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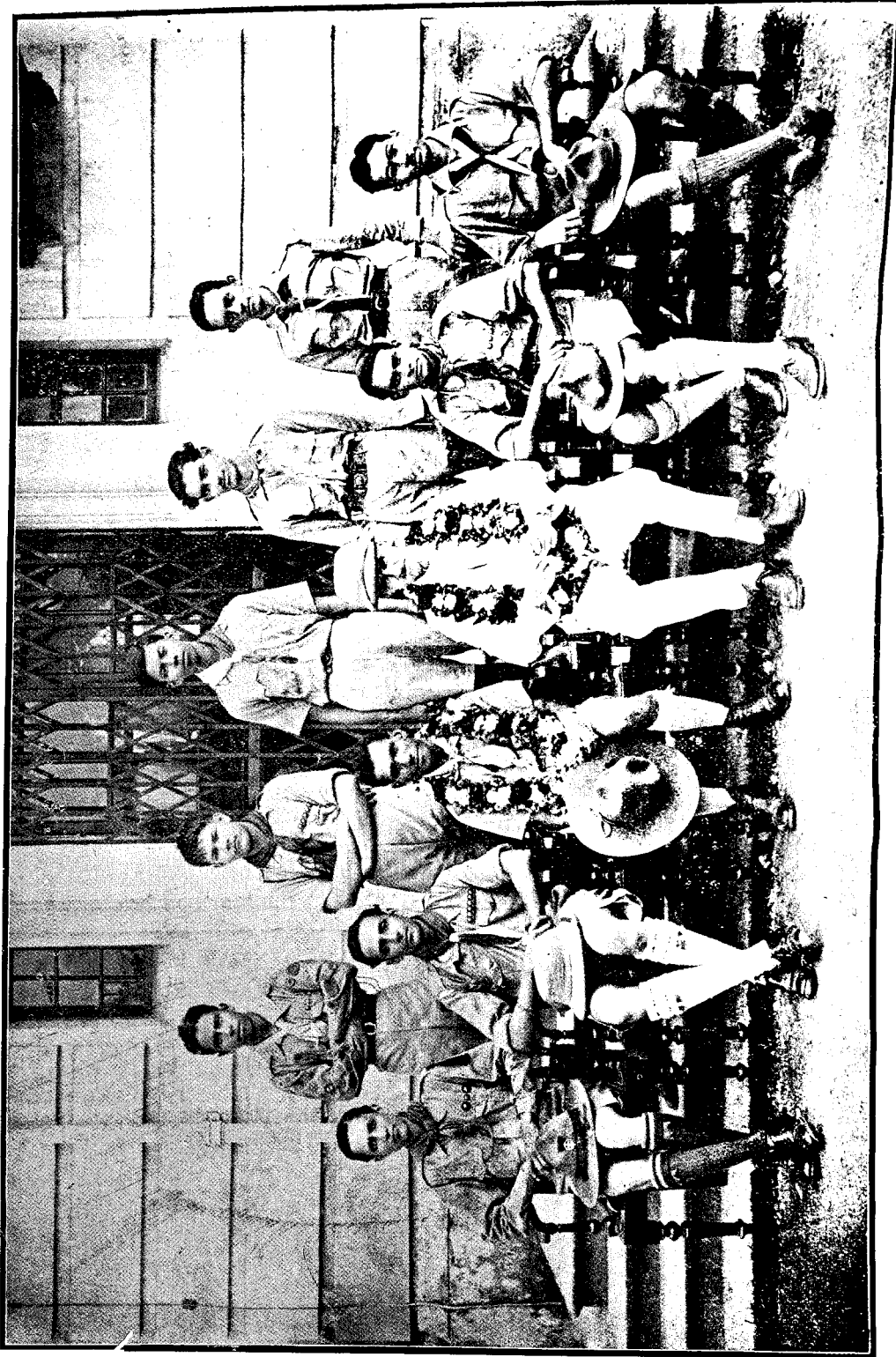


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Our Principal with the Boy Scouts and Officers



Standing (left to right) P. K. Bose, Bimal Mukherji, Ajit Bose, Abul Choudhury, N. Banerji,  
Sitting (left to right) Mr. Ajit Basu, Mr. Pratap Mitter, Prof. K. Zachariah, Principal R. B. Ramsbotham, Mr. S. P. Choudhury, Mr. K. Dutt.

# THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

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## NOTICE.

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There will ordinarily be three issues a year, in September, December, and March.

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

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

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

Sunit Kumar Indra B.A.,  
*Editor.*

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# THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

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Vol. XV. }

SEPTEMBER, 1928.

} No. I.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

**F**OURTEEN years have gone by since the idea of having a College Magazine of our own was translated into actual fact under the patronage of the then Principal Mr. H. R. James, who had always before his eyes a glorious vision about the College and its future and who, though now far away from us, still delights to hear about every step taken in the path of its realisation. We pay our respectful homage to the founder of the Magazine which now enters upon the fifteenth year of its existence. During all these years it has maintained a uniformly high standard of excellence, for which the present editor as also every member of the College must be thankful to the gentlemen who were entrusted with the task of piloting this Magazine in the past, and we take this opportunity of recording our deep sense of gratitude and admiration for the services which had been ungrudgingly rendered to the Magazine by its outgoing Editor, Mr. Hirendranath Mukerjee, particularly in view of the fact that he was able to bring out the Magazine with so great success even single-handed in the most troublous days of the year. All this is very pleasant to reflect upon, but it makes the present incumbent all the more diffident about the success which may be his lot. Whatever the year may have in store for him, he enters upon the task with the hope that the good-will and co-operation of everyone associated with the College which his predecessors had the good fortune to enjoy, will not be denied to him

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It has always been a pleasant duty of the Editors to welcome the "freshers" in the name of the College. And although it looks rather



odd that we should be welcoming our new friends when one whole term has practically come to a close, in course of which they have seen a good deal of the ding-dong of College life, yet it is a duty which the editor performs in all sincerity and good faith. When Principal Stapleton said on the Founders' Day last year, "Of all the work that falls to the lot of the Principal of Presidency College, nothing gives me personally greater pleasure than the few hours spent each week with the 1st Year students in their English Classes," he expressed a sentiment which is closely akin to that of the editor when he contemplates how the chain which binds us as belonging to one great community, grows longer and longer each year by the addition of fresh links to it. The venerable halls and walls of the College which may have lost their charm with those who have been here for the last five or six years, are eloquent to our young friends. They have a message for them deeply laden with significance. They tell them — and the memorials in the Library do nothing else if they do not tell — that it is incumbent upon them to give their best to the College so as to be worthy of the institution they belong to.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

This duty of giving their best one has particularly in one's mind because of the fact that in the last few months the College suffered materially in the estimation of the public. How far this has been due to our own failings and how far it is a result of malicious propaganda in which irresponsible persons take a peculiar delight, is not for us to judge here at present. It is nevertheless a fact that we *have suffered*, and it remains with us to make a determined effort to wipe off this blot on the fair name of our *Alma Mater*.

The duty does not lie with the newly admitted students only, nor even with the present members alone. It lies as well with all who have now passed out of the portals of the College and will soon be entering upon their respective vocations in life. The limited range of activities of a College student will no longer be theirs. They are now in the wide wide world. And theirs is a greater

responsibility because an educational institution is judged not so much by its results in the examination as by the achievements of its *alumni* in the vast field of life. We hope our friends will be able to carry into the din of life the noble idealism and generous enthusiasm which is a young man's heritage. Our good wishes to them all.

\* \* \* \*

Quite a good number of our men have left for Europe this year for higher studies. Most of them will prosecute their studies in the United Kingdom. Our readers may be interested to learn that Mr. Humayun Kabir, who is so well known to them through the pages of this Magazine, has been granted a State scholarship for study in the United Kingdom. He has proceeded to England and will study Modern Greats in the Exeter College, Oxford. We wish Mr. Kabir and others godspeed in their new careers.

One thing that suggests itself to our mind in this connexion is that these friends of ours who are going abroad are not mere students. They are in a sense missionaries too. The times are such, and the need of a spirit of mutual understanding between the East and the West is at present so great that it would be doing injustice to ourselves if we think that our friends will content themselves with the acquisition of knowledge only. We do not know whether, as the Vice-Chancellor said in addressing the Special Convocation of the University, they will be able to brighten up the war-weary spirit of the young men of Britain. But we confidently hope that they will largely help in the effort to bring about a better understanding between Britain and India. Of die-hards we have had many. What is wanted at the present moment is a closer and more sympathetic knowledge of India—of her ideals and aspirations—by the rising generation of Britain. Our friends will have enough opportunities in the Universities they join to bring to bear upon their many-sided intercourse with Westerners the distinctive heritage of Indian thought and culture which is theirs ; and we hope they will make good use of these opportunities.

\* \* \*



Now to come nearer to our present position. The session began with many important changes in the staff. In fact very few departments have been left untouched.

Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham, M. A., B. Litt. (Oxon.), M. B. E., late Principal of the Hooghly College, has joined us as our new Principal. In him we have a man of erudite scholarship and of long experience in the Educational Service both as professor and principal. During the many years he has been in India his activities have not been confined to the class room only. He has been the Editor of Bengal Past and Present, member of the Historical Records Commission, and is on the Council of the Imperial Library and Honorary Adviser on Records to the Government of Bengal. His book on the Land Revenue Administration in Bengal and his work in connexion with the preparation of a history of the Hooghly District testify to his spirit of historical research. We accord him our cordial welcome.

Professor K. Zachariah of the History department has been on deputation to the Hartog Committee as its Assistant Secretary from the 20th August last. Mr. Satchidananda Bhattacharyya of the Sanskrit College has been appointed to act in his place.

We miss the genial personality of Rai Bahadur K. N. Mitter, professor of Philosophy, in our midst. He has been transferred to the Inspectorate of Schools, Burdwan Division. Dr. P. D. Shastri has rejoined us after an absence of two years at Hooghly.

Mr. S. P. Das, head of the department of Mathematics is on leave now, Professor N. C. Ghose of the B. E. College, Shibpur is officiating in his place. Professor Das rejoins after the Puja vacation, but Mr. Ghose will continue to act in this College during the absence on study leave of Professor B. M. Sen till September 1929.

Shamsul-ulema Khan Bahadur Dr. Hedayet Hossain, Senior Professor of Arabic and Persian has left as the Officiating Principal of the Calcutta Madrasah, and Mr. Ziaul Haque has been promoted to the B. E. S. in his place. Mr. Maqbul Hossain, Lecturer, Islamia College and an ex-student of this College has succeeded Mr. Haque. Mr. Taher Rizwi, another ex-student has been appointed Lecturer in Urdu.

Mr. Basanta Kumar Chatterjee of the Dacca University has joined as Lecturer in Bengali, and Mr. Shibnarayan Lala as part-time Lecturer in Hindi.

Mr. S. C. Sinha of the Botany department is still on leave, Mr. P. C. Ghatak acting in the resulting vacancy. Mr. J. N Mukherjee of the Physiology department has left us to take up the duties of Headmaster, Krishnagar Collegiate School.

\* \* \* \*

Turning to the University results we cannot flatter ourselves on our performances in the Intermediate examination. The top places both in I. A. and I. Sc. have gone to the City College. In the I.Sc. we have to content ourselves with the second place and only three others out of the first ten in the list ; while in the I.A. we have gone down to the eighth place. In the B. A. and B. Sc. we have better results to show. We have been able to secure the first places in Economics, History, Arabic, Persian, Pali, Chemistry, Botany, Physiology and Geology. In Economics and Chemistry we have captured all the places in the first class only with a single exception in the former. In all there were fourteen and twenty-six first classes in Science and Arts respectively out of which we secured ten in Science and twelve in Arts. Still the results are after all not up to our satisfaction. Without having the least idea of minimising our shortcomings in this matter, it is proper that we should make a diagnosis and then apply the remedy. Chance, over which we had no control, played not an unimportant part in this tragedy, for many of our best men could not appear at the examinations, or if they did, could not continue to the end owing to unforeseen attacks of illness. Then there was the great disturbance in the College which particularly affected the boarders of the Eden Hindu Hostel. When at the end of the first week of February they were ordered almost at a day's notice to leave the hostel, they knew not where to lodge their heads with the examinations hanging over them. One has only to imagine oneself in their position to comprehend what harm this complete dislocation did to the examinees. Then there is another cause which is more



serious than either of the two and which threatens to be permanent if not removed in proper time.

A complaint that is being repeatedly heard from students in connexion with the comparatively bad results of the Presidency College in recent years is that of the great increase in the College fees. We will only quote from a letter we have received to show how deeply this grievance is felt. "The top places in examinations," writes our correspondent, "which were always reserved for Presy. men are now being occupied by students of other Colleges. The reasons are not very far to seek. Among others the most obvious and important reason seems to be the tremendous increase in the tuition fees. The granting of a few part free-studentships has not improved the matter very much. At the time of admission, one cannot be sure of being given a part free-studentship ; so a student cannot venture to seek admission into this College unless he hopes to be able to pay the high rate of fees somehow or other. Under these circumstances part free-studentships, if they are not superfluities, do not at any rate do the services they are expected to do." Another serious consequence of this increase in fees is that the number of students in the post-graduate classes of the College is rapidly off, and the day is not far off when it will vanish altogether if the present state of things be allowed to remain as it is. Presidency College men have to pay almost double the amount paid by University students. And yet for this heavy drain upon their purse they enjoy no special facilities in the form of extra lectures or extra tutorial work. It is not in the least unnatural that students do not find it worth their while to be in the Presidency College. Loyalty to the College is what we all want. But it would be straining that loyalty too much to advance that argument in the face of financial hardship. We do not know if there are people who can quite comfortably think of the day when Presidency College which only a few years back did practically all the post-graduate teaching in the province, would be reduced to such a position as not to be able to claim half a dozen students as its own in the post-graduate classes. We hope the authorities will

take notice of the serious nature of the question and find an adequate solution,

\* \* \* \*

Among the All-India examinations this year Bengal goes unrepresented in the I. C. S. In the I. P. S. we have Mr. H. N. Sircar from our College first in the list. In the Civil Service Examination held in England in last August, the results of which have just been published we find Messrs. B. N. Chakravarti and R. K. Mitter, both our ex-students, among the successful candidates. We are glad to note that Mr. Chakravarti heads the list of successful Indians, standing sixth in the whole list.

\* \* \* \*

In the field of sports Presidency College seems to show unmistakable signs of coming back to its former glory. The football season this year which is just coming to a close, has been the most successful one in the recent history of Presidency College. After vegetating for many years in the first or second round in nearly all the tournaments we now come out at the head of the League Table along with the Law College. The crowning achievement is the winning of the Hardinge Birthday Shield by defeating St. Xavier's College by a goal to nil. The season will be wound up by a trip to Benares, Lucknow and Allahabad. Thanks are due to Mr. Bishnu Kinkar Sarkar, our General Secretary and Cricket Captain, for his energy and enthusiasm. Judging from the fixtures we have had up till now, the cricket season which commences with the re-opening of the College, is also expected to be a great success.

We congratulate Mr. S. C. Mallik, M. A., I. C. S., an Old Boy of this College, who has been permanently appointed a puisne judge of the Calcutta High Court.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. N. N. Sen-Gupta, one of our most brilliant students in recent years, has been doing excellent work in England. Taking his B.Sc. degree in 1926 he went to the Faraday House to study Engineering. He has passed the final examination of the first year with the highest number of marks in honours, standing first in all



subjects except drawing—a rare achievement for Indians. Our congratulations to Mr. Sen-Gupta.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. James's Extension Scheme of the College, after it had once received the momentum given by Mr. Stapleton, is being rapidly pushed forward. The rounding off of the College compound is practically complete, and the new Observatory will be ready for use in a very short time. The College Hall is still to come. An appeal for funds for the purpose was issued on the last Founders' Day over the signature of Mr. James to which there have been some generous responses. Yet we think the response has not been as wide as it should be. We appeal once more in the name of the College to all those who have been associated with it in any way, so that Mr. James's vision may come true and a long-felt want of the College removed.

\* \* \* \*

The Junior Common Room is labouring under undue congestion. The two rooms allotted are quite insufficient for meeting the demands of 1100 students. It is well nigh impossible under the circumstances to maintain order in the Common Room. We thankfully acknowledge the gift to the Common Room of a beautiful cup by the Kumar of Santosh for the purpose of starting a ping-pong competition.

\* \* \* \*

We understand that the College is going to be affiliated in Geography from the next session, for which our thanks are due to Profs. K. Zachariah and H. C. Das Gupta for their long and persistent efforts in this direction.

Another subject in which the College should be affiliated is Civics. This is an urgent necessity in view of the growing popularity of Political Economy and Political Philosophy in the degree examinations.

\* \* \* \*

The suspension of the College Union still continues. It is hoped to reorganise at an early date and to set in motion once more the various pleasant activities associated with it.

\* \* \* \*

We offer our hearty congratulations to the Rev. Dr. W. S. Urquhart and to the Scottish Churches College of which he is at present the head, on his being appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta. Dr. Urquhart is a popular figure in the educational circles in the province, and his tenure of office bids fair to be one of continuous progress and harmony. For the last few years the University had been sailing in the troubled waters of party politics. We hope the troubles have now come to an end.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Another matter for congratulation is the election of Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, George V Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy in the University of Calcutta to the chair of Comparative Religion in the University of Oxford. We do not know as yet whether Prof. Radhakrishnan has accepted the offer or not. But the offer itself is a recognition of the honourable position of our University and of the intrinsic value of India's contribution to the culture of the world.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

• As we go to the press we learn that in the Debating Competition held under the auspices of the All Bengal Students' Conference Messrs. Khagendranath Das Gupta of the 5th Year English Class and Ranadhir Sarma Sarkar of the 4th year Economics Class have stood first and second respectively. All honour to our College.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

At the death of Lord Haldane Britain loses one of her most eminent men. A distinguished lawyer, statesman and philosopher, Lord Haldane represented a type of men now fast disappearing from his country—men who could bring the serenity of a philosophic outlook to the handling of political questions. To England with all his attainments he was always "a man difficult to understand." His career, full of pathos as it was, reminds us of his colleague, the late Earl of Oxford and Asquith. They were both of them eminent scholars and statesmen, and both had the sad experience towards the end of their life of being rewarded by their country's ingratitude. Lord Haldane's last article which appeared in the Hibbert Journal shows how he was drawn to the study of



## THE TEMPEST\*

I am the storm—the tempest—the tempest am I. The tremor of my approach crashes through the sky, the wind, and the forest, and they roar and howl.

My birth is in the crest of the hill where the sun turns to rest in the extremest west.

Sudden is my birth, and all at once I start upon my path towards the nameless tracks of the east.

I am a demon-child and scatter my charms all around as I rush out in search of evils unnumbered and unknown.

The legions of loss and injury come and bow down to me at my birth, and with whispering cruelty say, For ages have we known thee: thou art our Lord and we thy humble slaves, we the angels of death and destruction, storm and flood, of pestilence, famine and utter ruin.

### II

The cymbals of earth and sky ring with horrible din; the cloud-vapours rise in columns of dark dense smoke and smother the Sun in the cup of Heaven.

Meteors flash and planets sing in unison the message of my advent, the ocean blows its conch to announce the unholy tidings of my unwelcome approach, and the waters roar in deep and sombre tones,

Hail to thee, terrible as thou art .

Hail to thee, thou symbol of destruction and ruin.

So sang my approach the hoary Sage of Time.

Suddenly aroused from their reverie, Ages past with bloodred eyes sang for me their dire welcome.

Like a new eclipse, I sprang up upon the sky, and swayed my arms in terrible rhythm.

---

\* Translated from the original Bengali of Kazi Nazrul Islam by Humayun Kabir (Ex-Editor).



## III

I saw the smiling aspect of my Mother Earth,—in the dignity of love she serves,

And suddenly,

At my approach she forgot her services of love and stood petrified and still, like a dead column of stone.

Like a mother who holds her breath in suspense and agony, when by her dying child she hangs in terrible doubt, and with fearful expectancy waits for the worst to happen,

She is hushed to a deathlike silence, she my Mother Earth,

And suddenly my heart cried out, "Here is my mother, here."

In her peaceful bosom I leaped with joyful glee and cried out, "Mother mine."

## IV

I know not in what poisonous clime, under what evil star,  
When the light was green with the poison of accumulated  
hatred and jealousy,

The poisoned womb of Kadru, mother of snakes, conceived me,  
And I was born a deadly reptile-child with a thousand crests  
hissing in envious agony.

I know not where Janamejaya holds his sacrifice, his feast of the  
death of snakes, and what seer calls me with relentless  
intensity to my flaming doom,

But across the ages I hear the call, the call of death, and  
rush on in blind fury towards my doom.

My heart, black with the poison of hatred and rancour, grows  
pale before the magic charm,

Any day and night, in spite of myself, I rush through empty  
space, dragged to doom by the call of Janamejaya's feast.

## V

I rush on, the eternal snake, like a tempest and fill the earth  
with roaring agony.

Suddenly whence camest thou, mother mine, with the borders of  
thy dusty skirt to hide me from my doom ?  
I conceal me in the folds of thy affection, but alas, in vain !  
The protection of thy love cannot save me, mother mine !  
Through the depths of thy folding sari, the fiery call burns,  
and in my blood the charm works, and my heart throbs with  
the passion of its call.  
Lo, from the distance the notes of the sage who holds the feast  
of death drag me with relentless strength.  
Restless with infinite yearning, I go, go I must.  
Thy lithe and lissom body grows blue with pain, the borders of  
thy skirt are scarlet with poisonous flame,  
And I, the eternal serpent, rush on.  
In my blood I feel the call,  
Pity swoons scorched to death,  
And a wanderer in the ways of ruin, marking my steps with  
destruction and desolation I go my way.

## VI

I am the storm—the tempest—the tempest am I.  
Loud clangs the horrid cymbals in tumultuous riot,  
I ride my high horse of fury and with unholy joy, rock me in the  
dark sombre of the thunder clouds.  
Bereft of home, bereft of peace, and with no bond or check, I  
rush on in my wayward quest.  
In thunder crashes my voice in terrible harmony,  
In cloud-lands, among the forests of the sky, from my fountains  
pour I the lightning streams.  
The house of pleasure vanishes at my touch,  
The shady tree crashes to the dust,  
The palace totters,  
And my tempest-steed rushes with lightning speed.  
In the longing desire of my thirsty breath, the ocean grows dry,  
And in all the worlds, Creation is quick with the  
expectancy of ruin and death.

## VII

The tempest—I ride my steed of mighty winds.  
The tattered canopy of the sky sags and sways in terrible  
fright with the dusty pinions that I rear,  
The sea wakes up in frenzied agony and her bosom heaves,  
When the hoofs of my tempest steed strike her with cruel speed.  
The foam gathers upon her thousand billow-lips when the lash  
of the storm strikes and she writhes.  
A snake-charmer am I. With my deadly charm I strike at the  
ocean and the water-snakes writhe in agony.  
The tornado is my mate. Like a Bedouin girl, she goes before  
my path, scattering ruin.  
At her touch, the dead leaves and scattered twigs wake up in  
swirling dance, like the river whom a thousand streams  
have fed.  
Before my terrible frown, the forest kings—Deodar and Pinnag  
and Salmali—bow down in terrified awe.  
I seize them by their bushy heads and shake them by their  
boughs,  
The prostrate forest breaks into forlorn weeping, and the age-  
old mountains, grey with years, quiver to their deepest  
foundations.

## VIII

My love, she goes her straggling way, singing snatches of song.  
Dust hangs upon her hair and in her eyes glisten stars,  
She swirls her skirt and my heart is tossed with the movement  
of its folds.  
The tempest-maiden bursts into clattering laugh, and eluding  
my eager grasp, defies me to seize her,  
And the cluster of her hair strikes my forehead and is tossed  
aside.  
Crazy with delight she flings at me handfuls of the red dust  
of the road.

And the knot in her hair unfastened falls in lotus-fields.  
 With wild delight I follow in her wake.  
 The fury of my steps makes the sun, the moon and the stars  
     reel,  
 The long road, stretched like a snake, curls in fear.  
 The stony back of the turtle-earth glisten fire at my hammer-  
     strokes,  
 Behind me rush the massed clouds, swaying like an elephant  
     herd  
     And the clarion call of the Rains shrieks in the sky.  
 The cloud-elephants suck with a thousand trunks the water  
     from the sea and pour it upon the earth.  
 And a thousand muddy streams flow,  
 And in Varsha's neck glistens a necklace with a million pearls.

## IX

I am the tempest—the spirit of tumult am I.  
 I dance the dance of death with my tornado-love.  
 Devastation follows incessantly in my wake.  
 The peacock of the world fills its heart with joy at my sight,  
 And spreads its starred tail in flower and foliage, green and gold.  
     Suddenly I strike hard, and in the earth, quaking with fear,  
     there rises the shriek of agony.  
 And the sea is churned to foam, as of old when gods and asuras  
     churned the ocean.  
 And out of the pain and suffering of my strife, like eternal  
     bubbles, sun, moon and stars come to birth.  
 Worlds are born and die as I rush along my path of joy.  
 The calm benign eyes of Shiva shine like stars, the red gleam  
     in Yama's eyes burn through the gloom: they are the  
     lights of my chariot.  
 The trumpet of Michael plays the chant of my triumph, when  
     on the last day he shall blow his horn.  
 Like a turban the primeval pytheon rises in coiled heaps upon  
     my forehead,



The light of comets shiver upon it like a plume,  
 And behind me shivers the curtain of eternal night.  
 The nebulæ whirling in terrible rhythm are my matted tresses,  
     coiled and grimy.  
 Out of these flow the blood of the oppressed universe.

## X

I am the storm—the tempest—the tempest am I.  
 I gnash my teeth in fury and thunder crashes loud,  
 I spread out my blood-red arms and the dust rises in columns  
     to check the path of the light of the day.  
 I scold in tempest-tones.  
 And suddenly Fate draws back in fear and hides him in the  
     dark recesses of creation.  
 The iron shackles of oppression clang upon my feet,  
 The closed gates of forbidden lands fly asunder at my touch,  
 The sea scowls in fire.  
 Death sings the refrain of my terrible song.  
 In my granary is gathered the hatred and the curse of Durvasa,  
 The dread forces of nature cannot stand my ire and shed burning  
     tears of meteors.  
 I cry out in unholy joy,  
 “Rear up thy red flag of destruction and rush forward, thou  
     pitiless one,  
 Let the standards of revolt march before thee,  
 Conquer the fear of treading paths beset with thorns.  
 Man is above wailing and tears,—shame to him that shudders  
     and draws back with fright at the thought of suffering.  
 Toss the universe like a ball,  
 Let the coward fly and skulk back,  
 In the joy of life, O thou hero, drink deep the nectar of life,  
     brewed from the thick poison of death.  
 Scatter over thy limbs the fire of hell and bathe them  
     in the burning fount of the sun,



Who art thou, my love ? The rain beats an incessant  
 patter, and in my heart rings their echo.  
 I forget my strength—thy melody comes and haunts me too.

## XII

Am I the tempest—the tempest I ?  
 Nay, I am the breeze that blows with the falling drops,  
 O my love, there is no storm, nowhere !  
 Where is the storm departed ?  
 The red steed of revolution neighs aloud,  
 Hark the beat of his hoof,  
 Hark the notes of his call,  
 Nay, let me depart to-day, I shall come again, I shall.  
 Keep thou awake, my comrade,  
 Thou art the keeper of the blood-red steed,  
 But lo, there comes floating the call of the siren again,  
 In the eastern breeze,—  
 All things flow and float  
 In the eastern breeze !

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## THE NATIVE STATES OF INDIA.

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NABAGOPAL DAS—*3rd Year Economics.*

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THE cry for a responsible government whereby India will be able to put herself on an equal footing with the Dominions in her various relations with the British Crown has long been echoed and re-echoed throughout the length and breadth of India. And while politicians of all creeds, opinions and schools have been busy devising schemes along which the future governance of India should be directed, no one can afford to shut his eyes to the curious position in which the Indian States have been placed, and will probably be placed, in their relation with the Crown and the Government of India. The gentleman or gentlemen who first applied the term "state" to these territories must have been either ignorant of the real significance of statehood, or careless enough not to note that sovereignty which means 'the original, supreme, and unlimited power of the state to impose its will upon all persons, associations, and things within its jurisdiction'\* has been, and is, absent in them. These "states" are states only by courtesy. They have, up till now, no control over anything that smacks 'foreign,' while, in their internal administration, most of them, excepting probably only a few of the larger states, have been deprived of a good deal of their freedom.

The relations of the Indian States with the Crown on the one hand and with the Indian Government on the other are of great complexity and anomaly. But complex though they are, we cannot conveniently leave them out in a scheme for a federal government of India. Occupying as they do more than a third of the total area of the Indian continent and containing about a quarter of its population,

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\* Burgess : Political Science and Constitutional Law. Vol. I. p. 52.

they are intimately—nay, vitally,—connected with the well-being of the country. Although the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme for Reforms could not do much for them except giving a few stray suggestions and, of course, the Chamber of Princes, it is immensely important that, in the Indian Commonwealth-to-be, they should occupy a position and enjoy a status which would give greater strength and solidarity not only to the individual states themselves, but to the Commonwealth as a whole.

There is no denying the fact that the Princes of India are now very different from the Princes of half a century ago. They have—with a few unavoidable exceptions—introduced administrative systems in the States on the lines followed in British India. They have ceased to look upon the states as 'their estates'; they have grown more alive to the *duties* of a ruler and less eager to emphasise their own *prerogatives and privileges* over their subjects. In short, a new atmosphere now seems to breathe over almost all the states of India.

It is altogether unjust to presume that the Indian Princes are hostile to the legitimate aspirations of the people of British India. Far from it; many of them are dissatisfied with the existing machinery of Government and are keen for a change. When the Maharajah of Patiala spoke at the meeting of the East India Association (on July 24), he was voicing the opinion of the majority, if not all, of the Princes: "There are still differences between the Princes regarding the form of actual machinery, but the Princes are agreed that the present system should be altered. There should be something like a federation for India—a machinery which would enable British India and the Indian States to discuss jointly the manner, interest and importance of each other's policies and purposes which affect India as a whole." Moreover he declared for the tenth time, in unequivocal terms, that they were not inimical to the movements afoot in British India for Responsible Government or Dominion Status. We must not too hastily pass harsh words upon the Princes; we should not overlook the fact that these States have rendered and are still rendering an immense



service to India and the Indians. When in British India the highest posts of power and responsibility were barred to Indians, it was these states which offered opportunities to Indians of talent for a display of their administrative genius. Even now 'a military career in the fullest degree for Indians' is available only in these states. Barring a few unfortunate cases of misrule, the people in general have been living in perfect peace and prosperity in these states during the last twenty-five years. Besides, 'the states and their rulers have been custodians of our cultural and artistic tradition in a degree that we cannot appreciate now. The very conservatism of the rulers has been of value in this connexion.' \* No doubt there are limitations; but these are not now very serious and can easily be remedied by the princes themselves by an assertion of their personality. The seamy side of the life of an Indian prince of which we hear so much now-a-days is due more to the peculiar position in which he is placed than to anything else; moreover, the favourite formula that political rights and liberties are denied to the subjects has been too much exaggerated; in most states the people are *now* given a share in the work of government, although it cannot be denied that reforms of far-reaching importance have to be introduced before these states can have a share in the governance of India as a whole.

The position of these states is unique in history. No parallel or analogy to them can ever be found in the political institutions of any other age or clime. Their present position is, to quote the phrase of an eminent journalist, 'partly a result of policy and partly a result of historical accident.'† It would not be out of place here to give a running history of how these local states or principalities grew up.

If we look to the Hindu Period we shall find that the wide empire of the Maurya, Gupta or Kushana kings was not a compact

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\* K. M. Panikkar : Relations of Indian States with the Government of India—Introduction p. xxvii.

† K. M. Panikkar : Relations of Indian States with the Government of India.

state with a central government having *direct* sovereignty both in internal and external affairs over every nook and corner of it, but that it contained, within its boundaries, principalities administered by chiefs of their own, who, supreme within their own spheres, paid an annual tribute to the Emperor and acknowledged his supremacy whenever asked to do so. The Pathan kings also found it convenient to follow the path chalked out by the early administrators of India; they held the country in a sort of military occupation and without reliance on the armies and munitions of the local tributary princes it would have been practically impossible for them to hold the people in subjugation. The Moghuls, too, continued the old and time-worn policy towards the local states—although they tried to, and, to some extent, succeeded in consolidating their supremacy over them. With the break up of the Muhammadan power in India these local rulers asserted their independence and then began a series of strifes among them for supremacy. It was about this time that the East India Company gradually began to extend their newly acquired territories in India. The British Power in India rose almost as speedily as the glory of the Moghul dynasty of Delhi declined; and very soon the East India Company found that they had to deal with the native chiefs directly. Oftentimes they had to depend on the co-operation and assistance of these rulers in their wars and strifes and this led to the conclusion of treaties between some of these rulers and the British Power on equal footings of mutual defence and co-operation. Many of the states were independent, in the strictest sense of the term, when these treaties were concluded. But as the power of the British in India was consolidated, the states found themselves gradually reduced to that position of subordination and dependence in which they are now. The 'princes and states in alliance with Her Majesty' became the 'princes and states under the suzerainty of Her Majesty'. \* And henceforward most of the new treaties concluded with other states became 'treaties of subordinate [co-operation and one sided obligation]'—and the rulers were allowed

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\* Compare Lee Warner : The Native States of India. London, 1910.

to exercise the little authority they had retained simply by virtue of their 'having derived it from the British Government.' Up to the administration of Lord Wellesley the Indian States were able to hold their own ; but soon after, circumstances and tides of fortune reduced them to a position of dependence and alliance—and the anomaly of the situation germinated. The general policy of Lord Wellesley with regard to the existing Native States was of thorough subsidiary alliance, but it was for some time obscured by the revival of the non-intervention policy by his successors. It was Lord Hastings who finally gave up the policy of non-intervention. 'He had no faith in the dream of Lord Cornwallis that the stronger organisations would incorporate the petty states and become good neighbours of the British ; whilst at the same time he did not, with Lord Dalhousie, hold that the good of the people required annexations.\* His was a policy of subordinate isolation ; the treaties that he concluded were no longer treaties of mutual defence and co-operation. These treaties had a distinct stamp of singularity and individuality of their own. 'Isolation was the keynote of his policy'.

With the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie the relation of the States with the Paramount Power entered upon a new phase ; the policy of subordinate isolation and co-operation was given up in favour of a policy of annexation due either to 'consideration for the sufferings of the millions and the good of the governed' or to 'more general and imperial considerations.' He claimed that the Government was supreme over all the native states of India and did not hesitate to assume feudal and sovereign rights over them. † Moreover, many of these states seemed to offer a sort of barrier to the consolidation of British rule in India. Hence followed his doctrine of lapse and escheat : it was the only 'logical and inevitable fruit' of the seed of the narrow principle of non-interference which had been sown early in the nineteenth century. But, to do

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\* Lee Warner : The Native States of India.

† Compare Panikkar : Relation of Indian States with Govt. of India. Chapter II. p. 26.

justice to Dalhousie, it must be noted here that he not only annexed new states to the fold of British India, but guaranteed to the old existing states security and immunity from outside aggression. This re-iteration was significant, although it had been emphasised more than once during the Governor-Generalship of the early administrators. By guaranteeing to many of the rulers absolute protection of the British Government he left the rulers in an easy and comfortable position. They felt that they need no longer be economical in expenditure and frugal in life so long as they were loyal to the Crown. The sense of responsibility that they were the custodians of a public treasury and could spend its money only in the interests of the people disappeared. And there followed the evils of irresponsible autocracy. 'The presence of the British force cut off every chance of remedy by supporting the Prince on the throne against any foreign and domestic enemy. It rendered him indolent by teaching him to trust to strangers for his security; cruel and avaricious by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects.\* It was by the increasing responsibility of the Crown for the good administration of the people in the States through Residents or Political Agents—a policy systematically followed after the transfer of the Government to the Crown—that many of these evils were slowly removed.

With the transfer of the Government to the Crown after the Mutiny, Indian States entered upon a distinctly new phase of their existence. Their historical and constitutional position was dramatically changed. The native Princes of India were assured of the validity of the treaties they had contracted with the East India Company; they were told that the British Crown desired no extension of their territorial possessions; promise was made and assurance was given that the rights, the dignity and the honour of native Princes would be respected, and the desire was expressed that they, as well as their subjects, should enjoy the benefits of prosperity and progress which follow only from internal peace and

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\* Wellesley Despatches, Appendix. Quoted in Panikkar's Book—Ch II p. 29.

good government. On a hurried glance it may appear that the Proclamation contained nothing new ; it was simply a repetition of old statements. But really it was more than a mere repetition : 'it effected a remarkable if a silent revolution'.\* The old policy of annexation on the plea of imperial interests or misgovernment by the rulers was given up; a minimum of good government, once ensured left the states to themselves. But in spite of all these guarantees, it must be noted that the Government did not concede its *right* to interfere even in their internal administration, should such occasions arise ; the grip was rather tightened. "If it (the new policy) definitely put a stop to annexations, it introduced in its stead rule by loaned officers, nominated dewans and strict control through the Residents."†

This policy has not been altogether new in India. We had the same state of things, if not a worse one, in India under the Pathans or the Moghuls. The British Crown only 'put on itself the decayed mantle of the Moghul Empire, and claimed the rights of sovereignty, which Akbar and Shah Jehan had enforced.' ‡ The bigger chiefs resented—but their resentment was of no avail ; they had been independent, they had concluded treaties on honourable terms of equality, and mutual co-operation and defence. But as the strength of the British Crown in India increased, they found it extremely difficult—nay, impossible—to throw off the shackles of dependence that had been unconsciously and imperceptibly thrust upon them. It would be unjust here to say that it all came about unconsciously ; many of them were conscious of it, some of them even made protests, but all of them had to bow down to the Paramount Power. And so when 'the imagination of Lord Lytton and the love of colour and extravagance of Disraeli' § was satisfied in 1876 by the assumption by the Queen of the title of *Kaiser-i-Hind* and the glorious assemblage of Princes from all over India to the Delhi

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\* Panikkar : Indian States. Ch. III. Page 35.

† *Ibid* : Chapter III. Page 37.

‡ *Ibid*. Chapter III. Page 37.

§ *Ibid*. Chapter III. Page 38.

Durbar, no new line of action was indicated, but the old, existing fact was simply emphasised.

The main grievances of these rulers to-day are three-fold. First, they do not know exactly where they are ; the treaties on which they had entered into relations with the Government are not always respected or upheld. Secondly, there is no impartial court of arbitration where disputes between one state and another and between one state and the Government of India, and points of difference concerning the interpretation of treaties, rights and obligations can be settled. And thirdly, the working of the Reforms has affected their interests deeply ; they have no voice—still less any share—in problems that affect jointly the interests of themselves and the Government of India. All of these grievances need serious consideration.

Really, the Princes do not know where they are. 'The action of time and customary law has worn down the treaty of Lord Wellesley, as well as that of Lord Hastings, to a common value,' but the Princes cannot forget that 'when they were fresh-minted they represented different policies and different periods.' 'A century of political practice has altered the original character of many states, and a classification based on rights is possible only on a close examination of the secret archives of the Political Department of the Government of India.' \* The status and position of the Indian States have always been steeped in a veil of mystery. Custom has reigned supreme, and the chains of custom have established themselves so firmly on the political transactions and negotiations between the States and the Government, that it is difficult to trace out the existence of documentary evidences and treaties from under them. These customs, we are told, are 'too delicate to codify and too complex to be analysed.' Where disputes arise, on most occasions the States have to concede their rights to the political practices of the Government.

The old differences between the treaty States and the petty principalities have largely disappeared and the 'direct and construct-

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\* Panikkar : Indian States. Introduction Page xx.



ive interpretation of treaties by the Political Department' has thrust new obligations and duties on the shoulders of the Princes. The chief Princes have, therefore, felt that an injustice has been done to them ; they are Princes only in name. In external and international affairs they have ungrudgingly conceded their privileges, but the constant interference of the Government of India has exasperated them. In matters which are looked upon almost with religious sanctity the Government of India has interfered ; the princes have no right of settling their own succession, the Government of India can disallow adoption and the old principle of mutual trust and co-operation has been reduced to a systematic show of subordination and obedience. In military or international affairs the States do not grudge the encroachment of the Government ; but the crux of their complaint lies in the frequent interference and intervention of the Government in the purely internal affairs of the states. The supreme power of the British Government over the military cantonments in the states, the railways, the telegraph and postal service and other claims of extra-territorial jurisdiction have been frankly admitted. 'In coinage and currency, in customs and fiscal policy, in claiming direct allegiance from the subjects of Indian States, in the arrangements of expedition, the Paramount Power has assumed legal and constitutional rights which have made serious inroads upon the guaranteed prerogatives of the major Indian sovereignties.\* The States do not question the justifiability of the limitations imposed upon them with regard to the reception of diplomatic or consular representatives from foreign powers and even the appointment of non-British Europeans in the employ of the State. Their grievances are not so much against the actual limitations imposed upon them in course of a century or so, but upon the *principle* that underlies the imposition of such limitations. They have always been most loyal to the Crown and as such they may legitimately and reasonably expect that their old rights and duties would be treated with more respect and caution. They

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\* Panikkar : Relations of Indian States with the Government of India.

do not know whether their relation with the Crown is either feudal or federal ; strictly speaking, it is neither. They are anxious to know their exact relations with the Supreme Government and they have long been tired of the prevalence of too many customs and usages in all these matters.

This has given rise to their demand for an impartial body which would be able to solve the intricate differences of opinion between the states and the Government. As matters stand now, the Secretary of State for India—as the representative of the Crown—has the final word with regard to all such disputes. But in reality he exercises very little of his own powers ; it is the Government of India—or, more correctly, the Political Department—that decides everything. The Political Department exercises almost unlimited control over the States. The only alternative that a state has before it, when it disagrees with a verdict of the Government of India is that it may make ‘an appeal, under certain conditions and subject to certain limitations, to the Secretary of State’ ; and obviously this is not a very happy alternative. The Princes are in a very embarrassing position, and some solution must be found out. The Government is now both a party and a judge in a controversy between itself and a State ! \* The remedy does not lie in a separate Council of the Indian States, as suggested by Sir Leslie Scott ; for such a council cannot obviously decide disputes that arise out of relations between the States and the British India Government. The remedy must be sought in ‘free investigation and *joint* consultation’. As has been wisely suggested by the Nehru Committee, provision must be made that whenever there be disputes between British India and a State ‘on any matter arising out of treaties, engagements, sanads or similar documents’, the case may be referred to a Supreme Court composed of ‘men of highest legal training, character and judicial independence’ for its decision. This would ensure justice to both sides, ease the life-long irritation of the Princes and bring about a happy solution of many of the intricate differences and disputes.

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\* Compare All Parties’ Conference Report: Page 84.

Again, the rulers desire that they should have at least a working independence in the internal affairs of the State ; they want to govern, not merely to reign. While interfering in the administration of the states, the Government does not often care to consult original stipulations ; and it is difficult 'to give any definite explanation of what things they (the Government) do meddle with and what they do not.'

Now while the Government of India has been practically the final authority over disputes of this nature, it should be noted that until recently things have gone worse. The Residents and Political Agents have been all in all in the states ; the rulers have been in constant dread of them and one of their chief duties has been to keep these representatives of the supreme power 'pleased'.\* It must not be supposed that this state of things has now disappeared totally, although there are signs visible that it is not likely to last any longer. The Political Residents have been, and still are, to a very great extent, the masters of the Princes. "All those who have direct experience of Indian States know that the whisper of the residency is the thunder of the state, and that there is no matter on which the Resident does not feel qualified to give advice."† The rulers gravely object to his method of 'unseen intervention,'—an intervention that is a hundred times more dangerous and intolerable than direct intervention. From the appointment of the dewan to the pettiest affair of the state, the Resident has the voice almost of a master. Excepting in a few of the bigger states, the Resident is the real master, although he is supposed only 'to advise' the ruler in his work of administration. The policy of 'lending' British officials to the states and of minority administration has also, to a very great extent, curbed the legitimate rights and aspirations of the rulers. Interventions undertaken in the interests of the state as a whole, or the people are never taken exception to ; the real cause of annoyance is

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\* Compare Panikkar : Indian States, Chapter vii.

† *Ibid* : Chapter vii. p. 111.

latter cannot be exempt totally from the charge—the situation has to be reviewed in the light of treaties concluded in the past. The future Indian Commonwealth would not be able to sever all connexion with the British with whom the fate of India has been indissolubly bound up during the last two hundred years, nor does it seriously intend to do anything of the sort. The Princes need, therefore, have no fear in this direction.

It is also regrettable that some of the States to-day are accusing the British Indians of negligence towards them and are foreseeing mere lip-service in the sympathetic effusions of the statesmen of our time. Good sense should prevail at this critical juncture and there should be a wider room for mutual sympathy and respectful toleration in the relations between the States and British India. The states and British India have been brought to the same level to-day by the force of circumstances—political and economic—and also of accidents. Both are keen on a change and both demand a greater share in the work of governance than they have hitherto enjoyed. The states should not misjudge the sincerity of British Indians to-day on the plea that “wherever the fiscal interests of the states have clashed with the fiscal interests of British India, there was scarcely any voice raised in the Indian Legislatures on behalf of justice or on behalf of the Indian states.”\* In the excitement of the moment the Princes must not overlook that the Indian Legislatures had too many limitations imposed upon them until recently and that discussions about the Indian states in the Councils are carefully avoided by the Government of India. The people of British India have been, and will always be, vitally interested in the well-being of such an integral part of self-governing India.

When the Maharaja of Bikaner reiterated that the treaties could not be treated lightly or discarded as mere ‘scraps of paper,’ he was voicing the wishes not only of the states themselves, but of the people of British India as well. The All-Parties’ Conference Report, against which much unjust criticism has been levelled by the Princes, does not attach a position of inferiority to the states nor do the

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\* Sir Manubhai’s Speech—*The Statesman*, September 16, 1928.

framers of the Report seek to employ coercion or bullying in forming an Indian federation. They sincerely desire that the Princes should come as 'willing partners' of the future Commonwealth, and well appreciate the deep bond of loyalty that binds them to the British Crown. They are as eager as the Princes themselves 'to see that they are put in a position which constitutionally belongs to them.' They are 'keen on seeing the rights to be authoritatively defined' and 'watch the situation with anxiety.' They do not fail to foresee the real risk which the Princes also do foresee—'lest the states should be so weakened by the gradual encroachment of the Paramount Power as almost to disappear as political forces.' \* It is, however, gratifying to note that "the Princes do not wish to remain aloof in selfish isolation ; they are quite ready to play their part in the development of India as a whole and to make such sacrifices as the position may demand." †

Indeed it would be really unjust to set up artificial barriers between the states and British India. Almost all sections of politicians of British India—Indian and European—are agreed that India must have some sort of federation. And for the unification of India and its well-being as a whole, it is just that the native states should not be jealously shut out. The Princes also seem to be very eager to have some sort of a federal union. But as has been well pointed out by the framers of the Indian Constitution, "it would be a one-sided arrangement if the Indian states desire to join the federation, so as to influence by their votes and otherwise, the policy and legislation of the Indian legislature without submitting themselves to the common legislation passed by it. It would be a travesty of the federal idea." ‡ Federation implies, among other things, the supremacy of the constitution, the surrender of some powers by the individual states to be dealt with by the Central Government alone and submission to the common legislation of the central authority.

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\* An interesting article contributed to *The Empire Review* by the Maharaja of Patiala : quoted in *The Statesman*, Wednesday, September 19, 1928.

† *Ibid.*

‡ All Parties' Conference Report, Page 83.

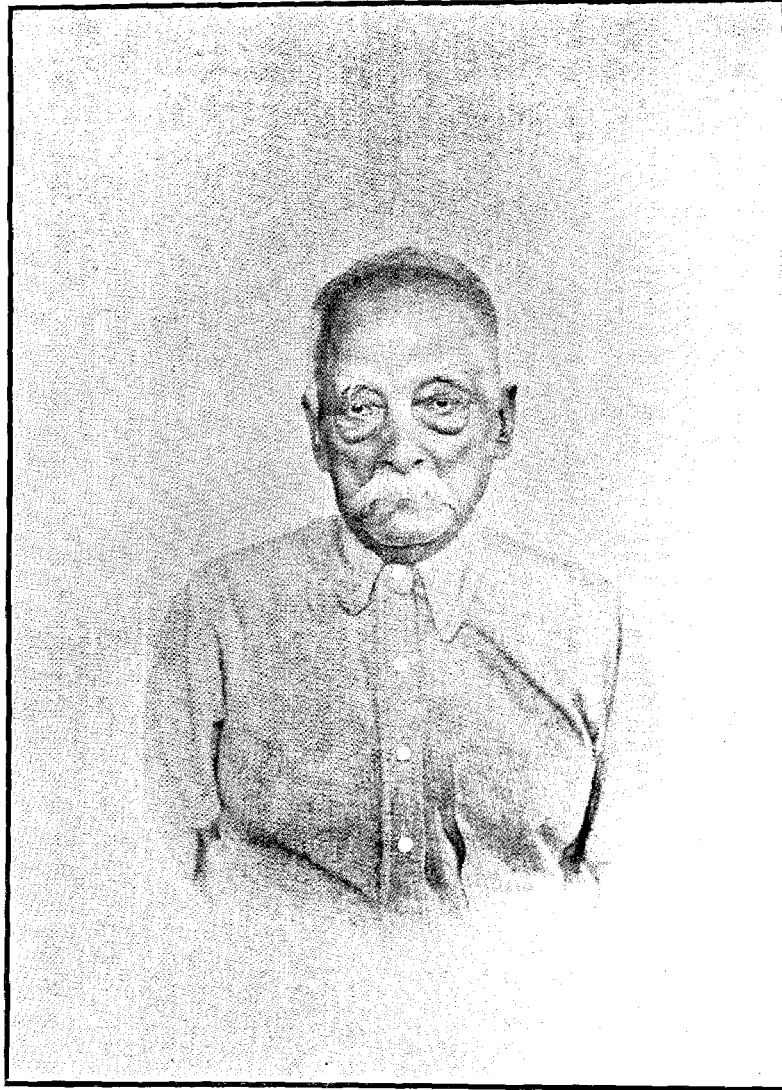
If in the federal union to be established in British India, the states are also taken in, it is just and proper that the states should modify the rather arbitrary system of government that still prevails in some of them and be willing to work for the general interest of the country, even if this may occasionally entail the surrender of some of their apparently legitimate rights before the legislations of the Central Government. This would not be a very difficult task if the Princes are really as determined to have a federation as they profess to be. Federation would solve the last grievance of the rulers and give them ample share in the control of affairs of all-India interest.

Anyway, the 'two Indias' must be brought closer together—there is no help otherwise. This union, if accomplished, would not only be a safeguard against the individual rights and privileges of the rulers, but also a means of the uplift of the glory and prestige of the Indian dominion. 'A united India can no more ignore the Princes than the Princes can ignore British India which surrounds them on every side.' As the Nehru Report says, 'the only future we want is an Indian dominion—a federal union—a congeries of internally autonomous states, united together under a strong central government' where the princes, side by side with the people, would do their duty not as proud isolated chiefs, but as the united sons of India.\*

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\* The writer of this article desires to make it clear that it has *not* been composed merely in a spirit of bitter criticism; he is *not* blind to the obvious advantages of the relation of subordination and obedience that now subsists between these states and the Central Government. Nevertheless, he recognises the fact that the Princes *now* are very different from their predecessors of about a generation ago—and that the change has happily been a progressive one. He, therefore, believes that some corresponding change should be introduced into the existing relations between the states and the Paramount Power. He earnestly hopes that the article would be judged in its proper spirit.





Rameshcharan Ganguli

90<sup>th</sup> year - 1928.



## LATE BABU SYAMACHARAN GANGULI

A distinguished scholar, great educationist  
and versatile writer.

*Born—4th June, 1838. Died—23rd June, 1928.*

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BIJOY KUMAR GANGULI.

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ONE of the earliest and one of the most brilliant graduates of the Calcutta University,—he took his B. A. degree from the Presidency College in 1860,—Babu Syamacharan Ganguli preferred to enter the poorly paid Provincial (then called Subordinate) Educational Service in January 1862. Being of a shy, retiring disposition success at the Bar was out of question, and his aversion to everything connected with law courts was so great that he never sought for a better paid post in the Judicial or the Executive Service, which would have been within his easy reach.

He held the following appointments in succession :—

Head Masterships of the Maldah, Arrah and Chapra Zilla Schools ; Lectureship,—no Indian used to be called a Professor then,—in Philosophy, Logic and English in the Sanskrit College ; Head Mastership of the Uttarpara Government School, and ultimately Principalship of the Uttarpara College on its establishment. He retired on pension in 1897 after rendering “long and valuable services to the State,” in the words of Sir Alfred Croft, late Director of Public Instruction. For his “good service, coupled with ability of a high order” Sir Alfred recommended him for the title of Rai Bahadur. Babu Syamacharan did not get this handle to his name. He, however, never cared for these things. He had 100 visiting cards printed early in his service and these lasted him till he retired after more than thirty-four years’ service, so few were the occasions that he called upon Europeans, superior officers and others. But

he often corresponded with Europeans, both in India and out of it, with whom he had intellectual kinship.

In the very beginning of his career as an educationist Babu Syamacharan made his mark, for in the Bengal Education Report for 1865-66, p. 297, Dr. S. W. Fallon, M. A., Ph. D., Inspector of Schools, N. W. Division, remarked :—"The discipline and tone of the ( Chapra ) School, and the teaching of the under Masters have greatly improved under the direction of Babu Shyama Charan Ganguli. ....Moral training and the principles of teaching receive more attention in the School than in any other School in the Division. The students of the first class have acquired a certain power and habit of thinking and also a degree of modesty and propriety of manners which testify to the elevating and refining influence of Babu Shyama Churn's teaching and example."

Fifteen years after Babu Syamacharan had left Chapra, Dr. C. J. Jackson, who had been the Civil Surgeon and Secretary to the Local Committee of Public Instruction there, wrote on the 29th July 1882, "I have never ceased to think of you with affection and respect, and have always carried about me a sense of shame at having ever been placed in a position of authority with regard to you, knowing, as I do, how much better and abler you are in every way."

Similar appreciation came from a famous Bengali, the late Babu Bhoodeb Mookerjee. In an article on the Police Commission in the *National Magazine* for February, 1903, a "Member of the Provincial Service" wrote :—"The late Bhoodeb Mookerjee used often to say, when expressing surprise that he himself got on so very well with the Government, while Babu Syamacharan Ganguli of the Uttarpara College, his superior in intellect and culture, scarcely thrived, that his chief merit lay in his tall figure, and fair complexion."

The special feature of Babu Syamacharan's teaching was that he never stopped at merely explaining the text-books, whether in English, Philosophy or Logic. The ideas, views and theories in them he always led on his pupils to accept or to reject after spending thought on them.

Presiding at the unveiling ceremony of Babu Syamacharan's portrait in the Uttarpara College hall on his retirement Mr. Oldham, the then Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, aptly described him as "Dr. Arnold of Bengal."

The blight of ill health lay upon him even while he was a College student, and he never enjoyed robust health. He was extremely regular in his habits and abstemious in everything. When he was too old and infirm to go out for a walk he had his daily constitutional on a terrace till his eighty-ninth year. Though the weakest in health of all his contemporaries in school or college he outlived them all, most of them by many years.

Even when in service with his frail health he contributed six articles to the *Calcutta Review*, the first and the most important of which was "Bengali, spoken and written." This article the then Editor, Mr. ( afterwards Sir Roper ) Lethbridge, thought to be "one of the best and most original essays" that had "ever been published in the Review." After his retirement from service he contributed one more article to the same Review, twenty-two articles to the *Modern Review* and one to the Centenary number of the *Presidency College Magazine*.

The articles covered a remarkable variety of subjects, as the titles of a few of them will show :—The Direct Method of Teaching Foreign Languages, Devanagari as the Common Script for India, Romanization of All Indian Writing, The International Phonetic Script, Esperanto *versus* English Internationalized, Reform of Fighting in Courts of Law, The Partition of Bengal—Its Annulment and Redistribution of Provinces, Self-Determination and India's Future Political Status, Steps towards Reduction of Armaments, Steps towards a World Federation, The Teutonic, Latin and Slavonic Races of Popular Ethnology, India's Two Great Gifts to the World, and Phases of Religious Faith of a Bengali of Brahman Birth.

He never wrote anything unless he had something new to say. His mastery of English was as perfect as was possible for a foreigner. One of his essays Sir Alfred Croft showed to a friend of his in

England, who was "a good judge of style" and this friend was "amazed at the purity and perfection of its English style."

His "clarity and vigour of thought" was still more remarkable and was highly appreciated by the eminent persons to whom he used to send copies of his articles. It was in 1918 that Sir George Grierson, after reading an article he had sent, wrote "I only hope that when I reach your age I may still be able to exhibit the same mental activity and balanced opinion." And his last article, that on World Federation, was written at the end of 1924, when he was eighty-seven.

At the suggestion of Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary he decided, after some hesitation, to publish in book form a selection of his contributions to periodicals under the title "Essays and Criticisms." (Luzac & Co., Re. 1-12, English price 3s.)

Two of his articles are autobiographical, one on his College Reminiscences (1917) and the other on the Phases of his Religious Faith (1924). In the Presidency College he was a favourite pupil of Prof. E. B. Cowell's, who kept up correspondence with Babu Syamacharan till about five years before his death in February 1903.

Before going from School to College, Babu Syamacharan ceased to be a polytheist and came to believe in one God. The writings of Comte and Herbert Spencer later on influenced most the general current of his thoughts, but as might be expected, he never became an out-and-out follower of either of them. Comte's religion of humanity he could not accept.

A First Cause, *i.e.* a Cause, which is uncaused, is inconceivable, and the Universe or Kosmos, which consists of all phenomena *plus* the Power at their back, is, according to him, identical with the all-pervading conception of God. He condemned the natural tendency in the human mind to exalt consciousness and to deprecate matter. An egg had long appeared to him to furnish good evidence of how the germs of consciousness might be associated, in a latent form, with a material substance.

He wrote :—"I have no objection to call myself a Pantheist, although the words 'Pantheism' and 'Pantheist' are liable to be

objected to as keeping up the idea of *theos* (God). But the *theos* here signifies no personality, \* \* \* \* 'Universism' and 'Universist,' or 'Kosmosism' and 'Kosmosist' may be proposed as terms noway objectionable. In Sanskrit, I would call myself a 'Visvavadi' and my faith 'Visvavad.' "

Hindu birth and conformity to certain Hindu usages constitute, he held, the essence of Hinduism at present. "To its credit, it leaves the individual free to believe according to his lights, so that the man of Hindu birth, whether he is a Monotheist believing in a personal God, or an Agnostic or a Pantheist, is," he wrote, "recognised to be Hindu, if he conforms to certain Hindu usages."

His religious faith, as disclosed in his article, did not change till the end.

Loss of morality and good manners in the present age is generally attributed to weakening of faith in the established religions of the world. But it is extremely doubtful whether there is really any relationship of cause and effect between the two. At least Babu Syamacharan exercised a vast moral influence over the students who passed through his hands. He was himself a man of very strict moral principles, with his sense of justice extraordinarily developed. In his life he strictly followed the excellent old Hindu ideal of "Plain living and high thinking."

He retired on a monthly pension of Rs. 164/- only after more than thirty-four years' service. But he spent a fixed sum on charity every month. He has left a modest Trust Fund of Rs. 2000/- for help to the needy of his native village Garalgachha in the Hooghly district, and in 1921 he made over to his University Government Promissory Notes of the face value of Rs. 3,000/- for creation of an endowment for the award of two annual money prizes.

He leaves behind two sons, four grandsons, three granddaughters, fourteen great grandchildren and one great-great-grandson. One of his sons was the late Rent Controller of Calcutta and one of his grandsons is a Staff Officer in the Imperial Bank of India.

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## A HINDI HISTORY OF RAJPUTANA—THE STORY OF A GREAT HISTORICAL UNDERTAKING.\*

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

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**T**HERE is at present in active course of publication in this country an historical work which when completed is bound to become the fitting literary monument of a brave and chivalrous people that have shed lustre on many a page of the mediaeval and modern history of India—the Rajputs.

It was almost exactly a century ago that the illustrious James Tod gave to the world the fruit of his life-long labours in the cause of antiquities of the Rajput country in his classical work called the *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. Its abundant wealth of material, its luminous survey of manners and institutions, the stirring and romantic theme that it treats and last, but not the least, the spirit of burning sympathy that runs through its pages at once made it the popular favourite which it has remained to the present day. Indeed it is not too much to say that it is to this brilliant epic of Rajput chivalry that the world is still indebted for its knowledge of the great part that the clans of Rajputana have played on the stage of India's history. But meanwhile the steady and continuous advance of Indian historical studies was revealing everyday the need for a more rigorously scientific and up-to-date work in the fascinating field which had captured the imagination of the author of the *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*. The times were ripe for a momentous history of the Rajputs and only a scholar of sufficient capacity was needed to give it to the world.

Such a scholar has at last appeared in the person of Rai Bahadur Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, the veteran Curator of the Ajmere

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\* Chiefly based on the Introduction (in Hindi) to Rai Bahadur Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha's *History of Rajputana*, Vol. II, pp. 38-43.

Museum who has been now known for many years past as the most zealous of the living students of Rajput antiquity. Inspired in his younger days by his perusal of the glorious annals of Greece and Rome, he threw himself with all the ardour of his enthusiastic nature into the study of Indian antiquities. While the bent of his mind was thus directed towards the channel of historical studies he chanced across a copy of Tod's masterpiece which at once defined the sphere of his future work. With his mind filled with the thrilling stories of Rajput sacrifice and patriotism he wandered down to Udaipur in 1888, where his keenness for historical pursuits led immediately to his appointment as Director of the Itihasa Karyyalaya started by its enlightened prince. The opportunities which he thus acquired for visiting the historical sites and collecting the ancient specimens were further increased when he was promoted to the post of Director of the Archaeological section of the museum at Udaipur. His desire to extend and popularize the study of ancient Indian inscriptions led him about this time to publish his Bharatiya Prachin Lipimala which, being the first work of its kind, was acclaimed with a chorus of praise by Indian as well as foreign scholars. We find him next projecting a series of manuals of Indian history ( Bharatiya Aitihasik Granthamala ) of which only the first volume bearing the title of Ancient History of the Solankis ( in Hindi ) has so far appeared from his pen. Appointed Curator of the Ajmere Museum in 1908, he employed his opportunities in still further enriching the stores of his knowledge of Rajput antiquities. Nineteen years afterwards when writing the Preface to the second volume of his monumental history of Rajputana he could declare with legitimate pride that he had spent about forty years of his life-time in collecting the most varied materials for a history of Rajasthan, consisting of coins, inscriptions, poems in Sanskrit and Hindi, popular tradition, bardic songs and the like. His attention had early been drawn to the deficiencies that a century of progress had revealed in Tod's work for he had undertaken as early as 1909 the preparation of an annotated Hindi translation of this book of which only fourteen Prakaranas appeared

in print. And now when it was known that the veteran scholar had turned his unrivalled knowledge to the purpose of writing a standard history of Rajputana, it was confidently expected that a masterpiece would be the result. Nor were these expectations doomed to disappointment. For when the first volume in a sumptuous size of 400 pages appeared in 1927 to be quickly followed by the publication of his second volume in the next year, it was received with praise in the highest terms by scholars alike of the East and of the West. Prof. Sten Konow expressed his keen interest and high admiration for the work of the Indian scholar. Dr. Barnett in wishing its speedy completion declared that when finished it would be a fitting monument to the glories of Rajputana, a true Kirttistambha. Dr. Ganganath Jha, the learned Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, declared that he had read the work with the greatest profit. The Annual Bibliography of Indian Archæology, the organ of the Kern Institute in Holland in drawing pointed attention to the history of Rajputana dwelt not only upon the vastness of its scope but also upon the high qualities of his scholarship, while it expressed the hope that a work of such importance might also appear in an English garb to make it accessible to Western readers. It is again a striking comment upon the popularity of the History that a second edition of his first volume has been called for within a few months of the publication of its first edition

Let us try to give some idea of the enormous scope of this work which has justly earned for it the designation of a *magnum opus*. It will suffice to point out that the first two volumes comprising 400 and 336 pages respectively which treat the history of the Udaipur State after a preliminary general survey of the country and its people, come down only to the reign of Rana Pratap Singha, the famous antagonist of Akbar. It is proposed by the author to treat in the succeeding volumes the history of Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Alwar, Bundi, Kotah, Girohi, Karauli, Jaisalmer, Jhalwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Tonk and Ajmere with preliminary notices on the general condition and geography of the States in each case. It has been conjectured that the whole work when completed would extend to about six or



seven volumes comprising nearly 3000 pages. As if this was not enough, the author proposes to add to each volume a portfolio of illustrations of the principal places of historical interest as well as the kings and nobles—it may be noted that a group of eighteen illustrations has already been published as an annexe of the first volume. Let us conclude by expressing our heartiest wishes for the early completion of the triumph of Indian historical scholarship which is foreshadowed by the publication of the first two volumes of the Hindi History of Rajputana.

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## THE KELLOGG PEACE-PACT.

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DEVENDRA NATH GHOSH—*Third Year Economics.*

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THE great wheel of the European War of 1914 rolled over the western world and left in its track marks of sore devastation. The world lay war-weary and mutilated, dazed with the shock of the mighty blow. To-day also, the world is perhaps none the less dazed by the sudden announcement of the Kellogg peace-proposal for outlawing war. Who could ever think that in this age of machinery and war-preparation, the first ray of the dawn of world-peace would be arriving so soon? But the indication of that glorious morn is already in the air. The world seems to hail it with joy and hope.

On April 14 last this great announcement came as a shock of surprise to all. The diplomats and the public opinion of the world were somewhat taken aback by the publication of the despatches addressed by Mr. Kellogg to the Governments of France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Japan, proposing on behalf of the Government of the United States that a multilateral treaty should be concluded renouncing war altogether.

The preamble to the Treaty consisted of only three simple Articles :—

A. 1. The High contracting parties solemnly declare, in the names of their respective peoples, that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relation with one another.

A. 2. The High contracting parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts, of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise between them shall never be sought except by pacific means.

And Article 3 prescribes that the Treaty shall be ratified in accordance with the respective constitutional requirements of the signatories and shall take effect as between them when ratified, the treaty itself remaining open as regards other powers, as long as may be necessary for their adherence to it.

The world was for the last few months hearing so often of a somewhat desultory and argumentative correspondence between M. Briand and Mr. Kellogg. But none could perhaps ever surmise that it would be productive of such a momentous result.

Now to trace back to the genesis of the great pact the brief history of this correspondence requires to be reviewed.

In April, 1927, on an anniversary meeting in Paris, M. Briand uttered these words :—“France would be willing to subscribe publicly with the United States to any mutual agreement tending to outlaw war, to use an American expression, as between these two countries.” Following this in June, M. Briand submitted a draft treaty, “to renounce war as an instrument of their national policy towards one another,” and pledging each side never to settle their disputes “except by pacific means.” On January 3 next Mr. Kellogg replied—“The Government of the United States welcomes every opportunity for joining with other Governments of the world in condemning war and pledging anew its faith in arbitration.” He thereby made it clear that the United States was not prepared to

enter into any bilateral pact with France. M. Briand replied that his Government was ready to enter into a multilateral treaty for the renunciation of "war of aggression," thereby protecting France's rights under the treaties and alliances which had been made and concluded in Europe since 1914.

Mr. Kellogg without any reserve, however, reminded M. Briand that his original proposal was for the unqualified renunciation of all wars as an instrument of national policy. Upon this M. Briand defined his difficulties on January 22: France and other members of the League had already been bound to one another by a pact which imposes mutual obligations upon them and by arguments such as they concluded at Locarno in 1925, or by international conventions which deal with arguments of neutrality. All these engagements impose duties which they cannot deny.

Mr. Kellogg's reply to this was highly inspiring. He said—".....  
...A formal engagement of this character entered into by all of the principal powers and ultimately, I trust, by the entire family of nations, would be a most effective instrument for promoting the great ideal of peace which the League of Nations itself has so closely at heart."

This answer was not, however, received with a readiness in France, which it deserved. Public opinion there was greatly perturbed by this Briand-Kellogg idea as endangering French interests. So the last reply of M. Briand was necessarily frigid. But Mr. Kellogg put aside all reservations and submitted the treaty to the five great powers.

It at once filled the air with guesses and criticisms. It was not an offer from a weak and smaller state. It came from the largest, richest and most powerful one. Then was it an idealistic pronouncement of the United States which had once refused to co-operate with the rest of the world in the League of Nations in 1920?

But however altruistic a spirit might have been the cause of this announcement, there is no denying the fact that it aims at the realisation of a great ideal. The ideal is lofty indeed, and if there is any ideal of supreme importance before the present-day world,

it is this ideal of world-peace. But the treaty itself hardly provides us with any practical means to the end. Critics have discovered many weak points in the pact. And they are too obvious to be ignored.

The Kellogg peace-pact stands for the outlawry of war, that is, it seeks to "delegalise" war altogether. It means to bind all great powers of the globe with a solemn promise that they will henceforward settle all international disputes by "pacific means". This is indeed very innocent on the face of it ; but one who looks beyond can easily see that the probability of future wars and its recognition are there in clear light. Wars will surely break out and the signatories of this pact will then come and say—"we feel very bitterly about these things. But any way, we will not settle them by war. We must settle them in other ways, for war is ruled out." This is all very good ; but the first stage of an attack on a nation by another nation is not ruled out by that. There is always a possibility of one nation falling upon a weaker nation as long as these huge armaments are there and the spirit of greedy imperialism guides the powers.

This is not all. The treaty involves a good many economic and political problems of vital importance. The great powers may easily stick to the pact and merrily carry on their respective trade and commerce without incurring any trouble among themselves. But what about the minor nationalities ? Will the backward nations aspiring to rise remain chained down as ever, both politically and economically ? There may not be wars and may be so far, peace among the powers ; but will that ensure universal peace ? So long as there are nations existing, fretting and pining under subordination, the establishment of peace is next to impossibility.

Again, there is no historic precedent to assure us that the boycott of war could ever decide international disputes. Nations may wish very much to renounce war altogether ; but will it be practicable under the complex conditions of the world to-day ? Half the wars of the past have arisen out of situations which it did not seem possible to redress except by wars. The Spanish-American

war arose out of conditions at Cuba and the Philippines, the Boer war, out of the treatment of Uitlanders, the Turkish war out of misgovernment by Abdul Hamid, the world-war, out of the racial and national feuds of the Balkan states and the Russo-Japanese war, out of the rivalry as to who was to control Korea. Thus history bears it out that the natural tendency of every nation for self-assertion which very often takes the form of aggression and greed, is always operative. So to shun war altogether seems to be a dream of the idealists.

The covenant of the League prohibits its members from going to war until pacific procedure has been used for some nine months. Thus it still leaves war as a legitimate instrument of international policy. The Locarno treaties also tell a similar tale : they authorise war, a legal method of settlement, if pacific measures fail. In this respect the Kellogg peace-pact has indeed been a novel departure from the policy of the League, for it seems to have unfailing confidence in pacific means and does not tell us definitely what will be done if pacific means fail. But by retaining armaments as ever, for self-defence, it still leaves the war-spirit to be operative and thereby wars to break out. A revolver under the pillow, as one critic observes, is all very well, but when two neighbours swear to live amicably together and at the same time spend more than they can afford in target practice, habitually spy upon each other's defences and in general exhaust themselves in warlike preparations. Then the theory of self-defence begins to look a little thin. In such circumstances as these, a pledge not to fight may well fail to carry conviction, especially when those who sign it insist that it must in no way interfere with or limit their existing defensive arrangements.

In this way, the Kellogg-proposal has been variously attacked and commented upon. The signing ceremony of the pact has been solemnised with due pomp and appearance of gravity, and all eyes are now eagerly turning to the future working of the treaty. In the light of the great ideal the treaty forebodes a series of beneficial changes in international relations. If all the powers of the world, both great and small, join hands in the treaty without

any reservations, good political consequences may be expected. It has been a sad accident that there is no mention of disarmament in the Treaty. But if the sacred mission of the pact is to be carried out at all, armaments must be reduced to the minimum of bare necessity for preserving peace and order within the land.

The war-spirit which dominates the world to-day is the gradual outcome of an advancing civilization. In the same way, the spirit of peace and good will which sounds strange in the modern age, may as well be generated, if only a suitable atmosphere is created. The sense of responsibility takes time to grow, but it grows nevertheless. It may take years for the nations of Europe to realise that, if they are to have security and peace, they must first genuinely turn their back on their entire past and renounce absolutely and not merely on paper, the right to use war as a means of policy. It may take even long for nations to realise that these steps may themselves prove inadequate unless they also make it clear that they will not allow any nation, however strong, to take the law into his own hands for the furtherance of self-interests. But once the huge war-implements are gone and nations begin to meet regularly, it can be expected that a healthy relationship will in course of time grow up. Then the powerful nations will realise that if real peace of the world is to be sought, it must be sought in the suppression of all inequalities in political status. And they will have to recognise the essential fact that so long as the idea of one nation, yoked and exploited by another, will remain, all their idealistic hopes of world-peace will fade into a mist. So, there should be no exploitation by the strong—no greedy imperialism and no wars. There must be no exceptions—no reservations for “defensive” war or “sanction” war, no question of “aggression” and “defence” and no distinction between “lawful” and “unlawful” warfare.

This is of course an ideal state of things and we can only hope for the best. But when rumours come across the seas that some powers are not going to accept the treaty or are putting reservations, our hopes seem to waver. But whatever may turn out ultimately, whether the treaty be signed by all or signed with reservations, there

is no mistaking the fact that it embodies a step forward towards the great goal of world-peace.\*

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## THE CONFLICT OF CIVILISATIONS

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ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE—*Third Year History.*

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LIFE is a great conflict of ideals. The intense and inevitable clash between the manifold movements in all their diversities, the relentless struggle waged on for ever by the ideal and the real, the eternal rivalry cherished by the opposing forces of existence—all these contribute their respective shares to the moulding of human life. Indeed, conflict and conflict alone is the crucial point of distinction between life and death.

There may, perhaps, be no fallacy in taking History as a branch of Philosophical Science in the sense that it studies man with reference to those conflicting fundamental ideas about life, civilisation and culture which lie at the very root of his existence as a rational animal. It examines the various forces which determine and help the march of humanity in definite directions, and tries to discover the essential law lying underneath. In its search for the connecting link existing between the different ages and movements History records the development of what we call civilisation.

There is enough room for difference of opinion regarding the precise import of the term civilisation, and it is as well a debatable issue, whether it is an absolute or a relative term. One may justly question whether man is making any real progress with the deve-

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\* The writer is largely indebted for his materials to the articles which recently appeared in the Round Table, the Manchester Guardian and the Review of Reviews.

lopment of ages ; and no certain conclusion may possibly be arrived at about the superiority and inferiority of the civilisation of a particular country in a particular age to that of another country in the same or in another age, only because it yet remains to be ascertained what constitutes a true and sufficient criterion of superior worth. But all the while we are conscious of sweeping changes in the movements and ideals of life, of the sudden disappearance of certain of them as well as of the slow but sure approach of others. The world is indeed an arena of unending strifes between these diverse ideas—strifes which invariably end in the establishment of new forces at the cost of old ones, and then again, in course of time, the defeated ideas again overthrow their usurping victors. This strange but universal phenomenon may be described as the conflict of civilisations.

History, then, is the story of the conflict of the different types of civilisation in different ages and climes. It studies the nature of the struggling forces, marks the result of the conflict, and tries to account for the success of the one and the failure of the other. It seeks to deduce universal laws and to anticipate the future. All the time the growing complexities of man's political, social and religious life assume different shapes and run to different routes with vehement energy, and ultimately History is destined to repeat itself.

Whether the present age has brought to man a nobler civilisation and greater happiness is, as we have already seen, a question difficult, if not impossible, to solve, and we may leave it while we study the growth and nature of the diverse aspects of modern life and their essential unity. But then, the present is the product of the past. We have to review the entire course of Ancient History if we are to have a thorough comprehension of the modern spirit and to determine the forces contributing to its growth, only because it is the result of the age-long, and almost eternal, conflict of different movements which shaped humanity in the earlier ages.

