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THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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Vol. XVII SEPTEMBER, 1930 No. 1

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.

Bhabatosh Datta,

Editor.

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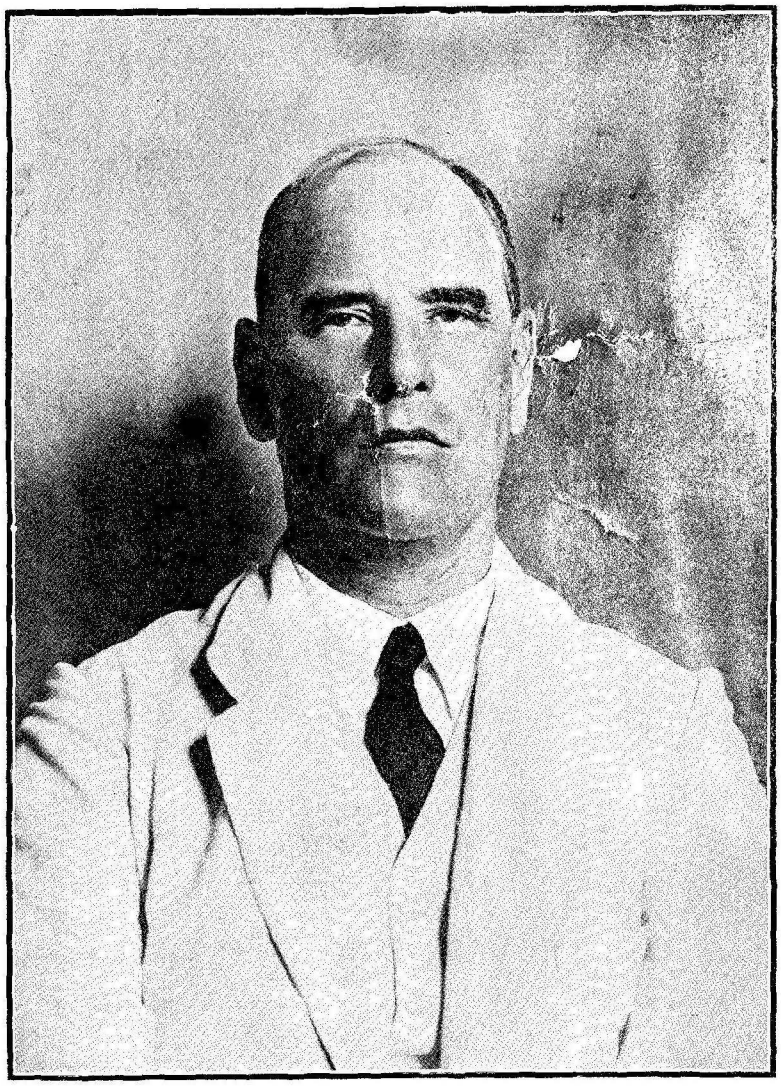

OUR PRINCIPAL

MR. J. R. BARROW

FOREWORD

ALTHOUGH I have not yet received orders, it is pretty certain that I shall not be returning to the College after the Puja holidays; and I take the opportunity afforded to me by the Editor of bidding farewell to its members.

I have spent altogether more than six years as Principal of this College since 1917 Financially they have been lean years, and in consequence external changes have been few. I remember that in 1918 or 1919 I sent up to the authorities a large and I fear outrageously expensive scheme for the clearing away of the surrounding bustees (which in those days jutted right into the middle of the compound) and a great extension of the playing fields. It seems unlikely that this scheme will ever be accomplished in its entirety; but Mr. Stapleton carried part of it into effect, and the College compound is now both more spacious and more sightly than when I first knew it.

This clearing of the compound and the erection of the new Astronomical Observatory are I think the only external changes of importance. The widening of the space at our disposal and the appointment of a keen Physical Instructor have rendered it easier to make arrangements for regular exercise, and a growing number of students appreciate these arrangements. I feel however that games like cricket and football (which last I consider the best of all games by virtue of the demand it makes on the strength, speed, energy and teamwork of the players) have not really much hold on the majority of the students of this College. If they had, the captain of so large a College could never find himself

unable to make up a full side for matches. Perhaps the truth is that these games require too much space for a Calcutta College, and that we must look rather to games like basketball to supply recreation to a large number of students.

However this may be, we are able to congratulate our football team this year on having carried off the Elliott Shield.

I am one of those who think that the cult of games is ridiculously overdone in England, where many persons (even people of mature years and venerable appearance) seem to think them the most important things in life; but apart from the exercise and recreation they afford, they can do a valuable service for a school or college by developing *esprit de corps*. At present they are not performing this service for us as much as they might; but I hope they will do so in an increasing degree.

The years that I have spent here have included some difficult periods, of which the term now coming to an end has been much the most trying. I do not wish to say anything controversial in these pages, but I hope I may be allowed to set down three brief and general reflections on the subject of picketing. I do this, though it is a subject of which I am heartily sick, because I hold that the question is already of great importance to the welfare of the college, and may become much more important in the future.

The first is that all picketing, however peaceful, is to some extent an invasion on the liberty of the individual: it is an attempt to make him do something he does not want to do, by moral pressure, if not by physical compulsion.

The second is that the practice of picketing, if not checked, may become a frequent, almost a normal, feature of educational life in Bengal. Should that come about, it must cause incalculable harm to future generations of students.

The third is that the people who can most effectively deal with picketing are the students themselves; and that they could do it with ease if they chose to assert their own freedom of action. But I suppose they have their own difficulties; and their problem does not look as simple to them as it does to me.

I do not attempt to elaborate these points. The matter is in the end one that the *bhadralok* class in Bengal must settle for themselves.

This college is frequently described (at least by those who belong to it) as 'the premier college in Bengal'; and it deserves the title by reason of its buildings (especially its laboratories), its staff, and above all by the long list of its old students who have won distinction in later life. No doubt this tradition of public service will be continued. I take it for granted that the present generation of students will see remarkable changes in the world of India; and it may fall to some of them to play a prominent part in critical times. If so, I hope their early training will in some sort help them to show wisdom and courage and loyalty to the cause they believe in: high virtues, which are not easy of attainment, but are the fruits of thinking, which is hard, and unselfishness, which is perhaps harder. Let them bear in mind that

> Loyalty is still the same
> Whether it win or lose the game,
> True as the dial to the sun,
> Although it be not shined upon.

To them and to that much larger body who will 'have no history' (and perhaps will not be the less happy for that), but will have ample opportunity to show in less conspicuous fashion the qualities I have named, I offer my best wishes; and to the members of the staff (not forgetting the clerical staff) my cordial thanks for their help and kindness.

J. R. B.

THE
PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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NOTES AND NEWS

HISTORIANS may quarrel among themselves as to whether history does or does not repeat itself; but so far as the history of a College Magazine is concerned, no reason can perhaps be found to challenge the truth of the popular dictum. Year after year, new editors and new secretaries make their appearance on the stage and play their part to keep the magazine going. The same tale of the flow of articles, of the arduous task of choosing from among them, of the stream of proof-sheets and letters flowing between the press and the editor's desk and of the publication of the magazine on the latest possible date, repeats itself every year. Then, after the magazine is published, there is for sometime a buzz and a murmur —criticisms, mild and strong, reach the ears of the editor and bring to his mind mixed feelings of pleasure and pain. Then again for sometime, everything is calm and quiet. The vacation passes away and old history is repeated once again.

So the Presidency College Magazine has grown and in this way sixteen long years have gone by.

* * * *

At the end of the sixteenth year, when the present editor takes over charge, the magazine can claim something of the prestige of age. Looking back from the present position, we find that from the

beginning under able auspices sixteen years ago, the magazine has grown from more to more, and editors of the past have contributed their best to maintain its standard. To all of them, the magazine owes a debt which can hardly be repaid, and we can fully realize that the magazine would not have been what it is now, but for their continuous efforts to keep up its level.

To the last year's editor, in particular, the magazine owes a great deal. The get-up, the size of the magazine, the quality of the types and the paper, changed very much for the better in his time, and his successors cannot but be thankful to him for that.

* * * *

The present editor makes no pretensions to modesty when he compares himself with the editors of the past and finds that it will be a difficult job for him to maintain the standard of excellence which the magazine has already attained. He hopes, however, the good wishes and the co-operation of all the members of the college will carry him through this difficult task.

We have, this year, to meet peculiar difficulties. The magazine-fund stares blankly at our face and we do not know how to bring out three issues, all up to the proper standard. There has been a considerable fall in the number of students, and other causes have conspired to bring about a deficit in the magazine budget. Two alternatives presented themselves before us: that of reducing the size of the magazine while keeping the standard of the get-up intact, and that of lowering the cost of production by making some changes in its general appearance. Of these two, we preferred the former, with, we hope, the approbation of our readers.

* * * * *

We regret, we have not received this time the same amount of co-operation from our fellow-students, as our predecessors had. A sufficient number of good contributions did not reach us, and we had no little difficulty in collecting the few articles that are published in this issue. We, however, hope that this dearth of articles is only a passing phase and will soon be made good. The new-comers to the College—to-whom we have the pleasure to extend our hearty welcome—have not perhaps been yet able to feel themselves quite familiar with the college atmosphere and to shake off

their shyness. We hope, before we publish the next issue, we shall get proper response, particularly from the 'freshers.'

* * * * *

Trying to analyse further the causes which have led to the want of a decent number of good articles, we may refer to one particular fact. Some of our regular contributors have passed through the portals of the degree examinations. These 'elders,' who in their undergraduate days contributed their full share to the magazine, seem to be reluctant to show themselves any more on these pages. We should not, of course, be exorbitant in our demands upon them, but we hope they will not forget the claims of the College on her '*alumni*.' The magazine is in need of their co-operation, as of every present member of the College, and they owe it as much to themselves as to their College not to be niggardly in their response to our appeal.

* * * *

Since the last appearance of our magazine, we have lost many of our illustrious ex-students. The late Rai Bansidhar Banerjee Bahadur, C.I.E., was one of the oldest among our ex-students. He took his B.A. degree in 1881 and had subsequently a successful career as a member of the Bengal Civil Service, Executive.

By the death of Sir Binodchandra Mitter, Presidency College loses another of her brilliant ex-students. He passed the B. A. Examination in 1891 and took his B. L. degree in 1893. His success as a lawyer in the Calcutta High Court needs hardly to be recounted. For seven years he acted as Standing Counsel to the Government of Bengal and he twice officiated as Advocate-General. For six years he was a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, and was for some time a member of the Council of State. He was knighted in 1918, and only last year he was appointed a member of the Judicial Committe of the Privy Council—in which capacity he served until death carried him away. Presidency College joins her voice today with the whole of Bengal mourning the death of an illustrious son.

The late Professor Rakhaldas Banerjee was one of the most eminent historians and archaeologists Bengal has ever produced. His original contributions to the literature of Indian history and his excavation work at Mahenjodaro and other places will keep his memory

green in the history of antiquarian research for a very long time to come. He was a litterateur of no mean calibre; his massive scholarship will ensure for him a splendid niche in the temple of Fame.

We have also to mourn the death of Mr. B. K. Ghose, a prominent barrister of the Calcutta High Court. He had a brilliant record as a student, both at home and abroad, and his career as a lawyer was equally successful. His connection with many of the educational institutions of the city makes his loss all the more keenly felt.

* * * *

Bengal has lost two more illustrious sons this year. Neither of them happened to be students of our College, but both were distinguished in their respective spheres of life. The late Rai Bahadur Dr. Chunilal Bose, eminent alike as physician and chemist, took notable part in every social welfare movement; he had also devoted much serious attention to the problem of the health of our people. The late Mr. Mahes Chandra Ghose was a learned philosopher, and his writings are a distinct acquisition to the serious side of the Bengali literature.

* * * *

It is the painful duty of the editor to prolong this list still further. Surath Kumar Ghose, a student of the first year Science class and a popular boarder of the Eden Hindu Hostel, passed away on the 4th September. Abu Hamid Khan, a student of the 2nd year Arts class, died in June last. Another of our fellow-students, Osman Ghani, died in February while appearing at the I. Sc. Examination. It came as a shock to us to hear of so many young lives cut off in their prime. May their souls rest in peace!

* * * *

The University results this year have not been upto expectations. In the Intermediate Examination in Arts, two of our students tied for the eighth place in the list, and that was the best that our College could do. Only three places out of the first ten came to us. In the I. Sc. Examination, however, our College heads the list, though we have missed many of the topmost places which were once our proud monopoly.

In the B, A. and B. Sc. Examinations, we have been able to secure twenty-one first-classes out of a total of forty-four.

Economics and History keep up their usual traditions—all first-class places, except the fourth in the former and the fifth in the latter, being secured by students of our College. In the Chemistry list, all the first-class men are from our College. We have secured the first places in Physics, Chemistry and Geology among the Science subjects, and in History, Economics and Philosophy in the Arts group. In Sanskrit the second and third places in the first class have been ours.

Compared with the results of other years, however, this year's performance of the College is but a poor show. As the premier college of Bengal, Presidency College should figure best in every direction, and this is what every member of the College should work and strive for. We expect, however, that this year is by no means typical; better days shall come in future, and Presidency College men shall go ahead in each department.

* * *

Our warmest congratulations to Mr. Nabagopal Das, B. A., on his winning H. E. the Viceroy's gold medal for the best essay on "The League of Nations: its Aims and Achievements". The gold medal is awarded every year by the Viceroy to the writer of the best essay on a specified subject in a competition open to all undergraduate students of Indian Universities. On two previous occasions, two of our old boys—Messrs. Sushil Kumar Dey and Bhuramal Agrawal—secured the provincial silver medals; but Mr. Das is the first man from Presidency College, and from Bengal to boot, to win the best man's prize. As an exceptionally brilliant student of the University, and as the most regular contributor to the magazine during recent years, Mr. Das has earned a recognition that falls to the lot of very few in their student-days. This new honour, we hope, will prove an additional impetus. He has already sailed for England with the intention of joining the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Trustees of the Tata Educational Scheme have awarded him a scholarship for three years' study in London University. Our best wishes go with him.

* * * *

A good many of our students are leaving India for higher studies in England. Mr. Sarada Prasad Sinha, B. Sc., has been awarded a state scholarship for prosecuting researches in water-proofing of

fabrics. Mr. Jaladhi Lal Roy, B. A., well-known for his many-sided activities in the College, is sailing for England, and will, we understand, join Oxford University.

Our best wishes will follow them and all other ex-students who are going to earn distinction abroad.

