It is interesting to note that the role of Gloucester was played by young Madhusudan Dutt.

32. ISSHUR CHUNDER GOOPTO :

Noted Bengali poet and journalist. He was a fearless patriot who lashed out at the misdeeds of the alien rulers both in verse and prose. He founded the famous Bengali newspaper "Sambad Prabhakar" which in content and style, established itself as a class by its own.

33. ISSUR CHANDRA SAHA :

He was a prominent student of the Hindoo College and a class-friend of Ramtanu Lahiri. In 1836, he became a teacher in the Hindoo College. It may be mentioned that at that time, there were only 4 Indian teachers in that college.

34. JADAV CH. DHARA :

He too was a brilliant student in the Calcutta Medical College in 1837-38 and later on became a doctor of repute.

35. KALACHAND BOSE :

A liberal philanthropist, he wrote several tracts against the odious system of Suttee. He contributed liberally to the Hindu Benevolent Institution in 1838 in order to help the cyclone-affected people of Cuttack.

36. KALA CHAND DEY :

He was yet another young doctor, who having passed out of the Calcutta Medical College, went to Assam in 1839, under difficult conditions, to fight disease and epidemics among the neglected tea-garden labourers.

37. KALI CHARAN LAHIRI :

He was a member of the SAGK from the mofussils. He was the Dewan of Cooch Behar and it was at his instance that a high school was set up there in 1832.

38. KALIDAS MOOKERJI :

He was yet another student of the Calcutta Medical College. In 1837, he won a certificate of merit and a money-prize worth Rs.50/-.

39. KALIKRISHNA MITRA :

Born in 1822, he was a student of the Hindoo College in 1838. He came from a poor family and maintained his educational expenses out of his own scholarship-money. Later on he settled at Baraset, in the 24-Parganas and set up a model agricultural farm there, on European lines. He imported machinery from Europe and tried to train the cultivators on modern lines. He was a great friend of Vidyasagar and supported all his reforming activities.

40. KALICHURN DUTT :

Born in 1821; he was an uncle of Rajendra Dutt (also a member of the SAGK) and together they founded in 1854, the "Hindoo Metropolitan College," with D. L. Richardson as its first Principal.

41. KASHEESWAR MITRA :

He also was a member of the SAGK from the mofussils. He lived at Andul in the Howrah District and was instrumental in establishing a high school there.

42. KYLAS CHANDRA BOSE :

Born in 1827, he was only 16, when he joined the SAGK in 1843. He was a student of the Oriental Seminary and later on of the Hindoo College. In 1849 he started an English journal called the "Literary Chronicle." In 1850, he shot into public prominence with a fiery speech in a public meeting, held at the Town Hall, Calcutta.

His paper entitled "The Woman of Bengal" read out in a meeting of the Bethune Society is a remarkable document.

43. KHETROMOHAN MUKHERJI :

A brilliant student of the Hindoo College, he translated into Bengali, a history of Greece at the request of the school book society. He also rendered into Bengali several sanskrit classics.

44. KISHORI CHAND MITRA :

Born in 1822, he was the younger brother of Peary Chand Mitra. He was educated in the Hare School and later on in the Hindu College. He was the first Indian to start writing in the columns of the "Calcutta Review." In 1846, he was appointed to the post of Assistant Secretary of the Asiatic Society. He started a weekly political journal called the "Indian Field" which later on merged with the more well-known "Hindoo Patriot". He was also one of the co-founders of the Bengal British Indian Society. He also wrote an excellent biography of Dwarkanath Tagore.

45. KOYLAS CHANDRA DUTT :

He was another son of that illustrious man; Russomoy Dutt. On the 27th August, 1835, Koylas Chandra started an English fortnightly journal called the Hindoo Pioneer", commenting on it the "Calcutta Monthly Journal" wrote in September 1835 that "A periodical called the Hindoo Pioneer, entirely the production of the students of the Hindoo college, has been published. The first number, on the whole reflects great credit on its contributors and editors."

46. KRISHNOMOHAN BANNERJEE :

Born in 1813 in Calcutta in an orthodox Brahminical family, he was educated in Hare School and later on in the Hindoo College. He was a direct student of Derozio and was deeply influenced by him. He was a brilliant scholar and at the very young age of 16, in 1829, he was appointed a teacher in the Hare School. Because of his radical views, he was expelled from orthodox Hindoo society and in 1832 he embraced Christianity. He was a famous preacher and among those he converted to the christian faith were the poet Madhusudan Dutt and Jnanendra Mohan Tagore. In the 'thirties he brought out a weekly called the "Inquirer" which was progressive and radical in its views. At the young age of 25, he was one of the pillars of S.A.G.K. and had the signal honour of reading the first Paper in the first monthly sitting of the said society. Around this time he wrote a play in English called "The Persecuted".

As we have already stated, he was a great scholar and linguist. He had fluent proficiency in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English, Bengali, Hindi, Oriya, Tamil, Urdu and Gujrati. For years he was the examiner in the University of Calcutta in Sanskrit, Hindi, Oriya and Tamil. ' In 1868 he was elected a "fellow" of the Calcutta University and in 1876, the Calcutta University conferred on him the degree of Doctorate in Law. When the early nationalists founded the Indian Association in 1878, the white-haired but ever youthful Reverend Krishnamohan was unanimously chosen as its first President.

47. LUKHINARAIN MITRA :

In 1832, together with two other benevolent gentlemen, he set up an English High School for poor students, called the Hindoo Liberal Academy.

48. MADHAB CHUNDER GHOSH

In 1848, a Bengali fortnightly came out named "Sambad-Ratnabarshan" and Madhab was its editor.

49. MADHAB CHANDRA MULLIK :

A direct student of Derozio, he embraced christianity in 1833. He was in the committee set up by the foundation meeting of the SAGK. He was a close friend of Ramgopal Ghose.

50. MADHUSUDAN DUTT :

Born in 1824, at 14 Madhu was perhaps the youngest member of the SAGK but already he was considered to be the most brilliant student in English in the Hindoo College. In 1843, he embraced christianity as a revolt against conservatism in the hindu society. After much restless activities, his deep love of his country turned him into the first modern Bengali poet of great stature. He broke away from the listless old poetic style, introduced the blank verse in Bengali and wrote the epic "Meghnad Badh" as well as the famous "Virangana"—dedicated to the cause of emancipation of women. He also introduced the sonnet in the Bengali language and wrote a number of beautiful sonnets. He also wrote a number of plays including two powerful social satires and also acted as the vehicle of introducing female actors on the Bengali stage. He was always with the oppressed people and fearlessly translated Dinabandhu Mitra's play "Nil-Darpana" denouncing the European Indigo-planters in India.

51. MAHESH CHANDRA DEB :

Educated in the Hindoo College, he was one of the most ardent

followers of Derozio, remaining by his bedside right upto the time of his death. He was expelled from Hindoo Society by the orthodoxy for his radical views and later on he accepted the christian faith. His paper on the condition of Hindoo Women read at a sitting of the SAGK and reproduced in full in this book reveals his warm human sympathy and progressive democratic views.

52. MATHURNA MOHAN MITRA :

In 1823, he brought out a Persian weekly named *Samshal-Akhbar.* The paper lasted for five years.

53. NABIN CHUNDRA MITTER :

Yet another student of the Calcutta Medical College, he tried to set up a drug manufacturing concern in Calcutta in 1840. On 20th July 1839, he, together with others set up a high school at Baraset in the suburbs of Calcutta. Nabin Chunder became its first Secretary.

54. NABIN CHUNDER PAUL :

He was a Brillant student of the Calcutta Medical College and in 1836, won a money-prize of Rs. 262/- on his college-examination results.

55. NABIN CHANDER MUKHERJEE :

He was one of the first students who studied in the Calcutta Medical College and made "service to people" the motto of their lives. From press reports, we come to know, that together with two other Bengalee students, Nabin Chunder in 1339 went to Assam to serve as a doctor among the neglected and poor tea-graden plantation labourers.

56. NABIN MADHAB DEY :

Educated in the Hindoo College, he too was a disciple of Derozio. His passion in life was to spread western education in our country and he founded a number of such schools in Bengal. He was also co-founder in 1833 of the association called the "Sarbatatwa Deepika Subha" dedicated to the cause of advancement of Bengali language and literature.

57. NEELMONY BYSACK :

He was a profound scholar and linguist of repute. As early as 1834, he translated the History of Persia from the original English into Bengali, in verse.

58. NEELMONY MOTILAL :

He was a student of the Hindoo College from 1829 to 1833 and

was a direct pupil of Derozio. By his own merits, he was appointed Diwan to the office of the Sheriff of Calcutta in 1835.

59. OBHOY CHURN BOSE :

He was a student of the Hindoo College from 1834 to 1838. From press reports we learn that he could recite and act fairly well. Later on, he became well-known for his philanthropic activities and became a committee member of the District Charitable Society.

60 PEARY CHAND MITRA :

Born in 1814, at the young age of 24, he was the other joint secretary of the SAGK. He was an extremely talented man and full of boundless energy. Apart from the SAGK, he was also the Secretary of the Calcutta Public Library. In 1843, he became one of the founders of the first political organisations in India—the Bengal British Indian Society. Peary Chand wrote the novel "Alaler Gharer Dulal" in spoken Bengali—which was a daring experiment for that age.

61. PEARY CHURN SARKAR :

Born in 1823, he was one of the members of the SAGK. In 1838, he was a student of the Hindoo College and later on became a brilliant scholar. In 1854, he became the Head Master of the Hare School. Still later, he became the first Indian to become the Professor of English in the Presidency (Hindoo) College. He ran two monthly papers—the "*Well Wisher*" in English and the "*Hita Sadhak*" in Bengali. His first book and second book in English were basic texts in the schools of Bengal for over half a century. He was a great teacher who won the hearts of his students and the people of that period compared him with Dr. Arnold of Rugby.

62. PEARY MOHAN BOSE :

He was one of the founders of the Banga Bhasa Prakashika Sabha, which was not only a cultural but also a political organisation of great importance. In 1837, together with others he organized a mass petition against some of the misdeeds of the local government.

63. PREAM CHAND CHOWDHURY :

A founder member of the SAGK, he later on became connected with all such progressive activities. He was also a founder-member of the Land-holder's Association.

64. PROSUNNA KUMAR MITTRA :

He too was a brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College and read quite a few scientific papers in various sittings of the SAGK.

65. RADHANATH SIKDAR :

Born in 1813 in Calcutta, he entered the Hindu College at the young age of 11 in 1824. From the records it is evident that he was by far the most brilliant student in Mathematics in that institution. He was a favourite pupil of Derozio and a firm supporter of all forward looking ideas of the age. In 1832, he accepted the job of a computer under Colonel Everest in the Survey of India office. Later on, he became the Chief Computer in that institution. It was actually Radhanath who calculated the height of the highest Peack in the Himalayas, namely Mt. Everest, named after his superior English officer. He was a fervent patriot and was connected with the formation of the Bengal British Indian Society. A friend of the down trodden masses, he fought for the right of the coolies against the oppressive activities of the European officers of the Survey of India. Together with his friend Peary Chand Mitra, he was the pioneer in the effort to introduce spoken Bengali in our literature.

66. RAJ KRISHNA DEB :

A direct student of Derozio, he was one of the conveners of the meeting that gave birth to the SAGK in 1838. He won a prize in 1836 as a brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College, and helped to establish a hospital in Serampore.

67. RAJ KRISHNA MITRA :

Together with Nabin Chandra Mitra, he was the co-founder of a high school in Baraset.

68. RAJ NARAYAN DUTT :

Father of the famous poet Madhusudan, he was himself a great scholar and a liberal. His paper on "Poetry" read at a sitting of the SAGK has been reproduced in full in this book.

69. RAJARAM ROY :

The adopted son of the illustrious Rammohun Roy. He accompanied Rammohun during his trip to Europe.

70. RAJENDRA DUTT :

He was the great-grand son of the well-known Akkur Dutt of Calcutta. He was born in 1818 and studied for some time in the Calcutta Medical College. He spent many millions of rupees for the advancement of Homeopathy in Bengal. In 1854, together with his uncle, Kally Churn Dutt, he fonnded the "Hindu Metropolitan College."

71. RAJENDRA NATH SEN :

He was a brilliant student of the Hindoo College. Later on he participated in many philanthropic activities.

72. RAM CHANDRA MITRA :

A founder member of the SAGK, in 1839, he participated actively in establishing its sister organisation, the Calcutta Mechanical Institute. He was professor of Bengali in the Hindoo College and retired in 1862 after 33 years of service. He was a fellow of the Calcutta University and he helped to run a number of journals.

73. RAMGOPAL GHOSH :

He also was one of the five signatories to the manifesto that resulted in the formation of the SAGK in 1838. After its formation, Ramgopal was elected one of its Vice-Presidents. He was born in 1815 in a very poor family. His oratorical gifts even when he was a child were remarkable and impressed David Hare who enabled him to study in the Hindoo College as a free student. From the 'thirties of the century till his death, Ramgopal was actively in the fore front of all social and political activities in this country. He was the main driving force behind both "Bengal Spectator" and the Bengal British India Society. His famous speeches in defence of the "Black Act" (right of Indians to try Europeans for certain criminal offences) won for him the name of "Black Demosthenes". He was also among the first persons to send his daughter to the Bethune School for girls.

74. RAMKUMAR DUTT :

Yet another brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College. In 1839, he established a drug manufacturing concern and tried to sell medicine at cheap rates to the local public.

75. RAMNARAYAN DAS :

He was one of the early medical students who later on became a doctor of repute. He won a Money-prize of Rs. 120/- on his results in the college examination.

76. RAMTANOO LAHIRI :

He too was a convenor of the meeting that led to the formation of the SAGK and in the very first meeting, he was elected one of its joint secretaries. He was born in 1813 and was educated in the Hindoo College, where he came in contact with Derozio and became one of his devout admirers. Later on he joined the Brahmo Samaj and rallied round himself the best of the social reformers. He was a model teacher all his life and dedicated himself to the cause of educa-

tion. His saintliness of character and his integrity were bywords in Bengalee Society. Shibnath Sastri wrote a memorable book called "Ramtanu Lahiri and Bengali Society of his age" which remains to this day one of the main sources of our knowledge regarding awakening in Bengal in early 19th century.

77. RASIK KRISHNA MULLICK :

A direct student and disciple of Derozio, he was connected with all the forward looking movements of the age. He was the editor of the well-known bi-lingual weekly "Jnananvesan." On 5th January, 1835, in a famous public meeting in Calcutta, he gave a speech arraigning British imperialism for all its misdeeds in India which will always remain memorable in the annals of the freedom movement in India.

78. RUSSICK LAL SEN :

He was a brilliant student of the Hindoo College. In 1835, he was appointed as Headmaster in the Midnapore School. In March 1837, he came away to Barrackpore near Calcutta, as headmaster in the Auckland School. In 1842, he joined the Sanskrit College as the Lecturer in English and remained there till 1853.

79. SARADAPRASAD GHOSH :

Another direct student of Derozio, he was also connected with the earlier body, the "Academic Association". Later, he became a teacher in a school and was connected with all progressive activities. In 1841, when radical Bengalees formed one of their first political organisations, the "Deshahitaishanee Subha"—Sarada Prosad gave a famous speech during the inaugural meeting. A few lines are given here from that speech which would clearly show the attitude of Sarada Prosad :

"Our deprivation of the enjoyment of political liberty is the cause of our misery and degradation. The losses of happiness follow the losses of civil liberty, as shadow does substance."

80. SAUTCOWRIE DUTT :

A brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College, he read many Papers in the meeting of SAGK.

81. SHAMA CHURN BOSE :

He was a member of the SAGK from the mofussils. In 1838, a society for the advancement of the Bengali language and literature was set up in Dacca. It had many members and was called the

"Timir Nashak Sabha" (Society for fighting out darkness). Shama Churn Bose was its first President.

82. SHAMA CHURN DEY :

Born in 1820, he was educated in the Hindoo College, thanks to the help given to him by David Hare. Among his teachers were Rev. Krishna Mohan Banerji and Russick Krishna Mallick. He was socially active till his ripe old age and in 1884, was elected to the post of Vice-Chairman in the Calcutta Corporation.

83 SHAMA CHURN DUTT :

He was a brilliant student of the Calcutta Medical College and in 1837 won a money-prize worth Rs. 120/- on the results of his college examination. Later on he became a doctor of repute.

84. SHAMA CHURN SARKAR :

He was a linguist and a lawyer of repute. Later on, he became an interpreter in the Supreme Court. He was the first person to write books on the legal system in Bengali.

85. SHAMLAL SEN :

In 1827, in order to enable the students of the Sanskrit College in Calcutta, to learn English properly, the government appointed one Mr. Wollaston at Rs. 200/- per month. Later on the government also paid for the expenses of two more teachers—Ganga Churn Sen (1833) and Naba Kumar Chakrabarty (1833). Two years later in 1835, Shamlal Sen was appointed teacher of English in Sanskrit College in place of Ganga Churn at Rs. 50/- per month.

86. SHIB CHANDRA DAS :

He was a profound scholar in both Bengali and English. The "Samachar Chandrika" of 2nd May 1831, informs us that he was a great supporter of the Dharma Sabha. He was also connected with the Asiatic Society. He was perhaps the only member of the conservative Dharma Sabha to join the SAGK.

87. SHIB CHANDRA DEB :

A brilliant student of the Hindoo College, he was a reformer and educationist and later on became a pillar of the Brahmo Samaj. He was a resident of Konnagar in the district of Hooghly and was respected by all for the saintliness of his character.

88. SHOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT :

He was in 1842-43, a teen-aged young member of the SAGK. Later he wrote many articles and a book (1854) on such subjects as

Rights of Hindoo Women, Female Education and a specially comprehensive one on the "Young Bengal" movement.

89. TARACHAND CHAKRABORTY :

He was one of the five signatories who convened the meeting in March 1833 that gave birth to the Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge (SAGK). After its formation, Tarachand was unanimously elected the President of the said Association. He was one of its seniormost members, being almost a contemporary of Rammohun Roy and the First Secretary of the Brahmo Sabha. In the thirties of the century, he brought out a journal called "The Quill" which fearlessly criticised the shortcomings and reactionary policies of the Government. After the death of Derozio, he became the unquestioned leader of the radical-minded Bengali youth that came out of the Hindu College and in fact some people called them the "Chakabortv faction". He was also connected with the formation of both the "Deshahitashinee Sabha" (1841) and the Bengal British India Society (1843)—the first political organisations to be formed in the country.

90. TARAK NATH BOSE :

He was a brilliant student of the Hindoo College and later on became the chief editor of the bi-lingual periodical "Jnananwesan".

91. TARAK NATH GHOSH :

Born in 1815, he was a favourite pupil of David Hare and through his help, was educated in the Hindoo College. He was among the first Indians to become a deputy Collector, where his courageous stand against the arrogance of European superior officers, won him much repute and admiration.

92. TARAK NATH SEN :

He was a member of the SAGK from the mofussils. He lived in the village of Sukhchar in the 24 Parganas. There, he established a charitable school on his own, in order to spread western education and modern knowledge in Sukhchar.

93. TARINEE CHURN BANERJI :

He too came from the mofussils but took a very prominent part in the formation of the SAGK. In fact, he was one of five convenors of the meeting that led to the formation of the Society in 1838.

94. UDAY CH. ADDHYA :

Another puplil of Derozio, he was a great champion of the Ben-

gáli Language. His paper advocating education through the medium of Bengali, read in a meeting of the SAGK, is a brilliant essay on the subject and has been reprinted in full in this book.

95. UMACHARAN MITTRA :

He was a student of the Hindoo College. In 1837, he acted in Shakespear's "Merchant of Venice" and brilliantly interpreted the character of Shylock. Later on he became a teacher in the Hare School, where one of his pupils was Raj Narayan Bose.

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APPENDIX—I

শ্রীউদয়চন্দ্র আঢ্যকর্ত্তৃক
এতদ্দেশীয় লোকদিগের বাঙ্গালাভাষা উত্তমরূপে শিক্ষাকরণের আবশ্যকতা বিষয়ক প্রস্তাব সাধারণ জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জিকা সভাতে পঠিত হয়।

হে সভাপতে এবং সভ্য মহাশয়গণ।

কিয়দ্দিবস গত হইল মহাশয়েরা এক সভা করিয়া তাহাতে এ পর্য্যন্ত যাহা করিয়াছেন ও পরে যাহা ২ করিবেন তত্তদ্বিষয়ক বিবরণ সমাচার পত্র মধ্যে পাঠে ও বন্ধু পরম্পরাদ্বারাবগতে আমি আহ্লাদিত হইয়াছি : যেহেতু আপনারা কতিপয় সুশিক্ষিত বঙ্গদেশীয় সহবাসি যুবাদিগের জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধির প্রতি অত্যুৎসুক হইয়াছেন, এবং গত সভার বৈঠকে উপস্থিত হইয়া মহাশয়দিগের কতিপয় ব্যক্তির বক্তৃতা শ্রবণে এমত প্রতীতি যুক্ত হইয়াছি যে সভাভুক্ত ব্যক্তিদিগের যে গৌরবের প্রতি পূর্ব্বে বিশ্বাস করিয়াছিলাম পরে তাহার সৌষ্ঠবও পাইয়াছে।

তৎসভায় উপস্থিত হইয়া পূর্ব্বোক্ত ব্যাপারে মহাশয়দিগের যথোচিত অনুরাগ বোধে আমার নিতান্ত মানস হয় যে আপনারদিগের এ মহাসভার এক ক্ষুদ্র সহকারী হই : তাহার কারণ আমার বাসনা আছে যে এতদ্দেশীয় বালকেরদিগের সুশিক্ষাভাবে এ দেশের যে দুর্দ্দশা ও দুর্নাম আছে ও তজ্জন্য যে অনিষ্ট হইতেছে তাহা প্রদর্শনানন্তর এই সভা মধ্যে দৃঢ়রূপে নানা তর্ক দ্বারা তদ্বিষয় সাব্যস্ত করিয়া যাহাতে স্বদেশীয় ভাষায় বাঙ্গালিদিগের সুশিক্ষা হয় এস্থলে উপস্থিত দশ জন বন্ধুগণে মিলিয়া তাহারি কোন চূড়ান্ত উপায় করি। তচ্ছ্রবণে আপনারা আহ্লাদিত হইয়া এতদ্বিষয়ে আমার বক্তব্য ব্যক্ত করণে সভাধ্যক্ষ দ্বারা অনুমতি এবং তৎপরে লিপিযোগে পুনশ্চাদেশ করিয়াছেন তাহাতেই এ বিষয়ে আমি কিঞ্চিৎ উক্তি করিতে প্রবৃত্ত হইলাম।

এই বঙ্গীয় বালকেরদিগের শিক্ষা সেই পর্য্যন্ত রুদ্ধ হইয়াছে যদবধি হিন্দু রাজারা রাজ্যচ্যুত হইয়াছেন ; ইহার কারণ এমতই নির্ধারণীয় যে যখন যবন জাতি রাজা হয়েন তখন তাঁহাদিগের দাসত্ব করণার্থ বাঙ্গালিরা যাবনিক ভাষা শিখেন, এবং

তৎপরে ইংরাজ রাজা হইলেও কেবল পূর্ব্ব কারণাৎ ঐ ভাষাই শিখেন। কি জানি! তত্তৎকালাবধি বাঙ্গালি মহাশয়দিগের কি কুদৃঢ় বিশ্বাস জন্মিয়াছে যে বাঙ্গালা ভাষায় কোন প্রয়োজন নিষ্পাদন হইতে পারিবেক না ইহা ভিন্ন মনে অন্য কদাচ স্থান দেন না। এই সাধু মতভাষা শিক্ষা যে বঙ্গীয় মহাশয়েরা একেবারে পরিত্যাগ করিয়াছেন তাহার প্রমাণ প্রথমতঃ এই শ্রবণ করুন, যে লোকেরদিগের জাতীয় ভাষার আলোচনা এককালে রহিত হইয়াছে : কারণ দেখিতেছি যে বালকেরদিগের প্রায় পুস্তক দ্বারা শিক্ষা হয় না, কেবল তাহারা শিশুকালে দাস-দাসীর নিকট নীচ ভাষা যাহা শিক্ষা পায়, যথা "যাবি, হেঁরে, ওই, বলিসনে" ইত্যাদি অতি অপভাষা এবং "তার কাচে কয়েচ, ঠাওর পেয়েচে, ধরে আন্" ইত্যাদি সমুদয় অশুদ্ধ শব্দঘটিত কথাই জানেন এবং যদা কদাচিৎ কোন যুবা উত্তম উত্তম সাধু শব্দ নিকর নানা পুস্তকে শিখিয়া তদ্দ্বারা বাক্যালাপে প্রবৃত্ত হন, তাহাতে সাধারণ লোকেরা তৎশ্রবণে হাস্য করিয়া কথককে বিদ্রূপ করিয়া থাকেন। দ্বিতীয়তঃ পূর্ব্ব ২ কালে বা তৎ কিঞ্চিৎ পরে মধ্যম কালে বঙ্গীয় ভাষায় কিছু আলোচনা থাকিয়া এ ভাষাতে জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জনে লোকেরদের যেমত স্পৃহা ছিল তাহা এক্ষণে হ্রাস পাইয়াছে, অর্থাৎ এমত হইয়াছে, যে একেবারে লোপ হওনোপক্রম বটে ; কারণ পূর্ব্বে পূর্ব্বে যে সকল গ্রন্থকর্ত্তারা ছিলেন, যথা কবিকঙ্কণ চক্রবর্ত্তী, কাশীরাম দাস, কীর্ত্তিবাস পণ্ডিত, এবং ভারতচন্দ্র রায় ইত্যাদি, এবং ঐ সকল কবিবরেরা যে সকল উত্তম২ ইতিহাস, কাব্য এবং অন্যান্য মত পুস্তক রচনা করিয়াগিয়াছেন তাহা কেবল লোকেরা যদা কদাচিৎ পাঠ করিয়া থাকেন মাত্র, কিন্তু এমত শুনিতে পাই নাই যে অধুনা ঐ সকল লেখকেরদিগের লেখার ভাবের মাধুর্য্য অথবা অভিপ্রায়ের প্রাখর্য্য, বা ছন্দের মধুরতার প্রাচুর্য্য প্রভৃতি এক২ গ্রন্থ কর্ত্তার গুণের তুল্য এক্ষণের কোন কবিবরের আছে, কিম্বা তদ্রূপ কোন পুস্তক অধুনা কোন গ্রন্থকর্ত্তা প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন : হায়! ইহা কি খেদের বিষয় নহে? ধন্য প্রশংসা ইঙ্গলণ্ড ও তৎসন্নিহিত অন্যান্য দেশ, যথায় ২ নিত্যই জ্ঞানের প্রাচুর্য্য হইয়া তাহারি প্রাখর্য্যে লোকেরা পূর্ব্ব কালাপেক্ষা দিন ২ জ্ঞানবান হইতেছেন, এবং ঐ জ্ঞানের দ্বারা নিত্যই নূতন রচনা করিয়া অন্যান্য দেশস্থ লোকের দিগের আশ্চর্য্য জন্মাইতেছেন ; তাঁহাদিগের গুণের অধিক কি প্রশংসা বাহুল্যমতে করিব, যে ২ দেশে আপনারদিগের জ্ঞানের নূতন চমৎকার শক্তি দেখাইতেছেন, তত্তদ্দেশের বিত্ত বিলক্ষণ হস্তগত করিতেছেন, ছি, ছি, ছি! এই সকল দেখিয়াও কি

এদেশের লোকেরদের ইচ্ছা হয় না যে ইংগ্লণ্ডীয়েরদের সদৃশ মনুষ্য হইয়া চতুষ্পাদের ন্যায় মূক থাকিয়া অপরের হস্তোত্তোলনে প্রদত্ত ঘাস জলই আহার করিতে থাকেন। হে বন্ধুবর্গ মদুক্ত পূর্ব্বোক্ত প্রস্তাব শ্রবণে আপনারা মনে করিবেন না যে আমি শ্লেষোক্তি করিলাম, কিন্তু এদেশীয় লোকেরদের স্বজাতীয় ভাষায় অনভিজ্ঞতা বিবেচনা করিয়া আমার যে রূপ অন্তর্ভেদ হইয়া নয়নে বারি বিগলিত হয় তাহা আর দীর্ঘকাল না থাকে এমত চেষ্টায় ঐ বিষয়ক প্রসঙ্গোত্থাপনে সমুদয় হেতু বিন্যাস করণ কারণ আমাকে সটীক উক্তি করিতে হইয়াছে।

কেহ ২ আমার মতের সহিত অনৈক্য হইয়া যদ্যপি এমত বিবেচনা করেন, যে ইংরাজী ভাষায় জ্ঞান প্রাপ্তে অভিজ্ঞ হইলে এক্ষণে মনুষ্যেরা যেরূপ কর্ম্মঠ হইয়া অবহেলে জীবনোপায় পাইবেক, অন্যভাষায় তদ্রূপ হওয়া সুকঠিন হইবেক, তাহা কেবল ইংরাজ দিগের দ্বারা উৎপাদিত তাঁহাদিগের বর্ত্তমান ঐশ্বর্য্য দর্শনে ভ্রমমাত্র: কেননা এক্ষণে ইংরাজেরা বাঙ্গালিদিগের প্রতি যে সকল কর্ম্ম প্রদান করিতেছেন ইহা কি অতুচ্চ জ্ঞান করিতে হইবেক? আমি তাহা বলিতে পারি না; যেহেতু এদেশীয় লোকের পূর্ব্বে স্বজাতীয় ভাষায় এমত অধিক জ্ঞান হয় নাই যেমত এক্ষণে ইংরাজী ভাষাতে হইতেছে, সুতরাং এক্ষণে ইংরাজেরা এদেশের লোকগণকে উত্তম জ্ঞানি বলিয়াই কর্ম্ম দিতেছেন কিন্তু জাতীয় ভাষায় যদ্যপি আলোচনা হইতে পারে তবে অত্যধিক ব্যুৎপন্ন হইয়া যে আরো উচ্চ পদ পাইবেন এমত আমি ভরসা করি তাহাতে সন্দেহ কি? অপরন্তু এ স্থানে স্থিররূপে বিবেচ্য যে যখন বাঙ্গালিরা অন্য ২ জাতীয় ভাষা শিখিয়া তত্তৎ জাতীয়েরদিগের নিকট সেই জন্যই প্রশংসার পাত্র হইয়া কর্ম্ম পাইতেছেন তখন যে জাতীয় ভাষা শিখিলে অত্যুত্তমজ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট হইয়া আরো শ্রেষ্ঠতা ও উচ্চ কর্ম্ম পাইবেন তাহাতে সন্দেহ হইতে পারে না। অপরন্তু বিবেচনা করা কর্ত্তব্য, সংপ্রতি গবর্ণমেণ্ট এমত নিশ্চয় মানস জানাইয়াছেন যে দেশীয় ভাষায় সর্ব্বত্রেই রাজকর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহ করাইবেন সেই আজ্ঞা তৎকাল বেগবান হইলে মহাশয়গণগো কি করণ কর্ত্তব্য? আমি অবশ্যই বলিব যে এক্ষণকার যুবারা যেরূপে ইংরাজী ভাষায় কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহ করিবেন বাঙ্গালা ভাষায় তত্তুল্য কদাচ পারিবেন না।

মনুষ্যের কর্ম্ম দক্ষতাই প্রাধান্যের কারণ, তাহা যে ইংরাজী ভাষার দ্বারা না হইবে এমত আমার প্রস্তাবের ভাবে বুঝিবেন না, কিন্তু এমত জানিবেন যে দেশের মনুষ্য সেই দেশের ভাষায় কর্ম্ম দক্ষতা হইলে পরাধীন দাসত্বের কারণচ্যুত হইয়া স্ব ২

প্রধান হইতে পারেন, তৎপ্রমাণ দেখুন যে এমত দেশও অদ্যাপি কতিপয় আছে যে তত্রস্থের স্বীয় ২ জাতীয় ভাষার জ্ঞান দ্বারা বৃহত ২ কর্ম্ম নিষ্পন্ন করিতেছেন, রাজার ভাষা বা কোন রাজার সহিত সংসৃষ্ট রাখেন না। এই কর্ম্ম দক্ষতা নানা প্রকার আছে যথা বাণিজ্য কৃষিকর্ম্ম ইত্যাদি। এসকল কর্ম্ম লোকেরদিগের নিজ ভাষায় সুসংস্কার না থাকিলে কিরূপে স্ব ২ প্রধানত্বে সম্পূর্ণরূপে চলিতে পারে কেননা তাহার এই এক প্রমাণ, আমার দিগের দেশের লোকের স্বভাষায় প্রচুর আলোচনা না থাকাতে অনেকেই বাণিজ্য ঘটিত দ্রব্যের ভাব বা উৎপন্নের উপক্রম বুঝেন না, তাহাতে বাণিজ্য বা কৃষিকর্ম্ম কিরূপে করিতে পারেন। হায় ২ সহস্র ২ ক্রোশদূর স্থিত অসংখ্যক লোকেরা ভূম্যুতপন্ন কতই প্রকার শস্য এবং স্ব ২ দেশে শিল্পে রচিত দ্রব্য লইয়া পৃথিবীর চতুর্দ্দিগে ভ্রমণ করিয়া ফিরিতেছেন আমার দিগের দেশীয় প্রায় সমুদয় লোকেরা তাহার কিছুই জানেন না। পরন্তু পল্লীগ্রাম নিবাসি যে প্রজারা যে কএক প্রকার শস্যোৎপন্ন করিয়া থাকেন তাহা ভিন্ন নূতন প্রকার শস্য আর কখন দেখা যায় না, এবং যে সকল ধনী মহানুভবেরা এদেশে আছেন তাঁহারা ঐকর্ম্ম সামান্য বলিয়াই জানেন ; কিন্তু এই কর্ম্মের যে কি পর্য্যন্ত ফল, ও আবশ্যক, এবং ইহাতে কি রূপ জ্ঞানসংযোগ প্রয়োজন, তাহা কেহই বিবেচনা করেন না, ফলতঃ তুলনা করিলেই বোধ হইতে পারিবেক যে অন্যান্য দেশে যে সকল শস্যোৎপন্ন ও বা নিজদ্রব্য নির্ম্মিত হইয়া থাকে, বঙ্গদেশে তাহার অনেক ন্যূনই হয়, তবে বঙ্গীয়দিগের জ্ঞানের অপ্রচুরতা জন্য এসকল কর্ম্মের লঘুতা বোধ হইতেছে কিনা ?

মনুষ্যের পরাক্রম ব্যাপ্ত হওনের প্রধানপথ কর্ম্মদক্ষতা, তাহ না থাকিলে সুতরাং পরাক্রম ক্রটিতে পারে কেননা কর্ম্মদক্ষতাসহ কৃত পরাক্রম যে একসংজ্ঞা মনুষ্যের প্রতি সংযোগ থাকে, তাহা কখনই যোজ্ঞতাহীন ব্যক্তির প্রতি প্রতিপাদ্য হয়না ; তৎপ্রমাণ এই দেখাইতে পারি, যে ইংলণ্ডীয়েরা ৪০০০ সহস্রাধিক ক্রোশদূর হইতে জলে ভাসিয়া এইদেশে বিদেশীয় ভাবে উত্তীর্ণ হইয়াও এমত কর্ম্ম দক্ষতার প্রাদুর্ভাব করিয়াছেন, যে তাহাতে তাঁহাদিগের একটা সামান্য কীর্ত্তি বিবেচনা করিলে তাহার মূল যেরূপ সবল বোধ হয় তাহাতে তাহারদিগের পরাক্রম দার্ঢ্য বলিতে হইবেক, অতএব এমত যে পরাক্রম, ইহা বঙ্গীয় লোকেরদিগের কোন অংশে আছে ?