The development of the early civilisation of mankind offers a



particularly fascinating and no less illuminating study. To-day civilisation is the common property of the human race ; but in the dawn of history it was the exclusive monopoly of "four favoured spots" in the Old World. Early civilisation seems to have been determined more by natural causes than by any other influences. Perhaps this is the true historical law explaining the nature of all prominent early civilisations. The valley of the Nile was the nursery of the powerful and civilised Empire of the ancient Hemitic race. The valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates witnessed the growth on its bosom of the splendid civilisation of the Assyrians and the Babylonians—a civilisation which "flourished within its own confines and yet imparted the light of Semetic culture to all the surrounding regions." The valley of the Yang-se-kiang and the Hoangho was the seat of an ancient Turanian Civilisation which flourishes to this day, baffling the iconoclastic efforts of Time. And finally, the valley of the Indus was the theatre of the growth of the earliest form of civilisation developed by the Aryan race, whose descendants have done and are still doing a great service for the world by developing the latent forces of a cultural and religious civilisation as by offering a concrete ideal of peaceful progress to the disturbed movements of humanity.

The infant civilisation of mankind was the product of these four countries. It is probable, though by no means certain, that none of them developed its own civilisation quite independently of, and in isolation from, the rest. Their achievements were not, perhaps, the results of isolated movements, but were the joint products of the whole process of human affairs. But at the same time we may be sure that each of the four races differed from the others in some fundamental aspects of life, and each of them left its own distinguishing marks upon its own civilisation. Modern man has reasons to be proud of his fortunate inheritance : his life is being moulded by four different ideals of those intellectual races who could develop culture to such a height in the dawn of human history.

Here emerges one of the most remarkable phenomena of History.

Everyone knows how greatly the civilisation of Egypt—a civilisation which could look upon culture as an end in itself and yet could combine it with intense religiousness as well as socio-political and artistic advancement—influenced the ancient world; and the contributions of Assyria and Babylonia—countries which once seemed destined to be the centres of an world-empire and world-culture—to the growth of humanity were no less important. And yet they died away in time, leaving only a sacred lingering memory of their mighty genius and violent impetus to the march of mankind to its yet undiscovered goal. Perhaps one may find it difficult to account for the vanishing away of these huge forces from the domain of civilisation and culture; the problem at the first sight seems to owe its origin to the whims of History, and on a closer consideration looks as if inevitable. The Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Babylonians suddenly emerged out of the all-pervading darkness of the ancient world; theirs was the mission of taking the torch of cultural progress to the very doors of the barbarians of the day. Like meteors they flashed on the cloudy firmament of the ancient world; they dispelled the darkness with an amazing rapidity and then disappeared along their hasty line. A permanent life-force—that initial energy which can baffle the destructive efforts of opposing tendencies—was not granted to them; they played their parts as no other nation could, they left an abiding stamp on eternity, and, when the scene ended, their sudden flight left a trace of violent convulsion behind.

But we are confronted with an altogether different problem when we proceed to consider the aspects of the Indo-Aryan civilisation. Let us leave aside all the learned controversies regarding the date of the origin of Aryan culture. Springing up on the sacred soil of Central Asia—the cradle of civilisation as well as of barbarism, the eternal play-ground of humanity—it travelled on, impelled by Providential behest, and found in the fertile province watered by the holy Indus a land pervaded with an atmosphere healthy to its growth. There it grew and assumed a definite shape with an unflinching message for all coming ages. It was a message of peace,

but not of weakness—of strength, but not of aggression. Theirs was a civilisation which was really very complex in all its apparent simplicity : it tried to harmonise man with all the diverse forces of Nature ; it offered the widest scope to the individual for the fullest development of his capacities and yet placed him under necessary restraint. Complete freedom in all the aspects of life, full enjoyment of all the good things of the world in the form of sacrifices to the Holy One under different names, and perhaps the most perfect development of culture in all its branches—these characterised the Aryan message. Pervading every single movement in Aryan life was a deep-rooted sense of religiousness, and it is this alone that has enabled Aryan civilisation and culture to be a permanent force in the formation of mankind. Egypt, Assyria and Babylon have vanished away ; younger types of civilisation like those of Persia, Greece and Rome could not stand the test of time—inevitable revolutions swept them away, leaving only some traces to indicate their once-glorious existence. But Indian civilisation has a soul which no revolution can kill—a power which submits to no aggression—a strength which never crumbles away. It has been a nourishing force and zealous impetus to all the succeeding races, and it seems it will succumb to no crushing factor. The imperialistic aggressions of other nations have often run after the greedy ideal of conquering the world, but ultimately nationality proved stronger than Imperialism. India has also sent out her forces—not of battalions, but of ideas. She has conquered the world and conquered it permanently. Her triumph signalises the victory of renunciation over ambition, of spirit over matter. India has stood the test of the great conflict of civilisations.

Hitherto there was, perhaps, no direct conflict between the civilisations of different countries. The types of national character were probably moulded through constant inter-actions and inter-courses of life and thought. Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, China and India flourished in their own way ; each might try to influence others, but it is certain that none tried to dwarf the achievements of others and to absorb them by open conflict. The simplicity of

childhood perhaps did not allow the growth of lusty aggression in human heart. But with the rise of Greece and Persia we enter a new and striking phase in the annals of the world. The splendid civilisation of the Hellenic race stood pre-eminent in the Western Hemisphere and was trying to inspire the world with its messages of *freedom, culture and enjoyment*. Greece had absorbed the best elements of the Eastern civilisations and she was determined to force the world to take what she had to give. But on the other coast of the sea there arose a power—heir, perhaps, of Assyria and Babylon—quite unnoticed at first, but destined to play the part of a civilising agency. Persian civilisation was restless, full of life and youthful ideas. Greece tried to Hellenise the world and Persia stood on the way. The contest ensued—marking the unhappy commencement of ceaseless rivalry between the East and the West, a contest that after the lapse of hundreds of years took the form of the crusades and then again in the modern age transformed itself into the imperialistic greed of the Western nations. Greece came out as the ultimate victor.

But then, the victory of Greece was destined to imprint permanent results only on the moral world ; her career in the physical world was doomed to be meteoric. She came to awaken the West ; her mission ended ; she vanished and left her message as the common inheritance of humanity. There was victory in her defeat.

Then Rome appeared with her robust militarism and rude culture. Roman arms seemed to penetrate into the darkest corners of the world and illuminate them with the dazzling flashes of a vigorous civilisation. Romanisation appeared to be the destined end of humanity. Again the eternal conflict came. Carthage stood as her proud rival. The Aryan and Semitic civilisations fought vehemently for the mastery of the world, and at last the field of Zama rang out the signal for the survival of the former and the downfall of the latter and that for ever. Proud Rome continued her victorious march, but she also lacked in that permanent life-force, and had to yield to the rude attack of the Barbarians. The lingering light transmitted by Rome to the modern world was

scarcely visible through the shadow of the Dark Ages ; but then it was not extinguished. Rome lives in the life of Europe for ever, and the world will remember her volcanic story.

And now civilisation in its progress has again reached a peculiar crisis. The strong prolific races of Europe, pushing out their borders in a sudden impulse of materialistic greed, are trying to Europeanise the whole world. Indeed, European Imperialism now seems to maintain that Europe alone has the right to live in the world. A contest of ideas between the East and the West—a phase, as we have seen, of the ceaseless rivalry between the East and the West, opened by Greece and Persia—is now going on, the East trying to resist the battalions of the West by her passive idealism which some may mistake as her weakness whereas it constitutes her real strength. What the probable result will turn to be no one can prophesy ; but History as a Science is a failure if it does not try to anticipate the future with the help of its knowledge of the past. A review of the History of the world in its broader outlines seems to convince us about the truth of the celebrated maxim—‘no race is great enough to absorb all other races.’ Once the expansion of the Hellenic race pressed upon the oriental world and Hellenisation seemed to be the destined end of humanity. But Greek culture perceived its inability to achieve the end. Then resulted the harmonisation of the Greek and the oriental cultures, and out of this Greco-Oriental civilisation sprang up Christianity, the new world-religion that turned to be a determining factor in the transformation of the European continent. Then again, Rome seemed to absorb the world ; this was not to be. Roman energy was the energy of a violent youth, it was invincible for a time, but it had to own defeat in its old age. The fusion of Roman imperial culture with the youthful vigour and rude ideas of the barbarians gave birth to the modern European nations. Conflict, of course, ends not unoften in the extinction of certain nations ; but it does not produce an all-absorbing power. The world is meant for all, not for one. The desire to absorb others has so long ended in a harmonisation, out of which new forces and movements sprang up in time ; and it can be believed with

confidence—the confidence which can be placed on human theories—that Europe will fail to Europeanise the world. European Imperialism seems destined to crumble away; European ideas may then be harmonised and united with the oriental forces and again produce new agencies which will shape human activities in a newer form. The East may conquer with her ideas and the West with her legions, but none can absorb the other. For a time materialism may seem to have the upper hand, but spiritualism cannot die. Both the East and the West must live and flourish. Victory is transitory; only unity and harmonisation are permanent and fruitful.

It is indeed a dream, but the dream seems to float before the eyes of both the hemispheres. Neither the East nor the West can shake off their inner nature, but each seems to long for an end. The West seems to be tired of greed; the united voice of the European nations assembled at Geneva seems to refuse to be impelled by insatiable greed any more. The East, depressed by subjection, seems eager for conciliation. The two conflicting voices seem to merge in a song of peace. The dawn of a bright day may reconcile the two forces, and a new age may, at no distant age, be ushered in.

But then, will that reconciliation and peace be ever-lasting? Will no misunderstanding poison the healthy air of that new epoch? Will conflict stop there and proceed no more? There again History appears with its maxims. It seems to deny the permanency of that peace. Conflict, it asserts, is the eternal law and life must disappear with its disappearance. So the East and the West seem destined to fight for unattainable supremacy until creation merges into destruction. And yet this conflict is not inglorious; it is the crowning glory of human existence—this thirst for something never to be attained.

Thus History “emerging darkly out of the mysterious Eternity, the true epic and universal Divine Scripture” seems to justify its prophetic message to humanity.

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## THE LATE Rt. HON'BLE SYED AMEER ALI, C.I.E.

### A Memoir

**W**ITH the death of Mr. Ameer Ali passed away a great man—great in the true sense of the term—being a great leader in the world of thought, a mighty warrior whose strongest weapon was his pen, a persuasive advocate of the cause of humanity, and last but not the least of all, a consummate scholar with an unflinching zeal and ardour for truth. India has lost one of her noblest sons, the Empire has sustained a loss almost irreparable, and the Islamic World is deprived of one of its brightest jewels.

In this short and brief memoir I do not propose to enter into any extensive biographical details. Of his private life I do not know much, neither do I care to know more. His teachings show the man he was, and his works are the best introduction to the innermost sanctuary of his heart. One does not remember him for what he was but for what he said and did.

Starting his eventful career with a life of comparative obscurity, he became a law-lecturer in Presidency College and gradually rose to the dignified position of a Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Fort William. Finally he got a seat in the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council in England. He was the first Indian to be appointed to such an important position. Without an ancient and aristocratic lineage to boast of, without a strong and influential god-father to call his own, without any of those adventitious circumstances that ensure the opulent dullard his success in life, he was essentially a self-made man, one that was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth as a sententious demagogue might put it.

His was a life dedicated to the cause of humanity and to his religion. To the last day of his life he remained a veteran champion of Islam. With an unflinching fortitude and an indomitable courage he fought the battles for his correlative religionists here in India and beyond the seas in England. But it is for his activities in England in the interest of the Turks and his Indian brothers-in-Islam that

posterity will ever cherish his memory. Never did his zeal flag or his enthusiasm falter in the least. A silent worker with a burning love for truth, a singleness of purpose, and an untiring energy, he kept burning the torch of Islam amid the encircling gloom round about. At a time when all Europe was quite in the dark about Islam and its teachings he carried the light aloft and then there was a cry "Behold, a light is visible!" He lifted the veil up, cleared away the surrounding mist, and made the invisible, visible.

Yet all these miracles he wrought with his magical pen. His nature and temperament suited him more for the closet than for the platform. He was not born to command the "applause of the listening senate." He was prudent enough not to fritter and dribble away his energy in idle talk, recriminations, shiftings of blame; but in order to face an attack with the best of resolution he could muster all his abilities. When he knew what his task was he made a ready response to the call of duty and silently busied himself with his work shut up in his closet "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife."

His "History of Saracens" and "Spirit of Islam" are two well-known works. Who can read these books without being enthralled by the incomparable excellence of his language, charmed and bewitched by its easy, effortless, and spontaneous flow! One can boldly say that "The Spirit of Islam" may easily find a place among the best works in English literature.

Besides being a juggler in words he was an artist of consummate skill and dexterity who detested the sham convention and the base hypocrisy that has tainted the efforts of many of our present-day artists. "The nobility of character and the sweetness of disposition" of the prophet of Arabia is drawn with a masterly hand without the least exaggeration. While poring over the pages of "The Spirit of Islam" one can almost hear the soft and soothing voice that was music to the ears of the *Ashabs* (the companions of the prophet), and can visualise the radiant face that was so dear to the citizens of the Seventh Century Mecca. Such were the immense capacities of the scholar, the historian, and the artist whose loss is felt throughout the Islamic world.



It is refreshing to note that there is a band of small but zealous workers in England who are pushing forward the ball that the late Mr. Ameer Ali set rolling.

Great soul! Inspire them with courage! Strengthen their hearts! Islam has need of thee!

As for us, our feelings cannot be more faithfully expressed than by the following lines of Wordsworth :

“ Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade  
Of that which once was great is passed away.”

S. M. M.

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## A PLEA FOR EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SCHOOLS OF BENGAL.

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By PRAFULLA KUMAR SARKAR, M.A., B.T., Dip. Ed.  
(Edinburgh and Dublin Trinity.)  
*[Ex-Secretary, Presidency College Magazine.]*

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ANY scheme of self-governance for a country would necessitate a corresponding scheme of Education suiting its purpose, and particularly so when the educative character of its institutions becomes prominent due to special circumstances as in our country. The great American Educational thinker Dewey has given a scheme of education for the great American Democracy ; we in India may lay our heads together in discussing an Educational scheme that will suit the needs of the situation on the eve of the coming political

changes "towards Democracy." It is impossible for any nation, what to speak of a politically young aspiring nation, to work a democratic constitution without an educational system coloured by its political ideals. Bearing this in mind, we shall here try to suggest a line in which we may weave our educational fabric at the present moment. In making up our scheme we should aim, as in all progressive Democracies, at—

Developing Resourcefulness, Initiative and Patriotic sentiments towards the constitution within the Imperial, as in our case, and the League of Nations Federation.

The *Means* suggested are grouped as follows :—

A Model Experimented School may be started somewhat after the Hamburg (After-War) Experimental Schools on the lines of Professor Kerschensteiner of Munic, now a leader in "Education" in Europe; the idea of the English Public School is not held up here as a general model, as not likely to suit Indian conditions. The proposed school may be placed under Indian teachers chiefly with direct experience of the "Experimental" and other schools in Europe. The School will have the Boys' Department and the Girls' Department; at first one may be separate from the other in deference to public opinion. The *lower forms* of the boys' department will have *lady-teachers* too. The girls' department will have *Gymnastics* beside *Domestics* and *Hand-work* over and above the cultural subjects, the last two being common with the boys.

(The School should be directly under the Director of Public Instruction, so that hard and fast regulations of the University may not stand in the way of its free growth. The rules may be framed by a board specially framed for the School with informed persons.)

[The details that will now be given will partly apply to the above-discussed School and generally to all schools of the ordinary type; I am speaking here chiefly of the Secondary schools though.]

*The Educational side* (1) A civic song at the beginning of the day's work may happily be introduced to grow reverence for the constitution and mutual love for the communities residing in India and love for those living in the Empire and the Brotherhood of Nations.

(2) To develop resourcefulness and confidence there should be a gradation of hand-work throughout. (A collection of handicraft specimens was made by me from the London County Council schools after a gradation scheme made in consultation with my Professor, Dr. James Drever of Edinburgh University. The collection has been placed in charge of the Calcutta Training School.) Colour-drawings of natural objects, etching, linoleum prints, metal designs and the like would arouse enthusiasm and interest ; book-binding and some such useful craft that may bring some money, while in or out of the school should be taught as in some of the Hamburg, Edinburgh and London County Council Schools.

(3) Elementary Science should be introduced as far as possible ; the Method of Discovery may be followed in part in all classes of lessons, theoretical or practical to encourage thinking, which seems to be deadened under the present system.

(4) Too much addiction to the text should be discouraged. In answering a question, the inveterate tendency of a student is to go back in mind to the printed lines of the text.

(5) Independent observation on different subjects, making notes and finishing the work in a neat, nice way should be fostered. Of course discussion helped by the teacher's contribution on the subject will help a lot. This sort of work I found being done in the Oundle School of the "Great School-master —Sanderson."

(6) The foregoing innovations would require that class-work through the year should count in the Final Examination, otherwise no clean habit in this can be cultivated.

(7) A Vernacular medium is calculated to encourage thinking and save energy—if I may speak so from my experience as Assistant Headmaster at the Calcutta Training School for Vernacular Teachers. I found in the Birbhum Government School as an Assistant Headmaster that even the knowledge of English may be well grounded, if the English medium be propped with the use of the Vernacular. (Of course, care should be taken that a working knowledge of English, particularly spoken English be emphasised.)

(8) A course in Civics for elementary political ideas as of Rights

and Obligations should be introduced in the Schools and the Training Colleges for Teachers. In my opinion, after my English experience, our people have need to renew their lesson in Non-interference Toleration of Opinions, a sense of public interest as apart from personal or communal ones and of Individual Obligations as the first condition of Individual Rights in the present state of things.

(9) Military drill should be introduced to prepare for the future Defence Force. Drums and bugles or flutes may play their part in glowing up the youthful imagination in the right direction even in ordinary drills, which are, as things are now in this hot country, dull and void of interest and particularly so for a majority of students, who are poor and cannot afford to take anything during what we call here the tiffin (lunch) time.

(10) A minor point in this connection is that children should be trained in Eurythmics somewhat after the Dalcroze plan particularly towards the lower stages to ensure better ideas of limb-movements in unison with tunes. If so trained, they can make new games more readily on the spot, as the British children can. This may help to prepare a more harmonious material for the future Territorial Force to start with.

(11) The *Celebration of Seasons* affording opportunities for the development of the dramatic instinct as well as training in certain matters after the Dramatic Method should have its place in the innovation proposed. This idea is from Dr. Tagore, under whom I had an opportunity of serving as the Chief English Teacher. This has something also of the *Celebratoin Movement* of Dr. Hayward, Inspector of Schools, London County Council.

(12) Films on Child-Education in self-governing countries may profitably be used to create sympathy among the "wee" folk of this country and abroad, besides serving the purposes of the Teacher's Training.

*The Social Side.* 1. More of self-governance should be introduced steadily among the children. Of course, discipline will work from behind like the British Police in the street. 2. Season-festivals will help to cultivate Social-virtues too. 3. Activities like tank-cleansing,

road-making, jungle-cutting as organised in the Bolpur School of Dr. Tagore should be encouraged to bring our children in real touch with life problems, Boy-Scouting having more of the fancy-element being in this way counterbalanced. 4. As women are coming out they should have a better physique and *esprit de corps* for self-protection in a heterogeneous social group, as in Calcutta, and also for the improvement of the race, whose female half is notoriously feeble. Gymnastics seems to be a good remedy to make better workers for the present and better mothers for the future. Its effect in the German schools has been rejuvenating, which I noticed during my visit to them last year. 5. To create greater respect for women and girls, when they will be freer, and for other reasons, Female teachers should be recruited for the lower forms. They are conspicuous by their absence now. (I had a talk on the subject with the late Dr. Ewan at Edinburgh; he apprehended financial difficulties; the existing low scales of pay would not attract the right kind of female-teachers) 9. Reverence for the weaker sex may be fostered from childhood in several other ways, when there is going to be more of Female Emancipation. Boys should be brought up in the idea that they are going to be the protectors of women and the helpless, and girls in the idea that they are going to form a healthy motherhood for the nation

[This is only to face the new situation that is coming on. This does not mean that we lack in home-training for a moral code on the point of respect for ladies. But the thing cannot be denied that under the stress of modern life faith in our own social institutions has a bit been slackened and people do not expect to get the same home and social "grind" as they used to get of old outside the school. So, as in other civilised countries, where for inculcation of the same principles of social and individual morality the school does its part generation after generation, we now have to look up to the school in this, our social and home influences working not so effectively as before.]

*Girls' Education.* 1. As to the course of girls, I would like to stress the Domestic equally well, that will help in house-keeping, as they do in Scotland in certain Secondary schools even. This will in-

spire popular faith in girls' education. 2. Gymnastics has been mentioned already.

*Training of Female Teachers.* A number of them should be trained at Government expense in England and Scotland, supplementing their course in Switzerland and Germany. They will combine with advantage a course of Physical Training, Curative Exercises for children, Dietetics, as they provide in the Women's Polytechnic, London, speech-training, hand-work (as is arranged in the Edinburgh Training College) and Dalcroze Eurythmics in addition to general subjects. Professor Dalcroze is ready to give every facility to our lady-students, as he told me during an interview with me after his lecture-demonstration last October in England.

*Training of Teachers.* 1. The training course should have an Agricultural section and a Handicraft section. This will apply more to the Primary School Teachers' case. 2. Should have a course in civics. 3. One in Social Hygiene mainly on the Purity Teaching line as suggested to the Department by me. 4. Something should be included on Mental Measurement after the Edinburgh training course. 5. Educational Experiments should be encouraged more. 6. A higher course called "Education" course should be instituted in the University. 7. A spattering knowledge of Geography is given in the Training College for want of due provision of it in the University. 8. The University should in conjunction with the Training College create a systematic course in Geography to be learnt in a more practical way with reference to local conditions. 9. A few handicraft teachers should be specially trained at different centres preferably to combine skill in different crafts, including something of Engineering too, some giving their training a finishing touch in England and Scotland. I found such teachers, one in an Edinburgh Secondary school and another in a London County Council school; the former was teaching even the making of a wireless set, while the latter was teaching Arithmetic and Geometry by the Applied Scientific method too. (10) This necessitates the appointment of a Handicraft Teacher for the Training College too. (The school hand-work teachers may go in circuit through different schools, one in charge of about three schools in the year.)

*The Financial Side* 1. More of scholarships to help on poor students should be provided for a democratic scheme of Education, broadbased on the Primary. For this big people may be induced more to slacken their purse-strings, which they are not in the habit of doing in this country for Education ; they would rather invest money in the high lands of Inverness for the pleasure of games. 2. In starting the Primary schools, in all areas building contracts, that are a luxury in a sense, should be avoided and the help of the co-operative Department may be requested instead. 3. An Employment Bureau of an effective kind will be found necessary for directing the materials to be turned out by the schools of all descriptions, helping them in getting jobs or apprentices in crafts, as they do in Scotland. 4. The Teaching services should be placed on a better footing, having scales of pay that will approach those of the Executive and Judicial Branches of the civil service. 5. Those with English training should have a better scale of pay than that beginning, as now, with Rs. 150 a month only. They should have what we may call a "Living Wage" of about Rs. 250 a month to start with so that there may not be any falling off in efficiency gained at a great cost in England due only to physical privations. 6. Teachers in general headed by the Headmaster should have wider powers. 7. The recruitment of Female Teachers has been discussed. 8. The appointment of a separate Librarian will leave with the teacher more time for his own work.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that the proposed changes, some or all, may be given effect to or tried in an Experimental school first specially started or converted for the purpose. I have already tried to give an idea of it at the outset. The state-schools which have been serving as models, will continue to assist in the matter according to local conditions.

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## KESHAV CHANDRA SEN AT DACCA.

[From the presidential address to the Dacca College  
and Dacca Hall Old Boys' Association]

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BY RAI BAHADUR SHAMA CHARAN ROY.

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THE late Babu (afterwards Rai Bahadur) Kaliprasanna Ghose came to Dacca in quest of service, and began to deliver lectures in English on Brahmoism. But the Christian missionaries who attended these lectures could not brook this, and Rev. Mr. Allan, an American Missionary, used to interrupt him very often in course of his lectures and tried to deprecate him by saying that his English was bad and that he had no knowledge of Philosophy and History. This continued for more than a month and the conduct of Mr. Allan gave great offence to the Brahmo Community.

It was the general opinion among us all that unless Brahmananda Keshav Chandra Sen came to Dacca, it was in no way possible to check Mr. Allan and his followers. So, an earnest appeal was made to Keshav Chandra Sen to come to Dacca, and he promised that he would come. At the time of which I am speaking, a steamer used to ply once a week from Calcutta or Kusthea to Dacca, and as Keshav Chandra Sen was expected every steamer-day, we used to flock to the steamer *ghat* at Badamtoli. But for a month or so, we had to return disappointed and Mr. Allan continued his vituperative attacks on Kaliprasanna Ghose during his lectures. At last information was definitely received in Dacca that by the next steamer Keshav Chandra Sen was certain to come and to the great joy of us all, he did come and he was enthusiastically received and escorted from the steamer *ghat* to the house of the late Babu Braja Sundar Mitra. A large crowd followed him, and immediately after his arrival, Mr. Aratoon, the then Headmaster of the Normal School, a follower of the Rev. Mr. Allan, circulated a notice that he (Mr. Aratoon) would deliver a lecture at Rai Mohan Babu's *Natmandir*.



In the notice it was also stated that Keshav Chandra Sen had been invited to attend the meeting. The name of Keshav Chandra Sen drew a pretty large crowd to the meeting. It was to commence at 6 p.m., but as Keshav Chandra Sen did not arrive at the meeting at the appointed time, Mr. Aratoon waited for his arrival. At last Keshav Chandra Sen came, and without uttering a word, occupied the first chair in the front row. In this connection I have to tell you that at the time it was the custom at Dacca that at public meetings all the chairs used to be occupied by Europeans and Armenians, while, with the exception of our revered Law Lecturer, the late Babu Upendra Nath Mitra, Government Pleader, not a single Bengalee gentleman, official or non-official, ever occupied any chair. But when Keshav Chandra Sen occupied the first chair, it filled us all with very great delight to see that there was such a man among us as could without taking any notice of Europeans or Armenians, occupy, as of right, the foremost seat. I hope that custom no longer exists at Dacca.

It was announced that he (Keshav Chandra Sen) would deliver four lectures in English and two in Bengali.

The first English lecture was on "Faith." The lecture was to commence at 6 p.m. but from 4 o'clock, large crowds began to flock at the big Natmandir of Rai Mohan Babu and even outside. The "Mandap" was filled with a huge concourse of European and Armenian ladies, and almost all the European and Armenian gentlemen of the station were present. Even Mr. Brennand, (Principal, Dacca College,) who seldom attended any meeting, was in evidence before the meeting commenced. The Rev. Mr. Allan was also there with paper and pencil to take down the lecture in shorthand. At the appointed hour, Keshav Chandra Sen, like a prince arrived in a phaeton of the late Nawab Sir Khaja Abdul Gunni of Dacca and took his seat on the pulpit. For 5 or 6 minutes he remained sitting in the chair, as if to survey the audience. Then he rose and began his lecture. For a few minutes it appeared that the lecture was not quite enlivening and almost in a tone of despondency. I said to a friend of mine, the late Babu Harkumar Ghose that probably he

had been unnevered at the sight of such a big European audience. But soon after, the lecture began to move like a storm evoking enthusiastic applauses and spontaneous cheers from all quarters, and the Scotch gentlemen present were seen rising up and waving their hats at times. The whole audience seemed to have been literally electrified. Mr. Allan was taking shorthand notes and I said to my friend Kumud Bandhu who sat by me, "How is it that today Mr. Allan is not rising to interrupt the lecturer? Kumud Bandhu replied, "Why should he interrupt such a lecturer?" It was a pity that amongst us there was not a shorthand writer. Consequently none of his Dacca lectures could be reported and published. But I can give you some idea of his lecture on "Faith" by telling you that it was as inspiring and edifying as his lecture on "Regenerating Faith" delivered at the Townhall in Calcutta.

The gathering at all the other three lectures was equally large and the lectures, which were on "Love," "Sacrifice" and "Intuition" were as eloquent and impressive as the first one.

In the last lecture, namely, that on "Intuition", Keshav Chandra Sen, addressing the Christian missionaries, said: "Before you attack the theory of intuition, first learn the philosophy of intuition," and boldly challenged them saying, "If any one can prove that intuition is derived, I shall forego Brahmoism."

Two or three days after this lecture, the Rev. Mr. Allan delivered a written counter-lecture against Keshav's doctrine of intuition. At its commencement he paid high tributes to Keshav Chandra Sen and said that he had no objection to his first three lectures which commanded the respect of them all, but that he could not speak in the same terms with regard to the last. He came with several books and read extracts from them in support of his theory and at times he was saying, "I remind my friend of his promise that he would forego Brahmoism" if the fallacy of his doctrine could be exposed.

After this lecture, at the earnest request of us all, Keshav Chandra Sen delivered another lecture, and it was so impressive that we used to talk about it for many days afterwards. It was a crushing reply to the arguments and theories advanced by Mr. Allan. In this lecture

he said more than once in reply to what Mr. Allan had said, "I still reiterate my promise to forego Brahmoism etc." and he asked the Christian missionaries to study the philosophy of Victor Cousin which would remove erroneous ideas about intuition.

He also delivered two lectures in Bengali in the same *Natmandir*. He had never before delivered any public lecture in Bengali, though he used to deliver Bengali sermons in the Brahmomandir. Still these two lectures were as forceful and uplifting as the English ones. At the first Bengali lecture when he exhorted the audience by holding up the example of Chaitanya, Kamaldas Babaji *alias* Lakridas Babaji fell prostrate on the ground in a spell of unspeakable emotion. The late Barada Kinkar Roy and Laksmi Munshi, who were the leaders of the bar and of the Hindu community, as also our College Pandit S. Srinath, were mightily charmed by his speech. At this time the hostility of the Hindus to the Brahma Samaj was quite as great as that of the Christian missionaries. If any Brahma happened to go to any orthodox Hindu's house and take his seat on the "Farash," the water of any *Hukkah* that might be there would be deemed polluted and was thrown away. But the whole Hindu community at Dacca seemed to have been so much enamoured of Keshav Chandra Sen's address that Barada Kinkar Roy and Laksmi Munshi actually invited him to their houses and entertained him with refreshments. One day I asked our Pandit Mahasay, what he thought of Keshav Chandra Sen. He replied that Keshav was a *Rishi* and that what Keshav spoke was in agreement with the Hindu Shastras, but that the Dacca Brahmans were merely fowl-eaters.

The European community also was equally enthusiastic in their admiration for the great man. Even Mr. Brennand, usually indifferent to all worldly affairs, not only granted holiday to the College and the School in honour of Keshav Chandra Sen's visit to the College, but also took him to his house and entertained him there, though Mr. Brennand did none of these things even when Lord Napier of Magdala had visited the College. Mr. Bellett (Professor, Dacca College), too, after having heard his lecture, once remarked, "There are few even among us, who can speak so well." On a certain occasion

while reading the essay on "Great Men" from the Spectator to us, he enquired if we could give an example that would satisfy the definition. Certain Zamindars were named by way of a reply. But Mr. Bellett observed that they were rich indeed but not quite great. When, however, Keshav was named as an example, he accepted the answer as correct and pointed out that Keshav was great because though he had left Dacca, "the eyes of the multitude were still turned on him" in the sense that they had not ceased to think of him. At various meetings of the Dacca Institute, European gentlemen spoke of Keshav Sen very respectfully and admiringly.

While we were in the B. A. Class, Keshav Chandra Sen came for the second time to Dacca, and, it is needless to say, he was as enthusiastically received as he was before. This time he delivered only one public lecture at the Nawab's house. So tremendous was the uproar that it was feared that it would be impossible for Keshav Chandra Sen to deliver the lecture. However, as soon as he rose and uttered the words, "Friends and Fellow-countrymen," pin-drop silence at once prevailed. The lecture was on "Brahmoism". It was as eloquent as the lectures I had the privilege of hearing before. We were taking down the lecture, but after a few minutes we found it an impossible task, and at last gave it up. The lecture was simply thrilling, and though over 50 years have elapsed since then, I still remember some passages of the lecture which made a deep impression. Keshav Chandra Sen had a high regard for Dr. Duff and in referring to him he said, "Dr. Duff, the prince of missionaries, than whom a greater man did not visit India, declared, on the eve of his departure for Europe, in terms most emphatic and unambiguous, that Brahmoism was a power."

In another part, I remember, he said in reference to Miss Cobb, "By some happy coincidence, I have this day received a letter from a lady in England,—the same feelings that actuate us here throb in a distant sister." And he paid a high tribute to the people of East Bengal of whom he said, "What was Scotland to England, so is East Bengal to West Bengal." He further said, "Last time few people ventured to dine with me, but this time about 30 gentlemen

came forward to dine with me". Keshab Chandra Sen had with him at the time several letters which he had received from England, earnestly requesting him to visit that country. I read them with very great interest. In one he was addressed as the "Indian Demosthenes"; in another he was curiously styled as "the Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College"; and so

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## TO WAR OR TO PEACE ?

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RANADHIR SARMA SARKAR—*Fourth Year Economics.*

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**T**HROUGH the long course of our experience of centuries, one thought has been constantly present to every thinking mind, what will be the future trend of world politics? Is war the end of all human hopes and progress? Is such a catastrophe, the result of all the efforts made to establish peace between the peoples of the world? The world marches on triumphantly when the life-force confronts itself with the grim question, *Quo vadis?* whither goest thou?—to war or to peace? What shall be her answer?

Any answer to this question based on our past experience will be misleading. Our past is a record of sad failures. War is as old as mankind itself. Whether or not we accept Hobbes' theory of the state of nature, it is a fact that so far as our knowledge of history goes, mankind has been warring through the ages. Many a time, just when a war was over and its consequences were being bitterly felt, attempts were made to bring peace to the world but in vain. But that is no reason why similar attempts in future should also be failures. The world is advancing, circumstances are changing, and peoples are more and more realising that they lose more by war than

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\* We are indebted for these interesting extracts from the address, the full text of which was published in the East Bengal Times, to our late Principal Mr. H. E. Stapleton now officiating Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, who kindly supplied us with a printed copy of the whole address.—Ed. P. C. M.

they gain, and we may confidently hope that at no very distant date, an era of everlasting peace, based on the ultimate good of the world will be ushered in.

In internal affairs, peace and order have already been established with the growth of the state. There are yet grave problems to solve. Capitalists still hold the field and they still command the destinies of nations. Labour lives in slums, works on starving wages and spends what little it gets in ale houses. The life of a labourer is a drudgery with nothing to hope for, nothing to look beyond.

With others also, fear plays a greater part than hope ; dread of unemployment and loss of livelihood make their lives full of cares and anxieties and they have no time to turn to their nobler sentiments. We have to struggle hard to solve these problems but we need not go to war. There is the state to prevent the reign of violence in human affairs, and to maintain peace and order.

The internal strife is not so conspicuous or important as inter-state wars, and to provide a machinery to prevent them gives us the greatest troubles. Controversies between states arose in the past and must always be expected to arise and there must be a way of settling them. Hitherto if negotiations failed, war was the only means left and it was resorted to. If war is to be prohibited some other means for settlement must be provided and it may be predicted with some amount of assurance, that the time is dawning when we shall be able to create a machinery for world-peace.

The strong incentives to war are absent to-day. Since the colonial expansions a perverted sense of nationalism, to spread "an aristocracy of the white race over the extra-European world" (Trietsche) has been at the root of all troubles. This scramble for power and for obtaining a footing in countries abroad has increased greatly the spirit of antagonism that has already existed among nations and the successes and failures in colonisation and conquest have given a keener edge to inter-national antipathy. There are to-day no more uncivilised lands where they can go and colonise. Further the horrors and evils of war have set them thinking seriously of peace. War consumes not only the material wealth of civilisation and the finest man-

hood of the race, but also paralyses the impulse towards social progress and spreads black despair in the hearts of men and women devoted to great causes. And it is quite certain that if nations have to organise their resources for a future war, they will do it in a far more thorough and destructive fashion. From these evils there is no escape except by way of a society of nations, which, it is hoped, will guarantee peace and security for all nations and leave them free to develop their moral and material resources without the menace of recurrent wars. But all nations joining the League, have to forego their freedom to go to war, but they will do so because the gain to *each* member of the League, not to speak of the gain to the world in arresting wars—far outweighs the limitations to its “will to war”, which it accepts in entering the Union. After the last war, this *enlightened* self-interest has combined with the highest form of political and social idealism in support of the machinery for world-peace.

If we could trust that the sins and sufferings of these years would change men's hearts, would make the thought of war hateful to men and instil a love of justice and right and human brotherhood, we might hope for peace resting on the most natural and most stable foundations. But a “large portion of the population has an impulse to conflict rather than to harmony” (B. Russel's *Principles of Social Reconstruction*). They go to war not so much for self-interest as to *satisfy their impulse*. The fundamental problem for the pacifist is to prevent this impulse towards war; this can be done by far-reaching changes in education, in the economic structure of society and in the moral code by which public opinion is formed.

We must create a machinery, which will prevent war and change the human impulse to conflict and foster the love of peace among the peoples of the world. With these ideas, the ‘League of Nations’ sprang to life in 1919 as a part and parcel of the Treaty of Versailles. It neither aims at creating a super-state, reducing the nations of the world into dependencies, nor is it an international body to which voluntarily and, in consequence, fitfully disputant nations might resort, but “a solemn agreement between sovereign states which

consent to limit the freedom of action in certain points for the greater good of themselves and of the world at large."

With the establishment of the League, a new era has been ushered in. Its very establishment has changed our outlook. It has made the task of holding international conferences easy and we look at every question from the world-standpoint. This new outlook has been further helped by the development of economic relations which has made all nations dependent on one another and by the enormous development of science which has knit the whole world together. We to-day have come to think that we shall be able to leave a better world in which the spirit of a divine peace will move upon the face of these storm-tossed waters and still them to an *abiding calm*.

The League operates through an Assembly, a Council and a Permanent Secretariat. In the first session of the Assembly which met in 1920, a Permanent Court of International Justice was established and placed at the Peace-Palace at Hague to settle international disputes. When disputes arise they are referred either to arbitration or to this Permanent Court. If any party refuses arbitration and threatens war, the League will declare economic boycott of the recalcitrant state. The states that are members of the League can interdict all trade with the offender, can forbid their subjects to send exports to or to receive imports from, it or lend money to it. This would be a penalty it would scarcely venture to defy. Such a method might often be speedier than war and quite as effective.

This economic boycott failing, the League will declare war against the offender. But where are the military force and the navy to be found? Bertand Russel suggested that so far as military functions are concerned there will be but one state, which will be world-wide; other states will have no military and naval power. But such a scheme would create a super-state, making other states only vassals. So it will be better for the League not to keep any standing army and navy but to take the help of other states in times of need.

With these novel ideas, the 'League' has been working. It has



carried the world one big step forward towards the attainment of the ultimate good. It has at least provided a place where the disputing parties may come and discuss their problems in the presence of the representatives of all the nations of the world, before they actually launch in warfare. It has solved many knotty problems which, but for its intervention, would have led to wars. It has prevented war between Sweden and Finland; it has settled the vexed question of Upper Silesia *after every other means had been tried and failed*; it has avoided disputes between Albania and Jugo-Slavia; it has settled the boundary lines between Poland and Lithuania; it has done many other things; its non-political humanitarian activities are many and unchallengable.

But still the question arises—Will the League do permanent good to humanity? Will it ensure real peace to the world? The answer to this question is nothing but an emphatic “No”. All nations, except perhaps two or three, will confirm our answer. Their voices of protest, however feeble and futile, show that they are being pinched somewhere, that there is something wrong with the League. We may make a wrong diagnosis of the disease in our body, but when there is pain and pinching, we have to admit that there is some disease.

Newspapers are full of criticisms against the League. They attack it from two points, which, however, are fallacious. They say that the League has not solved the problems of China and of India; it has not solved the greatest problems the war has left behind—the Reparation problems and the problems of international debt; it has not done many other things it ought to have done. To them, it may be answered that the League, as an international body, has nothing to do with the internal problems of a country; moreover, a thing must be judged not simply by what it has not yet done, but by what it has done. For a League, in its infancy, born in the turmoil of 1919, regarded by most political functionaries as an interloper, the foregoing list of activities is by no means a mean achievement.

The second point of criticism is that it lacks sanction; but a combination of the peace-loving states is a sufficient force behind

the League. A greater power should not be given to the League, lest it should form itself into a super-state reducing all other states to the position of mere dependencies.

Where, then, is the defect of the League? The very foundations on which the League has been built are rotten; we have built the League on the sands of insecurity and any moment the grand edifice may tumble to the ground. The League wants to maintain peace; but we want not peace, not *Santi*, but *Kalyan*,—the ultimate good of the world. The path of *Kalyan* has not always been peaceful; it has often to wade through wars. The League wants to maintain the *status quo*; we want to break that. The Covenant of the League has provided in Art. X., that "the members of the League, undertake to respect and preserve as against the external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all the members of the League". The Treaty of Versailles, has indeed marked the triumph of nationalism in Europe, but there are in other parts of the world many nations which are not yet states. This 'keystone of the arch of the Covenant' has sealed their fates. The Kellogg-Pact, has doubly sealed the fate of these unfortunate nations. There can be no talk of permanent good or real peace, unless these nations be free states and stand on a footing of equality with other nations. The first step towards inter-nationalism is the full growth of nationalism in all parts of the world.

There are other constitutional defects in the League. In the Council, which exercises real power, seats have been reserved for the 'big six', while many nations have never got a chance of sitting in it. Would it not have been better, if the Council were wholly an elected body out of the Assembly? Secondly, in the Permanent Court of International Justice, some states are represented by more than one man, but there is none to represent Hindu and Muhammadan laws, which govern one-fourth of the world-population. Thirdly, though it is laid down that benefits will be conferred on different nations according to their respective scales of contribution, the principle is not followed in practice. India, though standing fifth

as a contributor to the League's fund, is represented by two of her nationals in the combined staff of the secretariat—the Labour Bureau and the International Court of Justice, while one nation paying 23 units more than India is represented by more than 200 of her nationals, while another paying 50 units less than India by 130 of her nationals. Finally, the position of the mandatory states, which are being exploited under the shield of high ideals, has evoked criticism and unqualified condemnation from all quarters.

For these various reasons, the League will not do real good to the world; it must pass away burnt up in the fire of its own hot passions. The next period in the world's history will see the struggle for the triumph of nationalism in Asia and Africa. It will be a period of war. From their ruins will grow up a "Society of Nations"—we hate the world 'League'—representing equally all the nations of the world—which will ensure real peace and security to the world.

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### LORD HALDANE—THE MAN AND THE PHILOSOPHER.

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( From notes taken from the extempore lecture delivered  
at the Philosophy Club of the Presidency College by  
Dr. S. N. Das Gupta. )

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**I**T was with great sorrow that I read the other day, in the paper, that Lord Haldane was no more. In 1924, when I had been to Naples to represent India at the Fifth International Congress of Philosophy and visited England, my old friend and teacher Dr. Mc Taggart was then living, and he told me that Lord Haldane was eager to meet me and later on I had an invitation from Lord

Haldane to lunch with him. That was the first time that I met him. He was a fat man, and if I had a photograph of him, I would have shown you, he looked so simple, and so amiable. He looked more a good and kind man than a gloomy philosopher. I found that he had studied my interests. He prepared no English dish but had prepared rice and curry for me. He himself also partook of the rice and curry. It is the custom to have wines on the table, but we had only orangeades. He had imagination enough to understand that an Indian does not relish wine. This is a very simple thing ; but this at once attracted my notice. Excepting at one or two places more, I nowhere found a host who had the imagination to study the inclinations of an Indian guest in this manner.

Oftentime you find that people have philosophy like an obsession. In that particular line, people generally become stereotyped. This is why scientists who specialise in one direction lose the broader view of life. They cut asunder that which establishes harmony among us. We must remember that nothing in the world can stand asunder. Whenever a man goes so deeply in any subject as to be out of touch with other things, he often grows narrow-minded and develops narrow interests. This could not be said of Lord Haldane. He was essentially a politician. People used to call him an amateur philosopher. He had not the same logical precision and logical analysis as we find in writers like Dr. Mc Taggart, Broad, Moore and others. He had always the methods of an amateur. He was not destined to be a College teacher of philosophy, nor a professional philosopher. He was a man of the world, a diplomatist. He was out and out a practical man and at the same time a philosopher. And in his writings you won't find the technical terms and categories ; He had a broad view of philosophy. His treatment of philosophy reads more like poetry. He used to call Germany his spiritual home, and he was stigmatised for that by his own people. I remember that in 1920, I searched about 20 shops of London for a copy of Haldane's *Philosophy of Humanism*, but couldn't find it. In one of the shops, when I

enquired, the reply was, "Who is to keep his books? He is a pro-German." Russel was an active pacifist and in consequence of that he not only lost his job in the Trinity College, but was also sent to the prison. So Lord Haldane was very unpopular during the War. He was an out and out Hegelian. He was also inspired by Goethe—the one literary master whom he adored most. In his books, we find various quotations from Goethe. But Goethe is often Hegel made literary.

After lunch, we talked for a long time. He began to talk about India and tried to gather all the informations that I could give him. One instance will show you how well informed he was about the affairs of our country. I was to have been the Principal of the Sanskrit College. I could not go there as I was not a Brahmin. And when we had a talk about self-government in India, he suddenly said, "Do you think that country to be fit for self-government where a public minister thinks that a man who is otherwise regarded as the fittest man to become the head of a college, is disqualified for the post for not being a Brahmin?" This shows how very keen he was about all that happened here in India. He told me that he had read large parts of my book. I suggested that he should write a book on Indian Philosophy after having studied the subject, and he said that he would do it if he had time. We then talked for a long time about various things, caste-system, Indian philosophy etc. In 1926 when I was proceeding to America at the Sixth International Congress via England he knew it beforehand and I found a letter from him inviting me to pass a few days in his native home at Glen Eagles, Perthshire. So I went to Scotland—a very nice and rugged country.

There was another interesting man there, his brother, Professor Haldane the biologist. His brother looked older though he was younger than Lord Haldane. There was also Miss Haldane. Lord Haldane did not marry, and so also his sister. His sister is also a great writer, and she has translated Hegel's Philosophy of Religion from German and Descartes' works from French. Lord Haldane took me to the drawing room. There he smoked and

talked in company with his brother and sister. Then in his own room, we two talked together for a long time, after which he brought me himself to my sleeping room ; he was so hospitable that he continued to give me all kinds of tips which are necessary to the comforts of a new-comer in the house. He asked me to go to bed, then he put the quilt over me, put down the shutters and blinds, and gave me all the necessary details that are necessary for a stranger. I was feeling ashamed that an old man of his eminence should be looking to the comforts of a young man of my position. I lived with him for 4 days. During all these four days, he gave his whole time to me. This is a great thing and I am proud of it, and I shall cherish the memory all my life. Dr. P. K. Roy was his class-fellow, and he used to ask me "Well, how is Roy ? How are his children at Ballygunge ?"

He told me that I was the first Indian that he invited at his country house, because he wanted to talk with me about Indian Philosophy. I was also asked to put my name in his autograph book. His last book is *Human Experience* and it is written to criticise Prof. Dewey's book. The *Hibbert Journal* contains his last article. In it he summarises my book on Hindu Mysticism almost chapter by chapter. My lectures on Hindu Mysticism had nothing to do with politics. It was a pure and simple enumeration of Hindu Mysticism. But Lord Haldane drew a political significance out of it and having summarised my book on Mysticism he said that it was rightly pointed out there that the British people knew no more of Hindu thought than is necessary for policing the country. This ignorance is the cause of all the muddle.

"In the passages from his Lectures," writes Lord Haldane in the *Hibbert Journal*, "which I have summarised, Professor Das-Gupta gives us an interpretation of the Hindu mind which we do well to remember. For in its foundations it resembles much in our own views. Religion all over the world and in all ages seems to have more of a universal foundation than we commonly imagine. We may be right in our preference for what has developed in the West. We may think that the infinite is disclosed in it more fully. But

many millions of people in India think otherwise. The reasons for their attitude I have tried to state in outline in this article.

“But whatever the truth in the Indian view, there is something that it compels us to recognise. Beliefs with such old and wide foundations influence profoundly where they exist, the outlook of the people, not only on religion, but on practical and political affairs. We have, as the Professor says, succeeded admirably in “policing” India. We have done much for her, and have protected the various peoples who make up her population. But have we secured in exchange the faith and confidence of that population? He would be a bold man who would say that we have. Their gratitude for having kept the peace we may have secured, but even this not ungrudgingly. Not the less in that gratitude do they look on us as strangers who do not enter into what they value most. The sound of the flute of Krishna has not reached us. To the inhabitants we are as folk of a different faith.”

This gives you his attitude before his death. This shows how he was beginning to be influenced by Indian thoughts. If he had lived, and if he had written something on Indian Philosophy, it would have been something very original. I had every hope that Lord Haldane would write something on Indian Philosophy which could show to many Europeans that India *had* a philosophy.

Turning to his own philosophy we must say that he was a Hegelian. In 1888, he wrote an article where he asserted that he believed in Hegelian dialectic but not in Hegelian ontology. His first book was the *Pathway to Reality*. Then appeared his *Philosophy of Humanism*, and then the *Reign of Relativity* which sold like anything. In two weeks, it had two editions. *Human Experience* is his last book. He had not changed very much his opinion since he wrote his *Path way to Reality*. He had one continuous story to tell us in all his books. He did not, like Russel, change his view twenty times over. The *Pathway to Reality* is an important book no doubt but so are also his *Reign of Relativity* and *Human Experience*. Dr. Haldar has written a book giving brief summaries of the Hegelians. There he devoted a few pages

to Lord Haldane. The main standpoint of Lord Haldane was this : In our ordinary observation, we have the notion of the mind as being quite different from the objects. But when we go deeper, another problem arises, whatever exists as an objective thing to us, exists because we think it to be so. Would the book be what it is if I did not perceive it ? To each perceiver, the book has a different value. It has a money-value to a shopkeeper and knowledge-value to a philosopher. We cannot say that all the meanings are centered here or there. For, but for human experience this book had lost all its meanings. But it is not your imagination only which makes the reality. Matter also contributes to its being. They both together give the meaning. The mind and the matter cannot be taken separately. Everything is correlated. It is by this connection that each of them attains its value. Take the human mind as a whole. Think yourself as united with the rest of the world. Think that your own thoughts are but individual centres which manifest themselves in and through the one evolving thought operating through the universe. Not only human mind but anything that has mind is to be taken as connected together in one inseparable chain. The baby's world is not untrue. It has a worth of its own. The world of a baby may not coincide with that of an octogenarian. But still it is there. My philosophy cannot contradict the philosophy of my baby for that is also a part of the universal thought. One evolving mind gradually manifests itself throughout the ages. Mind is trying to complete itself in this universal process, in fact it is God Himself who is thus manifesting Himself. When you think that mechanism is something different from life, you do violence to the law of nature. Nature is only explainable as a whole. The mind of God is operating through human minds, but it has not exhausted itself in human minds. It is eternal. It is a great flow, unperturbed, that is flowing within Him ; there is no rest, ceaseless movements are going on. He is the upholder of all movements. Now Dewey says that experience goes far beyond knowledge which is only a product evolved within it. It starts with being and having



things. Cognitive property is not intrinsic. Things themselves teach us whether they are subjective or objective. Thought and reflection are only realised in a small class of existences. Experience cannot be distinguished into knowing and being, into mind and its objects. The line of demarcation is between blind action within nature and that which is directed and significant. The difference between means and end is only analytic. The end is a continuous development of becoming. Meaning is objective because it is a mode of natural interaction. But Lord Haldane says that it is wrong to treat experience as actual apart from any moulding by knowledge. Every possible object in nature seems to have meaning only for reflection. Our minds have the double nature of being included in nature and of being its foundation

It is knowledge which means experience. Meanings can only be ascribed by mind. Meaning is what is given by us. It is not something lying there. It cannot be ascribed to anything if there is no mind to give it. Ultimately the fundamental problem, Haldane says, is that the Reality is mind, which is manifesting itself as the experience of different persons and which flows back to the one mind, namely, the mind of God.

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## EDEN HINDU HOSTEL NOTES.

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PRAPHULLA MOOKERJEE.—*Prefect, Ward II.*

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**T**HOSE who have seen Harold Lloyd in the role of "Freshman" will remember the terrible ordeal that a fresher has to face before he can come to limelight. It is the fond wish of every undergraduate to be reckoned as "the card". In our Hostel we have a different picture of the freshmen. They feel like newly transplanted

trees and take a lot of time to settle down as "regulars". In order to make plants straight and symmetrical sunlight is essential. The Freshers must realise that without the sunny side of life they will grow lop-sided—mere book-worms who miss the piquancy of the salad-days.

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The Hostel opened with reform in the air. This year the two houses have been placed under the charge of two tutors. The prefects are there as usual, but there are no wardens this time.

Mr. Jitendranath Mookerjee, the Assistant Superintendent of the Hostel has been transferred to Krishnagar. Mr. Mookerjee in his College days was a popular boarder of this Hostel and earned an enviable name as an all-round sportsman. We are sorry to lose him from our midst.

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The special attraction of the Hindu Hostel during the Puja term is football. This year has witnessed the most successful football season in the records of the Hostel, thanks to the untiring energy of Mr. Phanindra Chowdhury. It is due to his efforts that the Ramesh Memorial Competition was started. In mentioning the tournament we recall the dear memory of our friend Ramesh Chandra Roy who was cut off from our midst untimely. He was an active member of the University Training Corps and the best shot in the Battalion.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The competitions have been played out, and the football season is at an end. The "Highlanders" have this year won double honours in football by carrying away the trophies of the League and the Knockout Tournament. They have thus set up a new record, and to add a feather in their cap they maintain an unbeaten record.

The newly started Ramesh Memorial Competition is open to all *bona fide* College Hostels in Calcutta. This year only fourteen teams took part in the Competition. The number is disappointing but we hope that next time the entries will be much larger.

In the Inter-Hostel Competition our Hostel "A" team won the trophy by defeating the Hardinge Hostel team by a goal to nil. The

“C” team went as far as the semi-final when they had to submit to the Hardinge Hostel team by the narrow margin of a goal. This success is due to Harisadhan, Jnan Baksi and Benoy Ghosh. The “D” team sprang a surprise by disposing of a strong side of the Ripon Hostel.

Of the players in the Hostel who deserve special mention this year are Phony Sen, Ajit Mookerjee and Roby Dutt. No praise is too high for the inimitable Phony. Possessed of hefty kicks and a stonewall head Phony is funny when he takes matters lightly. Ajit has played wonderful football this year. Extremely tricky and fast he has great control over the ball and the ability to shoot without hesitation. He is yet in his teens and he has the makings of a great footballer. Kshiti Dutt, “undoubtedly the best goal-keeper in the Hostel” has been instrumental in saving his team by his smart and effective clearances. A new acquisition in football has been made in Sushil Nag, the witty boy from Comilla.

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We are glad to announce that two of our ex-boarders, Messrs. Biren Chakravorty and Robin Mitter have been successful in the I. C. S. Examination held in London this year. To pass out a severe test like the Civil Service Examination is no doubt praiseworthy but greater honours have wreathed the brow of Mr. Naren Sen, another of our ex-boarders and a contemporary of Messrs. Chakravorti and Mitter. A brilliant student in Physical Science, he has been doing wonderful work at the Faraday House where he has topped the list of the Honours men. Dr. Russel, F. R. S., the Principal of Faraday House is of opinion that he possesses a native genius in Mathematics.

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The hostellers are fortunate in having Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham as their Principal. His appearance like the rainbow after a storm fills the sky with prophetic ray. Extremely sympathetic with the students he never spares himself in looking to the interests of the hostellers. His visits to the hostel are informal and here the formality of his demeanour is relaxed and he chats with the boys in a familiar

manner as a friend who is always alive to their difficulties and aspirations.

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Mr. G. P. Mazumdar, our popular Superintendent showed keen interest in our football and at the end of a successful season entertained all the hostellers to a tea party. The function was enlivened with songs and comic skits.

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The Library has got a large grant from the College and we expect valuable additions in the catalogue this time. We understand that exhaustive schemes for extending the Library and the Reading Room are in contemplation. Ward 111 will very likely be abolished and converted into a spacious gymnasium.

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The Secretary of the Common Room has done really something new by installing a radio set in the Common Room. We can now enjoy the Saturday and Sunday evenings in our Hostel by listening to the broadcasted music. The one draw-back of the Common Room this year is the lack of intellectual and social intercourse among the boarders. Last year, Mr. Biswas, the late Prefect did something in the way of meetings and debates; but pressure of work and some unforeseen circumstances forced him to abandon his projects. May we not hope that the present Secretary, enthusiastic as he is, will take some interest in this matter?

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The Hostel Union Committee has been formed and it is doing its work. The Union has decided to stage Saratchandra's Sodashi which has been the rage of the year in Natyamandir. Those who are taking part in this play must remember the responsibility that rests with them. Of course we cannot expect them to bend the bow which has felt the touch of giants like Sisir Bhaduri and others, but we hope that they should not fall below the Hindu Hostel standard, which has so far kept quite a high level of excellence in the Annual Socials.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

To

The Editor,

Presidency College Magazine.

Dear Sir,

With a view to invite the opinion of those who are interested in the removal of some disabilities and grounds of complaint relating to the College beg to submit a list of 'wanted's for publication in the Magazine. Wanted

A. A Co-operative Society for the College and the Eden Hindu Hostel, where students might imbibe the spirit of co-operative activity. It might be formed in the first instance at the initiative of students and Professors and not of the College authorities, with a non-dividend paying share-capital. This institution is bound to have immense potentialities.

B (i) An up-to-date catalogue of the books in the Library, (ii) an Assistant Librarian for issuing 'daily requisition' books and Magazines to students to obviate the delay now caused by centralising all work, (iii) an arrangement of the card-index cases so that an inspection would tell whether any particular book has been issued or not, (iv) to keep the Library open till 7 P.M. in the evening or to keep it open on Saturday afternoons and Sundays to make reading in the Library a practical proposition, (v) a suggestions-book for students which will be acted upon every week, (vi) daily papers—one at least from U. P., Bombay, Madras and Calcutta to be placed on stands in the Common-Room, and to replace some second-rate story-magazines by more interesting ones like the *Literary Digest* and making all magazines available to students.

C. The revival of a tutorial system which would pay attention to the all-round development of students and would make the tutor the link between the students, the office and the guardians. This system will help many students in the proper choice of their careers and would make much of the slackness and want of sufficient loyalty to the College impossible.

D. The growth of a spirit of "my College first" among the students, to be fostered by a closer relation between Professors and students, the co-operative society and by devising means for establishing a closer relation between the old and the present students through games and discussions and social meetings to bring the traditions of the College to greater prominence.

May I hope that the spirit in which the above lines are written will not be misunderstood ?

Yours etc.  
B. N. B.

## REPORTS

### Athletic Notes

#### *Football.*

It has been a fairly successful season with us in football this year. In the Inter-Collegiate League Competition we are still topping the list along with Law College. In the Elliott Shield we lost to Law College (the holders) in the third round. This was mainly due to the regulation which rules out Anglo-Indian students from this competition and thus debarred some of our best men from taking part in the tournament. Anglo-Indians are now being recognised as Indians, and so the sooner this invidious distinction is done away with the better. We, however, have the satisfaction of defeating Law College in the third round of the Hardinge Birthday Shield Competition by two clear goals.

In this connexion we regret to say that we lost two valuable points in the League through the failure of the requisite number of players to turn up in the game with Bangabashi College. But for this our chances of winning the championship would have been absolutely sure. It is idle to talk of an *esprit de corps* in a College when the students are so lacking in a sufficient sense of responsibility as to let such things as the one referred to above to happen.

An Inter-Class League Competition has been started; and thanks to Mr. S. C. Sen, our popular physical Instructor, it is going on quite well. The particular importance of this tournament is that it gives the players some practice and specially that it gives a chance to the vast majority of players who are not fortunate enough to be included in the best eleven.

We have lost a very sound and capable footballer in D. King, our right back, who proceeds to Jamalpur on service. He would have been an asset in Hockey also and in general sports. He was the best hurdler in the last inter-collegiate sports.

Our Captain, Niren Dey who, by the way, is our best scorer and Amal Gossain, the Secretary are mainly responsible for our remarkable success this season.

#### *Basket-ball.*

Mr. Sen is sparing no pains to improve and popularise this game in the College. The players are taking a keen interest in it. We have entered two strong teams for the League Championship conducted by the Y. M. C. A., and under the able leadership of Dinesh Mukerjee we hope to do very well in the Competition.

#### *Gymnastics.*

Many improvements in the shape of new apparatus and better arrangements have been made in the Gymnasium. It is now no longer what it was

a few years ago—a place where very few people cared to go. Regular gymnastics has become greatly popular among the students as is clearly shewn by the large attendance in the gymnasium both in the morning and in the evening. The boarders of the Eden Hindu Hostel who live so near the College naturally derive the greatest benefit. They are also lucky in having Mr. Sen as one of their tutors and therefore more of his advice and directions than others.

*Cricket.*

We are busy arranging fixtures for the ensuing cricket season. We must thank the secretaries of the various clubs who have kindly made time to play with us. This year we must congratulate ourselves on our being able to have fixtures with many important clubs including Calcutta who have consented to give us an afternoon and His Excellency the Governor's Eleven who will play a full-day match with us in the Eden Gardens.

*Conclusion.*

The Report will be incomplete if no mention is made of our Principal, Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham and our Hony. Treasurer, Prof. Manjugopal Bhattacharyya, who have ungrudgingly helped us whenever we have had occasion to seek their advice and guidance.

BISHNUKINKAR SARKAR  
*General Secretary,  
 Athletic Club.*

## The English Literary Society

We have had only two meetings up till now. In the first meeting Prof. H. K. Banerjee, B. A., B. Litt (Oxon) delivered a very interesting and informative lecture on "The Honours School in English at Oxford", in course of which he not only gave an intimate account of the system of studies prevailing there but also compared it with the defective system in vogue in the University of Calcutta. In the second meeting Mr. Provangsukumar Sett of the Fourth Year Class read a paper on "Shakespeare's Politics" which provoked quite a lively and interesting discussion.

SACHI SEN,  
*Secretary.*

## The Philosophy Club

The first meeting of the Club was held on the 14th of January last. Dr. S. N. Das-Gupta read a paper on "The Approach to Metaphysics." His essay mainly ran on two lines. In one he showed that the methods hitherto employed in the search after Reality had been faulty in some way or other. The second portion of the essay was a sort of guide to future enquirers.

Our Club had the unique good fortune of having Dr. P. K. Roy, an Ex-Principal of the College, in its midst on the occasion of its second meeting. Dr. Roy spoke on Philosophy and the Art of Life. In a few words he showed how we can make our lives successful, and said that in order to do that we must take the help of Philosophy.

In the third meeting Dr. Snehamay Dutt spoke on the "Structure of Atoms." Dr. Dutt's lecture embodied in it the modern theories regarding matter. He began with Prof. Dalton, and then passing through Newton, Leonard, Kelvin, Rutherford, Curie came to Dr. Boher of Norway and discussed at some length the theory of the last named Scientist. Principal Stapleton who was present in the meeting supplemented Dr. Dutt's speech by explaining the theories of Democritus and Lucretius.

The fourth and the fifth meetings were complementary. Dr. Dasgupta spoke on the Upanishads. After tracing the history of Sanskritic culture from the Vedic age to that of the Upanishads, he said that the Upanishads were a protest against the dogmatism of the Brahmanas. The rest of the lecture was devoted to the elucidation of the eternal character of the Upanishads.

In the sixth meeting Prof. Joygopal Banerjea of the Calcutta University read a long and learned paper on the Philosophy of Shelley. He first traced the circumstances that went to make Shelley the revolutionary poet. He recounted many stories from the poet's life and quoted passages to show how his revolutionary spirit found expression in his *Prometheus Unbound*. He further showed that the writer of *The Necessity of Atheism* was himself a great theist—a Berkleyan and a Vedantist.

HIRANMOY GHOSHAL,  
*Secretary.*



## Political Philosophy and Political Economy Seminar

The first meeting of the current session of the above Seminar took place on the 3rd September with Prof. Sir Jehangir Coyajee in the chair. Messrs Rabindranath Mitra and Amulya Bhusan Chatterji, both of the 4th Year Class, read papers respectively on, 'Bicameralism in Theory and Practice' and 'The Quantity Theory of Money.'

Mr. Rabindranath Mitra refuted the arguments that second chambers were necessary for checking hasty legislation, or for acting as a counterpoise to democratic despotism, or for checking encroachment by the popular House on the permanent will of the electorate. The main argument in favour of second chambers was that they protected the rights of minorities. He ably illustrated the application of the theory in U. S. A., England, the Dominions and the Irish Free State. He discussed at length the recommendations of the Nehru Committee of the All-Parties Conference relating to his subject as to its necessity, composition and functions, and pointed out that it embodied the best experience of other constitutions.

Mr. Amulya Bhusan Chatterji in his exhaustive paper dealt with the enunciation of the Quantity Theory of Money by Fisher, Chapman and Keynes. He said that the Theory depended on the acceptance of the proposition that money was a commodity which Cannan would accept with qualification. He then illustrated how far facts followed the theory from the history of movements of prices in the 19th century and during and after the War. Dealing with the objection that the theory was a mere truism, he said that the greatest generalisations of physical science were truisms, but when duly supplemented by specific data they prove of immense value. Owing to lack of time no discussion could take place.

BENOYENDRA NATH BANERJEE  
RABINDRA NATH MITRA,  
*Secretaries.*

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## The Historical Seminar

The first meeting of the Historical Seminar was held on the 13th August Principal R B Ramsbotham as President. Professor K. Zachariah read a paper on "The decree of Callias" in which he dwelt extensively on the sources of the decree and mentioned what invaluable contributions the stone inscriptions had made to this chapter of Greek history. He discussed the inscription on both sides of the stone and brought out and discussed at length all the existing theories about the date and criticised them.

The second meeting of the Historical Seminar came off on the 13th September when S. Semarendra Nath Mukerjee of the 4th year Class read a paper on "The Imperialism of Pericles". Professor B K Sen took the chair.

The writer dealt with almost all the existing views about Periclean Imperialism although he mostly accepted the views put forward by Thucydides

A very interesting feature of the paper was the writer's contrast of Periclean Imperialism with Napoleonic and German Imperialism.

NIKHIL CHANDRA GANGULI.  
*Secretary.*

বাংলা

Replaced by a student.  
10/0.2.31  
~~Bejoy Krishna Barua. First year, Science.~~  
Sh.

## THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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## NOTICE.

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There will ordinarily be three issues a year, in September, December, and March.

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

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

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

Sunit Kumar Indra, B.A.,  
*Editor.*

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Sir Stanley and Lady Jackson photographed with the Principal and the Captain while watching the game between the Governor's XI and the College C. C.

*By courtesy of "The Englishman."*

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# THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

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Vol. XV. }

JANUARY, 1929.

} No. II.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

A word of apology is necessary for this late appearance of ours. The Magazine was due in December last. But anybody who is familiar with the recent changes introduced in the system of *examinations in the College*, must admit the difficulty in bringing out the Magazine at the scheduled date. The College re-opened after the Pujah recess on the 23rd of November, and scarcely had our friends time to settle down when the test and promotion examinations came upon them; and the editor had to wait till the examination atmosphere was cleared away.

In spite of all that has been said above the editor is sorry to remark that the response has not been very encouraging this time. He is sure there is no dearth of talent in the College. But if he has to go about bullying for articles from person and person, we are sure, nobody will envy his position. Besides, it is rather unfortunate that the same names should figure again and again in the pages of the Magazine. And if something of the nature should happen owing to causes that are unavoidable, the editor must not be held responsible for it.

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It is admitted on all hands that to a student Christmas is the most enjoyable time of the year. During the summer the heat torments him; while during the Pujahs, though he has a very pleasant time

of it in other respects, the fear of the examination is upon him like the fear of the Lord, and the books engross all his attention. But in Christmas all his pent up energy rushes out in its exuberance through numerous outlets. The screen and the stage attract him many an evening, and the afternoons are mostly spent in playing or witnessing a game of cricket, while the morning paper provides him with not a little food in the shape of what is being done day by day in the social, political and semi-political institutions that hold their annual sessions during Christmas. The fight for the ashes created additional interest for the Cricket enthusiast and for those who have an artistic temperament there was the superb exhibition of Anna Pavlova's dance.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

This year Calcutta monopolised all the interest of the people. Eyes from every part of India and beyond were fixed upon this great city which witnessed the proceedings of the All-Parties' Convention and of the forty-third session of the Indian National Congress. Although it would be out of place to discuss in detail the decisions arrived at in those two bodies, we cannot leave such momentous issues unnoticed. The Nehru Committee's Report which embodies exhaustive and well-thought-out recommendations regarding the future government of this country, has after all been accepted. But we are sorry that in spite of the many expressions of its thankfulness to the Committee for its 'patriotic services' there is a large and influential section in the Congress which opposed the Report over a fundamental issue. The battle was fought and lost. But it cannot be denied that it has taken away much of the strength of the Report, and the national demand has lost much of its force. The fight, properly speaking, is between idealism and practical politics. And we hope we shall be pardoned if we say, without having any presumption to give counsel to any of our political leaders, that idealism and abstract thinking find their proper place in philosophy while practical politics has always been a compromise between the ideal and the actual.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*



While we are writing these notes news comes to us of the troubles in Afghanistan. The political situation there is changing so rapidly that it is impossible at the present moment to say anything definite about the Afghan revolt. King Amanullah tried to pour much new wine into the old bottle, and the bottle appears to have burst. The developments in Afghanistan will have very far-reaching consequences upon the political situation of the world ; and so they are being closely followed with interest by all the inhabitants of the world.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The twelfth of January, the day on which Sir John Simon and his colleagues made their public arrival in Calcutta, passed off peacefully, so far as educational institutions were concerned. Political questions have for sometime past begun to affect the mind of students in a very great measure. This sort of things has perhaps more than once been deprecated both in this province and elsewhere. But as the Hon'ble Mr. Monohar Lal put it some time ago when addressing an assembly of students, the fact is natural and inevitable in the present state of the country ; and the best way of dealing with it was not to make too much of it. This was fully realised by the heads of educational institutions in Calcutta ; and accordingly many Schools and Colleges were closed, while in others that remained open no action was taken against students who absented themselves. An *hartal* is, in our humble opinion, nothing more than a question of sentiment. When a businessman suspends his business we do not say that he takes any active part in politics. Why should it then be otherwise with a student ? No conclusion should be drawn from this note as to whether the editor supports an *hartal* or not. He merely wishes to emphasise the difference between active politics and a student's absenting himself from the class on a day of *hartal*.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The results of our College in the last M.A. and M.Sc. examinations are very good indeed. We find the names of Presidency

College men topping the list in English, History, Economics, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Physiology and Geology. The total number of first classes from our College is seventeen—quite a good number indeed. In this connection we congratulate Messrs H. Kabir and H. N. Mukherjee, two of our ex-editors, on their standing first in English and History respectively.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Our readers will be glad to learn that Mr. Pramathanath Banerjea, M.A., B.L., P.R.S., one of the founders and the first editor of the Presidency College Magazine, who left for England in February last to qualify for the English Bar, has stood first in the First Class from Lincoln's Inn in both the subjects in Part I of the Bar Examination held in September last. He is expected to appear at the Final in March next. We wish Mr. Banerjea an equally brilliant success in the Final Examination also.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Our hearty congratulations to Sir B. L. Mitter on his appointment as Law Member of the India Government. Sir Brojendra was a student of this College and also for some time Vice-President of the Governing Body of the College, and the students will long remember the kind and sympathetic treatment they received from him. His appointment is the occasion of double congratulation, for one Presidency College man has been succeeded by another. Mr. N. N. Sircar who succeeds Sir B. L. Mitter as Advocate General, Bengal and also in the Governing Body of the College is also one of our distinguished ex-students. We wish Sir Brojendra and Mr. Sircar prosperous careers in their new spheres of activity.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

There have been a few changes in the staff after the Pujahs. Professors S. P. Das and K. Zachariah have rejoined the College. Dr. P. D. Shastri of the Philosophy Department has been transferred

to Rajshahi and Mr. N. K. Brahma of Krishnagar has come in his place.

We are sorry to note that Mr P. Mukherjee has been on medical leave since the re-opening of the College. Prof. Mukherjee's absence is keenly felt by professors and students alike. The great interest he used to take in the welfare of his students is well known. He also rendered valuable services to the Magazine as the Vice-President and Treasurer of the Magazine Committee. May he soon recover from his ill-health and rejoin us in his sphere of work ! Mr. Arun Kumar Sen, one of our brilliant ex-students who passed out only this year, has been officiating in Mr. Mukherjee's place.

There have been important changes in the ministerial staff as well. Babu Hara Chandra Mazumdar, Head Clerk, retired very recently after thirty-three years of meritorious service. Our Librarian Babu Gokul Nath Dhar has gone on leave for about a month. Prof. H. K. Banerjee is now in charge of the Library in addition to his own duties.

\* \* \* \*

Our College is doing well indeed in the field of sports. Mr. P. L. Mehta whose name has figured so often in these pages and also in the columns of the newspapers, fought his way into the finals of the Calcutta and Bengal Championships. Up till now Mr. Mehta has been a finalist in nine such important tourneys. The consistency with which he goes up to the final and is defeated, is remarkable. We have many times seen him a finalist, soon we hope to see him a champion.

The Cricket Season with us has been very noteworthy. Everybody who takes some interest in Cricket knows that Presidency College forced H. E. the Governor's XI to a draw in which A. Das figured most prominently with a score of fifty-six not out. B. Sarkar and A. Das have been invited to play for His Excellency's Team against the Anglo-Indians. Sir Stanley is connected with our

College as the Official Visitor, but cricket has brought about a closer and more intimate relationship between His Excellency and our College, and we hope it will grow closer and closer still in the days to come. We must thank Mr. Sarkar, our energetic Captain, for it was mainly through his effort that this happy relationship has come about. He and A. Das are also playing for the University against the Governor's XI.

The College also held its honour high in the Annual Sports of the University Training Corps. Our boys carried away the largest number of prizes. M. Safiq, D. N. Ghose and R. Dutt were among the most conspicuous.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The Bill for the establishment of a Board of Secondary Education in Bengal will shortly be introduced in the Legislative Council. The dual control of Secondary Education by the Government and the University must go. Nowhere is it the business of a University to direct, control or supervise the affairs of schools that give instruction up to the Matriculation standard. It is simply impossible for it to discharge all such duties properly and efficiently. The Degree classes are the proper sphere of the University and it should concentrate all its attention upon them. Private schools will no doubt resent Government control. A Board is therefore the fittest body to look into the affairs of all Government and non-Government schools.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The words in which Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham, our Principal, gave his evidence before the Hartog Committee have startled many people. He suggested that in the present circumstances of the country an alien Government cannot carry on a wholesome system of Secondary Education. He also expressed himself strongly against outside interference with the internal administration of a college. His use of the word 'autocrat' is disliked by many persons.

And people will not be wanting who hold different views. But the candour and boldness with which Mr. Ramsbotham expressed his views have a value of their own.

\* \* \* \*

In the Calcutta Gazette of January 10, the Government of Bengal thanks Babu Gopaldas Chaudhuri, M.A., B.L., Vakil and Zemindar, an 'Old Boy' of our College, for his liberality and public spirit in making a gift of a garden house and several bighas of land valued at one lakh of rupees and of Rs. 5000 in cash to the Calcutta Vigilance Association, for a Rescue Home for non-Christian minor girls. Babu Gopaldas also maintains a Lectureship in Bengali in the Calcutta University and is the founder of the G. K. P. M. Institution in Sherpur. Some time ago he made a gift of a large number of books to the Hindu Hostel Library where the reading room is still named after his departed daughter.