* * * * *

The Hon'ble Sir Jehangir Cooverji Coyajee has been sent by the Government of India as substitute delegate to the League of Nations Assembly at Geneva. Only recently he was nominated a member of the Council of State, and, as was only to be expected, took prominent part in debates on economic issues. We take this opportunity of congratulating him on his new honour, and in doing so, we think, we echo the sentiment of the whole College.

* * * *

The College Staff has suffered some very notable changes. The History Department, in particular, has had the worst of them. Professor K. Zachariah, as most of our readers are aware, has joined Hooghly College as its Principal. What is Hooghly's gain is our loss —a loss that we cannot easily hope to repair, so far at any rate as we can see. Professor Zachariah needs none of our encomiums. The College knows and feels what it has suffered and will suffer by his absence. He was, if we may be permitted to say so, an institution. We shall miss his calm, lucid brilliance in the class-room ; we shall miss no less his genial presence, his shy, winning smile. We shall miss in College the influence, so much greater than was apparent, of the silent man with the hermit's strength.

Professor Santoshkumar Chatterjee joins our History staff as the Senior Professor. He is no stranger to the College, and his reputation as scholar and teacher has travelled wide. It is some sort of a consolation that a man of Mr. Chatterjee's reputed ability comes to fill the void left by Professor Zachariah.

* * * *

After a long service in this College, Professor S. P. Das of the Mathematics Department has retired. He has not been in good health for some years past and had to go on leave before his retirement was actually due. His long connection with the College will

not, we hope, be severed by his retirement, and he will, we think, ever cherish in his heart the best wishes for the welfare of the College. Professor B. M. Sen is on leave, and Professor N. C. Ghose is acting as the Senior Professor of Mathematics. No appointment has yet been made to fill the place vacated by Professor A. K. Chanda, the Head of the Department of English. Professor Ziaul Haq has been transferred to Rajshahi as the Superintendent of the Senior Madrasah. His place is still vacant. Professor Bidhubhusan Datta of the Department of Chemistry is on leave for three months, and Mr. Dayananda Bhaduri, M. Sc., is officiating against the vacancy. Mr. Upendranath Ghoshal, B. Sc. Econ. (London) has joined the Economics staff in the vacancy consequent on the absence of Sir Jehangir Coyajee on deputation.

* * * *

We extend our hearty welcome to Lt.-Col. Hassan Suhrawardy, the new Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. The University is passing through troublesome days, and is, as Dr. Urquhart said, badly in need of a physician to cure it of its maladies. We hope Dr. Suhrawardy's part in bringing about reforms which the University really requires, will not be negligible. As the first Moslem occupant of the Vice-Chancellor's chair, he has special responsibility which, no doubt, he will ably discharge.

It is with a sad heart that we bid farewell to Dr. Urquhart, the outgoing Vice-Chancellor. During his term of office he was successful in winning the respect of the entire student community, and it will be a long time before the students forget his ever-sympathetic concern for them.

* * * *

Elsewhere we publish a letter from a 'fourth-year student' suggesting that the College library should be kept open on holidays. The worth of a library, all will recognize, consists in the manner and extent of its utilization. But if the best utilization is to be insured, arrangements should be made to offer proper facilities to those who want to use it. To the post-graduate students, the reading-room with its present arrangements is of little benefit, for it is not possible for them to attend classes in the University buildings and to use the College library at the same time. A great service

will be done to them, if the library is kept open on Sundays and other holidays.

We want to make another suggestion. Many new books are purchased for the library every year. The choice of books, we hear, is with the professors. That is as it should be; but we think the students also should have some voice in this matter. It will not be very difficult to place somewhere in the reading-room, a suggestion-book where the students may put down their own choice.

* * * *

The Rabindra-Parishad has recently set up a library of its own. The organizers of the Parishad have reasons to believe that this library will be greatly helpful to those who want to study the writings of Dr. Tagore. The Bankim-Sarat Samiti—an institution which has grown up side by side with the Rabindra-Parishad—has now come forward with the proposal of starting another library. None can perhaps deny that there can be no better asset to the Samiti than a collection of the works of Bankim Chandra and Sarat Chandra. The Samiti can, we hope, claim from the students the best that they can give to it, and we expect all possible assistance will be rendered to it by the members of the College to help it out of all difficulties—and particularly of that fundamental of all difficulties, *viz.* that of money.

* * * *

While the Rabindra Parishad and the Bankim-Sarat Samiti are showing every sign of activity, all other College clubs, societies and seminars—with the exception of one or two perhaps—are overtaken with lethargy and inertia. We remember the days when the notice-boards constantly announced the meetings of this society and that, and every student of the College could find among these societies, at least one, which could claim him within its circle.

But now, though the societies are there, we have not yet heard of any considerable activity on their part. Perhaps the abnormal atmosphere is a cause; perhaps, students in these days are too studious to find time for holding such meetings. But still, so long as the societies are there, they must do something to keep up the tradition of the College. Let us hope, these institutions are dormant—not dead—and will flourish again soon.

Our Football team has won this year the Elliott Shield for the College. Though we were successful in annexing the Hardinge Birthday Shield, year before last, we have not been for many years faring well in the Elliott Shield competition. We heartily congratulate our College Eleven on recovering what we had lost more than a decade ago.

The Ping-pong Tournament, organised under the auspices of the College Common Room, has just been played to a close. We congratulate Mr. Nisith Sen of the third year class (brother of last year's victor), on winning the trophy.

* * *

After last year's flash, this year's magazine would appear, we fear, to be only a dim show. While we are fully conscious of our own shortcomings, we hope we will be judged with due regard to the external circumstances which have been so much responsible for bringing about the present state of affairs. To crown all difficulties, the time at the disposal of the Editor was extremely short, and the magazine had to be hurried through the press in less than two weeks. We have to thank the proprietors of the North British Press, who are ex-students of our College, for the very careful interest they have taken in having the magazine printed within the short space of time that could be spared. The Editor's best thanks are due to the Principal and the members of the Staff, who have ungrudgingly helped him, whenever he sought their help; to his fellow-students of the College who sent in their contributions, and particularly to the General Secretary, Mr. Ajit Nath Roy, for his able assistance in every direction.

* * * *

As we go to press, we come to learn that our Principal, Mr. J. R. Barrow, is going on leave preparatory to retirement. We are sure there is no need for us to tell him that his students are bidding him, through the pages of their magazine, what is most certainly not a mere conventional farewell. We shall miss him tremendously when the College re-opens. We have yet to meet anybody in College who had ever a hard word to say about Principal Barrow. He has presided over our College for a fairly long time; but so far as we are concerned, we have known him for a little more than a year. Those were troublous times, the last fifteen months, and it is a wonderful

tribute to Mr. Barrow's innate good sense that his students never mistook the man. His work as teacher and administrator does not require any of our appreciation ; that leaves, we doubt not, a mark of its own. To everybody he was the pink of courtesy ; to talk to him was a pleasure, and to know him was to admire and revere him. He will, we hope, carry away the most pleasant memories of Presidency College—and shall we add—for all that has happened ; he has, we are sure, the largeness of heart to understand. The Editor is privileged to count himself among those of his students who came in personal contact with him, and he will ever remember the unfailing kindness which he received at his hands. Principal Barrow has the best wishes of Presidency College as he goes back home from this our lovely land of sun and shower, of clouds and weird moonlight.

B. D.

SHORTER POEMS OF ROBERT BROWNING

DEBESH CHANDRA DAS—*Fourth Year English*

IT is an age of little leisure and lesser love of poetry. The days of poetry, they say, are over, and with them have gone the time or the mood to sit up through the tedious march of a long poem. To-day we have littered our mind with urges for work and speed and poetry must adapt itself to the inclinations of a world gone strangely mad on rush and speed. The epic is surely an anachronism in this age; longer poems are none the better. They have all been hastily thrust aside from our desks, the more so the longer poems and dramas of Browning, "pieces of pure bewilderment" as they are thought to be. Who, for instance, can meander through the mazes of Sordello with the midnight lamp burning on the table and the din of a machine-crazy world constantly clanking in his ears?

The world has grown old. Traces of 'sick fatigue' and 'languid doubt' have spoilt our happiness. Creeds have been cruelly shaken. Our poems are inspired by a sentiment of the void, the sadness and sterility of life. The loss of faith within and the dislike for the world without have awakened in us the sense of our own helplessness. To chill the feverish heart, to calm the restless spirit, to numb the pain of sensibility we have demanded not cures but 'anodynes'. The disease of modern life has been diagnosed but the cures are not coming. We are conscious of the need of some message but there is none. In the midst of these doubts, disbeliefs and despairs, Browning offers us abiding hope.

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid"

sings the Rabbi. This life ends but the soul is eternal. "Poor vaunt of life indeed," but the period is not barren. Life here is but the period

of preparation for one hereafter. Experiences one has to gather and not one is wasted. Even failure contributes to the attainment of the ultimate goal. Uncertainty there must be to enliven our quest for spiritual uplift. In the absence of uncertainty stagnation comes in. So doubt and hesitancy are not evil nor are they unnecessary. The flickering lamp and the unknown path do not check progress. Even this perishable body is helpful in the spiritual quest.

"All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more
Now; than flesh helps soul."

The Rabbi feels strength enough within himself and extends his hands to those who do not share his conviction. Within his heart Abt Vogler catches an echo of the eternal life. Even failures he takes as "triumph's evidence." The sound of the distant music has long ceased but the sense retained is enough to sustain him. He does not stop to enquire whether his life here has been one of ruined purposes. He is satisfied with the idea that 'on the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven a perfect round.' The simpler faith of Pippa has no tinge of philosophy.

"God's in His heaven
All's right with the world"

carols Pippa and the optmistic faith of Robert Browing has been summed up in these lines.

This optimism has brightened up Browning's love-poems as well. Beloved Edith, the married wife of another man is now dead and beyond all the tender advances of the unfortunate lover. Still he warms up his love with passionate appeals that cannot now stir her. In the regretful remembrance there is a vague hope that he grasps with the zeal of a sinking man. Fancy fills the void in him and he is not bitter against the hoarded memories of a joy that cheered his earlier years. In 'Christina' a glance has united the lover with the girl. The worldly bond of marriage has not crowned their love, and for this life, it has been barren. Temptations of wealth have allured Christina away from the lover. She has lost him but he has gained her spiritually. He anticipates her in the life to come. This conviction has been retained more passionately in the poem "Evelyn Hope". Young Evelyn is dead now. A stranger sees her for the first

time and is filled with love. He cannot have his dead sweet-heart but he confidently expects to get her in some unknown life hereafter, for God creates love to reward love. He may have to pass through many lives, to traverse many worlds. No matter ; he will get Hope. He puts a leaf in her cold hand ; she will recognise it when the union comes to take place. This fruition of love in an after-life is a new aspect of love ; the characteristic psychological analysis of Browning has not marred this strangely refreshing idea. We have enough already of sorrow, failure and hopelessness, and cannot therefore afford to forego the little sustenance our firm belief creates. Faith and optimism are at the root of what wiles of sophistry or cold psychology cannot build up.

Love, according to Browning, is a necessity. It is a vital element of his theology. Divinity can be reached through human emotions, and love is the supreme among them. Apart from any relation to God, love is the finest passion at work in human heart. It is the one lasting reality. In the ruins of an ancient city, desolation can be marked all around. Even in this seat of past glory and forgotten shame, love is triumphant. The mighty city is now a thing of the past but the living might of love is still now present there, for "love is best." It is not simply a mighty wave that overpowers man but it has its eddies and whirlpools too. 'In the Campagna' amid the everlasting wash of air, and silence and peace

> 'Infinite passion and the pain
> Of finite hearts that yearn.'

fill the lover with tantalising hope. There is at the same time something of pathetic hopelessness even in the waving grass and the blooming flowers. 'The serenade at the villa" has proved useless. The music meant to awaken love falls flat. Perhaps even the advances are intrusive inflictions. "In three days" the lover will meet his lady-love, but he is mad with torturing ecstasy, for life is full of chance and change. The last few hours of waiting seem painfully to linger long. Melancholy forebodings make "James Lee's Wife" alive to the change of Lee's feelings towards her. Whether by the hearth, or on the cliff, or aboard the steam-ship she is constantly pitying herself that she cannot satisfy her husband. With last tribute to the omnipotence of love, she sighs heavily and leaves her husband. Love is not a plain sailing after all.

Browning's poems are poems of sunlight and soar above all disappointments. The poet does not sing of blighted hearts, fruitless aspira-

tions or wasted lives. Rejection the hopeless lovers bear with a resigned manliness, for in it lies the true test of the sincerity and depth of affection. Andrea del Sarto had once the genius to compete with Raphael. For his wife Lucrezia's sake he has neglected his art and his ideal has lowered down. Lured by his wife he has drawn repeatedly the single model of Lucrezia. Failure as an artist has intensified the pain of the knowledge that she cannot incite in him any noble feeling. Yet he thinks

"We are in God's hand."

Lucrezia is about to give him the slip for one whom she cares for more. What deepens in Andrea is not despair but her irresistible charm. He will perhaps get one more chance in heaven to compete with Leonardo, Raphael and Angelo and to make up the wasted opportunities here. But he blandly admits the possibility of a defeat as he hopes still to have his wife by him. In "The Worst of It" the husband bewails the transgression of his wife from the path of virtue. Bitterly does he realise his own loss on account of the wife's fall. He once got his sustenance in life from her purity. Now she is lost to virtue and his own love cannot save her. The anguish of his personal loss has been pathetically subdued in the lament for the injury she has brought upon herself. In 'The Last Ride Together' the dismissed lover has been granted one last ride with his beloved. For one moment she lies on his breast and he is deified.

"Who knows but the world may end to-night ?"

thinks he, and the moment has been eternal to him. He does not stop to count the possibility of gain or loss in this rejection. Nor does he think of success or failure which cannot be judged in the vulgar worldly standard. He has striven to win her. If he has failed it is no blot to his love. Happiness lies in the effort and not in the realisation of a cherished end.

"Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast."

He wonders, "Earth being so good, would heaven seem best ?"

In his imagination he rides with his beloved on and on, and fancies the ride to continue till the end of time.