জীবনোপায় মনুষ্যের বিবিধ প্রকার আছে ; প্রথমতঃ সুখে কালক্ষেপণ, দ্বিতীয়তঃ

কষ্টসৃষ্ট্যা অন্ন সংস্থাপন করণ : অত্র দেশীয় লোকেরা কেবল শেষোক্ত প্রকরণেই জীবন নির্ব্বাহ করিতেছেন : কিন্তু কেহ এমত মনে স্থান দিবেন না, যে অনেকেই সুখে স্বচ্ছন্দে আছেন, কেননা কতেক লোককে সুখি দেখিবেন, সেই যে সুখ তাহা লোকেরদিগের মধ্যে কাহার ২ পূর্ব্ব পুরুষের ধন দ্বারাই, সুতরাং তাহা ধর্ত্তব্য নহে, ফলতঃ পরাক্রম দ্বারা জীবনোপায় করিয়া লোক সুখ ভোগ করণের পথ করিতে পারেন নাই, বর্ত্তমান বিষয়ে সেই ধারার প্রতি উল্লেখ করিতেছি ; অতএব অবশ্য বিবেচ্য যে কোন ২ ব্যক্তিরা স্বীয় জ্ঞানের প্রভাবে সুখে জীবন নির্ব্বাহোপায়ের পথ করিয়াছেন তাহা ভাবিলে বলিতে হইবেক যে কেহই পারেন নাই : কেননা সুখী তাহাকেই বলা যায়, যাহাতে পরাধীনতা না থাকিয়া স্ব ২ পরাক্রমের প্রভাব সিদ্ধ হইতে পারে।

পূর্ব্বোক্ত দুঃখ নিবারণার্থ এক্ষণে আমর এই প্রস্তাব্য যে প্রথমতঃ এদেশের শিক্ষার ধারা দর্শন কর্ত্তব্য : অতএব কহি, যে বঙ্গদেশের প্রধান স্থান কলিকাতা, এখানকার শিক্ষার বিষয় সুন্দবরূপে অনুসন্ধানানন্তর বিবেচনা হইতে পারে, এবং তদ্বিষয়ে আমি যৎকিঞ্চিৎ যাহা আহরণ করিয়াছি তাহা দর্শাই। আমি এই অবগত হইয়াছি যে এখানে বঙ্গভাষা শিক্ষা দেওনার্থ উদ্‌যোগ অতি ন্যূন আছে, অথবা বিশিষ্টরূপে শিক্ষা দেওনার্থ কিছুই নাই, তদ্বিশেষ, প্রথমতঃ অস্মদেশীয় শ্রেষ্ঠ জাতীয়েরদিগের শিক্ষার্থ গবর্ণমেণ্ট আপনাদিগের বিত্ত ব্যয়ানন্তর এক বিদ্যামন্দির স্থাপন করিয়াছেন, তাহাতে যে উত্তম শিক্ষা প্রদান হয় এমত ঐ শিক্ষালয় স্থাপন-কালে বিলাতীয় কর্ত্তা সাহেবদিগের মানস ছিল বটে, এবং তাহা বিশিষ্ট প্রকারে নির্ব্বাহকরণের ত্রুটি না হয় এমত বিবেচনায় বহু সংখ্যক ধন তদর্থে বিতরণানুমতি করেন, পরে তাহাতে কি শিক্ষা দেওন কর্ত্তব্য তাহা এতদ্দেশের অনেক মহাশয়েরও অস্মদেশের শুভাকাঙ্ক্ষি কতিপয় ইংরাজগণের মত লইয়া স্থির করেন বঙ্গভাষার মূল যে সংস্কৃত তাহাই শিক্ষা দেওয়া যায়, এবং তদনুসারেই কলিকাতা নগরে সংস্কৃত বিদ্যামন্দির সংস্থাপিত হয় পরে তদ্বিদ্যালয় নির্ব্বাহের যেসকল নিয়ম হয় তাহা যে অস্মদেশীয় মহাশয়েরা স্বদেশীয়গণের সুখকর জ্ঞানে চিরস্থায়ী করিয়াছেন তাহাতেই আমি চমৎকৃত হইয়াছি। তাহার এক প্রমাণ দেখুন ঐ সংস্কৃত কলেজে এক প্রধান নিয়ম করিয়াছেন যে, কেবল ব্রাহ্মণ ও বৈদ্য জাতীয়েরাই সংস্কৃত শিক্ষা পাইয়া ধর্ম্ম ও বৈদ্যক শাস্ত্রাধ্যয়ন করিবেন, এবং নিষেধ রাখিয়াছেন যে অন্যান্য নানা জাতীয় শূদ্র যুবারা সংস্কার প্রাপণার্থ ব্যাকরণও পাঠ করিতে পারিবেন না : ইহাতেই বোধ

হইতেছে যে পূর্ব্বোক্ত বিদ্যালয়ের কুনিয়ম প্রযুক্ত যে অন্যান্য জাতীয়েরা চিরকাল মূর্খ থাকিবেক তাহা ঐ বিদ্যালয় স্থাপকেরা বিবেচনা করেন নাই। অপরন্তু যাহাদিগের শিক্ষার্থ ঐ বিদ্যালয় স্থাপিত হইয়াছে তাহাদিগের অসীম উপকারের কথাইবা কি কহিব, কেননা আমি দেখিতেছি যে সকল ব্রাহ্মণ বালকেরা ঐ বিদ্যা-মন্দির মধ্যে পাঠ করিয়া থাকেন তাঁহাদিগের ঐ পাঠে যে কিছু উপকার দর্শিবে এমত তাঁহারা প্রায় মনে করেন না, এবং তাহা প্রায় অত্যল্প বালকেরদিগেরও হইয়া থাকে ; যেহেতু দেখুন তাহাদিগের অনেকে এমত পণ্ডিত হয়েন যে কতেকগুলির শাস্ত্র বচন আওড়াইতে পারেন, এবং সংস্কার জ্ঞান পাইয়া বর্ণাশুদ্ধাদি বিবেচনা করিতে পারেন মাত্র ; নচেৎ একটা প্রস্তাব লিখন যাহা ইংরাজী বা অন্য ভাষায় সামান্য জ্ঞানিতে লিখিলে তাহা পাঠে লেখকের জ্ঞান প্রতিভার প্রাখর্য্যবোধে প্রশংসা করিতে হয়, সংস্কৃতপাঠি ছাত্রদিগের কৃত তাহা দেখিলে বা শুনিলে হাস্যই পায়, অপিচ সংসারের নানা কার্য্য অর্থাৎ রাজ্যের কর্ম্ম বিচার বা বাণিজ্য কার্য্যে তাঁহারা অত্যন্ত অযোগ্য অর্থাৎ দেশের ধারা, চরিত্র, লক্ষণ ইত্যাদি সকল কিছুই জানেন না। সামান্যত তাঁহাদিগকে শাস্ত্রে জ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট বলা যায় কিন্তু কিতাবৎ প্রভৃতিতে অত্যনিপুণ ; যথা একের পৃষ্ঠে দুই শূন্য দিয়া তাহাই সহস্র কহেন এবং একের পৃষ্ঠে তিন শূন্য দিয়া কখন তাহাই শত কহেন ; এবঞ্চ বিষয় কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহার্থ যেরূপ পারগ তাহা ঐ বিদ্যালয় স্থাপন কালাবধি তাঁহারা কে ২ কি ২ করিয়াছেন তাহা অনুসন্ধান করিয়া কিছুই জানিতে পারিলাম না, ইহাতেই বোধগম্য হইবেক। এদেশের মধ্যে কখনই ঐ ব্যক্তিরা উত্তম কর্ম্ম পায়েন না বা আপন ২ উদ্যমে কোন কর্ম্মের নূতন সৃষ্টিও করিতে পারেন নাই কেবল শতের মধ্যে পাঁচজন প্রদেশের বিচারাগারের পণ্ডিত হন ও হিন্দুদিগের বিষয়ের বিরোধ বিচার কালে কখন ২ শাস্ত্র হইতে উদ্ধৃত দুই একটা প্রমাণ দেন এইজন্য যে বেতন পান তাহার অঙ্কপাত তাহাদিগের উপাধির দক্ষিণে দর্শন করিলে ঘৃণা হয়, ফলতঃ তাঁহারা কলিকাতায় শিক্ষা পাইয়া এখানকার কি গুরুতর উপকার করিয়াছেন এবং ঐ বিদ্যামন্দির স্থাপকেরা যে তাহা কিমত দেখিয়া সন্তুষ্ট আছেন তাহা বলিতে বাসনা করিয়াও কিছুই নিদর্শন পাইলাম না। অপরন্তু তাহাদিগের যেমত শিক্ষা হইতেছে তাহাতে অগণ্য উপকার ভাবিয়া ছাত্রেরাই বা কেমত অনুরাগে প্রবিষ্ট থাকিয়া শিক্ষা করিতেছেন তাহা শ্রবণ করুণ। পূর্ব্বে ঐ বিদ্যালয়ের এমত নিয়ম ছিল যে যে সকল ছাত্রেরা তত্র বিদ্যাধ্যয়ন করিবেন তাঁহারা ৫।৮ মুদ্রা মাসিক বেতন পাইবেন তাহাই শ্রবণে

বিদ্যালয় দীন ব্রাহ্মণগণের বালকে পূর্ণ হয়, পরে অধিক বালককে বেতনদান হেতু ঐ বিদ্যামন্দিরের যথেষ্ট ধন না থাকাতে কয়েক বৎসর হইল এমত আজ্ঞা হয় যে২ সকল বালকেরা ভবিষ্যতে তদ্বিদ্যালয়ে বিদ্যাভ্যাসার্থ নিযুক্ত হইবেক তাহারা বেতন পাইবেন না ; তদাজ্ঞার পর অবধি আর অধিক ছাত্র তথায় পাঠার্থ নূতন প্রবৃত্ত হইতে দেখা যায় না, এবং এক সময়ে ঐ বিদ্যালয়ে ২০০ শত ছাত্র ছিলেন এক্ষণে তাহা ন্যূন হইয়া ১৪০ হইয়াছেন। দ্বিতীয়তঃ প্রাচীন ধারানুসারে কেবল ব্রাহ্মণ পণ্ডিতেরা শাস্ত্র ব্যবসায় করিলে হিন্দুদিগের শ্রাদ্ধ দান ইত্যাদি ক্রিয়াতে বিদায় পান অতএব তাহাই প্রাপণার্থ অনেকে তদ্ব্যবসায়ী হইয়াছেন, এবং সেই ব্যবসায় যে তাঁহারা যথার্থরূপে করেন এমত লোকদিগের স্পষ্ট নয়ন গোচর রাখনার্থ এক চতুষ্পাটী করিয়া তাঁহাদিগকে তাহাতেই কেবল শাস্ত্র অধ্যপনা করিতে হইতেছে ; কিন্তু খেদের বিষয় যে ভট্টাচার্য্যেরা এমত বিদ্যার্থী পায়েন না যে কেহ স্বগৃহে সঞ্চিত কিঞ্চিৎ আহার করিয়া চতুষ্পাটীতে অধ্যয়ন করেন অতএব ছাত্র যাবৎ অধ্যয়ন করেন তাবৎ অধ্যাপককে অন্নদান করিতে হয় : এবং তাহা অধ্যাপকেরা আপন২ ভট্টাচার্য্যত্ব উপায়ের দ্বারা নির্ব্বাহ করেন ফলতঃ ঐ সকল চতুষ্পাটীতে শিক্ষিত যুবারা যেরূপ শিক্ষা পাইয়া থাকেন তাহাতে সংসারের কর্ম্মোপযোগী না হইয়া বিপিনে বাসে কেবল ধর্ম্মচিন্তা করণের উপযুক্তই হয়েন। তৃতীয়তঃ এই মহানগর কলিকাতাস্থ ভাগ্যবান ও মাধ্যমিক এক২ গৃহস্থের বাটীতেই পাঠশালা আছে, তাহার প্রথা এই যে যে কোন জাতীয় এক ২ জন সরকার ঐ সকল পাঠ-শালার শিক্ষকরূপে নিযুক্ত হন তাহাদিগের প্রত্যেকের বেতন তিন মুদ্রাবধি অষ্ট মুদ্রা পর্য্যন্ত মাত্র, তাঁহারা বালকেরদিগের অক্ষর পরিচয় অবধি সামান্য অঙ্ক পর্য্যন্ত শিক্ষা দেন ; সর্ব্বারম্ভে অক্ষর পরিচয় এমতই করান যে সকার, নকার, জকার ইত্যাদির ভেদ প্রত্যেক বর্ণের প্রকৃত নাম দ্বারা করাওনের অনভিজ্ঞতা প্রযুক্ত আণ ণ, দোব্যেডা ল, বলিয়া ণত্ব ণ, ও ল, প্রভেদ ও তেপুটলে ও পেটকাটা বলিয়া তালব্য ও মূর্দ্ধন্য সকারের প্রভেদ বুঝান ইত্যাদি ; এবং পত্রাদি লিখনকালে ভ্রম বশত বর্ণভ্রম করান : এ প্রযুক্ত ঐ সকল সরকারের নিকট শিক্ষিত যে সকল মনুষ্যেরা পরে কিতাবত শাস্ত্রে জ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট হইয়া নানা কর্ম্মে লিপ্ত হইয়াছেন ও লিখন পঠনাদি করেন তাঁহাদিগের লিখন পঠন নীচশব্দ ঘটিত ও ব্যাকরণ বিরুদ্ধ পদ বিন্যাসে পূর্ণ। অপর পূর্ব্বতন কালের যে সকল ভাষা পুস্তক আছে কেহ ২ তদ্ধ্বয়ৈক কদাচ পাঠ করিয়া থাকেন কিন্তু তাহার অনেকাংশ বুঝিতে পারেন না,

আরো আমাকে নির্লজ্জ হইয়া কহিতে হইল যে পক্বকেশবিশিষ্ট বিশিষ্ট শ্রেষ্ঠাগ্রগণ্য বাবুরা এক২ খান পুস্তক দৃষ্টি করিয়া যথার্থ শব্দের উচ্চারণে অসমর্থ প্রযুক্ত জিহ্বার জড়তা ত্যজিয়া সুমধুর স্বরে পাঠ করিতে পারেন না। চতুর্থতঃ বিলাতীয় ও অন্যান্য দেশীয় বহু মহাশয়েরদিগের দত্ত ধনব্যয়ে তাঁহাদিগের ধর্ম্মালোচনার প্রাচুর্য্যার্থ আনুপূর্ব্বীরূপে এক২ মিসনরি সাহেবের কর্ত্তৃত্বাধীনে কলিকাতা ও তদিতস্তত স্থানে এক২ পাঠশালা সংস্থাপিত আছে তত্তৎস্থানে বাংলা ভাষার দ্বারাই শিক্ষাদান হইয়া থাকে। ঐ সমুদয় শিক্ষালয়ের নিয়ম এই যে উপরোক্ত তৃতীয় প্রকরণে উল্লেখিত অস্মদ্দেশে গণ্য এক২ জন সরকারই নিয়ত শিক্ষা দিয়া থাকেন, এবং ঐ সরকারের-দিগের ব্যুৎপত্তি পূর্ব্বোল্লেখিত গুরুমহাশয়েরদিগের অপেক্ষা গুরুতর নহে ; সুতরাং তাঁহারা যাহা শিক্ষা দেন তাহা ঐ প্রকরণে প্রস্তাবিত গুরুমহাশয়দিগের প্রদত্ত শিক্ষার নির্ঘণ্ট স্মরণ করিলেই বোধ হইবেক। এই শিক্ষা বরং উপরোক্ত প্রকরণে উল্লেখিতাপেক্ষা অপকৃষ্টই জ্ঞাত আছি, যেহেতু ভদ্রলোকের বাটীতে শিক্ষালয় থাকিলে তাহারা তদ্বিদ্যালয়স্থ স্বজনদিগের পরীক্ষা প্রায়ই লয়েন, এবং যাহার দিগের সন্তানেরা ঐ সকলস্থানে শিক্ষা পায়েন তাহারদিগের পিত্রাদিরাও স্ব ২ পুত্রাদির শিক্ষার তথ্য লইয়া থাকেন ; মিসনরিদিগের শিক্ষালয় সকলই নীচ জাতীয় ও বংশানুক্রমে মূর্খদিগের সন্তানগণে পূর্ণ এবং গুরুমহাশয়েরা জানেন যে বালকেরা বিনাবেতনে শিক্ষা পাইয়া থাকে, সুতরাং তাহাদিগেরো স্বকর্ম্ম সাধনে তাচ্ছিল্য আছে, এবং ঐ বালকেরদের পিত্রাদিরা মনে করে যে সন্তানদিগের শিক্ষার বৃদ্ধি হইতেছে, কিন্তু পরীক্ষা করিবার যোগ্যতা নাই ; তবে যে একজন করিয়া মিসনরি ঐ প্রত্যেক পাঠশালার দর্শক আছেন তাঁহাদিগের মধ্যে দুই এক জনের বাঙ্গালা ভাষায় ব্যুতপত্তি আছে ভাল, এবং ঐ অভাগা বালকেরদিগের সুশিক্ষাহেতু তাঁহাদিগের বাচনিক ইচ্ছাও শুনিতে পাই এবং মানসিক বটে এমত বোধ করিতে হইবেক ; কিন্তু দেখিতেছি যে যুবাদিগকে জাতীয় ভাষা শিক্ষাদানে যেরূপ শ্রম এক্ষণে শিক্ষকেরদিগের করা আবশ্যক তদ্বিষয়ে তাঁহারা অনভিজ্ঞ আছেন, যেহেতু তাঁহাদিগের কায়িক শ্রম অধিক দেখিতে পাইনা ; তৎপ্রমাণ তাঁহারা একটা নিয়ম করিয়াছেন যে এক জন মিসনরি আপন২ অধীন পাঠশালায় সপ্তাহে এক বা দুই-দিবস উপস্থিত হইবেক এবং দুইতিন ঘণ্টাকাল মাত্র স্থিত থাকিয়া কেবল ধর্ম্ম বাত্তা ছাত্রেরদিগকে শিক্ষাদেন, কিন্তু অন্যান্য বিষয় শিক্ষায় তাদৃশ চক্ষুঃপাত করেন না ; ইহারদিগের দ্বারা প্রদত্ত শিক্ষার এই সুখ্যাতি হইয়াছে যে কস্মিন কালেও তদ্রূপ

কোন এক শিক্ষালয়ে ভদ্রলোকের সন্তানেরা প্রবেশ করেন না, বস্তুতঃ তাঁহার দিগের মনে যে আছে ধর্ম্মচালনা করিবেন এবং তাহার নিমিত্ত বিত্ত ব্যয়ও হইতেছে সত্য বটে, কিন্তু ঐ সকলস্থানে পাঠ করিয়া কোন যুবা ধর্ম্মাবিষ্ট হয় নাই কেবল পিত্রাদিরা কয় বর্ষ সন্তানগণকে তথায় রাখিয়া দেখে কিছুই হইল না তৎপরেই স্বজাতীয় ব্যবসায় অর্থাৎ পাদুকা নির্ম্মাণ শকট চালন ও অন্যান্য বিবিধকর্ম্ম করান : অতঃপরে মদ্যপায়ী পরস্ত্রী গামী ইত্যাদি বিপথাশ্রয়ী অনেকেই হইয়াথাকে তবে ধর্ম্ম শিক্ষার ফল কি রূপে হইল : বরং ঐ রূপে বিত্ত ব্যয় করিয়া যে সকল ভদ্রসুশিক্ষিত যুবাদিগকে ধর্ম্মাদেশ দিতেছেন তাহার প্রার্থনীয় ফল প্রায় অব্যর্থ রূপে আশু পাইতেছেন।

এতদ্দেশের লোকেরদিগের এক্ষণে যে রূপ শিক্ষার প্রয়োজন তাহার উপযুক্ত প্রমাণ আগেই দেখাইয়াছি এবং তাহা যে দেশীয় ভাষায় হওয়া অত্যুচিত তাহার প্রয়োজন তৎপরেই দর্শাইয়াছি : অতঃপরে খেদ পূর্ব্বক জানাইয়াছি এক্ষণে কিরূপ ধারায় শিক্ষা হইতেছে ও তাহাতে প্রাপ্তীচ্ছার তুল্য ফল হইবেক না : তবে এক্ষণে অত্যাবশ্যক হইতেছে কি না যে কিরূপে এদেশের বালকের দিগের দেশীয় ভাষায় শিক্ষা হয় তাহার উপায় করা যায়? অত্র আমার কথ্য যে ইংলণ্ডীয়ের দিগের শিক্ষার ধারা অত্যুত্তম : যেহেতু তাঁহাদিগের এক সাধারণ শিক্ষালয়ে যে বালক পূর্ণ শিক্ষা পায় তাহার বর্ণজ্ঞান অবধি শাস্ত্রজ্ঞান নিয়মিত মতে জন্মে এবং সাংসারিক প্রয়োজনীয় কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহোপযোগি জ্ঞানেরও ত্রুটি হয় না : অর্থাৎ কি যন্ত্রী কি মন্ত্রী সর্ব্বকর্ম্মাজ্ঞই হয় এবং সেইযুবা যে কর্ম্ম ইচ্ছা কিছুদিবস সাধন করিলেই নিষ্পাদন করেন। অতএব ঐ শিক্ষার ধারানুসারে এক শিক্ষালয় কলিকাতার মধ্যস্থলিতে সংস্থাপিত হয় এবং তাহাতে কিরূপ শিক্ষক নিযুক্ত করণ কর্ত্তব্য এবং বালকের দিগের বিদ্যারম্ভাবধি শেষ পর্য্যন্ত কি২ পুস্তক পাঠ নির্ব্বন্ধ হওন প্রয়োজন তাহা স্থির হয় ও ঐ পাঠশালা কিরূপে আরম্ভ হয় ও তাহা কিরূপে নির্ব্বাহ পায় তাহার বিবেচনা দশজনে ঐকামতে করা যায়।

শ্রীউদয়চন্দ্র আঢ্যস্য।

APPENDIX—II

জ্ঞান সম্পর্কে

এসভাস্থ সমস্ত সদ্বিদ্যানুশীলন সদন্তঃকরণ বিচক্ষণ গুণিগণ সন্নিধানে সম্বোধনে নিবেদন সংপ্রতি আমি যে এক কঠিন কর্ম্মে প্রবৃত্ত হইলাম তৎকর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহারম্ভের অগ্রেই আমার ব্যগ্রতা এই যে এতৎ কর্ম্মে আমি নূতন ও অনভিজ্ঞ তৎপ্রযুক্ত হাস্যাস্পদের কারণে ভীত হইয়াও আপনকারদিগের সম্যক প্রকার বিশিষ্ট গুণাবলম্বনে ও সাহস প্রদানে কিঞ্চিৎ উৎসাহি হইয়া এতদ্দুরূহ কর্ম্ম বহু আয়াস প্রয়াস যুক্তে আরম্ভ করিতেছি কিন্তু আমার নিতান্ত প্রার্থনা যে এসভা ও সভাধ্যক্ষ মহাশয়েরা স্ব২ বিদ্যা বিশিষ্ট নম্রতা স্বভাবে এ অকিঞ্চনের আকিঞ্চনের প্রতি অবজ্ঞা না করিয়া সাহস প্রদান করেন এবং আমার প্রয়াস উপহাস দ্বারা নিরাশ নাকরিলে আমার উৎসাহ বলবতী হওয়াতে আমি পরম উপকৃত হইব পরন্তু আমার মনে ভয় ও অভয় এ উভয়ই উদয় হইতেছে ভয় এই যে এসভা শরচ্চন্দ্র কিরণোজ্জল সুখ রজনীর ন্যায় হইয়া সুচারু সোভাকে প্রাপ্তা হইয়াছেন তন্মধ্যে কোন২ বিজ্ঞবর গুণাকর সুপণ্ডিতের চন্দ্রানন হইতে বক্তৃতা রূপ সুধাস্খলনে শ্রোতাগণ কর্ণেন্দ্রিয় দ্বারা পাণ করত যথেষ্ট তৃপ্ত হইতেছেন ইতোমধ্যে আমি ভেকবৎ ভেকলইয়া আমার নীল নিবিড় নিরদরূপ অসুশ্রাব্য কটু কষায়োক্তিবচন সকলে চন্দ্র মণ্ডলীকে আচ্ছন্ন করিলে শরদ যামিনী রূপিনী সভার সোভা বিনাশকে পাইয়া এককালে অন্ধকারে আবৃত হইবার সম্ভাবনা তাহাতে শ্রোতাগণ অবশ্যই বিরক্তি প্রকাশ করিতে পারেন। পরন্তু অভয় এই যে সর্ব্বসাধারণ্যে ইহা ব্যক্ত আছে যে সাধুজন সাধুস্বভাব বসত পরের দোষ গ্রহণে বিরত হইয়া তিলমাত্র গুণকে তাল প্রমাণ করিতে করুণা বিতরণে কার্পণ্য বিধান করেননা, সে যাহা হউক এক্ষণে ব্যক্তব্য বিষয় ব্যক্ত করি। মনুষ্য জাতি মাত্রেরই জ্ঞানার্জ্জন করা কর্ত্তব্য কিন্তু সেই জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের আদি কারণ বিদ্যা হইয়াছেন অতএব বিদ্যানিধির নিরবধি আলোচনা মাত্রেই জ্ঞানোদয় হয় একারণ সর্ব্ব সাধারণের বিদ্যধ্যায়ণ অত্যুৎকৃষ্ট কর্ম্ম হইয়াছে কেননা এ জগন্মণ্ডলে অমূল্য বিদ্যাতুল্য পরম বন্ধু আর নাই বিদ্যা পরম হিতৈষি এবং যশোরাসি সঞ্চয়ের পথ বিদ্যা পিতৃসম অনুপম হিতকারিণী এবং অতুল স্নেহ প্রকাশিনী জননীর স্বরূপিনী

হইয়া সর্ব্বক্ষণ প্রতি পালনে পরাঙ্মুখ নহেন অর্থাৎ সর্ব্বতোভাবে প্রতিপালন করেন এবং প্রিয়সী প্রায় পদে২ প্রয়োজনানুসারে পরম সুখকে প্রাপ্ত করান এবং বিদ্যা স্বদেশে বিদেশে দিগ্দেশে আদরিণীয়া হয়েন, বিদ্যাধ্যারি জনের ঙ্গবুদ্ধি ও ঙ্গজ্ঞান দোষ জন্য লৌহবর্ণ মন মালিন্য দূরিকৃত হইয়া সুবর্ণ প্রভার তুল্য জ্ঞান প্রভা প্রকাশকে পায় এবং পুরুষার্থ চতুষ্টয়ের অর্থাৎ ধর্ম্ম অর্থ কাম মোক্ষের যে মূল অর্থ তাহাকে অনায়াসে পাওয়ান সুতরাং অন্য তিন তৎ পশ্চাৎগামি হয়েন। আর বিদ্যাবিহীন অর্থাৎ বিদ্যাভ্যাস নাকরিলে জ্ঞান জন্মে না সুতরাং জানহীন ব্যক্তির জীবনে কি প্রয়োজন তাহার জ্ঞান শূন্যতা জন্য জঘন্য দেহপতন ভিন্ন অন্যান্যে শ্রেয়ঃ নহে কারণ সে ব্যক্তি মূর্খতা প্রযুক্ত তাহার মনুষ্যের দেহ ধারণ করা মাত্র কিন্তু সে পশু, তবে প্রাকৃত পশুর সহিত ঐ নরাকার পশুর কেবল আকৃতি বৈলক্ষণ্য কিন্তু প্রাকৃত বিবেচনার প্রাকৃতিতে বৈভিন্ন নাই কেবল সেই নরাকার পশুর পাদ চতুষ্টয় ও লাঙ্গুড অভাব মাত্র। অতএব বিদ্যাভাসে জ্ঞানোদয়ে গুণের ভাজন ও অনভ্যাসে অজ্ঞানতা প্রযুক্ত দোষ মন্দির মাত্র। মনুষ্যের বিদ্যাই চারু দর্শন ধন ভূষণ এবং বিদ্যা গুরু হইতেও গুরু যে বিদ্যার দ্বারা জ্ঞানের উদয় হয় বুদ্ধির আশ্রয় শত্রু পরাজয়, দুর্ব্বাসনা ক্ষয়, সর্ব্বত্রে জয় ধন সঞ্চয় নিশ্চয় হয় আর দেখ বিদ্যাভ্যাসে হৃদয়াকাশে জ্ঞান রূপ সূর্য্য প্রকাশে সমুদয় অজ্ঞান তিমির বিনাশে সদ্বুদ্ধির প্রাখর্য্য হইয়া সৎপথদৃষ্ট হওয়াতে কেহ দুর্বর্ত্মে প্রবৃত্ত অথবা পাপ আবর্ত্তে পতিত হয়না সুতরাং সৎ পথাবলম্বনে সন্তোষরূপ আনন্দ কাননে স্বচ্ছন্দে বিহার করে। আর বিদ্যাবিহীন ব্যক্তির জ্ঞান চক্ষুঃমুদিত থাকাতে সে সতত অন্ধকূপে পতিত হয অর্থাৎ সে সকল ঙ্গকর্ম্ম করিতে পারে।

কর্ত্তব্যাকর্ত্তব্য জ্ঞান সে বিদ্যাতেই বিদ্যমান। সকল ধন হইতে বিদ্যাধন আহরণীয় অমূল্য অক্ষয় কেননা নীতিশাস্ত্রে স্পষ্টই লিখিত আছে যে বিদ্যাধন কখন নস্ট হয় না রাজ দণ্ডে রাজ পুরুষ কতৃ ক ছলবল কৌশলাদি ক্রমে বা ভ্রমে অপহৃত কিম্বা লুণ্ঠিত হয়না ভণ্ড প্রবঞ্চক তস্কর গণ দ্বারা অপহৃত হয়না এবং প্রবল অনলে দগ্ধ করিতে পারেনা জলপ্লাবনে নিমগ্ন হয় না জ্ঞাতি চয়েরা বণ্টণ করিয়া লইতে পারেনা এবং কোন স্থলেই অপ্রকাশ থাকে না মরিলেও সঙ্গে যায় তাহার তাৎপর্য্য এই যে বহু শিস্ট বিশিস্ট বর্দ্ধিষ্ণু গুণ গরিষ্ঠ বিদ্যান ব্যক্তির দ্বারা কোন অলঙ্কার বিশিস্ট মনোহর কাব্য রচনা হইলে অথবা কোন সুজন গুণ ভাজন ধর্ম্ম পরায়ণ ব্যক্তিদ্বারা কোন হিতোপদেশ কিম্বা কোন মহোপকারি গ্রন্থ রচিত অথবা সংগৃহীত হইলে ঐ২ গ্রন্থকার চিরস্মরণীয় থাকাতে এবং তত্তদ গ্রন্থ সুন্দর রূপে প্রচলিত থাকাতে ঐ সকল

গ্রন্থকার ও সংগ্রহকারদিগকে চিরস্থায়ী কহা যায় যথা ব্যাস, যজ্ঞবল্ক, যৈমিনি, বশিষ্ঠ, কপিল, গৌতম, পাতঞ্জলি, পাণিনী, চাণক্য,কাত্যায়ণ, বাল্মিকি, বিষ্ণুশর্ম্মা, কালিদাস, বররুচি, ধন্নন্তরি, বরাহ মিহির, ভবভুতি, সঙ্করাচার্য্য, ভারবী, বোপদেব, হেমচন্দ্র, মাধবকর, লিলাবতী অমরসিংহ প্রভৃতি অদ্যাপি জীবিত আছেন। অতএব বিদ্যা ধন সকল ধন হইতে উত্তমা, কারণ অন্যধন দানে ক্ষয় অবশ্যই হয় বিদ্যাদানে দিনে২ বৃদ্ধি হয় বিদ্যা দ্বারা বুদ্ধি বিনয় ঔদাস্য ধৈর্য্য গাম্ভির্য্য সৌর্য্য বীর্য্য মাধুর্য্য দয়া ক্ষমা সত্য শান্তি বিশ্বাস প্রেম নিষ্পাপ অহিংসা ইত্যাদি হয়। এবং কাম ক্রোধ লোভ মোহ মদ মাৎসর্য্য এই ষড়রিপুর চ্ছেদ করণের উত্তমশাস্ত্র বিদ্যাই হইয়াছেন প্রথিবীতে সকল বিদ্যার মধ্যে শাস্ত্র ও শস্ত্র এইদুই বিদ্যাকে প্রশংসা করিয়া বুধ-গণেরা বর্ণনা করিয়াছেন তন্মধ্যে শস্ত্রবিদ্যা যৌবন দশাতেই সোভনীয়া হয় বৃদ্ধাবস্থায় হাস্যাস্পদের হেত্ত মাত্র এবং শাস্ত্র বিদ্যা সকল কালেই প্রসস্ত ও সোভনীয়। মনুষ্যের বুদ্ধির স্থুলত্ব দোষ পরিহারার্থে শাস্ত্র রূপি শাণে সতত অনুশীলন রূপ ঘর্ষণ করিলে সেই স্থুল বুদ্ধি ক্রমে২ তীক্ষ্ণ হইয়া শবের ন্যায় বিষয়ের কিঞ্চিন্মাত্র প্রদেশ দর্শনে বিষয় ব্যাপারেও হিতাহিতে বিবেচনা করত স্বীয়২ ভদ্রাভদ্র করণক্ষম অনায়াসে হয় এতাদৃশ যে তীক্ষ্ণ বুদ্ধি তাদৃশবুদ্ধি যাহার সেই বুদ্ধিমান ও জ্ঞান বিশিস্ট হইয়া বিদ্যার আলোচনা করিয়া বিদ্যাভ্যাসে রত হইয়া বিদ্যান হওত নানা সুখ প্রাপ্ত হয় বিদ্যাযুক্ত যে জ্ঞান তাহাকে শাস্ত্রীয় জ্ঞান কহে আর স্বাভাবিক যে জ্ঞান জন্মে তাহাকে লৌকিক জ্ঞান কহে, ঐ লৌকিক জ্ঞান যদি অতি তীক্ষ্ণ হইয়াও আদরিণীয় হননা সুতরাং শাস্ত্রীয় জ্ঞান বিহীন ব্যক্তিকে নির্ব্বোধ কহে। এতৎ নানা কারণে মনুষ্য জাতি মাত্রেই স্বীয় অন্তঃকরণ ক্ষেত্রে বিদ্যারূপ বীজ বপণ করিয়া শ্রম জল সেচনে জ্ঞানরূপ কল্পদ্রুমের উৎপাদন করিয়া স্বেচ্ছাভিলাসিত সুখ ফল প্রাপ্ত হয়েন তাহা নাকরণে ঐ উত্তম উর্ব্বরা ভূমিতে দুর্ব্বুদ্ধিরূপ কণ্টক বৃক্ষাদি নির্গত হইয়া অন্তঃকরণ ক্ষেত্রে নিবিড় কণ্টকাবৃত হইলে দয়া শ্রদ্ধা শান্তি ভক্ত্যাদির অগম্য স্থান হইবে সুতরাং তাহা নাহইলেই মনের যথার্থ আনন্দ বিরহে নিরানন্দে দ্বন্দে ধ্বন্ধে সদা সর্ব্বক্ষণ কাল ক্ষেপণে সর্ব্বত্রে নিন্দিত হয়। জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের উপায় পাঁচ প্রকার যথা ভদ্রাভদ্র বিবেচনা, শাস্ত্রাধ্যয়ণ, শাস্ত্র শ্রবণ, সর্জ্জন সঙ্গে বাস করণ ও পঠিত বিদ্যার অনুশীলন করণ। ভদ্রাভদ্র বিবেচনা এই যে অস্মদাদির নস্বর শরীরে স্বাভাবিক ও দৈব ঘটনার এবং অন্যান্য নানা উপদ্রবের অধিকার সদত আছে কিন্তু ঐ সকল ঘটনা বিষয়ের বৃথানুসন্ধান করিয়া তাহার যথার্থ কারণ ইষ্ট বা অনিষ্ট ফল সম্ভাবনার

কারণ ও গুণ ও মূল ও স্থান ও অবস্থা নির্ণয় করা এসকল বিবেচনায় মনুষ্যের অনায়াসে বাল্যাবস্থাতেই বহুবিধ জ্ঞান জন্মিতে পারে তাহার প্রমাণ যথা অগ্নি দর্শনে আমরা মনের মধ্যে অনলের দাহিকা গুণ উদয় করিতে পারি এবং সূর্য্য দেবকে দৃষ্ট হইলে অন্ধকার নাশকত্ব তাঁহার গুণ মনে উদয় করিতে পারি এবং সেইরূপ মনুষ্যের দশার ও অবস্থার প্রতি বিশেষ মনোযোগ করিলে জানিতে পারি তাহাতেই আমাদের গত ক্রিয়ার প্রতি পশ্চাৎ দৃষ্টি ক্ষেপ করিলেই আমরা মনে২ অধিক লজ্জা প্রাপ্ত হইয়া আপনাকে ধিক্কার জন্মে যে আমরা কতশত যথার্থ ও কর্ত্তব্য কর্ম্মে ভ্রমযুক্ত হইয়াছিলাম এবং কতমতে কতশত অনিত্য সুখাভিলাসে সচেষ্টিত ছিলাম এবং কত অনাকারণেই অন্তঃকরণকে তাপে তাপিত করিয়াছিলাম। আমরা ইহা বিশেষ রূপে জ্ঞাত আছি যে আমাদের এদেহ নশ্বর কখন চিরস্থায়ি নহে অবশ্যই কাল পূর্ণ কালে এই বর্ত্তমান কালে বা কোন এক কালধীন সকালে বিকালে কিম্বা রাত্রি কালে কাল হরণ করিবে তজ্জন্য ঈশ্বরের সৃষ্টির হ্রাস হইবেক না কেননা ঈশ্বরেচ্ছায় পুরুষের ঔরষরসে স্ত্রীরক্ষেত্রে স্ত্রী পুরুষের সর্জ্জন নিয়ম নির্দ্ধারিত হইয়াছে অতএব ক্রমশঃ জন্ম গ্রহণ ও দেহ ধারণাদি করত কর্ত্তব্য কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহ করণ ও মরণেত্যাদি চলিতেছে, রূপ রস শব্দ গন্ধ এই পঞ্চেন্দ্রিয়ের সংস্লিষ্ট স্পর্শ তাবৎ প্রতিবীস্থ বস্তু অর্থাৎ যে সকল বস্তুর রূপ আছে যথা গ্রাম পর্ব্বত সমুদ্র নদনদী চন্দ্র সূর্য্য নক্ষত্র আকাশ ভূমি বৃক্ষ মনুষ্য পশু পক্ষী কীট পতঙ্গ ইত্যাদি বস্তু যাহা চক্ষুরেন্দ্রিয় দ্বারা দৃষ্ট হয় এবং রস কটু তিক্তাদি যাহা জিহ্বেন্দ্রিয় দ্বারা বোধ হয় ও শব্দ যাহা শ্রবণেন্দ্রিয় দ্বারা বোধ হয় এবং গন্ধ যে সকল বস্তুর আস্বাদন ঘ্রাণেন্দ্রিয়েতে প্রাপ্ত হওয়া যায়, এবং স্পর্শ অর্থাৎ ত্বগেন্দ্রিয়ের দ্বারা বোধিতব্য বস্তু সকল। এই সমূহ বস্তুর সৃজন ও সৃজনের কারণ ও গুণ ও ক্রিয়া সকলের চিন্তা অনুক্ষণ মনে ২ করিলে ক্রমে আপনা আপনি মনের দৌর্ব্বলত্ব নাশ হইয়া উৎসাহ জন্মিয়া সদানন্দে অনুক্ষণ মগ্ন থাকিবার সম্ভাবন্য এই সমুদয় বস্তুর বিশেষ রূপে মন মধ্যে সদত চিন্তা করত বিশেষ তথ্য জ্ঞান হইলে জ্ঞানের বৃদ্ধি অবশ্যই হয়।

দ্বিতীয় প্রকার অধ্যয়ণ। পুস্তকাদি পাঠ যদ্দ্বারা আমরা পুরাবৃত্ত সকল অনেকানেক বিজ্ঞ বিচক্ষণ পণ্ডিতগণের বর্ণাবলী গদ্য পদ্যে রচিত নানা বিষয় ঘটিত গ্রন্থাদি পাঠ করিয়া বহুবিধ জ্ঞান লাভে অংশি হই এবং কুকর্ম্মে নিবৃত্তি সৎকর্ম্মে প্রবৃত্তি উৎপত্তি হয় এবং উৎসাহ জন্মে এবং শস্ত্রসমূহের বিগ্রহে ও নিগ্রহে নিষ্কৃতি পাই এজন্য পুস্তক অধ্যয়ণে নানা দেশীয় ব্যবহার রাজকীয় ব্যাপার ও ভিন্ন ২

দেশাচার যুদ্ধের প্রকার প্রজাপক্ষে বিচার বিদ্যার প্রচার জ্ঞানের বিস্তার দাম্পত্য ব্যবহার, দোষের উদ্ধার পাপের নিস্তার, কুকর্ম্মের তিরস্কার, সৎকর্ম্মের পুরস্কার, ইত্যাদি নানাবিষয়ে বিজ্ঞাপ্তি হইবার সম্ভাবনা আর বিদ্যাভ্যাসে কালক্ষেপণ করণ ও অন্যকর্তৃক যে যে নূতন আশ্চর্য্য প্রকাশ হইয়াছে তাহা জ্ঞাত হওন এবং আমাদের জাতীয় বা বিলাতীয় বিদ্যার সীমাবৃদ্ধি অর্থাৎ জ্ঞানবৃদ্ধি করণ এইসকল বিষয় সর্ব্বকালে ও সর্ব্বস্থানে জ্ঞানোদয়ের কর্ম্মের মধ্যে গণন। করা যায় আর এই অধ্যয়ণাদিতে কালক্ষেপ করণ তাহাদের নাম জ্ঞান প্রিয় হইয়াছে কিন্তু এই উচ্চ নাম পাইবার কারণ যে মনুষ্য অন্য কোন কর্ম্ম নাকরিয়া কেবল অন্য-কর্তৃক প্রকাশিত তত্ব অভ্যাস করিলে জ্ঞানের মহোন্নতি হয়।

তৃতীয় শ্রবণ, যাহা অন্যের প্রমুখ্যাৎ দৃষ্টান্ত সহিতে জ্ঞানোপযোগী বিষয় সকল নানাজ্ঞান কিম্বা বিদ্যাবিষয় প্রসঙ্গে বক্তৃতা মনোনিবেস পুর্ব্বক শ্রবণ করিলে এসকল শ্রুতবিষয় মন মধ্যে যাগরুক রাখিয়া সদত তদনশীলন দ্বারা জ্ঞানের উত্তরোত্তর বৃদ্ধি হয়।

চতুর্থ সজ্জন সঙ্গে বাসকরণ। কেননা সৎসঙ্গ করিলে বুদ্ধির স্থূলত্ব অবশ্যই নষ্ট হয় অত্র সংসয় নাস্তি ও যেমন সুবর্ণের সন্নিকটে থাকিলে কাঁচও সোণার দ্যুতি ধারণ করিতে শক্য হয় তদ্রূপ পণ্ডিতগণ সন্নিধানে থাকিলে মুর্খের মুর্খত্ব দূরিকৃত হইয়া সেজন বিজ্ঞতা প্রাপ্তি হয়!