\* \* \* \*

It is our melancholy duty to record the sad death of our lamented friend Ajit Kumar Mitra, a very promising student of the College. He has left behind him a very bright academic career. He stood sixth in I. Sc., and first in the First Class in B. Sc., with honours in Botany, securing the highest number of marks among the successful B. Sc. Honours students of the year. He could not appear at the last M. Sc. Examination owing to illness which ultimately carried him away. He was of a very amiable and gentle disposition. He was a good writer of English and Bengali poems, and was also a social worker.

Three of our oldest ex-students also died recently. Rai Bahadur Girish Ch. Chaudhuri, a retired officer of the Bengal Civil Service, Judicial Department, died at the age of eighty-five. Babu Abinash

Chandra Ghosh who served for a long time in the Military Accounts Department passed away at the age of seventy-six. Babu Jogendranath Mukherjee, who died only recently, had many-sided activities in life. He was a lawyer, a Municipal Commissioner, an M. L. C. of the pre-Reform days, Professor of the University Law College, a member of the Legislative Assembly, and also a great lover of music.

May their souls rest in peace !

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## KEATS'S TREATMENT OF GREEK MYTHS

AMARENDRA S. THAKUR, M.A.

IT has been asserted by Professor E. de Selincourt that Keats's classical inspiration was the inspiration of the Renaissance as it appears in English Literature from Spenser to Milton. This view, if judged carefully, will be found untenable. First of all it will be shown that Keats's treatment of Greek mythology which is the vital point of his classicism essentially differs from the Renaissance treatment of the same.

First of all, let us take up the story of Endymion. The true meaning of the myth of Endymion is lost in the mists of antiquity. There are two versions of the myth, one of which makes Endymion a son of the King of Elis and another makes him a shepherd-prince of Latmos. It is needless to mention that Keats's imagination works upon the latter version of the myth. (A Greek myth has a two-fold aspect—its outward and sensuous aspect, another a deeper spiritual aspect. "Hellenic mind was endowed with a power of mystical apprehension, now almost departed, of going beyond the material veil of things," a fact to which Wordsworth refers in his Excursion Book IV, lines 715-762. Keats's letters show that these lines were read and re-read by him and they intensified his imaginative vision.

No Greek poem which treats this myth elaborately has come down to us. The explanations of the Scholiast of Theocritus, of Apollodorus and Pausanias leave us in the dark. To think of Endymion as the mere personification of Death would be alien to the spirit of Greek art and religion. The Greek mind is haunted by the images of life and it is the medieval monastic mind which is haunted by the images of death and "The Great Beyond." He cannot represent Sleep, since sleep to the Greek mind is a sort of forced inactivity which cuts a man from the

world of living reality, and Swinburne truly voices Greek feelings when he associates Sleep with "dreams and desolation." The interpretation of Lucian, which the Renaissance accepted, that Endymion represents astronomy, appears to be unsound since Greek myths are not rooted in scientific speculations but represent the vast and abounding life of nature. Endymion is a nature-myth. The sinking sun of the Latmian gulf overtakes the rising moon. The ancient Hellenic bard endowed with a vision of beauty and impelled by his instinctive personifying tendency, which naturally belongs to all primitive poets, figures the sinking sun as the youth Endymion about to be kissed by Selene, the moon-goddess. This interpretation, which Keats also accepts, has the weighty support of Frazer, the author of "The Golden Bough."

The Romantic story then finds its way into the mind of the most aesthetically gifted race of antiquity and is deeply rooted there. To Keats, whose Romantic mind was filled with starry visions of the transcendental world, the story comes to signify "Soul's passion for Absolute or Ideal Beauty." Prof. Selincourt has sought to explain the allegory in Endymion by referring to some dark hints which Keats found in Sandy's commentorial embellishment of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This explanation is not satisfactory. It is the innate romantic temperament in Keats which is not satisfied with the outward beauty of the story but reaches out beyond the finite, the visible, and the sensuous. Moreover, it seems to the present writer that Keats was probably influenced by Joseph Beaumont's allegory of Cupid and Psyche or *Love's Mystery* (1648)—a favourite theme of the Platonic poets. The wanderings and sufferings of Psyche symbolising the purification of the soul by passions and misfortunes, have a curious re-echo in Keats's wanderings of Endymion in course of which the self-centred and isolated soul of the hero comes into touch with the miseries and sorrows of others, and by an exercise of active sympathy is purified to receive the final bliss. This latest born of myths inspired Keats through various sources:—Raphael's painting—Cupid and Psyche, Canova's Cupid and Psyche in stone and Mrs. Tighe's (an Irish poetess)



Psyche or the Legend of love. Beaumont's version with its brooding sense of mystery, its meandering Platonic undertone probably influenced Keats whose readings in Elizabethan Literature were often remote and out of the way. But it is not in the root and stem of the poem, but rather in some of its branches, that we find the sweetest flowers of Keats's Hellenic inspiration. As regards the allegory in *Endymion* the present writer does not wish to enter into a subject that has been discussed threadbare by many great critics, and possibly no new elements can be added.

Pan is a common figure in Elizabethan pastoral poetry. Ledger critics who make too much of borrowings and lendings have pointed to many sources. Keats's indebtedness to Spenser, Ben Jonson, Drayton, Browne and Fletcher has been pointed out with unflinching accuracy. Modern criticism has made too much of these Renaissance sources but the true Hellenic spirit which informs the hymn has been neglected.

To the Elizabethans Pan is the very god of all shepherds, their presiding deity, the shaper of their destiny, the vigilant guard of their flocks, which he saves from wolves and vermins. But in Keats's hymn he is not the god of shepherds merely but of animal and vegetable kingdoms as well, of fruits and flowers, of birds and beasts. He is an unseen awful Sylvan Presence. To Keats as to all old Greek worshippers he is the spiritual form of the Arcadia embodying the rude vitality and abounding life of the forest. Here Keats in his comprehensiveness of vision leaves behind his Renaissance predecessors to whom Pan was no more than a god of sheep and shepherds. ∴

Last of all Keats is keenly alive to the spiritual significance of the myth which his Renaissance predecessors never dreamt of. In the history of Greek religion Pan occupies an important place and his worship is connected with the Dionysiac as distinguished from the Apolline cult. Later on he was introduced into the Orphic Mysteries and came to signify a sort of pantheistic idea in religion, the "unseen spiritual power" as Harrison puts it, "beneath the veil of sense." He is a serious and solemn deity

in later Greek religion and had so far come to represent Olympus that a legend makes the birth of Christ hailed by a supernatural voice proclaiming to Greece "Great Pan is dead." In popular medieval conception the death of Pan and Apollo's inability to prophesy bring the Pagan religion to an end. To Keats he is the great son of Dryope, opener of universal mysteries. Here Keats refers to the orphic symbolism of Pan. These lines at first sight seem obscure and no critic or editor has as yet thrown light on them. The present writer suggests that they refer to the Orphic Mysteries in which Pan was oftentimes the presiding deity and by "universal knowledge" Keats means those profound and sacred truths that were uttered by the hierophant who was the mouth-piece of the deity before the body of worshippers. Pan is the mysterious divine presence in nature, a symbol of eternity, a spirit which "spreading in the dull and clodded earth gives it a touch ethereal." We have now reached the third stage of Greek mythology—what Pater calls "ethical" or "philosophical stage." An altar has been erected to the worship of the unknown and the unknowable. In vain do we ransack the literature of Elizabethan England for such a deep and penetrative insight into the meaning of the Hellenic myth.

Keats was first of all influenced by Lempriere's Dictionary in which the significance of Pan has been explained. Secondly he was largely indebted to Homer's Hymn to Pan through the Elizabethan translation of Chapman and thirdly he was also partly indebted to Ben Jonson's "Pan's Anniversary." Other sources are mere guess-work.

In connection with this I must mention the following lines and comment on them :

'Twas a lay  
More subtle cadenced, more forest wild  
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child.

( Endymion Bk-1, 493-495. )

These lines in the opinion of S. Colvin describe the Sylvan nature of Pan by his mother Dryope, but Prof. Selincourt holds that Dryope here refers to the wife of Andremon, mother of Amphissus who

was transformed into a tree for breaking the branch of a flowery lotus sacred to the nymph Loti, as described by Ovid. Selincourt also says that the relation between Pan and his mother was not very tender as the latter was terrified at the ugliness of her son as described in the Homeric Hymn.

To tie down Keats to a particular source, specially when he deals with Greek mythology, is not very wise. Keats oftentimes rejects the cruder aspects of Greek myths with great freedom and draws upon a variety of sources. These lines have a breathless calm and a palpitating romance of forest solitude, which aptly describe the nurture of this deity—his 'forester divine.' Last of all I should mention that in 1820 in Ollier's *Literary Miscellany* No. 1 a poem signed "L" titled "Universal Pan" was published. This poem has not been satisfactorily traced to any author. T. L. Peacock in his *Paper Money Lyrics* ascribes it to Leigh Hunt. The following lines have a Keatsean flavour :

For I though a humbler deity  
 Usurp the honours that belong to me  
 Am the pervading surrounding power  
 Of the great earth—the Universal Pan.

The myth of Adonis and Venus was deeply rooted in the religion of the Greeks. Two Elizabethan poets (Shakespeare and Spenser) have treated this myth elaborately. In Fletcher and Browne we have stray touches.

In Spenser the story is portrayed with cunning on the costly clothes of Arras. Shakespeare invests the story with dramatic atmosphere and in his hand it becomes a purely human story burning with passion, smelling too much of the earth. Keats might be indebted to Spenser for the description of the shadowy arbour where Adonis is sleeping. It also reminds us of the lovely picture of the god of love laid asleep among roses ascribed to Plato. Excess of amorous details, already a Pre-Rapháelite characteristic cannot be too strongly condemned. He inherited the fault from his master Shakespeare whose Venus and Adonis he carefully read. It seems to the present writer that in his treatment of the

myth Keats was influenced by Moschus's lament over Bion. This Greek poem which was available in a translation by Fawkes in Keats's time—"Apollonius, Bion and Moschus"—was probably used by him. Both in Keats and Moschus we have the description of the bower and in both we find the presence of feathered lyrists or Cupids of the Bambino type. The resemblance is of course superficial.

Selincourt thinks that the presence of Cupid both in Spenser's Garden of Adonis and in Keats's bower shows that Keats got hints from Spenser; but this view cannot be taken except with caution, since Keats's young loves with fluttering wings should be distinguished from Cupid-Eros who was a somewhat more august personage. Those cupids of the baby type first put in an appearance in later Greek poetry and were a favourite theme for many Renaissance painters. Of course, in Spenser there is a description of such "little loves with nimble wings of golden purple hue" but not in connection with the Garden of Adonis. Hence Selincourt's point that Keats's version is closer to Spenser in that in both writers Cupid is represented as being present does not help us much, since this Spenserian Cupid is different from the small winged beings brought into fashion by the Renaissance painters and it is quite probable that Keats saw some of those paintings or their prints. The point of resemblance between Spenser and Keats is the description of the bower. Here, again, the Romantic bower of Keats is of much more beauty and grandeur than the bare Platonic garden of Spenser.

Leaving aside all these points, we see that Keats, above all, enters into the heart of old religion. He enters into the symbolism of the myth, which was celebrated with pomp and grandeur every summer. To the Greeks the reawakening of Adonis means a great deal, it signifies the renewal of life and vigour both in the vegetable and animal worlds after the frosty rigour of winter, when living creation seems dead. Greek religion had its Adonian worship at the advent of Summer, when fruits and herbs were heaped up and offered to Adonis—the year spirit, symbolising vegetation, Spring and fertility.

Then there was a hum of sudden voices echoing, "Come! come! arise! awake! clear Summer has forth walked unto the clover-sward, and she has talked full soothingly to every nested finch; Rise Cupids! or we'll give the blue bell pinch to you dimpled arms. Once more sweet life begin!"

Shakespeare's treatment of the theme has not a jot of symbolism so vital to the Greek conception nor have I been able to find out in any Elizabethan author this description of the resurrection of Adonis, which is so essential to the proper understanding of the myth. This critical rehabilitation of Greek mythology belongs to the nineteenth century and is not a product of the Renaissance.

This eternity of nature's life gradually developed into a doctrine of the immortality of human soul and these august truths, namely Nature's eternal life and immortality of the Soul, were revealed by the priest to the body of worshippers in the sacred mystery of Adonis in ancient Greece.

In this roundelay sung by the Indian maid, Keats has very poetically described the Romantic association of the Dionysian legend so deeply rooted in the popular and religious traditions of ancient Greece. "The two most deeply suggestive themes of Greek mythology were for religion Demeter, an earth goddess, not one of the Olympians, and for art Dionysus, the son of a mortal woman to whom the moment of his birth had proved also the moment of her death."

The story of Bacchus or Dionysus was eternised in the frame of ancient art, literature and tradition. Bacchus, under the mystic denomination of Iacchus was a sacred figure in the solemn Eleusinian mystery. The legend making its way through innumerable vases and carvings, through quaint religious customs, through the sculptures of Praxiteles and those of the decadent Graeco-Roman School, received honour when the tints of the Renaissance flushed the Italian sky. The luxuriant fancy of Titian paints Bacchus and his crew with the background of the coast and the sky. Michael Angelo conceives him as a deity given to transporting dreams. Tintoret and Benvenuto Cellini—the former in his painting and the latter in his fresco turn with pleasure upon the same old theme.

The sources of Keats's inspiration are, as shown by S. Colvin, of composite character. Rossetti's view that it is a verse transcript of Titian's picture of 'Bacchus and Ariadne' which was suggested by decadent Latin poetry, does not hold good nor does the Keatsian conception owe a great deal to Lempriere. Nowhere do we find tiger and leopard panting with Asian elephants. Colvin says this picture might have been suggested by Godwin's primer of mythology or Spence's *Polymetis* but he lays much emphasis on a living work of art—a sarcophagus relief in the Woburn Gallery of the Duke of Bedford which represented Indian prisoners on the backs of elephants following Bacchus. Now let us see how these different suggestions have been cemented together and given a new shape by the powerful Romantic imagination of Keats.

First of all we should note that Keats takes up the joyous aspect of the story. In Severn's "Reminiscences" we find that Keats regarded Greek religion as a religion of joy and beauty. Some of the savage aspects of Bacchic myth connected with the primitive worship of Dionysus Zagreus Keats altogether rejects. In the picture of Titian and in the Bacchanals of Euripides we have the presence of orgiastic and savage elements. In Titian's picture a goat-footed satyr swings aloft the foot of an animal torn in pieces and a satyr boy drags the head after him. In Euripides Agave tears asunder her son in a fit of frenzy. All these undesirables have been evaporated by the genius of poetry in close relation to Beauty and Truth in Keats's own words. This rebellious artistic temper which drives away all savage and primitive elements in mythology belongs to the Hellenic world itself and an eminent Greek scholar has detected the presence of this tendency in Pindar and Æschylus

Keats, like a true Ionian living in the sunny hills of Attica, rejects the darker associations of the god lingering in the forests and wild regions of Bœotia. He enters into the very core of Greek worship of Nature and feels the heart-beat of the antique world. The Bacchanals of Poussin helped his imagination a great deal to gather up this splendid vision. His Dionysus is all of fire and dew who makes the old world new again after the numbness of

winter and sends through it the tingling sensation of spring. The rapturous mode of dance is the enthusiastic mode of nature-worship of the Greeks which is distinguished from the quiet and humble worship of the Christians. Botticelli's angels dance, but they have not the ecstatic frenzy of the Bacchanals of Poussin. Keats never forgets the vital connection between nature and myth and brings in associations of green leaves, wide streams, mountains great and light blue hills. The richness of the background even surpasses in beauty and grandeur the coast and the sky of Titian. Keats has conjured up all the romantic charm of Cithaeron and the background is reminiscent of Euripides. The satyr and the Silenus representing the abounding health and wild vigour of the Arcadian world are present with this god of the vineyard and of all flowing things.

Secondly, in the ecstasy and mirth of the Bacchic throng we have the very expression of the Greek god Elen<sup>u</sup>therios, the god of enthusiasm and strange inspiration, the winged god venerated at Apyclae, the inspirer of song and drama. It is the presence of this Bacchus which awakes the enthusiasm of Ion on the birthday feast of Charmides. The faces of the satyrs and Silenus are all on flame. Lost in the visions of their gods the Maenads know not where they go. The cup of Bacchus has opened up beatific visions. They are beside themselves with "Divine rapture".

The Eastern story of Dionysus, so deeply engrafted in the Hellenic world with his far-off conquest of India and Egypt, has not been neglected. It probably signifies the colonising spirit of the Greeks and their introduction of superior civilization to remote islands in the Mediterranean and also in far-off regions. Keats here revels in luxury of details.

What distinguishes Keats's triumph of Bacchus from that of Lorenzo de medici—a poet of no mean order of the Italian Renaissance—is its intuitive grasp of the details of the Hellenic legend. The scenic grandeur of Euripides or Titian has been neglected by the poets and artists of the Renaissance. The Renaissance spirit does not enter into the deep meaning of the

Greek myth, but takes delight in the humanised abstractions forgetting altogether their symbolism and spiritual meaning ; thus it brings down to the level of common-place humanity those once-adored deities who received sacrifices and votive offerings. The poets and artists of the Renaissance hardly understand that every Greek myth has its far-off root in nature, that the rich human and semi-human figures signify more than what they seem to an imaginative mind, that to dissociate nature and myth is to devitalise them both.

But Keats has an innate sense of relationship which is vital to the proper understanding of the spirit which engendered those mythological stories. This is evident from one of the early poems of Keats ("I stood tip-toe upon a little hill") in which he describes the origin of the story of Echo and Narcissus. Lorenzo de medici's Triumph of Bacchus rings with an air of frivolity and voluptuousness, the Bacchic songs of Poliziano—another Renaissance poet of Italy—break into lavish praises of wine which can drive away care and create a sort of thoughtless ease of mind.

These Italian poets are inspired by Aphrodite Pandemos and their songs speak of carnal desires. What a far cry from the sacred son of Semele, the inspiring god of poetry and drama, whose image on the 19th Boedromian was carried with great solemnity and in the streets of Athens amidst the light of torches at noon-day. These Renaissance poets of Italy see antiquity often through a dark glass and transmit the impure vision to others. Shakespeare, Milton, Spenser and other English poets of the Renaissance associate this sacred god with wine, mirth and debauchery. They have not the Hellenic angle of vision.

The philosophy of Greek mythology is a vexed problem and it is desirable that some observations should be made on it by way of introduction for the convenience of the reader. According to Ruskin and Pater Greek myths have their root in the vast and abounding life of Nature. At first the various phenomena of Nature are ascribed to some living spirits presiding over the natural world and are given human shapes so that they become concrete symbols



of the processes and functions of nature. ✓ In the next stage those humanised abstractions turn into a group of actual human figures oftentimes wholly losing their original meaning. Last of all the mythology passes into ethics and philosophy and man's moral and spiritual ideals are put into those shining gods and goddesses who only represented nature. Dr. Farnell puts much emphasis upon the humanism of Greek mythology and holds that the Greek gods embody certain moral, social and spiritual principles and some of them reveal no sign of having originated from nature-worship. Here Dr. Farnell has given a very subsidiary position to the influence derived from the objects of Nature to which Pater, Ruskin and Hegel have given such prominence. Pater divides Greek gods and goddesses into two classes. Those which originating from Nature lost all the attributes derived from her and became the glorious symbols of Greek humanism and those that remained till the end the symbols of Nature. Apollo, Artemis and Athene, though they were forms of Nature, came to signify pre-eminently the moral and spiritual consciousness of the race ; whereas Demeter, Dionysus and Pan were always associated with Nature and up to the end they are the spirit of life in grass, green sap, vine-yards and woods. Hitherto Keats was working into the inexhaustible mine of Nature and was absorbed in the study of those myths which illustrate the elements of Nature-worship in Pagan times, in which is embodied the Pagan belief in the immortal life of Nature. (The Myths of Endymion, Pan, Bacchus and Adonis.)

Now in course of our study of Hyperion we shall see that he had an equal insight into the humanism of Greek mythology. Romantic philosophy of mythology—whether expressed in poetry as in Wordsworth's Excursion Book IV from which Keats took some hints or in Shelley's Queen Mab or in the Art-criticism of Hegel—holds that Greek worship of Nature was gradually replaced by Dorian worship of Apollo. Keats by sheer poetic intuition follows the various stages of Nature worship which was finally overthrown by the religion of light and culture.

Hyperion is a conscious study of Greek mythology—the stages of

its evolution are from the religion of Nature to that of mind. First of all we have Nature's "blankness and repose, its soulless vacuity" which find expression in Coelus who has no definite shape and whose inarticulate sounds, heard from the universal space, have a sort of elemental grandeur

I am but a voice

My life is but the life of winds and tides.

Then the Titans are diffused like so many beautiful forms in Nature—children of heaven and earth. In making heaven and earth the parents of the Titan gods Keats is following the traditional cosmogony of Hesiod. These Titan gods are pure and objective symbols of Nature and though they have been endowed with human and quasi-human attributes, yet in their sublimity and grandeur they bear the stamp of elemental forces. Here we find the struggle of the Greek mind as it tried to put in human shapes the infinite, varied and the changeful life of Nature. Though the grotesque, unnatural and monstrous shapes of Nature deities, which we find in Egyptian and Asiatic art, were kept in restraint by the supreme bent of the Greek mind for naturalism and its abhorrence of anything ugly and monstrous, yet some traces of Asiatic influence are found in the somewhat formless theogony of Hesiod, in the thousand-breasted Diana of Ephesus, a crude symbol of Nature's fecundity in the mysterious cone of Aphrodite worshipped at Paphos—as contrasted with the daintier worship of the goddess at Cytherea, and in the dark indefinite outlines of the statues of Caryachus. The Chryselephantine School of Greek Art with Phedias at its head expresses this phase of Greek mind—its Graeco-Asiatic phase.

While describing the colossal statue of Zeus by Phedias expressing the blandness, breadth and smile of the open sky Pater aptly says,—“as if one of the great white clouds has composed itself on its broad forehead.” Such personalities of Titan deities struggling between the elemental and human are true to Greek religion at its early stage. This shows the struggle or the “streben” of the Greek mind. Such figures abound in Hyperion. We have the

huge superhuman figures of Saturn and Thea at the opening. Thus Keats describes Thea, the spouse of Hyperion :—

“ She was a goddess of the infant world ;  
 By her in stature the tall Amazon  
 Had stood a pigmy's height : She would have ta'en  
 Achilles by the hair and bent his neck  
 Or with a finger stayed Ixion's wheel,  
 Her face was large as that of a Memphian Sphinx.”

The picture of fallen Saturn and Thea, in shimmering moonlight in a huge cavern, postured motionless, has a sort of sublimity, statuesque calm and solitary grandeur, such images are not of the earth earthy ; they take us away from the earth and we breathe the very air of Olympus.

The while in tears

She touched her fair large forehead to the ground.  
 Just where her falling hair might be outspread  
 A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet  
 One moon with alteration slow, had shed  
 Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
 And still these two were postured motionless,  
 Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern.

The picture of Saturn has a real godlike majesty. These Romantic poets are quite at home in transcendental and superb conceptions, they always transfigure nature and reality. This romantic note is noticeable in the ancients as well as in Milton. After all, Deus ex Machina gave a great scope to the ancients in art as well as in literature to cultivate sublime conceptions. The picture of fallen Saturn—fallen from Divinity—has a grand pathos befitting Gods only.

\* \* \* \* “and I am smothered up  
 And buried from all godlike exercise  
 Of influence benign on planets pale  
 Of admonitions to winds and seas,  
 Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting  
 etc.”

This elemental grandeur reaches its high-water-mark in the picture of Hyperion and his palace. Hyperion is animistically conceived, he is the sun-god with the physical qualities of the sun. Gold and golden are the epithets that are constantly applied to him. He is a blazing presence with golden Numidian curl with a palace having similar lustre and effulgence.

The splendour of the scene in Book II when Hyperion appears for the last time before the fallen Titans in the "gloomy steeps" and caverns is unsurpassed and shows how the Romantic imagination can soar into empyrean heights.

In pale and silver silence they remain'd  
 Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,  
 Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,  
 All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
 And every gulf and chasm old,  
 And every height and every sullen depth,  
 Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormenting streams  
 And all the everlasting cataracts,  
 And all the headlong torrents far and near,  
 Mantled before in darkness and huge shade  
 Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
 It was Hyperion :—a granite peak  
 His bright feet touched, and there he stayed to view  
 The misery his brilliance had betrayed  
 To the most hateful seeing of itself.

The similitude drawn from Nature and her vast unseen life that are scattered throughout the poem give it a unity of tone, and are nicely attuned to those primeval deities of Nature. Enceladus with his tameless energy and Ops with her black folded veil and pale cheeks, Cottus, Briareus and other Titans represent the mysterious forces of Nature that are often hostile to men. All these descriptions show what keen insight Keats had into the earlier Greek worship of Nature, and in the words of Colvin, "what masterly justice of instinct did he show in conceiving and animating those colossal shapes with their personalities between the elemental and the

human." The vagueness and indefinable grandeur of Hyperion have called forth critical strictures even from persons like Raleigh and Rossetti, but they seem to forget that this half-light, this want of definite contour, "this huge Cyclopean architecture" (Rossetti) express that human and natural sublime of Greek religion, that struggle of the Greek mind in its transition from the religion of Nature to the perfectly humanised religion of Apollo. ✓

Now let us follow the treatment of the myth. These gods are mere objective symbols of Nature and are dead to the weal and woe of man and sometimes they are merciless to the lesser Titan deities. In the next stage we find the idea of Providence. The religion of awe, fear and mystery detects in nature abundant beneficial agencies. So the gods are no longer embodiments of natural forces but 'raised to the platform of wills and agencies.'

Saturn represents the benignant influence of Nature. So does Hyperion.

Peaceful sway above man's harvesting  
And all those acts which deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in.

It is only when Saturn is identified with Greek Kronos that he becomes the ruler of the golden age. In Roman mythology Saturn is only an agricultural deity. Here Keats's indebtedness to Ovid and Lempriere has been pointed out. Such description of golden age under Saturn also occurs in Spenser.

These gods as yet know no change or flux, they are fixed solemn and undisturbed ; they are immune from struggles and conflicts.

Divine ye were created and divine  
In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,  
Unruffled like high gods, ye liv'd and ruled :

But in the next stage their static repose is disturbed. Even their own flesh and blood rebel against them. The Jovian brood overthrows them and the Titanic gods, for the first time, know pain. Passion, anger and indignity take possession of their hearts and we are on the threshold of anthropomorphic religion.

Last of all, we have the picture of Apollo—no longer a mere

symbol of the sun,—man's Silhouette has been infused into the images of the air, the sea and the sky. The knowledge of history of gray legends, sovran voices have been poured into the wide hollows of the Sun-god. When Apollo says, "Knowledge enormous makes a god of me", he rings the death-knell of the religion of Nature. The Sun-god is no longer animistically conceived, but bears a reflex of the human mind. This perfectly humanised god, expressing all that is noble and great in man, is the brightest creation of the Greek Anthropomorphism, identified with the Dorian influence in Greek mind—the spirit of a severe and wholly self-conscious intelligence. Men's thoughts and ideas of art and ethics come to be symbolised by the deities of this younger dynasty. A glorious train follows in the wake of Apollo; Diana comes to represent chastity, Aphrodite love, Nemesis justice, Minerva wisdom and above all, shine the muses of tragic and lyric poetry haunting the sacred mountains of Helicon. ✓

Keats has put in the mouth of Oceanus a philosophy of deep significance which is also closely connected with the mythic symbolism of the poem. The poem is the expression of this eternal truth

So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty, born of us  
And fated to excel us as we pass  
In glory that old darkness :—

Keats here means to say that Beauty is a cosmic process, it is a dynamic force which is moving this creation towards perfection by working through it. Its tendency is to bring into order and perfection the jarring atoms that stand in the way of moral, intellectual and aesthetic perfection of man. By bringing perfection and beauty in close relation Keats has struck a Greek note. Apart from the beauty of the world of sense the Greeks were also keenly alive to the inward beauty of intellect and character. Greek "Idea te Kalone" aims at a harmonious development of various faculties of men. Aristotle exalts human mind and intellect and human institutions. His is the ideal of 'Kalak Agathos' of the perfect

citizen. He specially puts much stress on 'Ethos.' Taken in this light Apollo—is the god of beauty as well as the embodiment of ideal human perfection—the type of perfection every Greek wanted to attain in life. To Keats ethics and aesthetics were thus identical. Life with its shifting appearance, its joys and sorrows, its aspirations and failures, was extremely attractive to Keats because through them he saw the spirit of beauty surging upwards, till it shone in full splendour like Aphrodite herself.

In identifying beauty with Cosmic power Keats might have been indebted to the scientific ideas of the age, the ideas of progressive evolution. But Keats had very little sympathy with the philosophico-scientific attitude and it seems to the present writer that in conceiving beauty as a creative spirit he was influenced by the Greek conception of Eros in Hesiod's cosmogony with which he was pretty well acquainted or with the Orphic deity of this name. This Eros should be sharply distinguished from the Eros of art. Professor Courthope says that such a symbolism even vaguely attaches itself to the Eros (Cupid) of medieval mythology who bulks so large in the Rose Allegory.

The Greek mind had a two-fold aspect. The Homeric aspect is identified with light and reason; this is the Dorian attitude, but there was also a counter-current, a deep veil of mysticism, a tendency to go beneath the appearance of things identified with the Orphic elements which attracted Plato.

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## HINTS FOR INDIAN INDUSTRIALISM

*From Current Movements in Industry Abroad.*

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BENOYENDRANATH BANERJEA—*Fourth Year Economics.*

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THE fundamental cause of India's poverty has been said to be her industrial inefficiency. That this is due to a great extent to lack of initiative on the part of her industrialists and the apathy of the Government has been often emphasised, and the latter has been often allotted a disproportionate share of the blame. There is a tendency to urge the state to a "policy of energetic intervention in industrial affairs", while the industrialist of India drags on with his business with antiquated machinery, unprogressive labour, and an ill-assorted, "unchivalrous"\* policy, and an apathy to keep abreast of the current movements in industrial regeneration. As Ranade pointed out, "State-help is after all a subordinate factor in the problem. Our own exertion and our resolutions must conquer the difficulties, which are chiefly our own creations."† It was to emphasise the same point that Marshall, the doyen of modern English Economists wrote in a letter, ‡ "A score of Tatas might do more for India, than any government, British or indigènous, can accomplish." It is with a view to bring into notice some modern movements in industry and to hint at their probable import to India that what follows has been written.

America's prosperity has caused many nations to cast envious glances at her. Recently European industrialists are studying and emulating her; and a recent calculation revealed that two-fifths

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\* See Marshall's article on "The Social Possibilities of Economic Chivalry" in the *Memorials of Alfred Marshall* for the proper bearing of the term.

† Address to the Indian Industrial Conference (1890).

‡ To Prof. Manohar Lal. (P. 458) *Memorials of Alfred Marshall.*



of the leaders of British Industry were "crossing the ocean for learning the secrets of efficiency and prosperity."\*

U. S. A. is in the throes of an "economic revolution" according to Prof. Carver.† The outstanding features of this revolution are high wages ; scientific management ; and co-operation between Capital and Labour. Before the War both high wages and a high cost of living were the features of American life but the most noticeable feature to-day is that high production has kept prices down even when the purchasing power had been increasing ‡ "The worker to-day is better off in the question than before the War by 30%." This has been both a result of and incentive to increased effort and productivity. Prof. Carver has remarked with regard to this phenomenon that "the American worker has so far preferred more goods to more leisure." The American employer, on his part, has realised that in a country where wealth is fairly evenly distributed, his customers must be found among the great bulk of the people and whatever reduces their purchasing power will reduce his sales. In India also the home-market alone gives ample opportunity for the expansion of her industries ; but one finds around him innumerable cases where Indian industry could, after a close study of the market, replace foreign-made articles and create a demand for many others, in spite of the unequal distribution of wealth and low purchasing power. Indian industrialists, again, have ignored the effect of a rising standard of living among industrial labourers, its influence on the masses and the favourable reaction this has on the prosperity of industry. While the Government of India has sent a Trade Mission abroad and foreign industrial magnates are coming to study India's markets at first hand, there is scarcely any concerted action of Indian industrialists to study these problems scientifically.

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\* American Prosperity and British Industry by C. H. Northcott.  
(Edinburgh Review, July 1927.)

† The Present Economic Revolution in the United States.  
by T. N. Carver (1925.)

‡ Wages in U. S. A. by the National Industrial Conference Board (1926).

The American employer finds in high wages a support of good trade, he prefers keeping costs low to drifting into "the brutal and stupid cycle of wage-reduction after wage-reduction" This is possible, to a great extent, by invention which more than keeps par with the requirements of industry. It has been said that an American dreams of inventions, and this seems to be supported by the fact that waste of power is being avoided whenever possible. And regarding the possibilities of invention Ford has propounded a dictum that the technician "always knows far too many things that can't be done." In a factory a machine was found to waste 40% time and readily an attachment was invented which made it 98% effective. Commenting on the service of inventors a noted economist says — "American society owes much to its colleges, but for our *material* happiness we probably owe more to our engineering colleges and Departments of Chemistry than to any other branch." \* The American employer does not hesitate to throw to the scrap heap old machines for new inventions, if it can be shown that in the long run it would pay him to do so. † It has been calculated that an American employee has at his disposal at least twice the mechanical equipment of any English workman. The Federal Census of Manufacturers found, in 1923, that in the previous decade there had been a 33% increase in productivity per employee with a 16% increase in primary horse-power per worker. While the average number of persons employed per factory in India is 369, it is only 58 in Japan and 31 in U. S. A. ‡ The mechanical apparatus, it follows, at the Indian employee's disposal is certainly much lower than in Britain or Japan, not to speak of U. S. A. The cheapness of labour is being exploited by industrialists to the detriment of the effectiveness of industry in competition, as well as proving

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\* L. H. Sloan in the *Economic Journal* (July, 1928.) "The Business Prospect in the United States."

† *Ibid.*

‡ Production in India by R. K. Das (1923) P. 103 Das points out that the inclusion of small industrial plants in the Indian definition of a 'factory' partly accounts for the disproportion in the figures.

harmful to labourers, economically, morally and from the point of view of education.

The high wages of American labour have increased the savings per capita by more than cent per cent after the War. Prof. Carver maintains that ownership of industry is shifting from the wealthy few to the working and the management classes. By calculating from the returns of over a hundred leading industrial enterprises and public utility corporations, he finds that 22% of the employees have become stock-holders. In another way industrial enterprises have been stimulated. The recent development of the Labour Banks, which now exist in every large industrial city to-day in America, has made the provision of capital for the enterprising entrepreneur of the less prosperous classes an easier affair. The first bank was established in 1920 at Mount Vernon, Washington. This was the result of a scheme suggested by a small machine-shop employer, who had approached the Machinists' Union to support him in his distress. This form of co-operative effort has immense potentialities and should form an adjunct to all progressive and constructive workers' movements. This would help labour to move from conditions of status to contract, which is the marrow of all progress.

Mr. Henry Ford has introduced the 40 hours week with 2 free days in 7, for his 217,000 workers. He believes that leisure will help in raising the standard of life and will reflect itself on production. \* The aim of efficient production must be more leisure for the fulfilment of the Aristotelian idea of a "good life." Production in America is outstripping her growth of population, thus making more comfort easily available. During 1900-1928, according to the Standard Statistics Company's index of the volume of industrial production, there has been a 3% annual increase of production with a corresponding growth of 1½% in population. †

As has been said at the beginning of this article scientific

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\* To-day and Tomorrow, by Ford and Crowther, (1926). For a stimulating discussion on cognate matters, The Secret of High Wages by Bertram Austin and W. Francis (1926) will be of interest.

† Quoted in Sloan's article in the *Economic Journal*.

management is another important factor in the prosperity of American industry. Ford says that "the only way to get a low-cost product is to pay a high price for a high grade of human service, and to see it through the management that you get the service." Thus in his 40 hours' week announcement he states the expectation that "management with the aid of machinery will find a way of getting more work done in 5 days than is done in 7." In India very few of us comprehend that "Better management is cheaper management." The Federal Census of Manufacturers states that "In 1923 it required 25% fewer workers, 13% less power and 18% less management personnel to turn out each unit of industrial production than before the War." And all is due mainly to scientific management. This movement, originated and fathered by Taylor and Gilbreth in America, has been eagerly adopted in the continent. Regular research work regarding the effective use of machinery, the most suitable position of every individual worker in the productive process, the most effective length of hours of labour in each department of an industry, co-ordination of management, and every trivial detail is enquired into.

According to the Elimination of Waste in Industry Enquiry Committee's Report (New York, 1921) the causes of waste\* are four :—

- (1) Low production caused by faulty management of material, plant, equipment and men,
- (2) Interrupted production caused by idle men, idle materials, idle plant and idle equipment,
- (3) Restricted production intentionally caused by owners, management or labour ; and
- (4) Lost production caused by ill-health, physical defects and industrial accidents.

Under each of these heads, the waste that is being perpetuated in India can be computed to millions. That given mechanical equipment and scientific direction an Indian worker, in spite of

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\* Quoted in *The Philosophy of Industry*, by G. A. Johnston. (The Hibbert Journal, July 1928).

his village upbringing and late initiation in works requiring application and persistence, can equal even the workers of America in efficiency has been proved.\* The "sweating" of labour directly and indirectly (through making men do work—arduous and often detrimental to health—when better mechanical substitutes are available and only exploitation of the labourer's poverty makes it in the "short-period" more paying) requires to be immediately stopped. Otherwise Indian industries will not try to be 'chivalrous' and scientifically-minded.

Co-operation between employers and employees! This would appear to orthodox Marxian trade-unionists to be an anathema and an impossibility. But this has been possible in America to a great extent. Mr. William Green, President of the American Federation of Labour thus explains the progressive and rational outlook of American labour, "Between capital and labour there is an interdependence so fixed and irrevocable as to make complete success attainable only through understanding and co-operation.....The newer concept of modern Trade Unionism is that the antagonistic and hostile attitude so characteristic of the old order must be supplanted by a friendly relation and a sense of obligation and responsibility." To summarise it: labour must cultivate a sense of economic forces and economic values and should not begrudge effort and ability

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\* See R. K. Das—Hindusthani Workers on the Pacific Coast. Also chapter on "Industrial Efficiency" in the same author's Factory Labour in India (1923).

Mr. R. G. Jones, Regional Production Manager, General Motors in the East, the well-known labour expert in the course of an interview at Bombay paid a tribute to the capacity of the Indian workman, contradicting the allegations of inefficiency recently made against Indian workmen by the Bombay mill-owners.

The average Indian workman's ability and intelligence was as good as in other countries, said Mr. Jones and he could adapt himself to any new methods and conditions of work. The men showed great keenness in learning.

Mr. Jones concluded by stating that what was needed was the creation of a pleasant atmosphere, and that no executive or foreman should be allowed to abuse the workmen, either physically or mentally.

their reward. It is all the more possible in America as the roles of employer and employee appear to be easily interchangeable, and this is not economic platitude but a plan of the American employee's hopes. In America employers have contracted with Trade Unions or Company Unions (not affiliated to Trade Unionism) for work and this has proved a great success, for the co-operation of the management and the employees, inspired by a comprehension of the objects of industrial production, and in a Bradleyan spirit of 'My station and its Duties' can utilise other factors of production to their fullest extent.\* Statistics show that in the American Railways, which have adopted this machinery, grievances have been reduced by 50% and appeal-cases which are not adjusted by local Committees have declined by 75%. Railway earnings have improved and this has made a rise in pay possible. All this has resulted from an "appreciation of the human problems of management." In another sphere this arrangement has proved beneficial. It has been calculated that 81% of the suggestions for recent improvement have come from workmen themselves of which 38% has been classified as directly benefitting the management and 51% benefitting the workmen.† It cannot be doubted that such a fruitful source of efficiency in production would have been lost if labourers and employers had adopted the attitude of European labour. The orthodox Trade Unionists, who would regard this move of labour as "Capitalistically-minded" are said to be losing ground in America and some employers are keeping the places warm for them by 'employee-representation plans' and by sponsoring 'Company'-unions from an Owenite attitude.

An acute critic has remarked that "Thus by concerted action of the Government, the manufacturers, the workmen, the consumers and the general public since the War, the United States have been able to put under way a doctrine of production adapted to the economic needs of the time .. ....England in spite of her excellent

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\* This has proved a success in some industries, notably the building industry in Britain.

† Clarence Northcott's article in the *Edinburgh Review* referred to previously.

craftsmen is hindered by her Trade Unions, and France by her politicians."\* It is a matter for serious consideration whether militant class-struggle ideals should develop further in our Indian labour-movements or they should offer their friendly hand to employees, as they have done in America. True, some acute differences there are, but that the widening of the gulf by taking an attitude of militancy cannot be beneficial, has been realised by British Trade Unionists. The success of the recent Turner-Mond (Lord Melchett) negotiations is a case in point. The Department of Industries and Labour of the Government of India states that during the three months of January, February and March 1928, 83570 workers were involved in 53 disputes, the total number of days lost being over one million, and only 3 demands were successful.† It is time that Indian industrialists wake up to the danger of the situation and make it impossible for 'outside' influence to work to the detriment of industry. What is wanted is a sympathetic and energetic policy to make labour more educated, more alert to the dangers and loss of the national dividend due to strikes, and his obligations to the employee.‡ The 'rights' of labour connotes some corresponding duties, and the latter requires greater emphasis to-day. Unless Indian industrialists show that they are alive to *their duties*, it will be impossible to press this point further with the employees. Higher earnings must be the result of higher production ; and when labour can be assured by developing the latent spirit of co-operation in Indian workers (an easier task here owing to the docility, amenability to reason and social conditions of comparative cordiality between classes) that their "rightful reward" would go to them, India will be able to practise once again that spirit of synthesis which her historians claim as one of her special gifts.

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\* America Comes of Age by Andre Siegfried. (1927) P. 170.

† The latest available figures are for the quarter ending June 30, 1928. There were 52 industrial disputes in progress resulting in a time-loss of 13,012,506 working days. The largest number of disputes, 23, occurred in Bengal. About 52% of the disputes related to wages and in only 28% of all the disputes the employees were partially successful.

‡ The preceding recent tribute to Indian labour speaks for itself.

'Rationalisation' was a byword at the World Economic Conference at Geneva. This word is partly a substitute for combination-cum-scientific management. In its broadest sense it means "the application of every means furnished by the technical knowledge and organisation to increase output," of an industry as a whole. Its purpose is the elimination of waste and the reduction of the cost of production to the absolute minimum ; its form of control may take the form of a trust, cartel or combine ; and its activity may take the form of price-fixing, control of the supply of raw material, regulation of output and marketing, etc.\* Germany has organised a big institution for carrying on research regarding rationalisation, so have many countries in the continent ; England has her bodies like the Fatigue Research Board. When will Indian industrialists follow in their footsteps ? Even in Russia the industries, controlled by the Gosplan or the State Planning Commission, under the New Economic Policy instituted in 1921, have been rationalized to a great extent ; so much so that after the introduction of the N.E.P., she has by 1925 over-reached the level of pre-revolution production. Seventy really large trusts are engaged in working up to the quota allotted to each of them by the Gosplan, which is expected to result in increasing by 75% the 1926 production by 1931.† With the spirit of working for an ideal of regenerating the world, that inspires the Russian employee, and the management of the quasi-independent State-Trusts and co-operative organisations (which are not officially connected with the State, rather in strict accordance with Marxist ideal), the hope has great chances of being realised. Mere mechanical improvements are not all ; the spirit of co-operation and chivalry has to be cultivated in industry, and *ideals* need more emphasis.

Lastly I wish to draw the attention of labour-leaders and industrialists to the necessity for adult-education for the labourers in the cities. The Folk High Schools of Denmark would offer a model.

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\* The Philosophy of Industry by G. A. Johnston.

† Stuart Chase : Collectivist Industry in Russia (*Asia Magazine*, May 1928). Mr. Chase notes that in 1923 the Trusts were given charters to operate "on a commercial basis with the aim of acquiring profits."



They were instituted in 1844 for all above the age of 18, on the theory that adults can easily master many details and intricacies at a shorter time than school-children. Recent statistics reveal that 30% of the agricultural community attend these schools, the Government pays half the school fees, the rest coming from the students. The schools are privately-owned and have proved a great success both regarding the spread of education and rapid progress.\* But in Denmark they have not proved successful with the artisan class. In India they are more likely to prove successful among the industrial labour for in several respects our urban labourers are in the stage of civilisation in point of interest and outlook with the agriculturists of Denmark. Adult-education is imperative for the development and efficiency of industry, for breaking the barriers of status and custom, in short, for any amelioration of urban conditions. A Garden-city movement or other ambitious schemes have little chances of success without adult-education, not only through magic-lanterns and lectures but in a more systematic manner. Possibly this opens a way for employment of the middle-class educated youngmen, who can combine to start schools in industrial centres.

Will Indian industrialists profit by lessons from abroad? The present critical position of many industries and the labour troubles point to the need for energetic action, clamouring for protection and State-aid is justified but internal economies need equal, if not more, attention. To my mind, the latter appears to be more urgent. Eternal vigilance is the price of industrial prosperity. It has been said that Industrialism was created in a mood of absent-mindedness, like the British Empire, as Seeley said. But should industrialists in India continue to be absent-minded? Progressive industrialists, even here, are no doubt moving; but a concerted action is necessary to give the stay-behinds a chance to get on well or not at all.

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\* The Folk High Schools of Denmark and the Development of a Farming Community, by Begtrup, Lund and Manichie, (Oxford.)

## THE EAST AND THE WEST

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ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE—*Third Year History.*

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**H**UMAN History is a synthesis rather than an analysis—an eternal current that flows on in all its harmony, the apparent cataracts of diverse forces, movements and ideals notwithstanding. Its oceanic depth presents a scene of calm and continuity, scarcely disturbed, agitated or shaken by the surging waves of warring creeds and conflicting individualisms. It appears as a bed-rock of contradictions ; but contradictions—all of them—blend in harmony when scrutiny looks on them. Indeed, the inconsistent Logic of History too often merges into the consistent Philosophy of human mind, and Philosophy in its search for truth reveals the disappearance of appearances and points out the coherent principles that lie unobserved by popular judgment. The course of History is a progressive evolution, and evolution, as a rule, is governed by a general law that unites its different stages.

And yet analysis plays so important a part in determining the development of humanity that it seems an untrue reading of History to ignore it. "Conflict," as has been well said, "is the very rule of life," in that it helps humanity indirectly for a better realisation of common good and common feeling which go to constitute harmony in social life and without which the unity of the world as a whole—the professed ideal of cosmopolitanism—would be a mere hoax. The inherent impulse to conflict divides mankind into artificial groups ; and a broadening conception of human destiny finds in national antipathy a factor of momentous consequence, as it points out historical land-marks in their truest significance.

Without denying the essential unity of History, historians have divided it into numerous clearly-marked epochs ; and analogy may as well suggest a convenient division of geographical entirety. Conveniences, however, are often based on laws. The geographical

division of the world into two Hemispheres—the East and the West—is at once artificial and significant. While they are united by the harmonising principles that underlie all the currents of human life, they individually uphold different standards of life, culture and religion. The inevitable result has been an eternal conflict. Their souls sing a common song of peace, but their arms fight a deadly and never-ending strife; with the development of ages one inspiration appears to prompt them to rise above trifles, and the other strengthens them to pour blood still more red and hot. All the while the conflicting unity of the two Hemispheres has been the one pregnant phenomenon of the world and the fundamental problem of History. The clash of the warring principles of the East and the West has, all through numberless ages, been sounding a challenge full of illimitable consequences, and it seems to surpass the scope of human knowledge to determine when these consequences will ming with the eternal decrees of humanity.

The question is one of the realisation of destiny—the cursed question that runs along its blood-red route and fosters the perilous faction that divides the Hemispheres. Here again is a sublime contest for supremacy between the East and the West, each believing in the superiority of its own genius and in its mission to civilise and its claim to dominion over the other. Men of vision may realise the common desire of the world and the impossibility of creating a super-state; but to the mass the destiny of the nations appears detached and the scramble for power becomes the commonest impulse. This sense of autonomous and independent realisation of destiny and the surging desire to assert supremacy—these seem to be responsible for the endless strife that yet continues unsatiated, though drunk with the blood of countless millions through countless ages.

Every acute observer of events perceives the necessity of taking the common saying that the Eastern civilisation is essentially spiritual and the Western predominantly materialistic, with qualifications. It is not to be inferred that the conflict between the East and the West is one between Spiritualism and Materialism. Far from it: the fact is that the conflict is there, but it is difficult, if not altogether

impossible, to give a distinctive and logically accurate name to the conflicting forces, simply because the manifold manifestations of the complex civilisation of a vast continent are beyond the scope of any single word to signify. But, even then we may assure ourselves that, while to an Eastern soul, speaking generally, a spiritual existence makes the most powerful appeal, to a Westerner a physical development and material luxury seem preferable. The East is fond of a solitary life; the West likes the splendour of public life. This estimate of the conflicting ideals is very well put by Sister Nivedita when she says that while the Buddha typifies the East, Alexander the Great is the true emblem of Western genius.\* But the other side of the picture must not be lost sight of. Just as the rapid expansion of the mercantile West is the one wonder of Modern History and even the Greco-Roman Imperialism of old was no less threatening to the political individualism of the various national states of the Mediterranean world, the expansion of the East was equally marvellous in Pre-Historic and ancient times. Central Asia is still generally regarded as the nursery of the human race; the Aryans and the Semitics ran to the wildest corners of the unknown world and developed magnificent ideals of political life; we hear of Indian colonies flourishing even in the hidden regions of South America, † not to speak of those in the Bible Land, 'the Far East and Africa.' Here we find that the East is a worthy rival of the West in the progress of materialistic tendencies. But again, that the East is true to her spiritual instinct at the core of her heart and the West is a devotee of the false ideal of materialism is evident from the fact that the unlimited expansion of the East did not arrest the autonomous development of the states, and the Modern West threatens, as the ancient did, to incorporate the large body of the world in her expanding, and the while destructive, arms. The result of the Eastern expansion had been the spread of civilisation and culture that nourished the poor veins of the receiving lands, but that of the Western expansion has been

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\* The Web of Indian Life—'The Indian Sagas.'

† Historian's History of the World.

the spread of a movement in which poisonous ideas and harmful institutions discolour the blessings. The East has been enriching the world with her gifts ; the West brings it face to face with a problem of losing its soul. The East has produced all the world-religions—Hinduism with its ideal of renunciation, Buddhism with its sublime reasonings devoid of any dogma, Christianity with its intense stimulus to the realisation of good life, and Islam with its unifying force and simple, if crude, philosophy. Hinduism and Buddhism are at once created by and the creators of the Indian civilisation—that marvel of History, with a spirit of unyielding fortitude and extra-material strength. Buddhism in its conquering march has given the final shape and reforming direction to the ancient civilisation of China and even amidst the brilliancy and splendour of the Modern Age it has effected a wonder in promoting the unsurpassed growth of Japan. Christianity has found but inconsiderable success in the land of its birth ; it has conquered the West, shaped her civilisation for a time and then lost its unquestioned appeal to its votaries, because, had the West been true to her religious heritage and believed in her religion as she believes in her political interests, Modern History would have taken a different, and most probably a more glorious and promising, turn. The shunting of religion to a line of secondary interest in life, if it is still any interest at all, is certainly the greatest curse on the modern man and the progenitor of this soulless civilisation of guns and machines. Islam had sought to conquer both the East and the West and everywhere its success has been partial. The East, the Helicon of spiritualism, had sought to inspire primitive barbarian life with a pregnant message ; her success, though ultimately proved to be comparatively futile, is still to be regarded as the most potent agency in the transformation of humanity.

For a correct interpretation of facts, it is therefore necessary to accept the general maxim describing the nature of the Eastern and Western civilisation with the proposed qualifications. We have to see what the nature of the contest between the two Hemispheres has been and whereto the results are tending, in view of the fact

that upon this question depends the future history of the world, which is destined to assume, as is clearly seen, the turn given by the victorious forces.

And here the necessary consideration takes us back to the dawn of History. A glimpse into the annals of humanity in its infancy has its charm and difficulties interwoven proportionately. We hear of the confused stories of the Aryans, the Semitics and the Egyptians ; sometimes careful observation reveals the faint traces of their triumphant march on the new-grown body of the infant earth. All these races—the parents of human civilisation—were children of the East. With their keen intellect, their intensely developed practical sense and their progressive adaptability the Aryans were a people intensely religious. It is religious and ethical culture alone which they have transmitted to the succeeding generations, and this heritage has marked out Aryan civilisation as the greatest formative stimulus to the future world. The Semites belong essentially to Asia ; Egypt hardly became truly Semitic until the collapse of her own distinctive culture.\* While Carthage was a standing specimen of what Semetic influence could achieve in congenial environments, the spread of Islam at a far distant date was only an extreme example of Semitic expansion and a true demonstration of the place of Semitic culture in the Medieval and Modern world. Without any real genius for new creation or originality and apprehension of a great or united whole, the Semites were essentially a people of re-shaping genius and were masters more of symbolism than of plasticity. Here again, religion has played a truly unique part in Semitic history. To that race religious truths were ends in themselves. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are Semitic products in form as well as in spirit. The Semites represent a child-stage of humanity and an arrested development ; there was no transformation of ideas and thoughts as is found in the relatively more mature Indo-European world—nevertheless, Semitic contributions have permanently influenced and enriched the world's civilisation and culture. Essentially lacking the philosophical

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\* Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. I, P, 192.

mould of mind, without any love of truth and any desire to probe into the inner nature of things, extremely conservative and bent towards material prosperity and artistic enjoyment, the Egyptians were yet a highly gifted race, exhibiting talent in almost every direction. A religious homogeneity united the whole structure of their society and their attempts to reconcile conflicting religious systems occupy a large and important section of the world's history of pure thought. The iconoclastic touch of time has successfully demolished the monuments of Egyptian achievements in culture ; but the mighty pyramids and a few neglected flashes of discovery here and there serve to remind us of the splendid genius of a half-forgotten race, which, from behind the scene, has contributed no inconsiderable quota to the shaping of Ancient and Modern Civilisation.

Throughout the whole range of the Pre-Historic times the East had been dominating the civilised world. The ignorant soul of the West had been passing its weary days behind the veil of unseen forest and impenetrable caves, with the advent of the so-called Ancient Age the West arose, but she owed her civilised existence to the East. The story of Western civilisation covers a period of two thousand and five hundred years—quite an insignificant period in comparison with the countless years of the cultural supremacy of the East. The torch of light that gradually illumined the darkest corners of Europe was brought by the Greeks, originally an Aryan, or rather Wiro, race. Considered in this light European civilisation appears only as a result of the Aryan expansion. Then the self-conscious West regarded herself strong enough to contest for supremacy with the East. The rapid expansion of Greek political ambitions and cultural genius threatened to absorb the fertile regions and intellectually rich minds of the East. The cursed conflict between the two Hemispheres began, only to destroy fair fruits of progress everywhere and to stop none knows when. The strange thing to be noted is that from the beginning the West has been the aggressor. However, Persia fought against the Hellenisation of the world and was defeated ; but her defeat was

the defeat only of the Great King and not of the East. Greece came out victorious, but her lofty ambitions were not to be fulfilled. History repeated itself when the mighty genius of Rome tried to absorb the entire East. Here again, the defeat of Hannibal was the defeat of an individual branch and not of the Semitic race, whose life lingered in the Asiatic soil and was destined to run with renewed vigour at a later period as the expansion of Islam. Even 'Asia' could not be held in permanent sway. The legions of Rome could overawe her only for a moment ; but her ideas were too strong for them. The result was the victory of ideas. Rome sank, but Asia retained her life-force, with her source of stimulus undisturbed by the momentary disaster. We may remember the poet's lines in this connection:

"The East bow'd low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain ;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again"\*

With the coming of Medieval Age, which the genius of a Gibbon has represented with less truth perhaps than that immortal authority seems to warrant, as a long night of ignorance and force. History, if it admits of division, enters into a new and momentous period—momentous, not because the age itself was great in its achievements, but in the sense that it is the birth-period of the modern territorial Imperialism of aggrandising Europe. The Promised Land of ancient culture was gone ; the glory that was Greece as well as the grandeur that was Rome hardly lingered to redeem the imperfect civilisation of the times. The interval between the onrush of the Plebeian ideals with the coming of the Barbarians and the 'jubilant return' to the ancient life of art and literature in the fifteenth century had been, if 'no mere sojourning in Egypt,' at best partially illumined by the volcanic fires of primitive human nature with its barren achievement. But then, as a striking and perhaps redeeming contrast, we find in the East a development which appears almost as a caprice of History, but which a closer

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\* Matthew Arnold—'The Pagan World'.



observation reveals to be a progressive evolution. The unsurpassed intellectuality of India, the re-shaping of the civilisation of China which reconciled the practice of life with the philosophical ideal of existence and the vehement and heedless energy of the new-born Islamic world with its lofty ideal of unification and the lusty aim of world-conquest—all these were the manifestations of the new stir which the East had felt and the expressions of the unconquerable sense of strength which had been shaking her from one end to the other. The age was glorious for her—the age of Renaissance we might call it. She remained true to her idealistic spiritualism—her message found expression in the voice of the Buddha and Mahomet. But, at the same time, her hankerings after material conquests went on apace, and the banner of Islam, with its crude strength of belief, subdued a wider area than the wisest Senate and the mightiest Caesars of Rome had ever dreamt of. Saracen prowess and Saracen culture were the dual wonders of the Medieval world. The culture was soon banished from the luxurious court of Byzantium; the prowess continued to dominate over a vast empire and to check the ambitions of Europe. When, after all, the fatal day came after the World War, Turkey refused her allegiance to the East and sacrificed her soul at the altar of Whitemanism. What the result will be remains yet to be seen.

The approach of the Modern Age, if it begins with the sixteenth century, has, however, brought numberless changes in its train and has altered the entire system of human life and thought. Modern History is, as has been well said, “the record of a life which is our own, of efforts not yet abandoned to repose, of problems that still entangle the feet and vex the hearts of men.”\* “The constancy of progress in the direction of assured and organised freedom”† is said to be the characteristic fact of Modern History. It will be worth while, therefore, to review the relations between the East and the West during this bright era of progress and enlightenment, if indeed it is so.

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\* Acton, Lectures on Modern History, P. 8.

† Ibid, P. 11.

To-day the solid greed of Whitemanism is dominating over the aspirations of humanity. The expansion of Europe is the connective thread of Modern History. European diplomacy and legions have conquered the most distant parts of the world; European adventure has penetrated into the darkest corners of the globe and has added two vast continents to the geography of the West; the fingers of the European merchants are thicker than the loins of the mightiest Caesars of Rome. The world is indeed only a Greater Europe.

And the contrast with the East is full of lessons. Asia is down trodden: her south-western portion—'the Fertile Crescent' of history\*—the scene where the dawn of continuous history broke out in days of old and the arena of an age-long conflict between the peoples of the three continents—is now the bone of contention between the hungry nations of Europe; the vast unexplored reign of Siberia has long served as the forgotten abode of Russian helots; China is the unfortunate play-ground of Western ambitions; India is a dependency of England; Indonesia is groaning under the yoke of the Dutch; the Philippines are included in the republican empire of the United States. The 'Dark Continent' has yielded to Europe, and enough room has been made there for the white. The fall of the East is a fact, in spite of the sudden rise of Japan, the possibilities of whose new-born vigour appear to be infinite indeed.

But the reality is not without a relief. It must be remembered that the victory of the West is only a physical one, in that the inner currents of Eastern life are still undisturbed and her ideals unchanged. The West offers only a force that is obeyed, not a message that is revered and accepted. To any superficial observation it may well appear that the civilisation of the East is going to be supplanted by that of the West. But such an opinion overlooks facts and misinterprets phenomena. Asia will not lose her soul. Her grey intelligence is strong enough to stand against the

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\* Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. I, P. 182.

onrush of ideals from the other side of the seas. Europe can devastate her fields, but cannot extinguish her life.

It no longer belongs to the domain of secrecy that the revolt of the East against the West is an accomplished fact, if ever there was such. It is the revolt of the non-white against Whitemanism—against political as well as cultural imperialism. The East had cared little when she lost her political autonomy as a result of the ever-successful Machiavellianism of fraud and force ;—her weakness might have been a caprice of destiny. But she cannot allow the youngsters of the West to crush her spirit, because she has been in constant and intimate touch with a goal nobler and greater than Europeanisation. There far away in the seas a Japan may find in Westernism the much looked-for seed of political greatness ; here in the lap of mountains an Afghanistan—a devotee, perhaps, of the modern Pasha-ism may try to 'modernise' Islam. But the soul of Asia lingers neither in Japan nor in Afghanistan. It lingers in India and China, and India and China are determined to stand against the boons of a culture that is nourished by the blood of helpless millions

The revolt has at last come out. The West can now well appreciate the doctrine of the Yellow Peril which was so eloquently preached from the imperial throne of Germany just before the World War. The Yellow and the brown have joined to augment the peril of the white. The destiny of the world shall be controlled by the restless movements of this dreaded 'Peril'.

So, after the forgotten struggles of unknown and the bitterly felt struggles of known centuries, the question before the world is—Quo vadis ? Whither are these modern, and so-called, progressive tendencies leading it ? How and when will this all-absorbing Whitemanism be checked and the peace of the world assured ? When, if at all, the poetic vision of the unification of the Hemispheres will take its hallowed turn to reality ?

No wisdom appears competent enough to declare a prophetic reply, but History may hope to offer a suggestion. "All true political science is," as Mill truly says, "... ..*a priori*, being deduced

from the tendencies of things, tendencies known.....as the result of an analysis of the course of history." \* Therefore, as has been justly remarked, "all our hopes of the future depend on the sound understanding of the past."†

From a rapid survey of the course of universal History it seems apparent that the conflict between the East and the West is as old as humanity itself. The principle may now authorise a deduction : so long as the diverse tendencies of the two Hemispheres will remain unmodified, the conflict will know no rest. Of course, it is a mere supposition, and so it must remain for ever, as human wisdom can never be expected to predict rightly the movements of events and ideas. But a correct interpretation of the science of History may lead to conclusions which may claim probability, and man must remain content with them.

As has been pointed out above, political events are now showing that the East is gradually shaking off her fatal slumber, and the West is goading herself to relentless action. No change of heart is seen so far as the masters of events are concerned. Greed is busy in creating perilous situations, and humanity does not interfere. The white civilisation is ruining its own potentialities by its unchecked addiction to power and prosperity, and the non-white civilisations are prevented from developing themselves to the fullest extent. This is a conflict which brings no gain to either side ; this is a conflict between aggrandisement and self-protection and therefore ruins everything. This is a conflict, which, though so old, is full of novelties, and those who inhale them are permeated with the scientific gas of universal ruin. This is the cruellest tragedy of humanity.

And who knows how the tragedy will run and end ? The sanguine heart of modern man has established Leagues and formulated Pacts to ensure the Peace of the world, but when Pessimism suggests that the inherent spirit of struggle in man is too strong to be subdued by speeches and documents, it adheres

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\* Inaugural Address, P. 51.

† Harrison, Meaning of History, P. 6.

to the true Philosophy of History. The World is destined to witness a period when the revived Nationalism of the East and the weary Imperialism of the West will fight for existence. It may be hoped, if History teaches any eternal principle at all, that the victory in the struggle will favour the East and her troubled soul will return to her destined aim of spiritual supremacy.

But, will this be the much looked-for epilogue of the tragedy of universal History ?

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## HYPERION.

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Prof. SRIKUMAR BANERJEE.

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**H**YPERION is the second effort of Keats to write a long poem, and the first to write an epic of sustained imaginative flight. It has, thus, obvious links with *Endymion*, being akin to it both in subject-matter and breadth of compass. Keats was but ill satisfied with the measure of his success in the earlier poem, and had already in his advertisement of *Endymion*, announced his intention of writing another on the subject of Greek mythology : and *Hyperion* comes to us as a partial and inadequate redemption of this pledge. In the earlier poem, Keats had been content to drift and meander amidst a profusion of way-side beauties, to walk ankle-deep in lilies of the vale ; the mood was one of a frank, voluptuous self-surrender to beauty, and there was but little sign of the controlling presence of a higher imagination. In *Hyperion*, the mood is immeasurably higher ; Keats, for the first time, plumes his wings

for soaring into the upper epic heights, and forges a wonderful stateliness of speech in marvellous keeping with the dignity of his subject, and in sharp contrast with the somewhat langorous beauty of his usual style. And though the young wings are soon tired out, and come down from the heights with a panting tremulous flutter, though a thin quaver soon makes itself heard amidst the booming sonorities of the style, yet the daring audacity of the experiment works its spell upon us, and expands our ideas about the potentialities of the poet. Fragment though it is and bearing as it does the signs of an obvious immaturity and exhaustion upon it, it is nevertheless felt to be a magnificent effort, a unique attempt to bridge over the gulf that yawns for all time between Epic and Romance,

The first point about *Hyperion* that calls for notice is, of course, its success as an epic poem; Keats meant it above all as an epic venture, and it is the epic test that should primarily be brought to bear upon it; and the abundance of incongruous beauties, however subtly imaginative these beauties themselves may be, should not be accepted as a substitute for the distinctive epic qualities—a certain all embracing breadth and massiveness of structure, a sustained heroic tone and pitch that are associated with all genuine epic poems. It should at the same time be realised what a stupendous burden Keats was laying upon himself in choosing to cast his poem in the epic mould. For, when all is said and done, the fact remains that an epic is something of an anachronism in the beginning of the 19th century. In a modern age, of little leisure and lesser credulity, when unity tends to be pierced through by the elements of doubt and discord, and imposing systems of thoughts and belief are crumbling to pieces in every direction, when homogeneity has given way to the wildest forms of originality, the most unmitigated kind of individualism, we have indeed, survived the need of an epic poem. The elaborate epical machinery has begun to turn on rusty hinges; its joints have given way; its parts have been unloosened and severed; and its imposing structure but tends to arouse a derisive, incredulous smile in us in place of the old unqualified acceptance and reverence of spirit. Is there any one in this latter days, who can feel himself

equal to swallowing wholesale the epic elaborations and common-places, even of a magnificent, first-rate poem like *Paradise Lost*—its clotted pedantries, and unscientific cosmogonies, and puerile discussions on divinities and demonology? We have drifted far indeed from the mood of mind which could pasture on such arid soil; to us they appear as peculiarly barren and unreal; we experience a three-fold hesitancy in putting our sickle in the dry fields of theology. Moreover, the excuse which was available for Milton can hardly extend itself to a latter-day poet; the burning spiritual faith of the Puritan poet pierces through these interminable elaborations of purpose, and links them somehow to the grandeur of its central design, just as the inexhaustible details of Dante's picture of Hell, so curiously grotesque and inappropriate to the finer subjectivity of a modern mind seem to emanate quite naturally from the fiery intensity of his spiritual vision. Milton's unlimited discursiveness, his wandering at large through the realms of all history, of the most recondite and out-of-the-way kinds of lore seems but the natural unfolding of a spirit—which is on fire with the glow of a mighty faith, and to which the universe appears, in sober reality, and not as a mere flaming metaphor, to be bound to the foot-stool of God. The spirit that "dove-like sat brooding on the vast abyss" covers under the space of its sheltering wings many a thing that would appear strangely ill-assorted, and out-of-place under a less extensive canopy.

The digressions of Keats have, therefore, neither the fitness nor the excuse of the digressions of his predecessor. He seems to feel, in fact, a strange uneasiness in filling up the interstices of his massive framework. There is a curious note of faltering and hesitancy in the learned details which he introduces so rarely and with such manifest awkwardness in the body of his poem. Milton's learning, however pedantic and inartistic it may be, seem to well out of a fully saturated mind; all his recondite allusions whether to Arthur and his Round-table, or to the spheres of science and theology, have the mark of a long sojourn in the chambers of the mind and are steeped in the personal qualities of

the poet himself. The boldest ventures of Keats have, on the contrary, a certain thinness, almost a grotesque and fantastic unreality about them, hardly in keeping with the dignity of the epic atmosphere. One of the most notable examples is to be come across in Book I, Ll. 277-283 where the manifest lack of an impression of solidity in the learning displayed, its frankly unreal and frivolous character is sought to be covered by a touch of imaginative sadness at the very end—

their import gone,

Their wisdom long since fled.

Every epic poem, which is spread out over a great space, must have its axioms and assumptions, a store-house of facts and fancies, of theories and legends popularly accepted, on which the poet can draw in his flatter, more uninspired levels. To draw the mere outline by one bold sweep of the imagination is not enough; the mind must be stored rich to fill up the inter-spaces of the story. Milton has such an inexhaustible store ready at his command; whole books are sometimes filled by these digressions, when the epic claim is yet afar off. The poverty of Keats in this respect is as well-marked as the opulence of Milton. He seems to have conjured up the vision of an epic structure without caring to provide himself before-hand with any of these mechanical props and buttresses without which the building could not stand erect. What a thin and empty world it is into which Keats takes us in his *Hyperion*—a world in which the reverberations of the mighty past have been thinned down into a faint and far-off echo, a world which moves in a kind of vacuum, as it were peopled only by "Grey Legends" and unreal phantoms. The allusions to allied or independent events that we come across in the poem are but two or three in number, and even these have not the promise of any considerable expansion about them. The relation between the first generation of Gods, such as Heaven and Earth, and the generation just supplanted, a thing hinted at in the speeches of Coelus (Book I) and Oceanus (Book II); an anticipation of the second war of the Giants against the Olympian Gods, summarily disposed



of by bare mention (Book II, Ll. 70-72) ; a bare recital of the future glories of a defeated Goddess, Asia (Book II, Ll. 55-60), in which an imaginative sympathy is made to take the place of wealth of detail—these are the only auxiliary events that held to swell the body of the narrative, and it is easy to see that such help as they can give does not go far enough. One of the reasons why the epic had to be cut short must, therefore, have been that Keats's intellectual equipment did not keep pace with his imaginative flight and availed not to give rest and support to his tired wings.

The more serious obstacle is certainly to be found in the lack of the epic mood, and the consequent failure to forge the right sort of epic style. The epical mood, the mood of sustained dignity and elevation did not come quite natural to Keats. Lyric poignancy and pathos, rather than epic stateliness is the natural form of his utterance ; the austere dignity of style, in which the impression of mere beauty is over-laid by that of massiveness, is but rarely attained by him, and even when attained for a brief while is but very ill sustained. Thus it is that again and again the austere epic tone of the poem tends either to be forced up into a shrill lyric pitch, or to slide down into the exquisite modulation of a quiet dove-like cooing—things beautiful in themselves no doubt, but hardly coming up to our notions of the epical standard. Again and again does the full, free articulation lapse into a half-heard melodious whisper, and distinctness of speech is swallowed up into a vague suggestion of beauty. There is too much of the shrill lyrical cry of high-pitched ejaculation in the first speech of Thea, the plaintive tone of which is in curious contradiction of the superhuman physical strength ascribed to her. (Book I. Ll. 27-30). The speech of Saturn which follows though striking the right epical note in the main, tends nevertheless, to stray at times into images of incongruous beauty ;

and there shall be

Beautiful things made new, for the surprise

Of the sky-children,

(Book I, Ll. 131-33).

The speech of Clymene in Book II, pervaded by an exquisite

lyrical melody and tender pathos as it is, disarms hostile criticism, but one can be permitted to doubt its fitness in its context. In the unfinished Book—III, again, we are made to feel that Keats has arrived at the end of his epic tether; the lofty epic mood, which must have been felt as an oppressive weight, is frankly abandoned, and the poet falls back into an unmixed lyrical vein that fights shy of the sublimities of his subject matter. He announces in no uncertain terms his intention to leave high themes alone:

O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes:  
 For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire;  
 A solitary sorrow best befit  
 Thy lips, and antheing a lonely grief,

(Book III, Ll. 3-6).

The very mention of Apollo unlooses the flood-gates of beauty in his soul; and he escapes altogether from the epic, to indulge once more in his natural vein, an Endymion-like elaboration of beautiful images and details. Moreover, over the whole of this last book there broods a long-drawn pathetic sigh, which envelops victors and vanquished alike. A lorn, pathetic tune intrudes no less in the rapturous visions of the youthful Apollo, than in the high defiance of the defeated Titans. Book III shows conclusively that Keats has drifted far enough indeed from the epic temper and style of the beginning.

A progressive deterioration of the epic style can likewise be traced onwards from the end of Book I. Even in Book I one can trace lines of beauty which are felt to be intrusive and out-of-place, like laced fripperies on a gigantic stone statue—

And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,  
 In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,  
 That inlet to severe magnificence  
 Stood full-blown, for the God to enter it

—a halting cadence, and a wasteful splash of colour seem to mark lines such as these. There is likewise a vagueness, an unsatisfying haze about the first few lines of the speech of Coelus (Book I, Ll. 309-320). A general laxity and flatness of style makes itself felt from

the Second Book, a flatness the more painfully visible in the duller levels of the narrative, and spoiled still further by the cheap decorative graces with which it is sought to be stuffed out,

Just at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings  
Hyperion slide into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gained with Thea that sad place  
Where Cybele and the bruished Titans mourned.

—in lines like these the halting bareness of the style is in vain sought to be covered by a dash of sprightly fancy which mainly shows itself in the choice of the adjectives. Sometimes a turbid riot of phrases is used to shadow forth the sense of a turmoil and convulsion, with little sense of economy, and a positively rude clatter of effect upon the ear—a mere travesty of the true epic dignity.

Heaving in pain, and horribly convulsed  
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.

(Book II, Ll. 27-28).

A similar instance of weakness *masquerading* as strength, of a feverish accumulation of images in place of the quiet strength and dignity of epic style is to be found in Book III, towards the very end :

Most like the struggle at the gate of death ;  
Or liker still to one who should take leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse  
Die into life. (Book III, Ll. 126-130).

where the effect is still further spoiled by the fantastic conceit worked into it, quite in the vein of the metaphysical poets of the 17th century.

All these are indications of Keats's failure to keep up the epic mood, of the restless wing-flutter of a weaker bird in place of the magnificent balance and poise of an eagle's flight.

In the management of the rhythmic effect of his blank verse too, Keats shows himself on an immeasurably lower level than Milton. His verses have but little of "the planetary wheelings" of Milton's. The rhythm does not triumphantly sustain itself from line to line culminating in the long run, in a magnificent climax, which like a

master-well of harmony combines the scattered melodies of the separate lines into one grand synthesis. Keats works within a narrower compass and on the whole with much less satisfying effect. (As Professor Elton well remarks, "he does not succeed in forging the time-and-wind-defying fabric of the epic style"; and the Miltonic inversions and sublimities, adopted for a brief while with astonishing success, soon prove to be too much of strain, grow fewer and rarer, and are finally swallowed up into a hectic, high-pitched sort of style quite unfit for epic purposes.)

Another proof of the constant tendency of Keats to slide down from epic heights into lowlier and more commonplace levels is furnished by the number of homely images and comparisons that he introduces into the body of the poem. These homely images are felt to be at a much lower, imaginative level than the rest of the poem, and bring us down, with rather a sharp and abrupt jerk, from our loftier soarings. It is not the fact that these homely touches are quite unprecedented in epic poetry; on the contrary they occur quite frequently in the early epics of the world, in Homer and Virgil above all. But in them the gulf between the homely and the heroic is not so well-marked as in later times; the homely stuff of life is woven of heroic feelings and sentiments, and the heroic, not pushed to the farthest limit of idealisation, is touched with homely features. In Milton, the homely elements are much rarer, and introduced with an exquisite sense of artistic effect as a relief from a too prolonged tension of feeling and straining after sublimity. Towards the end of the First Book of *Paradise Lost*, the homely image of bees hiving out is felt as an exquisite refreshment, when the sulphurous fumes of Hell have been too long inhaled by us, and its murky horrors have already begun to get on our nerves. Neither of these justifications is available for Keats: his homely images are not in vital fusion with the heroic elements of his poem, nor do they come as a welcome relief to a too uniform and unmitigated sublimity. The effect of such lines as the following in Book I is doubtless to weaken and dilute the impression of grandeur and intensity.