It is unfortunate for man that often love cannot be reconciled to duty. When their paths lie different, lovers are torn between allegiance

to one and service to the other. It is sad to be rejected in love but sadder still to reject love for duty's sake. In the moonlit night of rest and peace, passionate intensity of love urges "meeting at night" but the beacon rays of the sun hasten "parting at day." The lover has to join his world and the call of duty must be responded to. In the May morning of life the young artist cannot marry the young singer for lack of funds. The life of each of them remains unfulfilled. Each has starved the love in it. It could not even sigh deep or laugh freely, and hence life "hangs scrappy and patchy." In 'The Statue and the Bust', Duke Ferdinand wants to get the bride of Riccardi. Daily he rides past the Riccardi palace and the bride returns his love with affectionate glances. She is confined to a chamber by her suspicious husband. The lovers contrive to elope but infirmity of purpose stands in their way. They cannot bring themselves to the plunge and keep on exchanging distant glances. But their love, like a sweet dream after awaking, begins to grow cold with the loss of youth. Youth is, of course, the time for dreams, but Time itself does not allow the young lovers to sit on the banks of its stream and wait. It carries the dreamers along with the course and all unconsciously they find themselves growing old and their love growing cold. To continue the dream and to preserve the memory of their love, the lady places her bust on the window and the duke his statue on the square below. The inanimate stones look on each other.

> I hear you reproach, "Delay was best,
> For their end was a crime"

But the lovers must realise that in the failure to unite they have lost the one object of their life. The fulfilment of love would not have been a crime. It has served as a test of their lives; expediency has got the better of heart's bidding and the lovers stand condemned. A man must exert himself to the uttermost for his life's set prize, be it what it will.

> "—the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
> Is the unlit lamp, and the ungirt loin,
> Though the end in sight is a vice, I say
> You of the virtue (we issue join)
> How strive you?"

Browning is not Tennyson, and cannot sit idle with the consolation that all "Life needs for life is possible to will." It is easy from the depths of a lounge-chair to light a cigarette and recommend theories like those preached in 'The Statue and the Bust' but it requires courage and conviction to translate them into action. One is sure to recoil in uncertain fear but Browning is not. He does not shrink from the contemplation of evil, or by any means seek to minimise it. He thinks of it as a condition of good. Evil remains, for him, essential to the variety that makes life worth coveting. He paints villains without faltering or fearing public opinion.

Browning does not fail to find pleasure in the apparently abhorred things even. The 'Englishman in Italy' finds pleasure in the mere grotesqueness of the strange creatures tumbled from the fisher's basket.

"You touch the strange lamps,
And mouths gape there, eyes open, all manner
Of horns and of humps
Which only the fisher looks grave at,
While round him like imps
Cling screaming the children as naked
And brown as his shrimps."

Not that he is deep in love with ugliness and unrefined aspects of nature. He invests them with the dignity and beauty of things beautiful, for he cannot tolerate the want of love and beauty anywhere. He sings of the joys of vigorous youth and the cheerfulness of old age as well. In the night the stars shoot out the pain of pent knowledge to David and at the peep of day he observes in the distant blue of the hills a gathered intensity. In the pastoral solitude he sings of the goodness of life as attested by both the pleasures of youth and the gratitudes of old age. Through all the aspects of nature, inclement or otherwise, the spirit of God addresses itself to man. Nature seems to be charged with some spiritual secret eager for disclosure. Browning strives to catch it. According to him life can provide a healthy exercise for all human faculties,—the heart for feelings, the soul for spiritual quest and the senses for artistic enjoyment. This belief testifies to the abiding mercy of God, and he sings out

"O world ! as God has made it all is Beauty,
And knowing this is Love, and Love is Duty."

THE PRESENT DEPRESSION IN JUTE.

SACHINDRANATH DASGUPTA—*Fourth Year Economics.*

THE cultivation and manufacture of jute is of great importance in the economic life of India in general and of Bengal in particular. Its cultivation brings money to the Bengal peasant and this money not only feeds and clothes the agriculturist but is also to a certain extent the basis of the economic activity of the rest of the community. Its manufacture gives millions to the Scotch capitalist and subsistence to the Bihari labourer. And it also employs many bankers and other dealers. The place of jute in the economic life of Bengal is of great and growing importance and second only to rice. India enjoys a monoply of jute-cultivation which is limited to the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta and the neighbouring tracts. The annual innundation of the rivers and the consequent alluvial deposits enable these blessed regions to withstand the exhaustion caused by the crop without the use of artificial manures. Its cultivation occupies about 3·3 million acres (something like 1·3 per cent of the total area under cultivation), Bengal contributing about 85 per cent. The rest is due to Bihar, Orissa and the Brahmaputra Valley. Jute has also of late been successfully introduced into the Ganjar tracts of the United Provinces. In 1927-28, the total area under jute was 3·37 million acres and the yield was 10·18 million bales, each bale weighing 400 lbs.* As regards the export aspect, jute ranks at least equal to cotton. In 1927-28, 8,92,000 tons of raw-jute valued at Rs. 30·66 crores and jute-manufactures valued at Rs. 53·56 crores were exported. The following tables will show the position of jute in the export-trade of India :—

Exports (percentage).

	Pre-war Average.	War Average.	1925-26.	1926-27.
Jute manufactures and raw-jute	19	25	26	26·5
Cotton manufactures and raw-cotton	21	21	28	23
Food-grains, tea, seeds, hides and skins and other articles ...	60	54	46	50·5
	100	100	100	100

*Estimates of area and yield of the principal crops in India (1927-28). p. 8.

After seeing how great the importance of jute at present is in the economic life of India in general and of Bengal in particular, it will be interesting to go through the history of the progress and development of jute-cultivation and manufacture. In the good old days, conditions of transportation did not allow dealings in cheap and bulky commodities. But the great strides made by human invention in the matter of transportation by land and sea in modern times has made such dealings now possible. And whereas in olden days, the international trade of India was chiefly confined to diamonds, spices, extra-fine cloths and other articles of great value in small bulk, in modern times she deals chiefly in articles like cheap cloths, raw cotton, raw jute, jute-manufactures, yarn, grains etc., and other articles of comparatively small value in large bulk.

What however was at first more important in India's export trade—jute manufactures or raw jute ? It will be a pleasant surprise to our readers to learn that it was jute-manufactures. India could not even up to the 18th century be called industrially backward in comparison with Europe. Europe had indeed by that time begun her splendid march of triumph over the powers of nature ; but as yet her command over nature was not sufficiently strong to strangle the Indian artisan. It is a common fallacy to regard "materialism" and "industrialism" as the quintessence of European culture and civilization, while the spirit of India shrieks and shudders at the sight of gold or rather just extends the corners of her lips a little in a smile of mingled compassion and contempt from her throne of light on the snow-clad caps of the Himalayas. A fetish of nationalism (I should rather say distorted nationalism) makes us clutch to everything that is now in India as if it were the logical development of the revelations of the Gods in the Vedas. Nations do imply distinctiveness ; but the march of human civilization is essentially one, and cultures have crossed the Atlantic and the Himalayas. India was not always industrially backward. Only recently has Europe surpassed her. Vedavyasa did not enjoin industrial backwardness upon India ; and if after a temporary lapse, we now come up and regain our former relative position in the industrial world, certainly in heaven the Rishis will not shake their hoary heads in disgust. If we avoid progress and remain stagnant, that will not vindicate our national greatness simply because we have not imitated the Europeans. Our greatness is to be vindicated by greater progress and not by no-progress.

But to return to our issue, upto 1850 the handloom industry of Bengal had sufficient vitality to ensure an excess of manufactured jute goods over

the raw material in the export trade of India.* The export of raw jute had indeed begun as early as 1795 and by the first quarter of the 19th century the demand on the part of Dundee power-looms had become considerable. The Crimean war cut off the U. K. from the supply of Russian flax and led to greater demand for jute. So, exports of raw jute steadily increased, the principal customers being the U. K. and Germany.

Then a great thing happened in the sixties of the last century which ushered a new epoch in the history of the jute industry in India. The first jute-mill was established in 1855 at Rishra in the neighbourhood of Serampore. The first power-loom was introduced four years later in 1859.† But the industry at first showed great reluctance to be transplanted from Dundee to Calcutta and during the first 30 years or so there was very little export of jute-manufactures. From 1868 to 1873, however, there was great prosperity in the industry and "the mills simply coined money" (what else could better describe dividends like 15, 20 or 25 per cent ?). Then followed what was natural : new mills ; over-production ; crisis and closing down of many mills. After that, however, barring temporary vicissitudes the industry has steadily progressed. In 1881 there were as many as 5000 powerlooms at work in Bengal ; in 1891, 8000 ; in 1901, 16000 ; in 1911, 33000 ; in 1921, 43000 ; and in 1925-26, 50503‡. The industry now employs about three hundred and fifty thousand men, and its capital is about Rs. 213·47 crores.

Even in the pre-war days, the Indian manufactures of jute increased faster than the exports of raw-jute. During the war Germany was isolated and therefore the exports of raw-jute fell very much. But the increased demand for jute manufactures in the various theatres of the war more than offset the disadvantage. This was further augmented by the overrunning of Russia by the Germans and the consequent necessity of substituting Indian jute for Russian flax. The post-war slump was necessarily felt by the jute-industry also, so much so indeed that the Indian Jute Mills Association, which had been formed in 1886 resolved in 1921-22 to invite an American business expert in regard to the formation of a jute-trust in order that there might be some control over production and prices of jute manufactures. The depression, however, passed away in the mean time and the project was abandoned. This brings us to recent times.

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*Industrial Commission's Report, p. 10.

†Ibid

‡Industrial Commission's Report, p. 10 & also the statistical abstract for 1925-26.

As we have said already, one important feature of the industry is that exports of the raw-material have not increased as fast as the exports of manufactured jute goods. The comparison of a pre-war year (1913-14) and a post-war year (1925-26) as exhibited below will show this :—

Value (in Rs. Crores) of Exports of

	Raw-jute	Manufactured jute-goods
1913-14	30·8	2·82
1925-26	37·9	58·8

"In point of efficient organisation, the jute-industry is second to none in India".* For many years, Great Britain was the only country which manufactured jute-goods, and Dundee was the principal centre of the industry. Calcutta has now displaced Dundee to a considerable extent. The Indian jute-mills consume about five times as much jute as those of Dundee. Of all industries in India, the jute-industry has the strongest position in international trade.

By the by, I fear readers, who are now for the first time being introduced to the history of this wonderful progress made by a modern up-to-date large-scale industry in India are breathing more freely with heaved bosoms, brightened faces and glistening eyes. If so, I am only to apologise for not having pointed out already the sore fact that the industry is hardly of India although in it. There are about ninety jute-mills in Calcutta. But very few are owned by Indians. "While the cotton-mill industry is almost entirely in Indian hands and financed by capital raised in India, the jute industry owes its origin and development to European—mostly Scottish —capital and enterprise."† Perhaps my reader is now thinking that Dundee in Dundee would have been less insulting than Dundee in Calcutta. I am inclined to think that the truth of this is not honestly disputable. But economically speaking Dundee in Calcutta is preferable to Dundee in Dundee. Dundee in Calcutta at least gives employment to three hundred and fifty thousand Indian labourers. If the profits and the salaries go to Europe at least the wages remain in India.

*Dr. Pillai : Economic Conditions in India, p. 175.

†Jathar & Beri : Indian Economics Vol. I first edition p. 64. See Industrial Commission's Report, p 12.

We have indicated the position of jute in the economic life of India and have reviewed the history of the jute-industry in India. Let us now proceed to a consideration of the nature of the demand for and supply of raw-jute and manufactured jute-goods. The demand for jute manufactures is specially connected with the volume of the world's trade. Jute manufactures are required specially for carrying agricultural produce from one place to another. Consequently, good harvests mean great demand for jute-goods. This is the most important aspect in the conditions of demand for jute manufactures. As regards the demand for raw-jute they are ultimately based on the demand for jute manufactures. On the supply side what is to be noticed most of all is the fact that whereas the jute-mills are directed by wise business-men acting in active co-operation under the Indian Jute Mills' Association, and therefore the supply of jute manufactures is consciously adapted to the demand for them, the production of raw-jute is in the hands of ignorant, ill-informed peasants scattered over a vast area and acting in no kind of co-operation with each other, so that there is no immediate relation between demand and supply, the conditions of demand regulating output only in the long run and that too in a very uncertain manner owing to the intervention of a hundred disturbing forces. This all-important fact shall have to be borne in mind when we come to discuss the Government's duty to the peasant of Bengal.

We now come to the present situation in jute. Everybody is perhaps aware that recently prices of many commodities have fallen steeply. Jute is one of them. The price of jute in the moffussil is between Rs. 4 and 5 a maund.* The report of the maritime trade of the province for 1929-30 compiled by Mr. G. S. Hardy, I. C. S., who was Collector of Customs, Calcutta throughout the period, and issued on July 14 shows how greatly the depression in world trade affected India's trade in jute last year. Prices fell very much. The average shipment price of raw-jute of first marks for 1929-30 was Rs. 59-14-6 per bale (of 400 lbs.) as against Rs. 64-0-4 in 1928-29. The local price of raw-jute of first marks was Rs. 69 per bale early in April ; by the first week of July it fell to Rs. 62 ; early in October it was Rs. 59 ; in the first week of January it was Rs. 56-8-0 ; and at the end of March the price was as low as Rs. 45 per bale. Despite this low level of prices, however, exports of raw-jute declined by over 5 lakhs of bales, Germany the largest consumer of Indian

* Liberty, July 19, 1930, p. 11.

emphasised by Englishmen.* The U. S. A. and Argentina and also France since 1928 are absorbing large quantities of gold which they do not require for the support of thier credit-systems, and are thus depriving the rest of the gold-standard world from the basis that they so urgently require for the expansion of credit. This sterilization of large quantities of gold means shortage in the media of exchange and their failure to keep pace with the increase of production; and this is largely responsible for the fall in whole-sale prices of about 75 p. c. of the main commodities of commerce and their accumulation in large quantities. And a fall in prices means a new and arbitrary distribution of the Social Dividend, by which those who have fixed money-incomes get a title, at the cost of the producers, to a greater proportion of the Social Income. The 'entrepreneur' is the first man to be affected. Then comes a fight between labour and enterprise. For the labourers do not agree to accept a smaller money-income; and the businessmen cannot suffer all the loss themselves. Nor can the labourer be blamed from his attitude; for as we have already said, retail prices do not keep pace with the fall in whole-sale prices and consequently the lowering of the wage-earner's cost of living does not come as early as the entrepreneur begins to suffer loss. The struggle between labour and enterprise takes shape in strikes and lock-outs, which make the situation worse still. Ultimately labour and enterprise have to divide the loss between themselves. And it is not rarely that the loss is too heavy for the industry to bear. Loss and insecurity make the businessman restrict his purchases of raw materials to his immediate needs. So, the prices of raw-materials fall. In all these ways do shortage in the supply of the media of exchange and the consequent fall in prices affect world-economy; and they have actually done so in the present case.