পঞ্চম পঠিত বিদ্যার অনুশীলন। যেসকল পুস্তকাদি অধ্যয়ণ করা যায় তাহাতে কেবল শুকপক্ষীবৎ শব্দোচ্চারণ নাকরিয়া তাহার যথার্থ অর্থের প্রতি যত্নকরত বারম্বার তাহার অনুশীলন করিলে বুদ্ধি নির্ম্মলা হইয়া জ্ঞানচক্ষুঃ প্রকাশিলে এবাক্তি বিচক্ষণ জ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট হইয়া সমস্ত জগোৎপত্তি বস্তু সকলের দর্শনমাত্রে তত্তদ্ মর্ম্মার্থ মনোমধ্যে বিলক্ষণ আন্দোলন করত সদত সুখি হন এবং অত্যন্ত ক্ষুদ্র কীট পতঙ্গাদি দেখিলেও সে পরমেশ্বরের অসীম শক্তি প্রতি শ্রদ্ধার দৃঢ়তা জন্মায়। উক্ত পঞ্চমপ্রকার জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের মূল হইয়াছে কিন্তু আমরা তাহার কিছুই করিনা। আমরা সর্ব্বদাই কহি যে আমারদিগের সময় অতি অল্প কিন্তু অল্প সময়েই কত ২ বিদ্যার্জ্জন হইতে পারে তাহা নাকরিয়া প্রায় আমরা নিরর্থক অনর্থকারি আলস্যে কাল যাপন করিয়া আসিতেছি তাহাতে আমাদের উচিত কর্ম্মের প্রতি বহুবিধ বাধা জন্মিতেছে। আমরা কেবল মৌখিক বলিয়া থাকি যে আমাদের আয়ু অত্যল্প দিনেতেই শেষ হইবে কিন্তু আমার—

দিগের কামনা ও কর্ম্ম এমন বৃহৎ ও আড়ম্বরিতে আরম্ভ করি তদ্দ্বারা বোধ হয় যে আমাদিগের জীবন কখন শেষ হইবেনা, আমাদের শৈশবাবস্থার বাসনা এই হইয়া থাকে যে আমরা যৌবন প্রাপ্ত হই তাহা হইলে যৌবনাবস্থায় বাসনা করি যে রাজকীয় কর্ম্মে কিম্বা বাণিজ্য কর্ম্মে নিযুক্ত হই তাহা হইলে বাসনা করি ধনোপর্জ্জন করিয়া ধনবান হই তাহা যদি ঈশ্বরেচ্ছায় হওয়া যায় তখন সম্ভ্রমলভ্যে বিব্রতহই এবম্প্রকার বাসনাতেই আমারদিগের অল্প অথচ অমূল্য কালকে হারাই জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের উপায় দূরে থাকুক মনেও করিনা, কিন্তু সে আমার-দিগের অতি কর্ত্তব্য কর্ম্ম হইয়াছে যাহাতে আমারদিগের জ্ঞান বিস্তীর্ণ হয় জ্ঞানোৎপাদিত কর্ম্ম করিলে আমরা স্বীয় ২ সম্পর্কীয় ভদ্রাভদ্র তর্কদ্বারা নির্দ্ধারণ করিয়া সৎজ্ঞানোৎপত্তি রত্ন সকলকে অন্তঃকরণ কোষে যত্ন পূর্ব্বক রাখি এবং সেই সকল রত্ন সময় বিশেষে প্রয়োজনানুসারে সৎক্রিয়াদি ক্রয়ের বিষয়ে কার্পণ্য ত্যাগপূর্ব্বক ব্যয় করি। আমারদিগের কাল বৃথা হরণ হইতেছে অতএব সকল সময় অনর্থে নষ্ট না করিয়া কিঞ্চিৎকাল আলস্য ত্যাগ করিয়া যদি জ্ঞান সাধন করি তবে অবশ্যই অনেক মঙ্গল হইতে পারে। যদি আমারদের সমস্ত সময়কে বিংশতি অংশ করা যায় তবে তাহার উণবিংশতি অংশ আলস্য ও অনিত্য হর্ষে ও ক্ষণিক সুখে উৎসর্গ কবি অবশিষ্ট একাংশ কদাচ নিত্য সুখের নিমিত্ত অর্পণ করি অতএব উচিত যে আমরা প্রথমে জগৎপ্রিয় সৎকর্ম্মের অনুষ্ঠান করি সেই প্রকারে যথা মুর্খের প্রতি হিত বচন প্রদান দরিদ্রকে ভিক্ষাদান, এবং তাপিত ব্যক্তিকে সান্ত্বনা করা ইত্যাদি। মনের অসীম শক্তি কিন্তু কাল সহকারে নানাপ্রকারে দুর্জ্জনের বচন মাধুর্য্যের চাতুর্য্যে অধৈর্য্য হইয়া প্রায় কুপথাবলম্বীই হইয়া থাকে কিন্তু তাহার পায় পায় অপার ব্যতীত হায় হায় সুখের উপায় কিছুই নাই অতএব সে ক্ষণিক সুখ সম্পত্তি প্রতি প্রবৃত্তি না জন্মাইয়া মনকে নিবৃত্তি রাখিলে অবশ্যই অপ্রবৃত্তির নিষ্কৃতি হইবার সম্ভাবনা আছে অতএব উচিৎ যে আপন ২ মন মধ্যে যুক্তিমত আপন আপন সৎকর্ম্মের ও অসৎকর্ম্মের ফলাফল আন্দোলন করত কৃত অকর্ম্মের তালিকা করিবেন যে দিন মধ্যে কত ২ অত্যাচার অসদ্ব্যবহার অপকার করা গিয়াছে সে সকল অকর্ম্মের প্রতি যদি ঘৃণা জন্মাইয়া তাহা ভবিষ্যতে সুধরাইবার চেষ্টা করা যায় তবে উত্তরোত্তর অসৎবুদ্ধির হ্রাস হইয়া সৎজ্ঞানের প্রতিভা সোভা দৃষ্ট হইতে পারে তাহা হইলে মণ্ডলির মান্য অনায়াসে হওয়া যায় এবং মনুষ্য জাতীয় স্বাভাবিক ভ্রমের প্রতি সদা

সতর্ক থাকিয়া মনুষ্যের ব্যবহার সদত আলোচনা করিলে অনায়াসে জানা যাইতে পারে যে কি প্রকার লোকাচারে লোকগণ লোকযাত্রা নির্ব্বাহ করে ও পণ্ডিত গণেরাই বা কি প্রকার সংসার নির্ব্বাহ করেন এ সমুদয় বিষয় তন্ন ২ করিয়া অনুসন্ধান করিলে প্রায় স্পষ্টই বোধ হইবার সম্ভাবনা যে যত ২ দোষ ও অপকর্ম্ম হইয়া থাকে তাহা প্রায় বিদ্যাবিহীন ব্যক্তি কর্ত্তৃকই অধিকাশ ঘটে এতদ্বিবেচনার দ্বারা স্বকৃত অসদ্ব্যবহারের প্রতি কেবল ক্ষণিক ঘৃণা করাতে ও মনের যথার্থ হর্ষ ও উৎসাহ জন্মিতে পারে না তবে সেই সকল অসৎ কর্ম্ম করণাপরাধে আপন মনে যথোচিৎ ধিক্কার স্বীকার করিয়া মনে ২ লজ্জিত হইয়া পুনঃ ২ আপনার অসদ্ব্যবহার ও পরের অহিতাচার দোষোদ্ধার করিবার চেষ্টা পাইতে যত্নবান হইবেন এবং আরও বিবেচনা করা কর্ত্তব্য যে ঐ সকল অসৎকর্ম্মে কি ২ মন্দ ঘটিবার সম্ভাবনা আছে এবং কোন ব্যক্তি তদুপযুক্ত অসৎকর্ম্ম করণের প্রতিফল প্রাপ্ত হইয়াছেন কিনা অর্থাৎ কোন ২ ব্যক্তি এমত অসৎকর্ম্ম করিয়া দণ্ডার্হ হয়নাই তখন অনুসন্ধানে প্রায় কখন এমত বোধ হইবেনা অসৎব্যক্তি অসৎকর্ম্মে অসৎফল পায় নাই এবং অসৎ ব্যক্তিরা অসৎকর্ম্মের দ্বারা স্বীয় কিম্বা পরের মনের পীড়া অথবা অপকার জন্মাওন জন্য কি প্রকার দণ্ড্য হইয়াছিলেন ও কোন ২ ব্যক্তিরাও বা স্বীয় দোষ পরিহার করিয়া এক্ষণে কি প্রকার কাল যাপন করিতেছেন আর পূর্ব্বাপেক্ষা তাঁহারা মান্য বা অমান্যরূপে এজগতে খ্যাত আছেন। যদি এমত বুঝ যে সে সকল পূর্ব্ব হইতে এক্ষণে অনেকানেক সমাদর পাইয়া থাকেন তবে তৎ পশ্চাৎগামি হওনের বাধা কি? অবশ্যই কর্ত্তব্য কিন্তু তোষামোদে অর্থাৎ আরোপিত বাক্যের দ্বারা যাহারা অন্যের মনে মিথ্যা হর্ষ জন্মায় সে সকল তোষামোদকারিদিগের অবিশ্বাস্য কথায় কদাচ বিশ্বাস কর্ত্তব্য নহে বিশেষতঃ জ্ঞানি ব্যক্তির অতি অকর্ত্তব্য কেননা অবিশ্বাস্যও অসম্ভব্য কথায় প্রশ্রয় দিয়া আমোদিত হওয়া শ্রেয়; হয় তবে জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জনের শ্রম বিফল হয় ও জ্ঞানেই বাকি প্রয়োজন থাকে আর বিদ্যাতেই বা কি ফল? সকলি মিথ্যা জানিবা।

জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জন করণের এই একটি ভাল প্রথা দেখিতেছি এবং অন্তঃকরণেও লইতেছে এবং মনে করি তৎপথাবলম্বনে কোন জ্ঞানার্থি আপত্তি না করিয়া সেই পথ সূক্ষ্ম জ্ঞান করিয়া গমনেচ্ছুক হইবেন অর্থাৎ বাদ বিসম্বাদ ঘটিত যে সকল পুস্তক আছে সে সকল পুস্তক মনোনিবেস পূর্ব্বক পাঠ করাতে নানাবিধ পূর্ব্ব পক্ষ

মীমাংসা ইত্যাদি দর্শন করিলে সম্যক প্রকার সন্দেহোচ্ছেদ হইয়া মনের তুষ্টি ঐ জ্ঞানের উদয় অবশ্যই হইবেক। এবং নানা বিদ্যা বিষয়ক যে সকল পুস্তক যথা, যন্ত্র বিদ্যা, যাহাকে ইংলণ্ডীয় ভাষায় Mechanics কহে এবং কিমিয়া বিদ্যা ঐ ভাষায় যাহাকে Chemistry কহে এবং এই উভয় বিদ্যা শিল্পিদিগের অত্যাবশ্যক হয় এবং রেখা গণিত ও ক্ষেত্র বিদ্যা যাহাকে ঐ ভাষায় Geometry and Mathematics কহে এই সকল বিদ্যার বিশেষজ্ঞ স্থলে যত ২ যন্ত্র নির্ম্মাণ কারক অর্থাৎ ঘটি যন্ত্র নির্ম্মিতা অস্ত্র নির্ম্মিতা রঙ্গ রচক ইত্যাদি শিল্পি গণেরা উত্তম কর্ম্ম করিতে পারেন এবং অট্টালিকা নির্ম্মাণ কারক ব্যক্তিরা গুঁড়ি কাষ্ঠ ও প্রাচীর এবং সোপানাদির দৃঢ়তা বিশেষ রূপে নির্ণয় করিতে সক্ষম হয় বিশেষতঃ যাহারা ধাতু দ্রব্যাদির সংলগ্ন ও অসংলগ্ন দ্বারা বস্তু প্রস্তুত করে তাহারা তৎকর্ম্মে অধিক নিপুণ হয় যে হেতুক ঐ দ্রব্যের কি প্রকার গুণ এবং উষ্ণতার সহিত ও অন্যান্য ধাতুর সহিত ও বাষ্প ও দ্রব দ্রব্যের সহিত ও ধাতুর কি প্রকার সম্বন্ধাসম্বন্ধ আছে তাহা বিশেষরূপে জ্ঞাত হওয়া যায় এবং কৃষি কর্ম্মকারি অর্থাৎ চাষারা দ্রব্য গুণ নির্ণয় করণ ক্ষম হইলে মাটীর ও সারের ও কাল বিশেষের ও মাটীর পারিপাট্য বিলক্ষণ রূপে জ্ঞাত হইলে অধিক শস্য জন্মাইয়া সুখি হইতে পারে। এবং প্রতিবীস্ত জরাউজ খণ্ডজ স্বেদজ ও উদ্‌ভিজ বস্তুর বিবরণ যাহাতে ইংরাজি ভাষায় Natural History কহে এইবস্তু বিবেক বিদ্যা শিক্ষা করিলে পশু পক্ষী মৎস্যাদির স্বভাব এবং বৃক্ষ গুল্মলতা ও তাহাদের গুণ অবগত হইতে পারা যায় এবম্বিধ নানাবিধ পরম প্রয়োজনীয় বিদ্যা বিষয়ক পুস্তক যথা ব্যাকরণ, জ্যোতিষ, খগোল, ভূগোল, গণিত, অবঅব নির্ণয়, কাল নির্ণয়, ব্যবসায়, রাজনীতি, আকর্ষণীয় বস্তু, ইতিহাস, দ্রব দ্রব্য বিবেক, জ্ঞান, স্মৃতি, কাব্য, অলঙ্কার, চিকিৎসা বিদ্যা, মণি নির্ণয় জ্ঞান, পদার্থজ্ঞান, দ্রব্য জ্ঞান, ইত্যাদি নানা শাস্ত্রের মর্ম্ম মনমধ্যে চিন্তা করিয়া দেখিবে এই সমূহ বিদ্যা মধ্যে কি তুমি জান ও কি না জান তাহাতে তুমি অবশ্যই জ্ঞাত হইতে পারিবে যে তাহার অনেকাংশ কিম্বা অত্যল্প অথবা কিছুই জাননা কেননা শাস্ত্র সমুদ্র স্বরূপ তাহা কোন ব্যক্তি লঙ্ঘিতে শকা হয়না অতএব এতদ্বিবেচনায় কোন মনুষ্য সমস্ত বিদ্যায় পারদর্শী হইতে পারে না যত অভ্যাস কর ততই ভাল যদি এমত মনে করা যায় যে সমস্ত শাস্ত্র অভ্যাস করায় প্রয়োজনাভাব একথা বালকৎমাত্র কেননা একৈক শাস্ত্রের একৈক গুণ আছে। যদ্যপিও বাঙ্গালা ভাষায় কাশীদাস প্রণিত মহাভারতাদি ব্যতীত পাঠশালার প্রয়োজনীয় ও সাধারণ জ্ঞানার্জ্জন যোগ্য

প্রচুর পুস্তক নাই তথাপি যে কএকখান আধুনিক পণ্ডিতগণ কর্ত্তৃক বঙ্গভাষায় রচিত পুস্তক প্রকাশ হইয়াছে সেই সকল পুনঃ পাঠাভ্যাস, যথা হিতোপদেশ, প্রবোধ চন্দ্রিকা, দম্পতি শিক্ষা, পুরুষ পরীক্ষা এবং সোসাইটির কতেক গুলিন পুস্তক এই সকল পুস্তকের বর্ণাবলি ও বাক্য সমূহের প্রতি বিশেষ মনযোগ করিয়া আপন আপন সাধ্য মতে যথা যোগ্য স্থানে পুরস্কার কিম্বা তিরস্কার স্থান বুঝিয়া চিহ্ন দিবেন এবং ভূয়ঃ ২ সে বিষয় মন মধ্যে আন্দোলন করিলে যদি পরিশেষে এমতই ঘটে যে তোমা কর্ত্তৃক যে দোষ ধৃত হইয়াছে তাহা গ্রন্থকারের প্রতি দার্ঢ্যরূপে অর্হে এমতে তাহাতে তুমি আস্পর্দ্ধা করত আপনাকে বড় করিয়া মানিবেনা কেননা গ্রন্থকার গণের কিম্বা সংগ্রহ কারিদিগের বহু আয়াস প্রয়াস দ্বারা ক্রমেতে এক ২ খানি পুস্তক প্রস্তুত হইয়া প্রকাশ হয় তাহাতে যদি ঐ গ্রন্থকারের অনবধানতা হেতুক অথবা মুদ্রা যন্ত্রস্থ পুরুষদিগের ভ্রমবসতঃ কোন অংশে ভ্রম কিম্বা অলঙ্কারের ব্যত্তয় অথবা অক্ষর পতিত হইয়া থাকে তাহাতে পণ্ডিত গ্রন্থকার দোষের ভাগি হইতে পারেননা বরং এস্থলে একথা কহা যাইতে পারে যে এই অলঙ্কার দৃষ্ট কথার অন্য কোন মর্ম্মার্থ থাকিতে পারিবে। জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের অপর প্রথা এই যে সর্ব্ব শাস্ত্রে সর্ব্ববাদি সম্মত ইর্ষাকে ত্যাগ করা অতিশ্রেয়ঃ কর্ম্ম হইয়াছে বটে কিন্তু কোন কোন বিশেষ স্থানে ইর্ষাকরা শ্রেয়তর কর্ম্ম হইতেছে তাহা আমি সহসা ব্যক্ত করিতেছি এবং মনে করি আমার এইমত প্রকাশনে সমস্ত সভ্যগণে যে মতে মতাবলম্বী হইতে কোন মতে অসম্মত হইবেন না যে এই যে বিদ্যার্থিগণের বিদ্যা ব্যুৎপত্তির প্রতি ইর্ষা করিয়া আপন মনকে বিদ্যার্জ্জনের জন্য সদত তাড়না করিয়া অন্যান্য বিদ্বান গণাপেক্ষা উত্তম ব্যুৎপন্ন হওয়া। এবিষয়ে ইর্ষা না করিয়া নিরাকাঙ্ক্ষী থাকিলে সে ব্যক্তিকে অলসের বাসস্থল হইয়া অনুৎসাহে কাল যাপন করিতে হয় তাহাতে নানা দুঃখ ভোগের সম্ভাবনা এবং আপনাকে বিদ্যাবান বলিয়া অভিমান করিতে হয় তাহাতে যথেষ্ট মূর্খতা প্রকাশ পায়। সদা সর্ব্বক্ষণ আপন ২ মন ও অন্তঃকরণকে বাচাল করণে ও শ্লেষ ভাষাভাষনে নিবারণ রাখিবে কেননা বাচলতা করিলেই যে বিজ্ঞতা প্রাপ্ত হওয়া যায় এমত নহে কেবল জ্ঞানেই বিজ্ঞ হন এবং সেইজ্ঞান বিদ্যাধ্যায়ণেই হয় তাহার বিশেষ বিবরণ পূর্ব্বে লেখা গিয়াছে বাচলতা করাপেক্ষা বরং শ্রোতা রূপে বিতণ্ডাদির কারণ দর্শান বিষয় ঘটিত বক্তৃতা শ্রবণ করা নিষ্ফল দায়ক বটে কারণ বক্তা অপেক্ষা শ্রোতার নানা সুখ ও সন্তোষ জন্মিবার সম্ভাবনা বাচাল ব্যক্তিরা স্বাভাবিক চতুর ও প্রায় প্রয়োজনানুসারে

আরোপিত বাক্যের প্রমাণ প্রয়োগ করে বাকযুদ্ধ সময় সমরে বিপক্ষ পক্ষে লক্ষ করিয়া আরোপিত তীক্ষ্ণাস্ত্র প্রহার করণে দক্ষতা দেখান অর্থাৎ পণ্ডিতগণ আপন ২ মত স্থাপন করিতে বিতণ্ডা উপস্থিত হইলে স্বকৃত পূর্ব্বপক্ষ স্থিরতর রাখিতে ও বাদীর পূর্ব্বপক্ষচ্ছেদ করণাভিলাসে অযথার্থ প্রমাণ প্রয়োগ দ্বারা স্ববক্তৃতার পোষকতা করিতে চাতুর্য্য বাক্যের দ্বারা চাতুরি করণে ভীত হন না এবং অজ্ঞাত বিষয়ের চাক্ষুষ দৃষ্ট বলিয়া অনর্থ প্রতাবণা করিতে লজ্জিত হননা। প্রত্যাহিক পাঠের সংস্কার বারম্বার করিলে নানা উপকার প্রতিকার হয় এবং ঐ সকল পাঠ বিষয়ে পুনঃ ২ আলোচনা কবিতে ২ পঠিত বিষয় মন মধ্যে দার্ঢ্য রূপে স্থায়ি হইবার সম্ভাবনা তাহাতে কদাচ বিস্মরণ হইব না আর যদি এই মত পাঠ সকল কণ্ঠস্থ করা যায় তবে পরম উপকারেব সম্ভাবনা আছে কিন্তু শুক পক্ষীর ন্যায় কেবল পাঠ করা কোন কার্য্য কারণে আইসে না তবে সে সকল বিষয়ের মর্ম্মজ্ঞান ব্যতীত সদ্‌জ্ঞানবান হইতে পারে না অতএব নানা বিষয় ঘটিত সম্যক প্রকার গ্রন্থ সংগ্রহ করিয়া গ্রন্থাগার ভরিলেই গ্রন্থের যথার্থ বিশেষে বিশেষজ্ঞ না হওয়াতে কি ফল পাওয়া যায় কদাচ নহে যদ্যপি নানা শাস্ত্রাভ্যাস করিয়া সেই ২ শাস্ত্রানুসারে ব্যবস্থা দেওনে অক্ষমতা প্রকাশ পায় তবে সে শাস্ত্রাভ্যাসও মিথ্যা ও জ্ঞানার্জ্জনও মিথ্যা। কোন বিদ্যাই হউক অভ্যাস করণের পূর্ব্বে বিবেচনা করা কর্ত্তব্য যে বিদ্যা সাধন বহু যত্ন ব্যতীত সাধ্য সাধনায় আসিবেনা ইহাতে যদি তোমার মন অনুৎসাহি নাহইয়া ক্লেশ স্বীকারে বিকার প্রাপ্ত নাহইয়া বিদ্যাপ্রতি অধিক প্রয়াস করে তবে ধৈর্য্যবান হইয়া যত্ন করিলে উত্তম বিদ্যাবান হইয়া জ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট হইবে। বিদ্যাভ্যাসের আশা কখন খর্ব্ব করিওনা যদি ও তাহা দূরাশা বটে তথাপি যে ভরসায় নির্ভর করিলে আশা পূর্ণ হইতে পারে। কোন বিষয়ের যথার্থ তথ্য জ্ঞাত না হইয়া এবং সুন্দররূপে বিবেচনা না করিয়া সেই বিষয়ের উপর কোন স্থিরবাক্য প্রয়োগ করা কিম্বা কোন ব্যবস্থা প্রদান করা কেবল বালকত্ব প্রকাশ ব্যতীত জ্ঞান বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তির কর্ম্ম সম্ভবেনা এবং স্বীয় ২ ব্যবসায় অত্যন্তানুরাগি হইয়া তাহার আদি অন্তসময় উত্তম রূপে জ্ঞাত হইয়া তৎপথাবলম্বী হইলে কোন দোষের ভাগি না হইয়া উত্তম ফল প্রদানের সম্ভাবনা বটে। কোন বস্তু দর্শন মাত্রেই ও কোন বিষয় ঘটনা মাত্রেই অসন্তোষ বা সন্তোষ প্রকাশ না করিয়া সেই বস্তুর ও ঘটনার বিশেষ তথ্যানুসন্ধানে নির্যাস প্রমাণ পাইয়া রাগদ্বেষ ত্যাগ করিয়া দেশ কাল পাত্র বিবেচনায় যথা যোগ্য শাস্ত্র সম্মত যুক্তি যুক্তে লৌকিকাচারে

ব্যবস্থা প্রদান কিম্বা দোষ গুণ বিবেচনায় পুরস্কার অথবা তিরস্কার যাহা উচিত মতে প্রসিদ্ধ হয় তাহাকরণে মনস্তাপ হয়না ও কোন আপদও উপস্থিত হয়না প্রতিদিন এক ২ সদুপদেশ পাওয়া যায় এবং সেই উপদেশ সকল মনমধ্যে স্থাপিত করিয়া রাখা যায় তবে বিবেচনা করুন যে আমরা কত২ মন্দ ব্যবহারের প্রতি দ্বেষ শ্রবণ করিলাম ও তত্তদ্দোষের দণ্ডে দণ্ডী হইতে দেখিলাম। মনুষ্য জাতি-মাত্রেই ভ্রমের অধিকারস্থ এ জন্য সদত সতর্ক থাকা উচিত যে কোন অংশে কোন ক্রিয়াতে ভ্রম না জন্মে আরো উচিত যে আপন ২ ভাবি কর্ম্মের প্রতি যে রূপ সতর্ক থাকিয়া স্বকার্য্য সাধনের ও লোক যাত্রা নির্ব্বাহের চেষ্টায় চেষ্টান্বিত থাকা কর্ত্তব্য সেই প্রকার আমাদের গত ক্রিয়া সকলের দোষ গুণ মন মধ্যে আন্দোলন করিলে যদি কোন ভ্রমবসতঃ ঙ্কর্ম করিয়া থাকি এমত বোধে আইসে তবে তৎ সদৃশ দোষ পুনর্ব্বার নাঘটনের চেষ্টা করা উচিৎ এবং দৈবায়ত্ত কোন ভ্রম ঘটিলে কিঞ্চিৎ লজ্জিতান্তঃকরণে স্বীয় ভ্রম স্বীকার করিলে হাস্যাস্পদের হেত্ত নাহইয়া স্বদোষ পরিহার স্থান হইয়া বরং গুণের ভাজন হয় এবং ভ্রম অস্বীকার করিলে তিন প্রকার মন্দ হইতে পারে প্রথম সদত ভ্রান্ত দ্বিতীয় মিথ্যাবাদী কারণ ভ্রম লুকাইবার চেষ্টায় লজ্জা রক্ষার নিমিত্ত মিথ্যা কহিতে হয় তৃতীয় জ্ঞান পূর্ব্বক ভ্রমাত্মক বস্তুকে নির্ভুল স্বীকার করা।

সর্ব্বদা শ্লেষ বাক্য প্রয়োগ করাতে গ্লানি আছে কারণ শ্লেষ বাক্যে কখন২ কোন মনুষ্য হর্ষে মোহিত হয় কিন্তু শ্লেষ বাক্যে ক্লেশই অনেকে প্রাপ্ত হন এজন্য জঘন্য সামান্য জন মনোরঞ্জন শ্লেষ কটুকাটব্য সৌজন্য বিধান নহে। যদি বিদ্যাধ্যয়ণে যে সৎজ্ঞানোৎপত্তি হয় সেই জ্ঞান অন্য ২ জ্ঞানেন্দু ব্যক্তিদিগকে সদুপদেশ সহিত দান না করিয়া অপ্রকাশ রাখি তাহাতে অবশ্যই উৎসাহ ভঙ্গ হইয়া বিমর্ষকে প্রাপ্ত হইব। প্রত্যাহিক শাস্ত্রানুশীলন ও সাংসারিক বিষয়ে নানাবিধ বিষয় ঘটন কেবল আমাদের বিবেচ্য বিষয়ের সার এসকল বিষয়ে মন মধ্যে তর্ক বিতর্ক করত মন্দের প্রতি বক্র হইয়া সতর্ক থাকা এবং যাহাতে উত্তম দশা প্রাপ্ত হওয়া যায় এমন সকল বিষয়ে মনোযোগ পূর্ব্বক কর্ম্ম সাধন করা। আমাদের মনোত্থিত কার্য্য সকল ধার্য্য করিয়া উত্তম বচনে রচনার দ্বারা পত্রে লেখা উচিত। সেই লিখনা-নুসারে বিবেচ্য বস্তুর ও ক্রিয়া বিষয় ভাব আন্দোলন করত কর্ত্তব্যাকর্ত্তব্য নির্ণয় অনায়াসে করা যাইতে পারে এবং কিপ্রকারে কোন কর্ম্মের দ্বারা ধন মান সম্ভ্রম ও গৌরব বৃদ্ধির সম্ভাবনা আছে এবং কি ব্যবহারেই বা জুগুপ্সিত হইতে হয়

এ সমুদয় বিষয় স্পষ্টই বোধ হইতে পারিবে। যদ্যপিও নানা পুস্তক অধ্যয়ণ করণে বহুবিধ জ্ঞানপ্রাপ্ত হয় বটে অথচ জীবন বিশিষ্ট পুস্তক যে মনুষ্য তাহার ক্রিয়ারূপ অক্ষর সকল শ্রবণ ও নয়ণ দ্বারা বিলক্ষণরূপ দৃষ্ট করত ইষ্টফল ব্যতীত অনিষ্টের কারণ হীন। যে ব্যক্তি অত্যল্প বিদ্যাধ্যয়ণ করিয়া জগতের নানাদেশের নানাবিধ লোকের রীতি নীতি ও ব্যবহারের প্রতি দৃঢ়ানুসন্ধান করত কর্ত্তব্যাকর্ত্তব্য প্রতি ঘৃণা ও শ্রদ্ধা জন্মাইয়াছে তদনুবর্ত্তি হওয়া জ্ঞানির কর্ম্ম বটে কিন্তু যে ব্যক্তি বহুবিধ বিদ্যাঘটিত নানা পুস্তক পাঠ করিয়া সমস্ত কর্ত্তব্যাকর্ত্তব্য কর্ম্মের বিবরণ অবধারণ করিয়া জগজ্জন গণের সৎ ও অসৎ কর্ম্মের প্রতি দৃষ্টি রাখিয়া তত্তদ কর্ম্ম জনিত ফলাফলের প্রতি বিশেষ বিবেচনা না করা জ্ঞানির কর্ম্ম নহে। যদি এমত মনে করি যে বিদ্যার্জ্জন কেবল ধনার্জ্জনের কারণ অর্থাৎ বিদ্যা হইলেই ধন হয় এবং বিদ্যাহীন ব্যক্তিরাই দরিদ্র হয় এবং শাস্ত্র সম্মত যুক্তি বিধায় সৎকর্ম্ম করিলে আয়ের বৃদ্ধি হইয়া ধনবর্দ্ধিত হওত ধনিরূপ খ্যাত হইয়া মান হয় ও শাস্ত্রবিরুদ্ধ কর্ম্ম করিলে অর্থাৎ অন্যায়াচার অসদ্ব্যবহার কর্ম্ম করিলে সঞ্চিত ধনের হানি হইয়া দিন দরিদ্র ও অসম্ভ্রম হয় কিন্তু এ জগৎ ঐ বিধানের সম্পূর্ণ বিপরীত দেখিতেছি তাহার কোন ভারি কারণ আছে সে বিষয় এক্ষণে বর্ণনে বিশ্রাম করিলাম কোন সময়ে প্রসঙ্গ করিতে পরাঙ্মুখ হইব না। দেখুন কতশত ঠক প্রবঞ্চক মূর্খ বিদ্যাহীন মূঢ় মিথ্যাবাদী অসৎকর্ম্মকারি ও দুরাচার লোকেরা নিশিদ্ধ ও অত্যন্ত গর্হিত কর্ম্মে ধন সঞ্চয় করিয়া বহু ধনৈশ্বর হইয়া সকট জান বাহন অট্টালিকা ভবন উদ্যান নানা ঐশ্বর্য্যের অধিপতি হইয়া স্বচ্ছন্দে পরমানন্দে নিরুদ্বিঘ্নে পরিবার সঙ্গে রাগরঙ্গে কালযাপন করিতেছে এবং লোকের দ্বারা প্রশংসিত হইয়া যশস্বীরূপে বিখ্যাত হইতেছে। এবং সহস্র ২ সাধুজন ধর্ম্ম পরায়ণ শাস্ত্রানুশীল হইয়া শাস্ত্রপ্রসিদ্ধ কর্ম্ম করিয়া অন্নাভাবে ম্রিয়মাণ হইতেছে। অতএব জ্ঞানার্জ্জনে জনগণের মন মধ্যে প্রথম এই বিবেচনা করা কর্ত্তব্য যে আমি কি বস্তু এবং কোথা হইতে আমার উৎপত্তি হইল এবং আমার উৎপত্তিরই বা কারণ কি, এবং জীবের মূল যে জীবন সেই জীবনই বা কি বস্তু এবং দেহের সঙ্গে জীবনের কিরূপ সম্বন্ধ আছে এসকল বিবেচনা করিতে হইলে যাঁহারা পরকাল না মানেন তাঁহারা এবিষয় মীমাংসা করিতে সুকঠিন বোধ করিবেন না কিন্তু যাঁহারা পরকাল বলিয়া মানেন তাঁহারা অবশ্যই সকল বস্তুর আদি কারণ পরমেশ্বরকে কহিবেন এবম্বিধ তর্কবিতর্কাদির দ্বারা যেজ্ঞান জন্মে তাহাতে যথার্থ