For as in theatres of crowded men  
 Hubbub increases more they call out "Hush !"  
 So at Hyperion's words the phantoms pale  
 Bestirred themselves, thrice horrible and cold.

(Ll. 253-256.)

An exactly similar impression is conveyed by a passage in Book II, where the agony of Saturn as he approaches the dwelling of his defeated followers is brought home to us by a rather trite and common-place human parallel :

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
 Is persecuted more, and fevered more,  
 When it is nighing to the mournful house  
 Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise.

(Ll. 101-104.)

Sufficient stress <sup>is</sup> has been laid upon Keats's want of equipment as an epic poet as an explanation of the failure of his epic venture. It is now time to turn to the other side of the picture, and to insist on the marked success achieved in spite of disabilities. The thing that is to be said in Keats' favour is that his intention was to write an epic, not of the austere Miltonic type, but one interfused by the rare beauties of romance ; to attempt reconciliation, as far as possible, between the epic and romantic temperaments, temperaments vitally unlike, as Professor Ker's famous book "Epic and Romance" goes to show. It would thus be manifestly unfair to Keats to judge him after the severe Miltonic standard ; such a standard would rigidly rule out of court those subtle graces and thrilling perceptions of beauty, the whole of that magic spell of nature which fills up so large a space of the romantic imagination ; and it is precisely in these haunting suggestions of beauty, the subtle evocation of the varied appeals of nature that the greatness of Keats consists. There is plenty of such thrills to be enjoyed in *Hyperion*, provided we succeed in keeping out our epical pre-possessions. —The nature-passages with which the poem is studded recapture for us even the most vanishing and fugitive vibrations that make up the total indefinable appeal of nature to the sensitive soul, while evincing, at

the same time, a rare fitness to the atmosphere in their suggestion of kinship between the sounds of nature and the voices and speeches of these primitive Gods who are but one step removed from the stirring nature-forces of the universe. Some of these nature-passages, which contribute so materially to the impression of rich and delicate beauty, that we feel in *Hyperion*, may now be examined in detail. (Book I. LL. 71-78.)

As when upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch— charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave ;  
So came these words and went.

brings out, to the last shade of suggestion the element of magic becalming in the stillness of the forest oaks, a preternatural suspension of life shed forth as an emanation from the stars overhead and spreading a trance through the multitude of their branches, while the comparison of these oaks to "Green-robed senators", though a trifle fanciful no doubt, serves to make them the fitter recipients of this benumbing spell. Unfortunately the spell of this exquisite passage is broken by the clause of exception that follows:— (Save from one gradual, solitary gust); the effect of this is to dissipate the magic trance by bringing in a common-place and rather contradictory image, for the silence which has been so cunningly built up is found to have one outlet of sound at any rate. The reader is naturally tempted to ask, "why take so much pains to create an impression of preternatural stillness, when the very next sentence brings in a gust that breaks through it all?"

The next passage of like intensity occurs in Book II—the famous passage comparing the Titans sprawling hither and thither in the dark forest to Druidical stones scattered at random on the plains of Stonehenge. (Ll. 30-38.)

Keats seizes the exact emotional import of these scattered stones,

once the objects of heart-felt and reverent worship, now the very embodiment of the spirit of desolation by comparing them to the fallen Titans and thus creating for them the right sort of atmosphere, and the effect is rendered still more gloomy and forlorn by the image of chill and rainy November evening that follows. These lines have the genuine epic stamp upon them, and hit off with marvellous appropriateness the condition of the fallen Titans; they mark the closest approximation of the romantic imagination to the purposes of an epic poem.

The other passages bring out with an unparalleled felicity the kinship between the sounds of nature and the voice of the primitive Gods. One of them (Book II, Ll. 116-29) merely conveys an idea of things supernatural by images drawn from the world of nature; and though 'the roaring in the bleak-grown pines, when winter lifts his voice,' very aptly shadows forth the tense murmur of expectancy among superhuman auditors, yet the passage as a whole tends to suffer from elaboration, and to swoon away, towards the end, into mere inanition. (Leave the dinn'd air vibrating *silverly*).

The others have a higher artistic value, showing as they do, a keen instinctive grasp of the first elements of myth-making, of the slow, almost unconscious process in which the anthropomorphic faculties of man are set to work, transforming nature-forces into divine beings. Such are Book II, Ll. 170-172.

And the God of the sea

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Arose, with locks not oozy, and begun,  
In murmurs which his first-endeavouring tongue  
Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands;

Book II, Ll. 300-308, in which the timid accounts of Clymene are caught up by, and drowned in, the rough hoarse voice of Encoladus is aptly compared to the gentle murmur of river swallowed up by the resonant sea-waves, while the gruff hoarseness of the latter's voice is brought out with singular felicity in line that not only speaks of, but echoes with marvellous exactitude, the waves hoarsely resounding through the winding caves of sea-side rocks.

There are still other passages, generally very short, in a simpler and more elementary vein which content themselves with a swift hitting of parallelisms from the world of nature, without going the length of conjuring up a complex atmosphere. The very spontaneity of passages like these make them go home deeper than the more elaborate and high wrought ones.

No shape distinguishable, more than when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds :  
(Book II, Ll. 79-80.)

Or

He looked upon them all,  
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar locks  
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel  
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.  
(Book III, Ll. 350-354.)

lines that have a wonderful freshness and glow of beauty upon them.

Another class of passages may also be distinguished, which bring out to the full Keats' power of finding concrete expression for all sorts of vague, shadowy suggestions and drawn from the world of nature. The unseen presence of Mnemosyne, dogging in secret the footsteps of the youthful Apollo, a subject that would have called forth mystic hymns and invocations from Shelley, and hints of fugitive glamour hiding behind the vesture of physical things, is disposed of in a few, simple words.

Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er  
The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid-forest. (Book III, Ll. 53-55.)

Again, nowhere do we come across a more concrete and clear out expression, shorn of all the elements of vagueness and symbolism, of a thrilling succession of melodies, than in the speech of Clymene in Book II.

I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
And a wave filled it, as my sense was filled  
With that new, blissful golden melody.



A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
 Each family of rapturous, hurried notes,  
 That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
 Like pearl-beads dropping sudden from their string :  
 And then another, then another strain,  
 Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
 With music winged instead of silent plumes,  
 To hover round my head, and make me sick  
 Of joy and grief at once.

(Ll. 278-289.)

Those beauties, of rich and subtly original kind, are our gains to set over against the losses due to a violation of the strict epic spirit ; these glowing finger-marks of romance betray the places where the romantic imagination has clasped the epic volume.

We have up till now been dealing with beauties more lyrical than epic, beauties of softer and subtler kind than are quite appropriate in the austerer epic atmosphere. But this does not, by any means, show that the true epic manner was altogether above the poet's reach, that he could not even occasionally screw up his powers to the epic pitch. He has, on the contrary, managed to attain the lofty epic style, and maintains it with almost unfaltering consistency throughout nearly the whole of the First Book, and in parts of the Second, though the signs of exhaustion are increasingly apparent as we proceed. There are numerous passages in Hyperion that have the distinctive epic stamp upon them that evince an easy and effortless dignity which follow the assured mastery of the lofty style. Such are, for example, Book I, Ll. 17-21, one passage in the first speech of Thea, Ll. 55-63 Ll. 100-102 and Ll. 145-147 and almost the whole of the first speech of Saturn. A peculiar largeness of accent and dignity of effect wait upon lines like the following :

.....For Fate  
 Had poured a mortal oil upon his head,  
 A disanointing poison. /

(Book II, Ll. 96-98.)

bureaucracy more rigorous and arbitrary than that of the pre-Revolution days—a bureaucracy that stops at nothing so long as the ends achieved justify the means adopted.

When the first Revolution broke out in Russia early in the summer months of 1917, very many optimistic views were held about the future of that country, and it was seriously hoped by many that the old class-privileges would disappear and in their place would rise a proletariat government of the people, by the people and for the people. But the second Revolution which followed early in November that very year under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky shattered all such hopes. Imbued with an impracticable ideal of communistic socialism, Lenin overthrew the comparatively sane elements of the Revolution, and then began an era of what may be called proletarian despotism. Yes, despotism it was—and a no better transition from the despotism of the days of the Romanoffs. In the early months of the Revolution Maxim Gorki had struck a note of warning against the increasing inclination of the Bolsheviki to anarchy, and that prophecy has at last come true. Of course, the leaders of this Bolshevist movement offered the platitude that after all they were not untrue to their professed principles (although it is seriously to be doubted if it were really so). Lenin, for example, gave an ingenious twist to the principles of Karl Marx to suit his immediate purposes, and held that this revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat was only a transitional period—the first phase of the communistic society, and that it was to be followed by a period when there would be no dictatorship, no state, but absolute and complete freedom—the highest phase. In the third International held in Moscow the same principle was re-iterated that the solution of the world-crisis was possible only through the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this dictatorship, the first phase of the 'glorious' transition from Capitalism to Communism, the Communists hold, cannot be attained by constitutional means, but by armed violence.

It now remains to be seen how far the ideal which swayed many of the sincere workers in the cause of freedom and equality

has been employed for the personal aggrandisement of some of the Bolshevik leaders. Once the high tide of revolutionary enthusiasm was over, the Bolsheviks discarded their false plumes and established a dictatorship which chained down the peasants and workers of Russia all the more fast. A very graphic account of the real situation in Russia after the Revolution has been given by Emma Goldmann,\* an ardent supporter of the Russian Revolution, who was deported from U. S. A. to Russia in 1919. She remained in the Soviet Republic for over two years, came across almost all the distinguished personalities of the Bolsheviks, saw every nook and corner of the Soviet organisation and spoke with real grief about the failure of the Revolution in Russia. She sums up her impressions as follows : "I found reality in Russia grotesque, totally unlike the great ideal that had borne me upon the crest of high hope to the land of promise..... Each day, each week added new links to the fatal chain that pulled down my cherished edifice..... I saw before me the Bolshevik State, formidable, crashing every constructive effort, suppressing, debasing and disintegrating everything..... Observation and study, extensive travel through various parts of the country, meeting with every shade of political opinion and every variety of friend and enemy among the Bolsheviks—all convinced me of the ghastly delusion which had been foisted upon the world." That was the situation in Russia in 1923 and it is little better to-day in 1929. The fact that the old Communist doctrines have undergone very many changes must not be overlooked ; the New Economic Policy adopted by Lenin in 1922 only showed that communism proper is an impossible ideal, and however much one might fret at the inequalities of a capitalistic régime, inequalities and differences are bound to exist.

In a sense Russia reverted to her old arbitrary ways in 1922. Neither new methods nor modification of old policies could achieve anything noble and substantial for her. Nevertheless, a certain section of the press and the public are never tired of preaching the blessings that the Soviet Government has conferred upon Russia in particular

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\* *My Disillusionment in Russia* (Doubleday, Page and Co., 1923).

and upon the world in general. But most of this painting in glowing colours of the 'divine' atmosphere that prevails in Russia has been done by very efficient and shrewd Bolshevik propaganda. Indeed, "as advertising wizards the Bolsheviks excel anything the world has ever known before." The mesmeric influence of revolutionary superstition coupled with the ingenious propaganda of the Communists, the power that be in Russia, has made us completely blind to the hollowness prevailing within. The Revolution, we know, was fought for a good many social, political and economic changes that would ameliorate the sufferings of the people and establish an era of perfect peace and equality; but very few changes of this type have actually been effected there up to this time. The peasants of Russia, in whose behalf the Revolution was fought, have derived little social betterment. The industrial yoke of the capitalists of pre-war days has only been replaced by a tighter yoke of the Bolshevik State. Capitalism was suppressed and exploited, we are told, in the name of something which was later to bring peace, comfort and light to the peasant proletariat; but has that much-coveted peace come? The Communist party in Russia has been virtually a bureaucratic tyranny; it is, in the words of Kautsky, the "tyranny of the minority over the majority"; violence has been used by them, not as a means of defence, but as a means of terrorism and aggrandisement. The spirit of solidarity among the peasants and workers to-day is no better than what it was before the Revolution, and comradeship and mutual helpfulness are no more than high-sounding phrases. There is inequality at every step; it is the Communist bureaucracy that rules, and all who do not subscribe to Communist views must go to the wall. In short, it is a veritable autocracy; "the Bolsheviks have created a bureaucracy and officialdom which surpasses even that of the old régime." They have suppressed most unscrupulously all newspapers that hold views different from theirs and thus have destroyed "the sole remedy that might militate against corruption." The glowing accounts of the prosperity and progress of Russia under the Soviet rule that are daily broadcast are only parts of shrewd Communist propaganda.

And when we hear one, who had devoted the best of his energy to the cause of the Revolution, emphatically assert before the world that the actual condition of the workers in the cities to-day is worse than what it was in the first year after the Revolution of 1917, that the wages of the workers on land to-day are not more than 63 per cent. of what they were before the War,\* we may well wonder what all these showy parades about Soviet Russia's prosperity and glory mean. The housing situation, continues Trotsky, is bad; the increase of drunkenness is frightful; the educational system is threatened by a collapse. Surely all these are not very hopeful signs; they all point to a Russia in which the peasant and worker proletariat are already groaning under a rigid system of industrial and political autocracy. A system of favouritism and graft has been the main feature of this Communist bureaucracy of Soviet Russia; everywhere dominates a partisan spirit—a virtual negation of real democracy.

It is really difficult to have a correct and faithful picture of present Russia from outside. The Soviet Government jealously sees to it that no 'unwelcome' visitors tread upon the sacred soil of Russia. And even if there be visitors, the ingenious Bolshevik propagandists manage to present such a rosy picture of their country before them that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, these new-comers cannot but be convinced of its truth. In fact, most things in Russia have a double facet—one, paraded before foreign visitors and enquirers, and the other, known only by the masses of that unhappy country.

After all the fact that we may gather very useful lessons from the rather unfortunate experiences of Russia must not be overlooked. Russia has served the purpose of a nice field for an important political experiment, and, although in consequence of this experiment her own people have suffered a great deal, there is at least some consolation in the reflection that the world will be able to profit by her experience—her success and failure,

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\* Trotsky on Russia: *The Statesman*, January 6, 1929.

idealism and practice. We must bear in mind that the pure idealism of a communistic society, which the early revolutionaries under Lenin and Trotsky sought to establish, has been an impossibility, a total failure. Communistic socialism as Karl Marx and Freidrich Engels understood and Lenin interpreted is an impracticable, if not an impossible, ideal. And those who were at first the most eloquent preachers of Communism were the first to realise the limitations of that ideal. It was a consciousness of this limitation that gave birth to the New Economic Policy of Lenin in 1922, when the right to own property was conceded and along with it many other non-communistic traditional bourgeoisie rights. Lenin, with all the mighty force of the Bolsheviki behind him, could not prevent the development of capitalism and the growth of a class of peasant proprietors given to a process of medieval accumulation of capital. All these are very important lessons for the student of political history. The failure of the Soviet to achieve what it at first purported to achieve has given the death-blow to the success of all utopian schemes of reorganisation of society on a communistic or anarchical basis. The existing Soviet is no better than a bourgeoisie state, showing only a lip-sympathy to the peasant and working proletariat ; it is the culmination of the Ninth Congress of All-Russian Communist Party held in March, 1920, when the militarisation of labour, one-man management of industry and obligatory labour were established in Communist Russia.

It is needless here to dwell on the popular arguments that are generally levelled against a communistic scheme of organisation of society ; they are all too well-known to be repeated. The fact is that the human factor is often ignored by these Communists and Socialists ; private property and competition have come to stay ; inequalities there must be ; self-interest is inherent in man ; the gulf between the producer and the consumer must be bridged—and that by the capitalist. For the real success of Communism and Socialism are needed a high development of the people, a high morale among the masses and highly-developed social instincts. These are almost totally absent in the proletariat of the present day and

there is little likelihood that they will ever be attained in the near future. Communism, under these circumstances, is only a dream.

A most dangerous aspect of the Communist agitation in Russia is that the Communists from Moscow are trying to win over disaffected masses all over the world to their utopian scheme. For this purpose they have been adopting a very shrewd and ingenious propaganda. But the realities of the Russian situation and the miserable experiences of the Russian proletariat—these should be an eye-opener to all sane people. This warning is particularly needed in India where communistic ideas are rapidly percolating among the masses and the thunder is gradually moving to the left. It is a really ominous sign, and more so because many of our accredited leaders are displaying a rather exuberant love for the communistic scheme. After all, communism only brings about a subversion of established order and tranquility, and achieves nothing beneficial either for the bourgeoisie or for the proletariat, as is evidenced from Soviet Russia. And even if a better and more humane re-distribution of wealth be the ideal, it should be achieved not by a violent class-struggle and revolution, but by a steady process of evolution.

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### THE MOTHER (La Madre.)

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DEVENDRA NATH GHOSE—*Third Year Arts.*

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ALL the Nobel-prize winners have some thing sublime to give. This idea lured the present writer to the study of *La Madre* by Grazia Deledda, the Nobel-prize winner of 1927. It was for this expectation, perhaps, that he was a bit disappointed in the

book. He must confess that he could not find any thing in it which might seem extraordinary—at least from his stand point. Yet when he came to the last line of the book he was amply rewarded. A feeling of pleasant sensation was irresistible, though, not of eminent satisfaction. He felt as if he had come through a delightful Sardinian village of quiet surroundings with all the charming characteristics of an ignorant populace wedded to primitive superstitions. The poverty stricken cottages clinging to the grassy hill-side like two rows of sheep, the church with its slender tower and with people thronging to its door, the old and venerable tress growing along the piazza before the church bending and tossing furiously in the wind, rose like beautiful pictures as if just visited. This sense of a joy—a satisfaction still lingers in his mind which has failed to discover anything extra-ordinary in the book. In spite of this one cannot mistake the traces of a masterhand and a feeling soul writ largely over the work. The psychological presentation of the two chief characters in their varied passions and subtleties of intentions is absorbing in its power and gives to the theme an abiding interest.

The story of the book is as simple as it can be. The action is confined within the narrow limits of two days. A mother's soul seeking to save her clergy son from a moral pitfall, the unblossomed love of the young priest, and a maiden withering away under the glare of religion form the essence of the book. It is a tragedy of love enacted on the altar of the church. The unhappy actors are Paul, the young clergyman and Agnes, the fair maiden. And Paul's Mother Maria Madalena gives shape to and completes the tragedy. Herself a servant she has toiled and slaved to educate her son for the church. The village to which he has been sent after his ordination is under a curse. The parish priest who had preceeded Paul had after a life of prayer and holiness turned to sorcery, drinking and cards. The superstitious villagers believe that the devil carried him away at his death and that his evil spirit still lurks in the village paths. Deputed to this village the young priest becomes an object of constant watch to the poor mother.



She finds to her grief her beloved son gradually tempted by evil influences. On a stormy night she crosses the little piazza of the church by the windlashed elder trees. She watches the gloomy mansion with its gothic porch, its iron rings for tethering horses. In that house, her son, the priest is alone with a beautiful young woman. Paul tortured by the fatal passion which caused him to forget his religious vows, can scarcely face his aged mother who is torn between filial love and religious horror at the sin which he has committed. After a night of frantic remorse he sends a farewell letter to Agnes, the lovely girl whose beauty has ensnared his senses. Now he feels a bit relieved that he has at last made an end of his consuming passion that was purrying him towards hell and that he has kept his promise to his mother. But at the same time, from a dim corner of his heart a yearning for what might have been begins to torture his mind. He passes the day in great mental agony. Of a sudden he learns at rightfull that Agnes is sick—very sick at his cruel note. This knowledge makes him lose control over his self ; he extorts permission from his mother and rushes out to Agnes' home. But he can not entirely give himself up to her. Standing face to face with his beloved he realizes with precision his position of duplicity. At last his better self prevails over his youthful passions, and he tries to console Agnes saying : "Agnes we must keep ourselves unsoiled, we must keep our love for all eternity. We must unite it with all that is best in life, with renunciation, with death itself, that is to say, with God." But Agnes hears him not. Instinct rules her feelings and she doubts his sincerity. In her helpless agony and passion she threatens to expose his love-making. Then Paul comes away. The dread of public exposure lies heavy on his mind.

Next morning, troubled and agitated Paul proceeds to the church to say the Mass. From the calvary he watches Agnes come with her servant and take her accustomed seat and he fears every moment that Agnes will rise and speak out every thing. His eyes pass over the crowd and fall upon his mother kneeling devoutly and looking intently at Agnes. The anxious moments pass on one

after another, and suddenly a noise arises. A voice cries out, "His mother is taken ill!" All at once he comes down to where his mother was. He finds her prostrate on the ground hemmed in by the pressing crowd. He moans out, "Mother! Mother!" Her face was still and rigid, the eyes half closed, the teeth clenched in the effort not to cry aloud. He too, clenches his teeth that he may not cry aloud and when he raises his head, across the confused crowd his eyes meet those of Agnes.

Here ends the book and we need not enquire what is to come after. But we can not push back from the mind a sense of the tragedy that is finished but yet not finished. It leaves the two young hearts in the space. With the inevitableness of the Greek tragedy the story is brought to its close. But the tragedy remains as ever.

The mother dies in her supreme dread of the public which Paul succeeded to overcome. And in her death culminates her love for Paul. Ever since the day of first suspicion how anxiously did she pass her days! How often did her motherly soul weep and regret for the hard lot thrust upon him! Could he not marry and have smiling children that might cheer her up? What a terrible curse it was for him! But the next moment remorse seized the indulging mother's soul and she watched her Paul with sorrow and grief in her heart. Such was she, and she died for her son.

Side by side with her emerges in our mind the familiar figure of Pavel's mother in Gorky's book. In her unshaken patience under oppression and unbounded love for Pavel and sympathy for his cause she stands close to Paul's mother though in a different light. A new awakening—a glimpse of a freer and higher life occupies the mother's heart and she follows in the foot-steps of her son. And in her struggle to assist the cause of her son she embraces death. Paul's mother too, in her eagerness to help him out of the dismal abyss of downfall brings upon herself her death. In both the cases the sacrifice is hallowed by the sacredness of mother's love. Love welling out of the heart of mothers consecrates all that it touches and turns it into gold.

The tragic situation into which love had thrown the young priest at once reminds one of the admirable book of Nathaniel Hawthorne. In "The Scarlet Letter" the same passionate love between Hester and the young clergyman Dimmesdale shows itself with all its impetuosity and inner conflicts. But the noble strength of Hester and the remorseful silence of the priest keep it a secret until the last moment when Dimmesdale can no longer hold on but gives way to his conscience in disregard of public voice. He speaks out all that he did and felt, and in that supreme hour of triumph he succumbs to death. It was a glorious end of one who in a passionate moment of weakness committed a sin and repented all through his life. Thus Hester was left alone but free from the public calumny which had branded her with infamy and disgrace. But in "The Mother" the death of Maria Madalena does not make the path straighter nor the impending tragedy easier. The mist of the secret remains as ever creating a deceptive situation that will lead to—no one knows where. The church stands between the two and the death of the sorrowing mother is like a sacred barrier that they can not overstep. Their position is indeed more tragic than before.

Such the story that we get from Grazia Deledda. As a realistic writer she may not be very great, but as a Regionalist writer she has perhaps very few parallels. Through all her books an intense love for her own island Sardinia manifests itself. Just as Thomas Hardy fixes upon Wessex as the scene of his novels, so Grazia Deledda has this Sardinian island for herself. She draws colour from this locality and her characters shine forth in beauty and charm. The primitive instinctive life of the populace, their superstitions and simple beliefs mingled with the complexities of human passions form one of the most charming chapters of world's literature.

Unlike most of the Noble-prize winners she is the least continental writer; yet international readers find much to enjoy and much to appreciate in her works. Her "Cenera" (Ashes), "L'Edera" (The Ivy), "Canne al vento" (Reeds in the wind)—the novels of

Sardinia bring us the wild scenery and the customs of the little-known island. The bricked galleries, the unpainted wooden ceilings of the little houses, the bunches of dried grapes and yellow pears hanging from the rafters are clearly pictured, Wild light dwells upon the yellow uplands and the wild mountains. The tinkle of the cow-bells moves homeward in the evening. All this one cannot forget. All this displays her art—the art of making things charming and telling things in a charming manner. Naturally she possesses an artistic vitality powerful and stern as the poor soil of Sardinia from which it sprung. Landscape descriptions and the stories of the little tragedies and comedies of Sardinian life lend to her works a sothing glow and a lasting freshness. She will be remembered for all this if not for any thing else.

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## THE PROBLEM OF WOMAN'S FREEDOM.\*

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SANTISUDHA GHOSH—*5th Year Arts*

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**D**URING the last several years a feminist movement has sprung up almost all over the world and a distant wave of that has recently reached our shores. But up to now, there has been little

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\* The article deals with the subjection of women, and the writer who is a woman herself, has tried to show in what condition women live when under subjection and also what the feelings of enlightened women are when they see their sisters in that condition. The writer professes to speak of conditions that are world-wide, but it seems that she has in her mind those that are nearer home.

It should not be supposed that the editor shares the views expressed in the article simply because it has passed through his hands. For, after all, he does not think man to be so very selfish as the writer has tried to make

progress made in this direction in our country, the work comprising mostly of writing and oratory and nothing else. And even in this short period some of our male well-wishers have become impatient of this sort of writings and begun to ridicule such revolutionary ideas in our women. And as we are not candidates for ridicule, we should not again come forward with another article of this sort, as in the opinion of our male guardians there has been already enough. But the only reason that has prompted the present writer to venture again is that out of the many writings that we find at present there are very few that consider all the circumstances for and against the question. Some are over-enthusiastic in their cause and so always overlook the possible evils arising out of it, and some are so very orthodox (and most probably a little selfish) that they use to scent evil where it is not. But in order to handle the problem seriously we must weigh all the pros and cons with an unbiassed mind. Where the whole human society is gravely concerned it is deproably mean to act under the influence of personal passions.

It is proper at the outset to state clearly what we do mean by woman's freedom. It is nothing but the full freedom of movoment. For no other kind of freedom can exist for one whose hands and feet are tied up. It will be quite out of place to treat this point here in details. But we can take one or two practical examples to understand the truth of this remark. There are women in our country who own large handsome properties or large sums of money deposited in some bank. But when they want to get the money in hand they must request some man to fetch it,

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out. Moreover, with regard to many of her complaints it may be said that the grounds of complaint have in every civilized country been removed or are being removed. Many of her remarks which are now out of date, might come quite aptly in the days when Mill was raising his voice against the subjection of women which was never an eternal condition but had come into existence as a product of the Dark Ages. Since then man has not grudged his partner in life any amount of liberty which she could reasonably claim and he could reasonaly give. The solution of the problem, as the writer has come to realise in the concluding section, is to be effected by the joint efforts of man and woman. Ed. P. C. M,

since they cannot go out themselves. And if the man refuses to do so, the woman is helpless and as poor as a pauper though mistress of vast wealth. Consider next the question of mental independence. A woman who from her childhood has been taught to believe, and has reason to believe from our present social conditions, that she is inferior to man in every respect and always a dependent on him, can never develop her mental faculties on an independent line. So far as her thoughts and opinions are in accordance with those of the male guardians of her family, she is quite safe; but as soon as her thoughts and opinions clash with them, she must submit. She is not allowed to act according to her own convictions unless sanctioned by her husband or father or brother. And the only choice of the woman then lies between two things—either to stifle her self-expressions or to revolt, and to revolt against a man's wish is a horrible crime in a woman. Hence her free thoughts die away. A boy could in such cases have revolted, for the worst that he would have to meet with is expulsion from home which is nothing for a male (if of course he is spirited) who has perfect freedom of movement.

Men often ask—why the women of to-day have this fancy of becoming free and equal to men. Are they being neglected and tyrannised over by men? Have they any real want in the peaceful shades of their domestic corners which they hope to remove by freedom? To all this, the male sex is eager to say “no” whereas our emphatic reply is “yes”. Tyranny is not always exercised by the actual display of bodily force, but there is a kind of mental tyranny which is equally, if not more unbearable. And the wants that they feel under the careful patronage of their *man-masters* are too deep to be expressed by a single stroke of pen and too numerous to admit of a full treatment in this short article. During all the stages of a woman's life, she finds not a single affair in which she can act according to her own judgment. Not to speak of forcing her will on the male members of her family, she is not even at liberty to manage affairs that concern her own self. Even in her domain of household affairs where she is supposed

to be the sovereign and flattered by men to be so, she is really no better off. Home is not a thing entirely cut off from the outside world and being dependent on it, it has many things to do with the outer world. But the mistress of the house has absolutely no hand in such businesses. Even a letter can not be posted without the help of a male. It is not only the womenfolk that are distressed by such a fettered life but the whole family is sometimes put to inconvenience. It happens not infrequently that the males of the family are out and an urgent need arises for calling a doctor. The best thing that the females of the house can do in such a case is to grumble or weep. If a woman has an indispensable necessity for going somewhere immediately she must wait for the consent and opportunity of some male relation of hers. And simply because a woman has no right to travel by herself, every family has to expend double amount of money on each single journey by train or steamer quite uselessly. In a poor country like ours this fact is not to be overlooked. Through this same obstinate adherence to purdah we have also barred the possibility of our women earning money, which, if permitted, would do something to solve our grave bread problem.

Let us come to a broader view of the question namely, the relation between woman's freedom and the world's prosperity. We all see and feel the vast increase in comfort and material happiness in modern life in whatever direction we like to find it. And all these wonders have been effected by human intellect. The rapid progress in science, in philosophy, in literature and what not—is really a miracle that man can justly be proud of. But it seems all the more astonishing when we notice that nearly the whole of the progress has been brought about by only a half of the human race. Women have had almost no hand in its making. The only indirect help that they have lent so long is to bring forth male children who developed into geniuses of something like them. But they have never got an opportunity of exercising their own abilities in moulding the destiny of the world. They have not been able to contribute anything directly to the world's treasure.

And this fact in the history of human society is so very prominent that men have begun to doubt whether a woman possesses the same intellectual faculties as those of a man. But they forget that it is not possible for a person whose duty it is always to submit, to have inventive genius. But apart from that it may be seen that the restraint put upon the free movements of a woman affects this point more directly. For, philosophy cannot be produced without a first-hand knowledge of the world at large, politics is not a policy of managing a household consisting of half a dozen inhabitants of the world, neither can the laborious scientific researches in a laboratory be carried on in the hidden kitchen of our homes.

Some people will perhaps at this point come forward with this ready reply that women need not be anxious to do this sort of hard work. Men alone are quite sufficient for that, and it will be enough for women if they can manage their own homely affairs with efficiency. They will do real good to the world if they can do that, for a peaceful home lends additional vigour and energy to man who will thereby be all the more competent to do his work in the outside world. But to this we must reply that the same kind of work cannot suit every individual temperament. We hope no sane man will deny this fact. Every woman has, just like a man, a special inclination in a special direction. If you want to mould all the characters in the same cast, you will produce so many pigmies, whereas you could have giants if they had been allowed to have their natural growth. So from this noble motive of human interest too, woman's subjection ought to be despised. And anyone who is not blinded by too much selfishness will readily realise this.

But apart from this consideration of universal good, men cannot, in fair justice, deny women freedom. Even if woman's liberty had nothing to do with the progress of civilization, men have no right to suppress their demand for freedom. We know that when women assert this their right, men try to laugh it out by calling it a passing outburst of youthful idealism or a meaningless echo of revolt in Western societies. It is useless to try to convince them that it is not so. But we propose to answer them by some counter-questions.



In recent years there has gradually come over the whole of India a national consciousness and a longing for national freedom. We hope, there is to-day not a single sane and responsible man in India who does not want to cast off our present foreign yoke. Every man dreams of a free India—by whatever name you like to designate that freedom, Home-rule, Dominion Status or Complete Independence. May we ask the reason for this demand for freedom? Is it true that India's condition has become worse in all respects than what it was a hundred and fifty years ago? If not, why do they refuse to tolerate the foreign domination any longer? Because they think that they will be able to govern India far more efficiently or, if this be denied, that every nation has a right to govern itself. But when women say that their condition would have been better had they been allowed to have their own way, men do not believe that. Is it true that every British official in India is selfish and arrogant and that everyone of them abuses his power? That man will be very bold indeed who dares say—'yes'. Yet people are impatient of their rule because they will not tolerate this power in a foreign hand—the power which they can and do sometimes abuse if they will. But when women apply the same argument in their case, they take it as very audacious. We ask—Are Indians ready to accept Britain's "trusteeship" even if she promises to govern them justly and righteously? The reply will no doubt come out in the negative because, after all, Britishers are a foreign nation and howsoever good they may be they cannot properly understand India's aims and aspirations. But it is strange that when women argue the same thing men turn a deaf ear. Last of all, India's greatest justification for the demand for freedom is that Swaraj is her birthright; and the English people, simply because they are English (if for no other reason) have no right to govern her against her will. With the same logic we also declare that freedom is the birth-right of every individual, male or female. Men cannot be our paramount lords and we do not recognise them as such. A woman has also a soul of her own and no power on earth can stifle its all-round development. If for no other reason,

woman will fight for independence simply for this, that she possesses a human soul—free, unbounded and strong.

But there appear two conditions that make us ponder seriously before we plunge into action. The first difficulty that presents itself is due to the physical inferiority of women. Though in the present civilised age, it is continually heard on all sides that right is might, and brute-force is giving way to soul-force, we do not quite believe that such is actually the case or is likely ever to be very soon. Therefore when woman has got complete freedom and shall move about freely it is feared that sometimes she may be liable to many personal dangers. This possibility she cannot avoid. Of course, it is not in the least likely that such things will happen every now and then. But the possibility remains and the question is whether women are able to cope with such emergencies.

But the second consideration that makes us hesitate is graver still. That which we have just considered may be provided against to some extent. But when we come to the second difficulty, we have to face a strong, unalterable law of nature. We mean the mutual attractions between man and woman. Whenever women are freed from their bondage, men and women will move and live on the same field and they will have an unlimited opportunity of mixing freely with each other. What harm this checkless intercourse may bring to society we know not! Of course, our present notions about morality and chastity will have to be modified to a great extent. The age when a look at the face of an unknown man by a woman or of a woman by a man was considered to be an act of grave immorality has now long been over. So also the present objection of Hindu families to allow free and friendly relations between their young people will have to give way under the newer demands of society. This we do not regard in the least as harmful. But if this relation be pushed further, it may shake the foundations of social peace and tranquility. And since we are not fanatics we do not propose obstinately to stick to our point, if it is opposed to general good. We want complete justice to ourselves as well as

real good of the society. Here lies the perplexity of the whole problem which, we fear, it is not easy to solve in a moment.

We can think of only three alternatives in the present case. First, women may remain fettered as they are. But this means a cruel suppression and gradual destruction of their soul—a wanton sacrifice of half the human race at the alter of the other half. The mere idea makes us revolt, for we are human beings and in no way inferior to men as rational creatures.

Secondly, women may fight and obtain freedom. In this case, there is the possibility of the moral basis of society being shattered. This we cannot brook. We have no religious or moral bigotry, but we believe in the existence of soul and in its purity and in the bliss and strength of a pure soul. We want freedom but not the absence of all moral restraints.

Lastly, we can offer one possible solution—that of an entire social reconstruction. Women cannot be and ought not to be kept in perpetual bondage. But along with their freedom there must also be introduced certain other changes in our social laws and customs. It is not possible here to give a summary of what these changes should be. But such effective changes there may be. Let wise and impartial men think them out. Public opinion has always been a strong factor in social life. It is by this invisible but keenly felt instrument that the fetters of ignorance and servitude of women have so long been kept intact. Let it also be a proper check on both men and women in the coming era of women's freedom. If we, the members of society, all really wish good and justice to be established in our social life, we can devise means which will bring them about. But since society does not consist of males or females alone, it requires the sincere and willing co-operation of both to reform it. If it had been simply a question of justice to our own sex, we would not hesitate to secure it by whatever means we can. But since it affects both of us, we halt and extend our hands to men for co-operation. If they are really well-wishers of mankind, they will no doubt accept our invitation.

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## Dr. SIR MOHAMMAD IQBAL—A RETROSPECTIVE GLANCE AT HIS URDU POEMS.

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SYED MAHBUB MURSHED—*Third Year Arts.*

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THE close of the nineteenth century marks the dawn of a new era in the history of Urdu literature which may be very aptly called the "Renaissance Period", and Iqbal may be regarded as one of the best exponents of that glorious era. Among a noble band of great poets that have enriched the treasures of Urdu literature pre-eminently the noblest and greatest of all stands Iqbal in a god-like isolation from the rest. Like a literary Columbus he set sail on a boundless sea and discovered a new world of belles lettres hitherto unexplored

The most popular form of Urdu poetry has always been, and to a great extent, still is the *Ghazal*. In this form every two lines of the poem beginning from the first line make a complete self-contained verse detached from the rest. The *Ghazals* are sung by Indian musicians and their appeal to the oriental mind is sure and unmistakable. Of all forms of poetry the *Ghazal* is the easiest to compose. This is why some of the finest poems as well as the most nonsensical of jargons are written in this form. There is scarcely any well-read student of Urdu literature who has not written a couple of *Ghazals* himself. It would be no exaggeration to say that in places like Delhi and Lucknow every tenth man one comes across in the street is some sort of a *Ghazal-writer*.

Such a state of affairs, though good enough in a way, has helped more often than not to drag down the Muses from their sanctuary in fairy-like dreamlands of Romance to vulgar market-places; and Poetry forced to descend from her peaky eminence where none but the aristocrats and high-priests of Art could approach her hallowed shrine, began to frequent public streets, taverns and tea-shops.

Amidst such unpromising circumstances and in a most uninviting environment rises Iqbal to find the smouldering embers of the Urdu literature slowly and imperceptibly dying out. But the dying embers must leap into flames. The fire has got to be kept alive, for, the fire of mind is the fire which the vestal virgins kept continually burning in the temples. It flamed night and day—immortal and not to be quenched. 'Upon something it must feed and act—upon the pure spirit of fine art or upon the foul and filthy dregs of corrupting passions.'

A true type of an artist with a love of Art for its own sake, a poet with a mind which was a perpetual spring of fresh ideas, fertile in resources, rich in imagination, Iqbal frees himself from the tyranny of fashion and the bondage of traditions, breaks through the shackles of convention and the trammels of custom, shakes off the fetters of pedantry and affectation, and tramples upon the base hypocrisy of art. He worships no false idol, accepts no model, and bears allegiance to none but nature. All his Urdu poems are written in the form of *Nazam* (like English lyric poems) except a few *Ghazals*. This is a signal departure from the usual way of his predecessors.

We shall conveniently classify his poems under three heads:—  
(i) *Nazams*, (ii) Patriotic Poems and (iii) *Ghazals*.

(i) In his *Nazams* he treats of nature, of love and other human passions, of life and death and other subjects of varied interest. Everything that he touches is tinged with the rich hues of his refreshing philosophy. His poems are never didactic yet they can never help being moral. He is not the pedantic school master abroad preaching his sermons and cheap copy book maxims to incredulous ears. We never picture him as a Moses delivering the "Ten Commandments" from the mountains amidst thunder and lightning. He merely creates the Beautiful and revels in his own creation, for, this is the true vocation of the artist. He makes us see and feel the Beautiful, almost overpowers our senses, dazzles our eyes, intoxicates us and leaves us to find 'tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones and good in every thing.'

In his treatment of Nature he resembles that immortal band of English poets—Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats—or coming nearer home our own Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore. He at once shakes hand with Tagore on a common intellectual platform as literary kinsmen and fellow worshippers of Nature. He looks on Nature in the abstract and indulges in an impassioned communion with the Sun, Moon and Stars, with the sky, earth and sea, with flowers, shrubs and plants. Wherever he turns his gaze on dancing shapes and gay images, 'haunt, startle and waylay' him. He delights in depicting Nature as almost always responding to human emotions. He notices the presence of the divine in different natural phenomena. He creates for us a new world out of the suggestions and influences of Nature. He not only makes us feel keenly the beauty and delicacy of Nature but also represents to us her strange power of refreshing the mind wearied by human responsibilities. His eyes are always on the subject itself and he thinks of the spiritual lessons it discloses. He hears the 'still sad music of humanity' and feels its cleansing and chastening influence.

His poem entitled "*Himalaya*" is well known, being the first of its kind to be published. It is Iqbal all over and Iqbal when he was young. The snow-covered Himalayas that feed the Ganges and the Brahmaputra suggest anthropomorphic visions to him. He stands in awe before the rugged beauty of the mountains. He gazes and gazes on the snowy peaks feasting his insatiable eyes on the beauty that lay unfolded before his enraptured vision till his eyes, in a fine frenzy rolling, glancing from the mountains to the heavens and from the heavens to the mountains, catches a glimpse of the sublime amid the eternal snows. The primeval mountains have witnessed the palmy days of India—the glorious era of which the poets have sung and which has passed away like a tale that is told. He fetches a deep sigh and pines for what is not.

We shall now see how the meanest flower that blooms fills his mind 'with thoughts that often lie too deep for tears.' The flower represents the beloved and the nightingale the lover. The nightingale from its shadowy bower tells a 'thousand' doleful tales, It

plaintively and musically pipes its sorrowful notes to the moon, rains a shower of melody, and the glowing eastern sky bends over it. The bud with closed petals hides within a mystery, cherishes a secret proof against publicity. The bud opens the petals and become a full-blown flower and smiles embodying in the smile an eternal enigma, a riddle, a conundrum. The poet stands puzzled, dazed and bewildered, makes no attempt to solve the riddle, gives it up as a hopeless futility.

In *Gulai Puzhmuradh*—a short and beautiful lyric—the poet thinks that the rose is dying of sorrow. He then imagines that the rose is afraid lest he should pluck it. He is grieved to find himself mistaken and pleads his innocence with a pathetic eloquence. He feels a kinship with the rose for he too is moved to sorrow.

If flowers and birds could fill his mind with subtle and delicate thoughts and could move him to tears what deep thoughts, the Sun, Moon, and Stars could suggest to him. The rising Sun tells its own tale, the dazzling midday Sun has a different message to deliver, the setting Sun makes a dying proclamation of its own, the Moon has yet another lesson to impart, the stars sing the praise of the Lord and the poet stands still amidst the wonders of creation lost in profound meditation.

In *Aftabe Subah* we find a picture of the rising Sun shooting out its mild rays to herald its arrival. He comes like a mighty magician touching everything to life and beauty. He dispels darkness and warms the cold earth. Then, again, the Sun is transformed into a lover. He bends to kiss the sleeping earth—his beloved. She awakens with a smile. The birds sing in the groves, the flowers dance with joy, the poet joins in the dance, and sings with the birds. With the progress of the Sun the poet feels himself lifted higher and higher up till he reaches the promontory of existence. His heart swells and becomes as large as humanity itself—the universe is his home and every man his brother. From his eyrie seat far above the hurry-scurry and the din and shock of the world's disturbing nearness he preaches the gospel of the dignity of man as man.

The moon like the poet is the lover in the quest of the beloved. The spots in the moon which has given birth to the legends like that of "The man in the Moon and his dog" are the scars in the wounded heart of the lover. He asks the moon to give up the hopeless quest for the beloved whom it seeks in the vast heavens amidst the stars but who dwells in its very light. The poet, too, has found the beloved in his own heart. Again, in another ode to the moon we find the poet viewing the moon with the eye of a primitive Hellene. The 'queen and hauntress chaste and fair' sets on her way to kiss the beautiful Endymion. This anthropomorphosis of the moon has a pugn grandeur about it—Keatsian in its conception and boldness of expression.

Besides the heavenly bodies and other objects of external Nature, commonplace things like a lamp, a moth, or a fire-fly could set him soaring in the land of poetry and philosophy. If Nature could lend him wings to fly over to a beautiful and enchanted dreamland peopled with fairies and imaginary beings, where everything was as it should be, a fire-fly can set him philosophising over the problems of life and death. A common lamp in his hands acquired all the qualities of Aladdin's wonderful lamp. He has only to rub it and delightful images dance before him. The moth and the fire fly are both insects. The former is the seeker of light the, latter is light itself—and why? What is fire-fly after all? A stray little winged star, a ray of the moon quickened into life! He is puzzled and finds the light in everything, in flowers, trees, and shrubs, in brooks, rivers and oceans, in man, birds and beasts. He gives up his impassioned questionings. They all end in a big note of interrogation.

In *Bach'a Oshama*—(The child and the lamp)—he lays open the soul of a child with the exquisite fellow-feeling of a child-like poet for a child. The lamb reminds the child of its previous existence. It thinks of God—the source of all life. It smiles and listens to heavenly music, and then begins the ceaseless questionings of the poet. In all these we can trace the shadows of the author of *Israre Khudi* and *Poyam-a Mashriq* cast behind.



(ii) We now turn to Iqbal's patriotic poems and national songs which are well known to all students of Urdu literature from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. A note of sad and pathetic melancholy pervades all his national songs and patriotic utterances. He remembers the days that are no more and tears, precious tears, well out of his eyes in profusion. He gazes on a lurid political sky and addresses grave warnings to his countrymen. Here he appears in the role of the school master. Rod in hand, he rebukes his countrymen in the strongest of terms, and delivers his Sunday-school sermons. But it is upon the backs of the half-educated demagogues and the sleeping aristocrats that the lashes fall incessantly. While he thinks of the past he becomes enthusiastic. He exhumes the dead bodies of the mighty Mohammedan kings from their graves and apostrophises them with the passion of Marlowe's Faustus addressing the ghost of Helen of Troy. With that poetic vision which is his, he raises before him in a splendid phantasmagoria all the magnificence and splendour of the courts of the mighty Moghul Emperors. He takes a flight across the seas to the Spain of the Moors, reconstructs in his mind the ancient mosques, schools and colleges, libraries, laboratories and observatories, and runs into ecstasies over them. But when it reverts to the present, dark and ominous clouds gather round him, a thick mist surrounds him. There is darkness and obscurity everywhere. No wonder he is sad in looking around in an atmosphere like this.

(iii) As we turn to his Ghazals our enthusiasm falters, for our admiration and appreciation of Iqbal ceases with his Nazams. The Ghazals stunt and repress the poet in him. He loses his poetic vision and his ardour and zeal flag. His soaring imagination is stripped of its wings. He is reduced to a 'mere mechanic and a dealer in fine phrases'. The flying Pegasus on which he rides securely and triumphantly—free as the wind that bloweth where it listeth—is lassoed, by all the petty technicalities of art and the meaningless twists and intertwinings of thought and language. He tries to conform to existing models and becomes a blind imitator of the 'literary Pharisees' who punctiliously adhered to the canons of

*Ghazal* writing without paying the least regard to their spirit. He could not shake off the classical draperies of his predecessors. He writes too well but does not dare be natural. He has a well-chosen stock of fine words, beautiful phrases and makes an ostentatious display of them to his best advantage. We find him halting at every step and laboriously spinning out grandiloquent words and suitable epithets. He says things which he feels he ought to say and not those which he would like to say. His delicate hero weeps twenty-five times a day, grows sick and consumptive on account of his morbid sentiments, does not broach his love lest his heart shall fail, faints while about to broach his love, and actually dies in broaching it. The sincerity of his emotions and the truth of his poetry is stifled by sentimental vapidities, passionate billing and cooing, abundance of epithets and personified abstractions, pompous invocations and academical tears. Some of his *Ghazals* are fine and beautiful in themselves compared with those of his contemporaries, but they can in no way approach the dignity of *Ghalib's* utterances. The fact is that we do not like his *Ghazals* as much as we like his *Nazams*.

Iqbal combines in him the far-sighted vision of a Prophet with the imagination of a poet. He goes out of his soul and enjoys the beauties of Nature through the senses merely. True, he philosophises over them yet his philosophy is warm and refreshing. There is no touch of chill and coldness. He loves to commune with God whom he identifies with Nature and sees everywhere. There is nothing of the weeping philosopher in him. Nature has made him a poet and an optimist too. When he thinks of his country he is sad, yet he does not despair.

A golden thread of symbolism runs through all his poems but the mysticism of the Sufi poets is conspicuously absent. His utterances are marked by a sincerity of purpose, clearness of diction, and lucidity of thoughts and ideas. The rhythmic flow of his lines are like the ripples of a brook. There is a charming sonority, music, and cadence throughout his utterances. He soars like the lark, glides like the swallow, sings like the nightingale. With what

tenderness he sings yet with what vehemence and passionateness ! There is a heart-rending wail in his sorrow and the purest rapture in his joy. He breaks into sobs and convulsions or laughs with the loudest mirth. Yet he is always sweet and soft, 'sweet as the smiles when lovers meet and soft as the parting tear'. It would not be enough to rank him as the greatest writer of Urdu Nazams for one knows not where to find one worthy of being his second.

The East is a land of enchantment and dreams. The multi-coloured rainbow glowing all the more brightly under the clear blue sky, the dazzling sun and the golden moon, the peacocks and other gay-plumaged birds, the graceful cocoa-nut and palm trees, the waving corn-fields and the smiling brooks and rivers, are all like a child's conception of a fairy land. Is it wonderful that poetry should be the language of the East ? All great oriental language viz. Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi, and Bengali are nothing if not poetry. The Easterner dwells in poetry, breathes in poetry and dreams in poetry. He has retained much of the simplicity of the primitive man in him. He is capable of enjoying simple pleasures as they come to him almost like a child. He does not study nature in books for he is always in close touch with Nature and lives on familiar terms with flowers, birds and animals. He trusts in Nature for he knows that 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.' He dances for the very joys of living on the green carpet beneath his feet and the azure canopy over his head. He is as yet immune from that strange disease of the life of the West, with 'its sick-hurry, its dived aim, its head over-taxed,' which disgusted Arnold and tinctured his utterances with the darkest hues of pessimism. The Bedouin sitting by his camp with the vast ocean of sands stretching out before his gaze, the Japanese monk in his pagoda, the Indian shepherd boy grazing his cattles on luxuriant pastures, the village maiden with pitchers to draw water from a neighbouring well or pond, the rustic in his cottage musing to the liquid bubbling of the *hookkah*—what dreams can they have ! Who knows ?

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## LALA LAJPAT RAI

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R. LAKHOTIA—*Third Year Arts.*

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EMERSON has said that range and extent are the two measures which constitute the real greatness of a man. If we judge the Late Lala Lajpat Rai by this standard, we at once find him perfectly true of the immortal words of the great philosopher. His death in tragic circumstances, removes from the field of our national activities a personality, which was not stunted and dwarfed to be easily allowed to run into particular moulds.

As he was a man of real action, large designs and multifarious interests he touched the national life of the country at every point which seemed to him to be vitally related to its destinies and aspirations. There was hardly any department of national activities which did not receive the impress of his personality. Starting his eventful career as an educationist, a social reformer, and a champion of Hinduism and of the depressed classes, he has left immortal records and monuments of his glorious works in these departments. The D. A. V. College of Lahore is a solid testimony of his vast and vital interest in education. His attempts in the uplift of the depressed classes are wellknown. Journalism also claimed his attention and his *People* is one of the best-edited Weeklies of India.

As an author and a writer he will be remembered no less than as a Journalist. His last work is 'Unhappy India' which is not only a rap on the knuckles of Miss Mayo, but also a clear review of India's social, economic, religious and political conditions. This book of Lalajee is a brave reply of a son of 'Mother India' to the malignant, mischievous and malicious propaganda which is being carried on by foreigners in other countries to lower India's traditions and glories in the eyes of 'civilised nations. But above all, his unflinching patriotism and his fearless devotion

to his country's cause will go down in history as the noblest achievements of a man born in a dependent country.

Great as he was as a leader of men and movements he was also charming in his private life. The present writer had the privilege of meeting Lalajee in Kashmir where he had gone to recoup his health. His treatment specially with young men was very pliable and entertaining. In moments of relaxation, he used to cut jokes with his young friends at his own expense and his words with them were a source of inspiration and enthusiasm.

After all, grief is selfish and is of no avail. We must accept the decree of fate because we know

The cup was bitter, the loss severe  
To part with him, we loved so dear.  
It was God's own will, it should be so ;  
At His command we all must go.

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## EDEN HINDU HOSTEL NOTES

**I**F Winter comes, Spring cannot be far behind. But Spring and Summer visit the Hostel not with flowers and bees but with examinations, and not infrequently with epidemics. One must pity the examinees,—those poor creatures, who are keeping their tapers burning in the night. Life is serious in the Hostel, and what we require is a bit of seasoning with enjoyment.

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Just before we closed for the Pujahs, the Annual Social Gathering of our Hostel was celebrated. We cannot say that the function was very successful, so far at least as management was concerned. But the Secretary should not be blamed for that as he could not

possibly see to everything himself without the help and co-operation of his fellow boarders. Sarat Chandra's *Sorashi* was staged, and the acting of some of the boarders, especially of Mr. Sunil Sarkar in the role of Jibananda drew high admiration from the audience.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

The annual sports of the Hostel were held in due course before the Pujah holidays. There were many interesting and merit-testing items in which many of the hostellers took part. The largest number of prizes was won by Deben Ghosh of Ward II and he was awarded the best man's prize.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Mr. S. C. Sen, our Assistant Superintendent, deserves our thanks for infusing an athletic spirit among the hostellers. The Basketball and the Volley-ball courts were so long busy with game-enthusiasts—old and new. These games are quite new in our Hostel, and but for the effort of Mr. Sen, we might not have, perhaps, ever seen them.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Hockey is now replacing the Basket and Volley balls. The season is now only on the door-steps, and much remains to be seen yet

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Cricket also comes in now and then. Our Hostel has a reputation of making players out of scholars, and this year many players are actually being made. Some of us are showing fair proficiency in Cricket. The game between the 'Lords' and the rest in which our Superintendents and other officers took the field with the boys provided not a little enjoyment.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

No report about our Hostel games is complete without the mention of the name of Bishnu Sarkar, the Captain of the College Cricket Team. His jovial, sportsmanlike nature has made him popular among us and we seize this opportunity of wishing him a bright and luminous career in the field of Cricket.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Some additions have been made to in the list of books in our Library, for which the Library Committee and the Secretary deserve our thanks ; but we eagerly expected many more additions.

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Our Hostel maintained its honour in the C. U. T. C. Annual Sports held on the *Maidan* during the Christmas holidays. Three of our members—Deben Ghosh, Roby Dutt and Atin Basu came out successful in many events and won decent prizes. Our compliments to the upholders of our honour before the eyes of outsiders.

B. D.

*The following address was presented on behalf of the College to  
Sir J. C Bose on his seventieth birthday.*

To

SIR JAGADISH CHANDRA BOSE, Kt., F.R.S.,

Emeritus Professor,

Presidency College, Calcutta.

Sir,

We, your colleagues at the Presidency College, beg to offer our heartiest felicitations on this happy occasion of the Seventieth Anniversary of your birthday. The link that binds you to us is one that can never be broken. We recall with a natural pride that it was in our laboratories that your now world-famous discoveries in science had their origin. The halo that surrounds your name has shed an imperishable lus're on our College and we feel proud of our association with an Institution which has been the nursery of a genius like yourself.

May God grant you many more years yet to inspire an ever-widening circle of students and disciples, and raise the Bose Research Institute, that undying monument of your sacrifice and organising zeal, to a yet higher pinnacle of glory.

Presidency College,  
Calcutta.  
*The 1st December, 1928.*

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We beg to remain,  
Sir,  
Your most affectionate colleagues  
of the Presidency College.

## A Letter.

D. O. No. 29

Presidency College, Calcutta.

The 15th January, 1929.

My dear Hara Babu,

I wish to express to you at the close of your long and honourable career in this College the gratitude and thanks which the Principal, the Staff, both teaching and ministerial, and the students feel to you for the many kindnesses which you have done on their behalf. You have a long record of service in this College and the Principals under whom you have served, have expressed in the most emphatic and cordial way their great appreciation of your untiring industry, your inflexible honesty and your readiness, at whatever cost of yourself, to give the best of your efforts for the welfare of this College. This is a fine record which you carry with you into your retirement and although I have only had the pleasure of being associated with you for a few months, I can easily see how well-deserved these testimonials from the previous Principals have been. I hope that you will be long spared to enjoy your leisure and your pension, and your name will always remain in this College as that of an officer who set himself a very high standard of duty and who served the Presidency College with great ability, distinction and faithfulness.

Yours sincerely,  
Sd. R. B. Ramsbotham.

Babu Hara Chandra Majumdar,  
Head Clerk, Presidency College, Calcutta.

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## REPORTS

### Founders' Day

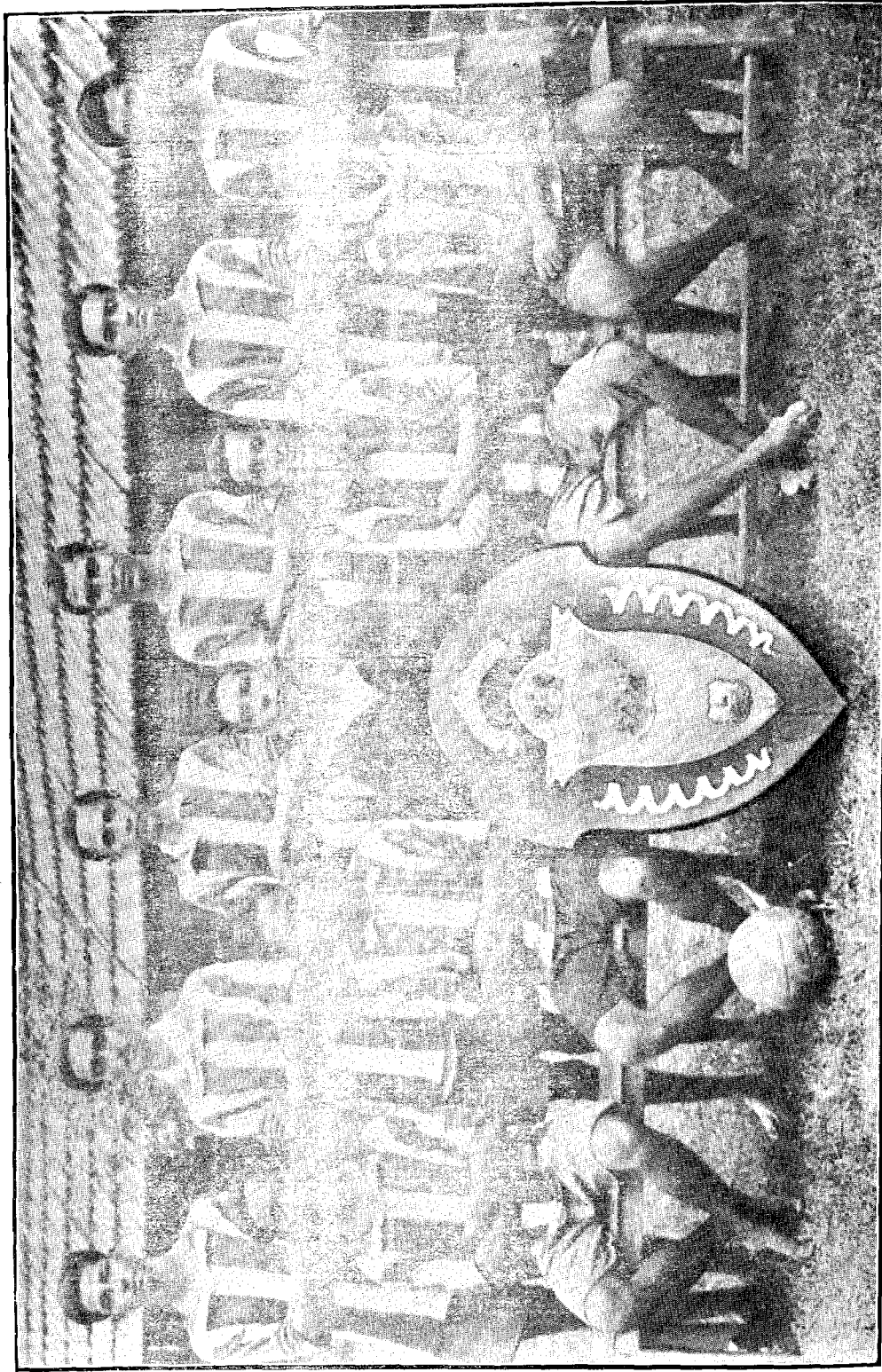
Founders' Day was observed on the 19th January. It was a quiet affair this time. A large number of Old Boys and many distinguished persons of the city were present at the afternoon party held in this connexion. The guests were received by the Principal; and the volunteers spared no pains in rendering service to the guests. In spite of a mischievous leaflet circulated on the previous day asking the students to boycott the function, more than seven hundred students attended and light refreshments were provided for all of them under the direct supervision of—Prof. S. N. Mazumdar, D. G. Chottoraj, K. N. Chakravarti, M. M. Huq. Among others the following ladies and gentlemen were present:—Sir Jagadis and Lady Bose, Sir Jehangir and Lady Coyajee, Mr. and Mrs. Stapleton, Mr. and Mrs. Holme, Mr. and Mrs. P. N. Chatterjee, Prof. and Mrs. B. K. Sarkar, Dr. and Mrs. B. B. Sarkar, Mr. Basanta Coomar Bose, Raja Gopendra Krishna Deb, Rai Bansidhar Banerjee Bahadur, C. I. E., Mr. Mohini Mohan Chatterjee, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhuri, Bahadur, Justice Sir Charu Chandra Ghose, Mr. Justice B. B. Ghose, Mr. Justice D. N. Mitter, Mr. Justice S. C. Mallik, Mr. M. C. Ghose, I. C. S., Mr. P. C. De, I. C. S., Mr. W. C. Wordsworth, Principals Heramba Chandra Maitra, Aditya Nath Mukherjee, G. C. Bose, Satis Chandra De, Narendra Nath Raye, Dr. G. Howells, Dr. P. G. Bridge, Dr. C. V. Raman, Dr. Syamadas Mukherjee, Mr. Jadunath Sarkar, C. I. E., Prof. Jaygopal Banerjee, Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Asutosh Shastri, Dr. W. A. Jenkins, Dr. Kedar Nath Das, C. I. E., Rai Bahadurs Dr. U. N. Brahmachari, Dr. Satis Chandra De, Dr. Haridhan Dutt, Raja Ramani Kanta Ray of Chowgram, Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray of Dighapatiya, Mr. Mohini Kanta Ghatak, Dewan Bahadur U. L. Banerjee, Mr. Jyotis Chandra Mitra, Rai Bahadur Dr. Sarat Chandra Banerjee, Messrs. Abdul Karim, Amulyadhan Addy, Jotindra Mohan Ray, Satyananda Bose, Hemendra Prasad Ghose, Mr. K. N. Dikshit, Rai Rama Prasad Chanda Bahadur, Rai Badridas Goenka Bahadur, C. I. E., Mr. Jatindra Nath Basu, Mr. Bijay Kumar Basu, Mayor, Mr. Abdur Rezzak, Deputy Mayor, Mr. Surendranath Ray, M. L. C. of Behala, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, M. L. C. of Burdwan, Mr. Tarak Nath Mukherjee, M. L. C. of Uttarpara, Lt. Bijay Prasad Singh Ray, M. L. C., Lt. Satyendra Chandra Ghose Maulik, M. L. C., Hon'ble Mr. Rama Prasad Mookerjee, Haji Capt. Dabiruddin Ahmed, Nawabzada, A. S. M. Latifur Rahman, Messrs. Bisweswar Bhattacharyya, Bijay Kumar Ganguli, Asutosh Dutt, Amarendra Nath Pal Chaudhuri, Nirod Krishna Ray, Jnanendra Nath Banerjee, Rai Hem Kumar Mallik Bahadur, Khan Bahadur A. K. Kabiruddin Ahmed, Rai Mallinath

Ray Bahadur, Messrs. Asutosh Pal, Bhujendra Mustaphi, Prafulla Chandra Dutt, Kiran Chandra Mitra, Khagendranath Dutt, Prabodh Chandra Ray, Rai Sahebs Revati Mohan Das, Girindra Kumar Sen, Harisadhan Mukerjee, Akshay Kumar Datta Gupta, Messrs. Kshitis Chandra Ray, Ahibhusan Chatterjee, Raghupati Ghatak, Dr. Aswini Chaudhuri, Dr. S. K. Gupta, Dr. J. K. Majumdar, Messrs. J. Chaudhuri, I. B. Sen, A. K. Ray, K. P. Khaitan, K. C. Mukerjee, Syama Prasad Mookerjee, P. N. Mallik, R. C. Ghose, R. N. Sircar, Amin Ahmed, Messrs. Hemendranath Sen, Narendra Kumar Basu, Satinath Ray, Satyendranath Ray of Behala, Narendra Nath Set, Sachindranath Mukerjee, Charu Chandra Biswas, Dr. Nares Chandra Sen Gupta, Mr. Syed Nasim Ali, Messrs. Gopal Chandra Das, Jotis Chandra Bhose, Suryya Kumar Guha, Mukunda Behary Mallik, Rames Chandra Pal, Panchanan Ghose, Nirad Bandhu Ray, Jites Chandra Guha, Zanoor Ahmed, Pasupati Ghose, Sikhar Kumar Bose, Purna Chandra Ray, Provat K. Sen, Amulya Chandra Sen, Pramatha Nath Mukerjee, Vidyarnaba, Messrs. Ratan Mohan Chatterjee, Susil Chandra Neogi, Durga Prasad Khaitan, Susil C. Sen, Amiyanath Mukherjee, Sailendra Mohan Dutt, Ajit Kumar Sen, Girindra Nath Sen, Binod Chandra Sen, Dr. Gauranganath Banerjee, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Surendra Nath Sen, P. C. Mitter, J. N. Mukerjee, S. K. Mitra, S. R. Bose, N. N. Sen, M. N. Goswami, H. C. Ray Chaudhuri, B. B. Dutt, Satya Ranjan Das Gupta, Profs. P. L. Ganguli, Nibaran Chandra Ray, Nripendra C. Banerjee, Satis C. Ghose, C. V. Newman, Susil K. Acharyya, Prabodh C. Sen Gupta, Devendra Nath Ray, Mohini Mohan Bhattacharyya, Sailendra Nath Mitra, Narayan Chandra Banerjee, Amiya Kumar Sen, Priya Ranjan Sen, Dhruba Kumar Pal, Birendra Binod Ray, Mohini Mohan Mukerjee, Sudhansu Mohan Guha Thakurta, Sudhansu Badan Panda, Kamal Krishna Ghose, Purna Chandra De, Udbhatsagar, Messrs. Jitendra Mohan Sen, Jatindra Mohan Majumdar, S. N. Mukerjee, S. N. Banerjee, Lokendra K. Gupta, Sukumar Ranjan Das, Nihar Ranjan Chatterjee, Amal Ganguli, Siddheswar Chaudhuri, Priyatosh Ray, Patit Paban Chatterjee, Dharendra Nath Sen, Asru Kumar Sen, Prafulla Kumar Sarkar, Pulin Behary Mallik, Harit Krishna Dev and Sachindra Nath Banerjee.

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PRESIDENCY COLLEGE FOOTBALL CROUP  
Winners of the "Hardinge Birthday Shield," 1928.



Standing left to right—Susij Nag, Shovamoy Banerji, Ajit Bose, Surath Bhattacharji, Ajit Mukherji, Saroj Ghose.  
Front Row—Amiya Das Gupta, Niren Day (Captain), Percival Day, Amal Goswami, Pares Chatterjee.

## Athletic Notes

The College sportsmen have been able, this year, to revive the glorious traditions associated with the Presidency College. The Football Team has won the Lady Hardinge Birthday Shield--thus winning a trophy after a lapse of fourteen long years; in Tennis and Cricket the College has certainly kept up its good name.

*Basket-ball*—We had the pleasure of mentioning in our last issue how this game was being popularised in the College. In spite of its infancy, the College Team under the able leadership of Dinesh Mukherjee won the Cup in the Intermediate League Championship. Mr. S. C. Sen, our Physical instructor should be given all the credit for having got up such a fine team.

*Tennis*—Though our team was highly praised in the local papers for its good show, unluckily we were defeated in the Second Round of the Inter-Collegiate Tournament, and the fact that P. L. Mehta could not play, greatly accounts for our failure. It is a pity that our grounds could not be improved for insufficiency of water-supply. It must be welcome news to us all that Mehta went to the final of the Calcutta and Bengal championships. A great credit to the College!

*Cricket*—The Cricket Season is not yet over. We have had very strong fixtures this season. Upto this date the games have mostly been drawn ones, including the games with H. E. the Governor's Eleven and with the Calcutta C. C. The game with His Excellency's Team drew the admiration of the local press for our team. Our performance was also highly praised by His Excellency the Governor and Hon. Lady Jackson as well as by other distinguished visitors. Ardhendu Das's brilliant score of 56 not out, attracted the notice of distant papers like the 'Times of India' of Bombay. Jaladhi Roy and N. K. Deshai are two other promising cricketers.

Ardhendu Das and Bishnu Sarkar (Captain) have been honoured by His Excellency's invitation to play for his team against the Anglo-Indians. H. E. the Governor told the Captain that he would ask Messrs Lagden, Hosie, Lee and others of the Calcutta Cricket Club to coach our players from the next season.

Ardhendu Das and Bishnu Sarkar have also been included in the Calcutta University Team to play against the H. E. the Governor's Eleven.

Yet it must be said that the College Team was distinctly poor in the field. *The Englishman* referring to it in connection with the game with H. E.'s Team wrote—"Had all the chances been taken the College Team could have saved at least 120 runs." We hope to make good this defect. But we have upto now practically no practice pitch. However, we are hopeful about the future, as our Principal has given us hopes of bettering our practice ground ( Baker Laboratory Ground ) from the next season.

The Police authorities will favour us a great deal if they permit us to enclose our Maidan Ground with ropes, as they have allowed the women's Hockey Association to enclose the adjacent ground. We feel confident that these two main grievances would be non-existent next year under our present Principal's enthusiastic care.

We take this opportunity of tendering our heartiest thanks to His Excellency Sir Stanley Jackson, our Official Visitor, Mr. W. C. Wordsworth and to Messrs R. B. Ramsbotham, S. K. Banerjee, M. G. Bhattacharyya, and S. C. Sen of our staff for the kind and keen interest they have taken in our games. May the College Athletic Section always prove worthy of their guidance and live up to the traditions of the College!

BISHNU KINKAR SARKAR  
*General Secretary*

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### A Charity Performance

A charity performance was given in aid of the Bengal Famine Relief Funds on Thursday, the 16th August in the Calcutta University Institute Hall. Dr. Tagore's "Muktadhara" (মুক্তধারা) was staged by the students of the College, the principal roles being taken, as far as possible, by those artistes who acquitted themselves so well when the drama was staged for the first time by our College during the annual Autumn Social Celebrations of the Union, held in 1925. This time, the performance attained a still higher level of excellence, let us say, quite befitting the premier college in the country. We are proud to note that Dr. Tagore was present at a rehearsal given by the chief actors in his place and gave many directions which greatly contributed to the success of the play. Up to the time of going to the press the receipts of the performance which include an advance of Rs. 50/- from the Union Funds amounted to Rs. 1267/-. Out of the receipts Rs. 176/8/- were spent for meeting the expenses incurred in connexion with the performance. The balance was sent to three different relief operation centres, Rs. 500/- to the District Magistrate of Dinajpur for the Balurghat Centre, Rs. 295/4/- to the Honorary Treasurer, Bankura Famine Relief Fund for the Bankura Centre Rs. 295/4/- to the District Magistrate of Birbhum for the Suri Centre. The receipts were duly posted on the Notice Board.

Our best thanks are due to the ex-students who took part in the play particularly to Messrs. Sachyn Banerjee, Prabodhendu Tagore, Jibananda Sen Gupta and Sudhansu Banerjee who all acquitted themselves remarkably well. Mr. Dinesh Ranjan Das, Editor, 'Kallol' who attended every rehearsal and materially helped in the production by his valuable suggestion for better histrionic effect, deserves our heartiest thanks. We have pleasure, again, in thanking Mr. Anadi Dastidar who very kindly coached our singers and Messrs. Amiya Biswas (an ex-student) who nicely played on the flute and the violin during the performance.

It is very gratifying to note that some members of the staff contributed wholeheartedly to the success of this humanitarian effort of the students. Prof. H. K. Banerjee gave his best energies and most of his valuable time to looking after the general management of the performance which could not have been the success it was, but for his unflagging care and sympathetic interest. Prof. S. C. Majumdar helped materially in promoting the sale of tickets and was also kind enough to attend some of the rehearsals. Prof. C. C. Bhattacharyya kindly helped in the management of the stage and Prof. K. N. Chakravarty arranged the seats in the hall on the day of performance. Prof. R. K. Dutt was, as on so many occasions before, an inspiring leader of the volunteers who worked with admirable *esprit de corps*. It may, well, be mentioned here that S. Anil Behari Ganguly of the Fifth Year Economics class greatly assisted Prof. Dutt.

Last of all, we convey our heartiest thanks to all those who gave their services in getting up this performance in a manner consistent with the good name of our college.

BIBHUTI BHUSAN MUKERJEE,

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### Farewell to Dr. H. Hossain.

Quite an enjoyable evening was spent on the 12th of July last when the staff and students met together to bid farewell to Shamsul Ulama Khan Bahadur Dr. Hidayet Hossain on his transfer to the Calcutta Madrasah as the Principal of that Institution.

Principal R. B. Ramsbotham presided. There was a large gathering including almost all the members of the staff. Messrs Khalilur Rahman, Mahbub Murshed, Jotsna Nath Chanda, Dr. P. Neogi and Rai Bahadur H. C. De, and several students of the College spoke on the Khan Bahadur's many qualities of head and heart. Principal Ramsbotham in wounding up

the proceedings delivered a short speech in course of which he wished the Khan Bahadur long life and continued prosperity. The meeting being over, the guests were treated to light refreshments.

The organiser takes this opportunity of thanking among others Messrs. Bibhuti Bhusan Mukerjee and Jotsna Nath Chanda, for their kind assistance in the management of the function which proved a great success.

CHOWDHURY GOLAM GOFFER  
*Organiser*

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### Historical Society

The first meeting of the Historical Society was held on Tuesday the 19th September. M. Sylvan Levi was invited to deliver a general address. Dr. Surendra Nath Dasgupta M.A., Ph D. presided. The learned lecturer spoke eloquently on India's contribution to the world-culture specially in the field of spiritualism. "A thrill of purity and joy passes through me when I go through the Shastras ; I seem to get a holy taste—a 'Prashada.'" With these brilliant words Prof. Levi concluded his instructive and illuminating lecture.

The Second meeting was held on the 21st September. Mr. K. N. Dikshit Superintendent. Archaeological department Eastern-circle delivered an interesting lantern lecture on 'Paharpur Excavation.' Principal R. B. Ramsbotham presided. The lecturer dealt with the subject in a masterly way which was interesting both to general students and to those who make a special study of the cultural history of old Bengal.

The Third Meeting of the Society was held on the 12th October, Mr. Jaladhi Lall Roy of the 3rd Year Arts Class read a paper on 'Ancient Alexandria' Dr. Upendra Nath Ghosal, M.A., Ph. D. presided. The writer gave a description of the ancient seat of Egyptian learning. An interesting feature of the paper was the writer's comparison of the Alexandrian University with Taxila and Nalanda, the two ancient seats of learning in ancient India.

A keen discussion took place in which Mr. Samarendra Nath Mukherjee, Mr. Hirendra Nath Mukherjee, M.A. took part. The president thanked the writer for his paper and gave some useful instructions.

JALADHI LALL ROY  
*Secretary Historical Society*

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### Hindi Literary Society

The Annual meeting of the above Society took place on Friday, the 13th July, under the Presidency of Mr. T. P. Khaitan, B. A. Owing to the absence of the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary, Mr. Khaitan reviewed on their behalf the activities of the Society during the last Session. He pointed out that a good many papers of general interest were read at the meetings of the Society. He then thanked Principals Stapleton, Sterling and Sir J. C. Coyajee and also Prof. P. C. Ghose M. A. for their efforts for the appointment of a lecturer in Hindi in our College. Then, Mr. Khaitan remarked that the Government had made provision for a part time lecturer only, while the requirements of the Hindi-speaking Students, really call for a whole-time lecturer.