One thing however remains to be explained. Short-term loans are very cheap at the present time. How can we then say that there is a shortage in the supply of the media of exchange? The fact is that people with fixed money-incomes do not require for present use all their increased purchasing power and can save much. They, as also other people who want to invest, do not dare to do so in productive industries, in their present plight and are ready to invest in short-term loans at cheap rates.

So far we have dealt with the general disease that world-economy has been suffering from for about a decade (specially since the resumption of the gold-standard after the International Monetary Conference of 1922,

* Sir Henry Strackosch, for example, in "The Economist," July 5, 1930.

raw-jute reducing her imports by 2½ lakhs and the U. K. reducing hers by 2 lakhs. Diminished exports combined with reduced prices and lowered the value of the total exports of raw-jute by about 5 crores of rupees. The steep fall in prices combined with increased activity by the mills succeeded in increasing the exports of manufactured jute-goods. But the fall in prices was so great that the total value of the exports of manufactured jute fell by as much as 5 crores of rupees. Prices have fallen still more this year—demand continues to be small—stocks are great : the prospect is as gloomy as can be.

What is most responsible for this state of things is the depression in world-trade which at present prevails and a "remarkable feature of which is the low price of every primary product—of wheat, cotton, jute, rubber, rice, etc." It will not be possible here to discuss in detail the nature and causes of this depression. Let us, however, notice its broad features. What is to be noted first of all is that "the present depression has something of the character of an acute attack supervening upon a chronic form of the same disease."* Since the war there has been going on steadily a levelling up of the standard of living and an increase of leisure leading to a general shifting of demand from staple commodities to products of a more luxurious and more varied character and consequent maladjustment of production to demand. And "world economy has been suffering greatly from this maladjustment,"† which has rendered a large part of the equipment of many industries superfluous, and which has reduced the scope for mass-production with its attendant economies. Further, "as demand for luxury goods is more fickle than that for staple articles of food and clothing, it means not merely an immense initial adaptation of industry to new conditions, but a permanent state of comparative instability in which similar acts of adaptation over smaller areas of production at a time will constantly be required."‡ The partial industrialisation of the "backward" countries has further contributed to relative overproduction in those industries which cater to the necessities of the poor. In other words it has augmented maladjustment. And the failure of retail prices to keep pace with the fall in whole-sale prices has prevented the slump from automatically bringing its own remedy in the form of stimulated consumption.

Deficiency of the media of exchange is another factor which is to a great extent responsible for the depression in world-trade ; and it is specially

* The Economist. May, 1930, p. 1205.
† Mr. A. Laird in the January issue of 'Index' quoted in the Economist.
‡ Sir Henry Strackosch, for example, in "The Economist," July 5, 1930.

whose advice was more or less acted upon first by Austria in 1924 and then by other powers including the British Empire). What however are the causes that have made the disease more acute in recent times ? The principal cause, as is shown by Sir Henry Strackosch, is the abnormally great sterilization of gold last year and in the first half of the present year, which is to a great extent connected with "the seismic upheawal of last autumn on the New York Stock Exchange,"

In order that no important side of the question may be omitted we cannot but give some space and time to the discussion of the relation between the present political situation in India and the trade depression. It is a sad thing that political sentiments should vitiate economic discussions. But we cannot expect more than human from men ; and man is essentially one in spite of a thousand legal personalities that may be contained in him. So we should excuse the Anglo-Indian Press if it lays all blame at the door of the Congress just as we should excuse the nationalist press if it sees "unearthly" motives behind the activities of the Jute-Mills Association. We have, however, only to congratulate ourserlves at the attitudes of the two presses ; for the nationalists do not deny the boycott means at least some temporary hardship to India, while, although the Statesman believes that "there has been deliberate and cold-blooded assassination of Indian prosperity by men who claim to be the only true friends of the people"* and feels sure "on whom the blame rests,"* it nonetheless recognises that "India in the best of circumstances could scarcely have escaped some reflection of the world-depression that has affected so largely primary products"* and that "the failure of activity on the part of the consumer would certainly have affected jute."* The economist lays aside political biases and realises that the boycott has had some hand in aggravating the effects of the depression, but he also realises that it has only aggravated the hardship and is not the sole thing "on which the blame rests." And he cannot also agree with the nationalist press in thinking that the "the boycott of British goods does not explain the internal trade depression of the country" and that it only "explains the latest figures in her international trade."† If the boycott depresses India's international trade, certainly the purchasing power of the country is diminished and this puts strain upon internal commerce and industry. The impact of the boycott upon India's internal trade and commerce is also partly conducted

* The Statesman, July 20, 1930. p. 8.
† Advance, August 19, 1930, p. 8.

through the medium of the credit machinery. At this stage, however, I think it necessary to remind the reader that we are not concerned here with the political soundness or unsoundness of the boycott, but are merely considering its immediate economic effects.

What is most irritating in connection with the present depression in jute is the fact that the bumper crop which the gods have given us this year will only further embarrass the country. There have been heavy sowings and the weather has been good. The Government acreage forecast figures published on July 8, have given the area under jute this year as something like 35,06,000 acres. Last year the area under jute was approximately thirty-four lakhs of acres and the out-turn from this acreage has proved to be 102 lakhs of bales. This works out at 3 bales per acre. But this year the crop has been grown under much more favourable conditions. So it is expected that the yield per acre this year will be about $3\frac{1}{3}$ bales. So the total crop will be something like 120 lakhs of bales. But the consumption this year is expected to be not more than 85 lakhs.* If all the jute has to be sold this year and the mills induced to buy in quantity for stock, prices must be lowered to such levels as will suffice to hand over the jute-growing peasantry to famine, disease and death. Moreover, if prices are allowed to fall so low and the mills store up for the next year, they will be able to manipulate the raw jute market next year in their own interest. And a long time must elapse before the peasant can successfully resist being exploited by the mill-owner. The situation must be alarming to any one who has the good of Bengal at heart. "It is an irony that the bounty of nature should turn to a curse; but with diminished demand and the promise of a heavy crop (almost a record crop), prices have fallen to a point at which they can no longer give the jute-growing ryot a living."† It will perhaps not be superfluous to explain 'how' the bounty of nature should turn to a curse. If all the 1,20,00,000 bales of jute have to be sold this year, the highest average price that may be expeced is Rs. 30 a bale, so the total value of the crop will be Rs. 36,00,00,000. Suppose there had been 85,00,000 of bales. Then the price would have been something like Rs. 50 a bale; and the total value of the crop would have been Rs. 42,50,00,000. Clearly there would have been a gain of 650 lakhs of Rupees.

A factor in this situation, as already hinted, is that in the middle of last year when stocks were already accumulating the mills decided to

* The Amrita Bazar Patrika, August 8, 1930 (Essay by Mr. U. N. Bose.)
† The Statesman, July 20, 1930, p. 8.

work longer hours. They were alarmed at foreign competition and increased their hours of work from 54 to 60 in the week, But the report of the maritime trade of the province for 1929-30 has, as we have already seen, revealed the fact that the U. K., Germany and Belgium diminished their imports of raw jute last year. They had already begun to feel the pinch of lowered prices and had grasped the true significance of the situation, while their rivals in Calcutta were racking their heads for crushing their 'competition'. This is a sad comment on the arguments with which the increased activity was supported. Mr. U. N. Bose pointed out to Mr. R. B. Laird, Chairman of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, at the time of the decision to work longer hours, the errors of the step. But Mr. Laird did not listen. In some quarters this move had even been suspected to be a "manœuvre" to strand the Bengal peasant.* Economic facts are liable to be distorted by political sentiments. But whether there be "unearthly" motives behind this move or not, certainly it has contributed a great deal to the present depression in jute and prepared the way for famine and lawlessness in Bengal. Certainly, if this wrong step had not been taken—if the Indian Jute Mills had had as much foresight as the foreign mills—there would have been lower prices for jute last year and so huge a crop would not have been raised this year and the effects of depression would have been minimised to a considerable extent. There would indeed have been some misery last year but that would have been nothing in comparison to the woe that stares us in the face this year. We need not here dwell at length upon the effects of steep fluctuations in prices as compared with a smoother and smaller descent spread out over a longer period. We will content ourselves with referring the reader to any good text book on Economics. The mills took a foolish step ; but being in more or less a monopolistic position, they are more or less able to avoid the consequences. Whatever the loss to them, it is microscopic in comparison to the impact upon the innocent peasant. And moreover, the crores of the mills are concerned with luxuries while the 'cowrie's of the peasant are concerned with the poor morsel that keeps him alive. We do not mean that the mills deliberately planned to bring suffering upon the poor peasant. But none the less the result remains that their foolish activities have aided the forces of destruction to strand the Bengal peasant.

* "The latter (*i.e.* the mills), for no earthly reason that can be conceived of, unexpectedly increased their working hours when their requirements were likely to be watched by the agriculturist. But as soon as a bumper harvest has been in evidence, they have suddenly decreased their work and declare the intention of further restricting their output." —— Advance, August 3, 1930 p. 8.

What, however, has the Indian Jute Mills' Association done as yet for the control of production and the ultimate good of the mills ? It took the mills full one year of depression and falling prices to realise that they had erred in increasing their working hours. It was only as late as the middle of June this year that the mills felt it necessary to reduce their activity. But the association was at first very reluctant to take any drastic step, and thought that it could expiate for the sin of abnormal activity for one full year characterised by universal trade depression, and also check the evils of a more intense depression this year by merely reverting to the 54-hours-a-week system from June 30. But the market did not sympathise with their feelings and demonstrated ruthlessly that the cut had not been drastic enough to move it in the least. There was little demand; and a bumper crop was expected. The association then thought it necessary to reduce activity further, and decided to work only 3 weeks in the month from July to September. But still the market was callous. "The glut of stocks from which the trade was suffering, though having naturally diminished since the introduction of short time working in July, had not been reduced sufficiently to relieve the market by the decision, also taken in July, to close the mills for one week for three months."* Hence, on August 13, at a meeting of the Indian Jute Mills' Association, it was decided to continue the effort to curtail production by closing down the mills for a week in each month until March 31 next, and not merely up to September as previously decided. The step was widely expected "to pave the way for a more healthy period of trading on a profitable basis."* But 'expectation' was of no avail. "The confidence which this decision imparted to the Hessian market and the share market was, somewhat unexpectedly, short-lived."† Up till now whatever the mills have done to restrict production has had very little influence on the market.

The reluctance and irregularity with which the association has proceeded in the matter of the curtailment of production does not demonstrate farsightedness. "Diseases requiring the surgical knife cannot be cured by palliative medicines of the physician."‡ The attitude of the association has also been attacked on another score. It has been said that "the chopping and changing of mill-hours without any apparently fixed

* The Statesman, August 14, 1930. p. 10.

† Capital, August 21, 1930, pp. 388-89.

‡ The Statesman, August 14, 1930, p. 10.

policy is very damaging to the trade and leaves consumers in a continual state of uncertainty."*

Alternative schemes have been suggested. One proposed that the mills should close down for one month, contracts for delivery being automatically extended to the next; servants and workers to receive half pay and half wages. This proposal, even if it were flawless in other respects, could not be accepted as it would cause great disturbance in labour circles. Another proposal is that "the mills association should form a pool out of what funds they can command, whereby they should buy up all goods that fall below certain prices to be fixed.....If the pool acquires goods it should be understood that they would be released on a certain fixed rise over the fixed purchase prices." This would no doubt check further fall of prices and create confidence in the market. But it is really no substitute for, but a supplement to a scheme for the curtailment of prodution. A third scheme suggested in the "Capital", dated August 21, deserves greater attention. It proposes "a sliding scale of working which would regulate supply according to demand and go a long way towards preventing violent fluctuations and market manipulation." A sample scale on the supposition that 10 days' stocks in the hands of mills are a reasonable quantity, is added.† The curtailment of production suggested in that sample scale seems to be insufficient. But the system of sliding scales is more just as between mills, and more scientific as automatically adjusting supply to demand. And it appears to us that a pool as suggested in the second scheme, combined with a sliding scale of working hours as suggested in the third, should be adopted.

But whatever the mills may do for the restriction of production will only further embarrass the position of the jute-growing ryot. The brunt of the suppression will have to be borne by the poor peasant. We have already indicated how serious the position of the jute-growing ryot is. "The miner and the grower have borne the full force of the depression. While obtaining lower and lower prices for what they produce, they have found everything they buy dearer in proportion." The difference between falling prices for rice and falling prices for jute is that rice being directly

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* Capital, August 21, 1930, pp. 388-89.

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Stocks.	Working Hours.
(1) Under 10 days'	4 weeks of 60 hrs. per month.
(2) 10-15 days'	4 weeks of 54 hrs. per month.
(3) 15-20 days'	3½ weeks of 54 hrs per month.
(4) Above 20 days'	3 weeks of 54 hrs. per month.

consumed by the Bengal peasant and very little of its being exported, falling prices for rice do not affect the welfare of the province much. The ryot, however, consumes very little of the jute he produces. The value of jute to him is only its exchange-value. So, falling prices for jute mean disaster to the grower. Falling prices for food-stuffs at least make his cost of living smaller, but falling prices for jute and similar articles mean unalloyed loss to him. To make things worse a bad wheat crop is expected in America, which will doubly injure the jute-growing peasant; firstly, by curtailing the demand for his commodity, and secondly, by checking to a considerable extent the fall that would otherwise have taken place in the prices for wheat and its substitute rice.

But the misery of the peasant will not stop with the peasant. As we have already said the cultivation of jute may without exaggeration be regarded as the foundation of the economic life of Bengal and to a considerable extent, of India. The reduced purchasing power of the peasant cannot but affect the rest of the community.

And economic ruin will not end the matter. We cannot expect the hungry masses to sit and famish in their houses and hug the government and its laws. The whole province will be given over to desperate lawlessness, defiance of authority, theft, dacoity, murder and loot. This is not mere fearing what may come in the distant future; but this is what has already begun in many parts of the country. Speaking of the great fall in the prices for raw-jute the "Statesman" remarks, "Hence the outbreaks over a large part of Bengal. These, though they bear a communal aspect, are in reality born of the hopelessness that comes with the realisation that the prices to be obtained for jute will not enable the grower to live."*

Thus we have reviewed the causes of the general trade-depression since the war, the factors that have intensified it in more recent times, the forces that have operated specially upon jute and the repercussion of this depression upon the welfare of Bengal. The question that naturally arises now is, 'Can the government do anything for the country? If so, what can it do?'