ও নিত্য সুখে সুখি হই এবং কামাদির সেবা জনিত যে ক্ষণিক সুখ তাহাকে হেয় বোধ করিয়া নিত্য সুখে সুখাভিলাষি হইয়া তৎপথে গতি মতি রাখিয়া সচেষ্ট থাকি তাহাতেই ইন্দ্রিয়াদির বল হ্রাস হইয়া আপন দল বলকে নিরস্ত রাখেন এবং মনও নিরাকাঙ্ক্ষি হন। জ্ঞান প্রাপ্ত হইলে সত্যের অন্বেষণে মনকে দার্ঢ্য করিতে যত্ন করিলে সত্যের আশ্রয় পাওয়া যায় তাহাতে সর্ব্বোৎকৃষ্ট নামক যে সুখ তাহা অল্পয়াসে প্রাপ্ত হয়। সত্য যদিও দূর্ম্মূল্য তথাচ জ্ঞেয় বটে জ্ঞানের দ্বারা পাওয়া যায়। এমত অমূল্য রত্ন তুল্য জ্ঞান প্রাপ্ত হইলে পদে ২ আমরা সকল বিষয়েই সুখি হইতে পারি।

সর্ব্ব সাধারণের জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জনের বিশেষ প্রয়োজন আছে যে সকল বালক কিম্বা যুবা জনেরা প্রসিদ্ধ২ পাঠ মন্দিরে নিয়মিত রীত্যনুসারে বিদ্যাভ্যাসি হওত জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জন করিয়া থাকে তদ্ভিন্ন অপর ব্যক্তিগণ যাঁহারা স্ব২ পিতা মাতার দুঃখ দশা প্রযুক্ত বা কার্পণ্য প্রযুক্তই হউক অথবা স্বীয় আলস্য জন্য হউক কিম্বা কোন কারণ বসতই হউক বিদ্যাভ্যাস না করত জ্ঞানের প্রতি তাচ্ছল্য করত কিঞ্চিৎ অর্থকরি বিদ্যাকে কৈবল্য দায়ক জ্ঞানে কিঞ্চিৎ অনুলিপি করণ সামর্থ সাধিয়া কেহ ধনের গৌরবে কেহবা ধনবান আমাত্মের অনুরোধে কেহ তোষা-মোদে তোষ জন্মাইয়া কেহ কর্ম্মাধ্যক্ষের প্রিয়তমের কোন অনিষ্ট সম্বন্ধে এক ২ কথা লইয়া রাজকীয় কিম্বা বাণিজ্যালয়ে নিযুক্ত হইয়া কর্ম্ম চালাইতেছেন তাঁহারদের উচিত যে সাবকাশানুসারে কিঞ্চিৎ২ বিদ্যা বিষয়ক ও জ্ঞান বিষয়ক পুস্তক অধ্যয়ণ করিয়া এবং তত্তদ্ মর্ম্মার্থ আলোচনা করত জ্ঞানার্জ্জন করেন এ সদভিপ্রায় প্রায় অনেকের আছে এবং করিয়াও থাকেন কিন্তু সম্প্রতি কর্ম্মালয়ে উপস্থিত হওনের ও অবকাশ পাওনের যে রীতি পরিবর্ত্তন হইয়াছে, যথা অনেকানেক কর্ম্মালয়ে বেলা আট ঘটিকার সময়ে উপস্থিত হইয়া সন্ধ্যাপর্য্যন্ত কর্ম্ম করিলেও ছুটি পাওয়া যায় না ইতিমধ্যে একবার জল বিন্দুও পাণ করিতে অবকাশ হয় না, ঐ দুঃসহ শ্রমকরণে অবশ্যই মনের উৎসাহ ভগ্ন হয় সুতরাং উৎসাহ ভগ্ন হইলেই যথার্থ সুখের ব্যাঘাত হয় তাহাতে জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জনের চর্চ্চা করাতে বিরত হইয়া দুঃখ সাগরে মগ্ন হইতে হয় এবং কোন ২ কর্ম্মালয়ে কোন সময়ে কর্ম্মের ন্যূনতা প্রযুক্ত দুই তিন ঘণ্টা বিলক্ষণ কর্ম্মে অবসর ঘটিয়া থাকে সেই অবকাশে নানা বিধ বা প্রয়োজনীয় পুস্তকে কেবল দৃষ্টিপাত করত জ্ঞানোৎপাদন করণ ক্ষম হয় কিন্তু তত্তদ কর্ম্মালয়াধ্যক্ষ মহাশয়েরা কিদৃশ বিবেচনায় কঠিনতা প্রদান করেন

ও তাড়না পূর্ব্বক কর্কশ বাক্য কহেন যে এ কর্ম্মস্থান এখানে বেতন ভোগী হইয়া কর্ম্ম করিতে আসিয়াছ এস্থানে অন্য চর্চ্চা ত্যাগ পূর্ব্বক কেবল কর্ম্ম করিতে হইবে পাঠশালা নহে যে পুস্তক পাঠ করিবে হাঁ একথা অতি প্রামাণ্য বটে কেননা যাঁহার বেতন লইব তাঁহার কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহে কেন ত্রুটি করিব তবে অবসর কালে সুদ্ধ অলসের ও জড়ের মত বসিয়া না থাকিয়া কিঞ্চিৎ বিদ্যাচর্চ্চা করাতে এক পক্ষের ক্ষতিনাই অথচ অন্যপক্ষের যথেষ্টলভ্য। অহো ভাগ্য পুস্তক পাঠ দূরে থাকুক সম্বাদ পত্রাদি দর্শনেও ব্যাঘাত জন্মান অর্থাৎ যদি কর্ম্মাধ্যক্ষ মহাশয়েরা ঐ কর্ম্মে নিযুক্ত কাহাকেও কোন পুস্তক বা সম্বাদপত্র হস্তে ধারণ করিতে দৃষ্টিপাত করেন তখনি কহেন যে তুমি কেবল পুস্তক ও সংবাদ পত্র দেখ কখন কোন কর্ম্ম করিতে আমি তোমাকে দেখিনাই অতএব তোমাকে এস্থান হইতে স্থানান্তর করণের চেষ্টা পাইব, এবম্প্রকার নানাবিধ অভিযোগ করেন তাহাতে সে স্থানস্থ তাবদ্ব্যক্তি এমন সাবধান হয় যে তাহারা আর পুস্তকের নামোচ্চারণ করেন না। কর্ম্মালয়াধ্যক্ষ মহাশয়েরা এমত মনে বিবেচনা করেন যে অধিক অন্তেবাসি কিম্বা কর্ম্মকারকদিগকে কর্ম্মস্থানে বন্ধ রাখিলে ও তাহারদিগকে স্বাবকাশানুসারে পুস্তকাদি না দেখিতে দেওয়াতে অনেকানেক কর্ম্ম হইয়া অনেক লাভের সম্ভাবনা আছে, তাহা অতি অসম্ভব কারণ উৎসাহ প্রযুক্ত যে সকল কর্ম্ম করা যায় তাহাই বিলক্ষণ সুসম্পন্ন হয় তদ্ভিন্ন ক্ষুণ্ণ মনে কোন কর্ম্ম করা হয়না অতএব উচিৎ যে এমত কোন প্রথা প্রকাশ করেন যে উভয় পক্ষের ক্ষতি বিরহে কর্ম্মকারির জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের সদুপায় হইতে পারে এতৎ শৃঙ্খলায় অনেকে বাধা জন্মাইবেন কিন্তু সে বাধা কেবল ঈর্ষা বা লোভ অথবা অহঙ্কার ঘটিত ব্যতীত অন্য কোন কারণ সম্ভবেনা কিন্তু মহত সর্জ্জন বিচক্ষণ পরোপকারক ও অস্মদাদির মঙ্গলেচ্ছুকগণেরা এবিষয়ে বিশেষ মনযোগ করিতে যত্নবান হইবেন অত্র সন্দেহোনাস্তি তবে অবশ্যই উভয় পক্ষে যথোচিৎ ফললাভে ও অনেকানেক ব্যক্তির সাবকাশ ঘটনে জ্ঞানের উন্নতি হইবেক যথা নানা বিজ্ঞান বিষয় ঘটিত সংবাদ পত্র পাঠে হর্ষ হইবেন কিন্তু ক্রমে ২ কেবল যে সমাচার জ্ঞাত হইবার নিমিত্ত সংবাদ পত্র পাঠ্য এবং তাহাতে স্বদেশের কুশল সংবাদ নাথাকিলেও পাঠ করণে হর্ষ জন্মে ইহাতে কোন সন্দেহ নাই ইহা না করিয়া সর্ব্বসাধারণের উপকার যে বিষয়ে আছে এমন বিষয় পাঠকরা উচিত এবং নানা সমাজে যাতায়াত করত সমাজস্থ জন গণের সর্ব্বসাধারণের উপকার বিষয়ে বক্তৃতা শ্রবণে

এবং স্ব২ তনয় দিগের পাঠের পরীক্ষা লওনে এবং জ্ঞান সম্বন্ধীয় আশ্চর্য্য ক্রিয়া অর্থাৎ ঐন্দ্রজালিক কাব্য দর্শনে ক্রমে২ জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধি হইয়া মহত্ত্ব প্রাপ্ত হওনের সম্ভাবনা অবশ্যই আছে। এসকল অকরণে অনেকানেক যুবা চক্ষুসত্বে জ্ঞান দৃষ্টি হারাইয়া আনন্দময় নগরের উৎসাহ পথ পরিভ্রমে কণ্টকময় কুপথে গমন করত নিরানন্দে কূপে পতিত হইয়া অন্তঃকরণে মহৎ ব্যামোহ পাইতেছেন। এতদ্ভিন্ন ব্যক্তি সকল যথা অট্টালিকা নির্ম্মাণ কারি, স্বর্ণরজতালঙ্কার গঠন বৃত্তিজীবি, লৌহ কর্ম্ম বৃত্তিজীবি, কাংশাদি কর্ম্ম বৃত্তিজীবি, ও তেলি, মালি, কাঁশারি, সাঁখারি, তাঁতি, কলু ইত্যাদি শিল্পীদিগেরও উচিত যে সাধ্যানুসারে কিঞ্চিৎ২ বিদ্যাভ্যাস করত জ্ঞানার্জ্জন করে। এতদ্দেশ মহানগর কলিকাতা এবং ইতস্ততো চতুস্পার্শ্বস্থ ইংলণ্ড দেশীয় লোকেরদের দ্বারা আনীত নানা যন্ত্রের প্রাদুর্ভাব হওয়াতে ঐ সকল কঠিন কর্ম্মকারি লোকেরদের অনেক শ্রমের হ্রাস হইয়াছে তাহাতে স্পষ্ট বুঝায় যে পরমেশ্বর এসকল ব্যক্তির প্রতি দয়া প্রকাশ করিয়া নানা বিধ যন্ত্র আনয়ণে সন্তুষ্ট থাকিয়া উহাদিগকে অবসর করিয়া দিয়াছেন যে তাহাতে কিঞ্চিৎ বিদ্যা-ভ্যাস করত জ্ঞানোৎপাদন করে। অতএব মনুষ্য মাত্রেরি উচিত যথাশক্তি বিদ্যাভ্যাস করিয়া পঠিত বিদ্যার বারম্বার পরীক্ষা আপন মনে লইয়া জ্ঞানের প্রতি সচেষ্ট হন।

নানাবিধ কৌতুক দর্শনে জ্ঞানার্জ্জন হয় যদিও মেষের যুদ্ধ, বুলবুলের যুদ্ধ কুক্কু-টের যুদ্ধ, বানর নাচাওন, সর্পের সহিত ক্রীড়া করণ, ঘুড়ি উড়াওন, মল্লযুদ্ধ দর্শন ইত্যাদি কৌতুক করণে আমোদিত হওয়া গ্লানিকর বটে কিন্তু অনেকানেক হর্ষ-জনক ক্রীডা আছে যদ্বারা জ্ঞানের বৃদ্ধি অবশ্যই হয় যথা বেলুন অর্থাৎ আকাশ গমনকারি বাষ্পযন্ত্র প্রস্তুত করিয়া তাহাতে কোন জীব কিম্বা অন্য কোন নির্জ্জীব বস্তু রাখিয়া আকাশে বাষ্পদ্বারা নিক্ষেপ করত উড্ডীয়মান করাইয়া লোক সমূহকে কৌতুক দেখাইয়া এবং ঐ সময় বেলুনের গঠনের রীতি ও অবঅবের প্রকরণ নির্ম্মিত বস্তুর নিরুপণ উর্দ্ধগমনের শক্তির কারণ এসকল আদ্যঅন্ত বৃত্তান্ত উপস্থিত জন-গণকে জানাইলে তজ্জনগণের অবশ্যই জ্ঞানের বোধ গম্য হইয়া অনেক জ্ঞান লাভ হইবার সম্ভাবনা আছে। দ্বিতীয় পেনে বোমা অর্থাৎ চিত্রিত ক্ষুদ্র বস্তু বৃহদাকার দর্শন যন্ত্র যাহাকে হিন্দুস্থানি ভাষায় সহরবিন কহে এই যন্ত্র প্রস্তুত করিয়া প্রাচীন নবীন দেশ নগর হাট মাঠ মঠ মন্দির অট্টালিকা প্রাচীর নদনদী সমুদ্র অর্ণবজান যুদ্ধ ইত্যাদি দর্শন করাইয়া ঐ যন্ত্রের উৎপত্তির রূপ ও কারণ ও কোন

বস্তুর দ্বারায় কি প্রকারে প্রস্তুত হয় তত্তাবৎ বৃত্তান্ত তন্ন ২ করিয়া বিস্তীর্ণ ও প্রকাশ্য রূপে সমারোহকে জানাইলে উভয় পক্ষের অবশ্যই জ্ঞান লাভের সম্ভাবনা আছে তৃতীয় দূর দর্শন যন্ত্র যাহাকে হিন্দুস্থানি ভাষায় দূরবিন কহে সেই দূর দর্শন যন্ত্রের পরিমাণ গঠন ও প্রস্তুতকরণ বিষয় লোক সমূহকে বিস্তীর্ণ রূপে জ্ঞাত করাইয়া এবং দূর দর্শন যন্ত্রের প্রয়োজন যথা দূরস্থ বস্তু নিকটস্থ করিয়া দর্শন যেমন অতি ক্ষুদ্র নক্ষত্রাদি যাহা নয়ণ গোচর হয়না সে সকল নক্ষত্রকে দেখা ইত্যাদি বিশেষ জ্ঞাত করাইলে জ্ঞানের বিস্তার হয়। চতুর্থ কিমিয়া বিদ্যা ঘটিত নানাবিধ আশ্চর্য্য কৌতুক দর্শাওন যথা নানাবিধ বস্তু জ্ঞান এবং সেই নানা-বিধ বস্তু যে ব্যবস্থানুসারে পরস্পর সংযুক্ত ও লীন হইলে ঐ বস্তু হইতে নানা-বিধ পদার্থ উৎপন্ন হয় এবং মূলবস্তু ও সঙ্কর বস্তু বিষয়ে যে ২ পদার্থ আছে সেই বস্তু ও তাহার স্বাভাবিক গুণ বিষয়ক এবং সেই২ বস্তুর পরস্পর লয় বিষয়ক বক্তৃতা ও প্রমাণ দর্শাওনে জ্ঞানার্জ্জন হইতে পারে এবং অগ্নি ক্রীড়া বিষয় যদিও তাহাতে কিঞ্চিৎ ভয় আছে বটে তথাপি তাহাতে জ্ঞান জন্মিবার সম্ভাবনা আছে। পঞ্চম। স্থানের জ্যোতিষ চক্র স্থাপন করাতে জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধির উপায় বটে যদ্বারা সূর্য্য চন্দ্র বুধ শুক্র মঙ্গল বৃহস্পতি শনি তারা নক্ষত্র গ্রহ রাশি মেষ বৃষ মিথূনাদি অশ্বিনী ভরণ্যাদি নক্ষত্র যোগ করণ তিথি চন্দ্র মণ্ডল চন্দ্রের সতা গ্রহণ ও গ্রহণের কারণ অমাবস্যা ও পূর্ণিমার কারণ রেখা ক্রান্তি নিত্ নিরীক্ষণ দেশ লগ্ন মণ্ডল ইন্দ্রধনু ও দিগ সকল ঋতুভেদ এসকল নানা বিষয় দৃষ্টে ও গোচর হওয়ার জ্ঞান সঞ্চারের পথ। ষষ্ঠম। স্থানে ২ সর্ব্ব সাধারণের সমরূপ ব্যবহারার্থে চাঁদা দ্বারা গ্রন্থালয় স্থাপন করিলে সর্ব্ব সাধারণের জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধি হইতে পারে কারণ প্রত্যেক ব্যক্তি নিজ হইতে ব্যয় করিয়া প্রয়োজনীয় গ্রন্থ ক্রয় করণে সক্ষম হয় না এজনা অসুসার সম্ভাবনা তজ্জনা এক ২ নিরুপিত স্থানে সাধারণের চাঁদা দ্বারা কিঞ্চিৎ আহরণ পূর্ব্বক যথেষ্ট ধন সঞ্চয় হইলে নানাবিধ পুস্তক ক্রয় করিয়া দাঁড়ামত পংক্তি সাজাইয়া রাখিলে ও চাঁদা প্রদত্তকারি ও তত্তৎ অনুরোধিত ব্যক্তিগণ সাবকাসানুসারে ঐ নিরুপিত স্থানে উপস্থিত হইয়া অথবা ঐ পুস্তকাগার হইতে প্রয়োজনমত পুস্তক লইয়া আপন ভবনে গমন পূর্ব্বক পাঠাদি করণে জ্ঞানের বৃদ্ধি সম্ভাবনা। সপ্তম। সম্বাদ পত্রাদির মাসুল অর্থাৎ কর রহিত হইলে বিনা করে দেশীয় ও ভিন্ন দেশীয় সমাচার পত্রাদি অল্প ব্যয়ে দেশ বিদেশ গতায়াতে ও তদ্বিবরণ পাঠে জ্ঞানের লাভ হয়। অষ্টম। সকল সভ্য জাতীয়দের সহিত দ্বেষ

হিংসা রহিত হইয়া সমভাবে বাক্যালাপ করণে জ্ঞানের বৃদ্ধি হইতে পারে। আমারদিগের আহার ব্যবহার ধর্ম্মকর্ম্মের বিপরীতাচারি প্রায় অন্য জাতীয়েরা বটে কিন্তু তাহারদের পরমার্থ বিষয়ে সংলিপ্ত নাহইয়া কেবল তাহাদের লোক-যাত্রা নির্ব্বাহের ব্যাপার ও রাজকীয় বিষয়ের ব্যবস্থা ঘটিত কথোপকথনে লিপ্ত হইয়া তাহা ইষ্ট নিষ্ঠ বিবেচনায় অনিষ্ট প্রথা সকল ঘৃণা পূর্ব্বক ত্যাগ করা ও ইষ্ট সম্ভব্য ব্যাপার আদর করত গ্রহণ করিলে দোষ লেশ দেখিনা কিন্তু লাভের সম্ভাবনা আছে। বিদেশী লোক বলিয়া যে অন্য দেশীয় লোককে ভিন্নভাবে ঘৃণা করা সে জ্ঞানবানের উচিত নহে কেননা তাহার সহিত ভদ্রতাচরণ করণে কোন ক্ষতি না হইয়া অনেকানেক আমাদের অজ্ঞাৎ বিষয় শ্রবণ করিয়া তত্তদ্ ২ বিষয়ের গুণাগুণ বিচার করিয়া জ্ঞানকে বিস্তীর্ণ করিতে পারি। নবম। স্থানে২ সভা সংস্থাপনে ও তত্তদ্ সভায় উৎসাহযুক্ত হইয়া সভার নিয়মিত কর্ম্ম নির্বাহ করণে ও সভার চিরস্থায়িনীত্ব রাখনে সচেষ্ট থাকিয়া ও সভার নিযমিত দিবসে উপস্থিত থাকিয়া তথায় যে ২ বিষয় উত্থাপিত হইয়া বাকবিতণ্ডা দ্বারা মীমাংসা হয় তাহার মর্ম্মার্থ গ্রহণ করিলে ও ঐ সভায় যে সকল লিপি পাঠ কিম্বা বক্তৃতা হইয়া থাকে তাহার মন্মার্থ সকল মন মধ্যে জাগরূক রাখিয়া এবং বাক্য বিন্যাসের প্রতি সযত্ন হইয়া সাবকাসানুসারে সেই তত্ত্ব সকল স্বীয় ২ চিত্ত মধ্যে আলোচনা করিয়া তাহার ফলভাগি হইলে জ্ঞানার্জ্জনের এ সদুপায় স্থান। কিন্তু এই মত সভা সংস্থাপন করণে অবশ্যই ব্যয় হইয়া থাকে তজ্জন্য এব্যয় এক ব্যক্তি হইতে কদাচ নির্ব্বাহ হইতে পারে না তবে চাঁদা দ্বারা ধন আহরণ করিয়া ব্যয় করিতে হয় অতএব তাহাও সম্ভব বটে কেননা এতদ্দেশে অনেকানেক ধনবান পুরুষ আছেন তাঁহারা যদ্যপি অনুগ্রহ প্রকাশ করিয়া এবিষয়ে সহকারী হন তবে অত্যন্ত আনন্দের বিষয় বটে কিন্তু কতেকগুলি ধনি ব্যক্তি আছেন তাঁহারা অজ্ঞান বসতঃ অনর্থ হেতু মাত্রে অর্থব্যয় করিয়া নিন্দার ভাগি হইয়া স্বীয় মনে হর্ষ প্রাপ্ত হন কিন্তু বহুগুণ প্রদায়ক অজ্ঞান বিনাশক জ্ঞানোপার্জ্জিকা বিষয়ে যথা পাঠশালা ও জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধি কারণ সভা কিম্বা জ্ঞান লাভ ও বিদ্যালাভ হওনের মূল কোন গ্রন্থ প্রকাশেচ্ছুক ব্যক্তির মানষ প্রকটিত হইলে ঐ সকল পরোপকারে বিরত ধনবান ব্যক্তিরা সাহায্য বা সাহস প্রদান না করিয়া বরং উপহাস করেন। এ বিষয় সমাপন করণের পূর্ব্ব জ্ঞানার্জ্জনকারি বিদ্যাভ্যাসের ফল ও সন্তোষ কিঞ্চিত কহি। আদি অনন্ত বিভু পরাৎপর পরমেশ্বর মনুষ্যকে মন শরীরে সৃজন করিয়াছেন কিন্তু শরীর

ও মনে সংযোগ থাকিলেও বাস্তবিক ভিন্ন ২ হইয়াছে মন ও শরীর উভয়ে যে কিরূপ সংযোগ ও স্থিতি আছে এবং আমাদের দৃশ্যমান অবঅব সকল সে কি বিশেষ অংশে লিখিত হইয়ছে এবং শরীর মধ্যস্থ প্রাণের সহিত কোন অংশে যোগ আছে কি না এসকল বিষয় কোন রূপেই আমারদিগের বোধ গম্য নহে আমরা যেমন অন্য ২ বিষয়কে জ্ঞাত আছি সেইরূপ মনকেও যথার্থরূপে জ্ঞাত আছি শরীরের যেরূপ বিদ্যমানতার প্রমাণ পাওয়া যাইতেছে তদ্রূপ মনেরও বিদ্যমানতা সপ্রমাণ হইতেছে এবং ইহাও আমরা জানি যে শরীরের যেরূপ প্রয়োজন সেই রূপ মনেরো প্রয়োজন হয় ইহারা বিশেষরূপে স্বতন্ত্র ২ সুখ দুঃখ ভোগ করে। পরমেশ্বর আমারদিগকে ইন্দ্রিয় সকল প্রদান করিয়াছেন যথা কর্ম্মেন্দ্রিয় অর্থাৎ হস্ত পদাদি যাহার দ্বারা আমরা এজগতস্থ সমস্ত দ্রব্যাদির ব্যবহার করিতে পারি আর পরমদয়ালু পরমেশ্বর আমারদিগকে যেরূপ ইন্দ্রিয় দিয়াছেন সেইরূপ জ্ঞানও দিয়াছেন এবং মনবৃত্তিও দিয়াছেন ঐ মন বৃত্তির দ্বারা শারীরিক সুখ হইতেও উত্তম সুখোৎপন্ন হয় অতএব ইন্দ্রিয় সুখের প্রয়াসি যদি মন বৃত্তি যথার্থ নিত্য সুখাভিলাসি হই তবে আমারদিগের কাল পরমসুখে কাটাইতে পারি কিন্তু তাহা বলিয়া যে বিজ্ঞান শাস্ত্রজ্ঞ জ্ঞান তাহার প্রতি হেয় করা বিধেয় বা শ্রেয় নহে কেননা তদ্দ্বারা অনেকানেক উপকার আছে ও আনন্দ জন্মিতে পারে তাহার প্রমাণ।

যে সকল সামান্য লোক স্ব ২ পরিশ্রম দ্বারা সংসার ভরণপোষণ নির্ব্বাহ করেন তাহারা যত্নপূর্ব্বক শ্রম করিয়া এমন কর্ম্মিষ্ঠ হওয়া উচিত কেননা তদ্দ্বারা যেমন তাহারা দিন নির্ব্বাহ করিবেন সেইমত তাহাদের ধর্ম্ম কর্ম্ম ও কুটুম্বাদির তত্ত্বাণ্বেষণ করিতে হইবে অতএব তাহার তাবৎ সাংসারিক কর্ম্ম নির্ব্বাহজন্য আলস্য ত্যাগ পূর্ব্বক কঠিন কর্ম্ম করিয়া ধনার্জ্জন করিবেন ইতিমধ্যে কিঞ্চিৎ ২ সাবকাশ রাখিয়া বিদ্যার প্রতি যত্ন করিলে অনেক লাভ সম্ভাবনা। আর এমন মনে করা উচিৎ নহে যে সামান্য শিল্পীদিগের বা কঠোর কর্ম্মকারের দিগের বিদ্যাভ্যাস করিলে কি ফল করিবে ইহা কদাচ মনে করিও না যেহেতু এ পৃথিবীতে এমন কোন শিল্প কিম্বা ব্যবসায় নাই যাহা বিদ্যাযুক্ত হইয়া করিলে উত্তম রূপে সম্পন্ন না হইতে পারে অর্থাৎ বিদ্যা শিক্ষা করিয়া আপন ২ কর্ম্মের উত্তমতা ও দক্ষতা হয় অতএব বিদ্যার মূল কারণ জ্ঞাত অত্যাবশ্যক যদ্দ্বারা মনুষ্যরা স্বীয় চতুরতা প্রাপ্ত হইয়া কর্ম্মে নিপুণ হন এবং তদ্দ্বারা আপন ২ জীবনাসন অর্জ্জন করিয়া তাহার আস্বাদন করে। মনুষ্য মাত্রেই জ্ঞানবান হইবার ঈশ্বর দত্ত এক

শক্তি আছে এবং অন্তঃকরণের দুইটি স্বভাব হইয়াছে যথা জ্ঞান দ্বারা তাবৎ বস্তুর আস্বাদন করা ও বিদ্যা শিক্ষায় হর্ষ হওয়া কোন ব্যক্তির বিদ্যা শিক্ষায় যদি সন্তোষ না জন্মায় তবে তাহার আপনার অথবা শিক্ষার কোন দোষ আছে ইহা কহিতে হইবে। যত বস্তুর বিষয় জ্ঞাত হওয়া যায় ততই সেই জ্ঞানে সন্তোষ জন্মে এবং বিদ্যাভ্যাসেতেও সন্তোষ জন্মে আর বিদ্যা বৃদ্ধি হইলে যে মনের সন্তোষ জন্মে ইহা কে অস্বীকার করে অর্থাৎ সকলে স্বীকার করে।

বিদ্যাবিহীন ব্যক্তি কিম্বা অত্যল্প বিদ্যাধ্যায়ি ও অজ্ঞানি ব্যক্তিদিগের পাঠের নিমিত্ত কতেকগুলি পাঠ্য অংশ আছে যাহা অভ্যাস করাতে কোন লাভ সূচক ফল নাই। প্রায় সমুদয় ইতিহাস পাঠ করণে হর্ষান্বিত হয় কেহবা আখ্যায়িকা পাঠে আনন্দ যুক্ত হয় কেহ আশ্চর্য্য কথা পাঠ করিয়া আনন্দ যুক্ত হয় কিন্তু এসকল পাঠ করণে কেবল মনের হর্ষ জন্মান মাত্র লাভ কিছু মাত্র নাই কেবল তত্তদ্ আখ্যায়িকা পাঠে সময় নষ্ট করা এবং আমরা সম্বাদ পত্র পাঠ করিয়া থাকি কিন্তু তাহার যে অংশ পাঠ করাতে লাভ উৎপন্ন হইতে পারে যে অংশ পাঠ নাকরিয়া কেবল দৈবঘটনায় ও কাব্য যথা প্রতাপচন্দ্র নামধারি ব্যক্তির সম্পর্কীয় সংবাদ পাঠ করিয়া পুলকিত হই কেননা এসকল বিষয় ও ইতিহাসাদি পাঠে মনের তুরিত স্মৃতি জন্মে একারণ ভৌতিক বিষয় মিথ্যা জানিয়াও তদ্বিষয় পাঠে আসক্ত হই ইহাতে যথার্থ আনন্দ ও জ্ঞান জন্মিবার সম্ভাবনা দূরে থাকুক কেবল আমরা অমূল্য সময়কে বৃথা নষ্ট করি তাহাতে আমারদের বুদ্ধির ভ্রম হয়। অতএব ইহাতে সপ্রমাণ হইতেছে যে অসভ্যকর ইতিহাস ভৌতিক গল্পে ও দৈব ঘটনাদি পাঠ করায় জ্ঞান লাভ হইতে পারে না কিন্তু শিল্পশাস্ত্রে যত ২ আশ্চর্য্য বিষয় রচিতে বর্ণিত হইয়াছে এবং রীতিদ্বারা দ্রব দ্রব্যের গুণ নির্ণায়ক যথা দ্রব দ্রব্যের গতির নিয়ম কিরূপ উত্তম হইয়াছে এবং কোন যন্ত্রব্যতিরেকে কএক সের পরিমিত জলের চাপনে অথবা বিশেষ রূপে তাহার সংস্থাপন অনিবার্য্য বলের উৎপত্তি হয় এবং দৃষ্টি বিদ্যা যাহাকে ইংলণ্ডীয় ভাষায় আপটিক্স কহে তাহাতে কত ২ আশ্চর্য্য বিষয় ও লভ্যকর বিষয় যোজিত আছে যে যদ্দ্বারা নানা বস্তু ভেদে জ্ঞান ও মনের আনন্দ জন্মে এবং চমৎকার বোধ করি যথা নানা বর্ণ একত্রিত হইয়া সুভ্র বর্ণের উৎপত্তি হওয়াতে এবং পরিমাণ বিশেষ শ্যাম ও রক্ত ও নীল ও অন্যান্য সমুদয় বর্ণকে একত্র মিশ্রিত করিলে এমৎ বল উৎপন্ন হয় যে তাহাতে কোন বর্ণের মধ্যে গণনা করা যায় না উক্ত বিদ্যার আশ্চর্য্যাপেক্ষা দ্রব্য বিবেক বিদ্যা যাহাকে ইংগ্লণ্ডীয় ভাষায়

Chemistry কহে ঐ বিদ্যার আশ্চর্য্য বিষয় ন্যূন নহে অর্থাৎ যে দ্রব্য মিশ্রিতে অঙ্গার উৎপন্ন হয় হিরকে সেই দ্রব্য আছে এবং দাহ জনক বস্তুর সংযোগ দ্বারা জলের উৎপত্তি হয় নানাপ্রকার বায়ু সংযোগে অম্লরস ও উৎপন্ন হয় এবং অম্লরসের এমত এক অম্লরস আছে যে তদ্দ্বারা ধাতুদ্রব্য দ্রব হইতে পারে এবং ঐ অম্ল মনুষ্যের শ্বাস প্রশ্বাস কারক বায়ুর দ্বারা নির্ম্মিত হয়। লবণের ধাতুবস্তুর ন্যায় অনেক স্বভাব আছে এবং লবণের অশেকাংশ ধাতু সম্বলিত আছে উক্ত লবণ জল অপেক্ষা লঘু এবং তরল উহাকে উষ্ণ না করিয়া কেবল বায়ু রাখিলেই তাহা হইতে অগ্নি নির্গত হয় কিন্তু উহাকে উষ্ণ করিলে এইরূপ দ্রব্য পাওয়া যায় যে যাহা সোরা ও কাষ্ঠ ভগ্ন মধ্য প্রাপ্ত হওয়া যায় এ সকল মূল বস্তু ও সঙ্কর বস্তুর দ্বারা বিজ্ঞাবিজ্ঞের সকলেরি মনের চমৎকার বোধ জন্মিতে পারে কিন্তু ইহা হইতে আর গুরুতর আশ্চর্য্য বিষয় আছে তাহা জ্ঞাত হইলে পূর্ব্বোক্ত আশ্চর্য বিষয় তাচ্ছিল্য বোধ অবশ্যই হইবে সে জ্যোতিষ বিদ্যা যাহাতে অতি দূরবর্ত্তি নক্ষত্রাদির বৃহতাকৃতি ও গতি ও স্থিতি নির্ণয় হয় ও শুক্ল ও কৃষ্ণপক্ষের কারণ ও সূর্য্য ও চন্দ্রের ও অন্য নক্ষত্রের গ্রহণের কারণ জানা যায় ও সমুদ্রাদির শ্রোতাশ্রোত নিরুপণ করা যায়। তদ্ভিন্ন রেখা গণিত যাহাকে ইংলণ্ডীয় ভাষায় Geometry কহে ঐ বিদ্যাতেও বিবেচক মনুষ্যের মনে অবশ্যই সন্তোষ জন্মাইতে পারে যেরূপ আকার বিশিষ্ট ত্রিকোণ হউক ও তাহার ভূজ সকলের যেরূপ হেলন থাকুক পরন্তু তাহারদের মধ্যে ত্রিকোণের প্রত্যেক কোণ একত্র করিলে সমুদয়ে যে পরিমাণ হইবে সেই পরিমাণকে সকল ত্রিকোণকেই সমান থাকিবে এবম্প্রকার নানা রেখা বিষয়ক আশ্চর্য্য আছে। বজ্রস্ফুলিঙ্গ বিদ্যা, যে বিদ্যাকে ইংলণ্ডীয় ভাষায় ইলেকট্রিসিটি কহে সেই প্রকার যে বস্তু দ্বারা বা গতি দ্বারা অথবা অন্য ২ যে ক্রিয়াতে উষ্ণতার জ্ঞান হয় সেই সকল বস্তু আদিতে দ্রব্যকে দ্রব করিয়া চতুর্দ্দিকে বিস্তৃত করে এবং কুজ্ঝটিকা সময়ে বিড়ালের পৃষ্ঠ দেশে ঘর্ষণ করণ দ্বারা অগ্নিস্ফুলিঙ্গন্যায় যে আলোক নির্গত হয় এবং গগণমণ্ডলে মেঘ হইতে যে বিদ্যুত নির্গত হয় এই দুই এক পদার্থ এবং মনুষ্যেরা যে নিশ্বাস ত্যাগকরে বৃক্ষেরাও সেইরূপ নিশ্বাস ত্যাগ করে এবং বৃক্ষগণ দিবা ভাগে যেরূপ নিশ্বাস ত্যাগ করে সেরূপ রজনীতে নহে যে বায়ু দ্বারা বাষ্প যন্ত্র অর্থাৎ বেলুন শূন্যে উঠে সেই বায়ুতেই বৃক্ষাদির ধূলিকে ঊর্দ্ধগামি করিয়া সামান্য বায়ু দ্বারা সর্ব্বদা গতিশালী করে অতএব এসকল অত্যাশ্চর্য বিষয় জ্ঞাত হওয়ায় অবশ্যই মনের উৎসাহ এবং সন্তোষ জন্মিতে পারে। ও তত্তদ জ্ঞান জন্মিলে অনায়াসে জানা যায় যে এই জগতে