It was unanimously agreed that every member of the Society should pay an Annual Subscription of Re. 1/- The first meeting of the Session came off on the 3rd September, with Prof. H. K. Banerjea, M. A., B. Litt. (Oxon) in the Chair. Mr. R. Lakhotia read a paper on female education in Mughal India. The subject was effectively dealt with and many examples of learned and cultured Mughal Begums were cited. The writer laid down that there was no education among the Hindu Ladies in the Moghul period. Messrs. Umaballabh Chaturvedi and B. K. Gupta contradicted the statement and names were mentioned of several Hindu ladies who had acquired high literary culture.

The President then made a neat and thoughtful speech, depicting the various aspects of the question. With a vote of thanks to the Chair, the meeting ended.

B. K. GUPTA,  
*Secretary,*

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### The Arabic and Persian Literary Society

The Annual General Meeting of the above Society came off on Friday, the 3rd August, under the presidency of Prof. M. Sanaullah M.A. Office-bearers for the present session were elected in that meeting.

A condolence meeting was held on Monday, the 13th August, under the auspices of the above Society with the Principal in the chair. The following resolution was passed unanimously :

"That the members of the Arabic and Persian Literary Society and the students and staff of the Presidency College place on record, with profound grief, the irreparable loss done to the country due to the sad demise of Rt. Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, C.I.E, the first Indian Judge of the Privy Council and the renowned scholar ; and extend their heartfelt sympathy and sincerest condolence to the bereaved family."

A copy of the above resolution was sent to Mr. T. Ameer Ali, Bar-at-law, under the signature of the Principal.

KHALILUR RAHAMAN  
*Hony. Secretary*

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### The Geological Institute

The 22nd Annual Meeting of the Geological Institute was held on the 12th October, 1928. Prof. H. C. Dasgupta was in the chair. The reports of the previous session were read out. The working of the Institute was not very satisfactory but one event worth mentioning was the inviting of the delegates of the geology section of the Indian Science Congress. When we had the privilege of meeting not less than a score and a half of the distinguished geologists from different parts of India.

Mr. Samarendra Nath Bagchi of the 4th Year Class read a paper on a "Geological excursion to thirjachowki (Rajmahal hills)." Comments were made on the paper by Mr. A Sen, M. Sc. and Prof. Dasgupta who also suggested some additions.

Professors S. L. Biswas and N. N. Chatterjee who kindly consented to address the students on the "Influence of Geological environments on the evolution of man" and 'Agate' respectively had to reserve their lectures for some future occasion for want of time.

MONMATHA NATH BHATTACHARYA  
*Secretary.*

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## REVIEWS

**Whither India**—By Dhirendra Nath Sen, M. A. Commercial Editor, 'Forward' formerly Asst. Editor. 'The Servant.' Re. one only

A small book of sixtytwo pages—in which the Author discusses the Nehru Committee's Report—Dominion Status—the question of independence—the Problem of Defence—the case of the Native States—the Problem of Indian federation etc.

Obviously, it is impossible to discuss all these subjects in such a short compass—the author himself admits it, he has attempted to create an interest in the study of these questions. He has been successful in that.

With some of the views expressed by the author in the book, many may not agree but on the whole he has presented facts clearly and lucidly. He has discussed the question of financial re-adjustment, the need for retrenchment and also referred to the Permanent Settlement not even sparing the Bengal Zeminders. As the author says in the Preface, he does not claim any originality. Nevertheless we are of opinion that a study of these few pages may be undertaken by any one who wants to dive deeper into the problem of the building up of a right constitution for India.

D. C.

**Namkaran**—By Ashutosh Mitra

A Bengali booklet which gives all possible Bengali names of either sex in alphabetical order, primarily meant to be used by parents at the time of naming their children. The booklet might have been made more interesting by including little bits here and there in connection with the names themselves—for names are not always colourless, very often they have much romance in them. We hope the author will keep this point in mind when bringing out the next edition.

বাংলা

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## NOTICE.

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

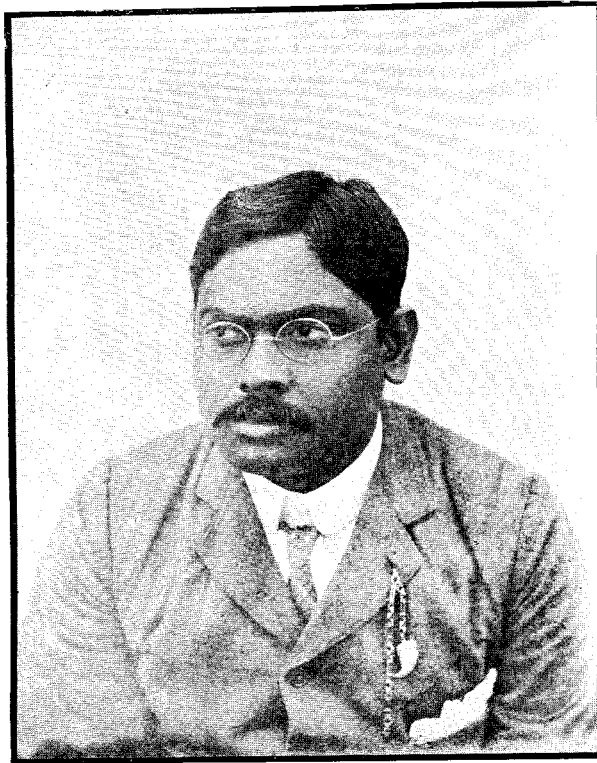
Contributions should be addressed to the Editor and all business communications should be addressed to the General Secretary, *Presidency College Magazine*, and forwarded to the College Office.

Sunit Kumar Indra, B. A.,  
*Editor.*

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Late Prof. S. C. Sinha.



# THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

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Vol. XV. }

APRIL, 1929.

{ No. III.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

A few days more and we shall break up for the long vacation. The holiday spirit is in the air already. It can be seen moving even in the very corridors. The annual examinations of the First and Third Year Classes have just been over. The year's work has been put to test and will be rewarded in well-earned promotions. The Intermediate Examinations in Arts and Science have long been over; the B. A. and B. Sc. Examinations, which are still in progress, will continue up to the first week of May. We wish our friends all success!

\* \* \* \*

Perhaps the most notable event of the term, so far as the prestige of the College is concerned, is the great success of Mehta in the All-India Lawn Tennis Championships. In our previous issue we noted how unfortunate he was not to be a champion in spite of the fact that he had been a finalist in not less than nine or ten very important tournaments. But this time he played not only Kapoor but fortune as well. He entered in both the singles and doubles contests and won them both. No praise from us is too high for Mehta who has carried the name of his College so far and held up its honour so high. In the men's singles no other champion has ever won the distinction at such an early age as Mehta. We understand that he will shortly be playing at Wimbledon.

\* \* \* \*

It was a rare piece of good fortune with us when we had the privi-

lege of hearing a very interesting and at the same time a highly instructive address from Sir J. C. Bose, Emeritus Professor of our College. A summary of the address is printed elsewhere in the Magazine. It is really interesting to us—the present generation of students—to hear an eminent scientist like Sir Jagadish relating one after another the difficulties he had to encounter in his life's work and how he at last overcame them by an unflinching loyalty to his ideals and his vocation in life. The one lesson that his life teaches us, which moreover he wishes the young men of our country to learn, is that of loyalty—loyalty to one's ideal in life, which should by no means be a low one—and of courage and will bravely to face or surmount any obstacle that may come in our way. Another point which should be emphasised is the lack of disciplined work among us. He quoted the instance of Prof. Hans Molisch who is at present doing research work in his Institute and works strenuously from morning till night, although he is so advanced in years. Principal Ramsbotham then thanked the lecturer on behalf of the College for the kindness he had shown in coming to our midst and for the address he gave us. In his speech the Principal highly appreciated the spirit in which Sir Jagadish had laid bare in the presence of a foreigner (meaning the Principal himself) our shortcomings, and endorsed Sir Jagadish's views on the importance of discipline in the building up of a nation. He was also deeply impressed with the account of numerous difficulties of which Sir Jagadish had spoken and proposed that a memorial should be placed in the small room where Sir Jagadish had carried on his first researches so that the hands of the P. W. D. might not one day desecrate the sanctity of the place. Considering the weight that the words carry when they come from the mouth of a great man like Sir Jagadish, the Principal expressed the hope that he would now and then come and address us in the way he did on this occasion at which Sir Jagadish said that he would be very glad to do so. We expect to have another lecture from Sir Jagadish at the beginning of the next session.

The proposal of Principal Ramsbotham to erect a memorial was quite in the fitness of things, and we hope that it will be carried into effect very soon.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

Some adverse criticism has been made in the local press of the Convocation Address delivered by Dr. W. S. Urquhart, Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. The portion of the speech which has been particularly so criticised is that where he dwells upon discipline among students. In our last issue we made some observations regarding what was very nearly the same thing and have nothing more to add on that point. The remarks of the Vice-Chancellor on the relation between the teacher, the student and the guardian are worth perusal and should be carefully noted by everybody who takes any interest in matters educational. "To my mind" said Dr. Urquhart, "the relation between the academic authority and the student is of the nature of a solemn contract in which the teacher promises to respect the rights and privileges and personality of the student, and, on the other hand, the guardian promises to support the authority of the teachers. The teacher must stand in some sense in *loco parentis*, otherwise he has no continuing of security : he cannot for any length of time stand in opposition to the parent or to the collective enlightened community. If the contract of which I have spoken be broken, and if it be broken, as may occasionally happen, by the academic authority, then the adage that discipline must be maintained at all costs would prove to be mechanical, archaic and peculiarly futile. If we can maintain our discipline only by the peristent refusal to admit that there may have been a mistake, such discipline is not worth maintaing. Guardians may in that case quite conceivably exercise their right of withdrawal from the contract."

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

His Excellency the Chancellor referred to the not very encouraging condition of the physical health of the student community and promised his whole-hearted support for any scheme that might be drawn up to combat this serious menace.

The draft constitution of the proposed Board of Secondary Education was submitted by Government to the University for eliciting its opinion. The University has agreed to most of the general principles involved in it and has suggested some amendments here and there for consideration by Government. This is a good sign indeed. Now we may confidently hope that at last the Board is coming into existence.

\*                             \*                             \*                             \*

In his presidential address to the Youth Conference S. J. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee administered to young Bengal a bitter pill to swallow, and it was swallowed, indeed, with good grace, for the novelist knows how dearly he is loved by the young generation of Bengal. It is never in the nature of Sarat Chandra to indulge in idle platitudes. He has the courage of conviction to speak out what he thinks to be the truth. It is no use, said he, simply blaming the Government for the Arms Act; Bengal and India have been enslaved over and over again owing to our own faults and weaknesses. A merciless society, a loveless religion, existing communal and caste relations, economic inequality and heartless treatment of womanhood were all, he added, responsible for our present state. The case is put rather very strongly, as is expected from one who keenly feels the evils he has spoken of and holds very strong views about them. However, it is the duty of young Bengal to see that these things are blotted out of existence.

\*                             \*                             \*                             \*

Ours is a very lean year in the New Year's honours list this time compared with the rich harvest of the last year. Two of our brilliant *alumni* Messrs. Gopal Chandra Ganguly and Krishna Chandra Bhattacharyya—professors both of them—have been created Rai Bahadurs. Mr. Ganguly was a favourite pupil of Principal Tawney who once called him "One of the best professors of English known to me." It is very gratifying to note that though far away from Calcutta Mr. Ganguly always takes active interest in the affairs of his old College. He presented Principal Tawney's portrait which decks our Library-

Hall and voluntarily helped the compilers of the College Register by offering the photographs together with the blocks of Principals Tawney and B. V. Gupta. Mr. Bhattacharyya has also been in the Education Department for a long time and has established his reputation as a scholar in Philosophy. He was also a Professor in our College for some time, and is at present Principal of the Hooghly College. Our congratulations to Mr. Ganguly and Mr. Bhattacharyya.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Hirendra Nath Mukherjee, M. A. and Md. Hedayetullah, M. Sc., two brilliant students of our College who completed their University careers only this year have been awarded a State Scholarship each for further studies in England.

\* \* \* \*

We are very glad to note that the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has been conferred by the Calcutta University upon Professor Sri-kumar Banerjee, M. A. of the English Department. He submitted a thesis on "Poetry and Criticism during the Romantic Period" which was examined by eminent men like Prof. C. H. Herford, Prof. Oliver Elton and Mr. H. R. James.

\* \* \* \*

The appointment of Sir Binod Chandra Mitter to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is a matter for general congratulation in the Province. We claim Sir Binod as an ex-student of our College. A leading member of the Calcutta Bar, he was member of the old Bengal Legislative Council from 1910 to 1916, was Standing Counsel, Bengal, from 1910 to 1917 and twice officiated as Advocate-General of Bengal. He was elected a member of the Council of State in 1921 and was knighted in January 1918.

\* \* \* \*

The College has at last been affiliated in Geography for the Intermediate Examination. It is the result of the efforts of Profs. K. Zachariah and H. C. Das Gupta aided by the support of the Principal.

\* \* \* \*

It is with great sorrow that we have to record the sad and untimely death of Mr. Srish Chandra Sinha, Professor of Botany in our College. Born in a village in the district of Nadia, Mr. Sinha passed his schooldays at Chuadanga and was subsequently educated at the Patna College and then at the Presidency College. Mr. Sinha began his career at St. Columbus College, Hazaribag. Then he served as Professor of Botany at the Canning College, Lucknow before joining the Presidency College as Demonstrator in 1914. He was afterwards promoted to the Bengal Educational Service and served as a Profess-



## “SILENCE AND TWILIGHT”

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HEM C. MUKERJI—*Sixth Year English.*

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MAN'S life is a scene of sleepless activity. It is all a picture of one wild rushing confusion. Noise is life's companion. A hurrying forward, a running after things, an impetuous impatience make up the average life. Existence all around is marked by fret and fury, froth and foam, stress and strain. A feverish restlessness follows life's course. All around, a greedy gusto, a leaping pulse, a ferocious vivacity !

Looking at modern world-forces one feels this with even greater intensity. Hungry commercialism feeds life's ambition. Restless self-seeking moves life's activities. The genius of the world to-day is fed and fostered by an assertive ideal. The atmosphere is charged with electric tension.

Silent moments are rare. Few appear to have time to think. Fewer still have ever the desire to withdraw from the bustle and go deep down into the depths of the soul. Few indeed in these days of busy life afford scope to the mind for the play of emotional imagination. The deeper self sleeps—the mind rusts. Nature has lost her imaginative appeal for man. The vast immensity of the sea now challenges only the 'professional' thinker to thought. The eternal mountains convey no sense of the infinite. The forest has no message to give—it gives merely shelter and shade, fruit and flower, fuel and fodder. The blue skies have no charm. The silvery stream is just a stretch of water. The landscape is a fallacy of the senses. There is no tune of the infinite in the music of the waves, no mystic message in the gentle murmuring rustle of the leaves. At best, Nature is only an abstract æsthetic consummation.

It is time to call a halt. Civilisation has reached its climax—the triumph of a materialistic outlook. It is time to look beyond the externals into the deeper, though obscurer, phases of reality. Let us lift our gaze from the ground immediately beneath our feet and seek to grasp that great, though ever-illusory, life-principle that permeates and vitalises all things. The full light of day tires. Darkness brings slumber. Twilight, the queen of the realm of suggestion, stands at the crossways with a magic rod and strikes a balance. Silence, her twin-sister, throws an arm of affection round her neck and stands linked in love. It is time they were wooed and won, courted and clasped. Let them no longer be “unbeloved of men.” In the depths of silence the mind seeks communion with the mind of the Universe—it attains equilibrium with the Infinite. It struggles to fight its way, against the aggressive demands of the world, into the presence of the Invisible. In the gray twilight of dreamy idealism the active forces of the mind are transformed into a state of emotional abandon—a silent worship and homage of the heart to something afar.

It is through meditation that we see heaven. The door of heaven *is unlocked only with the key of communion*. The wild stir of life leaves the door unmoved. Impetuous waves of unruly emotion strike against it but in vain. Flights of science carry us to the presence of the door—thus far, no further. Imagination knocks with no response. Cold reason is impotent. Hard logic effects no entrance. Deep philosophy only adds strength to the bar. Into the making of the key that unlocks must enter a spirit of communion—the workmanship must assume a pose of psychic tension. It is silence and twilight that lead us by the hand, may be through darkness, into the full flood of light. One long stretch of darkness—then a glorious dawn of pink and gold !

What, after all, is communion, or, in the language of of the East *Yoga* (at-one-ment)? It is not merely falling upon knees and lifting clasped hands to God—to an unknown God. It is something more



than that. It is an attitude of the mind, involving a suspension of the ever-fluctuating psychic activities and an act of concentration whereby the sub-conscious permanent mind-entity emerges into organised life. The brain can then be said to be under a spell—thrown out of its normal action and switched on to an appointed end. The irrelevant conscious factors are ruled out, or rather they are organised into a unity. The scattered mind-forces are gathered and dedicated to a determined end. The perpetual flux of the mind is arrested. An intense concentration takes its place and works up to a state of mystic rapture. Reaction of external forces is held in suspense. The mind is in a static pose—in equilibrium. Through such atmosphere alone can light from heaven travel. The mind is then in a recipient state—the door is open. The Greater Mind communes with her child the lesser mind. The Universe-mind meets and flirts with the individual mind. It is a supreme moment. Power flows. Peace follows. The soul is vitalised—nay, revolutionised. The heart is set on fire and the whole being is ablaze ..... But this divine moment of fellowship with the Infinite is just a brief moment. The vision melts away and dissolves into the unknown. Normal consciousness returns. The soul starts once again on its tumultuous career.

Flash-lights of inspiration do come even to the average mind, though rarely. The monotony of superficial excitement is thus relieved. The mind is just for a brief moment bathed in the light of another world. There is a pause, a spell, a shock. The mind is raised to dizzy heights. A sigh rises from the soul in an exalted moment of supreme self-consciousness. The whole being is convulsed and tossed out into an atmosphere unknown before. It is just one glorious moment of exaltation ! The flash-light passes but it leaves its mark, sometimes even a wound, on the mind. For some it means a fresh store of electric force. For others it proves a terrific concentrated mass of dynamite and leaves them rent asunder, shattered, paralysed, even dead. Some again are startled to frenzy by it. In some it leaves a lingering regret, an abiding sense of

failure in life's mission. Some again it leaves in doubt and darkness. Such fleeting moments are rare, yet they do come and on them is pressed the "signet of eternity."

Similarly, corporate psychic life does not escape the invasion of such moments. There is a deep-lying substratum of psychic unity in the race. This group-consciousness or mass-mind passes through similar phases. But it would mean drifting into the intricacies of psychology with which we do not propose to load our modest effort here. Suffice it to say that into the making and evolution of the psychic life of the race enter such twilight moments of silence.

The culture of the mind is man's supreme duty. An unthinking man is a man without a mind, or perhaps more correctly, with a dead mind. The seen and the superficial are incidents of illusion. The mind is the only reality—the only immortality. The mind has an elasticity which transcends bounds, a potentiality which annihilates limits. Man is finite, but his mind is infinite. He is mortal, but his mind is immortal. He is ephemeral, but his mind is eternal. But the mind, lest we should forget, is elastic both ways. It might shrink into an infinitesimal point or it might grow to infinite proportions. The mind again is a corporate entity—a substantial unity. The cultural evolution of the mind is an organic process. One factor feeds another, one force lends colour to another, one fact relates itself to and vitalises another, and so the organic evolution goes on. All the psychic elements stand in a relation of delicate equipoise. Each unit makes a constructive contribution to the total growth.

A dull passivity or a featureless uniformity is thus fatal to mind-culture. The mind must be a focus of dynamic energy—the playground of struggling forces; yet there must come moments of static repose. The progress of the mind must be reinforced by a fresh supply of self-sustaining power at every stage—power drawn from the inspiration of moments of silent self-analysis. Rest is always a spring of life and a reserve of energy; it is not merely

a flat dead pause. It is power in repose—a potential quantity. Into the compound of psychic life enter, therefore, both static and dynamic elements. Neither yields in significance to either—each is as vital as the other.

*This world is a scene of struggle—ceaseless, restless, breathless struggle. In the struggle, the fittest survive. The fittest are those who have a true sense of values—who have stood on mountain-tops and stretching their eyes down the long vista have seen the blue skies melting into the blue seas, eternity meeting eternity in a cordial clasp. To develop this sense, one must, from time to time, drift off from the hot and dusty thoroughfare of life into the cool bye-lane of thought. To be ceaselessly moving along with the jostling crowd is to let the end die in the means. Further, it would be all so dull and flat and weak if life were one long unbroken continuity of active struggle—with no relief or re-inforcement of moments of silent inspiration.*

Most lives are lives that lack balance—that organic equipoise of life's interests. The interests appear to stand in a hostile relation of conflict, opposing, drowning and defeating each other. But below *this apparent discord, there is a base of unity. The ground is common on which there are varied growths. The key-tune is the same, though superficially there are dissonant notes. Now to discover this underground community of interests, there must come moments of searching introspection, of drastic self-dissection. It is self knowledge—knowledge of the springs of life within—that alone can introduce a harmony into our outlook and impart a tone of organisation to life.*

Self-isolation is sometimes automatic and sometimes self-chosen. Sometimes again it is forced into life—super-imposed on an unwilling soul. The mind in such a case is fettered and held down by a force from which it cannot break away and which it cannot fight down either. It is like chaining down the lower nature which grows for license. In the mad festivity of life, there are times when the

Babylonian finger spells out letters of judgment on the wall. The heart is struck through by a cold thrill of terror. Yea, none can sit beyond the reach of Fate! But such forced impulse to thought ceases with the disappearance of the artificial cause. It passes away like a stain of breath on a mirror. The old appetites and interests revive with renewed vigour—vigour born of artificial suspension. The suggestions of alarm are quickly drowned in the swift currents of life's business.

Every mind is a spring of creative energy. In every man lies the capacity to make a constructive contribution to, what H. G. Wells calls, "the gathering achievement of the race." The instinct of creation may sleep, but is never dead. It may lie dormant, but is never absent. This creative art can thrive only in the silence of twilight—in that delicate atmosphere of light-and-shade. The scorching sun of the day withers it. The darkness of night sends it off to sleep. It is in the calm serenity of twilight alone that we can hear voices from beyond and read into them the message of "something far more deeply interfused." It is silence and twilight alone that can open the springs of creative life within us. How long, yea, how long indeed, will they be 'unbeloved of men'?

The baffling twilight throws out a silent challenge to us—an invitation to solve the eternal problem of life. What will be our response? Shall we say.....NAY?

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## THE MUNSIFFS\*

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PRINCIPAL R. B. RAMSBOTHAM, M.A., B. LITT., M.B.E.

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“HOBSON-Jobson,” in its definition and explanation of the word munsiff states that it is a title of a judicial officer in British-India, and that the office was first established in 1793. The Fifth Report of the Select Committee of 1812 describes the munsiff as one of three types of Commissioners, *viz.*, munsiffs, amins, and salian.†‡ The first were justices, the second and third arbitrators, and thier powers were limited to hearing suits of personal property not exceeding the value of fifty sicca rupees. “Hobson-Jobson’s” date is wrong : the real author of this well-known and valuable branch of the judicial administration appears to have been Mr. Edward Otto Ives, who was the first Superintendent of the Diwani Adalat Court of Murshidabad after the reorganisation of those Courts in 1780. Mr. Edward Otto Ives had been Persian translator to the Provincial Council of Murshibabad in the years 1776-77 : among his contemporaries was Robert Pott and his Chief was Mr. Edward Baber, a man of independent character and considerable acumen, who had effectively criticised the hollowness of the settlement made by the Committee of Circuit in 1772, by exposing the ignorance of the existing conditions on which the revenue was collected from the raiyats, and the inaccuracy of any settlement until that ignorance was dispersed. These home thrusts were not relished by Mr. Hastings and his Committee, but, to their credit, they did not allow their annoyance to injure Mr. Baber’s prospects. It is not astonishing, therefore, to find original work and thought flourishing under so observant and fearless a chief.

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\* A paper read at the Eighth Meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Lahore in November 1925.

† Most probably this is *salisan* which means arbitrators

In 1777 Mr. Edward Otto Ives was promoted from being Persian translator to the superintendentship of the Murshidabad Diwani Adalat. He found himself overwhelmed with a mass of work, and he considered that some system of decentralisation in the interests of justice and efficiency were speedily necessary. Accordingly he submitted a plan to the Chief and Council of Murshidabad, which they forwarded and recommended to the Board in a letter dated June 1st, 1778, embodied in the Governor-General's proceedings of January 29th, 1779, in which they urged the increase of the staff and scope of the Diwani Adalat Court.

The letter suggests that the reasons for retrenchment are now not so pressing, and that these Courts have the first claim to any relaxation for reasons which they proceed to give : the two Courts were never sufficiently staffed ; the system of meeting extra expenses by levying a fee of 5 per cent, on each decree had failed ; the arrears due to the servants in these establishments were considerable, and the Superintendent of the Court had been obliged to charge a fee of one rupee on each "arzi."—"But besides the insufficiency of the fund for the purposes designed, we have many objections to its continuance drawn from the various abuses to which it is liable; nor shall we, we flatter ourselves, be thought too speculative when we offer it as our opinion that the dignity of Government is concerned in keeping up proper establishments and that it is somewhat sullied by trusting to a fund of this nature for defraying expenses which are absolutely necessary and to a due administration of Justice, an object of all others the most important.

We are aware that this fee has been of use in restraining the spirit of litigation to which the disposition of the Natives are but too much inclined but we think that if it be changed into a fine to be paid by the plaintiff (in case he is cast) to the defendant exclusive of such other costs of suit as the Court may think proper to award, this end would be equally answered and the inconvenience arising from the present mode be obviated at the same time.

We scruple not therefore to recommend in the strongest terms the total abolition of the 5 per cent. fee and the making of an addition to the number of servants on the present establishment, and we do ourselves the honour of enclosing a list of such as are necessary to the regular discharge of the business of the two Courts. We beg leave to observe that though we think we should not lose sight of a proper attention to frugality, yet in a matter of such importance to the welfare of these districts our views should not be too confined, and that the appointment of a few supernumerary servants would be much less prejudicial to the Company than too contracted an establishment must be to the regular discharge of the business and of consequence to the public good.

We beg leave, gentlemen, in this plan to explain to you a plan which has been adopted for a more speedy administration of Justice in the inferior Court. It was proposed to us by the present Superintendent after his taking charge, and as we were fully convinced that the petty disputes in and near a city of such extent as Murshidabad could not possibly be decided by the Superintendent alone, we most willingly gave it our sanction and Mr. Ives assures us that it has been attended with the desired success. To assist the Superintendent in the determination of these causes a number of responsible persons have been appointed under the title of munsiffs, or umpires, at a fixed salary which is paid from the 5 per cent. fee collected on causes decided by them. The munsiffs sit six days a week in places near the catcherry. They have executed machalkas\* that they will receive no bribe or present on any pretence whatever under pain of forfeiting, on conviction, double the sum so received to the informer and the amount of the decree to the party cast. They have likewise taken an oath of office renewable every month that they will decide to the best of their judgment without partiality or bias, when they have completed their investigation, they deliver in their faisalnama, or decision, to

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\* Bonds.

the Superintendent, which, under these restrictions is passed by him into a decree. The Superintendent has the authority of summoning the parties on any cause before him and fixing on a particular day for them to attend and mutually agree on submitting their cause to the arbitration of some common friend or to anyone of the established munsiffs they please : in case they cannot both concur in their choice of either, the Superintendent may, to prevent vexatious delays, refer the matter to any one of the latter he thinks fit ; this authority, however, he assures us, he has had very few occasions of asserting as the utility of the scheme has been universally acknowledged, and the parties have, with very few exceptions, indeed, concurred in choosing their own judges.

This plan, gentlemen, having been adopted these nine months it is from the actual experience of the Superintendent and not on speculation that we take upon us to recommend in the strongest terms its continuance ; we are convinced that without it the superior Courts can be of but little real utility ; the disputes which the Superintendent alone can decide being as nothing in proportion to the number of causes instituted. The Superintendent assures us that 20 of these munsiffs are not more than sufficient, and a salary of 40 rupees a month is, we think, the least that can induce men of principle and abilities to accept these employments.

We have, therefore, added 800 rupees on their account at the bottom of the list which we have recommended ; but if this sum should appear to you, gentlemen, too considerable, we think that the least cost of the two should be chosen and the 5 per cent. fee continued in the inferior Courts, rather than the plan should be abolished. All the servants of the Court, however, should be paid by the Company because the amount of the fees on the causes decided by the munsiffs is not found to be quite sufficient for defraying their salaries ; nor will this be esteemed extraordinary when it is considered that no causes for sums exceeding 250 rupees are cognisable by the inferior Court, and that the greatest number are for sums less



than 50. Besides this, the parties are frequently so poor as to render the collection even of this small fee utterly impracticable.

There is still another circumstance, gentlemen, arising from the present contracted establishment which we believe is frequently productive of very oppressive effects to the natives ; but as the expense which must be incurred by a redress would be more considerable than all the rest put together, we dare not recommend it in terms so strong as we have used with regard to the particulars already submitted in this letter to your determination : we nevertheless think it incumbent on us to mention it ; it is the daily allowance paid by the *asamis* \* to peons who are sent with summonses etc. from the Courts. The 5 per cent. fee was never more than sufficient to keep a few *chuprassi* peons who are deputed only on particular occasions. The number absolutely necessary for the transaction of the current business cannot be less than 200 in each court, and if they were added to the establishment it would occasion, at 5 rupees each, an increase of 2,000 rupees a month.

We think it was (sic) our indisputable duty to point out the consequence that arises from the present system : you, gentlemen, are the proper judges whether the advantages to be expected from easing the people of this burthen will counter-balance so considerable an enhancement of expense that would be occasioned by defraying the charge from the Company's Treasury. It must not be concealed that there is one inconvenience to be apprehended were the mode of paying the peons by Government to be adopted ; the *asamis*, when under no dread of their expenses being enhanced by delay or contumacy, might be apt to slight summonses issued at such a distance and brought to them by a single peon, but the exactions to which they are now subjected and which (every officer in the Court being interested to deceive) it is utterly impossible for the Superintendent to redress, are so great and various that we cannot but be of opinion that the mode we have suggested, though attended

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Tenants, non-proprietary cultivators.

with one inconvenience, would (if the objection to the increase of expense be got over) be far preferable to the present . . . . . The subject of this letter we conceive to be of such importance that we flatter ourselves we shall be pardoned taking up so much of your time ; we thought it our duty (especially at the time when we understand the Adalats to be under your consideration) to lay before you every particular which we esteemed necessary for putting the Courts of Justice on a respectable and advantageous footing.”

The Council also gave the proposed establishment of the two Courts, which were as follows :—

*Diwani Adalat.*

		Rs.
1 Peshkar	... ..	150
4 Mohurrirs (Persian) Rs. 25 each	... ..	100
2 Mohurrirs (Bengali), Rs. 20 each	... ..	40
1 Treasurer	... ..	25
1 Treasurer mohurrir	... ..	15
1 Jailer	... ..	100
1 Jemadar, Rs. 10	... ..	}
10 Peons, Rs. 5	... ..	60
1 Jemadar, Rs. 20	... ..	20
10 Merdas,* Rs. 8 each	... ..	80
Jail hire	... ..	20
1 Brahman	... ..	6
1 Mullah	... ..	7
1 Daftarbund	... ..	7
1 Munshi	... ..	25
Paper	... ..	10
1 Portuguese writer	... ..	100
TOTAL		765

\* *Mirdaha*, head-peon, or messenger.

THE MUNSIFFS

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*Inferior Diwani Adalat.*

				Rs.
1 Peskar	...	...	...	50
4 Persian Mohurrirs, Rs. 15 each	...	...	...	60
2 Bengali Mohurrirs Rs. 15 each	...	...	...	30
1 Munshi	...	...	...	15
1 Mullah	...	...	...	7
1 Treasurer	...	...	...	15
1 Treasurer mohurrir	...	...	...	8
1 Brahman	...	...	...	6
1 Ferash	...	...	...	4
1 Daftarbund	...	...	...	5
1 Jemadar	...	...	...	15
10 Naibs or merdas (Rs. 8 each)	...	...	...	80
20 Chuprassi peons (Rs. 5 each)	...	...	...	100
Paper and ink	...	...	...	15
Jailer	...	...	...	30
Jail hire	...	...	...	10
10 Peons for the jail (Rs. 5 each)	...	...	...	50
			TOTAL	500
				765
<i>Add cost of Diwani Adalat</i>			TOTAL	1,265

*Deduct* allowance already made dy Company

for the Diwani Adalat	...	...	...	110
For the inferior Diwani Adalat	...	...	...	78
Proposed addition	...	...	...	1,322

*Add* 20 munsiffs for the inferior Court at Rs. 40

each	...	...	...	800
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*N. B.*—The 400 peons for the two courts are omitted.

These proposals stamp Mr. Ives as an officer of ability ; their execution involved a complete re-organisation of the system of civil judicial administration in the mofussil, based on decentralisation,

having as its object a speedy hearing and decision of cause: Mr. Ives recognised the fact that delayed justice is no justice. The Board accepted\* the suggestion and sanctioned the introductions.

In 1780†, the Governor-General laid before the Board a plan for the administration of Justice in the provinces and it was ordered to lie for consideration. The plan was sanctioned on April 11th.‡ It consisted of 43 regulations and was to be "binding only until a new arrangement shall be made by authority of Parliament". The full text can be found in Colebrooke's "Supplement to the Digest" pp. 14-22.

The six Diwani Adalat Courts were ordered to be continued, each under the presidency of a covenanted civil servant of the Company styled Superintendent of Diwani Adalat. The jurisdiction of the Courts and the powers of the Superintendent were defined, and proper records were ordered to be kept. The chief effect of the new regulations was to transfer the powers of the civil judiciary in the districts from the Chief of the Provincial Councils to an individual *viz.*, the Superintendent of the Diwani Adalat; this was, by the way, bitterly resented by the Provincial Councils and led to such wrangling between them and the Superintendents that the Board eventually issued a circular letter§ forbidding any official correspondence whatever between the Provincial Councils and the Superintendents of Adalats. In the Circular letter dated April 11th, 1780, from the Board to the Provincial Councils, which accompanied the new regulations for the administration of Justice, official intimation was given of the gentlemen appointed to the respective Adalats. "You will observe that we have been careful to restrain the authority of the Superintendents of the Adalat in such particular cases as might interfere with or obstruct the collection of the revenues." The Councils

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\* G. G. P. January 29th, 1779.

† G. G. P. March 28th, 1780.

‡ G. G. P. April 11th, 1780.

§ G. G. P. August 15th, 1780.

are ordered to administer the oath prescribed in section 43, and the oath is to be written in a book "kept for that purpose and is to be signed by the Superintendent. The salary of the Superintendent is to be Rs. 1,000 per mensem *plus* an allowance of Sicca Rs. 300 per mensem for house rent.

The Office of Registrar to the Court of Appeals was also revived, and a resolution of the Board, dated April 18th, 1780\* records that "the Board taking into consideration the necessity of reviving the office of Registrar to the Sadar Diwani Adalat or Court of Appeals, and being of opinion that whatsoever may be the judgment of the Supreme Court of Judicature on Mr. North Naylor† in consequence of the answers given by him to the interrogations put to him by the Court, he cannot, after suffering imprisonment and the disgrace he has undergone, continue to serve the Company in his offices of Commissioner of Law Suits and their Attorney on Records which will require his attendance and services in the Court, and being desirous to avail themselves of the abilities of Mr. Naylor and to make him some retribution (sic.) for the sufferings he has undergone. Resolved that his former office of Commissioner of Law Suits be discontinued, that he be removed from those of Company's Attorney and Attorney on Records and that he be appointed Registrar to the Governor-General and Council in their capacity of Sadar Diwani Adalat or Court of Appeal with the same salary and allowances that is enjoyed in the above offices."

The salary was Rs. 2,000 per mensem.‡

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\* G. G. P. April 18th, 1780.

† Mr. Naylor succeeded, Mr. G. Boyle as Commissioner of Law Suits, on February 26th, 1779.

(G. G. P. February 19th/26th, 1779).

He was imprisoned in brutal circumstances on January 31st, 1780 by Sir E. Impey for contempt of Court in refusing to disclose to the Court certain confidential communications made to him by the Board in connection with the Kasijura Case. The Board declared this imprisonment to be "a species of torture of which the Board have never before heard any instances but in the Courts of Inquisition." G. G. P. March 9th, 1780

‡ G. G. P. December 22nd, 1780.

The new Superintendents soon got to work with more vigour, perhaps, than discretion; the Board's proceedings for May 30th, 1780 contain an instructive letter from Mr. Edward Otto Ives, addressed to the Murshidabad Provincial Council, dated April 10th, 1780. He writes of the expenses incurred in the administration, which the Court "rasum" or fees no longer covered, and explains why "the rasum which served very well to defray the expenses to the end of June, should have proved so deficient since that period." The first reason is the pujahs, during which the Courts were closed; secondly the illness of certain munsiffs. But the principal reason is the limitation of the Court's jurisdiction which took place in June; for before that, the Huzzur Rasum had been sufficient not only to defray the expenses of the officers but also to supply any little deficiencies of the Munsiffs' rasum. It is therefore necessary to explain to you how the limitation above mentioned should cause a diminution of the Huzzur Rasum. When I inform you that I usually appropriate two days in every week to the passing of the Munsiffs' decisions into decrees, two days to the enforcing of decrees and another day chiefly to the receipt of rozinamas\* from persons who have come to an accommodation, and to the referring of causes to arbitration, where the parties can agree to do so, you will perceive that I have but very little time on my hands to hear causes in person. Even that little is still more limited because I am obliged frequently to examine the Munsiffs' decisions: the Huzzur Rasum, therefore, arising from causes investigated and determined by me could not be very considerable and chiefly arose from the rasum of rosinamas or causes that were accommodated. Now these were principally mofussil causes because it was so troublesome to the asamis to come to the City that unless the cause was really good, they had much rather make up the matter than subject themselves to that inconvenience.

On the limitation of my authority this source of consequence failed at once, and this is the principal cause of the present arrears."

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\* *Razinama* paper of mutual settlement of disputes, a deed of compromise.

Mr. Ives, after being appointed Superintendent of the Diwani Adalat at Murshidabad was in a position to correspond directly with the Board, and he speedily availed himself of this privilege.

In the Board's proceedings for July 14th, 1780 three letters from Mr. Ives. dated April 21st, May 25th and June 3rd respectively, were considered ; in the first he urges the establishment of an inferior Court of Diwani Adalat. "I am fully convinced from experience of its absolute necessity in this very extensive city where the petty disputes are so exceedingly numerous as totally to preclude the possibility of their being settled at one cutcherry. I think it my indispensable duty to recommend the re-establishment of an inferior Diwani Adalat."

He suggests that the inferior Court being under the Superintendent of the Adalat exercising the same control "as the Chief and Council had on the late system over the Diwani Adalat", that the jurisdiction of the lower court should be confined to sums of less than Rs. 250 and to an accurately defined area of territory ; "that six munsiffs at the plan formerly adopted at my recommendation" be employed ; and that the expenses of the Court "be defrayed by a commission of 5 per cent. and the other fees established by the new regulations, and that the pay of the Superintendent of the lower Court be fixed at Rs. 500 per mensem. He recommended Mr. Turner Macan to the Board for the post.

In a second letter\* dated May 25th, 1780, Mr. Ives submits 31 "subsidiary regulations which I published on the 22nd instant in the cutcherry of the Adalat under my superintendence. They descend to such particulars as are not prescribed in your general orders and are such as appear to me to be best adapted to the change of system which you have been pleased to make.....As I am very sensible how much theory differs from practice, it is possible it may not be in my power to carry every particular in the manner I have laid down into execution."

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\* G. G. P. July 14th, 1780

Among the 31 subsidiary regulations was one providing for a doctor "for sick prisoners. He shall always go to the jail three days in every week or as much oftener as may be necessary." How many European prisons at that day had a doctor attached to them under *stringent orders to visit the sick at least three times a week*. The seventh regulation ran...*"as health depends in a great measure on cleanliness, the jail must always be kept clean."* Remembering the state of Newgate prison in 1780, these two regulations alone throw a flood of light on the character of Mr. E. O. Ives as an administrator and judicial officer.

In the third letter Mr. Ives again lays stress on the value of "munsiffs, or umpires, entertained at fixed salaries and bound by penal obligations and solemn oaths of office as the only mode by which the great number of petty disputes that originate in and near this extensive city can be duly heard and decided." The letter encloses a copy of his regulations for the munsiffs. He decides that in the interest of "a due and speedy administration of justice" the decision of the munsiffs must be final, but the Superintendent is to possess the power of revival to be exercised in such cases as notoriously require it; and he assures the Board that all charges of corruption brought against munsiffs shall be "speedily as well as strictly investigated."

In his regulations recommended for the administration of the Inferior Court of Diwani Adalat at Murshidabad he asks for the appointment of five munsiffs to assist in the work; they are to execute machalkas in open cutcherry to do justice faithfully and honestly, and any case of insolence offered to the munsiffs in the execution of their duty is to be reported to the Superintendent of the Diwani Adalat, "who will punish them on such representation without listening to their\* excuses."

The Board unanimously approved of all these regulations.†

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\* *i.e.*, those accused.

† G. G. P. July 14th, 1780.



I find no mention again of munsiffs in the Governor-General's proceedings, but the proceedings of the Committee of Revenue for August 17th, 1781 contain a record of the appointment of "six munsiffs or public arbitrators" on a salary of Rs. 50 each to the Courts of Diwani Adalat in Dacca, Murshidabad, and Patna. The Revenue Records up to 1785 contain, so far as my researches have been able to find out, no further reference to munsiffs, but enough evidence has been produced to show without doubt that they were in existence in 1778, and that they owe their origin to the resourceful and observant mind of a junior officer, whose name is only known to a few students of Indian History from a contemptuous remark of Sir Elijah Impey's, but who probably did more to reconcile the poorest and therefore the most numerous class of Indian suitors to the methods of British civil justice than any achievement recorded of the first Chief Justice of Bengal.

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## ENGLAND AND HER DOMINIONS \*

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JITENDRA KUMAR MITRA—*3rd Year Economics.*

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**I**T is interesting to take a short review of the relationship at present subsisting between England and her Dominions, especially in view of the report of the Nehru Committee and the great controversy that has raged since its publication round the question of Dominion Status for India.

Before 1914, the Dominions although fully autonomous in their home affairs left all foreign affairs in charge of Great Britain. The

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\* I am much indebted for this sketch to Mr. Edgar H. Brooks' article in the "Current History."

sense of unity between the Dominions and England was much stronger than it is at present, and it seemed they were prepared to follow Britain in her foreign policy. But the War changed all this. In 1919-20 there was a profound reaction and it was openly declared by responsible men in the Dominions that they would not help Great Britain in any war which may be against their interests. There were many persons who went still further and declared that the Dominions must be fully autonomous in external as well as in internal affairs. In each of the principal Dominions there were found groups of persons who made complete severance of the "Imperial tie" a part of their programme. The most extreme agitator in this respect was General Smuts of South Africa. Although the movement died down soon, it again revived in 1924 and this time something concrete had to be done by the Ministers responsible to the Parliament and the result was the Imperial Conference of 1926. In it almost all the demands of the Dominions were acceded to, only on condition of a formal recognition of the King as sovereign and the promise of a "continued non-binding consultation" in all foreign affairs. The result of the Conference was thus to make every dominion into "a sovereign independent state on a footing of perfect equality with the British."

Other States were not slow to recognise this changed status. Although the Dominions were each of them separately represented in the League of Nations since its inception, yet that fact was generally regarded as a move to multiply British voting power and was not held to involve any question of status. It seems this opinion is no longer held, as is evidenced by the election of Canada to the League Council in 1927. The election means, that the other powers regard the Dominions as equal in status to England, and is, to quote Mr. Brooks, "a deliberate re-affirmation of Dominion independence."

Two highly significant events which occurred recently throw a flood of light on this question of status. One was a despatch of the Government of U. S. A. about the Kellogg Pact and the other a full-dress debate which took place in the Canadian House of Commons

on the 28th and 29th of May, 1928.\* The Kellogg Pact, as we know, was the multilateral treaty renouncing war as a method of settling disputes. The Government of U. S. A. issued separate invitations to the Dominions and England to adhere to it and this is a procedure which, we understand, was suggested by Sir Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary. The separate invitations seem to imply the possibility of England or any of the Dominions being at war without affecting the rest of the British Empire.

What the result of such a course of action would be we shall discuss later on.

The second significant event just referred to was the debate consequent upon a motion in the Canadian House of Commons. Henri Bourassa, the leader of the Nationalist Party brought forward a motion urging that the full equality of status in domestic and foreign affairs recognised in the Imperial Conference of 1926 should be given effect to. Among other things he demanded that communication between the Governments of England and Canada should pass directly and not through the Governor-General as was the case then, and that foreign consuls should receive their exequaturs from the Canadian Minister of External Affairs and not from the British Foreign Secretary. He deprecated the system of sending appeals to the Privy Council in London and advocated a more independent foreign policy. The reply of Mr. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister was still more significant. He said that both the two former demands have already been given effect to. As regards the last one, he denies that Canada had blindly followed the British Foreign Office. Canada, he said, did not break off diplomatic relations with Russia because England did so, but because the Russian Trade Mission in Montreal persisted in carrying on Communistic propaganda in spite of protests. Further, Canada was no party to the recent Anglo-Egyptian treaty, because she felt it would be against her interest to do so. Mr. King then recalled that the report of the Imperial

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\* Reported in the "Forward"

Conference, "sets out quite distinctly and deliberately that where there is an intention to bind another Government by anything that is said or signed, that particular obligation must be specifically stated and must be specifically agreed to by the Government that as a consequence is to be obligated."

A similar tendency to attain the status and perform the functions of sovereign independent states is shown by the other Dominions. The recent South African Flag Controversy is a case in point.

The divergent interests of Britain and her Colonies are the cause of this movement towards Dominion self-assertion. Separated as they are by wide stretches of ocean, the commercial and political interests of Canada, Australia and South Africa can hardly be the same as that of Britain. Another more important cause lies in the system of government which prevails in England and the Dominions. The legislature in all the members of the British Empire are divided into parties and government is carried on by the party which commands the majority. Different parties naturally have different foreign policies and it must be a singular coincidence if all the different party Governments in the different dominions happen to have the same foreign policy. These conflicting foreign interests naturally prevent a common Imperial policy from being pursued. Thus the mutual consultation agreed upon in the Imperial Conference reduces to a farce. As a matter of fact there is no recognised system for inter-imperial consultation even. The only time that the representatives of Britain and the Dominions meet is before the meetings of the League Assembly at Geneva but then attendance at these meetings is voluntary and not at all obligatory.

It appears thus that the Dominions and England form a confederation of autonomous states rather than an Empire and this is the reason why "The British Empire" is officially styled as "The British Commonwealth of Nations." The tie that at present binds the Dominions to England is one of sentiment only,—a sentiment of

*common origin and a common destiny which issues in a formal recognition of the sovereignty of the king.*

But sentiment is a very uncertain factor in politics and whether it would suffice to keep the union in tact through another crisis such as that of 1914 is a very doubtful point.

The report of the Imperial Conference throws no light on the question whether one of the dominions can remain neutral while the others are at war. It seems generally recognised that it can but it is questionable whether such a course of action is practicable under the present circumstances. Suppose Britain is at war with Russia, and Australia decides it would be against her interest to do so. Now, if she remains neutral she will have to be so completely i.e. her attitude towards the people and the merchant marine of both the belligerent countries must be the same. International Law does not recognise any mean course between absolute belligerency and complete neutrality\* and so legally speaking Australia cannot show any differential preference to Great Britain, neither could her citizens and subjects go and enlist in the British Army. Obviously in such a case Australia cannot be regarded as part of the British Empire. Besides there is no guarantee that the enemy would recognise this neutrality. In the eye of International Law the British Empire is under one sovereignty. When Britain is at war so also is her Dominions. So that if the enemy so desire they can treat the Australians as belligerent. Whether they would do so or not would depend upon whether such a course of action would be profitable to them or otherwise. If the neutrality of Australia is recognised by the enemy, it would mean that they are gaining by the neutrality pro-tanto Britain must be losing. In the converse case if the enemy found that neutral Australia was covertly helping Britain then it would be their interest to treat Australia as enemy and by such a course it would not be breaking any rules of International Law. The only way in which Australia can escape

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\* *Vide.*, "An analysis of the Government of British Empire" Macmillan's.

the consequences of war is by declaring complete independence and that would sound the death-knell of the Empire.

It seems thus tolerably certain that the 'silken chord of sentiment' which at present binds the British Commonwealth of Nations together would hardly suffice to pull it through another war such as that of '1914' should it find Britain and the Dominions with conflicting interests and views.

The only hope therefore of the permanence of the Commonwealth lies in a continued state of peace and it is here that the importance of the League of Nations comes in. International disputes may well be settled by arbitration and in a state of ideal peace there can be no need of any 'foreign policy' in the sense in which we use the term. But should the League fail and the world drifts back into the pre-war methods of diplomacy, the future of the "British Commonwealth of Nations" is gloomy indeed.

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## THE NEW ASIA

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NABAGOPAL DAS — *Third Year Economics.*

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EVERY age has a distinctive lesson to teach, and it is claimed by many that the best legacy of political thought that the twentieth century will leave behind is the ideal of a 'Parliament of Man—a Federation of the World.' No doubt it is a noble ideal and the present century is much better fitted for a realisation of it than any previous era or age. But a federation, if it is to be permanent and successful, must be one of equals: equality of the component groups is the primary essential. This equality of the component members was, in a fair degree, attained in Eur-America by the end of the nineteenth century: it was an age of aggressive national growth. But the countries of Asia lay all the while deep asleep; the ideal of nationalism hardly found an echo in their hearts till very lately. Then alone could they realise that a close relationship, an honourable partnership with the states of Eur-America required an active national existence: for 'it is an era of the survival of the fittest and of *Machtpolitik*.'

This ideal of nationalism has primarily been expressed in a striving after political independence. The East has been imbued with a new idea of national glory—and so strong has been this motive force that in some cases the desire for political integrity is being pursued almost with a jealous suspicion. For long Asia was indifferent to the assumption of a superior tone by the West: the burden of school lessons and university lectures and newspaper stories in the Asiatic states was to emphasise the strength, the grandeur, the superiority of the Occident. For years Asia believed in these stories. Then came the awakening, and the Asiatic nations lost their fear of the white man and set to carry on their programme of the attainment of national integrity resolutely. Japan and China, Turkey and Persia, Afghanistan and Egypt, all were eager to have a free and uninterrupted

national existence—a life to be so fashioned and shaped that they might claim equality with the powers of Europe. Thus Turkey—the land of the ‘Sublime Porte’—by a single stroke gave up the traditional beaten track. The Turk decided that Turkey should henceforth be Turanian, not Ottoman; and the outward expression of this inner spirit was the ‘transfer of her capital from Constantinople, which was supposed to be incurably ottomanised and internationalised,’ to Angora, situated ‘in the heart of the homelands of true Turkey.’ This ardent Turkish nationalism—or is it provincialism?—was manifested also in the prohibition of the fez. The fez was picturesque; it amused the Western curiosity; many a Western writer had written volumes on the Turkish philosophy of clothes. It was precisely this that wounded the feeling of the new Turk. ‘He was determined that he would not sit as model to Théophile Gautiers and Pierre Lotis, or act the amusing child to a European audience.’ Again, even in the petty state of Afghanistan, this new wave had its echo: the freedom-loving old-world mountaineers too felt as much interest in the new cult as the Turks of Angora. Thus, when King Amanullah declared that Afghanistan was first and last for the Afghans and that he intended *his* people to enjoy the fruits of his labours, not foreign capitalists, he was voicing the same spirit urging from within.

This new movement—which may fitly be called a challenge—has a double aspect: it is both political and cultural. Europe has been holding sway over Asia for nearly two centuries; it began with the fall of Constantinople and the opening of the sea-road to the East when Asia could not effectively withstand her inroads. Nevertheless, the advance made by Europe was looked upon by her, rightly or wrongly, as an encroachment upon her natural rights, and this engendered a wide-spread revolt against European influence, which, says Mr. A. F. Whyte, ‘is the most conspicuous feature of the modern East.’ ‘The two continents stand face to face to-day, no longer as possessor and possessed, but as disputants claiming an inheritance on conflicting grounds.’ Europe has based her claim on the right of



conquest, followed and largely justified by the benefits she has conferred upon Asia by promoting the stability of government, spread of law and order, internal development and scientific progress; Asia, on the other hand, vehemently wishes to be left undisturbed in her own house: her contention is the simple right of birth. A few years ago it would have seemed grotesquely incredible that Asia should ever thus challenge Europe—and that again in spheres trodden by Europe herself; but even that has come out to be true. The pendulum has swung the other way: it is a challenge against Europe's political rule, a challenge against the imposition of her culture and religion, a challenge against her proud assumption of social superiority. Is it not an irony of fate that it was the white man who hammered and knocked down the barriers of Eastern exclusiveness, and that it is on him that the first brunt of the challenge has fallen?

It was in Japan that signs of this awakening were first visible. The sudden development of Japan, 'the country of flowers and iron-clads, of dashing heroism and delicate tea-cups—the strange border-land where quaint shadows cross each other in the twilight of the New and the Old World,' has long been a puzzling enigma to foreign observers. It was about the middle of the sixteenth century that the Portuguese first came to Japan; these maritime races were followed by the Dutch, the Spaniards and the English, and for about a century the intercourse between the East and the West continued. Then in 1636 came the reaction: all foreigners were expelled excepting the Dutch, who again were allowed to live under the greatest restrictions. This policy of jealous isolation was rigidly adhered to for over two hundred years and all this time Japan was practically lost to the rest of the world. It was in 1853-54 that 'this slumber of the Rip Van Winkle of the East' was broken by the unexpected arrival of an American squadron in Japanese waters. The arrival of Commodore Perry united the nation hitherto torn by a rivalry between the cabinet and the boudoir. The country awoke to its own needs and the death-knell of feudalism was sounded by

the Japanese minister Abe-Isenokami. Then in 1867 followed the Japanese Revolution—a revolution resulting in the restoration of the Mikado and the downfall of the Shogun ; it was a consummation universally desired and already half-accomplished. There was a new sp'rit of freedom and equality in the country, and Japan speedily set to model herself—her army, navy, administration, education, industries and so forth—on Western lines. It was a new lease of life, as it were,—and she deserved it. Her first great political triumph was achieved in China in the Boxer disturbances of 1894-95 ; and so great was Europe's appreciation of her that soon after the conclusion of the Treaty of Shimonoseki Europe consented to put an end to her extra-territorial rights of jurisdiction in Japan. Lastly, the triumph of Japan over Russia in 1905 was the finishing touch to her already too well-known power and glory. Her armies had defeated a Power with whom even Napoleon could not cope—and it was this that intensified the prestige she had already been steadily acquiring. She was now a first-class Power in the world and could speak and deal with Europe in terms of perfect equality.

The transformation of Japan has well been called a marvel of the world. Even at the beginning of the Chino-Japanese Wars, Japan was almost universally regarded as the land of 'merely an ingenious imitative race, somewhat more considerable than Siam.' But when the curtain rose upon the twentieth century, the Orient revealed a new world-power. The most startling thing about Japanese transformation has been its speed ; it was almost in the twinkling of an eye that Japan leapt the chasm between medieval and modern civilisation. Japan is to-day a typical modern state composed of 'a deal of American hustle and a liberal proportion of Prussian centralisation, superimposed upon a foundation of unique picturesqueness.' Her commerce and industry threaten to crowd out all other competitors. Her administration to-day is so complex and subtle, like any modern administration, and yet so strong. The traditional principle of autocracy has been preserved on the pivot

of its constitution ; yet it is no autocracy. A modified form of local autonomy was granted in 1878 ; two years later this was extended to the divisions of the prefecture. A cabinet was established in 1885 and on February 11, 1889, the new constitution containing the salient features of democratic principles came into being. It is, 'in theory, a constitutional autocracy ; in practice, a military oligarchy ; and in the promise of the future, a democracy.' Again, the adoption of the gold standard (which enabled her to place her finances on a sound basis), the introduction of universal compulsory education, the revision of iniquitable customs tariff imposed upon her by foreign powers, the adoption of manhood suffrage—all these various measures have made Japan one of the most prosperous, literate and influential countries of the world. Further, in spheres of religion, art and literature as well, her ideas have undergone a wonderful change. For example, modern Shintoism in Japan is not the old popular religion, but a deliberate recreation, transformed and wholly designed to concentrate both 'the patriotism and the religious feeling of the Japanese upon the person of the Mikado as the physical and spiritual embodiment of the whole nation'.

Just as Japan is the champion of Eastern Asia in the world of to-day, so a new power bids fair to be a most potent force in Western Asia. It is Turkey. Turkey is no longer the 'sickman of Europe'. The vast Ottoman Empire under Abdul Hamid has given place to a racial state more restricted, but more solid. The remorseless tyranny of Abdul Hamid, his suppression of every movement for administrative and economic reforms resulted in his forced abdication in April, 1909, and then was sown the seed of a new Turkey. And, after the War, when the very existence of Turkey was at stake, rose Kemal Pasha, in a very real sense the saviour of his country. The Turkish nation was disunited and had too many foreign entanglements to be got rid of in a day. But with his magic personality Kemal set to his task ; he saw that if Turkey was to survive the strains of the War, she must present herself as 'a

unified independent nation with inviolable frontiers'. Hence Turkey was deliberately reduced to what was essentially Turkish ; she had to strip herself, or be stripped, of all extraneous possessions and ambitions, but on the restricted ground of her national home she stood stubborn and inviolable. Turkey thus displayed a wonderful self-restraint and sacrifice ; she was now content with her 'irreducible minimum,' and began to concentrate her energies upon the peaceful development of her homelands. Her first move was the removal of the capital from Constantinople to Angora. Constantinople was too much Ottoman and international ; it was a city with a mixed population from all maritime nations—Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Syrians and nondescript Levantines. But the Turk wanted to be the master in his own house ; national necessity demanded that he should remain, at least for a time, away from the motley of races in Constantinople. Thus was created a Turkey, purified and made new, standing on her own feet, developing a civilisation of her own, 'clear of the barbaric fringes and foreign parasites,' yet modelling her institutions on the democratic principles of the West. The dervishes were suppressed, education transferred from the mosques to the public schools, the number of Imams was ruthlessly cut down and a clean sweep made of the idlers and beggars who infested them. All these were necessary for the independence and solidity of new Turkey and Kemal has not hesitated to take even the most drastic measures to achieve his end. An extraordinary man, a very remarkable blend of the East and the West in his own way, not infrequently denounced as a dictator, he is to-day an all but mythical hero to the Turks. The Government is first and last Kemal ;—and although much may be said against his savage intolerance venting itself in the ruthless crushing of honest opponents, there is no doubt about the fact that he is perfectly sincere. Everything seems to be built in Turkey on 'blood and tears, and massacre and pillage' ; but it is the same personality which enables him to wield an almost autocratic authority despite the democratic provisions of the new constitution, that has made Turkey to day strong, self-contained and independent.

The new awakening has made itself manifest in Egypt as well, the Egypt of the Nile. One of the oldest countries of the world, she has a most chequered history of her own. The Egypt of to-day is very different from the Egypt of the days of Menes ; further, she belongs culturally and essentially to Asia, although geography has allotted to her a place in the Dark Continent. It was in 168 B.C. that the Roman Envoy Popilius Laenas drew his famous circle in the sand near Alexandria ; and nearly two thousand years later there came Napoleon Bonaparte, the child of the French Revolution, to rouse the country from her slumber of obscurity. Bonaparte came accompanied not merely with fleet and army, but also by an academy of scientists and *litterateurs*, 'to bring the land of the Pharaohs within the circle of Western imperialism, liberalism and enlightenment.' The young conqueror gave to the people the breath of a new life—a life that they had not tasted for long.

Till the outbreak of the War Egypt was an autonomous province of Turkey, governed by the Khedive and his ministers, but virtually controlled by Great Britain. When Turkey joined against the Allies in the War, her claim to Egypt was made forfeited and Egypt was declared a British protectorate. The War brought in its train in Egypt 'a ferment of embryonic self-determination,' and two days after the Armistice was signed. while the world was still in a severe strain from the shock of the War, Saad Pasha Zaghul demanded, on behalf of the people, the abolition of the protectorate and the recognition of the complete independence of Egypt. The demand was rejected and then began the nationalist agitation of Zaghul : for four years Egypt seethed with political excitement. And at last in March 1922 the independence of Egypt was formally proclaimed ; and while 'from the summit of yonder pyramids forty centuries looked down,' it was declared that Egypt was henceforth to be ruled by a King of her own and a Parliamentary Cabinet. The first session of the Parliament was opened on March 15, 1924 and the new life of Egypt was marked by a cordial exchange of telegrams between the

British and Egyptian Prime Ministers and by other conciliatory gestures. Egypt has thus triumphed and her national existence entered upon a new page of glory. She still has, however, certain obligations to Great Britain in respect of defence, the Suez Canal, the control of the Sudan and the protection of minorities ; these are constant sources of friction between her and Britain. But it must not be forgotten that the international recognition of the new status of the country is her most significant achievement.

Even the vast country of China could not escape the contagion of this new movement. For long she lay buried in her own fantastic dreams, proudly imagining herself to be the best and most favoured country in the world. But she was destined not to remain so in her *proud isolation while the rest of the world was moving and whirling fast*. And, to her utter disgust (disgust more for being rudely roused from her sleep of dreams than for anything else), on came 'the preposterous barbarians from beyond the seas' claiming equality of position with the sons of Han ! This the 'sacred sons of the holy Han' could no longer tolerate. The result was friction, disturbances and war. The contemporary government of China, though in a sense benevolently despotic, was essentially corrupt ; there was no strong central government : the people, in effect, were organised as multitudes of tiny republics managing their own affairs. The consequence was that China suffered considerably in the actions that followed. She was defeated by her own kinsman Japan in 1894, and this defeat was the first to open her still drowsy eyes. She saw that in order to resist foreigners successfully, she must try to defeat them with their own weapons. In a panic Kwang-Hsu set to work to put his home in order ; a multitude of reform edicts was rained upon China. But it was too swift and premature ; China was not prepared for this radical change ; hence the rain of edicts was only followed by the Boxer disturbances in which China suffered still more humiliation at the hands of Europe. She did not even then possess the efficiency and aptitude of Japan ; so, while the

first success of the latter was followed by a still more glorious victory at Portsmouth, the failure of the former was accentuated by the humiliating conditions that were heaped upon her after the Boxer disturbances.

Now, it is noteworthy that the spirit of a new China survived in spite of these disasters ; and it had its best expression on January 5, 1912, when Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen was declared First President of the Provisional Republican Government of China. It was a revelation to the whole world ; the conception of representative and responsible government on a national scale finds no place in Chinese thought throughout the centuries—and yet, in one bold stroke, as it were, the sacred dynasty of the Manchus was swept away and a Republic instituted in its place. It is significant that the popular discontent was awakened mainly by domestic corruption and a spineless foreign policy : the Republic found the Chinese people unprepared. There was ‘an overdose of democracy in a Western prescription’ and hence followed chaos and confusion lasting for over fifteen years. It seems now that China has at last come out stronger and freer out of these turmoils. Although immense tracts of country are still prostrate and exhausted by famine, war and brigandage, China stands united to-day. The South has triumphed over the North : whether this unification is ‘in lip service to the ideology of nationalism and the political testament of Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen’ or whether it is something permanent has yet to be seen. But the success of the South is very significant ; General Chang Tso-lin has disappeared from the scene ; communism has been vigorously stamped out of China by General Chiang Kai-Shek ; armies are being disbanded, bandits suppressed. Almost an orgy of moral reformation has been ensued ; eight commandments have been drafted for the guidance of officials. No doubt many of these reforms and measures are on paper only ; but we should understand and pardon some natural intoxication in the first flush of triumph. On the whole, she is making great industrial strides ; education is

progressing ; old traditions and irksome restrictions have been shaken off. Her new government has been recognised by the nations of the world ; a treaty recognising Chinese tariff autonomy has been signed between Great Britain and China on December 20 ; Japan has made a compromise with her. All these events show the triumph of China—her new life and new status. 'It is a change in the rhythm. It is the clear onset of a new phase, of a new China, like nothing the world has ever seen before, a challenge, a promise to all mankind.' Given time to adjust herself, time for the forces of obstruction to her progress to be removed, China will be able to do most of the rehabilitation herself.

The new ideal has had a warm echo in another country of Asia almost simultaneously with Turkey : it is Persia, the Iran of the Persian poets, the Land of the Lion and the Sun. She, too, has deserted the Asiatic tradition for the European novelty. The country laboured under despotism till 1908 when the Shah of Persia was compelled by popular clamour to promulgate a constitution of which the new legislature, called the National Assembly, was the chief innovation. Under this new constitution rose Riza Khan, later the virtual military dictator of the country. In 1925 the much-honoured Kajar dynasty was brought to an end by the deposition of the Shah and Riza Khan was made head of the Government. And finally in April 1926, Riza Khan was crowned Shah of Persia. It was a new step ; the country emerged from the chaos of old to a new order of things. For the moment Persia lives under the dictatorship of a powerful adventurer, sanctioned by the deliberate will of an elected House ; yet it shows great promises of the future and brings to light the unwillingness of the Persian people to submit always to what the saints decreed.

The new tide has reached the shores even of Afghanistan where the freedom-loving mountaineers, holding in ravine and cave, have always disliked intercourse with foreigners. Centuries of unpleasant experiences with invaders from without coupled with



the mountaineers' love of freedom have bred this feeling of hostility to foreigners. And so even so lately as 1914 Afghanistan remained an obscure and undeveloped country of semi-civilised mountaineers. It was Amir Abdur Rahman, the Relentless, that first saw through this ; and he set to consolidate the complex races of his country and make a modern Afghanistan out of them. And Amir Amanullah, King even the other day, wisely carried on the policy of his predecessor. He was imbued with the same spirit that had animated Peter the Great in Russia and Mustapha Kemal in Turkey. His sole aim was to make Afghanistan internally and externally independent and free—to invest it with all those rights of government that are possessed by other independent Powers of the world. This, he well diagnosed, could only be achieved by the spread of education and of more enlightened ideas among the people and by the adoption of Western methods in various spheres of the nation's activities. The ideal of nationalism guided all his subsequent measures—either social or political—and although he was forced to abdicate because of his raw haste in transforming Afghanistan, the greatness to which he has raised his country has come to stay. Amanullah is no longer on the throne ; but it is earnestly hoped that beneath the apparently teeming fanatics and mullahs there survives deeply the new spirit kindled by Abdur Rahman and fanned by Amanullah. The vision of a free Afghanistan—an Afghanistan which has bade good-bye for ever to her stationary position and jointed the social and living nations of the age—which Amanullah saw early in December, 1927, has not after all been dimmed ; it has only suffered a temporary set-back—but very soon Afghanistan will return to her position of glory : no waters of the sea can extinguish the spirit that has been born in new Afghanistan.

Even the small countries of Iraq, Siam, Korea and the Philippines have not been able to escape the contagion. The spirit has made itself manifest in each of these countries—though the expression has not been indetical in all of them. In the demand of the Filipinos

for a greater share in real government, in the benevolent personal rule of the King of Siam, in the uneasiness of the Iraqis at the restrictions imposed upon them, in the Independence Movement in Korea, we find the same spirit at work. The desire for a real national existence seems to have pervaded the whole of Asia.

While nearly the whole of Asia is being carried on in a general current of this new aspiration, India has not escaped uninfected—and that quite naturally enough. The new spirit has been felt here also—and whatever political expression it may take, whether a simple demand for provincial autonomy, or a bigger demand for dominion status or a vain cry for independence, it may safely be asserted (without pausing to consider whether a particular demand is just or not) that the new spirit is there. The political ferment which ‘began in Macaulay’s ink-pot’ has had its expression in our various social, cultural and economic activities. The Reforms of 1909 and Mr. Montagu’s solemn declaration of policy in August, 1917, are all reducible to the new movement. The demand for a separate share in the work of the League of Nations and in the various economic and political organisations held all over the world—all this points to the new desire for a distinct national existence. There is no use saying that the spirit is not there ; in fact it is and cannot but be there, when the world around has been literally infused with it. It may seek different expressions, but that does not demonstrate the entire absence of the ideal. As has been well remarked by Mr. Dutcher, ‘there is too much smoke to preclude the existence of some fire.’

Now a most significant feature of this new movement has been the intelligent imitation of the West. Asia very soon recognised that ‘the virility of the West, its pushing and forceful progress could only be met by a counterblast, derived from similar impulses’ and this led to her momentous decision to westernise her people. She could no longer do with her medieval system ; she had to accommodate herself to the West—or more correctly, to the modern economic order

created by the Industrial Revolution. If Europe has lost, or is going to lose, her control over parts of Asia, it is due to the creation of a new Asian intelligentsia through Western education. Asia was determined to be modern—and modernisation, she argued, was not the monopoly only of Europe and America. She wanted to keep abreast of the present age, 'the age of pullman cars, electric lifts, bachelor apartments, long distance phones, non-stop flights and the new woman'—and, to a marvellously large extent, she has succeeded. Thus, in Turkey, together with the desire to be all-Turkish reigned the desire to be all-modern. The abandonment of the Caliphate, the abolition of the *féz*, the reorganisation of the alphabet, all these were mere steps in the way of cutting off medieval and outworn pretensions. In China again, the success of the Japanese taught the people the value and importance of assimilating the modern Western culture in their systems. And thus China, 'long recollected as the synonym for massive changelessness', gave up the conventions dating back to Confucius, condemned the dignified old Chinese polygamy and resorted to a vigorous campaign of weeding out from her national life whatever was baneful and prejudicial. Japan has risen to her present national glory by following the same track later pursued by China and Turkey. And so close was her westernisation that she even adopted an international outlook modelled on that in vogue among the races of Eur-America—in conquest, colonisation, creation of army and navy, etc. India, too, has understood the value of assimilating the culture of the West in her striving after the new ideal. In the words of the Earl of Ronaldshay, 'modern India—Eastern by birth and tradition—is, to a large extent, Western by training and upbringing.' The cry of retreat to medievalism which Gandhi recommends can by no means satisfactorily solve India's difficulties; it is with the aid of Western science and Western culture that she has to solve the various economic and political problems of her teeming millions.

Has Asia then lost herself in this eddy of Western culture and

modernisation?—No. Even in the midst of the intoxicating rhythm of material progress, political revolution, economic disturbance and religious change, she stands unique and singular. The real Asia has only undergone a reincarnation in this new Asia. She has imported the methods and implements of scientific progress from the West, but has not bartered her soul for material goods. Behind this alien virus of Western ideas, this new Asia in the throes of change, we can catch a glimpse of the real spirit of the unchanging East. The doctrine of reverence, the keynote of Asia, as expressed in Chinese ancestor-worship, in Shintoism, the national religion of Japan, and also in India, still survives, though considerably modified. Modern Asia is in a large measure a manifestation of a rapidly awakened consciousness of her *past* greatness; an ever deepening national impulse is compelling her to go back to her own traditions, her own spirit, wherefrom she may derive her best energy; the gaze of all Asia is back upon her own inheritance. Thus in Japan, in spite of the picture of Western industrialism, Western culture and Western methods of life, in the foreground may be noted such local products as 'cherry blossoms, geishas, kimonos, 'Bushido' and a brand of patriotism of an unearthly devoutness', peculiar to Japan. The heart of old Japan still beats strongly; 'though her sandals are changed, her journey continues; though her houses are burnt, her cities remain.' And in India—notwithstanding the very powerful impact of Western culture—her traditions survive; nothing can dim India's age-old spirituality—'the changeless behind the face of change.'

The whole of Asia is a congeries of different races, languages, faiths, sects and castes—with different levels of civilisation; it is an enormous motley. But behind this enormous diversity may be noted an inherent unity—a unity of culture and thought, if not of politics. The religions of the various races may differ, but 'a Bedouin from the Arabian desert and a man from the bank of the Gunga sing alike; the heart is the same throughout though words and even the

passions are different.' And this cultural sympathy seems of late to have been intensified by a political sympathy arising out of a common desire to protect their civilisation from Western interference.

After all, more fundamental than the political is the cultural awakening—'one which will continue to affect mankind after empires, nations, alliances and other political entities of the present age have passed into limbo.' Whatever form the awakening may take, it is plain that a new intellectual class has been created in Asia by Western contact. Western culture has evoked a critical spirit hitherto unknown to the Asian mind ; it is an intellectual renaissance. The new spirit is the fruit of the impact of the West upon the East, the result of the 'dynamic thrust of Western philosophy, with its insistence on forward movement, its harnessed science, its active spirit, impinging upon the self-satisfied contemplative calm of the East.' This new culture has manifested itself in the wonderful turn which Eastern philosophy has taken since the European advent. It is traceable in the attempt of China to bridge the gulf between the written language and the spoken tongue, and in the raising of the *Pai Hua* to the dignity of an official language. It is this new culture that has made Nichirenism in Japan, not the worship of an abstract truth, but 'the communion of those living now and henceforth with all who have gone before, and the restoration of primeval connexion with the eternal Buddha'—'a life to be lived by every living being, human or other, in the identity of man with nature.' It is this new culture that has done away with the ultra-conventional rigidity of Japanese poetry, led to a revival of the aristocratic *No* and its farcical counterpart, the *Kyogen*. In art, literature, sculpture and architecture, everywhere there has come the new spirit—a wonderful blending of the earlier standards of Asia and the dynamic thrust of the culture of Europe

There is thus a ferment working in all Asia ; is it an awakening, a challenge or a revolt ? Well, neither of these adequately conveys quite the correct impression ; this new ferment is an awakening, a challenge as well as a revolt. It is an awakening from an antecedent

sleep—‘a story of how one-half of the world, gradually brought into subservience to the other half during the past two hundred years, has awakened to her shame and risen to take her destiny in her own hands.’ It is also a revolt—an uprising, more or less conscious, against the interference of Europe. But most of all, it is a challenge—a challenge that springs from a consciousness that she has wrested the secret from Europe and can stand forth at no distant date as her rival. The process has been more psychologic than physical or political—and it was at Port Arthur in 1905 that Eur-America first learned how at last Asia intended to retaliate. It is a movement slow and hence hardly perceptible, but ever moving forward.

After all, ‘what concerns us is not what the historical facts which appear at this or that time *are* perse, but what they signify, what they point to, by *appearing*.’ The recent political activities of Asia may not be sufficiently illuminating of the ideal she aspires after ; it is very natural that she will be making mistakes. But we ought not to make very harsh comments on the success or otherwise of the new ideal merely from the fate of the *political* expressions that it has had. Ideals are a record of what men *hoped* to do ; ‘the future is in the present as the present was once in the past, as a hope or an ideal.’ The visible history is only the expression, sign and embodiment of the soul—the ideal. As Oswald Spengler has said, there is a morphological relationship that inwardly binds together the expression-forms of *all* branches of a culture. So if we go beyond the rough field of politics to grasp the ultimate and fundamental ideas of this new ideal, we may be able to trace them even in her philosophy of clothes, her ornamentation, the basic forms of her architecture, sculpture, drama and literature, and in her choice and development of great arts. It is this aspiration, and not its achievement, that is the highest contribution of Asia to the political thought of to-day.

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## HEALTH AND EFFICIENCY—HOW TO IMPROVE THEM.

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S. C. SEN, M. A., B. L.—*Physical Instructor.*

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THE report of the Students' Welfare Committee reveals the fact that 71% of college students are suffering under abnormal condition of health and only 29% are normally sound. The majority of the students who are in subnormal or abnormal conditions have been found to have one of the several defects :—

1. Almost all of them suffer from defective eye-sight.
2. Some have postural defects, such as stooping shoulder (kyphosis), protruding abdomen (lordosis), lateral curvature of the spine (scoliosis), flat-foot etc.
3. A few have organic defects such as weak, palpitating heart and lungs.
4. Some have very low vitality either due to malnutrition, fatigue, or obesity.

Youth is the period of growth. It is the filling up period of all the faculties of manhood both mental and physical. Now seeing that the general body of our young men are very weak in health our first aim should be to improve their health and efficiency. In dealing with this problem of improvement we must try to find out the causes that led to this unhappy condition.