We have already said that the country would have profited if a quarter of the jute-crop could somehow be withdrawn from the market. The Statesman prays for a natural cataclysm that may do this.* The idea is romantic but silly and ludicrous. A cataclysm might have destroyed jute and raised prices; but it would have affected the scene of its

* The Statesman, July 20, 1930, p. 8.

activity in such a way that even the contemplation of it horrifies the normal mind. We will try to offer a saner suggestion : Let the Government fix prices for the various grades of jute at which it will buy any quantities offered. These prices should be settled by taking the average for the past few years. But they should be a little less than last year's prices, so that the peasant may also suffer a little. This will contribute to the restriction of production in the coming season. The mills will buy what quantities they can profitably consume at these prices. Some jute will come to the government. Let it restrict the production of jute next year by the issue of licenses, so that at remunerative prices not only the whole crop raised but also the stock in the government stores finds a market. Objection may be raised to the control of cultivation by government as liable to be misunderstood by the people and to be utilised by corrupt officials to suck the peasant's blood. As regards the second objection it is a mere administrative question and we do not think that at a decent pay honest officers cannot be obtained. As regards the former objection we have nothing to say ; it is a political question involving the comparative hold of the government and of the Congress upon the popular mind. But we cannot check the temptation of suggesting that if the activity of the government is liable to stir resentment, none the less is its inactivity. If the government remain idle and do nothing in the face of such a crisis, naturally the people will learn to regard it as a mere tax-devouring institution.

In conclusion, we cannot help raising a voice of protest against such statement as the following which appeared in the Statesman on July 20 : "No government would be justified in using funds to save the situation so long as there is a large body of politicians working to make the situation worse." According to the Statesman, the Government is to make use of the situation to bring down the Congress on its kneess seeking government help for its amelioration. Not to speak of the political short-sightedness revealed in such mentality, it is inhuman to utilise with complacence and seeming cunning the misery of millions of innocent people for making political cases. However, we are not concerned with politics. We only want to say that the peasant cannot be held responsible for the activities of the Congress. And even suppqsing that the peasantry is anti-government, the way to win it back is not complacently to look on its suffering from a distance, but to extend a loving, sympathetic and helpful hand in its distress.

CHRISTABEL

PROFESSOR S. K. BANERJEE, M.A., Ph.D.

COLERIDGE'S genius, working as it does in rare and intermittent flashes, has a natural kinship with fragments; in nothing is its magic more apparent than in its power of transfusing such fragments and wresting out of them a compelling unity of impression. Judged from this standpoint, *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan* are more in accord with the inmost trend of the poet's mind than the complete and rounded-off *Ancient Mariner*. Kubla Khan, a fragment though it is, is hardly recognised as such: it breaks off just at the moment when dreams tend to lose their sharpness of edge and spread out into the incoherence and shapelessness of vapour. It marks the perfection of that difficult and delicately-poised synthesis in which the volatile essence of dreams just suffers itself to be caught up for a moment within the golden meshes of art. In Christabel, the wild, irreclaimable spirit of Mystery that haunts the outer world encloses itself for a brief while within the entanglements of a human drama, and then before the resulting complications have worked themselves up to a final effect, the story comes to a dead halt, leaving behind it perplexity and an infinite yearning to resolve it. For a while it speaks the accents of man, setting in motion vague trails of allegory which the human mind would fain clutch at and bring into accord with its own matter-of-fact moral senses. But its real appeal lies deeper than the region of allegory and morality: it touches, above all, that "electric chain with which human souls are darkly bound," and rouses them to a momentary consciousness of the enveloping mystery. Christabel is the record of such a swift and transient demon-visit. It is a failure in so far as it essays to recite the details of this demoniac duel: for the attempt involves a lowering of the demon to human levels. It is a splendid success in so far as it describes the wheeling rapidity of the demon-flight, the strange echoes it excited in the chambers of the soul, and the allies it found in the neighbourhood of the world of man. It is from both these points of view that it is proposed to treat *Christabel* in the following pages.

Christabel is much less complex in its type of romanticism, as compared with *The Ancient Mariner;* it is lacking in some of the most vital

qualities of the latter—the romance of its unpeopled spaces, its thrilling emotions and vivid sensations, and above all its perfect narrative art. A greyer and more subdued light broods over its atmosphere; the blazing lights and black shadows of the Ancient Mariner are thinned down into a long-drawn twilight glimmer; out of this twilight glimmer leap out sudden flames and short whispers, and far-off suggestions of ghostly forces at work behind the scene, which blow over the atmosphere like a transient ripple of wind, but do not emerge clearly enough to form an articulate utterance, and lead to a definite conclusion. Indeed, the appeal of the poem lies in this power of subtle suggestiveness, of hinting at a weird mysterious drama going on under an apparently uneventful surface, by casual strokes and light touches, and undertones thrown out as if at random. The genius and psychological insight of Coleridge are apparent in (1) the wonderful accuracy with which he estimates the exact effects of such half-statements in producing a nameless thrill of horror and expectancy in the mind of the reader—a mood which would have been broken in upon and dissipated by a more definite way of speaking; and (2) the unerring power with which this vague and indirect way of speech has been carried on, and consistency of atmosphere secured at any rate in the case of Part I, and (3) in the rare art with which the supernatural has been purged of all its grosser, more aggressive features, and "driven underground or distilled into the atmosphere" as it were,

It would be tedious to give a detailed analysis of the methods by which this thrill of horror and expectancy is produced; but something of this will have to be attempted. A mystic note is imparted to the story, in the very beginning, by the weirdness of the scenic background—the solemn silence of midnight brooding upon the feudal castle, and the forest close by, whither a maiden resorts by stealth to pray for the safety of her absent lover, with her mind strung up, as it were, for some sort of apparition, some kind of response from the gods invoked. Direct hints of supernatural influences at work, of the air heavy with electric forces are thrown out from time to time, and the strain gains in distinctness as we go on with the story and leads up to an all but plain announcement of a fateful tussle between rival forces over the soul of the unhappy maiden. The climax is reached with the revelation of the serpent-nature of the witch-lady, helped on by telling strokes which artfully prepare the mind for something uncanny to turn up, and over the crucial proof, the crowning disfiguration, a kind of iridescent veil is drawn which sets the imagination on fire without

satisfying it with any definite details. Critics who have laid stress on Coleridge's power in this poem of "suggesting enchantment by purely natural means" have perhaps failed to see the extent to which the strain of direct supernatural implications has been developed. To speak about witches who cast spells and mutter incantations, and hold colloquies with unseen enemies in the air is certainly not to suggest enchantment by purely natural means ; and to this extent we must correct our impressions about the so-called difference in the presentation of the supernatural between this poem and the Ancient Mariner. The only legitimate difference between the two is that in Christabel the supernatural is not so obtrusive, does not stand out so sharply above the surface as in the Ancient Mariner, but is just one step removed from the sublimated treatment of nature. For the advent of these direct supernatural forces the ground has been carefully prepared by a touch of weirdness thrown into the descriptions of nature, a hectic, excited way of speaking which asks a question before it can muster up courage to supply the answer, a curious indirectness of speech, like the apparently furtive manner of a magician who hesitates to utter the fatal formula which will call up the spectre before him. The lines

> The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
> It covers, but not hides the sky,
> The moon is behind, and at the full ;
> And yet she looks both small and dull.

suggest a certain effect of weirdness by an indefinable method, possibly by the very subtlety and minuteness of the description, an apparently tense anxiety on the poet's part to give out the precise truth by hedging in his statements with qualifications, and setting forth contrary effects, as if he was on his oath, and momentous issues hung upon the exact truth of his delineations.

There is a similar impression of weirdness in the abrupt transition to nature-description ;

> She stole along, she nothing spoke,
> The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
> And naught was green upon the oak
> But moss and rarest mistletoe.

as if some occult force more potent than winter had assisted at the process of stripping the trees.

The passage

> There is not wind enough to twirl
> The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
> That dances as often as dance it can,
> Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
> On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

has its weirdness diversified by a touch of grotesqueness which leaves the final impression rather bafflingly queer. We know from Dorothy's journal, how this description had a realistic basis in the scenery about Alfoxden, and we admire more the alchemy of the poet's art which could so completely transform the commonplace character of its original, and infuse into it a witchery, a grotesque fantasy so perfectly in keeping with the atmosphere of its new context.

The curious indirectness of speech, suggesting affinities with the language of incantation, is directly illustrated in the

" 'Tis a month before the month of May".

It runs as a distinct vein through the conclusions to Parts I and II which sum up for us the leading impressions of each section in the form of a quaint commentary, with its mystery and piquancy enhanced by a vague, yet potent allusiveness. Lines such as the following

> ....."He at last
> Must needs express his Love's excess
> With words of unmeant bitterness,
> Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
> Thoughts so all unlike each other ;
> To mutter and mock a broken charm,
> To dally with wrong that does no harm.
> Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
> At each wild word to feel within
> A sweet recoil of love and pity."
>
> (Conclusion to Part II)

provide a curious, a daringly original interpretation of the apparent estrangement between father and daughter which is the main topic of the Second Part of Christabel, and have a strange and far-off echo about them, like the thought of a spirit surveying across a wide gulf, the loud and surging passions of man below.

Throughout the poem and even in places where it does not admit of being plainly traced, this indirectness of speech can be felt as a pervasive presence, like a subtle smell in the atmosphere. The simple, tripping words come forth, shod with felt as it were, and speak with low muffled accents, and through this comparative hush we feel a new edge of meaning added to them, a curious suggestiveness like faint music filling up the interspaces of silence. This quality, floating like a mist through the written words (and heightening their delicate expressiveness) lies at the root of the thrilling suggestiveness of the poem as a whole, and keeps up the unity of the atmosphere even where no mystery can be scented in the manipulation of the story. It is in this heightened expressiveness of words that Christabel claims a real advance above *Ancient Mariner.*

THE MAURYA ADMINISTRATION AND THE MOGHUL ADMINISTRATION

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

SANTOSH KUMAR CHAKRAVARTY—*Fifth Year History.*

IT is very difficult to draw a line of comparison between two systems of administration, which have between them a wide margin of about two thousand years, People change, circumstances alter, and a constitution that would suit a country at one period, would be an object of mere antiquarian study at another period. However, it is always stimulating to indulge in such comparative studies.

The machinery of the Maurya government was a highly organised bureaucracy, with the king, assisted by a number of ministers and a council, at the head. The king was the head of the military, executive and judicial branches of the administration. He had also legislative functions to some extent. Individual members of the ministry were in charge of separate portfolios, but they conjointly advised the king on all important affairs of the state. There was also a larger council, called by Dr. Ray Chaudhury the "Assembly of Imperial councillors," which the king was advised to call in a joint session with the council of ministers

in times of crises, and do whatever the majority of the members suggest. At the head of the bureaucracy were a few high officials, viz, the High Priest, the Commander-in-chief, the Chief Judge, etc. Then there were about thirty departments into which the administration was divided, each of which had a superintendent and a number of assistants and subordinates The secret service was the mainstay of the government next to the army. Spies of different classes were maintained by the State, and controlled by an espionage bureau. The empire was divided into at least four viceroyalties in the time of Asoka, each under a Kumara, assisted by a council. The provinces were divided into several districts, and each district into a number of villages. There was a district officer called Sthanika and a village accountant named Gopa. The administration of the city corresponded on a small scale with that of the country. It was divided into several wards, each under a Sthanika, and each ward into several groups of households, under Gopas. There was also the Mayor called the Nagaraka. The judicial system was also highly organised. Cases were often disposed of by a local body of arbitrators, or by officials of various grades, and there was a system of appeals as far as the king. Rules of procedure in court, with plea, counter plea, and, and rejoinder, and as well as of evidence, were settled. The penal laws were severe. The Revenue department was organised under the Samahartri, or Minister of the Interior, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The land revenue amounting to a quarter of the gross produce, was the mainstay of the finance. Various other dues were collected viz, excess on liquor, tax on sales of produce, licensing fees etc. There was a special department charged with the construction of roads. Irrigation was in charge of expert officers. A War office of thirty looked after the army.

Now to the Moghul administration. At the head of the structure there was the Emperor. He had supreme executive, judicial, military and religious functions. There was no regular council of ministers. The Emperor along with the Wazir, or Prime minister, carried on the administration, but as a matter of practice, when the Emperor held his private consultation, the other high officials (the Chief Pay master, the Chief Quazi, the High Steward) usually attended along with the Wazir. The Imperial Secretariat was divided into eight departments. The Moghul government also maintained various Karkhanas or factories in order to supply its own wants, each of them being under a Daroghaga, all of them being under the Buyutat, who was in some respects an under-study of the

Khanisaman, or the High Steward. The Empire was divided into a number of provinces, called Subas, each Suba being divided into a number of Sarkars, each Sarkar into Parganahs. Each Suba was placed under a Viceroy called Subadar with complete control, civil and military, subject to the Emperor, and was assisted by officers exactly of the type of the central government. Each Sarkar was governed by a Faujdar, or Commandant, as the deputy of the Subadar. As regards local government, the Moghuls did not interfere much with it. Every large city had a Kotwal in it, whose business it was to keep order, repress crime and violence, and to keep strict eye on all townsmen. Matters relating to justice were performed by the Quazis and the Sardars, and in villages by the Panchayats. The Emperor was the highest court of appeal. The Revenue department was organised under the Diwan. The Moghuls kept strict control over revenue and each Parganah and village had revenue officers. Revenue consisted of a large share in the gross produce, license taxes, special imposts on the Hindus, etc. The cavalry was the mainstay of the Moghul army, the infantry and the artillery being of little account.

Such in brief are the outlines of the two systems of administration. The points of similarity between the two are very few. The general structure is the same in both. In both the Emperors had limited powers of legislation, the Judges had to consult men learned in the sacred books ; in both was the land revenue the manistay of the Government. But the points of difference are far greater, and are of greater significance.

As regards provincial administration the Maurya Central Government had more efficient control over the provincial authorities than the Moghul. The Subadar had no check on him in fact. But the Maurya Viceroy had to govern with the help of a Council. From Asoka's edicts we know that whenever he addresses the local provincial government, he addresses the Kumara and the Mahamatras jointly. The "Kumara in Council," as Dr. Bhandarkar puts it, was the provincial authority. The Kumara alone was not invested with complete and unchecked authority. Then again under the Moghuls, the higher officials of the Imperial Secretariat appointed their officers in the provinces. Thus the provincial Quazis and their subordinates were appointed by the Chief Quazi, the provincial Diwan had to reckon with the High Diwan. This device of divided responsibility was no doubt meant to be a check on the Subadar,

but it could not serve its own purpose ; on the other hand, it impaired the efficiency of the provincial administration. According to Dr. Bhandarkar, the Maurya provincial governors, at any rate the Kumaras, had the privilege of appointing their own district officers as in the Gupta age. But in both the systems the provincial government was oppressive. Under the Moghuls, as will be shown presently, the judicial system was bad, and the revenue demand was too high. And under the Mauryas, we also hear much of the oppression of the provinces. The Kalinga edicts of Asoka bear this out. Ministerial oppression goaded Taxila in the reign of Bindusara and again in the time of Asoka to open rebellion. Dr. Raychaudhury thinks it to be the main cause of the decline of the Maurya Empire.