যত পদার্থ আছে তাহার মধ্যে এমন কোন পদার্থ নাই যে তাহাতে কোন নিগুঢ়াভিপ্রায়ের আশ্চর্য্য চিহ্ন নাই অর্থাৎ যে দিগে গমন করা যায় সেই দিগেই এইরূপ চিহ্ন দর্শন হয় যে তদ্ব্যতিরেকে এক পাদও যাইতে পারা যায় না ঈশ্বরের সমুদায় তাৎপর্য্য প্রকাশ যে সৃষ্টি তাহাতে দর্শন হইতেছে যে তাঁহার সর্ব্বথা রূপে অভিপ্রায় যাহাতে জীবদিগের বিশেষতঃ সুখবৃদ্ধি হয় ইহা এমতরূপে দৃষ্টি হইতেছে যে আমরা ইহা স্থির করিতে কোন সন্দেহ করিতে পারি না এবং আমরা যদি পরমেশ্বরের সকল অভিপ্রায় জানিতে সমর্থ হইতাম তবে অবশ্যই জানা যাইত যে ঈশ্বর জীবদের হিতেচ্ছাতেই সৃষ্টির সমুদয় অংশকে সৃষ্টি করিয়াছেন। এবং বিদ্যাভ্যাসের প্রতিবন্ধক যে সকল হয় তাহাও এস্থানে কহা উচিতবোধ করিয়া কহিতেছি যে এই ১। বহুজন সহবাস, এস্থলে বহুজন সহবাস করার অর্থ যে নানা ব্যবসায়ি লোকের সহিত বাস করিলে নানামত কথা ও বিষয় শ্রবণে ও আন্দোলনে বিদ্যাভাসির স্বকার্য্য সাধন অতি দুষ্কর হয়, ২। উত্তম মিষ্টান্ন ভোজনাভিলাষ এ অভিলাষিত ব্যক্তিকে পেটুক করিয়া বর্ণন করিয়াছেন যে যাহার সদত মিষ্টান্ন ভোজনে চিন্তা সে ব্যক্তি কিপ্রকারে বিদ্যা চিন্তা করিয়া বিদ্যারূপ নিধিকে প্রাপ্ত হইতে পারেন অর্থাৎ তাহার বিদ্যাভ্যাস হয় না। ৩। গন্ধ পুষ্পে প্রয়াস যে ব্যক্তির পুষ্প চন্দন আতর গোলাপ ইত্যাদিতে মন আবিষ্ট তাহার মন ভ্রমেও শ্রম করিতে বাসনা করেনা সুতরাং বিদ্যাভ্যাস হয় না। ৪। যুবতী সংসর্গ কেননা যৌবনমদে মত্ত হইয়া যুবতী সঙ্গ পাইলে ক্রমে২ কামের পরাক্রম বৃদ্ধি হইলে কি২ মন্দ না হইতে পারে অর্থাৎ সকল মন্দ হইতে পারে অতএব কামের পর পরম, শত্রু আর নাই দেখ এক পরদার দোষ সকল দোষের মূলাধার দেখ যাহার কামের ক্রমে পরাক্রম বৃদ্ধি হইলে স্বকিয়াতে রস বোধ না করিয়া পরকিয়াতে প্রবৃত্তি জন্মে তৎপরে সে প্রেমে ব্যাঘাৎ পাইলে ক্রোধ আসিয়া দেহকে আশ্রয় করে তদ্দ্বারা নানাপ্রকার বিবাদ বিসম্বাদ অবশেষে ধনান্ত মানান্ত এবং প্রাণান্ত হওনের সম্ভব আছে। অতএব ক্রমে ষড়রিপুর বসিভূত হইয়া ব্যস্ত সমস্ত হওত নানা দুঃখ ভোগে ব্যতিব্যস্ত হইতে হয় সুতরাং বিদ্যাভ্যাস করা হয় না। ৫। ইতস্ততঃ নিরর্থক ভ্রমণ। নিরর্থক ভ্রমণে মনের মধ্যে জড়তা জন্মাইয়া অলস দেহতে স্থান পায় তাহাতে বুদ্ধির ভ্রংশ হইয়া সে ব্যক্তি এক স্থানে সদত থাকিতে পারেনা তাহার মন সদত চঞ্চল অতএব চঞ্চলিতান্তঃকরণ ব্যক্তির বিদ্যার্জন হয় না। ৬। নৃত্য গীত বাদ্যানুরাগ এই কয়েক মনোহর সুখদায়ক তুষ্টিজনক আমোদ আমোদিতান্তঃকরণ ব্যক্তিগণ সদত গান বাদ্যে মগ্ন থাকাতে

তাহারদিগের মন অন্য কোন বিষয়ে ধাবমান না হইয়া কেবল তাল মান গাঁণ ইত্যাদিতে রত হওত বিদ্যা অধ্যায়ণ করা হয় না। ৭। পাশকাদি ক্রীড়া যাহা জীবের পক্ষে কেবল কালরূপ হইয়া কাল নাশের কাল হইয়াছে কেননা তাস পাশা সতরঞ্চাদি ক্রীড়াকারি ব্যক্তিরা সদৎ ক্রীড়ামোদে বৃথা কালক্ষেপ করত ক্ষণিক সুখে সুখী হইয়া ইহকাল পরকাল নষ্ট করে এবং মনের আবিষ্ট ঐ ক্রীড়াতেই রাখে সুতরং বিদ্যাভ্যাস হয় না। ৮। মাদক দ্রব্য পাণ যাহাতে কেবল বিদ্যা অধ্যয়ণের প্রতিবন্ধক না হইয়া সকল বিষয় ব্যাপার শিষ্টালাপ সৌহৃদ্যতা সৌজন্যতা শীলতা গৌরব নাশ করে অতএব গাঞ্জাদীর ধূম পাণ ও সুরাদির পাণে আপ্ত বিভ্রোল হইয়া বিদ্যা আলোচনা না হওয়াতে বিদ্যাভ্যাস হয় না।

শ্রীগৌরমোহন দাসস্য।

APPENDIX III

রাজবৃত্তান্ত।

এতদ্দেশে পুরাণোপপুরাণ কাব্য প্রভৃতি নানা প্রকার পদ্য রচনার আত্যন্তিক সমাদর প্রযুক্ত গদ্যেতে রচিত গ্রন্থ প্রায় নাই এইহেতু স্বরূপ বর্ণনা সম্বলিত সত্য ইতিহাস গ্রন্থের অভাব। কিন্তু এক্ষণে এতদ্দেশস্থ বহু জনগণের স্বদেশের পূর্ব্ব বৃত্তান্ত সমূহ অবগত হওনে বিশেষ বাসনা প্রকাশ করণ প্রযুক্ত ইতিহাস গ্রন্থের নিতান্ত প্রয়োজন হইয়াছে। এতৎ প্রয়োজনানুরোধে আমার পক্ষে অসাধ্য সাধন এই ইতিহাস রচন কার্য্যে প্রবর্ত্ত হইয়াছি। যদি এতৎ ক্ষুদ্র গ্রন্থ রূপ ভেলাতে আরোহণ করিয়া ইতিহাস জলনিধির তীর হইতে নীরেতে কিঞ্চিদ্দূরে গমন করিতে পারি তাহা হইলেই মনোভিলাষ সিদ্ধি হয়। পরে আমা অপেক্ষা জ্ঞানবান ও ক্ষমতাপন্ন জনগণেরা এই সাগরের তরঙ্গাবর্ত্ত প্রভৃতি উত্তীর্ণ হইয়া পারদর্শী হইবেন।

সত্য ত্রেতা দ্বাপর যুগ ত্রয়েতে মনু সত্যব্রত ঈক্ষ ঙ্গ এবং সূর্য্য ও চন্দ্রবংশজ নৃপতি গণের যশঃ ও কীর্ত্তি সমূহ রামায়ণ ও মহাভারতাদি নানা পুরাণেতে বিবিধ প্রকারে বিস্তার রূপে বর্ণিত আছে এবং তাঁহাদিগের দেব দানব যক্ষ রক্ষ গণ সহিত সংগ্রাম অতি অদ্ভুত কোন প্রকারে বিশ্বাস যোগ্য নহে অতএব এতৎ গ্রন্থে তদ্বৃত্তান্ত সকল বর্ণনের প্রয়োজনাভাব এইহেতু কলিযুগে মহারাজা বিক্রমাদিত্যের রাজত্ব অবধি ইতিহাস লিখিলাম।

প্রায় অষ্টাদশ শত বৎসর গত হইল ভারতবর্ষস্থ সমস্ত রাজগণ মধ্যে শ্রীযুক্ত মহারাজাধিরাজ রাজপাল নামে সম্রাট অর্থাৎ একছত্র ছিলেন। সেই নৃপতি শকাদিত্য নামা রাজঙ্গমার কর্তৃক আক্রান্ত ও পরাজিত হইয়া রাজ্যচ্যুত হইলেন। শকাদিত্য নৃপতি সিংহাসনোপবিষ্ট হইয়া কিয়ৎকাল পর্য্যন্ত রাজ্য শাসন করণানন্তর রণস্থলেতে মহারাজা বিক্রমাদিত্যের সহিত সংগ্রামে পরাভূত হইলেন। যে বিক্রমাদিত্য নানা দিগ্‌দেশস্থ বিপক্ষ ক্ষিতিপতি ঙ্গলের ক্ষয় করিয়া পরমানন্দে প্রজাপালন ধর্ম্মাচরণ পূর্ব্বক শিষ্ট বিশিষ্ট বিদ্বান জন গণের সমোচিত সম্মান করিয়াছিলেন। এবং যে বিক্রমাদিত্যের কীর্ত্তি সমূহ অদ্যাপি এতদ্দেশস্থ মনুষ্য বর্গের মনঃ পটেতে চিত্র পুত্তলিকার ন্যায় চিত্রিত আছে। তাবৎ কবিগণ চূড়া মণির কিরণ করণক চরণ যুগল পূজিত যে মহাকবি শ্রীকালিদাস তিনি সেই ভূপতি সভাস্থ নব-রত্নের মধ্যে শ্রেয়স্ ছিলেন। শ্রীবিক্রমাদিত্য দক্ষিণাধিপতি সালবাহন নামা রাজা কর্তৃক যুদ্ধে পরাভব হইয়া গত প্রাণ হইলেন। শ্রীসালবাহন ভূপতি নিজ ভুজ বলেতে স্বাধীনত্ব পদ প্রাপ্ত্যন্তর শ্রীবিক্রমসেননামা রাজাকে উজ্জয়নী নগরীতে রাজ্যা-ভিষিক্ত করিয়া আপনি নর্ম্মদা নদী তীর পার হইয়া স্বদেশে প্রস্থান করিলেন অনন্তর শ্রীবিক্রমাদিত্য মহারাজের বংশজ নৃপতি গণেরা কিয়ৎকাল রাজ্য শাসন করিলে পরে একজন শত্রু কর্তৃক তাঁহারাও রাজ্যভ্রষ্ট হইলেন। সেই রাজ্যাপহারকের বংশজ এক ভূপাল দিল্লি অর্থাৎ হস্তিনা নামা নগরীকে মনোরম রূপেতে নির্ম্মাণ করিয়াছিলেন। তদনন্তর তিন শত বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত ক্ষিতিপতি গণেরা সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইয়া কিরূপে কিপ্রকারে রাজ্য শাসন করিয়াছিলেন তাহা এতদ্দেশস্থ ইতিহাস-বেত্তাবর্গেরা তাহারদিগের স্বীয়২ রচিত গ্রন্থে কিঞ্চিন্মাত্রও উল্লেখ করেন নাই। পরন্তু শ্রীবাসুদেব নামা এক রাজ ঙ্গমার বঙ্গ ও বাহার অর্থাৎ মগধ প্রেদেশ জয় করিয়া মহারাজাধিরাজোপাধি গ্রহণ পূর্ব্বক সুরপতির অমরাপুরির ন্যায় রম্যা অট্টালিকাতে সোভিতা কনজ নগরীতে বহুকাল রাজত্ব করিলেন। এতৎকালে বাহরাম নামা

পারস্য দেশাধিপতি ভারতবর্ষস্থ হিন্দু দিগের আহার ব্যবহার ধর্ম্মাধর্ম্ম ও রাজ্য শাসন নিয়মাদি অবগত হওনার্থ তন্নগরীতে ব্যবসায়ির বেশ ধারণ করিয়া আসিয়াছিলেন। দৈবাৎ এক দিবস তিনি নগরের রাজ পথে ভ্রমণ করত এক মত্ত মাতঙ্গ দ্বারা আক্রান্ত হইলে তাঁহার ক্ষিতিপালত্ব পদ প্রকাশ পাইল। শস্ত্র বিদ্যাতে সুশিক্ষিত বাহরাম নৃপতি নিজ শরীরের সমস্ত সামর্থ করণক সেই মাতঙ্গাঙ্গ লক্ষে এক শূল নিক্ষেপ করিয়া ক্ষণ মাত্রে হস্তির মস্তক বিদীর্ণ করিলেন। এই সম্বাদ বাসুদেব ভূপতি শ্রবণ করিয়া ঐ ব্যক্তিকে সভাতে আনয়ন কবিতে আজ্ঞা প্রদান করিলেন। বাসুদেব রাজা পূর্ব্বে পারস্য দেশে বাহরাম পাদসাহের সহিত সাক্ষাৎ করিতে গিয়াছিলেন অতএব বাহারম তাঁহার সম্মুখে উপস্থিত হইবামাত্র তাহাকে পাদসাহ জানিয়া সিংহাসন হইতে গাত্রোত্থান করিয়া রাজা বাসুদেব তাহাকে আলিঙ্গন প্রদান করিলেন। পরে বাহরাম পাদসাহ স্বীয় পারসা দেশাধিপতিত্ব করিয়া প্রকাশ কবণান্তর বহু সম্মান পুরঃসর রাজ সভাতে কিয়ৎকাল কাল যাপন করিয়া বাসুদেব রাজার কন্যার পানি গ্রহণ করত স্বদেশে প্রস্থান করিলেন।

শ্রীবাসুদেব রাজার সন্তানেরা অশীতি বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত রাজত্ব করিলে পরে তদ্বংশজ এক নৃপতি এক শিশু সন্তান রাখিয়া লোকান্তর গমন করিলে রাজ্যে অরাজকত্ব প্রযুক্ত নানা প্রকার উপদ্রব উপস্থিত হইল। সেই সকল উপদ্রব নিবারণার্থ শ্রীরামদেব নামা অত্যন্ত সাহসী ও মহাজ্ঞানী অতি বিখ্যাত রাহটুর দেশজ এক রাজ কুমার রাজ্য শাসন ভার প্রাপ্ত হইলেন। শ্রীরামদেব ভূপতি রাজ গণের দৌরাত্ম্য দমন ও গর্ব্ব খর্ব্ব করণ পূর্ব্বক স্বকীয় রাজ্য সীমা সুবিস্তার করিয়া পঞ্চাশত বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত রাজদণ্ড ধারণানন্তর ইন্দু কুন্দের ন্যায় নির্মল ধবল কীর্ত্তি ও যশঃ প্রাপ্ত হইয়া স্বর্গারোহণ করিলেন। ফেরেস্ত নামক পারস্য দেশজ ইতিহাসকার লিখিয়াছেন যে শ্রীরামদেব রাজা এই রূপে মহা মহিমান্বিত সম্রাট হইয়াও পারস্য দেশাধিপতিকে কর প্রেরণ করিতেন। শ্রীরামদেব রাজার মরণান্তর বহু প্রতারক গণেরা রাজত্ব প্রাপণার্থ সমূহ চেষ্টা করিলেক কিন্তু সেই ধূর্ত্ত গণ মধ্যে রাজ সেনাধ্যক্ষ প্রতাপচন্দ্র নামা এক ব্যক্তি বল ছল কৌশল দ্বারা অন্যান্য প্রতারক গণের প্রাণ নিধন পূর্ব্বক স্বকীয় মনোভিলাষ সিদ্ধি করিলেক।

ধার্ম্মিক মনুষ্যেরা সর্ব্বদা জয়যুক্ত হয়েন। ও অসতজন গণেরা পরিণামে তাহারদিগের দুঃশীলতার প্রতিফল অবশ্যই প্রাপ্ত হয় অধর্ম্মমূলক রাজ্যাধিকার কদাচিত বহুকাল স্থায়ী হয়না। শ্রীপ্রতাপচন্দ্র রাজার মরণান্তর তাঁহার অধীন রাজগণ

তাঁহার সন্তানদিগকে রাজ্যচ্যুত করিয়া আপন২ দেশে স্বাধীন রাজা হইয়া নিষ্কণ্টক রাজ্য ভোগ করিতে লাগিলেন। সেই রাজগণ মধ্যে শ্রীআনন্দ দেব ও শ্রীমল্লদেব নামা দুই নৃপতি অত্যন্ত ধনী ও জ্ঞানী রূপে বিখ্যাত ছিলেন। বন্য জাত্যুদ্ভব শ্রীআনন্দদেব ভূপতি আদৌ মানয়া দেশাধিপতি হইয়া পরে নিজ বাহু বলেতে এক বিখ্যাত সংগ্রামে মহারাষ্ট্রাধিকার বিরার দেশ ও গুজরাট দেশ জয় করিলেন। শ্রীমল্লদেব ভূপাল অত্যন্ত নীচ জাতিতে জন্মিয়া স্বীয় বিদ্যা বুদ্ধিবলেতে হস্তিনা নগরী ও তদন্তঃপাতি রাজ্যাধীশ্বর হইয়াছিলেন। কনজ নগরী এক সুবিস্তৃত রাজ্যের রাজধানী হইয়া হস্তিনা নগরর্য্যাপেক্ষাও মহামহৈশ্বর্য্যশালী হইল। এমত কথিত আছে যে তন্নগরীতে গায়ক নৃত্যক বাদ্যকরগণ প্রভৃতির ষষ্ঠী সহস্র দল ছিল ও ত্রিংশত সহস্র বিক্রেতাদিগের দোকানে তাম্বুল বিক্রয় হইত। কিন্তু এই দুই রাজ্যের যাদৃশ আশু মহা উন্নতি হইয়াছিল তদ্রূপ শীঘ্র পতন হইল। শ্রীআনন্দদেব ষোড়শ বৎসর ও শ্রীমল্লদেব চল্লিশ বৎসর রাজত্ব করিয়া প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন। তদনন্তর সমস্ত সামান্য ভূপতিগণেরা কেহবা নানা দিগ্‌দেশ জয় করণে কেহবা স্বীয় রাজ্য রক্ষণে নিযুক্ত হইলেন।

এতৎ কালে মহম্মদ প্রভৃতি আরব দেশজ ভূপাল গণেরা মক্কা মদিনা নগর জয় করিয়া মিসর পারস্য সিরিয়া প্রভৃতি ও তন্নিকটস্থ নানা দেশাধিপতিদিগকে পরাজয় করিলেন। কাবুল কান্দাহার কাশ্মীর দেশ সকল তাহার জাতীয় রাজগণের অধীন ছিল। লাহোর ও সিন্ধু নদীর পূর্ব্ব তীরস্থ অন্যান্য অনেক দেশ প্রদেশের রাজ গণেরা পারস্য দেশের সম্রাটকে কর প্রদান করিতেন কনজ ও দিল্লি ও আজমীর দেশস্থ নরপতি গণেরা অত্যন্ত বীর্য্যবন্ত ছিলেন কিন্তু যবন সৈন্যের দ্বারা আক্রান্ত হইলে একৈক তাহারদিগকে পরাভব করিতে কেহই শক্য হইতে পরিতেননা। গহন কানন বেষ্টিত গিরি মধ্যবর্ত্তি রাজপুতনা নাম দেশজ নিতান্ত স্বাধীনতাকাঙ্ক্ষি মনুষ্যেরা স্বকীয় বল বীর্য্য প্রকাশ করণ পূর্ব্বক মুসলমান সৈন্যদিগকে সর্ব্বদা উপহাস করত দ্বাদশ শত বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত স্বদেশ সুরক্ষিত করিয়া রাখিয়াছিল।

আরব ইতিহাসকারদিগের গ্রন্থ পাঠে বোধ হয় যে একাদশ শত বৎসর গত হইল মুসলমান জাতিরা ভারতবর্ষে প্রথম আগমন করত তাহারদিগের বাহুবল প্রকাশ করিয়াছিল কিন্তু এ কথা সর্ব্বতোভাবে গ্রাহ্য নহে। সে যাহাহউক এতৎ-কালে তজ্জাতিরা ব্যবসা করণার্থ যে এতদ্দেশে সতত গমনাগমন করত নানা দ্রব্যাদি ক্রয় বিক্রয় করিত তাহা অবশ্যই সত্য মানিতে হইবেক এবং সেই ব্যবসায়ী জন-

সমূহ বাণিজ্যাদি কার্য্যদ্বারা বহু ধনোপার্জ্জন করিয়া স্বদেশে প্রত্যাগমনে ভারতবর্ষস্থ মনুষ্যদিগের ধন জন ঐশ্বর্য্যাদির বৃত্তান্ত নানা শাখা পল্লব সহিত অত্যন্ত বাহুল্য রূপে বর্ণন করত স্বজাতীয় বীর গণ মনেতে অত্যত্তঙ্গ ধন তৃষ্টা ও গঙ্গা তীরস্থ নানা অট্টালিকাতে শেভিতা রম্যা নগরী সকল জয় করণে অনিবার্য্য ইচ্ছা জন্মাইয়া ছিলেন। এবং তাহারা অস্মদ্দেশোদ্ভব মাতঙ্গ তরঙ্গ মণি মাণিক্য মুক্তাদি নানারত্ন ও কার্পাস ও পট্টবস্ত্র ও পুষ্প বাসিত তৈল এলাইচ লবঙ্গ প্রভৃতি বিবিধ সদ্‌গন্ধি দ্রব্য এবং রমণীয়া নীলেন্দীবর ললনা বরণা গণ লাবন্য অপরঞ্চ হিন্দুদিগের মুসলমানী ধর্ম্ম প্রতি বিশেষ দ্বেষ বর্ণনা করিয়াছিলেন। এতাদৃশ নানা প্রকার বর্ণন শ্রবণে ও পাঠে সহজে সুখাভিলাষী ও সাহসিক আরবদিগের মনেতে প্রবল লোভ উদ্ভব হইয়াছিল। পরন্তু আরব ইতিহাস লেখকেরাও ভারতবর্ষ সম্বলিত নানা অত্যদ্ভুত ও আশ্চর্য্য ও মনোরঞ্জক ইতিহাসাদি লিখিয়াছিলেন।

কিন্তু মুসলমানদিগের এতদ্দেশে আক্রমণের পূর্ব্বেই তাহার দিগের সম্রাটের প্রতাপ স্বরূপ দিনমণি বিপক্ষ ক্ষিতিপতি কূলের বৃদ্ধি রূপ জলধরগণেতে আচ্ছাদিত হইয়াছিল। সেই ক্ষিতি পতি গণ মধ্যে বখরা দেশাধিপতি অত্যন্ত বলবন্ত ছিলেন যাঁহার এক জন সেনাপতি আফগাণ দিগের আক্রমণ হইতে রাজ্য রক্ষার্থে কাবলি স্থান প্রদেশের রাজধানী গিজনী নগরীতে বাস করিতেন। ৯৭৬ বৎসর গত হইল এক শিশু সন্তান রাখিয়া মুসলমানদিগের সম্রাট প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলে পরে তাঁহার ভ্রাতা প্রভৃতি নানা ব্যক্তি ছল বল দ্বারা রাজ্যাধিকার প্রাপনে সচেষ্টক হইল। কিন্তু অবশেষে ঐ অপ্রাপ্ত বয়স্কই রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইল। খোরাদান ও কাবলিস্থান দেশের নৃপতি গণেরা ঐ বালকের পিতৃব্য পক্ষে স্বাপক্ষতা ও আনুকূল্যতা করণ প্রযুক্ত এক্ষণে সশঙ্কিত ও অত্যন্ত ভীত হইয়া সংগ্রাম করণে উদ্যত হইলেন। অনন্তর স্বকীয় সৈন্য ও নিজ বাহু বলেতে পাদ সাহের সৈন্য পরাজয় করিয়া স্বদেশে স্বচ্ছন্দে নিষ্কণ্টকে রাজ্য ভোগ করিলেন। তাঁহার মরণান্তর তাঁহার পুত্র শক্র প্রদত্ত বিষ ভক্ষণ করিয়া পঞ্চত্ব প্রাপ্ত হইল। পরে তাতার জাতীয় মহা বলবন্ত সবক্তগিন নামক এক বীর রাজদণ্ড ধারণ করত নাজিরুদ্দিন উপাধি গ্রহণ পূর্ব্বক যৌব রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। সেই রাজা স্বীয় প্রজা বর্গের চঞ্চল ও রণাকাঙ্ক্ষি স্বভাব অবগত হইয়া তাহারদিগকে সতত কোন মহান কার্য্যে নিযুক্ত করণ আবশ্যক বোধ করিলেন। পরে ভারতবর্ষের স্বয়ং কল্পিত ধনাশাকৃষ্ট হইয়া সিন্ধু নদী পার হইলেন। অস্মদেশে আগমন করিয়া নানা তীর্থস্থ বহুতর দেবতা মঠ মন্দিরাদি

সমূলোৎপাটন এবং তাহার সহসা আক্রমণ প্রযুক্ত সংগ্রামে অনোদ্‌যোগী বহু ক্ষিতি-পাল গণকে পরাভব করত নানাবিধ ধন রত্নাদি অপহরণ করিয়া গিজনী নগরীতে পুনঃ প্রস্থান করিলেন।

এতৎ কালে শ্রীজয়পাল নামা রাজা লাহোর নগরাধিপতি ছিলেন। সেই সাহসিক সুনীতিজ্ঞ বীর্য্যবান নৃপতি মুসলমান শত্রু দিগের আক্রমণেতে সশঙ্কিত চিত্ত হইয়া তাহারদিগের নিপাতনার্থ এবং পুনরাগমন নিবারণার্থ ঘোরতর ভয়ানক যুদ্ধ সজ্জা করিয়া সিন্ধু নদী পার হইয়া শত্বাধিকার খোরাসান দেশে গমন করিতে উদ্যত হইলেন। কিন্তু সবক্তগিন বাদসাহের সৈন্যগণও শীঘ্র যুদ্ধ সজ্জ হইয়া রাত্র মধ্যে শত্রু সৈন্য নিকটে আসিয়া প্রাতে রণে প্রবর্ত্ত হওনাশায় থাকিল। ইতি মধ্যে আরো তমসাব্রিতা রজনীতে প্রলয় কালীন পচণ্ড পবন প্রচালিত অভ্রগণ ভীম ঝন বজ্র ঝনঝনা পাত সহিত ভূমণ্ডলে মূসল ধারাতে বৃষ্টি বর্ষণ করিয়া হাট বাট গ্রাম নগরাদি বারিপূর্ণ করিল। এতদ্দৃষ্টে হিন্দু সৈন্যগণ মহাভয়ে ভীত হইয়া পলায়ন উদ্যোগে অন্ধকারে পথভ্রমে কেহবা নদীতে কেহবা পর্ব্বত হইতে পতিত জল প্রবাহে নিমগ্ন হইয়া পঞ্চত্ব প্রাপ্ত হইল। পর দিন প্রাতে শ্রীযুক্ত জয়পাল ভূপতি আপন সৈন্যগণ বিনাশ হইয়াছে দেখিয়া মুসলমান পাদসাহের সহিত সন্ধি করণে ইচ্ছা করিলেন সবক্তগিন বাদসাহেবও সন্ধি করিতে সম্মতি হইল কিন্তু তাঁহার মামূদ নামা পুত্র নিজবীর্য্য প্রকাশ করণাশয়ে ও গৌরবাকাঙ্খা বশতঃ তৎসন্ধি বিঘ্নার্থ নানা প্রকারে চেষ্টাকরিয়া তদুপলক্ষে ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ ও জয় করণেচ্ছা ঐ স্থানে ব্যক্ত করিলেন। তচ্ছ্রবণাননন্তর অত্যন্ত রাগ প্রকাশ পূর্ব্বক রাজা জয়পাল কহিলেন যে আমাদিগকে আত্যন্তিক মর্ম্মান্তিক বেদনা দেওন উদ্যোগ হইতে এক্ষণে নিবর্ত্ত হও কেননা আমরা বরং স্বহন্তাদি করণক বচন বৃদ্ধ বনিতাদির প্রাণ নিধন করিব ও ধন রত্নাদি সমুদ্র জলে নিক্ষেপ করিব ও নগর গ্রহাদিতে অগ্নি প্রদান করত দগ্ধ করিব ও শত্রু সহিত সংগ্রামেতে প্রাণ পরিত্যাগ করিব কিন্তু তথাপি মুসলমান-দিগের অধীন কদাচ হইব না।

এই বাক্য শ্রবণে সবক্তগিণ বাদসাহ করুণার্দ্র চিত্ত হইয়া রাজা জয়পাল তাঁহাকে বহুধন এবং পঞ্চাশত হস্তী প্রদান করণে স্বীকার করিলে পরে সন্ধি করিলেন। জয়পাল ভূপতি লাহোর নগরীতে যাইয়া আপন মন্ত্রিগণ বাক্যাবহেলন পূর্ব্বক স্বীকৃত ধন ও হস্তী প্রেরণ করিলেন। তাহাতে ঐ বাদসাহ অত্যন্ত রোষান্বিত চিত্তে সসৈন্যে সিন্ধু নদী পার হইয়া ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করিয়া তিন লক্ষ হিন্দু

পদাতিক পরাভব ও বহু ধনাপহরণ করত স্বদেশে প্রস্থান করিলেন। অনন্তর বাদসাহ আপন শত্রুগণ সহিত নানা স্থানে যুদ্ধে জয়ী হইয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষ পুনর্ব্বার আর আক্রমণ করেন নাই। তাঁহার মৃত্যু শ্রবণে মুসলমানেরা অত্যন্ত শোকাকুল হইল এবং তাঁহার মাম্মদ ও ঈশমেএল নামা দুই সন্তান তাঁহার পঞ্চত্ব প্রাপ্ত মাত্রে রাজ্যাধিপত্ব প্রাপ্ত্যর্থে নানা প্রকার বিবাদ বিসম্বাদে নিযুক্ত হইল। পরন্তু মাম্মদ সিহাসনারূঢ় হইয়া নিজ ভ্রাতাকে কারাবদ্ধ করিয়া রাখিল। এবং সেই স্থানেই তাহার মৃত্যু হইল। মাম্মদ রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইয়া পরমেশ্বরকে সাক্ষী করিয়া এই প্রতিজ্ঞা করিলেন যে যাবৎ পর্য্যন্ত হিন্দূদিগের মঠ মন্দির ও তত্রস্থ দেবতা মূর্ত্তি ও প্রতিমাদি সমস্ত সমূলোৎপাটন না করেন তাবৎ তাহার দিগকে ক্ষণ মাত্র বিশ্রামের সাবকাস দিবেন না। এই পাষণ্ড ভণ্ডের প্রতিজ্ঞা নিজ জাতীর ধর্ম্ম প্রতি দৃঢ় ভক্তি জন্য নহে কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষের আধিপত্ব প্রাপণার্থে। অতএব তাবৎ হিন্দুরাজ মণ্ডল সমূলোনমূলন করণাশায়রূপ বৃক্ষ যাহা বাল্যাবস্থা পর্য্যন্ত যাবৎ জীবন মনেতে রোপণ ও সমবর্দ্ধন করিয়াছিলেন তাহার সাধ্য ফল সিদ্ধি ও ভোগার্থে এক্ষণে পরমানন্দে অবিরত বহুবিধ শ্রম ও অনিবার্য্যোৎসাহ প্রকাশ পুরঃসর সৈন্য সাগর সুসজ্জীভূত করিয়া গিজণী নগর হইতে লাহোর নগরে প্রস্থান করিলেন।

মাম্মদ অস্মদ দেশের যে২ স্থানে যুদ্ধ করিয়াছিল তাহার বিস্তার বর্ণনে প্রয়োজনাভাব সংক্ষেপে এই বক্তব্য যে সেই দুর্দান্ত দুরাত্মার নির্দয়া অশীলতাতে ক্ষত বিক্ষত হস্তী অশ্ব ও নর শরীর নির্গত রক্ত নদী স্থানে২ বহন হইয়াছিল এবং তাহার আক্রমণেতে অত্যন্ত ঐশ্বর্য্যশালী নগরী সকল কেবল ভস্ম রাশি মাত্র হইল। তাহার সহিত প্রথম যুদ্ধে রাজা জয়পাল পরাজিত ও ধৃত হইয়া বহু ধন দান পূর্ব্বক স্বাধীনত্ব প্রাপ্তানন্তর প্রজ্জ্বলিত জলদাগ্নিকুণ্ডে প্রবেশ করিয়া প্রাণ পরিত্যাগ করিলেন। মাম্মদ যে২ স্থান জয় করিলেন সেই২ স্থানে বহুদুর্গাদি নির্ম্মাণ করিয়া সৈন্য দ্বারা সুরক্ষিত করিলেন। বসিরা নামক শ্রীযুক্ত রাজা জয়পালের অধীন এক রাজ কুমারকে জয় করিলেন। অনন্তর তাহার আশ্চর্য্য বল বিক্রম দৃষ্টে সমস্ত ভূপতি গণেরা অত্যন্ত ভীত হইয়া স্বীয়২ সৈন্য সুসজ্জীভূত করিয়া প্রাণপণে সংগ্রাম করিতে উদ্যোগ করিলেন। ভারতবর্ষের তাবৎ মহা বলবান যোদ্ধা বীরগণ একত্র করিয়া উজ্জয় গোয়ালিয়ার কনজ দিল্লি ও আজমীর দেশের নৃপতিগণেরা রণক্ষেত্রে আগত হইলন। ভারতবর্ষে এতাদৃশ

মহারথি সেনাপতি গণেরা সংমিলিত হইয়া এতদ্রূপ সুশিক্ষিত সেনাসাগর সহিত সংগ্রামে বহু কালাবধি প্রবর্ত্ত হয় নাই। হিন্দুসৈন্যরা যবনদিগের ধর্ম্ম প্রতি বিশেষ দ্বেষ জন্য তাহার দিগকে স্বদেশ হইতে একেবারে দূরীকরণাশাতে উল্লাসিতান্তঃকরণে পরমানন্দে যুদ্ধ স্থানে প্রবেশ করিল। কিন্তু মহাবলবান সাহসিক সুশিক্ষিত শস্ত্রজ্ঞ তাতার আরব ও আফগান জাতীয় যোদ্ধাগণেরা অদ্ভুত ভুজবল করণক মৃগ মধ্যে মৃগরাজবৎ সমস্ত হিন্দু সৈন্য অতি শীঘ্র উচ্ছিন্ন করিল। এবং সংগ্রামান্তে অপহৃত স্বর্ণ হীরক ও নানাবিধ বহু মূল্য প্রস্তরাদি ত্রিশ হস্তী পৃষ্ঠে বোঝাই করিয়া লইয়া চলিল। তদনন্তর নানাস্থানে বহুবিধ যুদ্ধ করিয়া ভারতবর্ষের অধিকাংশ জয় করিল। ও লোক মধ্যে অজেয় খ্যাতি প্রাপ্ত হইল। এমত কথিত আছে যে মামুদ এক নগরী লুট করিয়া তত্রস্থ মন্দির ও দেবতা প্রতিমাদি বিনাশ করিতে উদ্যত হইলে মান্য ব্রাহ্মণবর্গেরা তাহার নিকটে আসিয়া বহুতর স্তব স্তোত্র করিয়া ঐ প্রতিমা সকলের বিনিময়ে অশংখ্যক ধন দিতে প্রার্থনা করিলেন। তাহাতে মামুদ উত্তর করিলেক যে শীলাদিতে ঈশ্বর উদ্বোধক অতি নিন্দিত যে প্রতিমাদি তাহা অনর্থক অর্থ লাভাশাতে নির্ব্বিঘ্নে রাখিলে পরমেশ্বরের নিকট নিতান্ত অপরাধি হইব। এবং ধন লাভার্থে ধর্ম্ম ধ্বংশ করণ রূপ যে মহা কলঙ্ক তাহা আমার নির্ম্মল যশেতে সংলগ্ন হইবেক অতএব তোমারদিগের প্রার্থনার সাফল্য কদাচ কর্ত্তব্য নহে। অনন্তর তাহার হস্তধৃতাদি করণক এক প্রতিমা খণ্ড বিখণ্ড করিলে তদুদরস্থ লুক্কায়িত বহু মূল্য রত্নাদি প্রকাশিত হইল। এমত বোধ হইতেছে যে ঐ বাদসাহের কৃষ্ণ বিষ্ণু প্রভৃতি দেবতা মূর্ত্তিতে যে দ্বেষাদ্বেষ ছিল তাহা সেই সকল রত্নাদি দৃষ্টে সহস্র গুণ বৃদ্ধি হইয়া হিন্দুস্থান সম্যক জয় ও সমস্ত রাজগণ স্থানে কর গ্রহণ করিয়া মামুদ পুনঃর্ব্বার স্বদেশ রাজধানী গিজনী নগরীতে প্রস্থান করিলেন। সেই বাদসাহ যাবজ্জীবন অন্যায় অবিচারে অনর্থক অর্থার্জ্জনেতে কাল যাপন জন্য দুষ্কৃতি হেত্ত কালান্তক শমন হস্তে নিস্তার প্রাপণে হতাশা হইয়া নিতান্ত খেদিতান্তঃকরণে, পঞ্চত্ব প্রাপ্ত হইলেন। রাজ্যশাসন কার্য্যে এবং বিগ্রহ সন্ধি ও শস্ত্র বিদ্যাতে ঐ বাদসাহ অতি সুপণ্ডিত ছিলেন। কিন্তু অপার ভব পারাবার নিস্তারক যে আত্মতত্ব জ্ঞান তাহার কিরণ কলাও কখন তাহার মনেতে প্রবেশ হয়নাই। কেননা ইহা কদাচ সম্ভব নহে যে কাম ক্রোধাদি প্রবল রিপুগণ অতি কঠোর নিগ্রহ জন্য যে ব্রহ্ম জ্ঞান চন্দ্র তাহা মহা মোহান্ধনির্দ্দয় মনুষ্য নিগ্রহকর পাষণ্ড ভূপতি চিত্তে উদিত হইবেক। সে যাহাহউক তাঁহার

মরণান্তর তাঁহার শত্রু বর্গেরা যাদৃশ আহ্লাদিত হইল তদ্রূপ তাঁহার মিত্র গণেরাও নানাবিধ প্রকারে মনঃ খেদ প্রকাশ করিলেক।