What are the causes of these abnormal conditions of the health of our young men ? The following are some of the causes :—

I. Sedentary habit in life. It interferes with the proper flow of fluid (blood and lymph) of the body. Active life promotes circulation and respiration, while inactive life retards them. Inaction means poor elimination, poor digestion, poor circulation, and hence low vitality.

II. The second cause is the state of life in the schools through which our young men have passed. It is a severe strain on the student if he is required to keep perfect decorum sitting continuously for hours together. Too much restraint in school without relaxation causes severe mental strain. Moreover school-life has a bad effect upon the normal posture of the body. Faulty habit of reading in insufficient light affects eye-sight.

III. Thirdly comes malnutrition or lack of protein and vitamin in our diet.

IV. Absolute neglect of living in hygienic condition and carelessness in following the fundamental laws of health.

These are some of the causes which are responsible for the weak health in the majority of college students. The means to remove them if persistently followed will undoubtedly improve the condition. Four things are essential for improving and keeping up good health and efficient working of the body.

1. To remove organic defects through medical help.

2. To observe the fundamental laws of health. A few of them are enumerated below.

- (a) Proper sanitary and hygienic condition of living.

- (b) Cleanliness of person, home and surroundings.

- (c) Proper rest, sleep, bathing and clothing.

- (d) Daily regular evacuation of bowels and elimination of waste products.

- (e) Observance of strict continence.

- (f) To refrain from using harmful drugs.

- (g) To take fresh air, pure drinking water, unadulterated food.

- (h) Not to indulge in excess of any kind in eating, drinking or in amusements.

- (i) To take proper care of eyes, nose, throat, teeth and nails.

3. To take proper diet.

Food consists of protein, carbohydrate, fat and other mineral salts. Food should be so selected as to give to the ration the right amount



of protein, or repair food, and carbohydrate and fat or fuel food. The right proportion of protein has been calculated as 10% of the total number of heat units consumed i. e. 10 calories of protein in every 100 calories of food. In the choice of food and diet individual *idiosyncracies* must be taken into account. Customs opposed to hygienic rules must be discarded.

4. To take regular exercise.

By exercise is meant any form of bodily movement. It includes not only calisthenics, and gymnastics but also games and sports.

Exercise should be safe, sane, easy pleasing and beneficial. It is essential for maintaining mental and physical equilibrium, correcting postural defects and for proper circulation of blood thus helping digestion and elimination of waste product. Exercise should differ according to the age and capacity of every individual. A list showing the effect of different exercises on different organs is given below : -

**Cricket**—The whole muscular system is moderately exercised, specially right and left forearms and shoulder muscles. Demand on nerve control is great. Physical characteristics cultivated are accuracy, speed and agility.

**Football**—Exercise of thigh and leg muscles. Demand on nerve control is moderate. Physical benefits derived are agility, speed and strength.

**Hockey**—Whole muscular system is exercised. Demand on nerve control is extreme. Physical benefits derived are speed, endurance, agility and accuracy.

**Sprinting**—Exercise for whole muscle groups especially for thigh and leg muscles. Demand on nerve control is extreme. It increases speed and alertness.

**Distance Running**—Exercise for thigh and calf muscles. Demand on nerve control is moderate. It increases endurance capacity.

**Rowing**—Exercise for back, forearm, arm flexors, shoulder and thighs. It increases strength and endurance.

**Walking**—Exercise for thighs, legs and back muscles. It slowly increases endurance capacity.

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## OMAR KHAYYAM

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SYED MAQBUL MURSHED

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**W**HEN we take a bird's eye view of the vast literary regions of Persia, what amaze us most, is the exuberance of graceful ideas, beautiful dreams and delicate fancies, and the music which floats about the Persian poems. There is an endless train of rare beauties and splendour which only a poetic vision can create. Strange feelings of joy rise, mingle come and go when the approaching dawn gleams faintly through the Persian trees, nightingales sing a doleful note and poets come out to see butterflies fluttering in a haze of light round the flowers.

We seem to be under a spell as we go through the poems. The lucidity of their expression makes the imagery all the more impressive. As without an external prop or an artificial clump-work an edifice will clumber into pieces, the sweetness of language is made to serve as the main-stay of the poems.

The fairy land of Persia, where 'the summer comes with flowers and bees' birds warble in a merry mood, tulips and hyacinths deck the green and a fragrant breeze rustles through the thick foliage of the trees—is a fit abode of poets to indulge in reveries and dreams. They catch glimpses of the sublime and the beauties in the lavishments

of Nature. The serene sky above, the charming landscapes, the smiling brooks, and the vast open field with waving corn are sources of delight to them. This is why Persia produced a band of famous poets who have enriched the wealth of Persian literature by their refined thought, and ideas. The names of the Sufi poets will shine in letters of gold in the pages of the history of Persian literature for their marvellous achievements in the domain of poetry. If it is worth while to read them, it is also worth while to understand the twists and turns of their doctrines; they apparently indulge in railleries, go on carousing, while wine flows freely and the damsels dance to the cheerful melody of flute. But all these "like straw on the surface flow," the rich gems of their teachings lie hidden in the stratum.

The dances and the railleries are the mystical ways of expressing an ecstatic Divine love. Their tavern is not a bazar-wineshop where people come for drink in an endless procession, but a sanctuary, a sacred place, a holy of holies, which is continually kept aglow by a ray of Divine beauty. The rocks, the clouds, the meadows, which to the ordinary eye seem dull and insensible, have a hidden meaning to the Sufi poets. Their philosophy appears behind their grand ideas and subtle and delicate thoughts and yet it is not dull, dry and insipid—a refreshing breeze perpetually blows over it. The 'Sufis think that the soul of a man is an infinitely small emanation of the Deity and that it differs from the holy Spirit in degree and not in kind.

One of the notable poets of Persia is Omar Khayyam, son of a poor old tent-maker who worked hard, day and night, on his needle and thread, for a mere crust of bread. About his early life we know little, as no trustworthy account is available. He was born at Nishapur at Khorasan in the middle of the eleventh century and had keenly felt the bitter pin-pricks of adversity in his childhood. Nursed in the cradle of poverty, he dreamt strange dreams in his broken mud-hovel and groped blindly like Homer's Cyclops within the

walls of his cave for an outlet of fame. The miseries and hardships that he had experienced in his early life did not freeze the genial current of his soul ; he merged out from obscurity and chaos as a renowned poet of the day. He is a poet who cannot be translated. The matter and substance can be reproduced in a terse prose, but they lose their artistic beauty and charm when divorced from the original grace of expression. The supreme glamour of his verses and imageries, the purity of his thoughts and ideas and the delicacies of dreams and reveries mark him out as a poet of no mean order. His poems are the genuine outflow of his virgin heart, not forced in a hot-house, but born of true soil under the azure dome of the Persian sky. His paintings have got an idyllic charm and freshness about them. A sort of brilliant light floats like a halo round his verses and a diapason of harmony is full to overflowing. He is elegant and graceful.

Khayyam's rubaiyats may be classified into four divisions, viz : (1) pessimistic, (2) satiric, (3) epicurean and (4) mystical.

(1) Poor as he was, a deep and sad thought had weighed upon his spirit from his childhood, which gave a melancholy colour to his early rubaiyats. Unable to stand the music of life's vicissitude, he sits like *Il Penseroso* in a philosophical vacuum, abstracted from the genial jollities of the world, and with an imposing seriousness complains of the tyrannies of fate. In the chessboard of the world, destiny plays with men for pieces, and men stumble in the darkness with "blind understanding" to guide them. He is thoroughly disgusted and exclaims !

"Tis all a chequer board of nights and days  
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays  
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays  
And one by one back in the closet lays."

Men are ruled with an iron hand by a power which is unknown but Almighty and all their feeble efforts to disobey it must prove to be worse than futile. The decrees of Fate are irrevocable and

unalterable like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. In the hands of Fate men tremble, even as aspen-leaves are tossed and shaken by every passing wind that blows. Hence he says :

“The moving finger writes ; and, having writ  
 Moves on : nor all thy piety nor wit  
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
 Nor all thy tears wash out a word of it.”

He laments over the death of his friends, shudders at the thought of death, and lapses to utter despondency when he realises the end of the hotfrenzy of life. He muses over the grand and eternal problems of life and death which has been variously discussed down the ages by prophets, poets and philosophers. Man comes into life mysteriously ushered in, and is set on foot to go—no one knows where. He has to fight the battle of life successfully or otherwise encountering the successive events, shocks and surprises of every day, month and year. He passes through weal and woe, faces the calamities and misfortunes that fall upon him, and makes a mysterious journey—unchartered and unknown. But going whither ? That's insoluble. Proceeding undoubtedly and unmistakably, and persisting most assuredly for some purpose, the bark of life voyages into the unknown. Mysterious arrivals, tremendous passages, and alarming departures—these are we all know of life. Life is fleeting—men like waves, rise, foam and vanish in the bosom of the sea, leaving no trace of their existence behind.

“Into the universe, and why not knowing,  
 Nor whence, like water willy-nilly flowing ;  
 And out of it, as wind along the waste  
 I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.”

Khayyam is simply baffled and puzzled, and the mystery of life remains unsolved as ever.

When lying at full stretch on meadows, he reflects on the evanescence of worldly things, melancholy touches his soul ; he sees a vision of a sombre and gloomy sky, the fading light of the setting

sun flickers over the landscape and an owl perched upon the debris of a demolished house hoots in a sad tone "where are those who once have lived." What a sad and pensive note of pathos and sorrows the poet strikes in the following rubaiyat!—

"Alas that spring should vanish with the rose !  
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close !  
The nightingale that in the branches sang  
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows !

(2) The vigorous persecution of the moulvis with puritanic frames of mind turned him into a bitter satirist like Voltaire. He uses his intellectual bludgeon against those whom he dislikes. He looks upon the people with an eye of scrutiny and laughs within his sleeves to find the learned men of the day stuffed with sawdust. The demagogues fail to impress him and he says :—

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument  
About it and about : but evermore  
Came out by the same door as in I went."

As a disciple of AVECINA it is quite natural that Khayyam should inherit his teacher's philosophy of life, even for a short period. The pessimism with which he viewed the world had begun to die in him ; the world was no longer a gloomy land, but a splendid place of resort, with birds chirping merrily in the trees.

"Come, fill the cup in the fire of spring ;  
Your winter garment of repentance fling.  
The bird of time has but a little way  
To flutter—and bird is on the wing."

He meant what he wrote during this period, like Horace and Anacreon, with no pretension to spiritualism, always worshipping the spirit of Bacchus. He now doesn't for a moment reflect on the sorrows and tragedies which flow along the current of life. He sits on a green field with "a loaf of bread and a jug of wine," a winding

river flows by, a maiden sings to the cheerful melody of the flute and flowers are scattered around.

“A book of verses underneath the bough,  
A jug of wine, a loaf of bread and thou  
Beside me singing in the wilderness—  
Oh, wilderness were paradise enow!”

He would not waste his time to solve the dark mysteries of the universe, for time flies and night is coming. He indulges in voluptuous delight, saunters in a garden where hyacinth and narcissus bloom and quaffs of the cup of wine to its last dregs. As Fate has unalterably fixed whatever is to happen, he would not allow himself to fret and worry about the future. He thinks it prudent to enjoy present bliss without giving much thought to the misfortunes which are yet to come. To him, the only panacea for the miseries of life is a cup of mellowed wine that cheers, inebriates and drowns all the cares that disturb the serene of life.

“Ah fill the cup :—what boots it to repeat  
How time is slipping underneath our feet :  
Unborn tomorrow and dead yesterday,  
Why fret about them if to-day be sweet.”

An inveterate worshipper of beauty that Khayyam is, he notices only one aspect of Nature, that which affects the senses agreeably. The aim that he has in view is not to create anything new out of the excellences of Nature, but to make us see and feel its beauty and harmony. The healing influence of Nature, its comparative permanence, its calmness and serenity, dispel the dark sorrows from his heart. He no longer pipes a sad qerela but dances with a rapturous heart in a happy communion with Nature. The buds blossom into full-blown flowers diffusing their rich fragrance in the air, the roses dance in a joyful measure to hear the nightingale sing of love, the golden rays of the dying sun shoot through the thick leaves of the trees and the groves resound with the warblings of merry birds,

There is a truth and completeness in his paintings. In his odes, his Persian blood is warmed up ; he indulges in voluptuous delights and revels in the beauty of Nature.

When Khayyam was advanced in age, the raptures of youth became blurred up into an undistinguishable haze and mist. He could not escape the influence of his contemporary Sufi poets. He shakes hand on a common pedestal with Hafiz and finds grace and beauty in commonplace things. Pretending to indulge in sensuous pleasures, he diverts himself to the speculative problems of Deity, shadowing Him under the terms "wine" and "wine-bearer". What he designates by the terms "wine-bearer" and "idol" is something invisible and grand which the sense cannot touch but "reverence alone can appreciate"—an all-pervading Spirit which permeates all Nature a fountain-head of light whence the sun, the moon, the stars derive their lustre. In a fine mystical language he gives a beautiful pen-picture of the devotees coming to offer their morning prayers ; early in the first streak of dawn, the sweet voice of the *moazin* wafts over the roof of the sleeping houses till it dies away in the bosom of the vast field behind, and the devotees awakened from their sweet slumbers come trembling in the frost of winter to offer their morning prayers to God. Again he seems to repeat a favourite formula of the Sufis :—"In eternity without beginning, a ray of Thy beauty began to gleam, when love sprang into being and cast flame over all Nature. Rise my soul, that I may pour thee on the pencil of that supreme Artist, who comprised in a turn of his compass all this beautiful scenery. From the moment when I heard the Divine sentence—*I have breathed into man a portion of my spirit*—I was assured that we were His and He ours. Shed, O Lord, from the cloud of heavenly guidance, one cheering shower, before the moment when I must rise up like a particle of dust. Oh the bliss of that day, when I shall depart from this desolate mansion ; shall seek rest for my soul and shall follow the traces of my beloved—dancing with the love of his beauty, like a mote in the sunbeam,



till I reach the spring and fountain of light, whence your sun derives all his lustre.

Critics differ in their views about Khayyam. Fitzgerald took him to be an epicurean, a rebel against the established order of society, whose philosophy of life was essentially like that of Herrick's "Gather ye, rosebuds while ye may", for the bird of time has a little way to flutter. Other admirers of Khayyam regarded him as a mystical poet who concentrated all his imagination to one focussing point, the Diety. But little did they consider if he was an epicurean, he was a mystical Sufi poet no less. He was neither an abstemious ascetic living a life of rigid piety as his enthusiastic admirers regard him nor a gluttonous lewd profligate as others like him to be. At times, in the full bloom of spring he would indulge in sensuous pleasures and would even take to drinking, but in sober moments his soaring imagination would help him to catch a glimpse of the *Almighty*. He would then change the outlook of his life and would imbibe all the abstruse philosophies of the Sufis. The philosophers of the garden would no longer appeal to him. None can dispute the fact that he was not the moral cripple as his writing would lead us to believe. He was at heart a genuine Sufi poet masquerading as a heretic and a worshipper of tavern. How often it is that the veneer of affected profligacy and libertinism wears thin and we detect beneath it a pure heart, unpolluted by anything base or mean. Such wild philosophies as he had entertained in his youth—those of Epicurus gave way to better and nobler sentiments. In his old age, standing with wavering feet with his eyes shut and head bowed down, he saw such vision of the Omnipresent which he could never forget.

He was essentially a far-sighted man, an excellent reasoner and above petty mannerism of rhetoric and affection of style. The stateliness and majesty of his rubaiyat resemble 'the grand music of the organ which in the eventide, at the close of service, rolls slowly in the twilight of arches and pillars'. Some of his predecessors were panegyrists who sang eulogies of their patrons. They wrote merely

to please their patrons by catering to their sense of vanity. Their utterances degraded to sentimental rehashes of philosophical common places. But Khayyam would not for all the wealth of the world write to flatter an opulent dullard. His utterances were the genuine outpourings of a heart full to the brim with poetic zeal and fervour. Lean and thin in constitution, with a rosary in hand, a long turban on head, a vacant smile floating over his countenance and occupied with grave thoughts, he poured the effusion of his soul at the sacred altar of the Muses.

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## A GLIMPSE INTO GREEK SCULPTURE

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NIKHIL RANJAN ROY—*Fourth Year History.*

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**T**HE Greeks were great worshippers of beauty. A fine sense for the appreciation of beauty early developed among the Greeks. The Greek ideals of beauty found a real expression in the works of master artists which will ever remain enshrined in the hearts of mankind in full glory. In the estimation of the world, the Greek relics will always be held in the same veneration as those of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria or India.

It is better, before we dive into the beauty of Greek sculpture, to have a short history of the sculpture itself. The history of Hellenic sculpture mainly comprises three centuries—viz. the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

The early story of Greek art is connected with three phenomena—the predominance of a primitive geometric art from the tenth down to the eighth century B.C ; assimilation of oriental influences towards

and after the close of that period ; and lastly the formation aided by these oriental models of a novel, national type—the Greek Archaic during the seventh and the sixth centuries.

The beginning of Greek sculpture is generally dated from the sixth century B.C. From Greece it spread over many centres, on the mainland, on the coast of Asia Minor, and in the islands of the Ægean. Several islands particularly Chios, Samos, Naxos, Paros, Thasos and Crete became early noted as centres of artistic activity. Influences on Hellenic art from beyond Greece, and especially from Egypt and Asia Minor were remarkably present.

But how crude the beginnings of Greek art in sculpture were, may be seen from the types found at Selinus in Sicily, in the Pre-Persian sculptures dug out of crevices in the Acropolis rock, and in all the archaic statues in the Acropolis Museum. It was far below the standard of excellence attained by the early Egyptian works and remarkably inferior to the best Assyrian reliefs.

Greek sculpture during the sixth century may be classified under two heads—the Ionian and the Dorian. These two types represented two contrasted styles based on racial distinctions. The Ionian School presented a model of softness and richness of decoration while the Dorian or Peloponnesian School showed a certain hardness and lack of delicate charm.

The latter found its culmination in the Argive School of Sculpture. But these two schools mutually influenced each other, and out of this reciprocal influence came the works of the great Hellenic Sculptors.

Ageladas of Argos was the greatest sculptor of the sixth century. He was the master of the Dorian style and was the teacher of Polycleitus, Myron, and Pheidias. "Polycleitus perfected the Argive style, Pheidias added an idealistic beauty and Myron gave his own individuality to the Argive type without attaining to the high ideality of Pheidias."

This splendid rapidity of progress with regard to the improvement

of Greek sculpture was mainly due to the tremendous impulse imparted to the Hellenic spirit by the Persian wars.

The growth of national consciousness accelerated the many-sided activities of the Greeks. Sculpture too borrowed its inspiration from the same source. That is why Greek Sculpture advanced so rapidly from the stiffness and coarse beauty of the Aeginetan and Olympian pediments to the perfection of the Parthenon Sculptures. This glow however, did not fade with the fifth century,—the ray lingered still later.

There lay a vast field of work for the sculptors. The custom of giving representations of living things to the Gods was a very old one. The new figures, so large and so life-like, so handsome and so durable—now filled the Greek sanctuaries. The construction of stone temples greatly contributed to the progress of sculpture—specially decorative sculpture. The frieze was adorned with low reliefs : and high reliefs beautified pediment and metope.

Free sculpture long confined itself to a few simple types. The chief types were the upright male figures, usually naked, the left leg set well forward ; and the draped female figures with legs close together or the left slightly advanced ; and the draped figures in sitting posture.

From the history we can now pass on to the principles that guided Greek Sculpture. As professor Laugo holds that all early sculptures viz, Egyptian, Babylonian or Assyrian were guided by one Common Law. This was the "Law of Frontality." Greek Sculptures from early times down to 500 B. C. also followed this universal convention.

"Whatever position the status may assume" as professor Lauge observes "it follows the rule that a line imagined as passing through the skull, nose, backbone and navel dividing the body into two symmetrical halves, is invariably straight never bending to either side. Thus a figure may bend backward or forward—this does not effect the line—but no sideways bending is to be found in neck or body. The legs are not always symmetrically placed ; a figure for

example may advance one foot further than the other or kneel with one knee on the ground, the other raised, but nevertheless, the position of legs shown the same line of direction as the trunk and the head. The position of the arms presents greater diversity. Yet it is strictly limited by the attitude of the rest of the figure."

There may be a few exceptions to this law but in almost all cases this physiological law holds good. There may be a variety of attitudes, but the 'Frontal' law is ever in tact.

We are told by Diodorus that the two halves of a statue of Pythian Apollo were done by the two Sculptors Telecles and Theodorus of Samos and Ephesus respectively. A very good example of this type is seen in an unfinished statue from Naxos discussed by Earnest Gardner.

Another striking characteristic of the 'Frontal' figures is, that they were thought out in two aspects only—the front and the side view. They always look full-face to the spectator or else in a profile; a three quarter view is never to be seen. And, we often notice that one part of the figure of man or animal is represented full-face while the other part in profile "without any proper transition from the one aspect to the other." Instances of such imperfect types are available in the reliefs in the metopes of Selinus, in the figure of Nike of Delos, and in the figure of Diacobolus of Myron.

One thing to note in the study of early Greek Sculpture is its humanist and psychological tendency. "In all sculpture there is an adaptation to the eyes and through the eyes to the thought."

The Greek sculptors would not depict the world of photography but the world as a back-ground to human life.

From the sixth century to the fifth. Greek sculpture passes through a phase of unique improvement. Improvements in 'Technique' accompanied the growth of knowledge. The law of 'Frontality' is not strictly observed in Greek art after the Persian Wars and we mark its gradual decay through the fifth and the fourth centuries. The line bisecting the figure is no longer straight, but

somewhat curved. We notice what the Germans call 'Standbein' or leg which supports the body and 'Spielbein' or leg which is bent, at the knee and free from most of the weight. Different schools adopt different plans with regard to this balancing. For instance, the operation of the above 'balancing' is done in a way in the Parthenon Frieze and the Attic school quite different from that which has been adopted by Polycleitus and perpetuated in his statues of the 'Doryphorus' and 'Diadumenus'.

Leaving aside these minute details, Greek sculpture may be said to be in its golden age during the fifth century. For Athens, what is known as the Periclean Age may otherwise be called the Pheidias Age. The "City Beautiful" owed its beauty and glory to two master citizens—Pericles and Pheidias, what Pericles conceived, Pheidias translated into action. The artist soul and the artist hand of Pheidias wrought out the sublime thoughts of Pericles in form of surpassing beauty. "The whole Acropolis was one vast shrine of Hellenic religion—a monument of Athenian action, and endurance."

The fifth century had a hopeful progeny. Praxiteles, the most eminent of the fourth century sculptors was no mean rival of Pheidias. Scopas added an intensity of life to marble statues which was alien to the fifth century canons. Lysippus followed the foot-track of Polycleitus but could not excel him.

But the fourth century sculpture deviated a good deal from the fifth century type. The fifth century art was not only natural but idealistic. The fifth century artists not only observe but idealise. The portrait of Pericles is a direct evidence. This figure is calm, serene and tranquil. But the fourth century Greek sculpture grew more realistic than idealistic. It achieved perfection of physical form but lost the sublime tone. A sort of moral relaxation crept in. And in the fourth century or later figures was mark the presence of a sort of licence and nude beauty. In brief the spiritual sense gave a way to material or rather sensual grace.

But to speak on the whole, "with proper safeguards and restraints

this respect for admiration of and delight in—the well-shaped and well-proportioned human body is not evil but good—not demoralising but in a high degree moralising.”

Finally, it is the happy combination of the study of man and that of Nature that produced the greatness of Greek Art.

Rightly may be repeated the words of J. A. Symonds:—

“The Greeks alone have been unique in sculpture: what survives of Pheidias and Praxiteles, of Ploycleitees and Scopas, and of their schools, transcends in beauty and in powers, in freedom of handling and in purity of form the very highest work of Donatello, Della Quercia and Michael Angelo.”

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### A short Summary of Sir J. C. Bose's Address at Presidency College.

**T**HREE generations had passed, said Sir Jagadish, since he accepted professorship at Presidency College. He did it not merely as a profession but as something higher, to help young men in their great adventure in life. It was a life of nobleness, chivalry and patience. And he wanted the students to imbibe this true spirit—the spirit which would make them chivalrous, the spirit which would make them bold enough to accept any difficulty that might come in their way, the spirit by which they could attain their highest manhood. In his opinion there cannot be any nobler work than to be called upon to discharge the highest vocation in life—the vocation of a teacher.

It was under great difficulties that Sir Jagadish began and continued his research work. At first he set up plans, but could not carry on his experiments properly as there was no well-equipped laboratory. But this was after all an illusion. He travelled abroad for a good laboratory and good instruments, but was sadly disappointed; and

then he came back to India and found that India was the only and the proper place for him to work in. He inwardly felt that a time would come when he would be able to do some service at least to the country; and he had the satisfaction that inspite of great difficulties he had to encounter, for example, in finding out instrument-makers and so on, he had achieved some success.

He then went on to explain our strength and weakness as a people. Our greatest weakness, in his opinion, is want of discipline in any kind of work. We, Bengalees, said Sir Jagadish, are generally very intelligent, but our greatest drawback is that we are mysteriously lazy. Further we are very imitative like the Japanese. But there is a great difference : in Japan, although many of the ministers know English perfectly well, they pretend as if they do not know English at all; and if they have to say anything in English, they purposely do so in broken English.

Then about patriotism. Sixty years ago we were far more patriotic than we are at present. There are, he said, two kinds of patriotism—the one is true, the other merely emotional. The latter stands in the way of our duty as students, namely our studies, but true patriotism is something better, something more internal. We are a favoured people of God, and we should justify our ancestry by our deeds. We must adapt ourselves to the environments and this must come from within, not from without. The advancement of knowledge, requires a mind that is absolutely free, not hampered by any narrow religious dogma or bigotry; and we should go on with our work without any fear, take up every sort of work and toil regardless of the future. We must not forget that man reaps only when he sows and so, we should be the pioneers setting the example for others to follow us. And as we expect our descendants to remember our work, we must cherish with veneration the activities of our predecessors. There is nothing more hateful and black than the ingratitude of forgetting the work done and successes achieved by one's ancestors.

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## REPORTS

### Athletic Report

With his men resting on oars after the finish of the race the cox looks back with pleasure and recounts the thrills of the course. The course of our College Sports this Year has been strewn with flowers of victory. It was a triumphal march from start to finish.

At last the olive leaves of Tennis have wreathed the brow of Mehta. His victory over Kapoor at the All-India Tennis was no fluke and it shows what mettle he is. He would be soon playing on the lawns of Wimbledon when we should be proud of our 'Nickie' Mehta. Cool as cucumber, always smiling, ever steady and a sportsman to the backbone Mehta should be the ideal of young Tennis aspirants.

In our College Tournament Ajit Mukherjee won the championship for the second time in succession by beating Anil Mitter. Ajit's good length drives and superior generalship won for him the match. The youngster is yet in his teens and there is much tennis in him and we hope to see him soon figuring in Calcutta Tournaments. While praising Ajit we must mention Mitter who gave the former a close fight and impressed the spectators by his steadiness.

A long standing grievance of tennis in our College is the wretched condition of our ground. Mr. H. K. Banerjee has kindly consented to see to the betterment of the Tennis Lawns next Year.

The Hockey season falls at the fag end of the session, and indifference on the part of the players naturally tells on the standard of play. However we have had a fairly good season considering the fact that we have finished near the top of the League table.

We cannot too highly praise Percival Day who showed his loyalty to the college by sacrificing the opportunity of playing for St Joseph's in the first division Hockey.

The Gymnasium has been enlivened by Mr. S. C. Sen and every day the number of attendance is increasing.

Bishnu Kinkar Sarkar  
*General Secretary*

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**Report on the Working of  
The Presidency College Co-operative Society Ltd.  
For the Year Ending 30th June, 1928.**

The Committee of Management of the Presidency College Co-operative Society Ltd. submit its report on the working of the Society for the year ending 30th June, 1928.

*Membership.*—The number of members last year was 113. 9 new members were admitted in the year under review while 6 ceased to be members, thus bringing up the total to 116.

*Share Capital.*—The authorised share capital of the Society is Rs. 20,000/- divided into 2000 shares of Rs. 10/- each. Share payments are made either in lump or in successive monthly instalments of not less than Re. 1/- per share. The amount of paid up share capital on the 30th June, 1928 was Rs. 7340/- as against Rs. 6660/- of the previous year.

*Deposits*—The maximum liability of the Society fixed for the year was Rs. 25,000/- and this limit has not been exceeded. The total deposits from members and non-members were Rs. 10,950/- and Rs. 5475/- respectively as against Rs. 7250/- and Rs. 3500/- of the previous year. The rates of interest continue to be the same and the interest is paid half-yearly.

*Working Capital.*—The working capital of the Society consists of the following :—

1. Members' deposit	...	...	Rs. 10,950
2. Non-members' deposit	...	...	,, 5,475
3. Share Capital	...	...	,, 7,340
4. Reserve Fund	...	...	,, 1,132-4-3
		<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	,, 24,897-4-3

as against Rs. 18,263/- of the previous year.

*Loans*—During the period under review, the amount of loan issued was Rs. 27,956/- and the amount repaid by members was Rs. 21,435/- as against Rs. 21,086/- and Rs. 19,565/- respectively of the previous year. At the close of the year Rs. 24 443 was due by the members as against Rs. 17,922/- of the last year; The repayment of loan instalments has been in general regular. The Committee has to note with regret that the amount of overdue loans this year amounted to Rs. 383/- as will be noticed from the following list :—

1. Mr. Gadadhar Banerji	..	...	Rs. 279/-
2. Gagan Das	...	...	,, 20/-
3. Asiruddin	...	...	,, 64/-
4. Sajani Mohan De	...	...	,, 20/-

The Committee is trying its level best to realise the money in all cases. If, however, the efforts become unsuccessful it will be necessary for it to seek the protection of law—a procedure which is so much to be regretted especially in an educational institution of which the Society forms but a part.

*Profits and its Distribution.*—The Society has earned a net profit of Rs 900-15-7, to which a sum of Rs. 24 5-9 has been added, bringing it forward from the last year's re-distributed profit, thus bringing up the total to Rs 925-5-4. The Committee proposes to distribute it as follows :—

1. Reserve Fund	...	...	Rs. 232
2. Dividend @ 8%	...	...	561-5-6
3. Bonus to Babu Hiralal Mukherjee	...	..	60
4. Bad debt Fund	..	...	50
5. Carried to next year	..	...	21-15-10
			Rs. 925-5 4

The Reserve Fund of the Society now amounts to Rs. 1132/- which together with the above distribution will bring up the total to Rs. 1364/-. The Reserve Fund had hitherto been being used as a part of the working capital but steps have recently been taken to open an account with the Bengal Provincial Co-operative Bank, so that it may be separately invested. Similar steps have been taken to invest the Bad Debt Fund too separately which with this year's allotment, would amount to Rs. 130/-.

*Meetings.*—During the year under review, one General meeting and 11 committee meetings were held and all were properly attended.

*General.*—With the close of the year the Society closes the sixth year of its successful career. It has gained a popularity which has attracted the Sanskrit College staff who have expressed a keen desire to be included in the area of operation of the Society.

The Committee agree to that the percentage of dividend this year compares rather unfavourably with those of the previous years. This is due to the fact that for some months, there was very little demand for loans and money had been lying idle in the Bank which by the way offers a very low rate of interest on current accounts.

D. G. Chattoraj and B. C. Das,  
*Hony. Joint Secretaries,*

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### Report of the Students' Common Room, for the session 1928-29.

The College Union having been suspended, the work of the Students' Common Room during the session had to be carried on by the Professor in charge without the help of a Secretary. The indoor games continued

to be as popular as ever, especially Pingpong, an additional table in which proved a great attraction.

A new feature in the activities of the Common Room was the Pingpong Tournament held in the months of September and October for which a beautiful silver Cup was presented by Kumar Rabindra Nath Roy Choudhuri of Santosh—at that time, a student of our College. We received the most sympathetic encouragement from Principal Ramsbotham who always took a keen personal interest in the Tournament, and it was a disappointment to us, when, owing to indifferent health, he had to leave early for the hills and could not therefore preside at the Final which produced great enthusiasm and attracted a large gathering of Professors and students. Sir J. C. Coyajee presided. The game proved a very interesting and exciting contest and the spectators were for more than an hour held spell-bound by the amazing skill of both the competitors. After the play was over, the Cup and the Medals were given away by Lady Coyajee: the Cup and the Winner's Medal to Mr. Jaladhi Roy and the runner-up Medal to Mr. Kironlal Roy, both of the 3rd Year B. A. Class.

The following periodicals were subscribed for the Common Room during the session :—

(1) Review of Reviews (2) Nineteenth Century (3) Pearson's Magazine (4) Strand (5) Bookman (6) Fortnightly Review (7) Wide World (7) Windsor Magazine (9) Great Thoughts (10) Amateur Mechanics (11) Illustrated London News (12) Punch (13) Nation and Atheneum (14) Time's Educational Supplement (15) Boys' Own Paper (16) Health & Efficiency (17) Mind and Body (18) Physical Education Review (19) Popular Science (20) London Magazine (21) Cornhill Magazine (22) Modern Review (23) Prabasi (24) Masik Basumati (25) Indian Review (26) Bichitra (27) Manashi-O-Marmabani (28) Uttara (29) Bishal Bharat (30) Sudha (Hindi) (31) Times of India Illustrated Weekly.

K. N. Chakravarti,  
*Professor in charge*  
*Students' Common Room.*

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### A Condolence Meeting

A condolence meeting of the staff and students of the Presidency College under the presidency of Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham was held on Friday, the 23rd Nov. 1928 in memory of the late Lala Lajpat Roy, the Hon'ble Mr. S. R. Das and Prof. Jogindra Nath Samaddar, when the following resolutions were passed, all standing in silence.

This meeting of the staff and students of the Presidency College do place on record its sense of great sorrow at the sad and untimely death of one of the greatest of Indians in modern times, the Hon'ble Mr. S. R. Das who by his learning, experience and knowledge of law distinguished himself both as a lawyer and a politician and who laboured so long and worthily for the good of our mother country and that a letter of condolence embodying the above resolution be sent under the signature of the President to Mrs. Das and the other members of the family.

The staff and students of the Presidency College in this meeting assembled do place on record their sense of the irreparable loss sustained by the country in the tragic death of Lala Lajpat Rai, a great scholar and educationist, an ever enthusiastic social and religious worker and champion of the depressed classes, a leader of Indian nationalism and above all, a brave and unflinching patriot.

This meeting of the staff and students of Presidency College places on record its deep sense of loss at the death of Professor Jogindra Nath Samaddar, an old student of this College, who by his various academic activities and his researches as a student of history brought honour to his old College and to the department to which he belonged, and that a letter of condolence be sent to the bereaved family as a token of our sympathy. Resolved further.

### Farewell to Dr. P. D. Shastri

A hearty farewell was given to Dr. P. D. Shastri, I.E.S. by the students of the Third Year Philosophy Honours Class on the 17th of February last on the occasion of his proceeding to Rajshahi College as its Vice-Principal. He was garlanded amidst cheers and was subsequently photographed with the students. Speeches were delivered by Messrs. Shankari Prosad Chatterjee and P. Siriwardhana referring to Dr. Shastri's various qualities of head and heart. Mr. Anil Chandra Ray, on behalf of the students, presented him an address in a nice-casket.

In reply Dr. Shastri made some remarks upon the system of examination and its effects in making the lives of students dreary and joyless. He expressed his earnest desire that the present generation of students of the Presidency College would furnish a large contingent of men who in future would lead their country not only in politics but in philosophy, religion, commerce and general culture as well. In conclusion he added that it was with extreme reluctance almost amounting to pain that he had to bid farewell to the institution where he had spent the best years of his life.

Light refreshment brought the function to an end.

## Report of the Philosophy Seminar

The first meeting of the Philosophy Seminar for the current year was held on the 10th February with Prof. R. K. Dutt in the chair. The subject for discussion was "The idea of God in Descartes and Spinoza" and the paper was read by Mr. Ajit Kumar Mukherji of the Third Year Class. The President in his speech dwelt specially on the ontological argument of Descartes and on the moral aspects of Spinoza's substance. In his criticism of Kant's objection against the ontological argument he remarked that there can hardly be an analogy between a finite being and an infinite.

The second meeting of the Seminar was held on the 25th February with Prof. H. C. De, in the chair. Mr. Jagadindra Nath Hore read a paper on "The relation between Science and Religion. The writer emphasised the distinction between the two and remarked that true Religion ought to concern itself with Faith and true Science with Reason and Intellect alone. The President remarked in his speech that there cannot be such a distinct line of demarcation between Science and Religion. "Religion", he said, "cannot rest upon mere blind faith", and he referred to the Hindu system of Yoga which made the Divine Being the object of our immediate perception.

The third meeting was held on the 11th March Prof. N. K. Bhama presided. Mr. P. P. Sriwardhan read a paper on Intuition. He was of opinion that intuition is the one and the only instrument for reaching ultimate truths. The President gave his views on the subject in an interesting speech after which the meeting dispersed with a vote of thanks to the chair.

Ajit Kumar Mukherjee,  
*Secretary.*

## Historical Seminar

A meeting of the Historical Seminar took place on the 28th of January with Prof. B. K. Sen in the chair. S. J. Jaladhi Lal Ray of the 3rd year Class read a paper on "Thucydides as an historian". Based on a thorough study of work of Thucydides and its criticisms, the paper was an interesting one. S. J. Santosh Chakravarti of the 3rd year class characterised the essay as presenting only one side of the shield, viz the merits of Thucydides. After S. J. Ray had answered, the President made some interesting remarks on the subject; and then the meeting came to a close.

Owing to the unavoidable absence of our President for about a month, no further meeting could be held. We, however, hope to make good the deficiency in the ensuing session.

Santosh Kumar Chakravarti,  
*Secretary.*

বাংলা





## অব্যক্ত

হায় ভাষা ! হায় মোর প্রকাশের ব্যর্থ এ ছরাশা,  
অব্যক্ত হৃদয়বাণী ! মর্মে যবে অনন্ত পিপাসা,  
অনন্ত আনন্দ সুখ, সুগভীর অশান্ত বেদনা  
ব্যাপিয়া ছলিয়া উঠে,—রুদ্ধ কণ্ঠে নিষ্ফল সাধনা,  
ব্যর্থ ব্যাকুলতা তা'র প্রকাশের লাগি'—লজ্জা দেয়  
বারম্বার বাণীরে আমার । দীপ্ত আবেগ বন্যায়  
স্বলিয়া টুটিয়া যায় মোর কণ্ঠবাণী ; অর্থহীন  
অক্ষুট প্রলাপে ভাষায় জাগিয়া উঠে শুধু ক্ষীণ  
আভাষ তাহারি ।—অন্তরেতে তাহে কেহ বুঝে,  
অবুঝ হাসিল কেহ কৌতুক বিদ্রুপে,—অর্থ খুঁজে  
হানিল ড্রাকুটি কোন জন । গভীর অন্তর তলে  
উচ্ছ্বসিত মর্ম্মকথা মোর ক্ষুদ্র লজ্জায় বিফলে  
রহিল নীরব স্তব্ধ ।

বাক্যে যাহা করেছি প্রকাশ  
শব্দে রচি', সে তো শুধু বুঝা'বার বিফল প্রয়াস  
ভাষাহারা দিশাহারা হৃদয়ের অব্যক্ত উচ্ছ্বাসে ;—  
দিগন্তের রেখাটানি' স্তবিপুল অনন্ত আকাশে  
সীমাবদ্ধ করিবার আশা !—পূর্ণ, ব্যাপ্ত, সুগভীর  
গোপন অন্তরতলে মর্ম্মকথা অতল নিবিড়,—  
ভাষায় বাহিরি' এল অসম্বন্ধ এ তুচ্ছ প্রলাপ !—  
হায়, ছি, ছি, ধরণীর বহিঃজালা অন্তরের তাপ  
ভস্মরূপে এল বাহিরিয়া ।

যাক্ বৃথা এ ছরাশা,  
মর্ম্মকথা প্রকাশের ব্যর্থ ক্ষোভ ! ফোটে কি গো ভাষা,  
গভীর হরষে, দুঃখে, প্রেমভরে, বিপুল বিষ্ময়ে  
দুঃসহ আবেগ যবে উচ্ছ্বসিয়া ওঠে পূর্ণ হ'য়ে  
আকুল হৃদয়ে ; মর্ম্মের দুয়ার ভেদি', শতমুখে

## অব্যক্ত

শতকথা চাহে বাহিরিতে, তবু র'য়ে যায় বৃকে  
 আরও কথা বাক্য হারা ! লাজক্ষুর্ক বিফল প্রয়াস ।  
 ক্ষুদ্র ছিদ্র পথে যথা অন্ধ-গুহাবন্ধ জলোচ্ছ্বাস  
 আবর্ত্তি ফিরিয়া যায় প্রতিহত আপনার মাঝে  
 স্মৃতিফেন রুদ্ধগতি ।

থাক তবে,—যেই সুর বাজে  
 আমার অন্তর ভরি', অপ্রকাশ থাক সে অন্তরে ;  
 প্রদীপ্ত অনল সম মর্ম্মজ্বালা নীরব অধরে  
 হটক নীরব, জলুক অন্তরে মোর চিরদীপ্ত  
 অনির্ব্বাণ রুদ্ধ বেদনায় । অক্ষম অপরিতৃপ্ত  
 ব্যক্ততার সহস্র কামনা মম হটক বিলীন  
 গোপন অন্তরে !

অনন্ত অঁধার হ'তে প্রতিদিন  
 যে গোপন সুগভীর সত্যবাণী স্তব্ধ অপ্রকাশ  
 ভরিছে নিখিল বক্ষ,—ভাষাহীন প্রবল উচ্ছ্বাস  
 তুলিছে তরঙ্গ সম !—অনন্ত শূন্যের কোনোখানে  
 তা'র সে অবাধ ব্যাপ্ত এতটুকু কুল নাহি জানে  
 যেথায় লুটায় পড়ি' আবেগে আঘাতে প্রতিঘাতে  
 তুলিবে সুব্যক্ত করি' ধ্বনিমন্ড্রে সুস্পর্ক ভাষাতে  
 আপন অব্যক্ত বাণী ।

সে বৃহৎ বিশ্বব্যথা মনে  
 মিশাক মর্ম্মের ব্যথা, নিষ্ফল কামনা মম মনে ।  
 কুঞ্জতলে স্থলিত মঞ্জরী যথা ব্যথিত নিঃশ্বাসে  
 নিঃশব্দে মিলায়ে দেয় ছায়াল্লান স্তব্ধ সঙ্ক্যাকাশে ।

শ্রীঅমরেশ রায়,

তৃতীয় বাষিক শ্রেণী ।

## “রক্তকরবী” \*

অধ্যাপক শ্রীজয়গোপাল বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

নাটকের আখ্যায়িকাতে যে ব্যাপারের বিবরণ পাওয়া যায় তাকে সূত্র ধরে নাটকের আলোচনা চলতে পারে। এই নিয়মটি আমরা রক্তকরবীর আলোচনায় প্রয়োগ ক’রলে দেখি যে Elizabethan নাটকে যেমন ভিন্ন ভিন্ন স্থানের উল্লেখ দেখি রক্তকরবীতে তেমনি তিনটি প্রধান স্থান আমরা পাই,—যক্ষপুরী, বজ্রগড় ও যেখানে রাজা স্বয়ং আছেন। এ নাটকটিতে কোন প্রাচীন প্রথমত নাটকীয় স্থান-সমাবেশের ঐক্য (unity of place) নেই। যক্ষপুরীতে যে ব্যাপারের সংঘটন তা’ অর্থনৈতিক ব্যাপার এবং বজ্রগড়ে রাজনৈতিক ব্যাপার সংঘটিত হচ্ছে—বিষয়বস্তু যেন কতকটা socio-economic বা politico-economic; কিন্তু রাজাসংক্রান্ত ব্যাপারের তৃতীয় দিক হচ্ছে আধ্যাত্মিক। কবি এ নাটকস্থানে জীবনকে একটা সমগ্র রূপ দেবার চেষ্টা করেছেন, কিন্তু নাটকে যা প্রতিফলিত হয়েছে তার তিনটি ব্যাপারের মূল্যের কোন তারতম্য নেই কি? যদি থাকে, তবে তাদের অন্তর-স্থল কোথায়? এ তিনের কোন একটিকে নিয়ে তার অন্য দুটির সঙ্গে তুলনামূলক সমালোচনা করা সম্ভব কি? যদি সম্ভব হয় তা হলে সেটিকে মূলসূত্ররূপে গ্রহণ ক’রতে পারি।

বিয়োগান্ত নাটকের মূলসূত্র দুই শক্তির সংঘর্ষে; তা বর্তমান থাকলেই বিয়োগান্ত নাটকের প্রাণপত্তন হয়। ফরাসী সমালোচক Brunetiére প্রশ্ন তুলেছেন—ট্রাজিক নাটকের Law কি? এবং আলোচনার পর এই সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হয়েছেন যে দুটো ইচ্ছাশক্তির সংঘর্ষেই এর উৎপত্তি। নাট্য-সাহিত্যের ইতিহাস আলোচনা করলে দেখি যে গ্রীক ট্রাজেডিতে সংঘর্ষ ছিল (Fate) নিয়তি বা ভাগ্য (Chance) এর সঙ্গে মানব মনের দ্বন্দ্ব। একটা অদৃশ্য শক্তি মানুষকে পরিচালিত ক’রে তাকে তার নিয়তির দিকে টেনে নিয়ে যাচ্ছে। মানুষ তার শত চেষ্টা সত্ত্বেও এ অদৃশ্য শক্তির কবল থেকে রক্ষা পাচ্ছে না। একে Fate, Destiny, Predestination, Providential Arrangement প্রভৃতি নানা নাম দেওয়া হয়েছে। Sophocles এর Oedipus the King এরই শ্রেষ্ঠ নিদর্শন। রাজা তাঁর অজ্ঞাতসারে তাঁর মাকে বিবাহ করে সংসার ধর্ম পালন করছিলেন, এতে তাঁর ভো কোন হাত ছিল না এবং ভবিষ্যতে নিদারুণ পরিতাপেও তাঁর কোন শাস্তি হচ্ছিল না। আপনারা বলবেন যে এ এক সাংঘাতিক রকমের ট্রাজেডি। আমাদের সময় অল্প, কাজেই রোমান ট্রাজেডি—বা গ্রীকেরই ছায়ামাত্র ছিল (যেমন Senecan ট্রাজেডি) তা আমরা আলোচনা থেকে বাদ দিচ্ছি।

\* গত ১০ই ভাদ্র (২৬শে আগষ্ট) রবিবার রবীন্দ্র পরিষদের দশম অধিবেশনে প্রদত্ত মৌখিক অভিভাষণের সারাংশ।—সম্পাদক

এলিজাবেথান্ ট্রাজেডিতে দেখি সংঘর্ষ হচ্ছে এক মানব-চিন্তের সঙ্গে অগ্র মানব-চিন্তের, অথবা মানব-মন ও তার পারিপার্শ্বিক ঘটনা-সমাবেশ ও অবস্থার সঙ্গে। এর শ্রেষ্ঠ নিদর্শন হচ্ছে হ্যামলেট। ইবসেনাইট ট্রাজেডিতে—যার প্রভাব ১৮৯২ সাল থেকে ইংরেজী সাহিত্যের উপর এসেছে—সংঘর্ষ হচ্ছে মানবের ব্যক্তিগত ইচ্ছাশক্তি ও Heredity তে। বর্তমান যুগ বিজ্ঞানের। আজ অজানা নিয়তি বা ঘটনা-সমাবেশের জায়গা heredity বা বংশক্রম নিয়েছে। ইবসেনাইট ট্রাজেডিতে দ্বন্দ্ব এই বংশক্রমের নিয়ম ও মানুষের ব্যক্তিগত ইচ্ছাশক্তির মধ্যে।

আরো আধুনিক কালে এলে আমরা দেখি যে যন্ত্র-সভ্যতার সঙ্গে গত শতাব্দীর মাঝামাঝি থেকে সোসালিজম্, কম্যুনিজম্ প্রভৃতি মতবাদ দেখা দিয়েছে। এ বস্ত-ব্যাপারঘটিত যে নাটক সেখানে দ্বন্দ্ব মানুষের ইচ্ছা এবং সামাজিক ও অর্থনৈতিক অবস্থার মধ্যে। Sudderman এ ইচ্ছাশক্তির সঙ্গে এই সংঘর্ষ সুন্দররূপে পরিষ্কৃত দেখি, সেখানে নিয়তির বা ঘটনাচক্রের সঙ্গে প্রকৃত দ্বন্দ্ব নয়। Galsworthyর Strife ও Justice নাটক দুটিতে বিশেষ করে তাঁর মতবাদ এই ধূয়াই নিয়েছে এবং এই সমস্যার উপর নাটক তিনি প্রতিষ্ঠিত করেছেন।

Gerhardt Hauptman এর The Weavers নাটকখানি প্রকাশিত হয় ১৮৯১ সালে, যখন ধনিক ও শ্রমিকের দ্বন্দ্ব বেশ স্পষ্ট রূপ নিয়েছিল। তার আলোচ্য বস্তুর সঙ্গে একটা আপাতসাদৃশ্য থাকলেও বজ্রগড়ের সঙ্গে তার কোন তুলনামূলক সমালোচনা করা সম্ভব নয়, কারণ রক্তকরবীকে আমি এ পর্যায়ের ফেলি না।

পাশ্চাত্য সভ্যতার সঙ্গে যন্ত্র সভ্যতা এদেশে এলে তাকে আমরা কিভাবে গ্রহণ করতে পারি এ প্রশ্ন এর পূর্বেও আলোচিত হয়েছে। আমার শ্রদ্ধেয় বন্ধু শ্রীযুক্ত জ্যেষ্ঠনাথ শীল মহাশয়ের কন্যা সরযুবালা দাশগুপ্তা গণ্ডে বহুকাল পূর্বে 'দেবোত্তর বিশ্বনাট্য' নামক একখানি নাটকে ঐ সমস্যা আলোচনা করেছিলেন। সে কথা আজ সকলে ভুলে গেছেন বলে মনে হয়। কিন্তু রবীন্দ্রনাথ রক্তকরবীতে সেই রকম সমস্যার আলোচনা তাঁর নাটকের মূল প্রশ্ন হিসাবে করেন নি। রক্তকরবী problem-play নয়, এ সেই শ্রেণীর নাটক যাকে character-play বা চরিত্র-প্রধান নাটক বলা যেতে পারে, যেমন Galsworthyর "Joy." রক্তকরবীতে বজ্র-গড়ের ব্যাপারটির অবতারণা শ্রমিক ও ধনিকের মধ্যে right relation কিভাবে দাঁড় করান যেতে পারে এ সমস্যার সমাধান করার উদ্দেশ্যেই হয়েছে এ ভাবের ব্যাখ্যা এ নাটকের আমি করি না।

এখানে নাটকের শ্রেণী নির্দেশ করার একটু চেষ্টা করা যেতে পারে। এক শ্রেণীর নাটক আছে যার আখ্যায়িকাই প্রধান অংশ, এবং তার সঙ্গে সামঞ্জস্য রক্ষা করে নাটকের চরিত্রগুলি সৃষ্ট হয়। এ ছাড়া এক শ্রেণীর নাটক আছে যাকে action-drama বলা হয়, যাতে আখ্যায়িকা ও চরিত্র প্রধান নয়; নাটকের মধ্যে একটা continuity ও rapidity of movementই প্রধান। চতুর্থ রকমের নাটক হিসাবে আমরা উল্লেখ করতে পারি Shelleyর Prometheus Unbound কে

যা সাধারণতঃ choral drama বলেই গণ্য, কিন্তু যার বিশেষত্ব এই যে তাতে dramatic action বস্তুটি এতই কমিয়ে দেওয়া হয় যে বলতে পারি যে action is reduced to a minimum, কারণ এতে বাইরের কার্যকলাপকে ছোট করে play of the soul দেখাবার বিশেষ রকমের ব্যবস্থা করাই নাটক লেখকের প্রধান চেষ্টা। Shelleyর Prometheus Unboundএ চারিটি অঙ্ক। নায়কের তো হাত-পা বাঁধা, তার তো action এর ক্ষমতা নেই। তার শত্রু জুপিটার তো পৃথিবীতে বাসই করেন না, যাদের সঙ্গে সংঘর্ষ তারা তো কোথাও একে অত্নের সম্মুখীন হয় না। একটু নড়ন চড়ন দেখি এশিয়ার ভিতর। এশিয়া যাছয়ানে কবে গিয়ে Demogorgonকে কতকগুলি কি প্রশ্ন করলে ultimate problem সম্বন্ধে; তার পরই হারকিউলিস প্রমিথিউসের বাঁধন খুলে দিলে এ রকম সামান্য একটু action যা ইঙ্গিতমাত্রে রয়েছে। একে কি ধরণের নাটক বলব ?

রক্তকরবীও ঐ ধরণেরই একটি soul-drama. Soul-drama বলতে বুঝি যা will-drama নয়। মেটারলিঙ্ক এ ভাবের নাটক লিখেছেন। আবার রবীন্দ্রনাথও এ রকম অনেক কয়টি নাটক লিখেছেন। Hauptman এর The Sunken Bell কতক পরিমাণে এ রকমের একটি নাটক। মেটারলিঙ্কের Monna Vanna এ রকম আর একটি। ইচ্ছার দ্বন্দ্ব চ'লে গিয়ে আত্মার দ্বন্দ্ব এখানে মূলসূত্র। এটিকে মূলসূত্র করে এ নাটক আলোচনা করলে প্রথমেই যেমন ব'লেছি নাটকের যে তিনটি স্বতন্ত্র ব্যাপার তিনটি স্বতন্ত্র স্থানে ঘটেছে তার মূল্যের তারতম্য একটা দাঁড়িয়ে যায়। তখন দেখি এ নাটকের মূলে যে দ্বন্দ্ব রয়েছে সে বলতে পারি ছুটি পরস্পরবিরোধী (Ideals) আদর্শের দ্বন্দ্ব। একটি আদর্শ রাজা ও তাঁর অমাত্যবর্গ প্রভৃতি দ্বারা, আর অপরটি নন্দিনীর দ্বারা গ্রাহ্য হয়েছে। সংঘর্ষ বেধেছে এই দুই আদর্শে। নন্দিনী একদিকে রাজাকে অল্পদিকে মজুর প্রভৃতি submerged শ্রেণীকে emancipation এর ঠিক বাণী এনে দিচ্ছে না বলে বলব তার আনন্দের একটা হাওয়া বন্ধস্থানে প্রবেশ করিয়ে সকলকে মাতিয়ে দিচ্ছে। তাই এ নায়িকার চরিত্রকেই নাটকের অন্তর বলে স্বীকার করে এ নাটকের ব্যাখ্যায় আমি প্রবৃত্ত হয়েছিলাম।

এ কথাটা যদি মানি তবে যক্ষপুরী ও বজ্রগড়ের যে সকল ব্যাপার নাটকে আছে তার অর্থনৈতিক-রাজনৈতিক জটিলতা দূরে সরে দাঁড়ায় এবং নাটকের প্রকৃত অন্তর আমরা খুঁজে পাই নন্দিনী ও রাজা এবং নন্দিনী ও রঞ্জনের সম্বন্ধের ভিতর। এখানে নায়িকার নামেরও সার্থকতা ধরা পড়ে। নন্দিনী আমাকে বৈষ্ণবের হলাদিনীর কথা মনে করিয়ে দেয়, আর নন্দন নামটিরও সার্থকতা তাই। কাজেই নন্দিনীকে কেন্দ্র করে আলোচনা করতে হবে। অবশ্য আপত্তি হতে পারে যে নন্দিনীকে তো সর্বত্র সব সময় দেখি না। কিন্তু Julius Caesar এও তো নায়ক প্রথমাংশেই মারা গেল। কিন্তু তার প্রভাব যে নাটকময় ব্যাপ্ত, তাই নাটকের নায়ক Brutus কি Cassius নয়। তেমনি নন্দিনীও সর্বত্রই উপস্থিত আছে—শরীরে না হলেও অশরীরী অবস্থায়। আর এরকম আধ্যাত্মিক নাটকে অতীন্দ্রিয় কিছু

থাকবেই, এবং যা ব্যক্তভাবে বলা হয়েছে তার অনেক বেশী জিনিষ ও কথা কেবল ইঙ্গিতেই জানান হবে। সেগুলি সব ইন্দ্রিয়গ্রাহ্য না-ও হতে পারে এবং নাটকও তাই Symbolic হতে বাধ্য। নানা রূপক ও ইঙ্গিতের ভিতর দিয়ে ভিতরের গুঢ় ভাব প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

এ নামটিতেই তো প্রথম ইঙ্গিত। অবশ্য আমার একথাটা স্মরণ আছে যে নাটকের নাম নন্দিনী নয়—রক্তকরবী। এ রক্তকরবী নামটিও নাটক বোঝবার সূত্ররূপ। একজায়গায় নন্দিনী যখন বিরক্ত হয়ে উঠছে মাটির বক্ষ খুঁড়ে এই অর্থ সঞ্চয়ে—সে বিরক্তি তার অন্তরের রক্তকরবী হয়ে দেখা দিচ্ছে; অন্তর যখন বিহ্বল হয়ে উঠছে, রক্তের আভা লেগে তার মুখের উজ্জ্বলতা রক্তকরবীর আভাসে দীপ্ত হচ্ছে। আবার রঞ্জন সম্পর্কে দেখি, বৈষ্ণব-কবিতায় যাকে হ্লাদিনী বলা হয়েছে এখানে সেই নন্দিনী; যেখানে সে আছে সেখানেই আনন্দ। বিশুভে তার এই শক্তির প্রকাশ আমরা বিশেষ স্পষ্ট করে দেখি। সে আগে বেশ শাস্ত্রভাবেই মজুরদের মত কাজ করত, কিন্তু নন্দিনী এসে তার মনে একটা ওলট পালট সাধন করেছে এবং গানের ভিতর দিয়ে (বেশীর ভাগ গানই সে গাইছে) সে তার নতুন এই ক্ষেপা প্রাণের পরিচয় দিচ্ছে। আবার দেখি কিশোর সতিই কিশোর। এখানেও দেখা যায় রক্তকরবীর নামের সার্থকতা। রক্তকরবী ফুলের একটি গুচ্ছ সে অতি সন্তর্পণে কোন্ এক নিভৃত স্থান থেকে সংগ্রহ করে হেতুহীন (বৈষ্ণবের অহৈতুকী) প্রাণের ভালবাসায় মগ্নিত করে যেন হৃদয়ের অর্ঘ্য নন্দিনীকে দিতে ব্যগ্র। তার শিশুসুলভ নিষ্কলুষ মন ও সরলতা নিয়ে সে ব্যতিব্যস্ত হয়ে পড়েছে—একে সে বাঁচায় কি করে? দুঃখ-দৈন্যের হাত থেকে, দৈনন্দিন জীবনের শুষ্কতার কাছ থেকে প্রাণকে সরস রাখা, আর এত সব জঞ্জাল থেকে এ সবকে সে রক্ষা করেছে—নন্দিনীর হাতে রক্তকরবীর গুচ্ছ দিয়েই।

যক্ষপুরী ও বজ্রগড়ের প্রভেদকে দূর করে তাদের এক করেছেও এই নন্দিনী। তারা দুটো বিরোধী শক্তির প্রতীক এবং কবি তাদের ভিতর একটা মিলনের সূত্র পেয়েছেন। ছুদিকেই নন্দিনীর কাজ আছে। একদিকে রাজাকে তাঁর অমাত্যবর্গ ও নিজের (power) রাজশক্তির নিগড় থেকে তাঁর প্রাণটিকে উদ্ধার করতে হচ্ছে, আর অন্যদিকে শ্রমিক মজুরদের উদ্ধার সাধন। ফাণ্ডাল ত চন্দ্রার তাড়না সত্ত্বেও ছুটির দিনে মদ খায়; এদের গোসাইও আছে—এখানে মদের ভাঁড়ার একেবারে Church-এর পাশেই। নন্দিনী এদের ভিতর মনুষ্যত্বের উদ্বোধন করছে, কারণ এ মনুষ্যত্বের জাগরণেই তাদের উদ্ধার। দৈনন্দিন জীবনে নন্দিনী এই অনুভূতি ফুটিয়ে তোলার চেষ্টা করছে যে—তোমরাও মানুষ এ কথা জানো। কবি নবীন সেনের কথায় 'মানুষের বুঝি দেবতার চেয়েও উচ্চস্থান' এই দাবী বোঝাচ্ছে। সমাজের Saviour হিসাবে তার এক কাজ। অন্যদিকে রাজা পর্দার আড়ালে, অমাত্যগণ তারপর সর্দার প্রভৃতির বহু বেড়ার পিছনে voice মাত্র। কিন্তু তার এই বেড়া জাল ভেদ করে বেরুবার একটা আকুলতা এসেছে। সেখানে নন্দিনীর অস্থায়ী কাজ।

অধ্যাপক পুস্তকের কীট, সেও নন্দিনীর কাছে এলে শান্তি পায়। কিশোর চায় সেবা করতে, বিশু চায় নন্দিনী যে মাতলামি এনে দিয়েছে তা' ছড়িয়ে দিতে, কিন্তু অধ্যাপকের কাছে নন্দিনী এক প্রহেলিকা, সে তাকে বুঝতে চায় তার জ্ঞানের পরিধির আয়ত্তে এনে।

রাজাকে অর্থ নৈতিক এবং রাজনৈতিক জাল থেকে মুক্ত করার এবং কর্মীদের আধ্যাত্মিক চেতনা জাগাবার ভার নন্দিনী নিয়েছে। তাই এখানে দ্বন্দ্ব ইচ্ছার সঙ্গে ইচ্ছার নয়; পারিপার্শ্বিক অবস্থা বা সমাজও নয়। ছোটো আদর্শের এখানে সংঘর্ষ, বা মেলাবার ভার নিয়েছে নন্দিনী। এইখানেই একটা নতুন art-principle এর সাক্ষাৎ আমরা পাই।

পাশ্চাত্য জগতে যে যন্ত্রসভ্যতার এবং বণিকবৃত্তির রাজত্ব এসেছে সেটা সংঘর্ষের উপরে প্রতিষ্ঠিত। রামায়ণে সীতাহরণ নিয়ে যুদ্ধ হয়েছিল, হোমারেও আমরা তাই দেখি, কিন্তু আজ দ্বন্দ্বের মূল বণিকবৃত্তিতে। পাশ্চাত্যের আজ প্রতীক হচ্ছে যক্ষপুরী, বজ্রগড় ও রাজা, আর প্রাচ্যের প্রতীক নন্দিনী। সে বলছে—এ সবই একটা মায়া, একে ছাড়িয়ে উঠতে হবে।

এই যে মানবের জীবনে ভাঙনের সুর সদাই বেজেই আছে সেখানেও ঐ নন্দিনীর আধিপত্যেই কিশোর, রঞ্জন, বিশু ও কিছু পরিমাণে ফাগুলাল পর্যন্ত একটা মিলনের যাদুমন্ত্র এনে দিচ্ছে। এখানে আমরা দেখা পাচ্ছি মিলনের সেই আদর্শের যা একমাত্র নিছক সৌন্দর্য্য। নন্দিনী সৌন্দর্য্যেরও আদর্শ। তার এমন একটা charm আছে যাতে সকলেই মুগ্ধ না হয়ে পারে না। চন্দ্রার চরিত্রের feminine touch যেন নন্দিনীর সঙ্গে একটা character contrast দেখিয়ে দেয়। চন্দ্রারই তার সঙ্গে যেন কেবল একটা ঈর্ষার ভাব আছে, এটা কবির একটা নারীসুলভ রেখাপাতের চেষ্টা। অনুপ—শকলু—কঞ্চু প্রভৃতি ঈশানী গ্রামের বাল্যসঙ্গীরা এই যক্ষপুরীতে এসেও তার স্নেহ পেয়ে ধন্য বোধ করছে। দেহকে শত্রুরা যতই এর নিষ্পেষিত করছে, তার রক্ষার কাজ তাদের আত্মার সকলের ভিতরেই তেমনই সে চালাচ্ছে।

এভাবে দেখলে নাটকের প্রধান চরিত্রই নন্দিনী। তাকে কেন্দ্র করে আর সব চরিত্র ফুটে উঠেছে। সে এ কথাই বলছে যে যন্ত্রসভ্যতার নিধনের কোন দরকার নেই, কিন্তু সেখানে একটা মিলনের সুর বাজাতে হবে। মজুরকে, কর্মীকে মানুষ বলে স্বীকার করে তাকে সেইমত কাজ করাতে হবে। যে যে রকম কাজ নিয়েই থাকুক না, সকলের ভিতরেই মনুষ্যত্ব আছে—ঐ মনুষ্যত্বই আমাদের প্রত্যেকের দেবত্ব। নবীন সেনের ভাষায়—“দেবতার উর্দ্ধে তবে মানবের স্থান—এই মহাবাক্যটি স্বীকার করিয়ে নেওয়া ও এই বিশ্বাস জাগিয়ে রাখা নন্দিনীর ভার। সমুদ্রমহুনের বিষকুস্তকে কোন্ নীলকণ্ঠ আজ গ্রহণ করবে? তার উত্তর কবি রক্তকরবীতে দিয়েছেন। তার সমাধান অর্থ নৈতিক নয়—আধ্যাত্মিক। যাকে জীবনহীন করেছে তাকে জীবন দাঁও,—মনুষ্যত্ব যার কেড়ে নিয়েছে তাকে মনুষ্যত্ব

ফিরিয়ে দাও—এই এর বাণী। যার ভিতর আধ্যাত্মিক বীৰ্য্য আছে সে পৃথিবীর দৈন্ত-শোকে বিহ্বল হয় না; সামান্য স্তূখের লোভে মোহগ্রস্ত হয় না, আশুতোষের মত এক কলস বিষ খেয়েও তার কোন পরিবর্তন ঘটে না। নীলকণ্ঠই যে চিরদিনের শিব—শিবম্—চির মঙ্গলময়, একথা আমরা হৃদয়ঙ্গম করলে তবে বিয়োগের বেদনাও মঙ্গলের আভাস দেবে। তাই কবির সমাধান আধ্যাত্মিক এবং নাটক মিলনান্ত নয়। যে বড় আর্টিষ্ট শুধু তার পক্ষেই ঐ খেলো মিলন আনার লোভ দমন করা অতি সহজ।

“রঞ্জন” নন্দিনীর আদর্শ। রঞ্জনের সঙ্গে শেষ মিলন হবে বলে এত জোঁগাড়, এত সাজ। কিন্তু সে মিলনের মূল্য দিতে হবে তো! আদর্শকে পাবার দামতো দিতে হবে! রঞ্জন এলো, রক্তকরবীর গুচ্ছও তার হাতে দেওয়া হল, কিন্তু নন্দিনীকে সে বাহিরে আর পেল না। আত্মার মিলনে আত্মার তৃপ্তি।

গানগুলি সম্বন্ধে কিছু বলা দরকার, কারণ নাটকের প্রাণ তার মধ্যে। সমস্ত আখ্যায়িকা ও চরিত্রের মধ্য দিয়ে যা দেখাবার চেষ্টা হয়েছে তার একটা সুন্দর নতুন অনুভূতি এই গানগুলির মধ্যে পাই। গানগুলির সঙ্গে নাটকটির একটি গভীর আধ্যাত্মিক যোগ আছে। বিশ্বের প্রথম গান “মোর স্বপন তরীর কে তুই নেয়ে” যেন নাটকের সবকথা বলছে। যা কিছু হচ্ছে আমাদের জীবনের আবর্জনা, সেগুলি দূরে রেখে লক্ষ্যের পানে মুখ রেখে অগ্রসর হলে আমরা সেখানে পৌঁছতে পারি—“তোমার প্রাণের রস তো শুকিয়ে গেল” ইত্যাদি। “রঙীন করা” কথা দুটির ভিতর আবার রক্তকরবীর রূপকের দেখা পাই। “দিক্-ভোলানো” চাই, তবেই ঠিক জায়গায় যাওয়া যায়। নন্দিনীর “ভালোবাসি ভালোবাসি” ইত্যাদি গানের ভিতরে, ঐ “অকারণে” কথাটার তাৎপর্য্যে আমরা বৈষ্ণব কবিতার অহৈতুকী প্রেমের ছায়া দেখি।

আর আমার মনে হয় পৌষের গানে—নাটকের আরম্ভে ও শেষে—সমস্ত নাটকখানির প্রাণ ধরা দিয়েছে।

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## রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ

বিগত ৭ই বৈশাখ শুক্রবার পরিষদের সভাগণকে কবি তাঁহার জোড়াসাঁকোস্থ 'বিচিত্রা' গৃহে আমন্ত্রণ করিয়া তাঁহাদের সহিত বহুক্ষণ আলাপ ও আলোচনা করেন। তিনি বলেন যে প্রেসিডেন্সী কলেজে 'রবীন্দ্র পরিষদ' নামে যে একটি আগ্রহশীল সভা গড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে তাহাকে ব্যাপক করিয়া মেলা-মেশার একটা আয়োজন করা দরকার। এই কল্পে তিনি শাস্তি নিকেতনে ও বিচিত্রা সমিতিতে এক একটা সামাজিক প্রতিষ্ঠান গড়িবার চেষ্টা করিয়াছিলেন। কেবলমাত্র একাডেমিক শিক্ষায় মনের প্রসার হয় না। স্কুল কলেজের পুঁথিগত বিজ্ঞান সহিত বাহিরের মানসিক ও সামাজিক শিক্ষার সমন্বয় হওয়া প্রকৃত সুশিক্ষার পক্ষে একান্ত প্রয়োজন। এমন একটা তীব্র অনুভূতির আগ্রহ গড়িয়া উঠা উচিত বাহাতে জীবনে নূতন শক্তি আনে। এই আগ্রহ তিনি জার্মানী ও আমেরিকার ছাত্রগণের মধ্যে লক্ষ্য করিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার সময়েও ছাত্রগণের মধ্যে যে উত্তম ও আগ্রহ ছিল এখন আর তাহা দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় না। রাজনীতির প্রভাবের তলায় আদর্শের প্রতি অনুবাগ ও cultureএর অনুশীলন চাপা পড়িয়াছে, আন্দোলন ও উত্তেজনা আজ কাল জীবনকে অধিকার করিয়া বসিয়াছে। ছেলে বয়সে এই মিথ্যা উত্তেজনা ও রাজনীতির চালবাজির ফল অত্যন্ত অশুভকর। মানুষ দেশকে বড় করিয়াছে শুধু বিষয়বুদ্ধি দিয়া নয়, idea দিয়াও বটে। আর্ট, সাহিত্য, রাজনীতি, অর্থনীতি প্রভৃতি সমস্ত বিষয়ের বাহাতে স্বচ্ছন্দ আলোচনা চলিতে পারে এইরূপ ব্যবস্থা করিতে হইবে। অল্প কয়েকজন high-browed men এ সভা বলিয়া হয়ত অনেকে ইহাকে উপহাস করিবে তাহাতে বিচলিত হইলে চলিবে না। জগতে চিবকালই বিজ্ঞানবুদ্ধি ও কৃষ্টির (culture) একটা আভিজাত্য থাকিবেই।.....অধ্যাপক ও ছাত্রগণের সহিত এই বিষয়ে কিছুক্ষণ আলোচনা হইলে কবি একটি কবিতা পাঠ করেন। শ্রীম্ননীল সরকার, শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ ও শ্রীরাধামোহন ভট্টাচার্য্য তিনটি গান গাহিলে পর কবি স্বয়ং একটা 'বসন্তের' গান ও নব রচিত "একটুকু হোঁয়া লাগে একটুকু কথা শুনি" গানটি গাহিয়া সকলকে মোহিত করেন। পবে রাত্রি নয়টার কিছু পূর্বে সেদিনের সভা ভঙ্গ হয়।

৩১শে আষাঢ় পরিষদের অষ্টম অধিবেশনে গীত, আলোচনা, আবৃত্তি ও পুস্তকসঙ্গ্রহ দ্বারা বর্ষামঙ্গল অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। গীত ও আবৃত্তির পর অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় 'বর্ষা কাব্যের ক্রমবিকাশ' শীর্ষক এক সুরচিত্রিত প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। লেখক প্রথমে যথাস্থিতবাদ (Realism), কল্পনানিবর্ত (Idealism) ও ব্যবহারিকতা (Pragmatism) সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করিয়া বলেন যে নিছক যথাস্থিতের চিত্রে রসসৃষ্টি হয় না। কাব্যের রসোদ্বোধনের পক্ষে কোন একটাই যথেষ্ট নয়। কালিদাসের মেঘদূত-কুমার সম্ভব ও শকুন্তলা হইতে, কবি ভবভূতি, হুইন্সলী কবি তুলসীদাস, মিথিলার বিজ্ঞাপতি ও বাংলার গোবিন্দদাস ও ঈশ্বর গুপ্ত হইতে, বর্ষার কবিতার নমুনা পাঠ করিয়া, রবীন্দ্রনাথের কবিতা হইতে দেখান যে কালিদাসের কল্পনা নিবর্ত তাঁহার পর রবীন্দ্রনাথেরই দেখা দিয়াছে। রবীন্দ্রনাথের স্বাভাবিক দৃষ্টিতে অন্তরের রসদ্বারা সিক্ত যে বর্ষার রূপ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে তাহার আলোচনা প্রসঙ্গে বলেন যে কবি 'প্রকৃতির শিশু' তাঁহার নিকট প্রকৃতির অন্তবেব কথা সব যেন ধীরে পড়িয়াছে। প্রবন্ধটি পরিষদের দ্বিতীয় নিজ্ঞাস্তিরূপে প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত অপূর্বকুমার চন্দ ও শ্রীযুক্ত সোমনাথ মৈত্র ও ছাত্র-সভা শ্রীজ্যোৎস্নানাথ চন্দ ও শ্রীঅমরেশ রায় আবৃত্তির দ্বারা এবং শ্রীরণজিৎকুমার সেন, শ্রীসন্তোষ ঘোষ ও শ্রীরাধামোহন ভট্টাচার্য্য গানের দ্বারা সভার আনন্দ বর্ধন করিয়াছিলেন।

২০শে শ্রাবণ পরিষদের নবম অধিবেশনে ছাত্রগণ কর্তৃক "ক্ষণিক" আলোচিত হয়। শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় সম্পাদকীয় কার্য্যভাব হইতে অবসর গ্রহণের ইচ্ছা প্রকাশ করার পরিষদের

সভাপতি অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়কে সম্পাদক মনোনয়নের প্রস্তাব করেন। প্রস্তাবটা উপস্থিত সভ্যগণের সম্মতিক্রমে গৃহীত হয়। গান ও কবিতা পাঠের পূর্বে শ্রীঅমরেশ বায় একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। লেখক বলেন যে বহু ক্ষণিকের দেখাকে কবি এই কাব্যে রূপ দিয়াছেন; মাটির সহিত শিথিল বাঁধন বাধিয়াও কবি তাঁহাব কল্পনার তবী লইয়া ভাসিয়াছেন; কোথাও কন্দ্বিমুখ পবিশ্রান্ত সুর, কোথাও বা কোঁতুক ও আনন্দের উৎস লইয়া দেখা দিয়াছেন। শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্র নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন যে মিলনের সহজ ও হাল্কা সুরের কবিতা, পবিশ্রান্তির সুরের কবিতা ও বর্ষাব বর্ণনা মূলক কবিতা—এই তিনভাগে ক্ষণিকা কাব্যখানিকে বিভক্ত করা যায়। শ্রীস্বনীগ সবকাব বলেন যে ‘ক্ষণিক দিনের আলোতে’ কবি যাহা দেখিয়া আনন্দ পাইয়াছেন তিনি তাহাই সহজ ও সাবলীল ছন্দে প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। অধ্যাপক শ্রীসুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত কতকগুলি কবিতা আলোচনা দ্বারা বলেন যে মনের সহজ ও শিথিল ভাবে কবি রূপ দিয়াছেন, ইহাই ক্ষণিকাব বিশেষত্ব। শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ একটি গান গাহিলে পর সভা ভঙ্গ হয়।