The next point to be considered is local administration. Under the vast structure of the Moghuls, the rural government had no room. The Moghuls were essentially an urban people in India. The villages were neglected and despised and village life was regarded by them as a punishment. Their only connection with villages was through the channel of revenue collection. Every village was left to continue its noiseless tenor of life. The centre of local life was the Zemindar, who was vested with civil administrative powers, almost unlimited. And the result was that petty local despotisms were established in the villages. But the Mauryas had an excellent rural administration. Each village had its own assembly. It was vested with large powers and responsibilities. It had great control over persons and property belonging to the village, and was held responsible for the payment of royal dues. It had also certain judicial functions. The link between the village and the Imperial Government was the Gopa. He audited the accounts of the villages and saw that the work was running on smoothly. The villages enjoyed real local autonomy.

It was in the administration of the cities that the Mauryas gave sure proofs of their superior powers of organisation. The Maurya administration of Pataliputra has drawn the unstinted praise of all historians. The Municipal Commission of thirty looked almost to all the affairs of the city. It regulated the wages of its inhabitants, appointed officials to take care of foreigners, took the census, regulated sales, graded the articles for sale, collected taxes, and kept the markets, temples and harbours in order. Moghul city administration was almost an antithesis to that of the Mauryas. Almost every large city had its Faujdar and Kotwal. The former was

merely the head of a regiment posted in the town to suppress smaller rebellions. The real government was in the hands of the Kotwal, There was no Municipal Commission as under the Mauryas. But the Kotwal combined in himself all the functions of the municipality, the magistrate, and the police superintendent. But his duty as the head of the city-police quite occupied his hands. He had to know what happened in every house through secret agents ; he should send men to the Quazis for justice, keep watch over the roads and see that the citizens were not molested by the robbers and the thieves. The municipal functions were left in the lurch. The Kotwal had various things to do and therefore could perform none adequately.

The judicial organisations of the two systems show further the superiority of the one over the other. Under the Moghuls, justice was rendered by the Quazis and the Sardars, but there were great flaws in the system. Quazis were placed in towns and poor villagers could not bear the expenses of dragging their suits to the towns. The posts of the Quazis were often sold for bribes and the Quazi's department became a by-word of reproach in Moghul times. In the words of Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, "The main defect of the department of justice was that there was no system, no organisation of the law courts in a regular gradation from the highest to the lowest, nor any proper distribution of the courts in proportion to the area to be served by them". The crudeness and inefficiency of the judicial system were aggravated by the fact that the only law recognised by the Emperor and his judges was the Quoranic law which had originated and grown to maturity outside India. Under the Mauryas not only was there a regular gradation of Courts, but separate tribunals were set up for the purpose of settling cases regarding caste or religion. There were also guild courts, and the village assembly also held judicial functions, authorised and recognised by the Government. The punishments were also reasonably graduated. Most of the offences could be atoned for by the payment of fines, while the Moghul code of punishments did not include fines as an alternative.

The revenue administration of the Moghuls however betray a tactful and scrupulously careful organisation, unusual among them. Each Parganah was administered by a Choudhury or a Zemindar. To control the Zemindars in their fiscal capacity, a Kanungo was appointed for each Parganah ; he was responsible for the Parganah accounts ; he kept the rates of assessment, controlled the survey of the Parganah, and generally maintained

the rights of the cultivators. Similarly in each village a Patwari or village accountant was appointed whose function in the village resembled those of the Kanungo in the Parganah. This was the rule in Bengal, Behar, and Guzerat. In other provinces the revenue was collected by Kroris who were placed in charge of tracts expected to yield a revenue of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of rupees. Rules were laid down on the lines of Todarmull for the assessment of land on a graduated scale. The system was an admirable one. The principles were sound. But when the machine went on working, it ground the people, especially the Hindus, a bit too severely. Akbar claimed as his share one-third of the produce. Moreover the *abwabs* or illegal cesses were too many. There were duties on the sale of fish, vegetables, milk, and cowdung-cakes even. Various forms of license-taxes were gathered. Hindus had to pay taxes on bathing in the Ganges and other sacred rivers. Many of these imposts were again and again declared by the Muhammadan sovereigns to be illegal and forbidden, but they soon re-appeared with some changes in their items. Sarkar, while speaking of the abwabs, notices " the wonderful fertility of the human invention in devising means for squeezing money out of the people—at birth, throughout life, and even after death." The Maurya financial department was in the hands of the Samahatri, under whom were the Rajjukas and Sthanikas, and Gopas successively. The Mauryas also exacted much. In addition to the land-tax, there were taxes in various forms, on sales, on licenses etc. In time of need, Kautilya advises, with perfect cynicism, to levy benevolences. Much was also brought to the State Treasury through Government undertaking in trade and business, e. g. in salt, mines, transport etc. As regards revenue administrations both the systems seem to be on a par.

The Moghul military system seems to have been hopelessly inferior to the Maurya. The Moghul government had a very small standing army. Most of the soldiers were recruited by the officers themselves. Great abuses prevailed in such a system. False musters were an evil from which the Moghul army suffered in its palmiest days. There was no division into regiments. From the highest to the lowest rank, the officer or soldier looked first to his immediate superior and followed his fortunes, studying his interests rather than those of the army as a whole. Discipline was very lax. There was no Commissariat or Transport System in the real sense of the term. Each soldier had to provide for his own food and shelter and the result was that there was often scarcity and death from starvation. There was a want of sympathy between the parts. The pay

of the soldiers often fell hopelessly into arrears. The army was in effect a body of mercenaries. It needed all the energy of an Akbar to keep such an army in perfect mobilisation. Because of the faulty system of organisation the army soon deteriorated in efficiency and skill. We may opine with Irvine that " excepting want of personal courage, every other fault in the list of military services may be attributed to the degenerate Moghuls", and that "military inefficiency was the principal, if not the sole, cause of that empire's final collapse." But the Mauryas had a perfect military system. Not only had they a permanent standing army, but its organisation was superb. There were separate boards for each of the four branches of the army, There was a special board of Admiralty and another board had to look after the Transport and Commissariate. "There was a scientific distinction of vanguard, centre, rear, wings, reserve and camp, with elaborate discussions of formations on the march and in battle—attack and defence." In short, as Dr. Thomas puts it, "The Mauryas possessed the art of war".

The Moghul administrative system was horribly diseased and corrupt. It was a military despotism. (This view has been disputed by some historians ; but, on the whole, I follow Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar). "The government was military in its origin, and by nature, and though in time it became rooted to the soil, it retained its military character to the last. Every officer of the Moghul government had to be enrolled in the army ; he was given a mansab, as the nominal commander of so many horsemen, which determined his pay and status" (Sarkar). Even Judges were not excepted. In such a government, it is no wonder that the subjects were not taken any great care of, unless Fate condescended to give them a benevolent sovereign of the type of Akbar. So long as the people paid their taxes regularly and did not revolt, the government would not interfere with them. Sanitation, irrigation, the people had to provide for themselves. There was little sympathy between the governors and the governed. Smith says "The Moghul empire.....had shallow roots..... It lacked popular support.....nor were there any permanent institutions to steady the top-heavy structure." The policy of the government was minimum of interference with maximum of taxation. On the other hand, the Mauryas not only did keep a clear line of distinction between the civil and the military, but the whole tone of their government was paternal and humane. The Mauryas, as Monahan says, "aimed at a close control over their subjects in many of their activities, regulating trade, commerce and industry,

levying taxes on sales, imports and exports, as well as internal transit dues, fixing prices, maintaining communications by land and water, as well as irrigation works, registering births and deaths and movements of travellers and enforcing numerous regulations in the interests of public safety and convenience, in town and country." The care of the sick, the infirm, the minors, the helpless widows, is enjoined by Kautilya. The people felt their interests bound with those of the state. A close study of the Arthasastra reveals the fact that the people were recognised as one of the most important factors of the state.

The Moghul system of administration was not a perfect one ; neither was the Maurya system. Both were oppressive and exacted much from the people. If the Moghuls did not interfere much with the daily lives of the people, the Mauryas interfered too much. The state transactions in trade and commerce, the forced prices, did not provide a fair field of competition between the state and the people and often crushed the initiative of the latter. And the heavy espionage system of the Mauryas was also a blot on their fair name.*

KEATS AND THE CULT OF BEAUTY

MANMATHANATH SIKDER—*Fourth Year English*

OF the great Romantic poets of England who liberated Literature from the barren rules and conventions which had hampered it for nearly the whole period of the Eighteenth Century, Keats was the youngest and the last. But he was not of them. Born at a time when the French

* The original article was read in a meeting of the Historical Society, last year, under the presidency of Dr. U. N. Ghosal. It has been thoroughly re-modelled and modified, for the sake of publication. Some passages, I fear, have been quoted in this present article without acknowledgments in due places. I beg to be excused on the ground that they have been severely mutilated in the process of modification. However, I owe my debt to the following books: Smith—Early History of India; Oxford History of India; Cambridge History of India—Vol. I; Bhandarkar—Asoka; Dr. R. C. Mazumdar—Ancient Indian History and Civilisations; Monahan—Early History of Bengal; Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhuri—Political History of Ancient India; Kautilya—Arthasastra; Smith—Akbar; J. N. Sarkar—Moghul Administration.

Revolution and the doctrinaire theories which it propounded had powerfully gripped the imagination of all the Romantic poets of England, it is curious that the poetry of Keats should be wholly uncoloured by the storm and stress of the great political movement. Yet such indeed is the fact. He professed indeed the most advanced democratic doctrines and reverenced Voltaire; but there is no stress either of political or religious bias in his poetry. He is destitute alike of love to God and enthusiasm for humanity. In the passion and the tragic struggle of ordinary human life, he discovered no food for poetry. He has no vital interest in the present, none in man as a whole, none in the future of mankind, no interest in anything but beauty.

The only thought he has ever celebrated in his writings is that Beauty is worthy of worship and that it should be worshipped for its own sake. To him Art should always be for Art's sake.

....." Poetry," he said, 'should surprise by a fine excess.' It should always abstain from an 'irritable reaching after fact and reason,' for do not all charms fly at the cold touch of philosophy? No other poet had this gift in his peculiar measure—the gift of seeing beauty everywhere or in his own language, 'the principle of Beauty in all things.' The reader who travels through his poems feels that the world within and without has become an enchanted garden; the small is no longer seen as insignificance, the large not as heaviness; action takes a new grace and even the fierce fever of sorrow is drowned in the tide of sympathy which it awakens.

His famous lines

" Beauty is truth, Truth beauty
That is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know "

which have become hackneyed by repetition, have been found fault with as dogmatical and didactic. The truth seems far otherwise. As he elsewhere expresses—"I can never feel certain of any truth but from a clear perception of its beauty." The idea therefore is Keat's settled conviction. Truth in life is to be approached through the avenue of artistic Beauty and not through the assemblage of realistic details. To him Beauty not only guarantees Truth, but somehow constitutes it. If a poet creates a vision of intense beauty, its beauty makes it in some sense true. It bestows upon it a reality which it did not have before and which it would not have had otherwise. Just how this comes about and in what sense we are to understand it, is too subtle a process to be communicated in language.

But it is certain that he regarded it as a genuine fact, a mystery perhaps, and not a metaphor, parable or myth, as some seem to have taken it to be.

Now this quest after Beauty, which is to him essentially a quest after Truth, is Hellenistic in character. It has also another dominant characteristic which humanises it and makes its appeal to us all the more irresistible. Let us illustrate these two aspects of his poetry one by one.

To Keats the vision of modern life was tame and vulgar. In order to sense Truth in forms essentially beautiful, he needed a world more remote and consequently obscured by the haze of distance in which his imagination could work unhindered. A world where "Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes" drove Keats to seek another ideal world jealously closed against the intrusion of ordinary human affairs. Nor had he long to seek it. The legends of Greece had fascinated his childhood and had never lost their hold upon his imagination. So saturated did his mind become with the imaginations of ancient Greece that it is said that 'he never beheld the oak tree without seeing the Dryad in it.' There was much indeed in the Greek attitude to Life which made an irresistible appeal to him. The expression of things in forms essentially beautiful, the spontaneous, unquestioning delight in the life of Nature and its incarnations in forms human but of more than human loveliness, made the pagan creed, "out-worn" to Wordsworth, retain for Keats, all its freshness and vitality. Almost all the poets of the Romantic Revival mourned a death in Nature. But Keats thought that Nature is not dead but alive. The living world is at our doors. In Endymion, Hyperion and Lamia, he recaptured the Greek temper, the temper of the divine childhood of the world when from every tree under whose shade one slept at noon and from every brook where he drank at eve, the Dryad or the Naiad might come forth and the immortal-knit relation to the mortal.

Added to this power of seeing all things with a child's amazement and forgetfulness, Keats had developed a mastery over statuesque effect in which he had no rival save Landor among his contemporaries and Rossetti among his successors.

> "Of the Naiad who mid her reeds
> Pressed her cold finger closer to her lips"

No poet has ever more fully possessed that creative power by which, in a few lines and at times in a mere phrase he can penetrate to the heart

of a story long since dead, and with magic touch bring it back to life so that we see it in its essential and vital truth which is forthwith transformed into superb beauty. Take, for example,

"The figures of
Old Deucalion mountained over the flood,
Or blind Orion hungry for the morn."

Or again,

"Perhaps the self-same song that found a path.
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn."

For such rare strokes of descriptive imagination, the poetry of Keats must always remain unrivalled. And it is this imaginative quality of phrase which conjures up visions of intense beauty not only in his smaller poems but also in his ambitious ones.

Worshipper of Beauty as he was Keats was sensuous to his finger tips. The line, in Psyche, "Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone" has been seized upon by crities as bearing testimony to the essentially spiritual and philosophic character of his poetry. But this solitary example does not reflect Keats' true cult. Nor has this sensuousness in any way detracted from the merit of his poems. The same 'spiritual flaw' in Keats' nature, which made of his love for Fanny Brawne a consuming and mortal passion, and gave the intolerable beauty to the song of the 'Nightingale', touched his poems with a rich sensuousness which have added to their beauty a thousand-fold.