মামুদ বাদসাহের মরণান্তে তাহার মহম্মদ নামা পুত্র সহোদর জ্যেষ্ঠ ভ্রাতা সত্বেও নিজ সদগুণান্বিত ও দয়াবান স্বভাব হেতুক রাজ্যাভিসিক্ত হইলেন কিন্তু মামুদ প্রজাগণ প্রিয় পাত্র ছিলেন এই নিমিত্ত রাজ্যের বহু বলবান যোদ্ধাগণ তাহার পক্ষে স্বাপক্ষতা করণ জন্য তিনি মহম্মদের সহিত সংগ্রামে প্রবর্ত্ত হইলেন। অনন্তর মামুদ নিজ ভ্রাতাকে রাজ্যাপহরণ করণোদ্‌যোগ দোষ প্রযুক্ত তাহার নয়ন দ্বয় বুৎ পাটন দ্বারা অন্ধী করিয়া যাবজ্জীবন কারাগারে বদ্ধ করিয়া রাখিলেন। মামুদ বাদসাহের জীবদ্দশাতেই তাহাঁর সন্তান দিগের রাজ্য ভ্রষ্ট হওনের বীজ রোপণ হইয়াছিল। তিনি সেনজুক নামক এক জাতি দিগকে স্বদেশে আহ্বান করিয়া তাহারদিগের বাসস্থান প্রদান করিয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু অতি শীঘ্র তাহারদিগের পরিবারের অত্যন্ত অসম্ভব বৃদ্ধি দেখিয়া সশঙ্কিত চিত্তে তাহার-দিগকে রাজ্য হইতে দূরী করণে সচেষ্টক হইলেন। কিন্তু তৎকালেই তাঁহার পরলোক প্রাপ্তি হেতুক অভিলাষিত কার্য্য সিদ্ধি হইলনা। তাঁহার সন্তান-দিগের যখন পরস্পর মহা সংগ্রাম উপস্থিত হইল তখন সুনজুক জাতিরা সমরকণ্ড ও বখোরা দেশের আধিপত্ব বল দ্বারা গ্রহণ করিলেক। মামুদ পাদসাহ ঐ জাতিদিগের সহিত যুদ্ধ করিয়া তাহার দিগকে সম্যক পরাজিত বোধে আপনি বহু সৈন্য একত্রিত করিয়া ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করিলেন। কিন্তু পারস ও সুনজুক জাতিরা পুনর্ব্বার শাত্রাবতাচরণ করিতেছে এই সম্বাদ শ্রবণ করিয়া স্বদেশে প্রত্যাগমন করিলেন। পারস জাতিরা শীঘ্র পরাজিত হইল কিন্তু মহাযোদ্ধা সুনজুক জাতিরা পাদসাহের সেনাপতিগণ দিগকে সসৈন্যে পরাভব করিলেক। এক্ষণে ভারতবর্ষে নানা স্থানে শত্রু গণ প্রবল হইয়া উঠিল। তাহার দিগকে দমন করণার্থ পাদসাহ তথায় গমন করিলেন এতৎকালে তাহার তাতার শত্রু গণেরা প্রচণ্ড পবন প্রায় তাহার রাজ্য আক্রমণ করিয়া নানাবিধ প্রকারে অনিষ্টতাচরণ করিলেক! সেই নির্লর্জ্জ শত্রু গণের সম্যক গর্ব্ব খর্ব্ব করণার্থ স্বদেশে গমন করিলেন কিন্তু চঞ্চলা কমলা তাহাঁর প্রতি সকোপান্বিতা হইয়া ছিলেন এই প্রযুক্ত নানা স্থানে যুদ্ধে পরাভব হইয়া স্বদেশ ত্যাগ পূর্ব্বক কিয়ৎকাল সিন্ধু নদী পারে বাস করিতে বাসনা করিলেন সমস্ত ধনাদি ত্রিশ শত হস্তি পৃষ্ঠে বোঝাই করিয়া তাঁহার অন্ধ ভ্রাতা ও সৈন্য গণ সমভিব্যাহারে লাহোর

নগরীতে প্রস্থান করিলেন পথি মধ্যে তাঁহার কৃতঘ্ন সৈন্য ও দাসগণেরা দুর্দ্দশাগ্রস্ত প্রভুর সমস্ত ধনাপহরণ করত বিভাগ করিয়া লইল। মামুদ বাদসাহ কিয়ৎকাল কারাবদ্ধ থাকিয়া নিজ ভ্রাম্পুত্রের হস্তাসিভে গত প্রাণ হইলেন। কিন্তু সেই পাপাত্মা ও তাহার পিতাও শীঘ্র মোদাদ নামক মামুদ বাদসাহের পুত্র কর্ত্তৃক বিনাশিত হইল।

মুসলমান রাজাদিগের এইরূপ বিবাদ বিসম্বাদ দেখিয়া ভারতবর্ষস্থ ভূপতি-গণেরা পুনর্ব্বার যুদ্ধোদ্যোগ করিলেন কিন্তু তাহার দিগের চেষ্টা সম্যক নিষ্ফলা হইল। অনন্তর যাবৎ গিজনী দেশের রাজঙ্গমারেরা লোভান্ধ হইয়া শত্রু দমন পরিত্যাগ পূর্ব্বক পরস্পর আত্মীয় বর্গের প্রাণ হত্যাদি নানা প্রকার অতি নিন্দিত কার্য্যে নিযুক্ত হইলে তাবৎ মহাবীর্য্যবন্ত সুনযুক জাতিরা তাহারদিগের রাজ্যের নানা স্থানে আক্রমণ করিতে আরম্ভ করিলেক। এতদ্রূপে কিয়ৎকাল মধ্যে অনেক পাদসাহ গণেরা ক্রমস সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইয়া আত্ম্য কলহেতে এবং সুনযুক জাতিদিগের সহিত যুদ্ধে নিযুক্ত থাকিয়া ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করিতে পারেননাই কিন্তু ৮৬৯ বৎসর গত হইল ইব্রাহিম নামক পরম ধার্ম্মিক ও অতিশান্ত এক বাদসাহ পুনর্ব্বার হিন্দুদিগের সহিত সংগ্রামে জয়ী হইলেন কিন্তু গিজনী নগরের রাজ গণের প্রতাপ রূপ সূর্য্য অস্তাচল চূড়াবলম্বন করিয়া-ছিলেন। প্রজা নিগ্রহ অন্যায় অত্যাচার অবিচার ইত্যাদি নানাবিধ দূষ্কৃত কার্য্যের দ্বারা তাহারদিগের রাজ্যের বিনাশ হইল।

অনন্তর মুর নগরের ভূপতিগণের প্রতাপ দিন২ বর্দ্ধমান হইতে লাগিল। ইবন হাকন নামক একজন পারস্য গ্রন্থকার কহেন যে ঐ মুর নগর খোরাসান দেশের রাজধানী ছিল। প্রায় ৮০৯ বৎসর গত হইল গিজনী নগরের রাজা মুরীয় য্যাসুদিন রাজা এবং তাঁহার মহম্মদ নামা ভ্রাতা কর্তৃক রাজ্য ভ্রষ্ট হইয়া ভারতবর্ষে পলায়ন করিয়া আসিয়া প্রাণ রক্ষা করিলেন। অস্মদেশেতেও তাহার শত্রু গণেরা তাঁহার পশ্চাতে ধাবমান হইল। ভারতবর্ষস্থ ভূপালবর্গেরা ঐ বাদসাহের রক্ষার্থে যুদ্ধসজ্জা করিলেন কিন্তু হীনবীর্য্য অথবা নিঃসাহস প্রযুক্ত প্রথমতঃ পঞ্জাব অনন্তর মুলতান দেশেতে পরাজিত হইলেন। গুজুরাট দেশাধিপতি রাজার সহিত সংগ্রামে মুর দেশের যোদ্ধা গণেরা পরাজিত হইয়া তদ্দেশ বিজয় ব্যাপার হইতে নিবর্ত্ত হইলেন এবং লাহোর নগরী বারম্বার শত্রু কর্ত্তৃক আক্রান্তা হইয়াও এপর্য্যন্ত স্বাধীনা ছিল কিন্তু অত্যন্ত নিন্দিত এক বিশ্বাসঘাতকতা কার্য্যের

দ্বারা মুরীয় সৈন্যেরা ঐ নগরী হস্ত গত করিলেক। খসরু নামক বাদসাহের পঞ্চত্বপ্রাপ্তে গিজনীনগরের ইতিহাস সমাপ্ত হইল। বহু দিন পুর্ব্বেই ঐ নগর গৌরবহীন হইয়াছিল কিন্তু এক্ষণে তত্রস্থ রাজবংশও নির্ম্মুল হইল।

কিন্তু এতদ্রূপে গিজনীয় বাদসাহের পরিবর্ত্তে মুরীয় বাদসাহের ভারতবর্ষে সাম্রাজ্য প্রাপণে হিন্দু দিগের মনেতে হরিষ বিষাদ কিছু মাত্র হইলনা কেননা তদুভয় জাতিরা অস্মদ্দেশে আগমন করিয়া প্রাণি হিংসা ধনাপহরণ নগবাদি দাহন ও অন্যান্য নানা প্রকার নির্দয় কার্য্য করিতে কেহই ত্রুটি করেন নাই। মূরীয় বাদসাহের মহম্মদ নামক ভ্রাতা রাজ সেনাপতি হইয়া খসরু বাদসাহের প্রাণ নিধনানন্তর বহুবিধ সৈন্য সুসজ্জীভূত করত মূলতান দেশে প্রবেশ করিলেন। তত্রস্থ ভূপাল সৈন্যের দ্বারা পরাভব হইয়া ঐ বাদসাহ গিজনী নগরে পলায়ন করিলেন। কিন্তু দিগ্বিজয় করণ রূপ মদিরার বারৈক মাত্র আস্বাদ গ্রহণে যাবজ্জীবন বুদ্ধিবৃত্তির সম্যক লোপ হয়। সৌভাগ্য সৌভাগ্য উভয় অবস্থাতেই ঐ বাদসাহ অসন্তোষ মানস হইয়া পূনর্ব্বার বহু সৈন্য একত্রিত করিয়া সিন্ধু নদী পার হইলেন এবং একশত পঞ্চাশত রাজাগণের সৈন্য পরাজয় করিয়া জিত রাজ্য সকল কূতুব নামক তাহার একজন ক্রীত দাসকে প্রদান পূর্ব্বক আপনি ভারতবর্ষের উত্তর খণ্ডস্থ দেশ সমূহ দাহন ও জনগণের ধন প্রাণাপহরণ করত নিজ ভুজবল প্রকাশ করিলেন। কূতুব দিল্লি নগরী আক্রমণ করিয়া এবং বুদ্ধি কৌশল দ্বারা তত্রস্থ দুর্গ সম্যক হস্তগত করিলেক এই হেওক ইতিহাস লেখকেরা কুতুবকে ভারতবর্ষে যবনাধিকার সংস্থাপক বলিয়া বর্ণন করিয়াছেন। অনন্তর জাত নামক জাতিরা ধনাপহরণান্তে গুজুরাট দেশের গহন বন হইতে নির্গত হইয়া নানা প্রকার শাত্রবতাচরণ করিলেক তচ্ছ্রবণে কূতুব সসৈন্যে সসজ্জীভূত হইয়া সংগ্রাম ক্ষেত্রে যাইয়া তাহারদিগকে পরাভব করিলেন। তৎ পর বৎসর তিনি যমুনা নদী পার হইয়া খোলা দেশের দুর্গ গ্রহণ করিয়া দিল্লি নগরীতে রাজধানী করত পূর্ব্ব দেশ সমূদয় জয় করণাশাতে সসৈন্যে মহম্মদ বাদসাহের সহিত সংমিলিত হইলেন। কূতুব এক বাণ নিক্ষেপ দ্বারা বারাণসী নগরীর নৃপতির প্রাণ বিনাশ করিলেন। তাহাতে মহম্মদ ঐ নগরীতে প্রবেশ করিয়া তত্রস্থ নানা দেব মূর্ত্তি ভগ্ন করত ভূমিতে নিক্ষেপ করিলেন। তদনন্তর কূতুব পশ্চিম দেশে গমন করিয়া রাজস্থানে ও গুজুরাট দেশেতে এতাদৃশ অদ্ভুত ভূজ বল প্রকাশ করিলেন যে মহম্মদ স্বদেশ গিজনী নগরীতে প্রস্থান কালীন তাহাকে সমস্ত ভারতবর্ষের রাজ্য শাসন ভার প্রদান করিলেন। এতৎ কালে তাঁহার ভ্রাতার পঞ্চত্বপ্রাপ্তে মহম্মদ

গিজনী নগরীতে সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন। অনন্তর তিনি জাবজ্জীবন বিবিধ সংগ্রাম করিয়া গৌকেয়ার নামক এক জাতির দ্বারা গোপনে বিনাশিত হইলেন। তাঁহার মরণান্তে ঙতুব ভারতবর্ষের একাধিপত্য প্রাপ্তে হইলেও তাঁহার ভ্রাতাপুত্র মামুদকে কিঞ্চিত কর প্রেরণ করিতেন। ঐ মামুদ স্ত্রৈণ স্বভাব প্রযুক্ত রাজ্য শাসন পরিত্যাগ পূর্ব্বক অবিরত স্তরণীগণানুরাগেতে নিমগ্নান্তঃকরণ হইয়া থাকিলেন। এইহেতু নসরুদ্দীন নামে একব্যক্তি মূলতান দেশের রাজত্ব গ্রহণ করিলেক। এবং গিজনী নগরীতে রাজ কার্য্যে নিযুক্ত এনদোস নামক এক ব্যক্তি তত্রস্থ রাজত্বাপহরণ করিয়া ঙত্‌বকেও রাজ্যচ্যুত করণাশয়ে বহু সৈন্য সমভিব্যাহারে পঞ্জাব দেশ আক্রমণ করিলেন কিন্তু তাহাতে মৎস্য মাংস পরিভ্রষ্ট জম্বুকের ন্যায় উভয়থা হতাশা হইলেন। কুতুব গিজনী নগরের সাম্রাজ্য প্রাপণ মত্ততা জন্য কিয়ৎকাল রসোল্লাষানুরক্ত হইয়া রাজ কার্য্যে শিথিল হইলেন। কিন্তু তিনি তদপরাধের প্রতিফল অতি শীঘ্র প্রাপ্ত হইলেন যেহেতু এনদোস তাঁহার রাজ্য শাসনে শৈথিল্য দেখিয়া সহসা আক্রমণ করত গিজনী নগরী জয় করিলেন। কুতুব ভারতবর্ষে পলায়ন করিয়া আসিয়া প্রাণরক্ষা করিলেন। এই অসৌভাগ্যোদয়েতে কুতুবের জ্ঞানোদয় হইল। দিগ্বিজয় করণ ব্যাপার হইতে সম্যক নিবর্ত্ত হইয়া প্রজাগণ হিতে রত হইয়া পরম সুখেতে রাজ্য পালন করত বদান্য স্বভাব প্রযুক্ত নির্ম্মলযশঃ প্রাপ্ত হইয়া লোকান্তর গমন করিলেন।

কুতুবের পুত্র আরাম আলতামস নামক নিজ ভগিনীপতি কর্তৃক রাজ্যভ্রষ্ট হইল। আলতামস তাতার জাতীয় এক বিশিষ্ট বংশেতে জন্মিয়া পিতার বিশেষ স্নেহাস্পদ হওন প্রযুক্ত তাঁহাকে তাহার হিংস্রম ভ্রাতাবর্গেরা বিক্রয় করিলেক কিন্তু স্বীয় বুদ্ধি বিদ্যা দ্বারা তিনি অতি উচ্চ পদ প্রাপ্ত হইয়া বাদসাহের কন্যাকে বিবাহ করিয়াছিলেন। এতৎকালে মুর নগরাধিপতি এনদোস নামক বাদসাহ মহম্মদ নামা খোয়ারেজম দেশের বাদসাহ কর্তৃক স্বরাজ্য হইতে উচ্ছিন্ন হইয়া ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করিলেন কিন্তু তদ্ব্যাপারে হতাশ হইয়া যাবজ্জীবন কারাবদ্ধ থাকিয়া প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন। এনদোস বাদসাহের রাজত্ব অবধি সিন্ধু নদী পশ্চিম তীরস্থ মূরীয় ভূপালগণের রাজ্যাধিপত্যর নিঃশেষ হইল।

শ্রীগোবিন্দচন্দ্র সেনস্য।

ভারতবর্ষের বিবরণ।

স্বদেশস্থ নগর গ্রাম নদ নদী ও স্বদেশোদ্ভব দ্রব্যাদির বৃত্তান্ত অবগত হওন সমস্ত ভদ্র সন্তানের নিতান্ত আবশ্যক ও এক্ষণে ভারতবর্ষ সমস্তই ইংলণ্ডীয়দিগের অধীন হওন প্রযুক্ত সমুদ্র অবধি হিমালয় পর্ব্বত পর্য্যন্ত নানা দিগ্‌দেশে লোক সমূহ কর্ম্মানুরোধে গমনাগমন ও বাণিজ্য দ্রব্য প্রেরণ করে। অপর এতদ্রূপ বর্ণনাদি পাঠে জ্ঞান বৃদ্ধি হয় ও চিত্তের বিনোদ জন্মায় অতএব ভারতবর্ষের দেশ সমূহের বর্ণন শ্রম ফলদায়ক বোধে আদৌ বঙ্গ বেহার অযোধ্যা দেশের বর্ণনে উদ্‌যুক্ত হইয়াছি।

প্রথমতঃ আমারদিগের জন্মভূমি বঙ্গ দেশ বিধাতা বিরচিত দেউল প্রায় নদ নদী গিরি গহনাদি দ্বারা চতুর্দ্দিগে এমত উত্তম রূপে সুরক্ষিত আছে যে শত্রুগণেরা আক্রমণ করিয়া বহুবিধ ক্লেশ ব্যতিরিক্ত কোন প্রকারে নগরাদিতে প্রবেশ করিতে পারে না। এই দেশের উত্তর ও পূর্ব্ব সীমা নিবিড় অরণ্য ও প্রবল জল প্রবাহ ও ক্ষুদ্র ২ শৈল শ্রেণী করণক বেষ্টিত এবং দক্ষিণ সীমাতে গহন বন ও অগম্য সাগর তীর ও পশ্চিম সীমাতে এক দীর্ঘতর মরুভূমি আছে এই দেশ দক্ষিণবাহিনী ভাগীরথী শ্রোত করণকর দ্বিখণ্ড হইয়াছে তন্মধ্যে পূর্ব্ব দিগন্ত খণ্ড শত্রুগণের নিতান্ত অনাক্রমণীয়। এতৎ খণ্ড কতিপয় ক্ষুদ্র ২ পর্ব্বত ভিন্ন সমস্তই এক মহান বিস্তৃত সমভূমি ক্ষেত্র প্রায়। ইহার দক্ষিণাংশে বর্ষাকালে জলপ্লাবন জন্য কোন ২ স্থানে বিস্তর ধান্য ও কোন ২ স্থানে যব গোমাদি জন্মে। এতদ্ভিন্ন এই দেশে কার্পাস আফিঙ্গ তাম্বাকু নীল ও তুত বৃক্ষ জন্মে। এতদ্দেশের অরণ্যেতে বাঘ ভল্লুক হস্তী মহিষ কৃষ্ণসার ও হরিণ প্রভৃতি নানাবিধ বনপশু আছে ও নদীসমূহ নানাপ্রকার মৎস্যেতে পরিপূর্ণ।

এই দেশে ভাগীরথী সগর পুত্রগণ পরিত্রাণার্থ যথা শতমুখী হইয়াছেন সেই স্থানের দক্ষিণ অবধি সমুদ্র তীর পর্য্যন্ত জলপ্লাবিত ও বৃক্ষেতে আকীর্ণ সুদীর্ঘতর অতি ভয়ানক সুন্দরবন নামক এক অত্যদ্ভুত স্থান আছে। যথা গঙ্গার নানা বাহু ও

তন্নির্গত শত ২ নদনদী স্রোত কালক্রমে নানাদিগে ভ্রমণ করিয়াছে। এই স্থানে প্রথিবী সুদীর্ঘ বনচয় দ্বারা সম্যক আবৃতা হইয়াছে এবং বনস্থ বৃহত্ বৃক্ষ সকল শাখা বিস্তার করণক বহুদূর অবধি নদীর সমূহের তরঙ্গ আচ্ছাদিত করিয়া রাখিয়াছে। এই গহন বনেতে কেবল কখন ২ কপোত ও সারি সুকাদি পক্ষির কলরব ও হরিণাদি পশুর ধ্বনি ও বানরগণের বৃক্ষ শাখাতে উলম্ফন শব্দ মাত্র শ্রবণ হয় নতুবা দশদিগ নিতান্ত নিস্তব্ধ। তপন কিরণ সেবনার্থে নদী তীরে বিশ্রাম্যমান বৃহদাকার হাঙ্গর হস্তির সর্ব্বত্র সর্ব্বদা দৃষ্টি গোচর হয়। ও ভীষণ বিকট দশন ব্যাঘ্র সকল জল সমীপে ভ্রমণ করত কাষ্ঠ ছেদক ও মলুঙ্গিগণকে বিনাশ করে অথবা জলেতে সন্তরণ করত নৌকাস্থ নাবিকদিগকে আক্রমণ করে।

এই স্থানে কতিপয় ফকির নদী তীরে ক্ষুদ্র ২ কুটীর নির্ম্মাণ করিয়া ভ্রমণকারী জনগণের নিকট কিঞ্চিত ২ দান গ্রহণ করত জীবন ধারণ করে কিন্তু তাহারা হিংশ্রক পশুর বশীকরণ মন্ত্রাদি জানিয়াও কালক্রমে ব্যাঘ্রোদরস্থ পঞ্চত্ব প্রাপ্ত হয়। এতৎ লবন জলাকীর্ণ স্থান শস্যশালী করণ অসাধ্য বোধ হয় ও সাধ্য হইলেও বৃক্ষাদি সম্যক ছেদন করণ কর্ত্তব্য নহে কেননা এই বন হইতে কাষ্ঠ আনয়ণ দ্বারা কলিকাতা নগরের সমস্ত লোকের পাকাদি ও নৌকা নির্ম্মাণাদি নানাবিধ কার্য্য নির্ব্বাহ হয়। ও এই বন এক সুরক্ষিত দুর্গ প্রায় দক্ষিণদিগের শত্রুগণের আক্রমণ নিরারণ করিয়া রাখিয়াছে।

এতদ্দেশের বর্দ্ধমান নগর অন্তঃপাতি স্থানসমূহ অত্যন্ত উর্ব্বরা সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা শস্যশালী এবং মেদনিপুর পেচেতা ও বীরভূম জেলার জঙ্গলেতে বেষ্টিত হওন প্রযুক্ত নিবিড় বন মধ্যে মনোরম উদ্যান প্রায় দৃষ্ট হয়। ইংরাজি ১৭৬০ সালে মুরশিদাবাদের নওয়াব কর্ত্তৃক এই দেশ ইংলণ্ডীয়াধিপতিদিগকে প্রদত্ত হয় এবং তৎ কালাবধি এই স্থানে ক্রমশ কৃষি কর্ম্মের বৃদ্ধি হইতেছে। সকর কার্পাস নীল তাম্বুল ও তাম্বাকু প্রভৃতি এতৎ প্রদেশোদ্ভব নানাবিধ দ্রব্য জল পথাভাব হেতুক তিন উত্তম রাজপথ দ্বারা হুগলি কাটওয়া ও কালনাতে আনিত হইয়া বিক্রয় হয়।

বঙ্গদেশে হেমন্ত বসন্ত শরত গ্রীষ্ম প্রভৃতি ষড় ঋতুর ভোগ হয়। ফালগুণ মাসে ঋতুরাজাগণে মলয় মারুত বহন কোকিলাদি পিকগণ মধুর রব ও ভ্রমর ঝঙ্কার শ্রবণ ও প্রফুল্ল কমল নলীন প্রভৃতি পুষ্প দর্শন হয়। গ্রীষ্মকালে ঝড় বৃষ্টি বজ্র ঝন্‌ঝনা হইতে আরম্ভ হয় এবং প্রায় প্রতিদিন বেলাবসানে পশ্চিম দিগন্তে মেঘ মালা দৃষ্ট হইয়া প্রলয় পবন চালন ও বৃষ্টি বর্ষণ হয়। এতদ্রূপে অল্প ২ বৃষ্টি বর্ষণ দ্বারা গ্রীষ্মের

উপশম করে অনন্তর বর্ষাগমে অবিরত বারি পতন জন্য নদ নদী ক্ষেত্রাদি নব সলিল সম্পূর্ণ হয়। পরে ভাদ্রপদ আশ্বিন মাসে গ্রীষ্মের আত্যন্তিক প্রভাব হেতুক প্রায় লোক সমূহ ব্যাধে পীড়িত হয়। শীতকালে কুজ্ঝটিকা ও শিশির পতন হয়। শৈল সন্নিকটস্থ স্থান সমূহেতে শীত হুগলি প্রভৃতি স্থানে মৃত্তিকা পাত্রে রসাকর্ষণ দ্বারা বরফ প্রস্তুত হয়।

বেহার প্রদেশের পূর্ব্ব সীমাতে বঙ্গদেশ পশ্চিম সীমাতে অযোধ্যা ও প্রয়াগ অর্থাৎ আলাহাবাদ দেশ উত্তর সীমাতে নেপাল ও দক্ষিণ সীমাতে গণ্ডওয়ালা দেশ আছে। কতিপয় শৈল সন্নিকটস্থ স্থান ব্যতিরিক্ত এই দেশ অত্যন্ত উর্ব্বরা শস্যশালী ও নানা নগর ও মনুষ্যেতে পরিপূর্ণ। গ্রীষ্মের মাধুর্য্যতা হেতুক এই দেশ অত্যন্ত সুস্থদায়ক ও বঙ্গ ও অন্যান্য বহু দিগ্দেশের বাণিজ্য দ্রব্যাদি এই স্থান দিয়া প্রেরিত হইয়া ভারতবর্ষের পশ্চিম খণ্ডস্থ প্রদেশ সমূহেতে বিক্রয় হয়। কোন২ স্থানে গ্রীষ্মকালে দিবাতে পশ্চিম দিগ হইতে অতি উষ্ম পবন বহন হয় কিন্তু রজনীতে সুশীতল সমিরণ পূর্ব্ব দিগ হইতে চালন হইয়া সমস্ত জীব জন্তু গণের ক্লেশ দূর করে। এতদ্দেশে আফিঙ্গ প্রধান বাণিজ্যের দ্রব্য। শোরা কাপড় চিনি আতর ও অন্যান্য অনেক সুগন্ধি দ্রব্য এই দেশ হইতে আনিত হয়। অত্র বেহার নগর পূর্ব্বে রাজধানী ছিল কিন্তু এক্ষণে গয়া নগরী রাজধানী হইয়াছে। পাটনা নগর এক্ষণে দিল্লি অপেক্ষায় বহুপ্রজ ও সুবিস্তর হইয়াছে। গয়া নগরী দ্বিখণ্ডে বিভক্ত তাহার এক খণ্ডে কিঞ্চিৎ উন্নত স্থানে ব্রাহ্মণবর্গেরা বাস করেন ও অন্য এক খণ্ডে সাধারণ জন সমূহের বাস স্থান। অত্র রাজ পথ সকল উত্তম পরিস্কৃত ও সুরক্ষিত দ্বিপার্শ্বে বৃক্ষ শ্রেণি এবং পদব্রজে গমনের পথ ও তন্মধ্যে যানাদি গমনাগমনের পথ।

অযোধ্যা প্রদেশ অতি ক্ষুদ্র ইহার পশ্চিম দিগে দিল্লি ও আগরা উত্তর দিগে নেপাল পূর্ব্ব দিগে বেহার ও দক্ষিণ দিগে আলাহাবাদ দেশ আছে। এই দেশে পর্ব্বত প্রভৃতি উচ্চ স্থান মাত্র নাই এবং নানা নদ নদী তরঙ্গ বহন জন্য কোন প্রকারে কূত্রাপি জলাভাব হয় না। অত্রভূমি অতি উর্ব্বরা যত্নেতে বীজ বপন করিলে যব গোম ধান্য ও অন্যান্য শস্য এবং ইক্ষুনীল পোস্ত বৃক্ষ ও ভারতবর্ষস্থ সমস্ত উত্তম ২ দ্রব্য জন্মে। অত্রস্থ সলিলানিলের বিশেষ গুণ হেতুক শোরা মনুষ্যের ত্ব ব্যতিরিক্ত আপনিই জন্মে। এবং ঐ শোরার জল রৌদ্রে রাখিলে ধূমোদ্গম হওনান্তর উত্তম লবণ প্রস্তুভ হর।

এই দেশে গোমতি নদী তীরস্থ লক্ষণৌ নগর এক্ষণে রাজধানী হইয়াছে।

এতন্নগরে যথা ইতর লোকেরা বাস করে তথা রাজপথ সমূহ অত্যল্প পরিসর ও নিত্যন্ত অপরিস্কার তাহাতে দুই খানি সকট স্বচ্ছন্দে গমনাগমন করিতে পারেনা। গৃহাদি সমস্ত ও অতি কদর্য্য ও মৃত্তিকাতে নির্ম্মিত এবং সর্ব্বত্র অসংখ্যক ভিক্ষুক দণ্ডি ও উদাসীন জনগণ দৃষ্ট হয় কিন্তু ভদ্র ও ধনাঢ্যদিগের বাস স্থানে উত্তম অট্টালিকা রাজপথ ও হাট বাটাদি আছে। বহু ধন ব্যয়ে অতি যত্নে মনোরম রূপেতে নির্ম্মিত নবাবের গৃহ এবং করব মস্‌জিদ অর্থাৎ যবনীয় ধর্ম্মালয়াদি অতি আশ্চর্য্য। এমামবায় অর্থাৎ প্রধান ধর্ম্মশালার মধ্যে এক মসজিদ ও মুসলমানীয় স্মৃতি শাস্ত্র শিক্ষার্থ এক চতুষ্পাটি আছে এবং তত্রস্থ এক মহান্ বারান্দাতে রৌপ্য কাঁচ হিরকও মণি মুক্তাদিতে নির্ম্মিত এক আবাস মধ্যে আসদ্দৌলা নবাবের মৃত শরীর আছে। এই গৃহের এবং ইহার নিকটস্থ রোমী দরয়াজার অনুপম শোভা ও নানা সৌন্দর্য্য ও ঐশ্বর্য্যশালীত্ব দর্শনে চিত্ত পুলকিত হয়।

ভগবান নারায়ণচন্দ্র রামাবতারে গোগরা নদী তীরে যে অযোধ্যানগর নির্ম্মাণ করিয়াছিলেন তাহা এক্ষণে নিতান্ত শোভা হীন কেবল রাশিকৃত ভগ্নাট্টালিকাময় দৃষ্ট হয় কিন্তু তথায় অদ্যাপি নানাদিগ্দেশাদাগত ষোতি সন্যাসী গণেরা আগমন করিয়া মঠ মন্দিরাদি প্রদক্ষিণ ও পবিত্র সরোবরাদিতে স্নান করত বিধিবোধিত রূপে নানা পূজা করে। ভগবান বাল্মীকি মহাকাব্য রামায়ণে এতন্নগরের পশ্চাদুক্ত রূপে বর্ণন করিয়াছেন। এই বর্ণন বাহুল্য বটে কিন্তু নিতান্ত অলিক নহে।

কোশলোনাম মুদিতঃ স্ফীতো জন পদো মহান।
নিবিস্ট সরযু তীরে পশু ধান্য ধনর্দ্ধিমান।
অযোধ্যা নাম তত্রাসীন্নগরী লোক বিশ্রুতা।
মনু নাম্না নরেন্দ্রেণ পূর্ব্বে পরি নির্ম্মিতা।
ইত্যাদি।

অর্থাৎ সুবিস্তার কোশল নাম দেশে খনু নরপতি কর্ত্তৃক নির্ম্মিত রাজমার্গেতে শোভিত দ্বাদশ যোজন আয়ত অযোধ্যানগরী ছিল। সেই নগরী বণিগ্‌জনেতে ও হস্তস্থ রথাদি নানা যানেতে পরিপূর্ণ এবং দুর্গ গম্ভীর পরিখা অম্রবনযুত উদ্যান শৈলাগ্র প্রায় উচ্চ শিখিরান্বিত মহা অট্টালিকা ও মৃদঙ্গ বেনু বিনার রম্য শব্দেতে বিনাদিত মনোরম গৃহেতে সুশোভিত দৃষ্ট হইল। তথা শঠ মিথ্যাভাসী ও নাস্তিকাদি নরাধম জন গণের নাম ও কুত্রাপি কর্ণগোচর হইত না। তন্নগরীতে নারীগণ রূপ চাতুর্য্য মাধুর্য্যাদি নানা গুণান্বিতা ও উত্তমাভরণে ও বসনে ভূষিতা পতিব্রতা ছিল

এবং পুরুষ সমূহ সত্যবাকব্রত পিতৃলোক ও অতিথি পূজাকরা স্বদার নিরত অতি ধার্ম্মিক ছিল।

হিমগিরির এক শ্রেণি দ্বিখণ্ড হইয়া ক্রমশ বহু দূর অন্তরে গমনান্তর পুনর্ব্বার সংমিলিত হওত কাশ্মীর দেশ বেষ্টন করিয়াছে। এই দেশের উত্তর সীমাতে টিবেট পূর্ব্ব সীমাতে নেতাক দক্ষিণ সীমাতে লাহোর ও পশ্চিম সীমাতে পখেলি দেশ আছে। এই দেশ প্রায় পঞ্চান্ন ক্রোশ দীর্ঘ ও ত্রিশ ক্রোশ পরিসর। পরম্পরা এক জনশ্রুতি আছে যে এই স্থান শৈল বেষ্টিত এক সরোবর ছিল কিন্তু দৈব বশত ভয়ানক এক ভূমিকম্প দ্বারা পর্ব্বদাবলি বিদারিত হইবাতে জল সমূহ নিম্নে গমন করণ জন্য ঐ সরোবর সুস্ক ও অনন্তর কালক্রমে মনুষের বাসস্থান হইল। এই দেশের মনোরম বনোপবনাদিতে মল্লিকা মালতি চম্পক চম্বেলি নলীন কমল প্রভৃতি নানাবিধ সুচারু ও সুগন্ধি কুসুমচয় হেমন্তবসন্তাদি সর্ব্বকালে প্রস্ফোটিত দৃষ্ট হয় ও নানা ক্ষুদ্র২ নদী সমূহ সর্ব্বদা নির্ম্মল সলিল সম্পূর্ণ থাকে নবীন পল্লবিত নানাবিধ বৃক্ষেতে সুশোভিত ক্ষুদ্র পর্ব্বতাবলি এই দেশকে বেষ্টন করিয়াছে এবং ঐ সকল পর্ব্বতেতে হরিণ প্রভৃতি নানা তৃণ জীবি বন পশুগণ সর্ব্বকালে সুখে নূতন তৃণ ভক্ষণ জরে। অত্র হিমাচলের হিমার্কীণ শিখর সমূহ কোথাও সূচাগ্র প্রায় সূক্ষ্মাগ্র কোথাও বা বারি তরঙ্গ বৎ নিম্নোন্নত হইয়া সহস্র২ অপরূপাকারেতে জলদগণাতিক্রম করত আকাশ স্পর্শ করিয়াছে। এতদ্দেশস্থ কবিগণেরা পুরাণাদিতে বর্ণন করিয়াছেন। যে এই সকল অগম্য স্থানেতে অমর গন্ধর্ব্বোরগ গণের নানা রম্য পুরি নির্ম্মিত আছে যথা হইতে নির্ম্মল ও সদা সূর্য্য কিরণে উজ্জল বারিতে পরিপূর্ণ বহু ক্ষুদ্র নদী নিম্নে আগমন করত কল কল রব পুরঃসর নানা শৃঙ্গাদি উল্লঙ্ঘন করণান্তর বন্যাপ্রায় বনোপবন ক্ষেত্র উদ্যানাদি জল প্লাবিত করিয়াছে। এই সকল জল প্রবাহ কাশ্মীর দেশেতে সংমিলিত হইয়া ভারতবর্ষস্থ ঝাইলম নামে খ্যাত মহানদী হইয়াছে। এই স্থান যদ্রূপ পর্ব্বত নদ নদী বৃক্ষ পুষ্পাদিতে সুশোভিত তদ্রূপ মনুষ্যের ও অত্যন্ত সুস্থদায়ক। অত্র পর্ব্বত গণের দক্ষিণ পার্শ্বে ভারতবর্ষের নানা মনোরম কুসুম ও মধুরাস্বাদ ফল ভারাক্রান্ত তরুচয় দৃষ্ট হয় ও উত্তর দিগ ইউরোপ দেশীয় নানা ফল ফুলাদিতে শোভিতা। এই মনোরম শৈলস্থ স্থান সমূহেতে নবীন তৃণে চরন্ত হরি গাভি ও অজাদি পশু গণ দৃষ্টে ও ভ্রমের ও মধুপক্ষিকাদির মধুর ধ্বনি শ্রবণেতে নিতান্ত স্বর্গাধিপতির পারিজাত কানন জ্ঞান হয়।