বিগত ১০ই ভাদ্র পবিষদের দশম অধিবেশনে কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত জয়গোপাল বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় ‘বক্তকববী’ সম্বন্ধে একটি সাবগর্ভ অভিভাষণ প্রদান করেন। বক্তৃতাটি পবিষদের তৃতীয় নিম্নাঙ্গিকপে প্রকাশিত হইতেছে\*। বক্তৃতা ও আলোচনার পূর্বে শ্রীশঙ্কর মিত্র ও শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ ‘বক্তকববী’ হইতে দুইটি গান গাহিলে সভাব কার্য শেষ হয়।

২৪শে ভাদ্র অধ্যাপক ডাঃ শ্রীযুক্ত কালিদাস নাগ মহাশয় ‘ববীন্দ্রনাথ ও আধুনিক ফবাসী সাহিত্য’ সম্বন্ধে পবিষদের একাদশ অধিবেশনে আলোচনা করেন। বাংলা ভাষাব সঙ্গে ফরাসীব যোগ এবং এই দুই সাহিত্যের অল্প সন্ন লেন-দেনের কথা এবং ববীন্দ্রনাথ যে বিশ্ববই বাণী প্রকাশ করিতেছেন ইহা ব্যাখ্যা করেন। তিনি ১৮৩০ সালে লুগাব সঙ্গে সাহিত্যে ‘রোমান্টিক’ আন্দোলনের আরম্ভ এবং ১৮৬০ সাল হইতে বিষয়-বস্তু অপেক্ষা রূপের সাধক দলের জন্মের কথা সংক্ষেপে আলোচনা করেন। ক্রমে symbolist movementএর ক্রমে আবির্ভাব ঘটিল তাহা বলিয়া তিনি এই সময়ে রবীন্দ্র সাহিত্যের ক্রমবিকাশের সঙ্গে তাহার একটা সামঞ্জস্য দেখান। ১৯২০ সালে যখন ববীন্দ্রনাথ ফবাসী দেশে যান তখন জাতীয়তাবাদী ও বিশ্বমৈত্রীবাদী এই দুই দলের শেখোক্তদলের সঙ্গে ক্রমে তাঁহার ঘনিষ্ঠতা জন্মে এবং নানা সাহিত্য সংসদে তাঁহার মতবাদ লইয়া ক্রমে উৎসাহ-সহকারে আলোচনা হয় তাহা বিবৃত করেন। আঁদ্রেজিদ্ নামে একজন বিখ্যাত ফবাসী কবি ‘গীতাঞ্জলি’র অনুবাদ করেন। পূর্বে ডাক্ষব, চতুর্ভঙ্গ, যবে বাইবে ও বলাকাও অনুদিত হয়। পরিশেষে তিনি ববীন্দ্র কাব্যের মূল হইতে ফবাসীতে অনুবাদের প্রয়োজনীয়তার আলোচনা কালে বলেন যে কবির কবিতাকে ফবাসী তেমন জানে না যেমন জানে তাঁহার মতবাদকে; কিন্তু কবির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা গভীর কবিতা হইলে তাঁহার কাব্যের ভাল অনুবাদ দরকার। এই প্রসঙ্গে তিনি ফবাসী কবি পিষের জাঁ জুভঁএর সহযোগিতায় ‘বলাকার’ যে অনুবাদ কবিয়াছেন তাহা হইতে ‘তাজমহল’ কবিতাব কয়েকটা অংশ পাঠ করেন।

অধ্যাপক ডাঃ শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় বলেন যে ববীন্দ্রনাথের কাব্যে যে বিশ্বজনীনতা আছে তাহাব ভিতর একটা ভাবতীয় ছাঁপ সর্বদাই দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়, এবং পবিষদের পক্ষ হইতে তিনি বক্তাকে বহু ধন্যবাদ প্রদান করেন।

শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়  
সম্পাদক।

\* অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত জয়গোপাল বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের প্রদত্ত অভিভাষণটি ছাত্রগণ-গৃহীত বক্ত-সংগ্রহ হইতে অঙ্গুলিখিত হইয়া ম্যাগাজিনের বর্তমান সংখ্যায় প্রকাশিত হইল।—সম্পাদক

## বঙ্কিম-শরৎ সমিতি ।

১৯শে এপ্রিল, বৃহস্পতিবার সমিতির ২য় অধিবেশন হয়। সে দিনের আলোচনার বিষয় ছিল ‘আধুনিক সাহিত্যের অভিব্যক্তিতে বঙ্কিমের স্থান’। বক্তা ছিলেন শ্রীযুক্ত বিপিনচন্দ্র পাল।

তিনি বলেন,—বাঙলার ভাব-জগতে চিন্তাধারায় বঙ্কিম এক নব যুগের প্রবর্তন করিয়া গিয়াছেন। বঙ্কিমের পূর্বে সাহিত্যে ছই প্রকাব বাঙলা ভাষা প্রচলিত ছিল। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র এই ছই ধারাব মিলনে প্রথম উদ্যোগী। বিবোধ যৌবনের ধর্ম; কিন্তু ধ্যান হইতে তাহাকে বিচ্ছিন্ন করা যায় না। বিদ্রোহ শুধু বাহিরের জিনিষ নহে—ভিতরের সঙ্গে তাহার একটি নিবিড় যোগ রহিয়াছে। বঙ্কিম আমাদের এই শিক্ষাই দেন। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র সাহিত্যে অভিনব রসেব সৃষ্টি করিয়াছেন। সে যুগে এমন রস-সৃষ্টি বাঙলা সাহিত্যে সম্ভব বলিয়া আমরা মনে কবিতাম না। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের সাহিত্যকে আমরা তিন স্তরে ভাগ করিতে পারি। প্রথম স্তরে পড়ে—“হুর্গেশনন্দিনী”, “কপালকুণ্ডলা” এবং “মৃণালিনী”। এগুলি অল্পকবণ নহে—সৃষ্টি। কল্পনার প্রভাব এখানে বেশী। দ্বিতীয় স্তরে পড়ে—“বিষবৃক্ষ” ও “কৃষ্ণকান্তের উইল”। এখানে বঙ্কিমের দৃষ্টি সমাজের দিকে। বাঙলাব প্রকৃত রূপ ধরা পড়ে—“চন্দ্রশেখরে”।

তাহার পব বক্তা আমাদের জাতীয় সঙ্গীত “বন্দে মাতরম্” এব একটি বিশদ ব্যাখ্যা প্রদান কবেন। তিনি বলেন—পৃথিবীর যে কোন জাতিই ইহাকে জাতীয় সঙ্গীত ভাবে গ্রহণ করিতে পারে। “আনন্দমঠ” এব আলোচনার তিনি বলেন, ইহাব প্রধান শিক্ষা—বিদ্রোহ উপায় মাত্র—লক্ষ্য নহে। তাহার পর শ্রীযুক্ত অতুল গুপ্ত ছাত্রগণকে প্রবন্ধ লিখিবাব ও আলোচনা করিবাব জগ্ৰ উৎসাহ প্রদান করেন।

৪ঠা শ্রাবণ শুক্রবার সন্ধ্যায় সমিতির তৃতীয় অধিবেশন প্রবীন সাহিত্যিক শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয়চন্দ্র মজুমদার মহাশয়ের সভাপতিত্বে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। শ্রীযুক্ত ফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায় “শেষ প্রশ্ন ও নারী বিদ্রোহ” সম্বন্ধে এক প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। “শেষ প্রশ্ন” এর কমল যে সত্যেব ও বিদ্রোহেব প্রতীক — সেইটিই তাহার মূল কথা ছিল। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় নারী বিদ্রোহের মূলে যে অজ্ঞায় ব্যবহার রহিয়াছে তাহা স্বীকার করেন, কিন্তু সমস্যা দেখা দিবাব পূর্বে তাহাব আলোচনা সমীচীন নহে বলিয়া মনে করেন। তিনি বলেন, হাট ও হট্টগোলের মধ্যে অতি নিকট সম্বন্ধ রহিয়াছে। হট্টগোল আরম্ভ হইলে হাট আসিয়া পড়ে, কিন্তু কতকটা জোর করিয়া হট্টগোলেব সৃষ্টি করিয়া কোন লাভ নাই।

শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয়চন্দ্র মজুমদার মহাশয় বলেন—সকল জিনিসকেই বিখমানবতাব দিক হইতে, বিচাব-বুদ্ধির মধ্য দিয়া সংস্কারেব মোহ কাটাইয়া দেখিতে হইবে। জোর করিয়া কিছু হয় না। স্বাধীনতা মুখ্যতঃ একটি অন্তরেব প্রেরণা। নারী বিদ্রোহও যখন অন্তরেব সত্যিকার জিনিষ হয় এবং আপনাব গণ্টিকে ছাড়াইয়া না যায় তখন তাহাতে কাহারও আপত্তি থাকিতে পাবে না।

পবিশেষে তিনি সমিতিকে আশীর্বাদ করিয়া আসন গ্রহণ করেন।

উপসংহারে শ্রীযুক্ত শচীন্দ্রনাথ মিত্র বলেন—শরৎচন্দ্র নিজেই প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন যে “পথের দাবী” যেমন রাজনৈতিক বিদ্রোহের কথা বলিয়াছে, “শেষ প্রশ্ন” সেইরূপ সংস্কারেব বিরুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহ প্রচার করিবে।

শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়

সম্পাদক ।

## বাংলা সাহিত্য সভা

বাংলা সাহিত্য সভার দ্বাদশ বৎসর সম্পূর্ণ হইয়া গিয়াছে। এ বৎসর 'Union'এর গোলযোগের জন্ত ডিসেম্বর মাস হইতে সভার কাজ বন্ধ ছিল, তাহা সত্ত্বেও গত দুই বৎসর হইতে অধিবেশনের সংখ্যা বেশী হইয়াছে। বাংলা সাহিত্যসভাকে যাহারা নানাভাবে সাহায্য করিয়াছেন, তাঁহাদের কৃতজ্ঞতা জানাইতেছি।

গত বৎসর নিম্নলিখিত বিষয় লইয়া আলোচনা হইয়াছিল—

বাংলার নূতন সাহিত্যের স্বরূপ—

“রক্তকরবী”

সরোজিনী নাইডুর “স্বর্ণতোরণ” ( Golden Threshold )

টমাস হার্ডির কবিতা

টমাস হার্ডির উপগ্রাস

পালি সাহিত্য

পালি ব্যাকরণ

শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়।

শ্রীজ্যোৎস্নানাথ চন্দ।

শ্রীপ্রভাতকুমার শর্মা।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীসোমনাথ মৈত্র।

হুমায়ূন কবির।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীনীলমণি চক্রবর্তী।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীনীলমণি চক্রবর্তী।

শ্রীপ্রভুল গুপ্ত

সম্পাদক।



## গম্পার মোহানা

শ্রীপ্রভাতকুমার শর্মা ।

সন্ধ্যার সময় 'মঙ্গলা'র সহ-সম্পাদক মহাশয়ের বাসায় গিয়া উপস্থিত হইলাম । দেখিলাম, বারান্দায় বসিয়া সন্ধ্যার আবছায়ায় তিনি প্রফ দেখিতেছেন । মাথা না তুলিয়াই বলিলেন,—“কিহে, খাসীয়াদের গল্প ছু'একটা সংগ্রহ করলে ?” আমি টুলের উপর বসিয়া পড়িয়া বলিলাম, “হ্যাঁ, ভারি চমৎকার একটি গল্প— আপনাদের পত্রিকায় তুলে দিন ।”

—“আচ্ছা, শোনা যাক কি রকম ।”

“এটি একটি করুণ প্রেমের কাহিনী, এতে আর্ট নেই,—এমনকি, মূল বিষয়টি অশৌক্তিকও হতে পারে । তবু জিনিষটি মন্দ নয় ।”

বলিতে লাগিলাম—

চেরাপুঞ্জির পাহাড় । তিন দিকে তিনটি দানব আকাশকে স্পর্ধা কর্চে, মাঝখানে ছোট্ট একটুখানি উপত্যকা—পাথরে পাথরে সমুদ্রে, যেন ক্ষীর-সমুদ্রে ঢেউ ওঠামাত্র সব জল জমাট বেঁধে গেছে । দিক ব'লে সেখানে একটা জিনিষ নেই, পূর্ব পশ্চিম উত্তর দক্ষিণ—সব সমান । সেই উপত্যকার মাঝখান দিয়ে ছুটে চলেছে এক বর্ণা—ঝঝ্ ঝঝ্ ; বাতাস বইছে—শন্ শন্ শন্ । সমস্ত আকাশের বৃকের উপর যেন একখানা আনন্দের আবরণ—নববধূর মুখের ঘোমটার মত । বর্ণার ঝঝ্ ঝঝ্ টানা আর বাতাসের শন্ শনের প'ড়েন—তাই দিয়ে কে বুলে পর্দা ! কোথায় তা'কে টানালে তা কেউ জানে না, আর কে টানা'লে তাই বা কে বলতে পারে ! সেখানে বসে পাশের মানুষটিকে পাওয়া যায় না, মনে হয় মা'কেও হারিয়ে ফেলেচি । ইচ্ছে হয় সবাইকে ভালো বাসি, অথচ কোথায় যে বাধে কেউ বলতে পারে না ।

সূর্য্য ডুবু-ডুবু, বেলা ঝুঝু-ঝায় । দুটি মেয়ে—বয়েস ষোলো আর তেরো—বর্ণায় গেছে জল আনতে । তেরো বছরের চাওয়া নেই, চিন্তা নেই—কলসী ভরে দেখলে, দিদি কলসী মাটিতে রেখে আন'মনে কি ভাব্চে । সে কিছু বললে না, চলে গেল । শ্রোতের কিনারায় বালু আর পাথর । তরুণী বালুর উপর লুটিয়ে পড়লো—নিজের ভার যেন সে সহিতে পার্চে না । ঝঝ্ ঝঝ্ আর শন্ শন্ যেন কি আড়াল করে রেখেছে—সে পায় না । তার মন উড়ু-উড়ু কর্তে লাগল,

প্রাণ উদাস হয়ে উঠল। কোথায় যাই—কোথায় যাই—বাইরে গেলে ঘরের জন্ত মন কাঁদে, ঘরে থাকলে বাহির ডাকে—আয় আয়। শিশু ডাকে চাঁদকে, চাঁদ ডাকে শিশুকে, তার বাড়া তো কিছু নয়!

হঠাৎ তার মনে হ'লো সে অনুরাগের লজ্জায় লাল হয়ে উঠেছে; যেন তার বুকের রক্ত মুখে এসে আঁবির ছড়িয়ে দিচ্ছে। একটি নিবিড় পুলকের কম্পনে তার হৃদয় স্পন্দিত হয়ে উঠেছে। তরুণী ব্যাকুল হয়ে পড়লো। আপনার এই অপরূপ অনুভূতির কারণ সে কিছুতেই বুঝতে পারলে না! হঠাৎ তার দৃষ্টি পড়লো বর্ণার ওপারে; চেয়ে দেখে বয়েস তেইশ একটি পুরুষ তার দিকে চেয়ে আছে। চোখ ছুটি তার—সে পূজার ঘর না বাসর-শয্যা বোঝা যায় না; তাতে যেন ধূপও জ্বল্চে, গোলাপও ফুট্চে। বধুর মুখের আভা দ্বিগুণ হ'য়ে উঠল। পুরুষ বর্ণা পেরিয়ে এগিয়ে এসে বললে,—“এই নাও হাজার সোণা,—আমার সারা জীবনের উপার্জন। প্রথম যখন চারচোখ মিললো—ঝরনার ওপারে ছিলাম আমি, এপারে তুমি; তাই ওখানে একটি শ্বেত-পাথরের সেতু তৈরী করিয়ে নিয়ো। আর এই যেখানে তোমার হাতের স্পর্শ পেলুম—এখানে একখানা ছোট ঘর তৈরী করে থাকবে তুমি; রাজ সন্ধ্যায় জান্না খুলে চেয়ে রইবে আমার প্রতীক্ষায়। আগামী বসন্তে এমনি সময় যখন ফুলের গন্ধে বন-পথ আকুল হয়ে উঠবে, আমি ফিরে আসব—সে দিন এখানে আমাদের বাসর-শয্যা।” বর চলে গেল—বধু ছ' হাতে বুক চেপে ধরে শূন্য কলসী নিয়ে বাড়ী ফিরলে।

দিন যায়, মাস যায়, তার পর বছরও গেল। সেই দিন আবার ফিরলো—সেই প্রথম মিলনের বৎসরান্ত। বর রাজ-দরবার থেকে ছুটি নিয়ে চললো মিলন-ভূমির উদ্দেশে। এক বছর ধরে সে ব্যথার দেবতাকে ধূপ জালিয়ে পূজা দিয়েচে—আজ তার পরিসমাপ্তি।

সন্ধ্যা যখন হয়ে এসেচে—আলো-ছায়ায় মেশা-মিশি, দূরে দেখা গেল বর্ণার উপরে সেতু আর তার ওপাশে বিশাল প্রাসাদ—যেন শান্তির মাঝখানে একটুখানি বিদ্রোহ; চারিদিকের সচ্ছন্দ পাহাড়িয়া জীবনের সাথে যেন তার কোন যোগ নেই। একটা অজানা ভয়ে বরের হৃদয় কেঁপে উঠল। আশা-আশঙ্কায় তার চরণ চলে-কি-না-চলে—সেতুর কাছে এসে দাঁড়ালে। কই—তার বধুতো দাঁড়িয়ে নেই তার প্রতীক্ষায়! জান্নার পর্দাগুলি থেকে থেকে ঝিকিয়ে উঠেছে—যেন তাকে দাঁত খিঁচোতে চায়! সহসা একখানি পর্দা উঠে গেল—বর চেয়ে দেখে, প্রাসাদের

জান্লার ওপর বধু বসে আছে, আর চেরাপুঞ্জির রাজকুমার তার কাঁধে হাত রেখে নিজের বীরত্ব-কাহিনী বর্ণনা করছেন।”

এই পর্য্যন্ত বলিয়া আমি চুপ্ করিয়া গেলাম। সম্পাদক স্বপ্ন হইতে উঠিয়া বলিলেন,—“তার পর ?”

“তার পর তো নেই।”

“তার পর নইলে চলবে কেন ? একি তোমার আধুনিক উপন্যাস যে শেষ হবার আগে থেমে গেলে মেনে নেব ? গোরা, বিনয়, আনন্দময়ী, তিনজনকেই আমরা একত্র দেখতে চাই।” তাঁর কিলের শব্দে ঘরখানি কাঁপিয়া উঠিল।

“আচ্ছা, আপনি তার পর কি চান ?”

“সেই প্রাসাদখানা সেই মূলুর্ভে ভেঙে পড়লো।”

“না এটা হ’ল না।—এ যেন উপদেশ হয়ে পড়লো। অথ কিছু বলুন।”

“মল্লযুদ্ধে পরাজিত এক আততায়ী চেরাপুঞ্জীর যুবরাজকে হত্যা করলে এবং সেই মেয়েটি তার বরকেই বিয়ে করলে।”

“না—না; এ যাচ্ছে-তাই; তার চাইতে বরং বলুন, বছর পেরোতে না পেরোতেই ভোলাগঞ্জের রাজকুমারীকে বিয়ে করবার জন্তে যুবরাজ চলে গেলেন, এবং মেয়েটি সন্ন্যাসী সেজে বেরিয়ে পড়লো। কোথায় যে গেল কেউ বলতে পারলে না।”

“এত অল্পেতে হয় না—চেরাপুঞ্জির রাজা যুবরাজকে ত্যাজ্যপুত্র করলেন, আর সেই ছুঃখে যুবরাজ.....”

“এটাও স্মৃতিধের হয় না—যেন ছুঃশাসনের রক্তপান-গোছের একটা কিছু। আমি বলি এভাবে করলে মন্দ কি—

হঠাৎ এক নিশুতি রাতে মেয়ে বিছানায় উঠে বসলে। কি জানি কেন তার চোখ দিয়ে ছ’ ফোঁটা জল গড়িয়ে পড়লো। অতীতের একখানা ঝাপসা ছবি সেই চোখের জলের ভিতর দিয়ে ... ..”

“দেখ, এরকম কিছুতে আমি সন্তুষ্ট নই। আর কিছু বল। আর এ শুধু বধুর দিক, বরের তো আমরা কেউ কিছু বলচি নে।”

“না—না, দেখুন, বরকে রাজা, কি সেনাপতি বানিয়ে রাজকুমারীর সঙ্গে বিয়ে দিয়ে লাভ নেই। তার ওপর অত্যাচার অমনি কম হয় নি। সে যা আছে ..”

“তবে যে গল্প শেষ হল না।—আমি এর শেষ চাই।”

“আচ্ছা, সেই শ্বেত-পাথরের তৈরী সেতুটা ভেঙে পড়লে আপনি খুসী তো?”

এমন সময় বৌদি,—সহ-সম্পাদক মহাশয়ের সহধর্মিণী—মুচুকি হাসিতে হাসিতে ছুই খালা খাবার হাতে করিয়া বারান্দায় আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইলেন। বলিলেন,—  
“কি ঠাকুর পো,” সম্পাদক-দা আর লেখক ভায়ে কী যুদ্ধ হচ্ছে? পদ্দার আড়াল থেকে সব শুনেচি। আমি বলি গল্পের শেষটা নাই বা হোলো।”

সহ-সম্পাদক দাদা এবার নিরুপায়। অনেক সাহিত্যিকের মত তিনিও বৌদির অবাধ্য হইতে সাহস করিতেন না। আমার কবিতা বৌদির সার্টিফিকেটের জোরেই প্রকাশিত হইত। এবারও সেই জোরেই রক্ষা পাইলাম।

বৌদির হাতের তৈরী খাবার খাইয়া বাড়ী ফিরিলাম।

## অভিযোগ

—অমরেশ রায়

সবাই বলে তুমিই নাকি আড়াল ক'রে আছ  
আমার জগৎখানি,  
বাইরে কত ঘটছে কি যে পাইনে তাহার আঁচও  
শুধুই তোমায় জানি।  
আমি নাকি গগন ভ'রে দেখি তোমার আঁখি  
ফুলে তোমার হাসি,  
বিশ্বে শুধু তুমিই আছ,—আর সকলি ফাঁকি!  
এমনি প্রেমের ফাঁসি!  
তাদের এমন অভিযোগটা—স্বখন কথাই ওঠে  
সত্যি হয়গো যদি  
বিশ্ব যদি তোমায় নিয়ে মধুর হয়েই ফোটে  
তাহে কার কি ক্ষতি?  
দখিন হাওয়ার পরশ যদি তোমার পরশ মানি  
ধন্য হ'ল সে তো!  
ফাগুন বনে তোমার মনের মধুর স্বপনখানি  
তুমিই রচিলে তো;



শূন্যতলে ফোটে যদি তোমার আঁখি দুটি  
 শূন্য ভরি' উঠে  
 স্পর্শে তোমার স্বর্ণ হ'ল বিশ্ব ধূলি-মুঠি  
 জীর্ণ দৈন্য টুটে !  
 প্রিয়া গো মোর কি জানে হায়, এ বুখা অভিযোগে  
 কি বাণী বলে তারা'—  
 পুলক তার ছড়ায়ে গেল অসীম লোকে লোকে  
 নাচিল চন্দ্র তারা !

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## জন্মান্তর

—অমরেশ রায়

অন্ধকার বিশ্বলোক ! অন্ধ মহাকাল  
 অনন্তের সীমা জুড়ি' জাগিছে বিশাল  
 গোপন ভীষণ রঙ্গে ! যতদূর চাই,  
 স্তব্ধ গুঁড় অন্ধকার ;—ভয়ঙ্কর তাই  
 অনিশ্চয় আশঙ্কায় !—জন্ম অর্থহীন  
 স্বভাব নিয়মগত—মৃত্যু চিরদিন  
 সূনিশ্চয় ধ্বংসলীলা । এ বিশ্ব সংসার  
 অসীম আঁধার মগ্ন--অর্থ নাহি তা'র ।

মাতৃগর্ভ অন্ধকার বুঝি এ আঁধার ।  
 পলে পলে গোপন রহস্য তলে তার  
 আমারে গড়িছে নিত্য করিছে সৃজন  
 তুলিছে সম্পূর্ণ করি' মোর প্রাণ মন  
 প্রতিক্ষণ !

একদিন বিপুল পুলকে  
 আমারে জনম দিবে কোন নব লোকে !

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## রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ

গত ১৪ই আশ্বিন রবিবার পারষদের দ্বিতীয় বাষিক সম্মিলন ফিজিঞ্জ থিয়েটারে এক সুন্দর ও অনাড়ম্বর রঙ্গমঞ্চের সম্মুখে বহু বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তি ও বহু ছাত্র-সদস্যের সহযোগিতায় সুসম্পন্ন হয়। শ্রীমুনীল সরকার কর্তৃক একটি উদ্বোধন সঙ্গীত গীত হইবার পর সভাপতি শ্রীযুক্ত সুব্রেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় কবির নিম্নলিখিত আশীর্বাদ পাঠ করেন :—

রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য-পরিষদের দ্বিতীয় বাষিক সম্মিলন উপলক্ষে আমি আমার আনন্দ জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি।

যেমন আকাশের এক তারা আর এক তারার সহিত সম্পূর্ণ স্বতন্ত্র নহে, যেমন তাহাদের লইয়াই নক্ষত্রজগতের সমগ্রতা, তেমনি কাব্যলোকে প্রত্যেক স্বতন্ত্র কবিতার মধ্য দিয়া একটি অরূপ ঐক্যের গাঁথন চলিয়া বিশ্বসাহিত্যের সৃষ্টি। কোনো একজন কবিকে সত্য করিয়া জানার ভিতর দিয়া সকল কবিকেই জানার পথ প্রশস্ত হয়। আমার কাব্যকে উপলক্ষ করিয়া রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য-পরিষদের সদস্যগণ সাধারণভাবে কাব্য সাহিত্যে রস সম্ভোগের যে আয়োজনে প্রবৃত্ত হইবেন সফল করিয়াছেন ইহাতে আমি নিজেকে ধন্য বোধ করিতেছি। ইহার দ্বারা যদি এই প্রমাণ হয় যে আমার রচনা সঙ্গীর্ণভাবে আমার স্বদেশসীমার মধ্যেই অবরুদ্ধ নহে তবে তাহা আমার পক্ষে গৌরবের বিষয় হইবে। বৎসরে বৎসরে রবীন্দ্র সাহিত্য-পরিষদের অধিকার দিগন্ত অতিক্রম করিয়া বিস্তীর্ণ হইতে থাকুক, এই আমার কামনা। ইতি ৭ই আশ্বিন, ১৩৩৫।

### শ্রীরবীন্দ্র নাথ ঠাকুর

তৎপবে পরিষদের সভাপতি আরম্ভকালীন ঘটনাবলীর উল্লেখ করিয়া বলেন যে রসসৃষ্টি সকলে না করিলেও উহা সকলেই পান করিতে অধিকারী। সে শাস্ত্র আজ গড়া দরকার যাহার উপর ভিত্তি করিয়া সাহিত্যের আলোচনায় আনন্দের উদ্ভব হয়। তিনি ছাত্রদের মনের এই রসবোধের প্রচেষ্টাতে আস্থা জানাইয়া বলেন যে কলেজের অধ্যাপনায় তিনি বিশেষ কিছু ছাত্রদের জন্ম করিতে পারেন নাই, কিন্তু পরিষদের মত সমিতির ভিতর দিয়াই অস্তবের প্রকৃত ব্যাপকতা ও শিক্ষা হইতে পারে।

শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ছাত্রদের পক্ষ হইতে বলেন যে আশাতিরিক্ত উৎসাহ ও আগ্রহ প্রথম বৎসরে দেখা গিয়াছে। রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য আলোচনার সুযোগে সাহিত্যের রীতি-নীতির সঙ্গে ঘনিষ্ঠ পরিচয় লাভের সুবিধা বহু ছাত্রের হইয়াছে। ছাত্র ও অধ্যাপকদের সহযোগিতার উল্লেখ করিয়া পরিষদের দৃশ্যকেন্দ্ররূপ একটি গ্রন্থাগার (যেখানে রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য ও তাহার সমালোচনা, পরিষদে পঠিত প্রবন্ধাদি এবং রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্য সম্বন্ধে নানাতথোর সংগ্রহ থাকিবে) প্রতিষ্ঠার ইচ্ছা প্রকাশ করেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত অতুলচন্দ্র গুপ্ত মহাশয় তাহাদের কালের তুলনায় বর্তমান ছাত্রদের এইরূপ সমিতির সুযোগের উল্লেখ করিয়া বলেন যে এই উপলক্ষে বিশ্বসাহিত্যের সঙ্গে যে যোগসূত্র স্থাপিত হইতেছে, তাহার সাহায্যে নূতন রস গ্রহণের দৃষ্টি জাগুক। শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী মহাশয় বক্তৃতারস্তে বলেন যে রসবোধের বিকাশের পূর্বে কোন জাতি সভ্যপদবাচ্য হইতে পারে না। গত শতাব্দীর শেষে কলেজে একটি ছোট দল এইরূপ আলোচনা করিত; সে দলে চিত্তরঞ্জন দাশ, হীরেন্দ্রনাথ দত্ত, জ্ঞানেন্দ্রনাথ গুপ্ত, বঙ্কি প্রভৃতি ছিলেন এবং সে দলের কেহ কলম ছাড়েন নাই। তিনি কবির

পত্রের উল্লেখ করিয়া বলেন যে সতাই কোন একজন লেখকের উপর দখল জন্মিলে সমগ্র সাহিত্যে প্রবেশলাভ করা যায়। তিনি আশা জানান যে এই স্থত্রে দেশে সমালোচনীশক্তি উদ্ভূত হইবে।

গতবৎসরে নিম্নলিখিত বিষয়ে আলোচনা হইয়াছে :—

উদ্বোধন-সভা : 'রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যের প্রথম স্তর' ( প্রবন্ধ ) অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত,

দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশন : ঐ আলোচনা।

তৃতীয় অধিবেশন : 'মানসীতে বাস্তব দৃষ্টি' ( প্রবন্ধ ) শ্রীহুমাঙ্গন কবির।

চতুর্থ অধিবেশন : রবীন্দ্র-সম্বন্ধনা ( কবির অভিভাষণ পরিষদের প্রথম নিষ্ক্রান্তিরূপে প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে )

পঞ্চম অধিবেশন : রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যে প্রথম স্তর সম্বন্ধে দ্বিতীয় আলোচনা।

ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশন : 'চিত্রাঙ্গদা' ( প্রবন্ধ ) শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথনাথ চৌধুরী।

সপ্তম অধিবেশন : 'বিচিত্রা' গৃহে কবির অভিভাষণ।

অষ্টম অধিবেশন : বর্ষা উৎসব উপলক্ষে 'বর্ষাকাব্যের ক্রমবিকাশ' সম্বন্ধে শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্তের প্রবন্ধ ( দ্বিতীয় নিষ্ক্রান্তি )।

নবম অধিবেশন : 'ক্ষণিকা' ( প্রবন্ধ ) শ্রীঅমরেশ রায়।

দশম অধিবেশন : 'রক্তকরবী' ( প্রবন্ধ—তৃতীয় নিষ্ক্রান্তি ) অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত জয়গোপাল বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়।

একাদশ অধিবেশন : 'আধুনিক ফরাসী সাহিত্যে রবীন্দ্রনাথ' ( বক্তৃতা ) শ্রীযুক্ত কালিদাস নাগ।

'সংগীত' পত্রিকার ভূতপূর্ব সম্পাদক আলি আহমদ সাহেব বলেন যে আরবীতে চার দক্ষ 'গীতাঞ্জলি'র অনুবাদ বিক্রী হইয়াছে এবং আল-আর-হান বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে রবীন্দ্রনাথের কাব্যালোচনার জন্ত বহু সভা হইয়াছে। শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ একটি গান গাহিলে পর পরিষদের সভ্যগণ কর্তৃক 'কর্ণ-কুন্তী-সংবাদ' অভিনীত হয়। শ্রীকমলেশ রায় ও শ্রীবিনয় ঘোষ কর্তৃক গানের পর 'গান্ধারীর আবেদন' এর অভিনয় হয়। অভিনেতাদের মধ্যে শ্রীহীরেন্দ্র ভঞ্জ ( কর্ণ ), শ্রীসুনীল সরকার ( ধূতরাষ্ট্র ), শ্রীশৈলেশ দাশগুপ্ত ( দুর্যোধন ), শ্রীসুনীল রায় ( গান্ধারী ও কুন্তী ) প্রভৃতির নাম উল্লেখযোগ্য।

শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়

সম্পাদক।

## বঙ্কিম-শরৎ-সমিতি

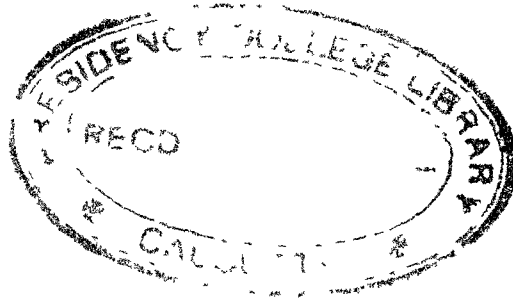
বিগত ৩১শে ভাদ্র ভাবতেব শ্রেষ্ঠ সাহিত্যিক শ্রীযুক্ত শবৎচন্দ্রের জন্মদিনে, আমাদের এক বিশেষ সভাব অধিবেশন হ'য়ে গেছে—এই কথা-শিল্পীকে অভিনন্দন দেবাব জগ্বে । শ্রদ্ধেয় অধ্যাপকগণের ও মাননীয় সাহিত্যিকগণের উপস্থিতিতে সেদিনকাব সভা খুব জাঁকাল হয়েছিল । মাশ্রবান্ শ্রীযুক্ত দিলীপকুমার রায় তাঁর গানের দ্বাবা সেদিন সকলকে মোহিত করেন ।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ও শ্রীযুক্ত নুপেত্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় যথারীতি শ্রদ্ধেয় অতিথিকে অভিভাষণ কবিবার পর ছাত্রদেব অভিনন্দন পত্র পঠিত হয় । তাহার উক্তবে শবৎচন্দ্র যা বলেছেন, তার কিছু অংশ তুলে দেব : “এই যে কতকগুলি ছেলে মিলে প্রতিষ্ঠান কবেছে—যার নাম দিয়েছে বঙ্কিম-শরৎ-সমিতি—যাহাব বিষয় আমাদের বইয়ের আলোচনা—এটা খুব ভালো আদর্শ ; এই আলে চনা হইতে তত্ৰাশ্র দেশের উপন্যাস সম্বন্ধে তোমাদের জ্ঞান জন্মিবে—তুলনামূলক সমালোচনা দ্বাবা তোমরা সমস্ত বৃদ্ধিতে পারিবে ।.....অনেকে বলেন, যাহারা সমাজেব নিয়ন্ত্রণে পড়িয়া আছে, তাহাদের উপব আমার সহানুভূতি বেশী । সত্যই তাই । অনেক বায়গায় আসল জিনিব গোপন থাকিরা যায়, তাহা আমি প্রকাশ কবিতে চেষ্টা কবিয়াছি..... অভিনন্দন সম্বন্ধে কি বলব, বেশ ভাল হয়েছে । অত্যন্ত আনন্দের সঙ্গে তা গ্রহণ করলাম ।”

মালাচন্দন ভূষিত করিয়া, আমরা আমাদের পূজ্য সাহিত্যিককে ভক্তিব চিহ্নস্বরূপ একটি বোপ্যপাত্রে আমাদের অভিনন্দন পত্র অর্ঘ্য দিয়াছি ।

শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়

সম্পাদক ।



## যাত্রা (Shelley)

ছন্দায়ন কবির

হৃদয় আমার কোন মায়াবীর তরী ?  
কোন মানসের হংসবলাকা সম  
তব সঙ্গীতসাগর-উর্ধ্বি' পরি  
স্বপনে ভাসিছে হৃদয়-তরণীমম !  
বন্ধু আসিয়া ধরিয়াছ তুমি হাল,  
বাহিছ পুলকে আমার তরণীখানি,  
মলয় ভুবনে ছড়ায় মায়ার জাল  
কোন অমরার সুর মধুরিমা আনি ?  
লতা লীলায়িত বঙ্কিম নদীবুকে  
চিরদিন ধরি' যেন আসিয়াছি ভাসি,  
কখনো দেখেছি নীলগিরি সম্মুখে,  
মরুকান্তার পিছনে ফেলিয়া আসি ।  
গভীর স্বপন-ঘুমে অচেতন এখন নয়ন মম  
ভাসিয়া চলেছি দিবস-রজনী মায়ায় মুগ্ধসম  
ডুবিব অতল শীতল সাগরে কূলহীন নিরুপম !  
তোমার হৃদয় মেলেছে দীপ্ত পাখা  
আকাশ ভরিল সৌম্য গানের সুরে,  
আনিছে বারতা অমরার স্মৃতিমাখা,  
তারি সন্ধানে কোথায় চলেছি দূবে !  
বাতাসে মেলিছু হৃদয়-তরীর পাল  
দূর হ'তে চলি দূরান্তরের পানে,  
নাহি কোন ভয়, এবার ভাঙিব হাল,  
ভাসিয়া চলিব কেবলি সুরের টানে ।  
যেথায় সাগর বিজন বেলার পরে  
দিবস রজনী লুটায় বিরামহীন

সাধেব তরণী সে দেশের মায়াভরে  
 বাহিয়া চলিব সম্মুখে নিশিদিন ।  
 কামনা-পুরীর টুটে নাই মায়া মানুষের পদপাতে  
 ভালবাসা সেথা জড়িয়ে রয়েছে মলয় অনিল সাথে  
 ভুবনের সাথে স্বপন মিলায়ে সাগর নৃত্যে মাতে !  
 রহিল পড়িয়া অতীতের গহ্বর  
 জীবনযুদ্ধে কঠিন উর্ষ্বলীলা,  
 যৌবনদিনে ফুলবনে মর্শ্বর  
 মায়ায় ভুলায়ে হানে যে মৃত্যুশিলা  
 স্বপনমুখর সুখশৈশবদিন  
 পিছনে ফেলিয়া নিয়ত সম্মুখে চলি ।  
 বারে বারে শুধি জন্মমৃত্যু-ঋণ  
 নবজীবনের প্রভাত দেখিব বলি ।  
 সেথায় কুঞ্জে কত না কুসুম ফুটে  
 প্রণয়-আনত সলাজ উজল আঁখি,  
 উপবনে শত রজত তটিনী ছুটে  
 মর্শ্বর রোলে তরল কাকলী মাখি ।  
 শ্রান্ত এ তনু আলসে বিছায়ে শ্যাম তটিনীর তীরে  
 গুনিব গভীর যে সুব বাজিছে তোমায় আমায় ঘিরে ।  
 তোমার প্রণয় বাহুর বাঁধনে আমারে বাঁধিবে ধীরে ।

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# সাহিত্যে মৌলিকতা

অধ্যাপক শ্রীশিবপ্রসাদ ভট্টাচার্য্য

সাহিত্যের আনন্দাধান ও শিক্ষাদান—উপভোগ ও উপযোগ—এই উভয় অঙ্গকেই স্বীকার করিয়া অনাদিকাল হইতে সাহিত্যরস-রসিকের নিকট এই বিষয়ে এক ছুরুহ প্রশ্ন সমাধানের অপেক্ষায় উথিত হইয়া আছে—ইহার মূল বা মূলে কি? কালপ্রবাহে দৃষ্টি ও সৃষ্টি-শক্তির বৈচিত্র্যে সাহিত্যের 'নিতুই নতুন' রূপ ধবা দিতেছে, এ চিরন্তন প্রশ্নও নিত্য নবীন আকারে আত্মপ্রকাশ করিতেছে। সম্প্রতি বাঙ্গালা-দেশের সখের সাহিত্যপাঠকের নিকটও এ প্রশ্নকে নিশ্চয় অখচ কঠোর ভাবে ফুটাইয়া তুলিবার প্রয়াস দেখা যাইতেছে। এই প্রশ্নে আমাদের সম্প্রদায়গত চিন্তাধারা (আইনকানুন বা বিধিব্যবস্থা ও অনুষ্ঠানগত প্রক্রিয়া) কি পথে চলিয়াছিল, তাহা জানিতে পারিলে মন্দ হয় না। বর্তমান যুগের নিত্য পরি-বর্তমান আবেষ্টনের মধ্যে তাহার কতটুকু গ্রহণ করিবার ও কতটুকু বর্জন করিবার, তাহাও অনুধাবন করিবার সময় আসিয়াছে। অখণ্ড হিসাবে ব্যক্তি ও জাতির জটিল জালকে অপলাপ করিয়া সাহিত্য চিরদিনই রমণীয়, কেননা চিরদিনই তাহা নূতন, এবং নবীনতাই সকল সৃষ্টির চরম নিদর্শন (১)। মৌলিকতা বলিতে কি বুঝায়? প্রথমেই বলিয়া রাখা ভাল, মৌলিকতা কথাটা 'সাধু' 'ব্যুৎপত্তিসিদ্ধ' হইলেও সাধারণতঃ যে ভাবে (originality কথাটির প্রতিশব্দরূপে) ইহার ব্যবহাব হয়, তাহা প্রয়োগসিদ্ধ নহে; বরং একথাও কেহ কেহ বলিবেন, প্রাচীন সাহিত্যে এ শব্দটি যে অর্থে ব্যবহৃত হইয়াছে, তাহা প্রায় ইহার বিপরীত, অন্ততঃ ইহা হইতে মূলতঃ স্বতন্ত্র (২)। ব্যুৎপত্তির দিকে কাহাকেও আশ্রয় বা অবলম্বন করিয়া যাহা প্রতিষ্ঠিত, তাহাই 'মৌলিক'—সে আশ্রয় যে প্রকারেরই হউক না কেন (৩)। এই ব্যুৎপত্তিগত অর্থই সাহিত্যের নবীনতা ও সৃষ্টিশক্তির সন্ধান দিয়া থাকে। প্রাচীন যুগের চিন্তা কবিকে স্রষ্টারূপে মানিয়া লইয়াও তাহাকে 'স্বতন্ত্র' অথবা 'সর্বতন্ত্র-

(১) 'ক্ষণে ক্ষণে যন্নবতামুপৈতি তদেব রূপং রমণীয়তায়াঃ' (শিশুপাল-বধ)।

(২) যেমন উত্তবরামচরিতে (তৃতীয় অঙ্কে)—দঞ্জীবনোপায়স্ত মৌলিক এব রামভদ্রনাথ সন্নিক্তঃ।

(৩) অভিধানে পাই—মূলং শিক্ষাভ্যাসোঃ। 'মূলবিত্তেহস্তিকে নাভে' (মোদনী)।

স্বতন্ত্র' বলিয়া নির্দেশ করিতে সাহস করে নাই (৪) বরং কবিপরের চিন্তা আত্মসাৎ করেন—তিনি চোর, কেহ পুরা মাত্রায় নির্লজ্জভাবে, কেহ বা বুদ্ধি ও বিবেকশক্তির যথারীতি বিকাশ করিয়া পূর্বচিন্তাধারার উপচয় সাধন করেন, অথচ তাহা সেই আকারে গ্রহণ করেন না। ইহাকেই ভিত্তি করিয়া লৌকিক বা প্রচলিত ভাবে কবির বিভাগ করা হইয়াছে (৫)। কেহ অপর কবির কাব্যের 'ছায়া' লইয়া কাব্য রচনা করেন, কেহ তাহার কোন 'চরণ' বা কোন শব্দ (পদ) লইয়া, কেহ তাহাকে সম্পূর্ণরূপে ভিত্তি করিয়া—প্রকৃত প্রস্তাবে কবিত্ব বা কবির বৃত্তি যাহাদিগকে শিক্ষা করিতে হয়, তাহাদের পক্ষে এরূপ ব্যবস্থা অপরিহার্য। নিজের চিন্তায় বিশ্ববিমোহন করিতে পারেন, সকলের উপজীব্য হইতে পারেন, এমন কবির সংখ্যা বিরল (৬)—এমন কবি 'ঋষি', তাঁহ'র 'প্রতিভা চক্ষুঃ' দ্বারা তিনি নূতন সৃষ্টি করিয়া থাকেন। সাধারণের পক্ষে তিনি বিধির নির্দেশকারী (rule) নহেন, তিনি ব্যভিচার স্থল (exception)। তাঁহার প্রজ্ঞা বা প্রতিভা নূতন তত্ত্বের সন্ধান আনে (৭)। তাঁহার অলৌকিকত্বের ইহা প্রথম নিদান হইলেও ইহাই সমস্ত নহে—'মননশক্তি', পূর্বতন চিন্তাধারার সহিত সংযোগই তাঁহাকে সারস্বত-সুধা-ভাণ্ডের স্বাদ নির্দেশ করিয়া অমরত্বের আভাস আনে। সাহিত্য ব্যাপকভাবে 'কাব্য' ও 'শাস্ত্র' রূপে দুই প্রকারের—দ্বিতীয় প্রকারের সাহিত্যিকের পক্ষে পূর্ব চিন্তাধারার সহিত পরিচয়ের অভাব অমার্জ্জনীয় ত্রুটি, প্রথম প্রকারের পক্ষে তাহা গ্রাম্যতা বা অবিদগ্ধতার নামান্তর, কারণ সংসারে অধিকাংশ পাঠকের পক্ষে কাব্যই শাস্ত্রের কার্য সাধন করে—তাহা 'কাব্যশাস্ত্র' রূপেই হউক, অথবা 'শাস্ত্র-কাব্যের' পূর্বাভাষ-রূপেই হউক। ফলে প্রথম প্রকারের সাহিত্যিকের দায়িত্ব গুরুতর—চমৎকার সৃষ্টি

(৪) প্রসিদ্ধ ঔপন্যাসিক মগ্নটের ভাষায় 'কবিভারতী অনন্ততন্ত্রা'। ইহার প্রকৃত অর্থ বৃষ্টিতে হইলে কাব্যপ্রকাশের ও তাহার টীকাগুলির আশ্রয় লইতে হইবে।

(৫) 'আরাচকিনঃ সতুণাভ্যবহারিণশ্চ কবয়ঃ (বামন কৃত কাব্যালঙ্কার ১।২।১।)

(৬) ছরোপজীবী পদকোপজীবী পাদোপজীবী সকলোপজীবী।

ভবেন্দ্র প্রাপ্তকবিত্বজীবী ষোড়শোত্তো বা ভুবনোপজীব্য পাদোপজীবী ॥

(ক্ষেমেন্দ্র কৃত কবিকণ্ঠভরণ ২।১)

(৭) 'অনাগতশ্চ প্রজ্ঞাতী প্রভেতি। (প্রজ্ঞা ও প্রতিভা একার্থক)।.....প্রথর্ষিতপূর্নঃ প্রজ্ঞাজ্যোতির্ষথার্পপরিগ্রহে ....সহ পরিচয়ো বিত্ত বুদ্ধিঃ ক্রমানুগায়তে ॥' রাজশেখর কৃত কাব্য-মীমাংসা—চতুর্থ অধ্যায়।

'প্রজ্ঞা নবনবে'ন্মেষণালিনী প্রতিভা মতা' (ভট্টতৌত কৃত কাব্যকৌতুক)। 'সা (প্রতিভা) হি চক্ষুর্ভগবতস্তৃতীয়মিতি গীয়েত। বেন সাক্ষাৎকবোহ্যেয ভাব্যাং নৈকালর্গণিনঃ ॥ (মণ্ডিত কৃত তত্ত্বোক্তিকোশ)।



দিয়া তাহার তারতম্য নির্দেশ করিতে হইবে বটে কিন্তু তাহার পক্ষে জ্ঞানগবেষণার অভাব দূষনীয় (৮)। সাহিত্যকে কল্যাণ ও কমনীয়তার মূর্ত্ত বিগ্রহ করিতে হইলে এ বিষয়ে উদাসীন হওয়া চলিবে না। বলা বাহুল্য এ সিদ্ধান্ত প্রাচীন সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের বিধিরূপে ও কার্যতঃ স্বীকৃত হইয়াছে, প্রতীচ্য দেশের প্রাচীন ও অর্ধপ্রাচীন সমালোচনা-সাহিত্যও ইহার মূল সত্যের সমর্থন করে। যে সাহিত্য জনসাধারণের বস্তু—যাহা মত বিশেষের পরিপোষক অথবা সম্প্রদায় বিশেষের উপাস্ত্র নহে—তাহার পক্ষে অস্থ নিয়ম থাকিতে পারে না বলিলেও চলে। কীটের বিচারে (৯) সমালোচনার ভিত্তিস্বরূপ এই বিধি-ব্যবস্থা অসার, ছর্ব্বোধ, শুধু ‘কালোদাগ’ হইতে পারে—কিন্তু প্রকৃত তত্ত্বানুসন্ধিস্থর মত অস্থরূপ হইবে।

বাঙ্গালার সাহিত্যসেবকগণও অতীত যুগে এই পথেই চলিয়াছেন। কে বলিবে তাঁহাদের সাহিত্য-সাধনা বাঙ্গালীর জীবনপথে নূতন পাথেয়সম্ভার সংগ্রহ করায় নাই, অথবা গৌরবের উজ্জ্বল আলোক তাঁহাদিগকে বরণ করে নাই? মধ্যযুগের মহাকাব্য সাহিত্য ও চৈতন্যযুগীয় পদাবলী ও চরিতকথা বাঙ্গালী সাহিত্যের উৎকর্ষের পরাকাষ্ঠা অথচ এই উভয় সাহিত্যেই ‘মৌলিকতা’র উৎকট ক্ষিপ্ৰকারিতা নাই। ‘দেবতারে প্রিয় করি প্রিয়েরে দেবতা’ বৈষ্ণব কবির সাহিত্য-সাধনা শুধু ভারতবর্ষে নহে, জগতে, এক অপূর্ব রসশ্রোত উৎসারিত করিয়াছে। মধ্যযুগের মহাকাব্য সাহিত্য তথাকথিত ‘পুচ্ছগ্রাহিতা’ দোষে (১০) ছষ্ট হইলেও জাতীয় ধর্ম্মবিশ্বাসের সংগঠনে ও সমাজ পরিপোষণে যে পরিমাণে সহায়তা করিয়াছে তাহার ইয়ত্তা করা কঠিন। বলিতে গেলে, বাঙ্গালী জাতির যাহা কিছু শ্লাঘনীয় চিন্তা-সম্পৎ, তাহার চিন্তাশীলতা, তাহার ভক্তিবিশ্বলতা, তাহার অপূর্ব বুদ্ধিমত্তা ও রসসিক্ততা, তাহা তাহার পুরাতন সাহিত্যের সহিত ওতপ্রোতভাবে জড়িত।

ইংরাজ যুগের প্রারম্ভ হইতে এই প্রবাহের ধারা বিধিনির্দিষ্ট পদ্ধতিতে এক নূতন খাতে প্রবাহিত হইয়াছে—ভগীরথের যুগযুগান্তের তপঃসাধনা হরিদ্বার হইতে কানপুরের খালের পথে কালশক্তির উপযোগ উপলক্ষ্য করিয়া প্রয়োজনান্তরে

(৮) ‘ন স শব্দো ন তচ্ছাস্ত্রং ন সা বিণা ন সা কলা। জায়তে যন্ন কাব্যাস্তমহো ভারো গুরুঃ কবেঃ ॥’ ( কব্যাক কৃত সাহিত্য মীমাংসা )।

(৯) রবীন্দ্রনাথ—কণিবা।

(১০)...“কিন্তু বাঙ্গালার কবিগণ পূর্ববর্তী কোন কবি নাই দেখিয়া অগ্রসর হইয়ন নাই...এই পুচ্ছগ্রাহিতা বাঙ্গালার জাতীয় জীবনের সূত্র”। ( ডাঃ দীনেশচন্দ্র সেন কৃত ‘বঙ্গভাষা ও সাহিত্য’ ( ৫ম সংস্করণ, ১০৭।১০৯ পৃঃ )

পরিচালিত ও প্রবাহিত হইয়াছে। পূর্বের মত প্রাচীনের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাবুদ্ধি অব্যাহত আছে, একথা প্রমাণ করা কঠিন;—হেতু ও যুক্তিবাদ আসিয়া সাহিত্যের সে ভাবতরল ধারাকে কঠোরকর্ষণ করিতে প্রয়াসী হইয়াছে। তথাপি বর্তমান যুগের প্রতি নিধিস্বরূপ মাইকেল মধুসূদন, ভূদেবচন্দ্র, বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র ও রবীন্দ্রনাথের রচনায় বাঙ্গালার স্বচ্ছসরল উজ্জল মধুর ভাবপ্রবাহ ব্যাহত হইয়াছে বলিলে সত্যের অপলাপ করা হয়। মুদ্রাযন্ত্রের আত্মগোরব আসিয়া বিজ্ঞানের বিজয়ডঙ্কা ঘোষণা করিতেছে, এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বৈজ্ঞানিক কুলপতি ডারউইনের নীতির (survival of the fittest) সহিত দ্বন্দ্বযুদ্ধে মত্ত হইয়াছে,—ফলে অবস্থাবিপর্ষ্যয়ে সাহিত্য যোগ-ক্ষেমের যে শাস্তপবন আদর্শ ফুটাইয়া তুলিয়াছিল, তাহা বহিমুখ জগতের সজ্বর্ষে ম্লানপ্রায় হইবার উপক্রম হইয়াছে। নূতন যুগেব আকাঙ্ক্ষার ‘রঙিল কাচ’ সবই বদলাইয়া দিতেছে।

এই নবীন প্রবীণের মিলনক্ষেত্রে সাহিত্যের যুক্তধারা—সৃষ্টি, সংরক্ষণ ও আলোচনার ক্রমসংস্কাররূপিনী ত্রিধারায়ুক্ত হইয়া উদ্দাম শ্রোতে ছুটিয়াছে। উদ্দামতার সহিত সংরক্ষণীশক্তির (রক্ষণশীলতার) চিরদিনই দ্বন্দ্ব। পরিণাম হইতেছে এই যে, প্রাচীন সাম্প্রদায়িক শিক্ষাদীক্ষা বহুক্ষেত্রেই বিপর্যাস্ত হইতেছে। পক্ষান্তরে সৃষ্টির দিক্ দিয়া ‘বহু স্মাং প্রজায়েয়’ উপনিষদের এই বাণী নবভাবে পুলকের পূর্ণতায় সাহিত্যের নব-নব বিভাগ, নব নব প্রশ্ন ও সমস্যার অবতারণা করিতেছে। সাহিত্যের ভিতর দিয়া আজ নূতন স্বপ্ন (types and subtypes) ভাসিয়া উঠিতেছে, নূতন ফল আপনার সত্তা জাহির করিতেছে, মধ্যে মধ্যে যেন তাহার মানসদেবতা করুণ কোমল আর্তনাদে গাহিতেছেন “হারিয়ে গেছি আমি।” কিন্তু হায়! সৃষ্টির উদ্দাম আবেগে সে বেদনামন্ত্র স্বর আপনা হইতেই রুদ্ধ ও স্তব্ধ হইতেছে।

এই নূতন যুগের নব আবেষ্টনে বাঙ্গালী সাহিত্যে যে তিনশ্রেণীর চিন্তা প্রসঙ্গ—কথা-সাহিত্য, গীতি-কবিতা সাহিত্য ও নাট্য সাহিত্য—ব্যাপক ও প্রবল হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, তাহা প্রাচীনের সহিত একেবারে সম্বন্ধমুক্ত না হইলেও প্রধানতঃ নব শক্তির দান। বর্তমানযুগে এই তিনটি শক্তির প্রকৃত প্রভাব যে অত্যন্ত অধিক, তাহা অস্বীকার করা যায় না। আজ যে কেহ আপনাকে ‘নিরক্ষর’ এই অপবাদ হইতে মুক্ত জানিয়া মনে আত্মপ্রসাদ লাভ করে, তাহারই নিকট নব বাঙ্গালার সাহিত্যরাণী তাহার তিন হারে সাজান পুষ্পপাত্র লইয়া আসিতেছেন—

নূতন আবহাওয়ায় নবীন সৃষ্টি বলিয়া পুরাতনের ধার ইহারা ধারিতে চাহে না, পুরাতনকে নিশ্চয়ভাবে নিষ্পিষ্ট করিতে পারিলে ইহাদের অপার আনন্দ! এই সাহিত্যিক যজ্ঞে মৌলিকতা কখন উৎকট আকারে দেখা দিয়া পর মুহূর্তে শতধা প্রকাশিত হইয়া পাঠকের নিকট আত্মসমর্পণ করে, কখনও তাহা পুরাতনের প্রোথিত শবের প্রচ্ছন্নপ্রায় বীভৎসতার নগ্নমূর্তি দেখাইয়া এক অপূর্ব অদ্ভুত রসের সৃষ্টি করে। অথচ ইহাও লক্ষ্য করিবার বিষয় যে, সময়ে সময়ে প্রকৃত প্রতিভার অধিকারী ষাঁহারা তাঁহারা ইহার পাশ হইতে আপনাদিগকে নিমুক্ত করিতে পারেন না, আবার এই সকল বিভাগেই অপেক্ষাকৃত অল্পশক্তি সাহিত্যসেবক পুরাতনের আহ্বানে যোগ দিয়া পাঁচফুল হইতে সাজি ভরিয়া বাণীর মন্দিরে অর্ঘ্য আহরণ করেন। প্রাচীনপন্থীরা সাহিত্যের কল্যাণের দিক্ দিয়া সময়ে সময়ে দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণীর সাহিত্য সাধককে উৎসাহিত করিবেন, ইহা বিচিত্র নহে। কবিদ্ব বা শক্তি সময় বিশেষে নিন্দিত হইয়া থাকে (১১)—সকল দিক্ দেখিয়াই তাই উৎকৃষ্ট সাহিত্য সাধক বিরল বলিয়া উল্লেখ করা হয় (১২)। জাতীয় জীবনের অভ্যুদয় সূচনা তখনই ইহারা করিবে যখন স্বাধীনতার সহিত সংযম, বস্তুতন্ত্রের সহিত আদর্শনিষ্ঠা, প্রাচীর সহিত প্রতীচী মিলনসূত্রে আবদ্ধ হইয়া সাহিত্যের সার্বজনীন মঙ্গলশক্তির জয়গানে মুখর হইবে। প্রাচীকে তাহার প্রাণ ও আত্ম-শক্তিকে অক্ষুণ্ণ রাখিয়া প্রতীচীর সাহিত্যচিন্তা আপনার অভ্যুদয়ে ব্যবহার করিবে—প্রতীচীর চিন্তাশীল ব্যক্তিগণও আধ্যাত্মিক ও নৈতিক জীবনের রক্ষণ-শীলতার বিষয় আলাপ করিতে পারেন নাই (১৩)। প্রাচীর চিন্তা এই সিদ্ধান্তকে স্বতঃসিদ্ধ সত্যরূপে গ্রহণ করিয়া জয়যাত্রার পথে অগ্রসর হইয়াছিল, এখনও তাহাকে উহারই উপর নির্ভর করিতে হইবে।

বাস্তবায় সাহিত্যানুরাগিগণকে, প্রধানতঃ শিক্ষার্থী তরুণবর্গকে, এই কথাই স্মরণ রাখিতে হইবে যে ভাবধারার চিরন্তন প্রবাহ ও আদর্শকে অগ্নান রাখিয়াই

(১১) অর্কাবৃত্তমধর্মায় ব্যাধয়ে...। কুকবিৎ পুনঃ সাকাম্মৃতিমাহর্মনীষিণঃ। ভামহ কৃত কাব্যালঙ্কার ১।১২)

(১২) 'দ্বিত্বা বা কবয়ঃ দ্বিত্বাণ্যেব কাব্যানি।' (আনন্দবর্দ্ধন কৃত ধ্বংসলোক)।

(১৩) The different spiritual functions do not develop side by side in any grown human being. The acquisition instinct hastens on from conquest to conquest. The moral consciousness, the 'conscience' on the other hand is very conservative. It has deep roots in tradition and in the past generally (Introduction—the Collected Works of H. Ibsen—W. Archer)

সাহিত্য আপনাকে জীবিত রাখিতে পারে ( ১৪ ) । জাতীয় ‘মূল’ধনকে (heritage) অক্ষুণ্ণ না রাখিলে ‘সাহিত্যে’ মৌলিকতা থাকিবে না । এই সত্যকে চিন্তে জাগরুক রাখিলেই সংসাহিত্যের সৃষ্টি ও পুষ্টি কল্পে বাঙ্গালার পাঠক সহায় হইতে পারেন, নচেৎ নহে ।

## তপোভঙ্গ

শ্রীঅমরেশ রায়

নারী । ক্ষান্ত কর হে তাপস সুকঠোর ব্রত !  
সত্যেরে বরণ কর দেবতার মত  
সর্গোরবে ।

তাপস । দেবতা কি এলে ? ( চক্ষু উন্মীলিত করিয়া ) একি নারী ?  
তুমি মোরে ডাকো—তুমি তপোভঙ্গকারী—  
তুমি বিদ্ব ?

নারী । আমি দেবতার আশীর্বাদ ।  
হে কুমার পূরিয়াছে তব মনোসাধ,  
তোমা লাগি আনিয়াছি সর্ব সফলতা  
বহি’ সুর-স্বর্গ-সভা হ’তে ।

তাপস । মিথ্যা কথা !  
আশীর্বাদ ? কে চেয়েছে আশীর্বাদ-বর  
দেবের সন্তোষভিক্ষা অলস নির্ভর  
ক্ষুদ্র ইতরের ! মূঢ় যারা চিত্তহীন  
তা’রা চায় আশীর্বাদ তারা রাত্রিদিন  
আপনার ভাগ্য ল’য়ে করে কোলাহল

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১৪. The stream of Indian culture has flowed through the ages, reinforced by the Time spent at every stage, *without being untrue to itself or losing its soul in the sweeping current* ( S. V. Venkatesvam Indian culture through the Ages Vol. I.)

দেবদ্বারে,—তা'রা ঘৃণ্য বাচকের দল !  
 একটু শান্তির সুখ সেই ভিক্ষা আন'  
 মোর কাছে তুমি নারী !—সে কি তুমি জান'  
 অন্তহীন কি আকুল অন্তর বেদনা  
 বিশ্বের সৌন্দর্য্য লাগি', সমগ্র চেতনা  
 আপনারে প্রসারিতে চাহে বারে বারে  
 বন্ধহীন কোন স্বপ্নে অকূল বিস্তারে !  
 আমার যে চিত্ত, তা'র একান্ত বাসনা  
 আপন আনন্দ হবে কমল-আসনা  
 বিশ্ব রবে পদতলে রক্ত-শতদল  
 অনন্ত রহস্যসিন্ধু করে টলমল  
 ঘেরি' তা'রে ! সেথা ওঠে যত জলোচ্ছ্বাস  
 দিয়ে যায় আপনার চঞ্চল আভাষ  
 কম্পিত পদ্যের বৃন্তে ! সেই মোর পণ ;—  
 সৌন্দর্য্য সত্যের মাঝে মগ্ন করি' মন  
 আপনি বহিতে পারি অনন্তের ভার  
 চিত্ত ভরি,'—চেয়েছিহু তা'রি অধিকার !  
 বিশ্বসৌন্দর্য্যের দ্বারে গোপন যে চাবি  
 আমার চেতনা তারে করিয়াছে দাবী  
 প্রতিক্রমণ ;—সে আবেগ নিত্য মোরে দহে  
 সেই সে সাধনা মম সে ত' ভিক্ষা নহে ;  
 নহে ক্ষুদ্র সুখ আশা. শান্তি হৃদিনের  
 হৃদিনের অশ্রু মুছি' চাহি সুদিনের  
 দেবতা-কল্যাণ-কণা ! বৃথা আন' নারী  
 মোরে দিতে ওইটুকু তব শান্তি-বারি !  
 বুঝিয়াছি—তপস্যায় ভীত দেবগণ  
 তোমারে পাঠাল' মোর বিনাশ কারণ—  
 তুমি মায়া !—

নারী ।

তবু,—তুমি তারে চেয়েছিলে ।

তাপস । আমি চেয়েছিছু তारे ?

নারী । সমগ্র নিখিলে

যে পূর্ণতা চেয়েছিলে আমি তা'রে আনি...--  
সেই মায়া—সৌন্দর্যের চিরসত্য বাণী—  
মর্শ্বের আশ্রয় তব ।

তাপস । ধিক্ প্রলোভন !

তুমি বুঝিবেনা নারী কি সাধন-ধন  
চিরারাধ্য মোর ! সে কি ওই নারীরূপে  
তুমি মোরে পাত্র ভরি' এনে দিবে চুপে  
লোলুপ অধরোপান্তে স্রবিজন ছায়  
মধুর অলস স্নিগ্ধ সুরভিত বায়  
ভ্রমর গুঞ্জিত কুঞ্জে—গোপনে নীরবে  
এতটুকু সুরাসম ;—আমি শেষে তবে  
মত্তসুখে সেইটুকু লব পান করি ?  
ক্ষম' মোরে, হেন আশা সম্বর' সুন্দরি,  
সুন্দরের আমি সে সাধক । কহ তবে  
যে আনন্দ পত্রে পুষ্প পুঞ্জিত বিভরে,—  
আলোছায়ে লীলায়িত—নিমগ্ন অঁধারে  
অনন্তের তীর্থযাত্রী—তুমি জানো তা'রে  
জানে ওই রূপ তব ? যে মাধুরী ছায়া  
সৌন্দর্যের স্বপ্ন লোকে মেলিয়াছে মায়া  
সুগোপন তা'রি সত্য—সে কি তুমি জান'—  
আমি তা'রে খুঁজিয়াছি সঁপি' মন প্রাণ,  
—আছে তব সেই সত্য—সে মাধুরী ?

নারী । আছে ।

তবু তার আগে শুধাই তোমার কাছে  
ভুলেছ কি একেবারে—তুমি একদিন  
মোরে ভালোবেসেছিলে ?

তাপস ।

আছে স্মৃতি ক্ষীণ ।

সত্য বটে—সুন্দরের শত সঙ্গী সাথে  
 তোমাৰেও দেখেছিলু কবে কোন প্রাতে,  
 ভেবেছিলু, এ'ও দেখি অপূৰ্ব সুন্দর !  
 সেই ভালোবাসা তবে—সে কি মোহ ঘোর ?  
 নহে নহে,—সে তো মোরে দিয়েছিল আশা  
 পেয়েছিলু তা'রি মাঝে সুন্দরের ভাষা, —  
 যেমন পেয়েছি নিত্য ফুলে ফলে তুণে  
 আকাশের নীলিমায় প্রান্তরে বিপিনে ;—  
 আজিকার এ সাধনা এ যে তা'রি ফল,—  
 সে তো মোরে করে নাই বিকৃত বিকল  
 প্রেমান্ন অলস !

নারী ।

তাই হবে ! মনে পড়ে

একদিন বসেছিলু বৈশাখের ঝড়ে  
 আপন কুটির মাঝে । তুমি বনতলে  
 মত্ত কাল-বৈশাখীর নৃত্যের কৌশলে  
 আত্মহারা, মুগ্ধমতি একাগ্র কৌতুকে  
 একাকী ফিরিতেছিলে ; আমি হাসি মুখে  
 সেই ক্ষণে ডাক দিই,—তুমি কাছে এলে  
 শুধালু রহস্যভরে, “দেখিব কি পেলে  
 এতক্ষণ ক'ত যত্নে করি অন্বেষণ  
 এ ছুর্যোগ অন্ধকারে কোন গুপ্তধন ?”  
 চাহিলে আমার মুখে তুমি সবিস্ময়,—  
 মোর সাথে ছিল তব পূৰ্ব পরিচয়  
 তবু নব-পরিচিত সম শুধাইলে,  
 ‘ও গো বালা, কে গো তুমি, কোন্ স্বপ্নে ছিলে ?  
 দেখ নাই দিকে দিকে বৈশাখীর লীলা  
 আকাশের পূজমেঘে পুঞ্জীভূত শিলা  
 আচ্ছন্ন আঁধার করি' অবনী অম্বর  
 রুদ্রের মন্দির রচে গহন সুন্দর !

এতক্ষণে তারি এই উৎসব প্রাঙ্গনে  
 শ্রামল সুনীল ছায়ে বনের অঙ্গনে  
 নৃত্য সুরু হ'ল ;--সে কি জানো নাই তুমি ?  
 আকাশে বাতাসে নৃত্য,—তরুশীর্ষ চুমি'  
 রুদ্রের বাহুর লীলা,—আন্দোলিত তৃণে  
 চরণ বিক্ষেপ তার ; লও নাই চিনে  
 ওহারি আহ্বান ধ্বনি গর্জিত পবনে ;—  
 দেখ নাই কত সমারোহ এই বনে  
 সহসা উঠিল জাগি' ! বন শিখীদল  
 মাতিল কলাপ নৃত্যে পুলক চঞ্চল  
 অপূর্ব সুন্দর ! কহিলাম সকৌতুকে  
 "সকলি সুন্দর দেখ, তবু এই মুখে  
 আমার এ দেহে রূপে—এ আঁখি অধর  
 চোখে পড়িবেনা কিছু অপূর্ব সুন্দর ?"  
 ক্ষণিক নীরবে রহি' কহ মূছ হাসি,  
 'সুন্দর সুন্দর তব ওই রূপরাশি,  
 বিছাতের মত কাস্তি—তবু তা'র চেয়ে  
 যেন লঙ্কাহীন । সমস্ত আকাশ ছেয়ে  
 আঁধার নিবিড় হ'ল আজি,— তা'রি মাঝে  
 দেখেছি চপলা ছ্যাতি বিকশি সলাজে  
 মুহূর্তে মিলায় শেষে ; বুঝেছিহু মনে  
 যে গহন মায়া নামে আঁধার স্বপনে  
 দীপ্ত সেথা অশোভন—তাই লঙ্কা তা'র,  
 শুধু সেই সত্যটুকু করিতে স্বীকার  
 ক্ষণিক প্রকাশ লীলা ! তুমি যে সুন্দরী  
 চিরদীপ্ত হাসিটুকু রাখিয়াছ ধরি'  
 রক্তিম অধর প্রাস্তে ;--চঞ্চল লীলায়  
 রূপ তব বহ্নিশিখা—সে নাহি মিলায়  
 মর্শ্বের গভীর স্বপ্নে—রহস্য আঁধার





আমারো সাধনা তাই ভাবি অভিনব  
তোমার সার্থক ক্ষণে ! পূর্ব আচরণে  
মোর ভ্রান্তি—জানি তা'রে রাখে নাই মনে  
তবু তা'রে ক্ষমা কোরো !

নারী ।

তা'রে ক্ষমিয়াছি ।

তোমারি সত্যের কাছে আগে নমিয়াছি  
তবে তো সফল আমি । প্রভু, জানোনা কি  
সত্য সে যেমনি হোক তা'রে দিব ফাঁকি—  
তা'রে অবহেলা করি' তা'রি অধিকার  
হরণ করিয়া লবে হেন সাধ্য কার,—  
নহে মোর সেই ব্রত । তুমি যা' পেয়েছ  
আপন মর্শ্বের বাণী,—তুমি যা' চেয়েছ  
মোহিনী-মাধুরী-স্পর্শ মুগ্ধ চিত্ততলে  
তা'রে কি ফিরাতে পারি কোন মিথ্যাছলে  
আপন প্রেমের লাগি ? তাই আনিয়াছি  
অনন্তের দ্বার হ'তে এই ভিক্ষা যাচি'  
তা'র লাগি চিন্তে তব যত আকুলতা  
আমি এনে দিব তা'র সব সফলতা  
সকল সাধনা সুখ । তা'রি মায়া হ'তে  
টানিয়া ল'য়েছি মোর নব চিত্তশ্রোতে  
একটি স্মৃষ্ণিঙ্ক ছায়া রহস্য নিবিড়  
বন্ধহীন স্বপ্নভরে ব্যাপ্ত চিরস্থির  
অসীম শূন্যের মত ! তুমি শেষে আসি  
তা'রে যে ভরিয়া লবে নিজে ভালোবাসি'  
আপন ঐশ্বর্য্য দিয়ে । ছু'টি মুগ্ধ হিয়া  
আপন প্রেমের রঙে উঠিবে রাঙিয়া,  
কত তা'র বর্ণচ্ছটা, কত আলোছায়া  
কত মুগ্ধ রাত্রি-দিন ঘন সন্ধ্যামায়া  
স্বখে ছুখে স্মৃনিবিড় ! বসন্ত বেলায়

তুমি যোগ দিতে গিয়ে বিশ্বের খেলায়  
 কি স্বপন চোখে ল'য়ে দাঁড়াবে সহসা  
 মোর পাশে আসি,—মাধবীমঞ্জরী-খসা  
 ক'টি ফুল পরাবে অলকে ; তারপরে  
 একান্ত আকুল ব্যগ্র কি আবেগ ভরে  
 আমার লাবণ্যভরা এই তলুখানি  
 যেন বিশ্ব সৌন্দর্যের মূর্ত মর্ম্মবাণী  
 ধরিবে হৃদয়ে । শ্রাবণ মেঘের ভারে  
 চিত্ত যবে ভ'রে ওঠে ঘন অন্ধকারে  
 নিবিড় রহস্যরসে । মোর কাছে আসা,  
 ধীরে চাওয়া, ফিরে যাওয়া, লাজ, ভালবাসা  
 সকলি গভীরতর নব পরিচয়ে  
 হেরিবে আপন মর্মে ব্যাকুল বিশ্বয়ে  
 সুগভীর ছায়াচ্ছন্ন চির-রহস্যের  
 কোন মায়ারূপ ! আমার নয়নে চাহি'  
 শ্রাবণ-জলদ-শ্যাম অনন্ত প্রবাহি  
 এ মোর চিন্তের ধারা অঁাখির ছায়ায়  
 ভুলাবে পরাণ তব অজানা মায়ায় !  
 না পাওয়া প্রেয়সী তব—সেই হব আমি,  
 খুঁজিবে নূতন ক'রে নিত্য দিবাযামী  
 মিলনে বিরহে ।.....এই বিশ্ব প্রকৃতির  
 উদাসীন যে পরশ রহে চিরস্থির,—  
 প্রেমের উচ্ছল শ্রোতে লীলা সমারোহে  
 আমি আনিয়াছি তা'রে নব স্বপ্নে মোহে ;—  
 লও তা'রে লও প্রভু !

তাপস ।

কি করেছ হায় !

যে বাণী ধ্বনিত্যে চাহে প্রভাতে সন্ধ্যায়  
 অনন্তের কেন্দ্র হ'তে শত কলোচ্ছ্বাসে  
 সে আর দিবেনা ধরা বিপুল প্রকাশে,

ভবিষ্যের কোন দিন কোনো অবকাশে ?  
 তুমি তা'র কতটুকু দিতে পারো আনি'  
 কতটুকু সত্য তা'র—কতটুকু বাণী ?  
 না জানি কি স্বপ্নে বুঝি মোর ব্যাকুলতা  
 রাখিবে ভুলায়ে ! একি মিথ্যা সফলতা  
 প্রেমাক্ত নারীর চিত্ত অন্ধ সাধনায়  
 ক'রেছে সফল !

তাই বিশ্ব-চেতনায়

আজি কোন অভিশাপ রচি' দিল কারা  
 মৃত্যুর বন্ধনী ! প্রভাত-আলোক-ধারা  
 সীমাহীন শূন্যপথে চলেছে একাকী  
 যেন কোন মর্স্মাহত উদাস বৈরাগী  
 দূরান্ত উদ্দেশে । তরুশ্রেণী সমুন্নত  
 দাঁড়ায়ে রয়েছে স্তব্ধ মূঢ় বজ্রাহত  
 জড়ত্ব শৃঙ্খল তা'র সদা ঝঙ্কারিছে  
 পল্লব মর্স্মরে ! একি মৃত্যু একি মিছে  
 মায়ার ছলনা !—একি দৃশ্য ভয়ঙ্কর  
 প্রাণহীণ বিশ্বরূপ পাংশুল ধূসর !  
 তবে থাকো থাকো তুমি ওগো মায়াময়ি  
 তোমার যা' ইচ্ছা তাই হোক হোক জয়ী  
 তুমি যেয়োনা কো ! তোমারি নয়ন-কোণে  
 একটি প্রাণের ছ্যতি করণ কম্পনে  
 এখনো রয়েছে লীন—তা'রে রাখো রাখো  
 সেই তব শেষ সত্যে সত্য হ'য়ে থাকো !

## ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস

শ্রীঅনিলচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়—তৃতীয় বর্ষ, ইতিহাস

মম্সেনের পাতা প্রথম হইতে উল্টাইয়া গেলে পাঠকের মনে এই ধারণাটি বিশেষভাবেই রেখাপাত করিয়া যায় যে, যে মহাজাতির কাহিনী তিনি আপন বেদনার রসে অভিষিক্ত করিয়া লিখিবার প্রয়াস পাইয়াছেন, তাহার জীবনের গতি যেন কোথাও নিরর্থক সময় অতিবাহিত করিতেছে না, তাহা ইটালীর পার্শ্বভ্যে শ্রোতস্বতীর মতই অবিশ্রাম বেগে ছুটিয়া চলিয়াছে। ইতিহাসের মহাকোলাহলের মধ্যে এই নবজাগ্রত জাতি একটা রোমাঞ্চকর সুবিশাল মহিমা বিস্তার করিয়া দিয়াছে। তাহার পর তুর্যোগের রাত্রে রোমকের অভ্রভেদী পাষণ-প্রাসাদ ভাঙিয়া পড়িল, পরিত্যক্ত রোমক সভ্যতার অব্যক্ত ক্রন্দন নিপীড়িত জাতির অশ্রুজলে পরিষ্কৃত হইল।

ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসে এই অবাধ গতি, এই চঞ্চল ক্ষুর্ভি ও এই বিরাট ধ্বংসের অভাব আছে। সাধারণভাবে বলিতে গেলে, পশ্চিমের অকুণ্ঠিত জীবনযাত্রায় যে মাদকতা রহিয়াছে প্রাচ্যে তাহার একান্তই অভাব। ভারতবর্ষে দ্রাবিড় হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া মুসলমান পর্য্যন্ত যে বিচিত্র জনশ্রেণীর অভিনব সম্মিলন দেখিতে পাই, তাহাদের মধ্যে কেহই উদ্ধার বেগে আপন বাণী ও সভ্যতাকে শক্তির সাহায্যে অপর জাতির উপর চাপাইয়া দিতে পারে নাই। পাশ্চাত্য জয় করিবার পূর্বে ধ্বংস করিয়াছে, আর প্রাচ্য জয় করিবার পূর্বে মিলন ঘটাইয়াছে।

ভারতবর্ষ একটা দেশ কিনা, ভারতবর্ষীয়েরা একটা নেশন্ কিনা এবং অশোকের শিলালিপি ও রাজতরঙ্গিনীর উপকথা ছাড়া ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসের উপাদান আছে কিনা সে প্রশ্ন একদিন উঠিয়াছিল; এই বিজ্ঞানসম্মত প্রশ্নালীতে ইতিহাস রচনার যুগেও তাহার জের একেবারেই মিটিয়া গিয়াছে একথা বলিতে পারিব না। মিস্টনের পাতায় শেলিকে খুঁজিতে গিয়া নিরাশ হইলে অভিযোগ করা অসঙ্গত হইলেও হয়তো সম্পূর্ণ অস্বাভাবিক নয়। মম্সেন ও গ্রোটের পাতায় পাতায় ঘটনারাশির সন্ধান পাইয়া আমাদের ইতিহাস পড়িবার যে রুচির সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে, ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস তাহা তৃপ্ত করিতে পারিবে না। অপরাধটা ভারতবর্ষের

না আমাদের রুচির তাহা বিচার না করিয়াই আমরা মাতৃভূমির ইতিহাসের চিরনির্বাসন বিধান করি।

মানুষের কৰ্ম্ম যেখানে আপনার সীমাকেও অজানাভাবে অতিক্রম করিয়া যায়, মানুষ সেইখানেই আপন চরম বিকাশের পরিপূর্ণ গৌরব লাভ করে। মানুষ যেদিন আপন সঙ্কীর্ণ আঙিনা পরিত্যাগ করিয়া বিশ্বব্যাপী মানবলোকের একাত্মতা আপন জীবনের মধ্য দিয়া উপলব্ধি করিতে পারে, সেদিন সে প্রকৃত বৃহৎ এবং মহৎ হয়। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস এই বৃহৎ ও মহৎ মনুষ্যত্বের ইতিহাস। এই সহজ সত্যটা স্বীকার করিলে এই মহাদেশের কাহিনী আমাদের কাছে সত্য ও পূর্ণ হইয়া দাঁড়াইবে।

রসিক পাঠক হোমারের কাব্য এবং কালিদাসের নাটকে তুলনা করিবেন না। ইলিয়ডের রস ও শকুন্তলার রস এক নয়; উভয়েই স্বতন্ত্র, গভীর এবং সার্থক। ভারতবর্ষ এবং ইউরোপ বিভিন্ন সময়ে এবং বিভিন্ন উপায়ে আত্মপ্রকাশ করিয়াছে, বিভিন্ন প্রচেষ্টার মধ্য দিয়া আপন আপন সাধনার পথ ও লক্ষ্য খুঁজিয়া পাইয়াছে। এই ভারতবর্ষে সম্রাট অশোকের প্রতিভা একদিন আপনাকে সাম্রাজ্যবিস্তারে নিয়োজিত করিয়াছিল; কিন্তু সে সাম্রাজ্য বাহুবলের নয়, ধর্ম্মের। ইউরোপ আপন রাক্ষসী ক্ষুধায় জ্বলিয়া জ্বলিয়া ক্রমে ক্রমে পৃথিবী গ্রাস করিয়াছে, তথাপি তাহার দারুণ অতৃপ্তি দূর হয় নাই। সাম্রাজ্য বিস্তারের এই যে দুইটি আদর্শ আমরা দেখিতে পাই তাহাদের তুলনামূলক সমালোচনা করিবার প্রয়োজন নাই। ইলিয়ড ও শকুন্তলার মত দুইটিই স্বতন্ত্র, গভীর এবং সার্থক। এই স্বাতন্ত্র্য, গভীরতা এবং সার্থকতা বুঝাইতে পারিলেই ঐতিহাসিকের এবং বুঝিতে পারিলেই আমাদের কাজ শেষ হইবে।

ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস যে লিখিত হয় নাই তাহার প্রধান কারণ এই যে ইহা অত্যন্ত বৃহৎ। এই বৃহৎত্বের পরিমাপ করিতে যাইয়া বিচারশক্তি স্তব্ধ হইয়া যায় এবং ইহার অপূর্ব বৈচিত্র্য বিজ্ঞানকে নিরুদ্ধ ও কল্পনাকে প্রসারিত করে। আমরা যেন বহুক্ষণ ব্যাপিয়া এক বিরাট বাহিনীর ধীর পদধ্বনি ও অর্ধক্ষুট কোলাহল শুনিতে পাই, কিছুই দেখিতে পাই না। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস যেন একটা মহাকাব্য— তাহা এক বিপুল জাতির মানবতাকে রূপে ও রসে সজীব করিয়া তুলিয়াছে। আমরা ইহাকে বিচার করিতে গেলে ভুল করিব, ইহা শুধু অনুভব করিতে হইবে। ফুল যেমন ধীরে ধীরে আপনার সমগ্রতা বিকশিত করে, ভারতবর্ষ অনাদিকাল

হইতে সেইরূপে আপনাকে বিকশিত করিয়া আসিতেছে। এই দেশের ইতিহাস শুধু সেই বিকাশের একখানি অসম্পূর্ণ চিত্র।

রণদামামার শব্দ ক্ষণস্থায়ী, কিন্তু এশ্রাজের সুর মিলাইয়া গেলেও তাহার রেশটুকু রহিয়া যায়। ইউরোপের ইতিহাসের উদ্দাম গতি আমাদের মনকে ত্রস্ত এবং কল্পনাকে সঙ্কুচিত করে। আমাদের বিস্মিত দৃষ্টির সম্মুখে তাহার প্রবাহ ছুটিয়া যায় এবং সময় যখন তাহাকে রুদ্ধ করে তখন সেই করুণ অবসান আমাদের ব্যথিত করে। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস যেন শেষ হয় না। ওস্তাদের কণ্ঠে রাগিনীর মত তাহা আমাদের সমস্ত ইন্দ্রিয়কে মুগ্ধ ও চৈতন্যকে তন্দ্রাহিত করে এবং সে মোহ ও তন্দ্রার ঘোর যেন কিছুতেই কাটিতে চাহে না। সমুদ্রের সীমাহীন তরঙ্গমালার মত অর্ধস্পষ্ট ঘনসন্নিবিষ্ট ঘটনারাজি আমাদের দৃষ্টির সম্মুখে ভাসিয়া উঠে; দূরাগত সমুদ্রকল্লোলের মত এই বিরাট জনসঙ্ঘের একটি মিলিত সুর যেন রহিয়া রহিয়া আমাদের মর্মে আঘাত করে। গ্রীস ও রোমের বীর্য, শক্তি, বুদ্ধি, শিল্প, সাহিত্য প্রভৃতির সম্পূর্ণ পরিচয় আমরা পাই, কিন্তু সে পরিচয় দিনের পর দিন পূর্ণতররূপে বিকশিত হইয়া উঠে না। তাহাদের সুর দামামার গর্জনের মত, চতুর্দিক বিকম্পিত করিয়া সহজেই মিলাইয়া যায়। কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষের অনাদি কাহিনী কি যেন এক মোহিনী মায়া বিস্তার করিয়া রাখিয়াছে। সমস্ত কথিত বিবরণের অন্তরাল হইতে কি যেন এক অকথিত মন্ত্র উকি মারিতে থাকে। একাদশীর চন্দ্রালোকের মত অর্ধপ্রকাশিতভাবে থাকিয়া ভারতবর্ষ কি বাণী প্রচার করিতেছে মন তাহা জানিতে যেন আকুল হইয়া উঠে। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসকে আমরা ছাপার অঙ্করে খুঁজিয়া পাইব না, আমাদের অন্তরের অনুভূতিতে তাহা অমর প্রাণ লাভ করিয়াছে।

ইউরোপ তাহার রাষ্ট্রের ইতিহাসকেই সম্পূর্ণ বলিয়া গ্রহণ করিয়াছে, অতএব তাহা গণদেবতার বিচিত্র জীবনযাত্রা এবং সুখ দুঃখকে পূর্ণভাবে ফুটাইয়া তুলিতে পারে নাই। ইউরোপ দাসত্বকে শুধু জীবনে নয়, কাব্যে এবং ইতিহাসেও অবহেলা করিয়া আসিয়াছে। ভারতবর্ষ রাষ্ট্র অপেক্ষা সমাজকে বৃহত্তর এবং মহত্তর বলিয়া স্বীকার করিয়াছিল, এবং তাহারই ফলে ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস এত ব্যাপক, বহুমুখ ও গভীর। ভারতবর্ষে রাষ্ট্র সমাজের অধীন ছিল, সমাজ যথার্থ সার্বভৌম-শক্তিরূপে রাজা-প্রজা সকলকেই নিয়ন্ত্রিত করিত। প্রসঙ্গক্রমে বলিতে পারা যায় যে ব্রাহ্মণের একাধিপত্য এই প্রথারই পরিণতি। রাষ্ট্রীয় ও সামাজিক জীবনের সমস্যা বর্তমান যুগে যে প্রবল আকার ধারণ করিয়াছে ভারতবর্ষ তাহা হইতে মুক্ত

ছিল। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস তাহার সমাজের ইতিহাস, এবং রামায়ণ মহাভারত সেই সমাজের চিত্রই আমাদের সম্মুখে উপস্থাপিত করে। বিশাল সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যের অন্তরালে ভারতবর্ষের যে রূপ আমরা দেখিতে পাই, হীরোডটাস্ ও থীউসিডিড্‌স্ গ্রীসদেশের সেই সম্পূর্ণ রূপ প্রকাশিত করিতে পারেন নাই।

ভারতবর্ষ নানা জাতি ও সভ্যতার সমন্বয় সাধন করিয়াছে, একথা আমরা শুনিয়াছি। ভারতবর্ষ এত বিভিন্নমুখী ভাবধারা গ্রহণ করিয়া আপনার অন্তরের বাণীর সহিত মিলিত করিয়াছে যে তাহার ইতিহাস কোন্ জাতির ইতিহাস, এই প্রশ্ন উঠিতেই পারে না। সুমেরীয়, জাবিড়, আর্ষ্য, পারসিক, গ্রীক, শক, ছন, মঙ্গোলীয়, মুসলমান ও ইউরোপীয় বিভিন্ন জাতি একত্রিত হইয়া ভারতবর্ষকে গঠিত করিয়াছে—ভারতবর্ষ সকলেরই মাতৃভূমি! অতএব ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস ইহাদের কোন একটির ইতিহাস নয়, সকলের ইতিহাস। ভারতবর্ষের সভ্যতাকে যাহারা এখনও আর্ষ্য সভ্যতা বলিয়া মনে করেন তাহাদের ভ্রম ইতিহাসই দূর করিবে। আমাদের ধমনীতে কতটুকু আর্ষ্যরক্ত প্রবাহিত হয় তাহার পরিমাণ করিয়া বৈজ্ঞানিক যে মত প্রকাশ করিবেন তাহা ইহাদের গৌরব বৃদ্ধি করিবে না।

বাস্তবিক ভারতবর্ষের যে রূপ আমাদের কাছে সর্বাপেক্ষা বেশী বিস্তৃত ও ভক্তিনত করে তাহা তাহার বৈচিত্র্য। ইউরোপীয় সভ্যতা আপনার ছায়ায় বাড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে, পরস্বকে কখন গ্রহণ এবং কখন বহিস্কৃত করিয়াছে এবং পরস্পরবিরুদ্ধ ভাবের সম্মিলন ঘটাইতে না পারিয়া বিরোধ এবং হিংসায় কলুষিত হইয়াছে। ইউরোপের উদ্দাম চাঞ্চল্য আপনাকে নিয়ন্ত্রিত ও শান্ত করিতে পারে নাই, বিভিন্নতা ও বিরুদ্ধতাকে একীভূত করা তাহার সাধ্যাতীত ছিল। ভারতবর্ষ আপন সাধনাকে কখনও সঙ্কুচিত করে নাই, আপন আঙিনায় অতিথির প্রবেশ নিষিদ্ধ করিয়া আপনাকে বঞ্চিত করে নাই। যে সার্থকতা বিরোধকে মিলিত, যুদ্ধকে শান্ত এবং অপূর্ণকে পূর্ণ করিতে পারে, ভারতবর্ষ নীরবে তাহারই তপস্যা করিয়াছে। যে স্বাধীনতা মনকে গ্রহণোন্মুখ এবং হৃদয়কে প্রসারিত করে, ভারতবর্ষে তাহার অভাব ছিল না। ভারতবর্ষ পরকে মারিয়া বড় হয় নাই, পরকে আপনার অস্তিত্বে মিশাইয়া প্রভুত্ব বিস্তার করিয়াছে।

তথাপি একথা ভুলিয়া গেলে চলিবে না যে ভারতবর্ষ শুধু শান্তি চাহে নাই, সে চাহিয়াছে কল্যাণ। মানবের পরম কল্যাণ ভারতবর্ষের কাম্য এবং লক্ষ্য ছিল।



ভারতবর্ষ যদি যুদ্ধ-বিগ্রহ হইতে বিরত থাকিয়া হিমালয়ের গুহাভ্যন্তরে আপনাকে নিভৃত তপস্যায় নিয়োজিত রাখিত, তবে তাহার সার্থকতা লাভ হইত না। যে শান্তি কল্যাণকে দূরীভূত এবং অকল্যাণকে অবশুস্তাবী করে তাহার সাধনা জাতির মৃত্যুর কারণ হয় এবং বিশ্বমানবের গতি নিরুদ্ধ করে। ভারতবর্ষের ঋষি ইহা জানিতেন, এবং সেজন্যই ভারতবর্ষের শ্রীকৃষ্ণ অর্জুনকে শান্তির পরিবর্তে কল্যাণের সাধনা করিতে উপদেশ দিয়াছিলেন। ভারতবর্ষের তপস্যা শুধু তপোবন আশ্রয় করিয়া বাড়িয়া উঠে নাই, যুদ্ধক্ষেত্রেও তাহা আপন কর্মে নিয়োজিত থাকিত। তাই ইউরোপের রাজশক্তি ভোগের প্রতীক এবং ভারতবর্ষের রাজশক্তি প্রজার কল্যাণ সাধনায় ব্যস্ত। ইউরোপ যে জীবনকে সঙ্কুচিত এবং ভারতবর্ষ প্রসারিত করিতে চায় তাহার যথার্থ কারণ উভয়ের সভ্যতার এই বিভিন্ন বৈশিষ্ট্যে সন্ধান করিতে হইবে।

একথা বলিব না যে ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসে বিক্ষোভ নাই, আবার ইহাও ভুলিব না যে তাহা প্রধানতঃ বিক্ষোভের ইতিহাস নয়। যে ধর্ম বাস্তবের সমুদয় কল্যাণের উৎস তাহার বিবরণ আলোচনা করিলেই আমরা ইহা বুঝিতে পারিব। ভারতবর্ষে যত ধর্মবিপ্লব উপস্থিত হইয়াছে তত পৃথিবীর অপর কোন দেশেই হয় নাই, ঐতিহাসিক এই মত গ্রহণ করিবেন। আর্য্যধর্ম এবং অনার্য্যধর্ম দীর্ঘকালব্যাপী যে সংগ্রামে রত ছিল তাহার বৃত্তান্ত বৈদিক সাহিত্যে যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে পাওয়া যাইবে। কিন্তু ইহা স্মরণ রাখিতে হইবে যে সে যুদ্ধ শুধু ধর্মের জন্ম নয়, তাহা প্রধানতঃ রাজনৈতিক প্রভুত্বের জন্ম। এই জন্মই দেখিতে পাই যে যখন উত্তর ভারতের অধিকাংশ স্থানে আর্য্যরাজশক্তি দৃঢ়ভাবে প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইল, তখনই সে যুদ্ধের অবসান হইল এবং আর্য্য ও অনার্য্য ধর্ম এবং সভ্যতার বিচিত্র সংমিশ্রণে হিন্দুধর্ম গঠিত এবং পৌরাণিক যুগের সভ্যতা সৃষ্ট হইল। আর্য্যধর্মের যে শাখা বৌদ্ধধর্মরূপে ভারতবর্ষ হইতে বেদের প্রভুত্ব বিনষ্ট করিতে প্রয়াস পাইয়াছিল তাহা অনেকাংশে আর্য্য ও অনার্য্য মতের মিলনের ফল। বহুদিন পরে যখন সেমিটিক সাধনার ফলস্বরূপ ইসলামধর্ম ভারতবর্ষের রাজশক্তি হস্তগত করিয়া তাহার ধর্ম ও সভ্যতাকে স্থানভ্রষ্ট করিতে চাহিয়াছিল তখন হিন্দুধর্ম ভারতব্যাপী রক্তশ্রোতের সৃষ্টি করে নাই। ভারতবর্ষ নিজকে বিসর্জন না দিয়াও ইসলামের সত্যকে অল্পভব করিয়াছিল এবং গ্রহণ করিতে চাহিয়াছিল। বিশেষভাবে কবীরের ধর্মমত এই প্রচেষ্টার ফল।

দৃষ্টান্তের প্রয়োজন হইবে না, ইতিহাস-পাঠক সহজেই দেখিতে পাইবেন যে ধর্মের নামে পরম অধর্মের পথে ছুটিয়া ভারতবর্ষ বিশ্বের কল্যাণ সঙ্কটাপন্ন করে নাই।

ইউরোপের ইতিহাসে ইহার ঠিক বিপরীত শক্তির জয় আমরা দেখিতে পাইব। ইউরোপ যখন আপন ধর্ম বিসর্জন দিয়া এশিয়ার বাণী গ্রহণ করিয়াছিল তখন বিনারক্তপাতে এই প্রবল বিপ্লব সংঘটিত হইতে পারে নাই। রোমক সম্রাটের অত্যাচারে নির্যাসিত বহুদিন ধরিয়া আপন তীব্রজ্যোতিতে অবিশ্বাসী জীবন দগ্ধ করিয়াছিল। তাহার পর ইউরোপীয় সভ্যতার যুদ্ধোত্তম মূর্তি ক্রুসেড্-যাত্রার মধ্য দিয়া নিতান্ত নগ্নভাবেই প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। প্রাচ্যের মন্ত্র নির্বিবাদের পাশ্চাত্যকে জয় করিয়াছিল, কিন্তু পাশ্চাত্য তাহা পারিল না; পরধর্মের অবমাননা এবং আত্মধর্মের রক্ষা করিবার জন্ত তাহাকে অস্ত্রধারণ করিতে হইল। দীর্ঘ শতাব্দীর পর শতাব্দী ধরিয়া ভয়াবহ ধর্মযুদ্ধে ইউরোপের সভ্যতা, শিক্ষা ও মনুষ্যত্ব ধ্বংস করিয়াছে সে ইতিহাস এখানে বলিবার প্রয়োজন নাই। শুধু ইহাই বলিব যে সে প্রচণ্ড বিক্ষোভের ফল অনুভব করিতে না পারিলে ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসের সত্য অন্ধকারে থাকিয়া যাইবে।

ভারতবর্ষের সভ্যতা কতটা ব্যাপক এবং গভীর তাহা আমরা সাধারণতঃ ভাবিয়া দেখি না। ইউরোপীয় সভ্যতা বর্তমান যুগে নানা প্রভাব বশতঃ বিপুলায়তন ধারণ করিয়াছে। তাহার আদর্শের মাপকাঠি লইয়া ভারতীয় সভ্যতার পরিমাপ করিতে গেলে ভুল হইবে, ইহা পূর্বেই বলিয়াছি। জাতির কোন একটা বিশেষ বৃত্তির পরিপূর্ণ উন্মেষ সাধন করিতে পারিলেই সে সভ্যতা ব্যাপকতা এবং সম্পূর্ণতা দাবী করিতে পারে না। যে সভ্যতা জাতিকে সমস্ত বিষয়ে এবং অনুভূতিতে উন্নত, উদার এবং বৃহৎ করিয়া তুলিতে পারে তাহার শ্রেষ্ঠত্ব অবশ্যই স্বীকার করিতে হইবে। ইউরোপীয় সভ্যতা মানুষকে পলিটিক্‌স্‌এর কারখানার শ্রমজীবী করিয়াছে; সেই মেসিনের গতি এবং প্রয়োজনীয়তা ইউরোপীয় মানুষের সভ্যতার মাপকাঠি বলিয়া গ্রহণ করিতে হইতেছে। সাধারণভাবে বলিতে গেলে, রাষ্ট্রের বাহিরে মানুষের স্বতন্ত্র সত্তাকে ইউরোপ সম্পূর্ণ অস্বীকার না করিলেও অবহেলা করিয়াছে। রাজশক্তির অব্যাহত প্রাধান্যের যুগ হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া বর্তমান গণতন্ত্রের যুগ পর্যন্ত সমস্ত সময়ের পক্ষেই এই উক্তি প্রধানতঃ সত্য। কিন্তু ভারতবর্ষ যান্ত্রিক সভ্যতার সমাদর করে নাই; এখানে মানুষ আপন মনুষ্যত্বের জোরেই বাঁচিয়া রহিয়াছে এবং সম্মান আদায় করিয়াছে, কোন সমষ্টির প্রয়োজনের জন্ত তাহাকে

আত্মবিলোপ করিতে বাধ্য করা হয় নাই। এখানে ব্যক্তি রাষ্ট্রের অপেক্ষা সমাজের বেশী অধীন ছিল, কিন্তু ইউরোপের রাষ্ট্র ব্যক্তির ব্যক্তিত্বকে যেরূপ নিষ্পেষিত করিয়াছে ভারতবর্ষে সমাজ সেরূপ করে নাই। এখানে সমাজ ব্যক্তিকে সর্ববিষয়ে রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ করিয়াছে, বিনিময়ে তাহার সহযোগিতা মাত্র দাবী করিয়াছে। ভারতবর্ষ মানুষের স্বতন্ত্র ব্যক্তিত্ব পরিস্ফুট করিবার এত বেশী সুযোগ দিয়াছে বলিয়াই তাহার সভ্যতা বহুমুখী হইতে পারিয়াছে।

যে পলিটিক্সের জোরে ইউরোপ আজ এত বৃহৎ হইয়াছে এবং যাহার নামে বর্তমান যুগের মানুষ এত গর্বিত, অতি প্রাচীন যুগেও ভারতবর্ষে তাহার যথেষ্ট উন্নতি সাধিত হইয়াছিল। প্রাচ্যের আধ্যাত্মিকতার কথা শুনিতে শুনিতে আমাদের এক বদ্ধমূল সংস্কার সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে যে এখানে পলিটিক্সের যোগ্য স্থান স্বীকার করা হয় নাই। আজিকার ঐতিহাসিক গবেষণার যুগে শিক্ষিত ব্যক্তিমাত্রই জানেন যে এই ধারণা সত্য নয়। পণ্ডিতেরা বেদ-পুরাণ-কাব্য খুঁজিয়া প্রমাণ করিয়াছেন যে ইউরোপীয় রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান রাষ্ট্রশাসনতন্ত্র সম্বন্ধে যত প্রকার মত প্রকাশ করিয়াছে ভারতবর্ষীয়েরা তাহার অধিকাংশই জানিতেন এবং দেশশাসন ব্যাপারে তাহাদের সদ্যবহার করিতেন। আমাদের জাতীয় গৌরব বৃদ্ধির পক্ষে এই আবিষ্কার সহায়তা করিয়াছে সন্দেহ নাই; কিন্তু ইহার অভাবে বিশ্বের দরবারে ভারতীয় সভ্যতার গৌরব কমিয়া যাইত, ইহা স্বীকার করিতে পারিব না। জাতি মহৎ হয় রাষ্ট্র-পরিচালনা দ্বারা, রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান সম্বন্ধে গবেষণা দ্বারা নয়। চাণক্যের অর্থনীতি যদি লিখিত না হইত তবে ভারতবর্ষীয়দের সুখ-সমৃদ্ধি বা সভ্যতা অসম্পূর্ণ থাকিয়া যাইত, এরূপ মনে করিবার যথেষ্ট কারণ খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় না। যাহা হউক, ভারতবর্ষ পলিটিক্সের দাম বুঝিয়াছিল, ইহা স্বীকার করিতে হইবে। কিন্তু এ পলিটিক্স ইউরোপের পলিটিক্স নয়, কেননা ভারতবর্ষের রাজ্য ইউরোপের রাষ্ট্র নয়। ইউরোপের পলিটিক্স এবং ভারতবর্ষের রাজনীতি মূলতঃ বিভিন্ন, তাহাদের বাহ্যিক অসাদৃশ্য সহজেই বুঝিতে পারা যাইবে। ইউরোপ রাষ্ট্রনীতিতে ধর্মের স্থান স্বীকার করে নাই; ভারতবর্ষ ধর্মকেই রাষ্ট্রে প্রধান স্থান দিয়াছে। ইউরোপের রাষ্ট্রের একমাত্র লক্ষ্য প্রজার মঙ্গল সাধন—সে মঙ্গল শুধু ঐহিক; ভারতবর্ষের রাজ্য প্রজার ধর্মরক্ষাকেই আপন প্রধান কর্তব্য বলিয়া গ্রহণ করিয়াছে। রাষ্ট্রসম্বন্ধে ইউরোপীয় এবং ভারতীয় আদর্শের মধ্যে তুলনামূলক সমালোচনা করিবার প্রয়োজন নাই। ইউরোপের আদর্শ যথার্থভাবে ইউরোপীয়ের পক্ষে

সর্বোৎকৃষ্ট ; ভারতীয় আদর্শ ভারতীয়ের পক্ষে সর্বোৎকৃষ্ট । পরম গ্রহণ করা আপত্তিজনক নয় ; কিন্তু অনুকরণ আজ আমাদের জাতীয় লক্ষণ হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছে । আমরা ভারতবর্ষকে বৃদ্ধিতে শিখি নাই, তাই তাহার আদর্শ পরিত্যাগ করিয়া ইউরোপের মত লইয়া আমরা পরম উৎসাহিত হইতেছি ।

ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস পৃথিবীর সভ্যতার ইতিহাসে কতটা স্থান অধিকার করিয়াছে, তাহার আলোচনা এখনও যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে হইতেছে না । ভারতবর্ষ যে শুধু ভারতবর্ষীয়ের নয়, বিশ্বজনের—এই সত্যটি সাধারণ সমাজ অনুভব করিতে পারিতেছে না । আমরা ভারতবর্ষীয়, আমাদের পক্ষে ভারতবর্ষের সহিত পরিচিত হওয়া অপরিহার্য্য । আমাদের গতি কোন পথে চলিয়াছে এবং কোন পথে তাহাকে চালান উচিত, তাহা ভারতবর্ষকে বৃদ্ধিতে না পারিলে আমরা নির্ণয় করিতে পারিব না । ফরাসী রাষ্ট্রবিপ্লব ইংলণ্ডে সংঘটিত হওয়া অসম্ভব ছিল, কেননা যাহা সত্য তাহাও দেশকালপাত্রভেদে নিয়ন্ত্রিত ও পরিবর্তিত হয় । ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস ইউরোপকেও বৃদ্ধিতে হইবে, কেননা ইউরোপ জীবনের একটা মাত্র অংশকে স্বীকার করিয়া শুধু তাহার জগ্ন যুদ্ধ করিতেছে, অপর যে একটা মহত্তর এবং বৃহত্তর অংশ অবজ্ঞাত রহিয়া গিয়াছে তাহাকে গ্রহণ করিয়া আপন সাধনা সুসঙ্গত ও পরিপূর্ণ করিবার জগ্ন তাহাকে ভারতবর্ষের সাধনার আশ্রয় নিতে হইবে । প্রাচ্য ও পাশ্চাত্যের মিলন সম্ভবপর কি না এখানে তাহার আলোচনা করিবার প্রয়োজন নাই ; কিন্তু যে জাতি এশিয়া ও ইউরোপ উভয়ের মন্ত্র সম্মিলিত করিয়া আপন সভ্যতাকে অনুপ্রাণিত করিতে না পারিবে তাহার সার্থকতা অসম্পূর্ণ থাকিয়া যাইবে ।

বিশ্বকে আপন দরবারে নিমন্ত্রণ করিয়া এবং অসংখ্য ভাবধারা গ্রহণ করিয়া ভারতবর্ষ যে মিলিত সভ্যতা সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে তাহার মধ্যে কোথাও একটু ফাঁক বা অসামঞ্জস্য খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যাইবে না । বিভিন্ন নদী প্রবাহের সম্মিলন মহাসমুদ্রকে যেমন সুন্দর, গভীর, ব্যাপক এবং সুসঙ্গত করিয়া করিয়া তোলে, প্রাচ্য ও পাশ্চাত্য বিভিন্ন দেশের বিভিন্ন সভ্যতা ভারতবর্ষকে সেইরূপ মহীয়ান করিয়াছে । ভারতবর্ষ যে এখনও বাঁচিয়া আছে এবং তাহার ইতিহাসের সমাপ্তি হইতেছে না, এই অত্যশ্চর্য্য ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনার মূল ইহাতেই দেখা যাইবে । ভারতবর্ষ মন্ত্রের দ্বারা জয় করিয়াছে, প্রেমের দ্বারা শান্তি বিস্তার করিয়াছে এবং ক্ষমার দ্বারা মিলন ঘটাইয়াছে,—বিরোধকে বিরোধের দ্বারা ঘনীভূত করিয়া তোলে নাই । অতএব

তাহার উর্ধ্বর ক্ষেত্রে যে ফসল জন্মগ্রহণ করিয়াছে সহস্রবর্ষব্যাপী শিলাবৃষ্টি তাহাকে ধ্বংস করিতে পাবে নাই। গ্রীসের সাম্রাজ্যসমূহ হিংসা এবং রোমের সাম্রাজ্য বলের উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছিল, তাহাদের পতনের যথেষ্ট কারণ ইহাই। অত্যাচার কখনও সত্যকে স্বীকার করিতে পারে না, এবং পরিণামে সত্যের শক্তি অত্যাচারের বলকে পরাজিত করে। রোম আপন ক্ষমতার দর্পে ও বুদ্ধির অহঙ্কারে বিশ্বমৈত্রী স্থাপনের যে উশায় নির্দ্ধারিত করিয়াছিল, তাহা সত্যের উপর স্থাপিত ছিল না; তাই ইতিহাসের অলঙ্ঘ্য বিধানে কয়েক শতাব্দী পরে রোমের শক্তি অন্তর্হিত হইল এবং নবাগত বর্বরজাতির বজ্রমুষ্টি রোমসাম্রাজ্যের ভগ্নাবহ প্রাচীর চূর্ণীকৃত করিল। ভারতবর্ষ বাহুবলের পূজা করিয়াছে, কিন্তু তাহাকেই চরম সত্য বলিয়া স্বীকার করে নাই। এই দেশ পশুত্ব ও মানবত্ব মিলিত করিয়া যথার্থ মানব সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে, যে শক্তি অত্যাচারকে অস্বীকার করিয়াছে তাহার সহিত তপস্যা মিলিত করিয়া আপন সমাহিত সভ্যতা গড়িয়া তুলিয়াছে। ভারতবর্ষ আপনার বৃহৎ সভ্যতাকে এক বলিয়া অনুভব করিয়াছে এবং সমগ্র বিশ্বকে আপন সভ্যতার সাম্রাজ্যে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করিয়াছে, কিন্তু পাশববীর্যের সাহায্যে মানুষের ধ্বংসস্তম্ভের উপরে আপন গৌরব প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিতে প্রয়াস করে নাই। রোমসাম্রাজ্যের মহাশ্মশানে পাশ্চাত্য-জাতির বর্তমান যুগে যে বিশ্বধ্বংসী সাম্রাজ্যসমূহের সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে তাহা ইতিহাসের সত্য গ্রহণ করে নাই। এই হিংস্র সাম্রাজ্যবাদের পরিণাম কি হইবে তাহা ইতিহাসের বিচার্য। এখানে শুধু ইহাই বলা যাইতে পারে যে, পশ্চিম যদি ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাসের শিক্ষা অবহেলা না করিত, তবে পৃথিবীর মানুষ শ্বেতসভ্যতার মহাযন্ত্রে নিষ্পেষিত হইত না।

বিশ্বে শান্তির বাণী প্রচার করিবার জন্ম ভারতবর্ষের প্রয়োজন আছে। ভারতবর্ষের শ্রীকৃষ্ণ বলিয়াছেন, যেখানে যোগী এবং ধর্মুর্দর সম্মিলিত হয় সেখানে জয় অনিবার্য। ভারতবর্ষের ইতিহাস যুগযুগান্তর ধরিয়া এই মন্ত্রই প্রচার করিতেছে। ভারতবর্ষ ধর্ম ও শক্তি সম্মিলিত করিয়াছিল, তাই যুগব্যাপী সভ্যতার সংঘর্ষে ভারতবর্ষের সভ্যতা পরাজয় হইতে রক্ষা পাইয়াছে। পশ্চিম শক্তিকে ধর্মের দ্বারা সংযত ও নিয়ন্ত্রিত করিতে পারে নাই, এজন্য পশ্চিমের জয় ধ্বংসের পূর্বগামী মাত্র হইয়াছে। আজিকার কলাণকামী রণশ্রান্ত পৃথিবী এই শিক্ষা অবহেলা করিতে পারিবে না।

## ব্যথা-ফুল

মুজাফ ফার হোসেন

প্রথম শ্রেণী কলা বিভাগ।

আজি এই বসন্তের সুষমার মাঝে  
আমার হৃদয়-তারে ব্যথা কেন বাজে !  
কোথা হ'তে নেমে এল তুহিন-হিমালী  
রোধিল পুলকধারা !—সারা চিত্তখানি  
ভরে দিল বেদনায় !—কানন-বিথানে  
যে কথা দখিনা বায় মল্লিকার কানে  
কহিয়াছে চুপে চুপে শুভ্র মধু রাতে,  
শুনিয়াছি মুগ্ধচিত্তে আগ্রহের সাথে ।  
'কুহু' তানে বাজিয়াছে মর্শ্ববীণা খানি,  
সৌন্দর্যের উপহার ডালি ভরি' আনি'  
করিয়াছে সমর্পণ প্রকৃতি সুন্দরী,  
লইয়াছি লুটে তাহা প্রাণ-পাত্র ভরি ।  
আজি কেন সব যেন প্রাণহীন ভুল !  
কোথা যেন লুপ্ত আছে ব্যথা-উৎস-মূল ।

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## ঈশ্বরবাদ

শ্রীশান্তিসুধা ঘোষ

বিপুল ব্রহ্মাণ্ডের বিচিত্রতায় চমৎকৃত হইয়া মানুষের চিত্ত যেদিন ইহার পশ্চাতে একের সন্ধানে নিরত হইল, বিবিধ সৌন্দর্য্যে ডব হইয়া হৃদয় যেদিন এক সৌন্দর্য্য-স্বরূপের অনুভূতিতে অভিনিবিষ্ট হইল, অপরিষ্কেষ্ট শক্তিপুঞ্জের পরস্পর বিরোধিতার মধ্য হইতে যেদিন একমাত্র শক্তিনিয়ন্ত্রার কল্পনায় প্রবৃত্ত হইল, তখনই ধর্ম্মের উদ্ভব। ধর্ম্ম ও ঈশ্বরবাদ মানবজগতের সেই অন্ধতমসচ্ছন্ন যুগ হইতে চলিয়া আসিতেছে। আজ এত যুগ পরে মানবের সভ্যতা যতই প্রসারলাভ করিতেছে, আপনার চারিদিকের আবেষ্টনের বিচিত্রতা ও বিশালতা ততই তাহার যৌবনদীপ্ত চক্ষুর সমক্ষে প্রকাশিত হইতেছে বেশী। আদি যুগের মানুষের মত এই সুবিপুল সৃষ্টি তাহার চক্ষুকেও বলসিয়া দিতেছে; এতখানি বিভিন্ন বিচিত্র উপকরণ সে একসঙ্গে ধারণা করিতে পারিতেছে না। তাই পরস্পরবিচ্ছিন্ন অস্তিত্বগুলির মধ্যে সমন্বয় ও সামঞ্জস্য-বিধান করিতে সে যত্নপর। বিরোধেব মাঝখানে অবয় বহুর মধ্যে একের প্রতিষ্ঠা—ইহাই বর্ত্তমান সভ্যজগতের লক্ষ্য। কিন্তু এই বৈচিত্র্যের সমাধা ও সমাধানকে সে নূতন চক্ষে দেখিয়াছে। আদিম মানুষ বিশ্বের সৃষ্টিস্থিতি লক্ষ্য করিয়া বিস্ময়ে বিহ্বল হইয়া এক বিরাট সত্তা—সর্বব্যাপী সর্বশক্তিমান্ সর্বমঙ্গলমঙ্গল্য পুরুষকে উপলব্ধি করিয়া আপনার চিত্তকে আশ্বস্ত করিয়াছিল। আজিকার মানবসম্প্রদায় আত্মপ্রতিভায় অভিমানী—সে কল্পনাদ্বারা আপনাকে প্রবোধ দিতে সম্মত নয়, সে প্রত্যক্ষ না করিয়া কাহারও অস্তিত্ব স্বীকার করিবে না। ইহাই বিজ্ঞানের বিশেষত্ব। সে আপনার ইন্দ্রিয়-গোচর প্রমাণের সাহায্যে একের সন্ধানে বাহির হইয়াছে; ব্যর্থকাম হয় নাই, কারণ বিভিন্ন ক্রিয়া ও বিকাশের পশ্চাতে সে একই শক্তির লীলা ও একই সত্তা প্রমাণিত করিয়াছে।—কিন্তু বিজ্ঞান ঈশ্বরের সাক্ষাৎ পায় নাই।

আশ্চর্য্য্য বটে,—একই আবেষ্টনে প্রভাবান্বিত হইয়া একই উদ্দেশ্যে যাত্রা করিয়া ছই যুগ যে ছই গন্তব্যে আসিয়া পৌঁছিল, তাহা এত বহুদূরবিচ্ছিন্ন, এমনকি বিপরীত বলিলেও অত্যুক্তি হয় না! প্রাচীন মনীষা ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্ব প্রতিষ্ঠা করিল, বর্ত্তমান শুধু যে তাহা পারে নাই তাহা নহে, সে তাঁহার অভাব প্রমাণিত করিতেছে। ঈশ্বর বলিতে যদি বুঝা যায় কেবলমাত্র এক সর্বনিয়ন্ত্রী শক্তি, তবে

সে ঈশ্বরবাদের সহিত বর্তমান বিজ্ঞানের কোনও বিরোধ নাই। বিজ্ঞান প্রমাণ করিতেছে যে আপাত-বিরোধী বিচিত্র শক্তি ও সত্তাসমূহের বস্তুতঃ কোনও স্বতন্ত্র স্বরূপ নাই, সকলের মূলে এক শক্তি ও এক সত্তা। কিন্তু সে শক্তি অন্ধ ও জড়। ভক্তহৃদয়ের অন্তরতম দেবতা—চৈতন্যময়, আনন্দময়, প্রেমময় পরমেশ্বরকে সে অস্বীকার করে। মানুষ চায় সে পরমাত্মাকে যিনি চৈতন্যস্বরূপ হইয়া মানবাত্মার দুঃখবেদনা অনুভব করেন, যিনি 'প্রেমস্বরূপ হইয়া ব্যথাকাতর জীবকে করুণা বিতরণ করেন, যিনি শক্তিস্বরূপ হইয়া দুর্বল মানবচিত্তকে সবল করিয়া তোলে। বিজ্ঞান তাঁহাকে অস্বীকার করিয়া বলে,—তিনি নাই, কারণ আমরা তাঁহার প্রমাণ পাই না।

এ কথার উত্তর কোথায়? এ যুক্তিকে মানুষ প্রতিবাদ করিতে পারিতেছে না। কিন্তু ভক্তপ্রাণের অগাধ বিশ্বাস তথাপি কাঁদিয়া ফেরে! উপাসকের হৃদয় কোন-মতেই স্বীকার করিতে চাহে না যে, ষাঁহাকে সে সমস্ত জীবন অর্পণ করিয়া নিঃস্ব হইয়া বসিয়া আছে, ষাঁহাকে সে সকল দুঃখবেদনা উপেক্ষা করিয়া প্রেমামৃত উপহারে পূজা করিতেছে, তাঁহার সত্তাই মিথ্যা!—“সে কি শুধু প্রাণহীন প্রেমহীন অন্ধ অন্ধকার?” আতঙ্কে অধীর হইয়া ভক্ত বলিতে চায়—ঈশ্বর আছেন। বিজ্ঞান জড়জগতের সাহায্যে তাঁহার দর্শনলাভ করিতে পারে নাই বলিয়া তিনি নাই এমন কথা ঘোষণা করা চলে না। ইন্দ্রিয়গোচর উপকরণসমূহ বিজ্ঞানের প্রমাণের ভিত্তি। কিন্তু বহিরিন্দ্রিয়ই একমাত্র ইন্দ্রিয় নহে, অন্তরিন্দ্রিয়ের অস্তিত্বও বৈজ্ঞানিক সত্য। ইহার সাহায্যে মানুষের মন সেই পরমপুরুষকে অনুভব করিতে সমর্থ। “তর্ক তারে পরিহাসে, মর্শ্ব তারে সত্য বলি জানে।” মর্শ্বকে তো অস্বীকার করিবার সাধ্য নাই। শব্দ অরূপ, তাই তাহাকে চক্ষুদ্বারা অনুভব করা যায় না; বর্ণ সরূপ, তাই তাহাকে কর্ণেন্দ্রিয়দ্বারা লাভ করিতে পারি না। তেমনি যিনি চৈতন্যস্বরূপ, তাঁহাকে চৈতন্যের দ্বার দিয়াই লাভ করা সম্ভব। জড় উপকরণের সাহায্যে তাঁহাকে আয়ত্ত করিবার চেষ্টা বৃথা। বিজ্ঞান যদি বলে তাহার জড়শক্তির তত্ত্ব ও সত্য সে প্রত্যক্ষ করিতে পারে, কিন্তু তথাকথিত ঈশ্বরকে প্রত্যক্ষ করা যায় না, কাজেই তাহা অ বিশ্বাসযোগ্য,—ভক্ত তখন বলিতে পারেন, তোমার সত্য ইন্দ্রিয়ের স্থল অনুভূতিদ্বারা লাভ কর নাই, গভীর গবেষণা, ধ্যান ও অনুপ্রবেশের প্রয়োজন হইয়াছে, ভগবানের সাক্ষাৎকারও তেমনি আত্মিক ধ্যান ও অনুপ্রবেশের বিষয়ীভূত।



কিন্তু বিজ্ঞান শুধু যে ঈশ্বরের প্রমাণ পায় নাই, তাহাই নহে; ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্বের বিরুদ্ধপ্রমাণও তাহার অনেক আছে। মানুষের মনোরাজ্যে যে অবিশ্রাম সুখ ও ছুঃখ, পাপ ও পুণ্যের ঘাত প্রতিঘাত, মানবসমাজে যে প্রতিনিয়ত ব্যাধি, দারিদ্র্য রক্তপাত, দাবানল জ্বালিয়া দিতেছে, ইহার মীমাংসা হয় কিসে? মঙ্গলময় সর্বশক্তিমান একমাত্র অদ্বিতীয় পুরুষের রাজত্বের সঙ্গে এই অকাট্য অপ্রিয় সত্যের সুসঙ্গত সামঞ্জস্য কই? বিবেকানন্দ বলিয়াছেন,—“*Inspiration is much higher than reason, but must not contradict it.*” কিন্তু এক্ষেত্রে যে ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্ব কল্পনা সহজ বাস্তব সত্যের সহিত সংঘর্ষ আনয়ন করে। ধ্যান কল্পনা দ্বারা আপনাতঃ হৃদয়রাজ্যে এক পরমকারুণিক দেবতাকে অধিষ্ঠিত করিলে ক্ষতি ছিল না, যদি তাহা ধ্যান ধারণার বহুপূর্বেকার অনায়াসলব্ধ প্রত্যক্ষ অভিজ্ঞতাকে অস্বীকার না করিত।—কিন্তু ভগবদ্বিশ্বাসী হৃদয় উত্তর করিবে,—বালক যখন গণিতচর্চা আরম্ভ করে মাত্র, তাহার বিচার সীমা যখন অতি নিম্নস্তরে আবদ্ধ, সে তখন অনেক মূল তত্ত্বকে ধারণা করিতে পারে না, অনেক বিষয় তাহার নিকট পরস্পরবিসম্বাদী বলিয়া প্রতীয়মান হয়। কিন্তু মস্তিষ্কদ্বারা ধারণা করিতে না পারিলেও গুরুর নির্দেশে সে সেগুলি মানিয়া লইয়া সম্মুখের দিকে অগ্রসর হয়। যখন বিচার চরম সোপানে আসিয়া পৌঁছে, তখন বিচার করিয়া সে দেখিতে পায়, তাহার দুর্বোধ জটিল সমস্যাগুলি সরল হইয়া পিয়াছে। ধর্মসাধনপথের যাত্রী যে, সে যদি তেমনই করিয়া ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্ব মানিয়া লইয়া যাত্রা করে, তবে সে অগ্রসর হইয়া দেখিতে পায়, ঈশ্বরের বিরুদ্ধে জগতের সমস্যা যত জটিল হইয়া তাহার চক্ষে দেখা দিয়াছিল, সে ততটা জটিল নহে। যাহা তাহার অনভিজ্ঞ জীবনে একান্ত বিসম্বাদী বলিয়া তাহার ঈশ্বরবিশ্বাসে বিপ্লব তুলিয়াছিল, আজ তাহারই মধ্যে অর্থ খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া গিয়াছে। বৈজ্ঞানিক আপত্তি তুলিতে পারে,—বালকছাত্রের মানিয়া লওয়া সত্যগুলি গণিতের মনীষিগণ কর্তৃক জগতের সম্মুখে সুস্পষ্টরূপে প্রমাণিত হইয়া গিয়াছে, সুতরাং বালকের পক্ষে তাহা শিরোধার্য্য করা অসঙ্গত নহে। ঈশ্বরের সত্যতা প্রমাণিত হয় নাই; মানুষ কেমন করিয়া তাহা স্বীকার করিয়া অকারণে সাধনার কঠোরতার মধ্যে প্রবেশ করিবে? কিন্তু এস্থলে ভুলিয়া গেলে চলিবে না যে, গণিতের এই সত্যগুলি জগতের সমগ্র মানবের নিকট প্রমাণিত হয় নাই; যে কতিপয় ব্যক্তি গণিতের পথে কথঞ্চিৎ অগ্রসর হইয়াছেন, তাঁহারা মাত্র ইহাদিগের সত্যতা নিরূপণ করিতে সক্ষম। ইহাদেরই বাক্যে আস্থা স্থাপন করিয়া

বালক গণিতের ছরুহ তত্ত্বরাজির মধ্যে আপনাকে নিমগ্ন করিতে আর পরাঙ্মুখ হয় নাই। কিন্তু সেরূপ সঙ্কীর্ণ সীমার মধ্যে ভগবানের সত্যতাও তো প্রমাণিত হইয়া গিয়াছে! বালক যদি তাহার প্রকৃতিনিহিত প্রতিভার উপরে অতিরিক্ত দস্ত রাখিয়া প্রমাণ ব্যতিরিক্ত কিছুই গ্রহণ করিবে না বলিয়া সঙ্কল্প করিত, তাহা হইলে সেইখানেই তাহার সমগ্র গণিতবিচার দ্বার রুদ্ধ! যাহাকে আয়ত্ত করিবার জ্ঞান এত একাগ্রতা, তাহাকে কখনই জানা যাইত না। আমার বর্তমান জ্ঞানের সাহায্যে আজ ঈশ্বরের সন্ধান পাইতেছি না, বিবিধ জটিল সমস্যা তাঁহার অস্তিত্বে সংশয় ধরাইয়া দিতেছে, তাই বলিয়া যদি মহাজনগণের বারম্বার উচ্চারিত আশ্বাসবাণীতে বিশ্বাস না করিয়া ঈশ্বরকে প্রমাণের বাহিরে গ্রহণ করিব না বলিয়া সোজা হইয়া বসি, তবে কখনও সে সমস্যা সমাধান হইবে না। গণিতজ্ঞগণ যাহা প্রমাণ করিয়াছেন বলিয়া শোনা গিয়াছে, তাহাকে নিঃসংশয় সত্যরূপে মানিয়া লইতে দিখা হয় না,—আর যঁাহারা প্রাণের আবেগে ঘোষণা করিয়াছেন—“বেদায়-মেতং পুরুষং মহাস্তং” তাঁহাদের বাক্যে বিশ্বাস স্থাপন করিতে এত সঙ্কোচ কেন?

নাস্তিকগণ বলেন, ঈশ্বর থাকিতে হয় থাকিতে পারেন। কিন্তু মানুষের যখন তাঁহাকে জানা সহজ নহে, তখন তাঁহাকে লইয়া এত গোলযোগ কেন? ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্ব কল্পনা না করিলেও যখন জগৎ তত্ত্বের সুসঙ্গত ব্যাখ্যা পাওয়া যায়, তাঁহার প্রভাব স্বীকার না করিলেও মানবের সহজ জীবনযাত্রা যখন নির্বাহিত হইতে পারে, তখন মানুষের ব্যবহারিক জীবনের পক্ষে তাঁহার অস্তিত্বের কোনও মূল্য নাই। সুতরাং এক কল্যাণময় বিধাতাকে আবিষ্কার করিয়া তাঁহার মঙ্গল বিধানের উপর সর্বভার স্থাপন করা অপেক্ষা আপনি বিচারবুদ্ধিপ্রণোদিত হইয়া মঙ্গল কর্মে নিয়োজিত থাকাই মানুষের পক্ষে সহজ, স্বাভাবিক ও সমীচীন ধর্ম। বস্তুতঃ নাস্তিকদিগের ধর্মের মাপকাঠি ঈশ্বরের সম্পর্কচ্যুত জগতের প্রত্যক্ষ মঙ্গলের দ্বারা নিয়মিত। যে চিন্তা, যে কর্ম মানবসাধারণের কল্যাণকর, তাহাই তাহার ধর্ম। এবং বাস্তবিকই, ইহা ঈশ্বরের নামলেশহীন বলিয়া কোনও মতেই হীন নহে। কিন্তু তাহাদের এই ধর্ম সাধনের দিক্ দিয়াই জগতবাসীর পক্ষে ঈশ্বরবাদের প্রয়োজনীয়তা। ব্যবহারিক জীবনের পক্ষেই ঈশ্বরকে লাভ করা একান্ত আবশ্যিক। সুমহান্ মানবমঙ্গলকে জীবনের ব্রত ও ধর্ম বলিয়া গ্রহণ করিতে যে স্বর্গীয় ত্যাগের প্রয়োজন, মানবমনের স্বভাবনিহিত স্বার্থপরতাকে উৎপাটিত করিতে যে বিরাত্ শক্তির প্রয়োজন, তাহা মানুষের কোথায়? সুখপ্রিয়তা জীবের চিরন্তন প্রকৃতি;

মানুষ ইহার অতীত নহে। যে মানুষ আপনাকে সৃষ্টির শ্রেষ্ঠজীব বলিয়া জানে, যে মানুষ আপনার উপরে প্রভু বলিয়া কোনও মহত্তর সত্তার অস্তিত্ব স্বীকার করে না, সে কোন্ ভয়ে ভীত হইয়া অথবা কাহার আদেশে নত হইয়া আপনার ঈপ্সিতধন লাভের প্রচেষ্টায় বিরত থাকিবে? আপনার ইচ্ছার উর্দ্ধে আর কাহারও ইচ্ছা সে অনুভব করে না; আপনার ক্ষমতার উর্দ্ধে আর কাহারও ক্ষমতা সে বিশ্বাস করে না। যুক্তিদ্বারা সে বুঝিয়াছে বটে যে, জগতের সুখবিধানই প্রতি মানবের কর্তব্য। কিন্তু সুখই মানুষের কাম্য ইহা জানে বলিয়াই তো সে আপনার সুখাকাজক্ষাকে সহজে অপরের সুখের চরণে বলি দিতে স্বীকৃত নয়। যে কর্তব্যবোধ আপনার সুখ বিসর্জন দিয়া পরের সুখের জন্য জীবনোৎসর্গ করাইতে পারে,— তাহার মূলে আধ্যাত্মিকের প্রয়োজন। এই আধ্যাত্মিকতাকে জীবনের উপরে সুদৃঢ়ভাবে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিতে পারিলে মানবজীবনের ছুঃখজ্বালার সমস্যা আপনিই মিটিয়া যায়। এই যে দারিদ্র্যের নিষ্পেষণ—যাহার প্রতীকারকল্পে মহানুভবগণ জীবনব্যাপী সংগ্রাম করিতেছেন, এই যে দুর্বলের প্রতি সবলের অত্যাচার—যাহার ছুঃসহ উৎপীড়নে দিকে দিকে বিপ্লবের রক্তনদী বহিয়া চলিয়াছে, মানবজীবনে অধ্যাত্মশক্তির বিকাশ হইলে এ বিরাট হাহাকার মুহূর্ত্তে থামিয়া যায়। সার্বজনীন ভাবে ইহার প্রতিষ্ঠা হইলে দারিদ্র্য, অত্যাচারের মূল বিলুপ্ত হয়; ব্যক্তিগতভাবে ইহাকে লাভ করিলে নিমিত্ত বর্তমান থাকিলেও ব্যক্তিগত জীবনের উপরে উহাদিগের প্রভাবের রেখামাত্রও পড়ে না। সুখ ছুঃখের আর কোনও বিশিষ্ট সংজ্ঞা নাই; ইহা কেবল আত্মার ছুই বিপরীত অনুভূতি মাত্র। যে মানবদেহে সামান্য আঘাত সহে না, সেই মানবদেহ লইয়াই খৃষ্ট ত্রুশবেধ স্মিতমুখে সহ্য করিয়াছিলেন—সেই মানবদেহ লইয়াই হরিদাস 'অসংখ্য বেত্রাঘাতের জর্জরযন্ত্রণা বহন করিয়াছিলেন। ইহা আধ্যাত্মিক বীর্যের বিকাশ। আজ যে সভ্যতার এই উন্নতি ও বিস্তার, পার্থিব সুখসম্পদের সকল দিকে দিকে স্তরে স্তরে যে নব নব উপকরণসামগ্রীর আবিষ্কার, ইহাতেও মানবের ছুঃখবেদনা সেই পুরাতন কালের মতই মানুষকে দন্ধ করিতেছে। ইহার কারণ, মানবের সুখ ছুঃখ বাহিরের সামগ্রী ততটা নহে, যতটা মনের। আত্মিক সংস্কার ব্যতীত ছুঃখসংশোধনের পন্থা কই? আপনার সুখ উপেক্ষা করিয়া অপরের আনন্দবিধান করিতে যে কঠোর বৈরাগ্যের প্রয়োজন এবং আপনার বিপদকে তুচ্ছ করিতে ও ছুঃখকে জয় করিতে আত্মার যে তেজের প্রয়োজন, তাহা মানবের অন্তরে নাই বলিয়াই অশান্তির আর্তনাদ আজিও

যুচিল না। জগতের এই বিরোধ মিটাইতে ও অশান্তির কল্লোলকে প্রশমিত করিতেই আধ্যাত্মিকতার প্রয়োজন এবং আধ্যাত্মিকতার প্রতিষ্ঠার নিমিত্তই ঈশ্বরবাদ চাই।

আধ্যাত্মিকতা ঈশ্বরবিহনে অসম্ভব বলা চলে না। কিন্তু অধ্যাত্মশক্তির সহজ ও প্রধান উৎস ঈশ্বরের চরণে। জীবনতরী যখন সংসারের ঝটিকাবর্তে দৌলুলামান, জগতের সকল শক্তি উদ্ধারপ্রচেষ্টায় বিফল হইয়া গিয়াছে, তখন মানুষ যদি জানিতে পারে যে মানবের অপেক্ষাও গরীয়সী শক্তি আছে যাহা তাহাকে রক্ষা করিতে সক্ষম ও ব্যগ্র, তবে সে নির্ভর কি তাহাকে নূতন উদ্যম আনিয়া দেয় না? মানুষ যখন আপনার পাপে আপনি ত্রিয়মাণ, সংসারের নিন্দা ও ঘৃণার শেলে জর্জরিত, অথচ আপনাকে উন্নত করিতে পারিতেছে না—আপনার অক্ষমতা ও ব্যর্থতায় নিরাশ হইয়া চিরাচরিত অজ্ঞায়ের স্রোতে নিশ্চেষ্টভাবে ভাসিয়া যাইতেছে,—তখন সে যদি উপলব্ধি করিতে পারে যে এমন এক মঙ্গলময় বিধাতা আছেন যিনি তাহাকে কখনও ঘৃণা বা পরিত্যাগ করিবেন না, তাহার সকল অপরাধ মার্জনা করিয়া যিনি তাহাকে পুণ্যের রাজত্বে টানিয়া লইতে হস্ত প্রসারিত করিয়াছেন, তখন সেই অভয়বাণী কি তাহার অন্তরে আশার আলোক জ্বালাইয়া দেয় না—যে আশার বলে সে আপনার জীবন গতি ফিরাইয়া লইবে? ঈশ্বরের কল্পনা যদি ভ্রান্তিও হয়, ঈশ্বরের অস্তিত্ব যদি মিথ্যাও হয় তাহাতে এই একান্ত বিশ্বাস মিথ্যা নয়। ইহা মানুষের জীবনে দৃঢ়তা আনিয়া দেয়। মানুষ যখন ঘোর অমঙ্গলের মধ্যে পতিত হয়, তখন সে যদি স্থির বুকিয়া থাকে যে, তাহার এই বর্তমান অশুভও কল্যাণময় বিশ্ববিধাতার বিধানে কল্যাণেরই জন্মদান করিবে, সে জ্ঞান কি তাহাকে হাস্তমুখে দুর্ভাগ্যকে বহন করিতে শক্তিদান করে না? নাস্তিকগণ যদি বলেন, এই আশা, উদ্যম ও শক্তি ভগবানের কল্পনা না করিলেও লাভ করা যাইত;—কারণ তাহা বিশ্বাসের বল, ঈশ্বরের বল নহে; সুতরাং মানুষ ঈশ্বর কল্পনাকে বিসর্জন দিয়া আপনার অনন্ত শক্তিতেই নির্ভর করুক;—তবে তাহা সঙ্গত উক্তি নয়। যে মানুষ আপনাকে প্রত্যক্ষভাবে দুর্বল বলিয়া জানিতেছে, সে কেমন করিয়া আপনাকে অসীম শক্তিদর বলিয়া কল্পনা করিতে পারে? তাহার পক্ষে অপ্রত্যক্ষ ঈশ্বরের অপার শক্তিকে বিশ্বাস করাই সহজ। আর যদিই বা মানুষ আপনার উপরে অগাধ বিশ্বাস স্থাপন করিতে পারে, তাহাতে আশা ও উদ্যমের সঞ্চারণ হইলেও অমঙ্গলে আনন্দময় বৈরাগ্যের উদয় হয় না; এবং সর্বাপেক্ষা প্রধান কথা এই যে, জগতের প্রতি আসক্তি ছিন্ন হয় না।

মানুষের প্রকৃতিগত প্রেম কাহাকেও আশ্রয় না করিয়া পারে না। স্কুল জগতের বাহিরে যদি কাহারও অস্তিত্ব না থাকে, তবে সে স্কুলজগতকেই আশ্রয় করিবে। ঔর্বেকর হৃদয়দাহিকা বহ্নিজ্বালার মত তাহা প্রকাশিত হইবেই;—বন্ধন প্রেমের প্রকৃতি। অথচ মানুষ যতই সাধু হউক না কেন, তাহাকে মৃত্যু ও বিচ্ছেদের সম্মুখীন হইতেই হইবে কারণ ইহা প্রাকৃতিক। বাঞ্জিতের অপ্ৰাপ্তি বা বিপ্রয়োগ এবং জুগুপ্সিতের আবির্ভাব—ইহাও প্রত্যেক জীবনেই স্বাভাবিক। কিন্তু এ দুঃখ তাহারই বৃকে বাজে যে পৃথিবী ও তাহার সুখসম্পদকে অতি নিবিড়ভাবে আলিঙ্গন করিয়া রহিয়াছে। জগতের প্রতি যিনি অনাসক্ত, মৃত্যু ও বিচ্ছেদ তাহার প্রাণে আতঙ্ক জন্মাইতে পারে না; পার্থিব বিষয়কে যিনি অকিঞ্চিৎকর মনে করেন জগতের মধ্যে বাঞ্জিত বা জুগুপ্সিত তাঁহার কিছুই নাই। তাই অচঞ্চল পরম শান্তির উপাদান এই অনাসক্তকে লাভ করা একান্ত আবশ্যিক। অথচ তাহা এত দুঃসাধ্য। জগতের মাঝখানে বাস করিয়া জগৎ হইতে আপনার হৃদয়কে সর্বতোভাবে বিচ্ছিন্ন করিতে গিয়া মানুষ যে অসীম শূন্যতা অনুভব করে, তাহার মানবপ্রকৃতি তাহা সহ্য করিতে পারে না। তাই আবার ঈশ্বরের প্রয়োজন। মানুষ জগতের কণ্ঠ হইতে মমতার বন্ধনহার তুলিয়া লইতে তখনই পারে, যখন তাহা আর কোনও প্রিয়কণ্ঠে উপহার দিবার অধিকার পায়। চঞ্চল জগতের প্রতি আসক্ত হইলে পদে পদে তাহার বিপদ বেদনার আশঙ্কা—তাই সে নিশ্চল নিত্যবস্তুর অনুসন্ধান করিতে গিয়া বিশ্বদেবতাকে পাইয়াছে। সমস্ত হৃদয়ভরা অনুরাগ এইখানে অঞ্জলি দিয়া সে ধন্য ও নিঃশঙ্ক। জগৎ হইতে সরিয়া আসিতে আর সে কোনও বেদনা অনুভব করিবে না।

জগৎ হইতে সরিয়া আসার অর্থ এ নহে যে, মানুষ সংসার পরিত্যাগ করিবে। যে পৃথিবীর বক্ষে সে সময়ে পালিত, তাহার প্রতি তাহার গুরুভার দায়িত্ব ও কর্তব্য রহিয়াছে। কিন্তু পৃথিবীর সুখ দুঃখের ঘাত-প্রতিঘাতে আন্দোলিত হইলে সেই কর্তব্যসাধনেরই ব্যাঘাত জন্মে,—ধরার বৃকে যে অথও শান্তিপ্রতিষ্ঠা মানবজীবনের লক্ষ্য, সেই শান্তিরই মূল ছিন্ন হয়। ঈশ্বরকে অস্বীকার করিয়া বিশ্বরাজ্যের মধ্যে মানবকেই সর্বোচ্চ সিংহাসনে স্থান দিলে নাস্তিক মহাজনগণের মূলমন্ত্র যে জগতের হিতবাদ, তাহার সাহায্য হয় না। এই জন্যই ঈশ্বরবাদের প্রয়োজনীয়তা। বুদ্ধিগর্ভবদীপ্ত নিরীশ্বরবাদী বলিতে পারেন যে, প্রয়োজনের খাতিরেও অসত্যকে কখনও স্বীকার করিব না; মানবের সুখের নিমিত্তও অলীক

ঈশ্বরবাদকে স্থান দেওয়া অসম্ভব, কারণ অসত্যগ্রহণে মনীষার অবমাননা হয়। কিন্তু এইখানে আবার গোড়ার প্রশ্ন আসিয়া পড়ে।—ঈশ্বর কি যথার্থই অলীক? এ প্রশ্ন কে দেখাইল? তিনি বর্তমান প্রশ্নের অগোচর, এই মাত্র। তাই তাঁহার অস্তিত্বকে—মানবের প্রিয়সত্যকে জানিবার জন্ত সাধনার প্রয়োজন। ঋষিদিগের প্রাচীন প্রার্থনা আজিও জগৎব্যাপ্ত হইয়া পূর্ণ হয় নাই,—এখনও তপোমগ্ন হইয়া বলিতে হইবে—

হিরণ্ময়েন-পাত্রেণ সত্যস্যাপিহিতং মুখম্।

তত্তে পূবন্নপার্বণু সত্যধর্মায় দৃষ্টয়ে ॥

## রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ

### কার্য্য বিবরণী

বিগত ২১শে মার্চ ( ৩রা ফেব্রুয়ারী ) রবিবার সন্ধ্যা ছয়টার কিজিক্স থিয়েটারে পরিষদের বর্তমান বর্ষের দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত প্রফুল্লকুমার সরকার এম. এ, মহাশয়ের সভাপতিত্বে শ্রীঅমরেশ রায় কবির “নটীর পূজা” নাটিকা সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। লেখক বলেন যে, এই পূজার কল্পনা এবং অপূর্ণ পূজাসঙ্গীতটী রবীন্দ্র-সাহিত্যে নূতন ও ইহার স্তম্ভশ্রেষ্ঠ সম্পদ। এই নাটিকার চরিত্র-অঙ্কনে বেশ একটা উচ্চ আদর্শ আছে। প্রত্যেকটা চরিত্র স্বাধীন ও সুদৃঢ়; বুদ্ধি এবং যুক্তির আলোকসম্পাতে সমুজ্জ্বল, তাই তাহাদের বিরোধের মধ্য দিয়া সত্য এমন মহৎ হইয়া প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে।

শ্রীজ্যোৎস্নানাথ চন্দ্র বলেন যে, রাজমহিষী লোকেশ্বরীর চরিত্রে বেদনা ও ভীমামানী মাতৃহৃদয়ের সুন্দর অভিব্যঞ্জনা, ও গ্রাম্যবাণিকা মালতীর সরল চরিত্রে সত্যের সহজ প্রকাশ হৃদয়কে বেশ মুগ্ধ করে।

শ্রীবিনয়েন্দ্র নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন যে, লোকেশ্বরীর তাশা, ও আকৃতি, মালতীর জীবন-বধা সমস্তই সুখ-দুঃখ, আশা-দৈন্যতা, ত্যাগ ও ভালবাসার দৈনন্দিন কাহিনীর উজ্জ্বল প্রতিবিম্ব। নটীর ধর্ম বিশ্বাস ও ত্যাগে নাটিকার হৃদয়ের যে সুন্দর অবসান ঘটিয়াছে, তাহাতে পাঠকের মন ধর্মের নিস্তর শান্তির মধ্যে বিবাম লাভ করে।

আলোচনার পর শ্রীঅমরেশ রায় “নটীর পূজা” হইতে কয়েকটা নির্বাচিত অংশ পাঠ করিলে, সভাপতি মহাশয়কে ধন্যবাদ ও কৃতজ্ঞতা জানাইয়া সভাভঙ্গ করা হয়।

বিগত ১২ই ফাল্গুন রবিবার সন্ধ্যা ছয়টার পরিষদের তৃতীয় অধিবেশনে, পরিষদের সভাপতি ডঃ শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় “সন্ধ্যাসঙ্গীত” সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী, শ্রীযুক্ত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ও বহু ছাত্রসভ্য এই সভায় উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

বক্তা বলেন যে, কবির যৌবনে পাওয়া-না-পাওয়ার দ্বন্দ্ব তাঁহার মনকে কত অশান্ত করিয়াছে,—“সন্ধ্যাসঙ্গীতে” তাহা বেশ উপলব্ধি করা যায়। কবি তাঁহার প্রবল আশা, আকৃতির পরিতৃপ্তি খুঁজিয়া পাইতেছেন না, তাই তাঁহার কবিতায় এত অবসন্নতা। “সন্ধ্যাসঙ্গীতে”র শেষে ও “প্রভাত-সঙ্গীতের” প্রথমে দেখা যায় যে, কবি তাঁহার মুহূর্ত্ত অস্তরটিকে উদ্ভূত করিতে চাহিতেছেন।

ববীন্দ্র-কাব্যের শ্রেষ্ঠ উপাদান সৌন্দর্য্যেব আনন্দ। তাঁহার অন্তরের আনন্দ বাহিবেব আনন্দের সন্ধান পাইয়া সার্থক হইয়াছে; কোনো theory বা গতানুগতিকের দৃষ্টিনের মধ্যে তাঁহার কাব্য আবদ্ধ নহে। “সন্ধ্যাসঙ্গীতের” সঙ্গে তাঁহার কাব্যের যে যুগ শেষ হইয়াছে তাহাতে এই বিশিষ্টতা বিশেষ লক্ষিত হয় না।

সভাদিগের মধ্যে হইতে শ্রী বিনয়েন্দ্রনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ও শ্রী আশুতোষ গাঙ্গোপাধ্যায় আলোচনায় যোগদান করেন। পরে শ্রীযুক্ত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন যে, রস কাব্যের শ্রেষ্ঠ উপাদান, এবং কাব্য বিশ্বমানবতার গণ্ডিকে প্রসার করে ও জীবনের মাধুর্য্যকে প্রকাশ করে; এই জন্তই কালিদাস, শেক্সপীয়র, রবীন্দ্রনাথের মত কবির সহিত ঘনিষ্ঠ পরিচয় আবশ্যিক। অতঃপর সেদিনকার মত সভা ভঙ্গ হয়।

২৬শে ফাল্গুন রবিবার সন্ধ্যা ছয়টায় পরিষদের চতুর্থ অধিবেশনে ধূপ, প্রদীপ, মঙ্গল-ঘট, আল্পনা ও পত্র-পুষ্পাদি দ্বারা সভাগৃহকে সুসজ্জিত করিয়া গীত আবৃত্তি ও আলোচনার মধ্যে “বসন্ত উৎসব” অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশ গুপ্ত মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করেন।

উদ্বোধন সঙ্গীতের পর কুমারী মৈত্রেয়ী দেবী “বসন্তের জন্মলীলা” শীর্ষক একটি স্বরচিত মনোরম কবিতা পাঠ করেন। পরে শ্রীমুনীশচন্দ্র সরকার “ববীন্দ্র-কাব্যে বসন্তের রূপ” সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। লেখক বলেন যে, কবি প্রথম জীবনে বসন্ত কাব্য তাঁহার পূর্ব্বজন কবিদের বসন্ত-কল্পনা হইতে বিশেষ পৃথক নহে, কিন্তু তাঁহার পরবর্ত্তী বসন্ত কাব্যে কবিকে আমরা অভিনব বৈরাগীরূপে পাই। তিনি অক্ষয় বৈরাগ্যমন্ত্রে দীক্ষা নিগেন। তখন আসক্তির খণ্ড মিলন বিচ্ছেদের পূর্ণ মিলনে মহত্তর হইল।

প্রবন্ধপাঠের পর বহু সভ্য বিষয়টী লইয়া সন্দর্ভ আলোচনা করেন। পরে সভাপতি মহাশয় তাঁহার বক্তব্য প্রসঙ্গে বলেন যে, এক হিসাবে বসন্ত কাব্য রসগ্রাহীর নিকট অধিক আদরনীয়। কেননা বর্ষাকাব্যে আমরা পাই রূপের কবিতা, কিন্তু বসন্ত কাব্যে অরূপ-কবিতাও আছে। বসন্ত কাব্যকে তিন স্তরে ভাগ করা যায়ঃ—ভাবোচ্ছ্বাসী কবিতা বা মামুলী ধরণের ভালবাসার উল্লাস ও বর্ণনা; বসন্তের অন্তরের কথা—কেবল বাহিরের রূপ নয় তাঁর ভিতরেও একটা লীলা চলিয়াছে; তৃতীয় স্তরে দেখা যায় যে, প্রকৃতির প্রত্যেক ঋতু যেন একটা পুরুষ, যাহার আনন্দের অভিব্যক্তি আছে, রূপ ও সঞ্চারণ আছে। মামুল্যের মনে এই ঋতুপুরুষের এক অপরূপ লীলা চলিয়াছে, এই পুরুষই কবির ঋতু উৎসবের নটরাজ। মৃত্যুর মধ্য দিয়া জীবনকে পাওয়া যায়—কবির এই ধারণা তাঁহার ঋতুকাবে স্পষ্টভাবে প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে। শীতের ধ্বংস বসন্তের অপরূপ নবীন সৃষ্টির অগ্রদূত; মৃত্যুর মধ্য দিয়া প্রত্যেক জিনিষ নবীনতায় জন্মগ্রহণ করে, মৃত্যু তাহার নেপথ্য-গৃহ।

অতঃপর বসন্তের কয়েকটা গান ও কবিতা পাঠের পর সভা ভঙ্গ হয়।

পরিশেষে পরিষদের সভ্যসাধারণের অবগতির জন্ত জানাইতেছি যে, অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত প্রশান্ত চন্দ্র মহলানবিশের নেতৃত্বে পরিষদের কয়েকজন উৎসাহী সভ্যকে লইয়া একটা আলোচনা-সভা খোলা হইয়াছে, এবং ইহার কার্য্যও আশাশুভরূপে চলিতেছে। পরিষদের কার্য্য সুনির্বাহের জন্ত সভাপতি মহাশয় শ্রীযুক্ত প্রফুল্লনাথ মুখোপাধ্যায়কে অভ্যর্থনা-সম্পাদক নিযুক্ত করিয়াছেন। পূর্ব্ব পরিষদের নিজস্ব একটা গ্রন্থাগার স্থাপনের জন্ত যে প্রস্তাব উত্থাপিত হইয়াছিল, বর্ত্তমানে পরিষদ তাহা কার্য্যে পরিণত করিবার জন্ত বিশেষ উদ্যোগী হইয়াছে। এ বিষয়ে সভ্যগণের সহায়ত্ব ও মনোযোগ আকর্ষণ করিতেছি।

শ্রীবিভূতিভূষণ মুখোপাধ্যায়  
সাধারণ সম্পাদক।