Passages, that go to pieces under criticism for their swooning abandonment to the thrills of sensation, have yet in them a noble freight of beauty scarcely to be paralleled in the whole range of English poetry.

"They lay calm—breathing on the bedded grass ;
Their arms embraced, and their pinions too,
Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu."

But what lends irresistible attraction to the poetry of Keats is the study in pictorial and suggestive effect which forms an invariable feature of almost everyone of his poems. In the subtle magic of suggestive phrases such as "magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in faery

lands forlorn " or in the master-stroke of concentrated imaginative pictures such as 'mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed', Keats has no master. These indeed surprise us by a 'fine excess' and intoxicate the imagination with their beauty. Some of his phrases indeed rival Shakespeare. The figure of Madeline in the "Eve of St. Agnes" sleeping "an azure-lidded sleep" brings back upon the mind's eye, if only as moonlight recalls a sense of sunshine, the nuptial picture of Marlowe's Hero and the sleeping presence of Shakespeare's Imogen.

"Isabella or the pot of the Basil", inspite of the gruesomeness and unpleasantness of the story, is so deeply charged with "a characteristic aegritude of passion", and occasional flushes of episodical beauty, that Keats has unanimously been credited with a chief share in the parentage of the Pre-Raphaelite School of English poetry. The figure of Isabella, as she knelt beside the grave of her dead lover, transfixed to the spot 'like to a native lily of the dell,' her womanly action in kissing the soiled glove of Lorenzo, while all the woman and mother in her is in a few words revealed to us as blighted by the tragedy of her life, her gestures of vital dramatic grace and importance—all these have been portrayed with such a concentrated force and beauty of conception that Keats may be called an artist who has turned to poetry as the best medium of his expression.

Thus far it is evident that Keats was an ardent lover of Beauty, so much so that no other considerations alien to Beauty impinge upon his work. We can imagine Shelley to be an agitator, Wordsworth a clergyman ; but in no circumstances can we imagine Keats to be anything but a poet. His oriental fertility of imagination transforms the world at pleasure so that everything it seizes upon as Beauty becomes Truth. This is conclusively borne out by the "Ode on a Grecian Urn."

That which inspired this "Ode" was the memory of perfect sculpture. It was the beauty of man's creation ; not of earth's. When "Beauty is Truth and Truth Beauty" it is absolutely immaterial if old age waste this generation. But such a philosophy is absolutely untenable when immortality is bestowed upon a work of art and refused to man. What Keats means to emphasise is this. In wedding Beauty with Truth, sensuousness with idealism and hailing the permanence of art over that of Nature, he affirmed, though tentatively, that it is the duty of human reason to induce order in the confusion of life by symmetry, order and selection.

In this "Ode" his cult of Beauty finds its most perfect expression. He utters himself in pure poetry when he says—

"What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn ?
And, little town thy streets for ever more
Will silent be : and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return".

The daring flight of imagination which he has made here, and which suddenly endowed the Nightingale with immortality, is really worthy of Shakespeare himself. The picture of the little town with its desolate streets moves lucid and serene before the mind's eye, while the passage of the townsfolk from the city adds another aura of loveliness to the magnificent picture he has conjured up.

Thus the impression which Keats finally leaves upon us is that while *we are with him, his high doctrine is true, and* Beauty is Truth for us and Truth Beauty ; and even when we have left his presence and other elements of Truth have forced themselves upon us, the vision he revealed is still unforgotten, the impression made upon us is ineradicable and we have no choice but to believe that Beauty if not the fulness and presence of Truth is at least Truth's authoritative witness and inspired prophet.

INDIAN INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

SUBODHKUMAR BHATTACHARYYA—*Fourth Year Economics*

THE economic conditions under which large sections of the population, rural and urban, of India have to live, are bad—often as bad as they can be. It is a fact which cannot be disputed and must be conceded that India is one of the poorest countries in the world and that her economic resources are of the scantiest character. The fabulous wealth of India which formed the topics of the historians of old, and attracted traders and plunderers alike to her unguarded and hospitable shores, is now a thing of the past. India has been forced to pay a very high cost for her wealth

which is now drained away. Whether it be her own folly or the result of the heavy drain, necessarily accompanying a costly (for India) government, which remits to England a huge proportion of the annual yield of the whole country by way of Home and other charges,—whether it be by some artificial or natural cause beyond the control of the government and the people, or as the result of a policy of unequal and unrighteous distribution of the burdens of the state, the stern facts remain and cannot be gainsaid that even today, after more than a century and a half of British rule, India—inspite of her enormous wealth of raw products—is the poorest country in the world with a very poor annual average *per capita* income; and that her capital resources for industrial and other developments are therefore necessarily almost nil. The need for supplementing them by all possible means open to the government and the people, is consequently all the greater and more urgent.

Poverty in India to-day is not so much a resultant of iniquities in the distribution of wealth as of the dearth or want of creative occupations. It is more a universal phenomenon affecting all the classes of the people than a by-product of the exploitation of one class by another. The Indian poverty problem is to be envisaged as a question of unemployment on a vast, continental scale. How to combat this huge unemployment, or in other words, to create myriads of employments, is the problem of the poverty-doctor. This is the task that economic development seeks to solve.

Theoretically, the doctoring is quite simple. Let the economic activities of the people grow in multiplicity and naturally also in diversity. Let the production of wealth increase on all fronts, and millions of men and women will begin automatically to function as industrial workers and hundreds of thousands as engineers, chemists, bank-managers, insurance-agents, office-clerks, and what not. And, of course, agriculture will be relieved of the burden of maintaining teeming millions and will pick up much of the science and technology afloat in the atmosphere. Simultaneously will the handicrafts commence shedding their 'primitiveness' and rise to the level of subsidiary industries such as are adapted to the new age of large-scale production. In other words, the cure for poverty is industrialism.

The movement towards industrialisation has already made a fair start in India. But though the general trend of opinion is in favour of

accelerating it, specialists differ as to the utility and desirability of this change, nay, there are some who would, if they had their own way, nip it in the bud, as being fraught with sinister possibilities for the country.

They may be divided into four classes : (1) the orientalists (2) the industrialists, (3) the economists, and (4) the nationalists. The first class consists of those who unconditionally deprecate industrialisation ; the second class is composed of those who absolutely idolize it. Of the remaining two classes, the first one finds both good and evil things in industrialization, and the second class claims those who want to promote progress on national lines.

"The fact is, that although we must take care not to emphasize unduly the material side of life, it is necessary, especially in a poor country like India, that the wealth *per capita* must be greatly increased, and her teeming millions must be lifted above the cares and worries of mere existence, in order that any kind of higher life should be possible for them. And this cannot be done without the help of up-to-date methods of production. Moreover it must be remembered that India can no longer remain isolated even if she wishes to, and she can only survive the on-slaught of foreign competition by forging the weapons of modern *industrialism.*"* Industrialism, indeed, has its dangers and pitfalls. No stage in the history of economic evolution is without its evils. But it would be sheer thoughtless obstinacy to practise blindness to the miseries and evils of to-day and yesterday or even glorify and cling to them as virtues,—in the fear that the next stage ahead should bring in new and unheard-of troubles.†

That the present position of Indian industry is very backward is so obvious as scarcely to need a formal statement. There has been some development of industries, but in the first place it is very uneven, being restricted only to those industries which have appeared to offer safe and easy profits. In the second place, as the Fiscal Commission observe, 'the development has not been commensurate with the size of the country, its population and its natural resources'.‡ Another serious industrial deficiency has been the scarcity of foremen, engineers, technical and chemical experts, owing to the inadequate facilities for industrial training in India, and the consequent dependence on foreign skilled labourers, technicians and experts.

* See Jathar and Beri, Indian Economics.

† See Benoy K. Sarkar, Economic Development.

‡ Report of Indian Fiscal Commission, para 41.

It is well-known that for the industrial development of a country the following things are essential: Natural resources, Capital, State-aid, Market facilities, Transport facilities and Skilled labour.

With regard to natural resources, our country is proverbially rich, as raw materials for the manufacture of various articles are to be found in abundance almost everywhere. India possesses immense natural resources—vegetable, animal and mineral. Her sources of power—although her position with regard to coal, wood-fuel or oil, is not so favourable as is sometimes imagined—are great, because there are immense possibilities of utilizing her large rivers and waterfalls and harnessing them to industrial uses. Her forest wealth is vast, and the development of modern means of transport and research in forest product are likely to result in a stimulus being given to industries based on the great variety of the forest products of the country.

Be this as it may, all this industrial transformation implies chiefly one thing, namely, capital operating in terms of crores. It is only capital and other factors that are required for the conversion of this abundant supply into finished products. It is true that a great many industries that could be started with success and for which the raw materials and other facilities are near at hand, could not be started in this country for want of the requisite funds. This is not only true in the case of gigantic industries but also in the case of a great many minor industries. It is now a matter of common knowledge that in a large majority of cases in which industrial enterprises have collapsed, the main cause of the failure has been want of capital to begin with, and in some cases, insufficient resources not only for current expenses but even for obtaining urgent expert advice and technical knowledge.

Although I may admit that as a rule, capital in India is shy and slow to move, specially in untrodden paths, it cannot still be denied that it is difficult to raise money in India for industrial purposes, first, because the country is poor and there is not much 'capital' (not wealth) in it ; and secondly, because there are few efficient banking organizations able to mobilize the financial forces of the country and make capital easily accessible.* Indian capital may be confidently expected to be less and less timorous if reasonable assurances are forthcoming that it can be invested

* Mr. Jehangir Bomanji Petit—Presidential address to the Indian Industrial Conference.

with security and profit. "The striking success of the loan operations of the government in the Indian money market during and after the War and the successful flotation of a considerable number of joint-stock companies in the post-war period, together with the fact that recently, considerable investment of Indian Capital has been brought to light, are additional proofs that the shyness of Indian Capital is a fast vanishing quantity. The improving banking organization of the country, the assurance of a large home market and the post-war enthusiasm for the industrial renaissance of India should further help in drawing out the savings of the people for purposes of productive investment in modern industries."* When the industrial development of a country depends upon capital, acquired largely through the gathering of small sums, special industrial banks should be established with large capitals and numerous branches to afford financial support to industries for longer periods and on less restricted security. Such banks and organizations must require a large measure of government support, although, they need not be brought under rigid government control. Government should place very large funds at their disposal, if possible, without interest. Mr. Petit is of opinion that the rate of interest should in no case be higher than 2 or 3 per cent. He also holds that they should be allowed to issue bonds for a limited period of not longer than ten years to the extent of at least double their paid-up capitals, and fixed deposits for shorter periods than two years should not be received; and no current accounts should be opened in these banks, excepting for parties whom they finance.†

This question of capital for industries may be discussed under two headings: (i) indigenous capital and (ii) external capital. Indigenous capital :—The supply of indigenous capital is tending to increase in quantity and to shake off its shyness, especially since the War. This is evidenced by the increase in Government rupee loans from Rs. 145 crores in 1913-14 to Rs.390 crores in 1928-29, and in paid-up capital of joint-stock companies from 80 to 277 crores of rupees between 1913-14 and 1927-28.‡ But there is still ample scope and clamouring need for further improvement as regards the point of adequacy, venturesomeness and employment of the indigenous capital resources of the country. Without this the industrial

* Jathar and Beri: Indian Economics Vol. I.

† Petit—Presidential address to the Indian Industrial Conference.

‡ See the Budget of the Government of India for 1929-30, p. 29. also the External Capital Committee's Report, para 8.

development in India will be greatly retarded. The problem of indigenous capital has assumed grave importance as all the schemes of industrial and economic development in India require vast amounts of capital, and it is necessary to take proper steps to tap all the dormant capital in existence at present.

External capital :—The recent adoption of the policy of protection has brought the problem of external capital into prominence. The general feeling is that if foreign capital and enterprise were allowed, without let, to take shelter behind tariff walls, then the country will lose heavily the advantage of protection. Even under the regime of free trade a considerable number of companies with foreign capital had established themselves in the country.

Without these foreign sources of finance, India would be poorer in material life and less efficient in technical affairs. It has to be admitted that but for foreign capital, other circumstances remaining the same, her economic poverty would be more palpable, extensive and profound. 'The woollen, cotton and leather industries of Cawnpore.....and the great jute industry of Bengal were promoted almost exclusively by British and not by indigenous effort.'* The supply of capital in India, both for agricultural and manufacturing purposes, is very small. Indian capital always fails to meet the increasing demand for it. To be plain, only a few industries of India are financed by local capital and the only perfectly mobile and chief source of finance is foreign capital. England is the creditor country of the world and Mr. Paish estimates that out of her £3,500 million sterling of investments, India borrows more than one-tenth of the total.* The present economic development of India, we may safely declare, is almost entirely due to foreign capital and enterprise.

Foreign capital may enter the country either as loan capital or as investment capital. As regards the former, it is generally agreed that so long as indigenous capital is not forthcoming sufficiently rapidly and adequately there is not only no objection to borrowing capital from abroad but it is positively advantageous to do so. In this respect, we should follow the examples set by other countries like Japan and the United States of America—the countries which, although intensely nationalistic in feeling and policy, have encouraged the use of foreign capital in this form.

* See Valentine Chirol, Indian Unrest, pp. 264-5.

† Mr. F. Howard estimates the amount to be £450 million sterling.

We have seen one side of the picture of foreign capital, but we should also remember that there is the other side. No unmixed blessing, however, is foreign financial aid. Foreign capital normally seeks entry into the country on a speculative and profit-sharing basis and involves foreign management. Objections are urged against this class of capital.*

The fundamental objections against foreign capital have been stated as follows :—

(*a*) The first obvious objection is that the profits go out of the country.

(*b*) The second objection is that foreign firms prefer to choose as directors persons of their own nationality.

(*c*) It is said that foreign capitalists take no trouble to train up Indians, and do not give them a reasonable chance of rising to positions of responsibility with the result that enterprises under foreign control result in far less benefit through increased employment and training of Indians than they should.

(*d*) It is alleged that the vested interest of foreign capital tend to be antagonistic to political progress, as such have been the problems of China, Turkey, Poland, Hungary, Austria, even Germany. But so far as India is concerned she has nothing new to lose on that score. The economic advantages, on the other hand, are mostly solid gains.

(*e*) But even as regards economic advantages, the price of foreign capital is immense. India has already paid much because of it during the last half-century. She will have to pay dearly again should she care to have more of it.

(*f*) The natural resources of the country will tend to get exhausted.