যৎকালে বরণিএর নামক এক ব্যক্তি ভ্রমণ করিতে গিয়াছিলেন তৎকালে এই

ভূকৈলাসস্থ নর নারী গণের অপরূপ লাবণ্য ও বিদ্যা বুদ্ধি দেখিয়া আশ্চর্য্য মানিয়াছিলেন। নানা শিল্প বিদ্যাতে তাহারা অত্যন্ত নিপুণ ছিল ও তাহারদিগের কাষ্ঠ নির্মিত যান পর্য্যঙ্কাদি নানা দিগ্‌দেশে প্রেরিত হইয়া বহু মূল্যে বিক্রয় হইত কিন্তু সর্ব্বোৎকৃষ্ট মনোহর কোমলস্পর্থ শাল নামক পশমি বস্ত্র যাহা সর্ব্বকালে প্রথিবীস্থ সমস্ত মনুষ্যের আদরনীয় ও প্রার্থনীয় হইয়াছে তাহা প্রস্তুত করণ জন্য কাশ্মীর দেশের লোকদিগের সুখ্যাতি সর্ব্বত্র প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে।

আওরংজিব বাদসাহ আমাত্য পরিবার সহিত এই দেশের বহু উত্তম২ স্থানে ভ্রমণ করিয়া পর্ব্বতের গহ্বর শৃঙ্গ ও নিবানোক ও ভয়ঙ্কর বনতমসাবৃত গর্ত্তোদ্ভব বজ্রপাত প্রায় ভীম শব্দ করত উচ্চ আভূরি হইতে নিক্ষিপ্ত জল প্রবাহাদি দর্শনার্থ গিরি শিখরেতে আরোহণ করিয়াছিলেন। এই স্থানেতে বরণিএর সাহেব অতি মনোহর একটী জল ঝরণা দেখিয়া ছিলেন এবং জাঁহাগির বাদশাহ সর্ব্বতোভাবে দর্শদার্থে ঐ ঝরণার সমীপস্থ এক শৈল কাটীয়া এক উত্তম স্থান করিয়াছিলেন ও আওরংজিব বাদসাহ তথা এক নর্ত্তকশালা নির্ম্মাণ করিয়াছিলেন এবং তন্মধ্যে সভাজন গণের সহিত উপবেসন করত আহ্লাদ সাগরে মগ্নান্তঃকরণ হইয়া জগদীশ্বরের এই অনুপম ও অত্যাশ্চর্য্য সৃষ্টি দর্শন করিতেন। এই নাট মন্দির হইতে ঐ ঝরণা অতিদূরে পর্ব্বতের ক্রম নিম্নে পার্শ্বে বৃক্ষ পল্লবাবৃত দৃষ্ট হয় অনন্তর আভূরির কিণারেতে আসিয়া ঐ শ্রোত অতি বেগে প্রক্ষেপ হইয়া অধঃ পতন কালে মত্ত তরঙ্গের গল দেশ প্রায় বক্রভাব হইয়া অবিরত চিক্কুড়ঝঞ্ঝনার প্রায় ঘোর নির্ঘোষ করত নিম্নে পতন হয়।

শ্রীগোবিন্দচন্দ্র সেনস্য।

রাজবিবরণ।

মূরীয় রাজ বংশ হন্তারক খোযারেজম দেশের মহম্মদ বাদসাহ পারস খোরাসান বেকট্রিএন কাবুল গিজনী মুর মেবারুল লেহর ও লাহোর প্রভৃতি শত রাজ্যাধীশ্বর হইয়াছিলেন। নানাদিদেশ জয় করণান্তর নিজ বিক্রমের অহঙ্কারে নিতান্ত উন্মত্তপ্রায় হইলেন। এতৎকালে জনগিস খান নামক এক যোদ্ধা তাতার প্রভৃতি নানা দেশ দাহন ও তদ্দেশসমূহস্থী প্রজাগণ প্রাণ নিধনাদি বিবিধ উপদ্রব করিতেছিলেন। সেই বীর কর্ত্তৃক প্রেরিত এক উকিলের বিনাশ হেত্ত অথবা অন্য কোন অত্যাচার হেত্ত মহম্মদ বাদসাহ তাঁহার কোপদৃষ্টিতে পতিত হইলেন। তদনন্তর মহম্মদ বাদসাহ জঙ্গিসখানের ঘোরতর ভয়ানক সৈন্য সহিত যে কুব্যারটিস দেশে প্রলয় সংগ্রাম করিলেন সেই রণ ক্ষেত্রে ন্যূনাতিরেক তিন লক্ষ ও পঞ্চাশ সহস্র যোদ্ধা গণ বিনাশিত হইল।

জঙ্গিসখান যুদ্ধে পরাভব হইয়াও জয়যুক্ত হইলেন যেহেত্ত মহম্মদ বাদসাহ নিতান্ত দুর্বুদ্ধি বশত কাল হরণ দ্বারা শত্রুগণের উৎসাহ ভঙ্গ করণাশায় রণক্ষেত্র হইতে স্থানান্তরে গমন করিলেন। কিন্তু তাহাতে হিতে বিপরীত উপস্থিত হইল কেননা পলায়নোদ্যোগ দর্শনে তাঁহার নিজ সৈন্যেরা অত্যন্ত ভীত হইল ও বিপক্ষ পক্ষেরা উল্লাসিত চিত্ত হইয়া ঘোর সংগ্রাম করিল। তদনন্তর অন্যগতি রহিত হইয়া পলায়ন করিলেন। জঙ্গিসখান সৈন্যগণকে পঞ্চমাংশে বিভক্ত করিয়া নিজ পুত্রদিগকে চত্তরাংশের পৃথক ২ সেনাপতি করিলেন ও আপনি একাংশ সৈন্যাধিপতি হইয়া পাঁচ পথ দ্বারা যুগপত একেবারে সহসা সর্ব্বারম্ভে খোয়ালেজম দেশ মধ্যে প্রবেশ করিয়া বখোরা সমরকণ্ড ও খোয়াবেজম দেশ জয় করিলেন ও তদনন্তর পারস ত্তরকস্থান ও কাবল রাজ্যের রাজধানী সমূহও জয় করিলেন। কাসপিএন সাগরের এক ক্ষুদ্র উপদ্বীপে মহম্মদ বাদসাহের পরলোক প্রাপ্তি হইল। তদনন্তর তাহার জললউদ্দিন নামক পুত্র রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। সেই জললউদ্দিন বাদসাহ

অত্যন্ত সাহসীক তেজস্বী ও বীর্য্যবন্ত ছিলেন শস্ত্র বিদ্যাতে জঙ্গিস খানের তুল্য ও কর্ত্তব্যাকর্ত্তব্য জ্ঞান বিষয়ে ও অন্যান্য সদ্গুণে তাহা অপেক্ষা শ্রেষ্ঠ তিনি স্বদেশ শত্রু-গণের সহিত সংগ্রামে নানা স্থানে জয়ী হইয়াছিলেন কিন্তু দৈব নির্ব্বন্ধ বশত মোগল দিগের নিকট পরাস্ত হইয়া সিন্ধু নদি তীরে পলায়ন করিলেন অনন্তর তথায় জঙ্গিস খানও বহু সংখ্যক সৈন্য সহিত উপস্থিত হইলেন। জলালউদ্দিন বাদসাহ সসৈন্যে অনুপম বীর্য্য প্রকাশ পুরঃসর মোগল দিগের সহিত ঘোরতর সংগ্রাম করিল। তাহার দলস্থ বিংশতি সহস্র সংখ্যক সৈন্য রণস্থলে বিনাশিত হইল তদনন্তর সম্মুখে ঘোর সৈন্য সাগর ও পশ্চাতে মহা গভীর বেগবতি দুস্তর নদী দর্শনে নিতান্ত হতাশা হইয়াও অবিশ্রান্ত যুদ্ধ করিল। জলালদ্দিন জঙ্গিস খান বাদসাহের প্রাণনাশ নিষেধ সূচক এক বিজ্ঞাপন সমস্ত সৈন্যগণের গোচর করাইলেন। এই হেতু তাতার সৈন্যেরা বাদসাহের গাত্রে বাণাঘাত করিতে নিবর্ত্ত হইল।

তদৃষ্টে বাদসাহ জঙ্গিস খানের অভিপ্রায় অনুভব করিয়া কারাবরনাপেক্ষা মৃত্যু শ্রেয় বোধে অত্যন্ত ভয়ঙ্কর সঙ্কট উপস্থিত দেখিয়া সিন্ধু নদী স্রোতে আপন আরোহিত অশ্বকে নিমগ্ন করিল। এতৎ কালে জঙ্গিস খান নদী তীরে আগত হইয়া দেখিলেন যে ঐ বীয্যবন্ত রাজপুত্র অত্যন্ত বেগবতী জল প্রবাহে অতি কষ্টে সন্তরণ করত ও বারম্বার তাহার প্রতি তীক্ষ্ণবান নিক্ষেপ করিতেছেন। এতদ্রূপ আশ্চর্য্য বিক্রম দেখিয়া জঙ্গিস নিতান্ত মোহিত হইয়া যথেষ্ট ধন্যবাদ করিলেন এবং যে সমস্ত বীরগণেরা বাদসাহের পশ্চাত ধাবমান হওয়নার্থে সসজ্জিভূত হইতেছিলেন তাহারদিগকে নিবর্ত্ত করিলেন। আরোহিত অশ্বরাজ ও বাদসাহের মনোরথানুগত হইয়া অতি শীঘ্র স্বচ্ছন্দ পূর্ব্বক সিন্ধু নদীর পূর্ব্ব তীর প্রাপ্ত হইল। তত্র দুর্ব্বল যুদ্ধাবশেষ সৈন্য সহিত সংমিলিত হইয়া পুনর্ব্বার সংগ্রামোদ্যাগ করিলেন কিন্তু জঙ্গিস খান রণ হইতে সম্যক নিবর্ত্ত হইল। জলালদ্দিন এক্ষণে রাজ্যাধিকারচ্যুত প্রভাব হীন ও ধনাপহৃত হইয়া আপন বিদ্যা বুদ্ধিতে নির্ভর করত ভারতবর্ষের আধিপত্য প্রাপণাশায় আক্রমণ করণ পূর্ব্বক সসৈন্যে প্রাণপণে বিবিধরূপে সংগ্রাম করিলেন কিন্তু অসংখ্যক বীর্য্যবন্ত সক্র কর্তৃক নিষ্পীড়িত হইয়া সিন্ধু নদীর পশ্চিম পারে পলায়ন করিলেন অনন্তর ক্রমে ২ স্বদেশের কিঞ্চিদাংশের রাজত্ব প্রাপ্ত হইলেন। তিনি ইং ১২৩১ সালে খরদিস্তান দেশে গমন করিয়াছিলেন এবং তথা এক দুরাত্মা কর্তৃক গুপ্তভাবে বিনাশিত হইলেন।

এতৎ ব্যাপারে মগলেরা জলালউদ্দিন বাদসাহের পশ্চাৎ ধাবমান হইয়া সিন্ধু

নদী তীর পর্য্যন্ত আসিয়াও নানা প্রতিবন্ধক হেতু ভারতবর্ষে প্রবেশ করেন নাই কিন্তু তাহারদিগের আক্রমণ রূপ যে মহা বিপদ তাহা ঘটনার কিঞ্চিত কাল বিলম্ব হইল মাত্র। সে যাহা হউক এক্ষণে দিল্লী নগরীর বাদসাহ আপনাকে নিতান্ত নির্বিঘ্ন বোধে বঙ্গ বেহার ও সিন্ধু নদীর পূর্ব্ব তীরস্থ দেশসমূহ জয় করণার্থে সমস্ত সৈন্যগণ প্রেরণ করিলেন তিনি গোয়ালিয়ার দেশাধিপতিকে রাজ্যভ্রষ্ট করিলেন এবং উজ্জয়নী নগরী জয় করিয়া পূর্বকালের দুরাত্মা মহম্মদ বাদসাহের ন্যায় বন কোশীনাশ্য প্রাচীন হিন্দূ ধর্ম্মের নির্ম্মূল করণের অনর্থক আশাতে তত্রস্থ নানা দেবতা প্রতিমাদি ভগ্ন করিয়া চিরকালের নিমিত্তে কুযশঃ ভাগি হইলেন। আলতামস বাদসাহ ইং ১২৩৫ প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন অনন্তর তাহার ফিরজ নামক পুত্র সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন। ফিরোজ অত্যল্প কাল রাজত্ব করিলে পরে তাহার রিজিয়া নামা ভগিনীর সম্মতি পুরঃসর রাজ্যচ্যুত ও বিনাশিত হইলেন। পরে রিজিয়া রাজ্যাভিষিক্তা হইলেন। আলতামস বাদসাহের তাবৎ পুত্র সন্তানের অপেক্ষা এই কন্যা অত্যন্ত বুদ্ধিমতী ও বিক্রমশীলা ছিলেন। তিনি নানা প্রকার কলহ বিবাদ বিসম্বাদ ও প্রাণি হত্যা করত তিন বৎসর ছয় মাস রাজ্য শাসন করিলেন। তদনন্তর তাঁহার বাহরাম নামক অতি দুর্ব্বল ও দুরাত্মা ভ্রাতায় তাহার প্রাণ বিনাশ করিয়া রাজ্য প্রাপ্ত হইল। এতৎকালে জঙ্গিস খানের এক পুত্র কতকগুলি মগল সৈন্য সহিত ভারতবর্ষে আসিয়া লাহোর নগরী আক্রমণ করিয়া বাহরাম বাদসাহকে বিনাশ করত ফিরোজ বাদসাহের মামুদ নামা পুত্রকে রাজ্য প্রদান করিলেন। মোগল সৈন্যেরা বঙ্গ পর্য্যন্ত প্রবেশ করিলে পরে মামুদ বাদসাহ তাহারদিগের সহিত সংগ্রাম করিলেন। মোগলেরা পরাভব হইয়া পলায়ণ করিলে মামুদ যুদ্ধে জয় প্রাপ্তান্তর সমস্ত ভূধর ধর্ম কার্য্য পরিত্যাগ করিলেক এই হেতু তাহার আজন্ম প্রতিপালিত মামুদ নামক এক ব্যক্তি কর্তৃক রাজ্যচ্যুত হইয়া কারাগারে বদ্ধ থাকিলেন। মামুদ এতদ্রূপে নিতান্ত কৃতঘ্নতাচরণ করণক রাজ্যপ্রাপ্তান্তর সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইয়া এমত কর্ম দক্ষতা ও বদান্য স্বভাব প্রকাশ করিলেন যে তাহাতে প্রজাবর্গের চিত্ত চমতকৃত হইল। প্রজাগণের পিতৃসম স্নেহেতে প্রতিপালন ও গুণিগণের নানাবিধ সম্মান ও দরিদ্র ও দুঃখিদিগের দুঃখ নিবারণ করণ জন্য তিনি নির্মল যশঃ প্রাপ্ত হইলেন।

মামুদ মুলতানও পঞ্চাল পর্ব্বতস্থ দেশে এবং ভারতবর্ষের উত্তরাংশে নানাস্থানে বিবিধ প্রকারে বহু দিবসাবধি সংগ্রাম করিয়া সর্ব্বত্র জয়যুক্ত হইয়াছিলেন।

স্বাধীন হওনাশয় রাজপুত জাতিরা যুদ্ধোদ্যোগ করিলেক। তাহাতে তাহার দিগের বহু সংখ্যক সৈন্য বিনাশিত হইলে পুনর্ব্বার বাদশাহের অধীন হইল এবং মোগলেরাও ভারতবর্ষে প্রবেশ করণ চেষ্টা হইতে সম্যক নিবারিত হইল। ইং ১২৫৯ সকে জঙ্গিসখানের পৌত্র হুলেগু নামক পারস্য দেশের সম্রাট প্রেরিত এক উকিল দিল্লির রাজসভাতে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইল। সেই উকিল শত্রু প্রেরিত চর হইয়াও সভাতে বহুবিধ সম্মান পাইলেন কিন্তু বালিন নামক বাদসাহের মন্ত্রী পারস্য দেশাধিপতি সম্রাটের মানস অনুভব করিয়া ঐ উকিলকে স্বদেশের ঐশ্বর্য্য ও বীরবর্গের সৌর্য্য ও বিক্রম দর্শাওনার্থে পঞ্চাশ সহস্র অশ্বারোহি সৈন্য সমভিব্যাহারে তাহার সহিত সাক্ষাত করিতে গমন করিলেন। এবং তিনি সহস্র কামানের গাড়ি ও দুই সহস্র মত্ত মাতঙ্গ ও দুই লক্ষ পদাতিক সসজ্জিভূত করিয়া রাজ পথে শ্রেণি পূর্ব্বক দণ্ডায়মান করিয়া রাখিলেন। এই সকল সৈন্য গণেরা মোগল উকিলের সম্মুখে নানাবিধ প্রকারে স্বীয় ২ বিদ্যা প্রকাশ করিলেক। এতৎকালের অনুপম ঐশ্বর্য্যশালী রাজসভা নানা দিগদেশের হিন্দু ও যবন রাজপুত্রগণেতে এবং দিল্লী নগরস্থ তাবৎ শিষ্ট বিশিষ্ট ভদ্র ও ধনাঢ্য মান্য জন সমূহেতে এমত সুশোভিত ছিল যে ঐ মোগল উকীল ও তৎ পারিসদগণেরা এতদ্রূপ অদৃষ্ট ও অশ্রুতা ঐশ্বর্য্য ধন ও বল বিক্রম দেখিয়া মামুদ বাদশাহকে ধন্যবাদ করিলেক। তদনন্তর বাদশাহ যাবজ্জীবন পরম সুখে নির্বিঘ্নে রাজ্য শাসন করিলেন। এবং ইং ১২৬৫ সকে তাঁহার পরলোক প্রাপ্তি হইলে আপামর সাধারণ সমস্ত প্রজাগণেরা শোক সাগরে নিমগ্নান্তঃকরণ হইল।

এই বাদসাহ প্রথমাবস্থায় অত্যন্ত বিপত্তি গ্রস্ত কালে যাবনিক ধর্ম্মপুস্তক কোরান নকল করিয়া উদর পোষণ করিতেন এবং সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইয়াও তৎকার্য্য পরিত্যাগ করেন নাই। এক দিবস এক খানি ধর্ম্মগ্রন্থ লিখিয়া এক পণ্ডিতের হস্তে দিলেন ঐ পণ্ডিত পুস্তকের কিঞ্চিদংশ পাঠান্তর অশুদ্ধ বলিয়া এক শব্দ দেখাইলে বাদসাহও তৎক্ষণাৎ ঐ শব্দ লোপ করিয়া পণ্ডিত কর্ত্তৃক উক্ত শব্দ তথা লিখিলেন। ঐ পণ্ডিত সভা হইতে যখন গমন করিলেক তখন বাদসাহ পুনর্ব্বার ঐ লোপকৃত শব্দ তথা লিখিয়া গ্রন্থের প্রকৃত পাঠ উদ্ধার করিলেন কিন্তু তাহাতে কালি পড়িয়া গ্রন্থের ঐ পাত অতি অপরিষ্কার হইল। ইহা দেখিয়া সভাস্থ সভ্যগণেরা অত্যন্ত চমৎকৃত হইয়া পণ্ডিতের বিভ্রমানুরোধে ধর্ম্মগ্রন্থ এতদ্রূপে শ্রীভ্রষ্ট করণে অতি আশ্চর্য্য ব্যবহার করিয়া কহিলেন। কিন্তু বাদসাহ

প্রত্যুত্তর করিলেন যে তিনি গ্রন্থ সূদ্ধ জানিয়াও ভ্রম দর্শায়ন দ্বারা পণ্ডিত ব্যক্তির মনোদুঃখ দেওন অপেক্ষা এক শব্দের পরিবর্ত্তে অন্য শব্দ লিখন শ্রেয়ঃ জ্ঞান করিয়া এতদ্রূপ করিয়া ছিলেন।

তদনন্তর বালিন নামক বাদসাহের মন্ত্রি রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। সেই বালিন বাদসাহ পূর্ব্বে কএক ব্যক্তির সহিত পরামর্শ করিয়া রাজ বিরুদ্ধে এক কুমন্ত্রণাতে নিযুক্ত হইয়াছিলেন সেই কুমন্ত্রকগণ মধ্যে যে কতিপয় জন এক্ষণেও জীবিত ছিলেন তাহারদিগের প্রাণ বিনাশ করত রাজত্বারম্ভ করিলেন। এতৎ নির্দয় কার্য্য সম্পমানন্তর তাহার স্বাভাবিক হিত প্রবৃত্তানুসারে দয়া ও দাতৃত্বাদি ধর্ম্মাচরণ পূর্ব্বক যাবজ্জীবন সাম্রাজ্য করিলেন। মোগল জাতিরা অদ্যাপি ভারতবর্ষের অগ্রবর্ত্তিদেশ সমূহেতে সসৈন্য নানা দৌরাত্ম্যে ও দুষ্টতাচরণে নিযুক্ত ছিল অতএব তাহারদিগের আক্রমণ নিবারণ হেতুক বালিন যুদ্ধে প্রবৃত্ত হইলেন এবং বঙ্গ দেশের সুবাদার এক্ষণে রাজবিদ্রোহোদ্যোগ করিলেক তাহাকেও সম্যক দমন করণ নিমিত্ত নানা বিবাদ বিসম্বাদে নিযুক্ত হইলেন।

মোগলদিগে সহিত যুদ্ধে তাঁহার মহম্মদ নামা পুত্রের প্রাণ ত্যাগ হেতু নৃপতি বৃদ্ধাবস্থায় পুত্র বিয়োগ শোকাকুল চিত্ত হইয়া মর্ম্মান্তিক বেদনা পাইয়াছিলেন। অনন্তর কিরা নামা পুত্রকে তাহার উত্তরাধিকারী করিতে মানস করিলেন কিন্তু ঐ রাজপুত্র কৃতঘ্নতাচরণ নিমিত্ত পিতৃ স্নেহচ্যুত হইলেন। পরন্তু বৃদ্ধ ভূপাল মহম্মদের পুত্র কয়খসরু নামা পৌত্রকে রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত করিয়া কিয়দ্দিবসানন্তর অতি বার্দ্ধক্য কালে স্বীয় উদার চরিত্রের জন্য নিষ্ফল সুখ্যাতি প্রাপ্ত হইয়া পরলোক গমন করিলেন। তাঁহার মরণান্তে সভাস্থ সভ্য গণেরা কুমন্ত্রণা করত কয়খসরূকে বহিষ্কৃত করিয়া কিরার পুত্র কয়বোবাদকে রাজ্য প্রদান করিলেন। সেই স্ত্রৈণ্য ও কর্ম্মাক্ষম রাজ পুত্র অতি নিন্দিতাধম আচরণ দ্বারা বংশ লোপ ও সর্ব্বস্বোচ্ছিন্ন করিলেন। ১২৮৯ বৎসরে তিনি এবং তাঁহার পুত্র বিনাশিত হইলেন তদনন্তর মুরীয় রাজ গণেরা যাহারা ভারতবর্ষে ১১৭ বৎসর রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন তাঁহাদিগের সম্যক কুল লোপ হইল। অপর আফগান দেশজ খিলজি জাতীয় ফিরোজ নামক এক ব্যক্তি সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন। সেই নৃপতি বালিন ভূপালের ন্যায় প্রথমত পাষণ্ডতাচরণ দ্বারা রাজ্যেশ্বর হইয়া অনন্তর প্রজানুগ্রহকর ও সুশীল করণরূপে প্রজা পালন করত বহু কালাবধি রাজত্ব করিলেন। এতদ্রূপে সমস্ত

লোক রাজ্য সুখেতে কালযাপন করিতে লাগিল কিন্তু তথাচ দুষ্ট জন গণেরা রাজ বিরুদ্ধে পরস্পর নানাবিধ বিবাদ সদত উপস্থিত করিয়া নৃপতির সুখ তরঙ্গের বিচ্ছেদ জন্মান বার্দ্ধক্য কালে ক্ষিতিপালের মাধুর্য্যতাচরণ ক্রমশ বৃদ্ধি হইল এইহেতু রাজ্যস্থ লোভাত্তর মনুষ্যেরা বারম্বার হতাশা হইয়াও রাজবিরুদ্ধচারি কার্য্য হইতে সম্যক নিবর্ত্ত হইলনা। ফিরোজ যাদৃশ দয়াবান তদনুরূপ বীর্য্যবান ও ছিলেন যেহেতু স্বদেশ বিদেশে নানা স্থানে অপূর্ব্ব পরাক্রম ধৈয্য ও গাম্ভির্য্য প্রকাশ পূর্ব্বক যুদ্ধ করিয়াছিলেন এবং সংগ্রামে জয়করণান্তে উদার চিত্তে অলোভ ও ক্ষমা ধর্ম্মাচরণ করত শত্রু গণ সন্নিধানেও মান্য ও প্রশংসিত হইয়াছিলেন। মুলতান দেশে মোগল দিগের এক দল সৈন্য পরাজয় করত তাহার দিগের প্রাণ বিনাশ না করিয়া বরঞ্চ সম্মানপূর্ব্বক আপন রাজ্যে তাহারদিগকে যথাযোগ্য কার্য্যে নিযুক্ত করিলেন। তাহার দিগের হুনেণ্ড নামক সেনাপতিকে আপন কন্যা সম্প্রদান করিলেন এবং তদ্দলস্থ অন্য ২ সমস্ত ব্যক্তিদিগকে এক প্রদেশে ভূমি প্রদান করিলেন এবং তথায় তাহারা মোগলপুর নামক এক নগরী নির্ম্মাণ করিলেক। অনন্তর কিয়দ্দিবসান্তে নৃপতির আল্লা নামক ভ্রাতস্পুত্র কতিপয় দল সৈন্য সসজ্জিভূত করিয়া দক্ষিণ দেশ জয় করণাশায় তথায় গমন করত লক্ষিত বিষয়ে ব্যর্থ চেষ্ট হইয়া বহু সংখ্যক ধনাপহরণ করিলেন। এতদ্ব্যাপার হইতে নিবর্ত্ত হইয়া পিতৃব্য রাজত্ব হরণাশায় বহুতর সৈন্য প্রস্তুত করণার্থে বঙ্গদেশে গমন করিলেন। অত্র ফিরোজ নৃপতি কতিপয় পারিসদ গণ সমভিব্যাহারে তাঁহার সহিত সাক্ষাত করণার্থে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইয়া নিশঃঙ্ক চিত্তে আপন প্রাণ প্রিয়তম ভ্রাতস্পুত্র ও জামাতা আল্লার প্রতি নানা বিধ প্রকারে অন্তঃকরণস্থ স্নেহ প্রকাশ করিলেন ইত্যবসরে সেই আল্লা কর্তৃক আদেশিত দুষ্ট দস্যুগণেরা আসিয়া নৃপতিকে আক্রমণ করত তাহার প্রাণ নিধন করিলেন।

তাহার শ্বশুরের মরণান্তে আল্লা সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন। তিনি নৃত্য গীত মহামহোৎসব ও রাজপুরুষদিগের একৈক উচ্চ পদ প্রদান ও অত্যন্ত দানশীলতা দ্বারা দিল্লি নগরস্থ লোক সমূহের মনোরঞ্জন করিয়া ফিরোজ বাদসাহ অপেক্ষাও যশস্বী হইলেন। এক লক্ষ মোগল সৈন্য যাহারা লাহোর দেশে আসিয়া প্রবিষ্ট হইয়াছিল তাহারা নৃপতির ভ্রাতা কর্তৃক পরাজিত ও অধিকাংশ বিনাশিত হইল। তিনি গুজরাট দেশ জয় করিয়া তদধিপতির ভার্য্যা হরণ করিলেন এবং তাঁহার খোজা কাফুর নামক এক ভৃভ্যকে ধৃত করিয়া আনয়ন করিলেন যে খোজা

কাফুর অনন্তর অতি নির্দ্দয়তা চরণ দ্বারা লোকে অত্যন্ত তিরস্কৃত হইয়া ঘোরতর কুষশঃ প্রাপ্ত হইল। মোগলেরা ভারতবর্ষের সুখাস্বাদ করিয়া লোলুপ্য চিত্তে বারম্বার পরাজিত হইয়াও পুনঃ ২ আক্রমণ করত এতদ্রাজ্য বারদ্বয় সম্যক অধিকার করিতে উদ্যত হইল কিন্তু আল্লা নরপতি সদা সর্ব্বত্র জয়ী হইলেন এইহেতু নিজ বাহু বলাহঙ্কারে উন্মত্ত হইয়া পূর্ব্বের মহম্মদ ও সেকেন্দর সম্রাটদিগের ন্যায় সসাগরা প্রথিবী অধিকার ও এক নূতন ধর্ম্ম সংস্থাপন করণে মানস করিলেন। অনন্তর সেকেন্দর দ্বিতীয় এই নাম গ্রহণ করত তন্নামে টাকা চালাইলেন। সদতোৎসাহান্বিত বুদ্ধিমান সমুদ্র প্রায় গাম্ভির্য্য ও ধৈর্য্যশালী সর্ব্বজন মনোরঞ্জক প্রতাপবান মহাত্ম পুরুষ সিংহ প্রথিবী জয়ী ও ধর্ম্ম সংস্থাপন করণে সমর্থ হয়েন। কিন্তু আল্লা নরপতির এতৎ গুণ গণের এক মাত্রও ছিলনা এ হেতু তিনি অতি শীঘ্র ধর্ম্ম সংস্থাপন ব্যাপার হইতে নিবর্ত্ত হইলেন এবং মনুষ্য মস্তক চ্ছেদন ব্যতিরেকে অন্য রাজ্য শাসন নীতি কিছুমাত্র অবগত ছিলেননা অতএব কুত্রাপি যুদ্ধ উপস্থিত না থাকাতে অত্যন্ত বিষণ্ণঃ হইলেন এবং কর্ম্ম শূন্যতা জন্য অসুখ নিবারণ নিমত্ত দক্ষিণ দেশ জয় করণার্থে যুদ্ধোদ্যোগ করিলেন। কিন্তু তাহাকে যুদ্ধার্থে দূরতর দক্ষিণ দেশে যাইতে হইল না যেহেতু অত্যন্ত বিক্রান্ত ও সাহসীক রাজপুত জাতিরা পর্ব্বতস্থ দুর্গাদিতে সুরক্ষিত থাকিয়া কখন সম্যক জীত হয়না। এবং এক্ষণে বৈরতাচরণ করিতে উদ্যত হইল। আল্লা ভূপাল তাহারদিগকে দমন করণার্থে প্রথমত সৈন্য প্রেরণ করিলেন কিন্তু রাজস্থান দেশস্থ কতিপয় ক্ষুদ্র ২ পর্ব্বতীয় নগর ও দুর্গ বহুকাল বিলম্বে নানাবিধ কষ্ট সৃষ্টে জয় করণান্তে তাঁহার বিলক্ষণ বোধ হইল যে প্রথিবীস্থ তাবৎ দেশের মনুষ্যেরা যদি তদনুরূপ বীর্য্য প্রকাশ পূর্ব্বক যুদ্ধ করিয়া স্বদেশ রক্ষা করে তবে যাবজ্জীবন অবিরত সংগ্রাম করিলেও ভূমণ্ডলের শতাংশের একাংশও জয় করা অসাধ্য হয়। যে সমস্ত রাজপুত সৈন্যেরা যুদ্ধকালে অত্যন্ত সৌর্য্য প্রকাশ করিয়াছিল ও তদনন্তর জীত হইয়া বাদসাহের হস্তে পতিত হইল তাহারদিগকে নিতান্ত রোষান্বিত ও রাগান্ধ হইয়া পাষাণ প্রায় নির্দ্দয়তা পূর্ব্বক বিনাশ করিতে আজ্ঞা প্রদান করিলেন। তাহা শুনিয়া যে সকল রাজ পূত সৈন্যেরা এক্ষণেও অজীত ছিল তাহারা জীবন সত্ত্বে কদাচিৎ পরাজিত হইবনা এই দৃঢ় প্রতিজ্ঞা করিয়া ঘোরতর সমর করিল। মিউয়ার দেশের পূর্ব্ব রাজধানী চিটোর নগরী লুট করণ কালীন ঐ বাদসাহ অত্যন্ত ক্রুরতাচরণ করিয়াছিলেন ও তথা রাজ-

পুত সৈন্যস্থ সমস্ত মহারথি গণেরা বিনাশিত হইলেন। দক্ষিণ দেশ জয় করণার্থে খোজা কাফুর নামক দাসকে এক লক্ষ অশ্বারূঢ় যোদ্ধা ও বহু সংখ্যক পদাতিক সহিত প্রেরণ করিলেন। আর সেই নির্দ্দয় পাপাত্মা তথায় উপস্থিত হইয়া আপন ধন তৃষ্ণাত্তর প্রভুর চিত্ত বিনোদ হেত্ত বল ছল কৌশলাদি নানাবিধ দুরাচার ও দৌরাত্ম্যের দ্বারা অর্থার্জ্জন করিয়া দিল্লি নগরীতে আনয়ন করিলেন এবং তাহা দেখিয়া আল্লা বাদসাহ আহ্লাদসাগর নিরাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। এতৎকালে নরপতি আপন তরুণী রমণী গণ সঙ্গে সুখ তরঙ্গে মগ্ন হইয়া নিরন্তর অন্তঃপুরেতেই কাল যাপন করাতে কাফুর তাবৎ রাজ কার্য্য নির্ব্বাহ করিতে লাগিল তাহাতে সাধারণ সমস্ত লোক বিরক্ত হইল ও স্থানে ২ রাজ বিদ্রোহ উপস্থিত হইল। রাজ্যেতে এতদ্রূপ বিভ্রাট হওয়াতে যে সকল শত্রু গণেরা জীত হইয়াছিল তাহারাও পুনর্ব্বার স্বাধীন হইল এই রূপে চত্তর্দ্দিগ হইতে রাশি ২ অমঙ্গল সমাচার আসিয়া বাদসাহের কর্ণ গোচর হইল এবং তাহাতে তিনি প্রচণ্ড কোপাগ্নি দগ্ধদেহ হইয়া প্রাণ পরিত্যাগ করিলেন।

তদনন্তর তাহার ওমার নামক পুত্র সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইল। সেই ওমার সপ্তম বর্ষীয় বালক ছিল এবং জেষ্ঠ ভ্রাতাগণ সত্বে কাফুরের কুমন্ত্রণাতে এক মিথ্যা উত্তরাধিকার পত্রদ্বারা রাজা হইল কাফুর সমস্ত কার্য্য নির্ব্বাহের ভার পাইল এতদ্রূপ অন্যায় অবিচারে পঞ্চ ত্রিংশত বৎসর পর্য্যন্ত রাজ্য শাসনান্তর কাফুর বিনাশিত হইল। এবং আল্লার তৃতীয় পুত্র মবারিক তাহার পদে নিযুক্ত হইল কিন্তু এই রূপে যাত্রাকারকদিগের পরিবর্ত্তন হইল মাত্র কিন্তু দৌরাত্ম্য অত্যাচার প্রাণি হত্যাদিরূপ ঘোর দারুণ যাত্রার ভঙ্গ হইলনা। মবারিক রাজপ্রনিধিত্ব পদে নিযুক্ত হইয়া অতি শীঘ্র কনিষ্ঠ ভ্রাতার চক্ষুদ্বয় উৎপাটন করিয়া আপনি সিংহাসনারোহণ করিলেন। তিনি কিয়ৎকাল নানাবিধ দুরাচার করত রাজত্ব করিলেন। অনন্তর তাহার খসরু নামক সেনাপতি কএকজন দুর্জ্জন সহিত কুমন্ত্রনা করিয়া তাহাকেও বিনাশ করিয়া সিংহাসনোপবিষ্ট হইল। সেই খসরুর অতি নিষ্ঠুরতাচারেতে সমস্ত প্রজাগণেরা বিপদ সাগরে মগ্ন হইয়া দুরাত্মাকে রাজ্যচ্যুত করিতে সচেষ্ট হইল। এতৎকালে ভগনক গাজি নামক এক ব্যক্তি পাঠান কতকগুলিন সৈন্য সহিত খসরুকে আক্রমণ করিলেক সেই যুদ্ধে খসরু পরাজিত হইয়া এক কবরের মধ্যে লুক্কায়িত হইয়া থাকিলেন। অনন্তর তাহাকে তথা হইতে ভূমিতে ঘেঁসড়িয়া টানিয়া আনিয়া সমোচিত দণ্ড প্রদান করিলেক।

ভগনক গাজি ঐ স্বেচ্ছাচারি রাজার নিপাতরূপ মহোপকারক কার্য্যের পারিতোষিক প্রায় রাজ্য প্রাপ্ত হইল। সেই নৃপতি সৎপথাবলম্বি হইয়া নানাবিধ পুণ্য কার্য্যের দ্বারা লোকসমূহের মনোরঞ্জন করিলেক। তিনি বিদ্বান ও গুণিগণের বহুবিধ সম্মান করিতেন এবং রাজ্যস্থ বালকদিগের বিদ্যা শিক্ষার্থে অনেক পাঠশালাদি সংস্থাপন করিয়াছিলেন কিন্তু তিনি নিজ দুরাত্মা পুত্রের কুমন্ত্রণা দ্বারা' শীঘ্র বিনাশিত হইলেন। তাহার জোলা নাম৷ পুত্র পিতার সম্মান করণ ছলেতে এক তাম্বু নির্ম্মাণ করিয়া তন্মধ্যে এমতরূপে এক সিংহাসন রাখিলেক যে ঐ সিংহাসনোপবিষ্ট মাত্র তাম্বু মস্তকোপরি ভগ্ন হইয়া পড়িবেক। এতদ্রূপে ঐ তাম্বু পতনেতে ভগনক গাজি প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন। তদনন্তর তাহার সেই পুত্র মহম্মদ তৃতীয় নাম৷ গ্রহণ কবত সিংহাসনারূঢ় ইংরাজী ১৩২৪ হইল। সেই পিতৃহন্তা নানাবিধ প্রকারে পাষণ্ডতা ও নির্দয়তা প্রকাশ পূর্ব্বক রাজ্য শাসন করিলেক। মগলেব৷ তাহাকে আক্রমণ করিলেক কিন্তু উৎকোচ প্রায় কিঞ্চিৎ অর্থ পাইয়া ক্ষান্ত হইল। এতদ্রূপে সেই নির্বীয্য কাপুরুষ রাজাদ্বারা প্রজাগণেরা বিধিমতে অপমানিত ও প্রতাড়িত হইয়াও কেহ সেই পাপাত্মাকে নিধন করিয়া পৃথিবীর ভার নামূল করিতে সক্য হইলনা অনন্তর সেই অত্যাচারি রাত্রি মধ্যে শয্যাতে মৃত হইল। পরন্তু তাহাব ফিরোজ নামক পিতৃব্য পুত্র রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইল।

দুষ্ট দুরাত্মা রাজ' সমূহেব দুরাচার বর্ণনে যাদৃশ ইতিহাসকার দিগের চিত্ত বিষণ্ণ হয় তদ্রূপ প্রজানুগ্রহকর ধার্ম্মিক নৃপতিগণের যশঃ ও কীর্ত্তিবর্ণনে অন্তঃকরণে প্রফুল্লতা জন্মে। যেহেত্ত পবোপকার সূচক পুণ্যকার্য্যের বিবরণ লিখনে ও গ্রন্থকারও আপনাকে কৃতার্থ জ্ঞান করেন। তৎকার্য্য কর্ত্তারা যেরূপে ধন্য তাহা অনির্ব্বচনীয়। ফিরোজ রাজা অত্যন্ত সাবধান পূর্ব্বক রাজত্ব করিতে আরম্ভ করিলেন। জোলা রাজ যে মোগলদিগকে উৎকোচ দান দ্বারা বশীভূত করিয়াছিলেন তিনি তাহারদিগকে রাজকীয় সৈন্য দল হইতে বহিষ্কৃত করিলেন যেহেত্ত নিতান্ত অর্থ লোভ মোহিত জনগণেরা কোন প্রকারে বিশ্বাসযোগ্য নহে। অনন্তর তিনি রাজস্ব গ্রহণের এবং সমস্ত প্রজাগণের দায়াদি বিবাদের পক্ষপাত রহিত সূক্ষ্মবিচার হওনের নানা সুব্যবস্থা করিলেন দুর্ব্বল দরিদ্রগণের দুঃখ দূর করিলেন এবং দুরাচারি দুষ্টদিগের যথোচিত দণ্ড করিলেন রাজ করাদিও ন্যূন করিয়া দুঃখিগণের ক্লেশ নিবারণ করিলেন। কিন্তু বহু সংখ্যক মোগল সৈন্য উত্তরদিগের

পর্ব্বত হইতে আসিয়া রাজ্য আক্রমণ করিলেক এইহেতু এতৎ পরমোপকার ব্যাপার সকল হইতে তাহাকে আপাতত নিবর্ত্ত হইতে হইল। রাজকীয় সৈন্য কর্তৃক পরাজিত হইয়া সেই অসভ্য দুরাত্মারা পলায়ণ করিলেক কিন্তু যে সমস্ত রাজ্য আক্রমণ করিয়াছিল তাহা তাহারদিগের গমনান্তে নিঃপ্রজ ও সমভূমিপ্রায় দৃষ্ট হইল। অন্যান্য শত্রুদিগকে দমন করিয়া সেই পুণ্যাত্মা ভূপাল পুনর্ব্বার সুখে রাজ্য পালন করত সর্ব্বজন মনোরঞ্জন করিলেন। এতদ্রূপে সেই নৃপাল বৃদ্ধকাল পর্য্যন্ত রাজত্ব করিয়া জরাওর ও রোগ গ্রস্ত হইয়া মৃত্যু কালাগত দেখিয়া মহম্মদ নামা পুত্রকে যুবরাজ করি আপনি সমস্ত বিষয় কার্য্য পরিত্যাগ করিলেন।

কিন্তু সেই বুদ্ধি বিদ্যাবিহীন রাজপুত্র কামে মোহিত ও সতত মদিরা পানে উন্মত্ত চিত্তে শত্রুগণ দমনে অশক্ত হইয়া পলায়ন করিলেন। তদনন্তর বৃদ্ধ ভূপাল ভগণক দ্বিতীয় নামক পৌত্রকে রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত করিয়া নব্বুই বৎসর বয়ঃপ্রাপ্তে প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন তিনি সংগ্রাম স্থলে কুত্রাপি বল বিক্রম প্রকাশ করেন নাই কিন্তু নিজ হিতৈশী শান্ত স্বভাব হেতু যাহাতে মনুষ্য বর্গের দুঃখ নিবারণ ও সুখ বৃদ্ধি হয় এমত সমস্ত কার্য্যে অত্যন্ত উৎসাহান্বিত হইয়া অবিরত মনোনিবেস করণ জন্য অতি নির্ম্মল যশঃ প্রাপ্ত হইয়াছিলেন। প্রাণি হত্যা সূচক যুদ্ধ বিক্রম অবজ্ঞা করিয়া তিনি রাজগৃহ মহাপথ পাঠশালা চিকিৎসালয় ও সরাই আদি নির্ম্মাণে পুস্করণী সরোবর প্রভৃতি খননে ও পুষ্পোদ্যানাদি প্রস্তুত করণে বহুবিধ পরিশ্রম করিয়াছিলেন। ভগণক দ্বিতীয় তাহার পিতৃব্য প্রায় দুর্বুদ্ধি ছিলেন এই হেতু অতি শীঘ্র সর্ব্ব লোকের নিন্দাস্পদ হইলেন। পাঁচমাস রাজত্বের পর তিনি বিনাশিত হইলেন অনন্তর তাহার অবুবাকর নামক ভ্রাতস্পুত্র রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন।

ফিরোজের পুত্র মহম্মদ অদ্যাপি জীবিত থাকিয়া দেশান্তরি হইয়া একাকি অত্যন্ত দরিদ্রতাবস্থায় বন পর্বতাদিতে ভ্রমণ করত ও হিন্দুস্থানে সাম্রাজ্য করণ আশা সম্যক পরিত্যাগ করেন নাই। তিনি সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইয়া অত্যন্ত চঞ্চল স্বভাব ও সুখানুরক্ততা প্রকাশ করিয়াছিলেন কিন্তু এক্ষণে দুর্দশাগ্রস্ত কালে তারুণ্য-তাঙ্গ দূরিকৃত করিয়া শান্ত সুবুদ্ধি হইয়াছিলেন। হমেউন নামক পুত্রকে সহায় করিয়া রাজ্য প্রাপণার্থে বহুকাল বিধিমতে সংগ্রাম করিয়া ছিলেন বারম্বার পরাজিত হইয়া পুনঃ ২ আক্রমণ করিতেন ও সমস্ত সৈন্য বিনাশিত হইলেও পুনঃ অতি শীঘ্র সসজ্জ হইয়া যুদ্ধ করিতেন বহু কালাবধি উভয় পক্ষস্থ সৈন্যগণের কখন জয় কখন বা পরাজয় হইত অনন্তর মহম্মদের শুভাদৃষ্ট হেতু তিনি দিল্লি নগরীতে প্রবেশ করিয়া

সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন। তিনি নানাবিধ দুঃখ ভাজন হইয়া ছয় বৎসর ছয় মাস রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন পরে রোগগ্রস্ত হইয়া প্রাণত্যাগ করিলেন। তদনন্তর হমেউন রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন কিন্তু তিনি এক মাস পনরো দিবসের মধ্যেই মৃত হইলেন। মহম্মদের মামুদ নামা পুত্র তখন বাদসাহ হইলেন কিন্তু সেই মামুদ তৎকালে অতি শিশু রাজ্যশাসনে অক্ষম ছিলেন এই হেতু তাহাকে নাম মাত্র তক্তে বসাইয়া মন্ত্রি অমাত্য্য বর্গেরা স্বার্থ সাধনার্থে নানা প্রকার সংগ্রামে প্রবর্ত্ত হইল এবং পরস্পর হিংসা ও ইর্ষ্যাইর্ষি করিয়া স্থানে স্থানে যুদ্ধ উপস্থিত করত এতদ্দেশ সমূহে রক্ত নদী শ্রোত বহাইল।

এতদ্রূপে ভারতবর্ষে সর্বত্র লোক সমস্ত বিপদার্ণবে মগ্ন হইয়াছিল এবং সর্ব কার্য্যাক্ষম অজ্ঞান শিশু সিংহাসনারূঢ় উপদ্রব হওন হেতু সমূহ দিন দিন প্রবল হইতেছিল। এতৎকালে তৈমুর নামক এক ব্যক্তি পারস্য দেশ অধিকার করিয়া দুর্দান্ত সৈন্য গণ সহিত সিন্ধু নদীর পশ্চিম তীরে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইলেন। লোক সমূহ তাহার নাম শ্রবণে অথবা কৃপাণাদি প্রভৃতি অস্ত্রাদির চাকচিক্য দর্শন মাত্রে অত্যন্ত ভীত হইয়া পলায়ন করত দিল্লি নগরীতে আসিয়া তাহার আগমন সম্বাদ প্রকাশ করিল। সেই বিখ্যাত দুরাত্মা দস্যু অত্যন্ত বীর্য্যবন্ত এবং শস্ত্র বিদ্যাদক্ষ সাহসী ছিলেন এমত অবশ্যই স্বীকার করিতে হইবেক কিন্তু এতাদৃশ পাপাত্মা নরাধম পাষণ্ড দিগের বল বুদ্ধি বিদ্যা সমস্তই নিষ্ফলা যেহেতু কেবল বিবাদ বিসম্বাদ ও মনুষ্য বর্গের পরিপীড়নের নিমিত্ত হয়।

পূর্ব্বাপর যে সমস্ত রাজাগণেরা যুদ্ধবীররূপ ভূমণ্ডলে বিখ্যাত আছেন তাহারা প্রায় সকলেই হিতাহিত জ্ঞান রহিত কেবল অত্যাশ্চর্য্যকর বিক্রম ও সাহস প্রকাশ করণ হেতু অসার গ্রাহি লোক কর্তৃক প্রশংসিত হয়েন মাত্র কিন্তু সেই তৈমুর বিবেক বৈরাগ্য দয়া ধর্ম্মাদি সমস্ত লোভরূপ দেবতার সম্মুখে বলিদান দিয়া অসি হস্তে ধারণ করত মনুষ্যবর্গের জাতি ধর্ম্ম ও ধন প্রাণাপহরণ করিতে উদ্যত হইয়াছিলেন। তিনি মদোন্মত্ত চিত্তে আপনাকে জগতের প্রভু জ্ঞান করিয়া স্বীয় অধীন জনগণের প্রতি বিধিমতে দৌরাত্ম্য করিতেন এতদ্ভিন্ন অন্যান্য সমস্ত মনুষ্যের প্রাণ বিনাশ করিতেন এবং সামান্য মন্দাত্মা রাজাগণকে রাজ্যচ্যুত করিয়া তাহাদিগের রাজ-গৃহাদি সমভূমি করত দর্পচূর্ণ করিতেন। বর্ষাকালে যদ্রূপ বারিদ গণেরা বারি বর্ষণ করে তিনি তদ্রূপ ভারতবর্ষে নর শরীরক্ষত রক্তবৃষ্টি করিয়াছিলেন। সসাগরা প্রথিবী অধিকার করণ লোভে মোহিত হইয়া তিনি ন্যায় অন্যায় ধর্ম্মাধর্ম্ম হিতা-

হিত বিবেচনা ক্ষীণ বুদ্ধি জনগণের প্রলাপ মাত্র জ্ঞান করিয়া পাষাণ প্রায় কঠিন হৃদয় হইয়া আপনাকে পাপ সাগরে মগ্ন করত অভিলাষিত কার্য্য সাধন করিয়াছিলেন। তিনি ইং ১৩৯৮ সকে সিন্ধু নদী তীরে উপস্থিত হইয়াছিলেন তদনন্তর দশ বৎসর মধ্যে তাবৎ শত্রুগণ বিনাশ করিয়া সমস্ত হিন্দুস্থানে একাধিপতি হইলেন। অগণনীয় নগর লুট ও দাহন করত যুদ্ধকালে অসি করণক আবাল-বৃদ্ধ-বনিতার প্রাণ বিনাশ করিয়াছিলেন। প্রজাকীর্ণ দিল্লি নগরী একেবারে কালাগ্নি প্রায় ভয়ানক অনলে তৎ কর্ত্তৃক দগ্ধ হইয়া ভস্মসাৎ হইল। যাবৎ পর্য্যন্ত গভীর গর্জ্জনশীল মেঘ বজ্রাঘাত সহিত ভয়ঙ্কর প্রবল পবন প্রায় এই সৈন্য দল হিমাচলের উত্তর দিগে গমন করিয়া অদৃষ্ট নাহইল তাবৎ দিল্লি নগরাধিপতি বাদসাহ গুজুরাট দেশে পলায়ন করিয়া অজ্ঞাত বাসে থাকিলেন।

শ্রীগোবিন্দচন্দ্র সেনস্য।

APPENDIX—IV

ভারতবর্ষের সংক্ষেপ ইতিহাস
শ্রীযুক্ত বাবু গোবিন্দ চন্দ্র সেনস্য

এতদ্রূপে ঘোর ধার অসি করণক বহুসংখ্যক রাজবর্গের কণ্ঠচ্ছেদ করত ভারতবর্ষ জয় করিয়া তৈমুর বাদশাহ হিমালয় পর্ব্বত অন্তর্বর্ত্তি এক ক্ষুদ্র পথ দ্বারা তাতার দেশে প্রবেশানন্তর সমরকণ্ড দেশে প্রস্থান করিলেন। এই বাদশাহের যুদ্ধবিদ্যার এবং আশ্চর্য বিক্রমের সুখ্যাতি সর্ব্বত্র বিদিত, কিন্তু অত্যন্ত নির্দয়তা ও দৌরাত্মাদি রাশি রাশি দোষ হেতু তিনি প্রথিবীস্থ সমস্ত মনুষ্যের নিন্দাস্পদ ও ঘৃণার্হ হইয়াছেন। তাঁহার এতদ্দেশ হইতে গমনান্তে নানাবিধ বিবাদ ও যুদ্ধ বিগ্রহ উপস্থিত হইল। সহস্র২ সামান্য দুর্ব্বল দুরাত্মা রাজগণেরা অতি প্রবল লোভমোহিত চিত্তে যুদ্ধোদ্যোগ করত তৈমুরের ন্যায় স্বীয় ২ সাধ্যানুসারে নানা দুর্বৃত্ত কার্য্যে প্রবৃত্ত হইল। ক্ষীণ ও বিভবহীন রাজপুত্রদিগের রাজ্যের উত্তরাধিকারীত্বের প্রমাণ অত্যুচ্চৈস্বরে ব্যক্তকরণ ধ্বনি মাত্র সদা সর্ব্বত্র সমস্ত মনুষ্যের কর্ণগোচর হইতে লাগিল।

অনন্তর বহু সংখ্যক শত্রুগণ মধ্যে মামুদ নামা রাজপুত্র দিল্লী নগরীতে উপস্থিত হইয়া রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন, কিন্তু তাঁহার রাজ্যশাসন ক্ষমতা বিহীনত্ব প্রযুক্ত তাঁহার মন্ত্রী তাবৎ রাজকার্য নির্ব্বাহ করিতেন এবং বাদশাহ সতত অন্তঃপুর মধ্যে থাকিয়া রমণীগণ সঙ্গ রঙ্গে কেবল পশুবৎ আহার নিদ্রায় কাল যাপন করিতে লাগিলেন। পরন্তু বিংশতি বৎসর রাজত্ব করিয়া বিধিমতে বিপদগ্রস্ত এবং অপমানিত হইয়া প্রাণ ত্যাগ করিলেন। এই বাদশাহ এতৎ ভয়ানক উপদ্রবময় কালের যোগ্য ছিলেন না। এবং স্ত্রৈণ্য স্বভাব প্রযুক্ত সম্যক প্রকারে রাজ্যশাসনে অক্ষম ছিলেন। তদনন্তর দৌলাত লুদি নামক এক ব্যক্তি পাঠান রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। কিন্তু তিনি অত্যন্ত নিঃসাহস এবং নিবীর্য্য ছিলেন এই হেতু তাঁহার এতৎ উচ্চপদ হইতে অতি শীঘ্র পতন হইল। খিজির নামক এক ব্যক্তি কর্ত্তৃক যুদ্ধে জিত এবং ধৃত হইয়া কারাগারে বদ্ধ থাকিয়া মৃত হইলেন। তাঁহার উত্তরাধিকারী সম্রাট নাম গ্রহণ না করিয়া তৈমুরের পুত্র সাহরুকের অধীন কর্মকারক প্রায় প্রতিবৎসর রাজকর স্বরূপ

বহুমূল্য উপঢৌকন সমরকাণ্ড দেশে প্রেরণ করত রাজ্য শাসন করিতেন। স্বাধীন বাদশাহ হইয়া এতৎ পরাধীনের ব্যবহার করণের এই অভিপ্রায় যে তদ্দ্বারা মোগলদিগের পুনর্ব্বার আক্রমণরূপ ভয় দর্শায়ন পূর্ব্বক অতি দুর্বৃত্ত ওমরা অর্থাৎ কুলীন প্রজাদিগের প্রবল লোভ দমন করিবেন এবং ইহাতে তাহার প্রত্যাশা ফলবতী হইল, যেহেতু অনেকানেক রাজগণরা বাদশাহের বিপক্ষতাচারণ করিতে উদ্যত হইলেও অধিকাংশ তৈমুরের প্রলয় ঘন প্রায় গভীর গর্জ্জনশীল সৈন্য সাগর স্মরণ করত মনোগত ঈর্ষ্যা গোপন করিয়া বাদশাহের বশীভূত থাকিলেন। ওমরাগণের পরস্পর বিবাদ ভঞ্জন করত মধ্যে ২ যে সাবকাশ পাইতেন তদবসরে বহু শ্রম পূর্ব্বক রাজকার্য্য নির্ব্বাহ করিতেন, এবং অবিশ্রান্ত যুদ্ধ জন্য রাজ্যে যে সমস্ত অমঙ্গল হইয়াছিল তাহার উপশম করণের সদুপায় চিন্তায় সতত মনোনিবেশ করিতেন। এতদ্রূপে লোক সমূহের হিতকর নানাকার্য্য সুসম্পন্ন করিয়াছিলেন, কিন্তু বিধাতার বিড়ম্বনা বশতঃ সেই বাদশাহের দ্বারা সুপালিত হইয়া প্রজাবর্গেরা কিঞ্চিৎকাল সুখে কাল যাপন করিলেই তাঁহার মৃত্যু হইল। তিনি সাত বৎসর ছয় মাস রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন। তদনন্তর তাঁহার মবারক ২ নামা জ্যেষ্ঠপুত্র রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইলেন। তিনি নানা প্রকার উপদ্রব হেতু সতত অস্থির থাকিষা ত্রয়োদশ বৎসর রাজ্য পালন করণান্তর আপন মন্ত্রিকর্ত্তৃক বিনাশিত হইলেন।

এইক্ষণে খিজরের পৌত্র মহম্মদ ৫ সিংহাসনারূঢ় হইলেন এবং তাঁহার রাজত্বেও ঐ মন্ত্রী প্রথমতঃ রাজ্যশাসন রজ্জু আপন করে গ্রহণ করত যথেচ্ছা নিরপরাধে কোন ২ প্রজাগণকে দণ্ড ও কারাবদ্ধ অথবা দেশত্যাগী করিতেন ও তদ্রূপ কাহাকে ও ইচ্ছানুসারে নানা সম্মান প্রদান করিতেন। এতাদৃশ শক্তি কেবল পরপীড়নে নিয়োগ করণ হেতু সহজেই সকল লোকের মনে প্রবল রাগোদ্ভব হইল, এবং সেই কোপানল কিয়ৎকাল মাত্র গোপন থাকিয়া পরন্তু কালাগ্নি প্রায় প্রজ্বলিত হইয়া এক অতি ভয়ানক রাজবিদ্রোহ হইয়া উঠিল। তদ্দৃষ্টে ঐ খল এবং চতুর মন্ত্রী বাদশাহকে কহিলেক যে এই রাজ বিদ্রাবণ গণেরা জয়যুক্ত হইলে কেবল তাহার প্রাণ নিধন করিয়াই ক্ষান্ত হইবেক এমত নহে, কিন্তু অপর বাদশাহকে ও রাজ্য ভ্রষ্ট অবশ্যই করিবেক, ইহাতে ঐ নির্বুদ্ধি রাজা মন্ত্রীকে আপন পরম হিতৈষী মৈত্র জ্ঞান করিয়া তাহাকে অভয় প্রদান করত দিল্লি নগরীর দ্বার রোধ করিয়া উভয়েই তন্মধ্যে তিন মাস পর্য্যন্ত শত্রুগণ কর্ত্তৃক বেষ্টিত হইয়া থাকিলেন। পরন্তু আপন মন্ত্রির দোষসমূহ অবগত হইয়া, অথবা আপনি নির্দ্দোষী হইয়াও পাছে ঐ খলের অপরাধের দণ্ডভাগী

হয়েন, এই ভয়ে ভীত হইয়া প্রজাবর্গের তুষ্টির নিমিত্তে তাহার প্রাণ বিনাশ করণ প্রতিজ্ঞা মনোমধ্যে স্থির করিলেন। ইতিমধ্যে ঐ মন্ত্রী বাদশাহের গুপ্ত মানস কোন-প্রকারে জানিয়া আপন প্রাণ রক্ষা হেতু বাদশাহকে বধ করিতে উদ্যত হইল এতদ্রূপে মন্ত্রী ও বাদশাহ উভয়েই মনে ২ দারুন প্রতিজ্ঞা করত এক ২ দল দস্যু প্রস্তুত করিয়া রাখিলেক। মন্ত্রী বাদশাহকে নিধন করনাশায় প্রথমতঃ দস্যু গণ সহিত অগ্রসর হইল কিন্তু রাজ পক্ষীয় দস্যুদল অতি প্রবল ছিল এই হেতু তাহারা জয়ী হইল এবং মন্ত্রীর কণ্ঠচ্ছেদ করিয়া তাহার মৃত শরীর রাজাজ্ঞায় বিদীর্ণ করিয়া শত ২ খণ্ড করত দূরে নিক্ষেপ করিলেক। তদনন্তর দিল্লী নগরীর কবাট খুলিলে রাজ বিদ্রাবণ জনগণ তন্মধ্যে প্রবেশ করত মহম্মদের শত্রুর মৃত্যু শুনিয়া তাঁহার অধীনতা স্বীকার করিল কিন্তু রাজ্যে যে সমস্ত অত্যন্ত লভ্য জনক কর্ম্ম ছিল তাহা তাহারা ঐ সুযোগে হস্তগত করিলেক। অপর বাদশাহ যে কিয়দ্দিবস রাজত্ব করিয়া ছিলেন তাহাতে বিবাদ বিসম্বাদ রাজবিদ্রোহ ইত্যাদি ব্যতিরিক্ত অন্য কোন ব্যাপার ঘটনা হয় নাই। তৎকালে তিনি আপনি বহুকাল কৌশলে প্রাণ রক্ষা করিয়াছিলেন অপর ইং ১৪৪৬ সকে পীড়িত হইয়া তনুত্যাগ করিলেন। তদন্তর তাঁহার আল্লা দ্বিতীয় নামক জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্র সিংহাসনারোহণ করিলেন। এই অভাগ্যবান গাম্ভীর্য্যবিহীন ও দুর্ব্বল রাজ-কুমার রাজত্বারম্ভে এক যুদ্ধে প্রবৃত্ত হইয়া সকল লোকের ঘৃণার্হ হইলেন। বেলালি নামক লাহোর নগরীর রাজার অত্যন্ত বলবীর্য্য ও অন্যায় লোভ দৃষ্টে তিনি রাগান্বিতচিত্ত হইয়া তাহার গর্ব্ব খর্ব্ব করণ প্রতিজ্ঞা করত সসৈন্যে রাজধানী হইতে যাত্রা করিলেন। পথি মধ্যে লোকদ্বারা অবগত হইলেন যে বেলালির সহিত যুদ্ধে প্রবৃত্ত হইলে তিনি আপনি অবশ্য পরাভূত হইবেন, যেহেতু শত্রু-পক্ষীয় মহাবল সৈন্যগণ জয় করা কোন প্রকারে সম্ভব নহে। অনন্তর তিনি সৈন্য-গণকে অন্য অন্য দিকে গমন করিতে আজ্ঞা করিলেন। ইতিমধ্যে এক জনশ্রুতি হইল যে কান্যকুব্জ নগরের সম্রাট সসৈন্যে দিল্লি নগর আক্রমণ করিতে আসিতেছেন। এই জনশ্রুতি শ্রবণ মাত্র সত্যাসত্য বিবেচনা না করিয়া তিনি দিগ্দেশ জয় করণ আশা সম্যক পরিত্যাগ করত আপন রাজ্য রক্ষার্থে অতি শীঘ্র দিল্লি নগরে পুনরাগমন করিলেন। রাজধানীতে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইয়া দেখিলেন যে তথা শত্রু আগমনের বার্ত্তা কাহারও কর্ণগোচর হয় নাই এবং রাজকার্য্যাদিও পূর্ব্ববৎ নির্বিঘ্নে চলিতেছে। লোক সকল এতদ্রূপ অব্যবস্থিত ব্যবহার দেখিয়া বাদশাহের মতিচ্ছন্ন হইয়াছে এই বিবেচনা করিলেক। এবং বাদশাহও দিল্লি নগরস্থ প্রজা-

সমূহের নিকট অত্যন্ত অপমানিত হইয়া অন্যত্র রাজধানী নির্ম্মাণ করণের মানস সর্ব্বত্র প্রকাশ করিলেন। তাঁহার মন্ত্রির নানাবিধ চেষ্টা দ্বারা তিনি এই কার্য্য হইতে নিবৃত্ত হইলেন কিন্তু লাভঃ পরং গোবধঃ প্রায় এই মানস প্রকাশ করণ জন্য সকল লোকের সম্যক ঘৃণা প্রাপ্ত হইলেন মাত্র, বিদ্বেষক জনগণের কিছুমাত্র ক্ষতি করিতে পারিলেন না। বাদশাহের শত্রুতাচরণ দেখিয়া বেলালি এইক্ষণে সসৈন্যে রাজধানী সন্নিকটে উপস্থিত হইলেন। কুচক্রী লোক সকল বাদশাহকে কহিলেক যে বেলালি এই যুদ্ধোদ্যোগ ছলে কেবল মন্ত্রিকে বিনাশ করিবেক মাত্র বাদশাহের উপর কোন অত্যাচার করিবেক না। আল্লা এই দুষ্টদিগের বাক্যেতে বিশ্বাস করিয়া পরম হিতৈষি মন্ত্রিকে কারারুদ্ধ করিতে আজ্ঞা প্রদান করিয়া ও আপনি ভয়ার্দিত চিত্তে এক পল্লি গ্রামে পলায়ন করিলেন। সেই অতিখল শত্রু-গণ মন্ত্রিকে কারারুদ্ধ করিয়ও ক্ষান্ত হইল না। অনন্তর কহিলেক হে মহারাজ যদি আপনার কুশল চিন্তা করেন তবে মন্ত্রিকে অবশ্য অবিলম্বে বিনাশ করিতে হইবেক। সেই পাপাত্মা ভূপাল এই নিন্দিত নির্দয় কার্য্য করিতেও সম্মত হইলেন। অনন্তর মন্ত্রী আপন প্রাণ বিনাশসূচক সম্বাদ শ্রবণ করিয়া কারাগার হইতে পলায়ন করিয়া আপন মিত্রবর্গের সহকারে বেলালির আগমনার্থে দিল্লি নগরীর দ্বার খুলিয়া দিলেন। বেলালি জয়ী হইয়া ও অভাবনীয়া দয়া প্রকাশ করত বাদশাহের অধীন থাকিতে স্বীকার করিলেন কিন্তু যাবজ্জীন অবিবেকী আল্লা ভূপাল এইক্ষণে নীতিজ্ঞের ন্যায় সুবিবেচনা করত সাম্রাজ্য পরিত্যাগ করিয়া কেবল বুধযান নামক এক প্রদেশের অধিকার বেলালির নিকট ভিক্ষার স্বরূপ যাচ্ঞা করিলেন। বেলালি অতি হর্ষ পূর্ব্বক এই প্রদেশ বাদশাহকে প্রদান করিলেন। এই কাম মোহিত ভূপাল এতদ্দুরবস্থায় অন্তঃপুর মধ্যে থাকিয়া তরুণী রমণী সম্ভোগ সুখোন্মত্ত চিত্তে যাবজ্জীবন কাল যাপন করিলেন, তিনি রাজ্যচ্যুত হইয়া ৩০ বৎসর জীবিত ছিলেন।

বেলালির পূর্ব্বে সমস্ত প্রতাপান্বিত যবন রাজারা যদ্রূপে রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন তদ্রূপ তিনিও সর্ব্বত্র শত্রু সমূহ দমন করত রাজ্য শাসন করিলেন। রাজ্যের সন্নিকটস্থ সকল স্বাধীন ভূপাল গণেরা তাঁহার অনিষ্ট চেষ্টায় সতত উদ্যোগী হইল এবং বলবন্ত যে সকল রাজারা দিল্লিস্থ সাম্রাজ্যের অধীন ছিল তাহারাও তাঁহাকে সিংহাসনারূঢ় দেখিয়া হিংসাবিষ্ট অন্তঃকরণে নানা বিবাদ উপস্থিত করিল। স্বপদ রক্ষার্থে তাঁহাকে আপন প্রজাগণ সহিত সতত সংগ্রাম করিতে হইল। অনন্তর

বহু সংখ্যক প্রাণিবধ করিয়া এবং অতি নির্দয়, ক্রুর, খল, কৃতঘ্ন এবং হিংস্রকের ন্যায় নানাবিধ কুকর্ম্ম করিয়া শত্রু মণ্ডলীকে পরাস্থ করিলেন। এই সকল আবশ্যক ও ন্যায্য সংগ্রামে জয়ী হইয়া তাঁহার অন্তঃকরণে অত্যন্ত উৎসাহ জন্মিল। অপর অনেক অন্যায় যুদ্ধে ও প্রবৃত্ত হইলেন। কিন্তু অবশেষে নানাস্থলে বহুবিধ সংগ্রাম করিয়া তাঁহার যুদ্ধে বিতৃষ্ণা জন্মিল এবং আপন রাজধানীতে গমন করিয়া প্রজাগণ হিতেরত হইয়া কিয়ৎকাল সুখে কালযাপন করিলেন। বেলালি জীবদ্দশায় থাকিতেই বারবেক ও নিজাম নামক দুই পুত্রকে রাজ্য বিভাগ করিয়া দিলেন। সেই নিজাম সেকন্দর নাম গ্রহণ পূর্ব্বক রাজ্যাভিষিক্ত হইয়া আলম নামক আপন সহোদরের সহিত সংগ্রাম করিয়া জয়যুক্ত হইলেন, এবং তাহাদিগের স্বজাতীয় ব্যবহারের বিপরীতাচারে সেই ভ্রাতার অপরাধ মার্জ্জনাকরত তাহাকে এক প্রদেশের রাজত্বে নিযুক্ত করিলেন। বারবেকের সহিত বিবাদ করিয়া তিনি পূর্ব্ববৎ জয়ী হইলেন এবং তাহাকেও আলমের ন্যায় এক প্রদেশের রাজ্য শাসন কার্য্যে নিয়োগ করিলেন। ভ্রাতৃদিগকে এইরূপ শীলতাচরণ করণক পরিতুষ্ট করিয়া আপনি দিগ্দেশ জয় করণে প্রবৃত্ত হইলেন, এবং কিয়ৎকাল মধ্যে বেহারাদি অনেকানেক দেশ স্বরাজ্যান্তর্গত করিলেন।

এতৎকালে ফিরিঙ্গি নামে বিখ্যাত পারটিউগেল দেশ নিবাসী মনুষ্যেরা গুডহোপ অর্থাৎ উত্তমাশা নামক অন্তরীপ দ্বারা ভারতবর্ষে আগমনের জলপথ প্রাপ্ত হইয়া মেলেবর প্রদেশে উত্তীর্ণ হইলেন, এবং সেই মেলেবর দেশে এক রাজ্য সংস্থাপন করিলেন, যে রাজ্য কালক্রমে নানা দিগ্দেশ সহযোগে অতি দীর্ঘ ও সুবিস্তৃত হইল। কিয়ৎকাল রাজত্ব করিয়া সেই ফিরিঙ্গিরা তদ্দেশস্থ মনুষ্য সমূহ সহিত নানা ছলে বিবিধ বিবাদ বিষম্বাদ উপস্থিত করিল। জামোরিণ দেশের রাজা যিনি মুসলমানদিগের ভয়ে ফিরিঙ্গিদের প্রথম আগমন কালে সমাদর পূর্ব্বক আশ্রয় প্রদান করিয়াছিলেন, সেই কৃতঘ্ন ও খল জাতিরা তাহাকেই অতিশীঘ্র আক্রমণ করিয়া রাজ্যভ্রষ্ট ও দেশত্যাগী করিল, ফিরিঙ্গিরা জামোরিণ দেশের রাজার শত্রু কোচিনের রাজার সহিত এক বাক্য হইল, পরে উভয় দলস্থ সৈন্যেরা জলে স্থলে বহু সংগ্রাম করনান্তর জামেরিন রাজার জয় হইবার উপক্রম কালে ফ্রানসিস ও আলফেনসো এলবিউকর্ক নামক দুই ব্যক্তি মেলেবর দেশে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইলেন। সেই দুই ব্যক্তি অত্যন্ত রণ পণ্ডিত ছিলেন এবং তাঁহারদিগের সহকারে ফিরিঙ্গিরা অতি শীঘ্র জয়ী হইল। জামোরিনের রাজা পরাস্থ হইলে কোচিনের রাজা তাঁহার সিংহাসনারূঢ়

হইলেন। এবং অন্যান্য সমস্ত সামান্য শত্রু সমূহ ও সুশাসিত হইল। এইক্ষণে মহামহোন্নতি যুক্ত হইয়া ফিরিঙ্গিরা কোচিন নগরে এক দুর্গ নির্ম্মাণ করিতে অনুমতি প্রাপ্ত হইল, এবং ঐ নগর ও রাজ-গৃহাদি ও তাঁহার দিগের অধিকারস্থ হইল। এতদ্রূপে সর্ব্বতোভাবে সুরক্ষিত হইয়া রাজ্য বৃদ্ধি করণোপায়ে সতত চেষ্টান্বিত হইলেন এবং ন্যায় অন্যায় ক্ষণমাত্র ও বিবেচনা না করিয়া বিবিধ ছল ক্রমে তদ্দেশস্থ মনুষ্যগণ সহিত অবিরত বিবাদ করিয়া নিতান্ত বল গর্ব্বিতান্তঃকরণে ক্ষীণ দীনজনগণ প্রতি দ্বিগুণ দৌরাত্ম্য করত দিন দিন স্বাধিকার সুবিস্তার করিলেন। এইরূপ দুর্বৃত্তি অন্যায় ও অত্যাচারে রত হইয়া শতাধিক বৎসরাবধি সাগরতীর দ্বীপ সমূহ ও প্রদেশান্তর্বর্ত্তী নগরাদিও বাহুবলে জয় করিয়া অধিকারস্থ করিলেন।

সেকন্দর বাদশাহ এতৎকাল পর্য্যন্তও দিল্লি নগরীতে রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার দিগ্দেশ জয়ানন্তর রাজ্যে সমস্ত প্রজাগণ বহুকালাবধি নির্বিঘ্নে কালযাপন করিয়াছিল। এবং সেই শান্তি ও কুশলময় কালে তিনিও পরদুঃখ নিবারণ ধর্ম্মাচরণ জনিত পরম সুখ ভোগ করত যথা ন্যায় রাজ্যপালন জন্য মহাগৌরব ও প্রসংশা প্রাপ্ত হইয়াছিলেন। রাজ কর্ম্মচারিগণেরা তাঁহার সুশাসন ভয়ে অপক্ষপাতিরূপে বিচার করিতেন যেহেতু কিঞ্চিন্মাত্র উৎকোচ গ্রহণ দোষিদিগকে গুরুতর দণ্ড করিতেন এবং ধর্ম্মভীত সজ্জনগণদিগকে ধন ও সম্মান প্রদান দ্বারা পরিতুষ্ঠ করিতেন। তিনি দিল্লি নগরী পরিত্যাগ করত আগরা নগরে রাজধানী করিয়া ঊনত্রিশ বৎসর রাজত্বকরণান্তে ইং ১৫১৬ শকে প্রাণত্যাগ করিলেন।