We may here state Sir Vithaldas' much quoted opinion throwing a clear light upon the question. He says, "We cannot but think that it would be to the permanent good of the country to allow petroleum to remain underground and gold to rest in the bowels of the earth until the gradual regeneration of the country enables her own industrialists to raise

* Jathar and Beri : Indian Economics.

them and get the profits of the industries. The price paid is much too great for the advantages accruing from them to the country".

But he adds at the same time that

"We cannot do without foreign capital, and we must not reject it on sentimental grounds".

Inspite of the disadvantages noted above, there are several grounds on which India can bargain with foreign finance and come to a more or less satisfactory arrangement for herself on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread.

(1) With its help, industrialization and consequently enrichment of the country is expedited.
(2) Another advantage is that 'it bears the initial cost of development and smooths the path of indigenous enterprise'.
(3) Apart from other considerations, foreign capital has educative influence of the highest value. The examples of successful employment of foreign capital have also a very salutary influence on our shy capital.

On a consideration of the advantages and the disadvantages of foreign capital, we come to the conclusion that because it has an important role still to perform in the industrial development of the country, it is better to welcome foreign capital, provided it is subjected to certain restrictions which have to be devised so as to reconcile two conflicting sets of considerations—the purely economic ones from the Indian viewpoint and those regarding the profits of foreign capital.

Let us refer to the kind of restrictions proposed, which are as follows.

(1) The undertaking should be incorporated in India.
(2) It should tell its capital in Rupees, and in every instance possess a certain proportion of capital belonging to Indians.
(3) The directorate must contain Indian elements.
(4) The higher branches of administration and technical direction must also contain Indian elements.
(5) Indian experts should get promoted to superior posts without having to feel an unnatural inferiority compared to the foreign personnel.

(6) Prof. Kale suggests that there must be provision for the training of Indian apprentices and that penal taxation should be imposed for non-compliance with it.

(7) Every advertisement or propaganda material must be published in the journals owned and conducted by Indians in India or abroad.

To summarize what we have said, foreign capital is welcome but foreign enterprise is not. We should borrow and pay interest for the capital, as in Japan, Canada and America, but we should not suffer foreigners to control our resources turning us into mere day-labourers serving under them.

To quote the generous and wise words of Sir Frederick Nicholson,

"I beg to record my opinion that in the matter of Indian industries we are bound to consider Indian interests firstly, secondly and thirdly.—I mean by 'firstly' that the local raw products should be utilised, by 'secondly' that industries should be introduced, and by 'thirdly' that the profits of such industry should remain in the country."

(To be continued)

SOME BUILDINGS OF MEDIEVAL INDIA

(Concluded)

GOBINDAPRASAD GHOSE—*Fifth Year History*

THE most peculiar characteristic of medieval Indo-Moslem architecture is the variety of forms it has assumed in different soils. We have already had some idea of the type of buildings prevalent in Bengal. If we shift our view once to the Western corner of India, quite a new style will greet our eyes. The Guzerati architecture has a wonderful freshness which is remarkably its own. To quote an authority, "Of the various forms which the Saracenic architecture assumed in India that of Ahmedabad may probably be considered as the most elegant as it is certainly the

most characteristic of all. No other form is so essentially Indian, and no one tells its tale with the same unmistakable distinctness." Permeated as it were with the traditions and ideals of those master architects who devised the temple at Somnath, or who gave form to those of Mt. Abu, the indigenous architecture of Guzerat was possessed of a breadth and spaciousness, a charm and elegance as could not but appeal to the new comers. The Moslems with their native adaptability assimilated all that was of interest in Hindu and specially Jaina conceptions of art, and gradually under their patronage was built a group of edifices as have elicited the admiration of all succeeding ages. It was also fortunate for the development of Guzerati style that annexation of the province to the empire happened at the very moment when Imperial architecture had reached its zenith of perfection under the Khilijis. But even as Bengal, Guzrat had to wait for the full play of her genius till her independence under the Ahmed Shahi dynasty. It was the founder of the dynasty that was responsible also for the buildings of the new city and once the start was given, each succeeding monarch tried his level best to outdistance his predecessor. There is indeed a profusion of handsome buildings in Guzrat that only a few can be picked up as the most typical examples of the elegant style of the province. Of the buildings of Ahmed Shah, three deserve more than a passing notice—the Tin Darwaza, the Jami Mosque and the Musjid of Shah Alam. The former, a magnificent gateway as Burgess termed it, was the principal entrance to the outer courtyard of the palace. It was 37 feet in thickness and pierced by three openings connected one with another by three cross passages. The charm of this gateway consists in its perfectly proportioned and delicately framed archways set off against the ornate buttresses of the intervening piers. This gateway formed the principal enclosure to the Royal Square, where the Kings held court in the cool of the evening beside the splashing fountain..... "Through this gateway sallied forth Mahmud Bigarah at the age of fourteen to quell by his looks the rebellious nobles who disputed his succession". Compared with this, the Mosque of Shah Alam is not of great interest. But the Jami Musjid is a magnificent creation. The building measuring 156 ft. by 54 ft. is roofed by ten larger domes in two rows with smaller ones between the whole supported by 152 pillars with plasters against the walls responding to the lines of pillars. The design of the building is of the simplest kind. The facade is decorated only by three string courses and the cornice all of purely Hindu pattern, pillars having Sanskrit inscriptions. 'It is,' says

Marshall, "one of the most superb as it is one of the most imposing structures of its class in the world." Its facade is so admirably composed, so broken up and diversified, so well proportioned in its parts that its vastness only enhances the beauty of the whole. The shapely expansive arches, the engaging minars, the carved mouldings and string courses are pleasantly reminiscient of the Guzrati style. The same is true of the interior with its 260 graceful columns, its narrow aisles, its clerestory galleries, its domes built on the Hindu Corbel system, its traceried windows and rich arabesques." A peculiarly happy idea was the mode of lighting and ventilating the interior, which admitted the required light and air while excluding the direct rays of the sun as also the rain. "Here", says Fergusson, "perfect ventilation was obtained with the most pleasant effect of illumination against glare". On the whole this 'Mosque of shaking minarets' was, according to European critics, an improvement on the plan of the 1000 pillared hall of the South, though in sheer poetry of design, the contemporary Rajput temple of Ranpur has got greater fascination for Fergusson. At bottom both signify eloquently the mastery of Hindu Principles of Art. But to return to our narrative. The Musjid of Malik Alam at Daru Lamdi marks the culmination of the development of Guzrati style. Whatever the date (1460) the interior and exterior are brought completely on the harmony. The design of the minarets commences at the ground and its goes straight to the summit. The niches on the base have an architectural detail instead of a design and all parts of the style are settled. Just inside the entrance, the square paint of the roof is exquisitely designed. The way in which light is introduced into the central compartment is, according to Fergusson, one of its most pleasing peculiarities. The excellent tastes shown by the architect of Ahmed Shah are equally evident in the monuments of Mohamad Shah II—notably in the mausoleum of Ahmed, the Tombs of the Queens (Ranika-Hujra) and in the mosque and tomb of Shaik Ahmed at Sarkhez. The tomb of Ahmed is a massive mausoleum containing a central hall with four square domes at the corner and four deep pillared verandahs between them. The floor is of marble embodied over with a beautifully carved tomb. The Queen's Tombs are the beautiful works of art and, according to Burgess, exquisitely finished to the minute detail. It consists of a square of 98 ft. surrounded by a wall perforated by doors and windows with open colonnades both on the outer and inner side of this wall. Out-side perches are added to the corridors surrounding the open court.....pillasters corresponding to

the pillars in front of the corridors divide the walls into bays each of which is pierced by windows of perforated stone and the compartments at the corner are carved with blind doors each ornamented with a different pattern of most elaborate workmanship. The Sarkhez buildings, the two finest specimens of which belong to the reign of Muhamad Shah II are, according to Fergusson, the most interesting set of buildings in Ahmedabad. Belonging as they do to the best period of Guzrati style they are remarkable for elegance of detail and purity of design. The buildings are of exceptional interest as being almost wholly Hindu or more correctly Jaina in conception and this is admitted even by Fergusson with all his bias for the so-called Saracenic style. The Mausoleum (104 ft. square), the largest of its kind in Guzrat, comprises a square central chamber surmounted by a large dome with four aisles of slender columns. The aisles are closed from without (square central chamber) by perforated screens of stone and the chamber is separated from the verandahs by panels of brass fitted into infinite variety of pattern. Speaking of the stone trellis work, a critic, one of the most eminent, remarks, "We in Europe are proud of the glass that enclose the naves of our cathedrals. Are they more beautiful than the walls of trellis-work which inclose the Tomb of the Saint ?" Considering the enormous variety of design involved in such a screen as this, the beauty of the patterns and the effect of the subdued light which they shed internally, there is something in all this which it would not be easy to match in any part of the world. A Persian quatrain that adorns the entrance sums up the noble aspiration of its designer beautifully :—

> " When the Ocean of Ahmed's palm scatters pearls
> Hopes he becomes the treasure of Parnaz
> No wonder, if in order to bend before his shrine
> The whole surface of the earth raises its head."

The Mosque itself differs from those of earlier dates in having no arched facade or minars and in the roof being of uniform height throughout. This mosque is a perfection of elegant simplicity. " Its beauty like that of the Tomb and of the exquisite little pavilion in front of it is due to its simplicity, and classic restraint ; and indeed considered on its merit as a pillared hall, it is difficult to imagine how it could have been improved upon". It may be questioned whether the absence of an arched frontispiece is not to be regretted. But on the whole considering what a mosque is and how difficult it is to amalgamate there two uncongruous parts it is

difficult to decide which is most good looking. It is clear that the architects of Ahmedabad were quite unable to make up their minds at this point, one-half of the mosques of the city being of one type, the other half as persistently of the other. "Any way it is evident that the favourite court architect knew far better the design of a columnar than of an arcuate building and here his artistic talent got full play." "Except the Moti Mosque at Agra," says Burgess, "nothing surpasses it in simple elegance." Some notable addition to the Sarkhez group of buildings owe their existence to the reign of Mahmud Bigarah whose name has passed into the legends not only of his country but also of Europe. The palace he built for himself on the bank of the great reservoir at Sarkhez, with stepped ghats and terraces, its pillared verandahs and balconied windows is marked throughout by a uniform level of excellence. Though less pure in style than the buildings of Muhamad Shah II its parts are entirely appropriate and in keeping with their fellows. It is also the same with the exquisitely carved sluice heads emptying their water into the lakes at Sarkhez, insignificant objects in themselves but finished with that perfection of taste which can make the commonest things beautiful. Another of these neat structural units was the tombs of Mahmud Bigarah at Sarkhez. Thus, taken as a whole, the Sarkhez group of buildings have maintained a uniform degree of high workmanship rare to be met with even in the beautiful Capital of Guzrat. But to take up once more the threads of our narrative. The reign of Qutb-Uddin did not add very much to the beauties of the Capital. He built the Hauz-I-Qutb Tomb at Kankariya as well as the Qutb-Uddin Mosque in Ahmedabad. His reign also saw the building of the massive Rajapur Mosque. These, however, are of little interest although the latter is acclaimed by Burgess to be a fine monument. More important from the point of view of the development of the Guzrati style was the tomb of Darya Khan. It is an imposing square structure with a lofty central dome and lower domed verandahs on its four sides and is constructed throughout on the arcuate principle which thus appears to be gradually coming in vogue.

The reign of Mahmud Bigarah ushers in the most fruitful period of the architecture of Guzrat. What is characteristic of the age is the impetus it gave not only to the Capital City but to the districts far and near. Mahmud is memorable in Medieval Indian History not only as a great king but also as a magnificent builder of cities, Mustafabad, Champanir all bearing eloquent testimony of his architectural zeal. Outstanding amid

the monuments of Champanir is the great Jami Musjid. It is not absolutely without reason that Fergusson calls it " architecturally the finest in in Guzrat." Undoubtedly it is a striking edifice, a fine effect being produced in the interior of the prayer chamber, by three tiers of columns raising one above the other and supporting the dome with richly carved balconies between the tiers and an equally rich frieze beneath the soffit of the ceiling. The mosque is of itself large size being 169 ft. 6 inches by 81 ft. inside the walls and having three rows of domes quite artistically arranged. " But considered as a whole," says Marshall, " it does not bear comparison with its old name-sake at Ahmedabad. Its parts are neither so well-arranged nor so well-proportioned." The reason may be found in the gradual prevalence of the arch and the dome which though at times handled with consummate skill were not so much to the taste of the native architects who fed on their old traditional principles of Art. We are already familiar with the palace of Mahmud at Sarkhez as also the great water-sluices. No less remarkable an example of the versatile workmanship of the age was afforded by the step wells constructed on the lines of old Hindu wells, the finest extant specimen of which is Mata Bhowani. There are no other wells in the world that can compare with those step wells of Western India. One of the most beautiful of the provincial examples of Art is the tomb at Mahmudabad, erected in the reign of Bigarah for Mubarak Sayyid. Though small—it is only 94 ft. square exclusive of the porch—there is a simplicity about its plan, a solidity and balance of parts in the design " which has seldom been surpassed even in India". Comparatively of less merit was the tomb of Qutb-Ul-Alam at Batwa erected under the same regime. But it is remarkable for the introduction of new style. The arch supplies the place of the beam and gives in consequence increased dimensions to the building and it must be admitted with considerable beauty.....it is not a screen of arches hiding a columnar interior but one design uniform in all its parts. " One of the most elegant edifices of this period is the mosque and tomb of Bibi Achut Kiki at Hajipur on the banks of the Sabarmati. In it the adopted Hindu style is mixed with Moslem details but so perfectly amalgamated that it requires a practised eye to detect what belongs to the one style, what to the other." A new development in the Guzrati style is also noticeable from the mosque of Sayyid Ushman at Ushmanpur. The mosque is one of the first in Ahmedabad in which the minars are transferred from the middle position of the facade to its extremities ; it is also

without the usual three domes of the roof. Apart from the dome the style is strictly Hindu. It also belongs to what may be called the mixed style—the parent Hindu being so mixed with Moslem details "so perfectly amalgamated as to baffle detection." But by far the most wonderful building that came to being during the reign of Mahmud was Sidi Sayyid's Mosque. In form this mosque is unusually simple and chaste ; an inarched chamber five bays wide and three bays deep, its arches supported on squared pillars, or pilasters ; plain octagonal minarets at the two fore corners ; and the interior lighted by demi-lune windows of pierced stone work. Anything more simple could hardly be imagined but there is no mistaking the stamp of Guzrati genius in the well proportioned arches and superbly designed window screens. It is these screens that have made the mosque world famous. Ten of them are divided into square panes filled with ever varying foliate and geometric patterns. The other two are adorned with free plant and floral designs, unrivalled in India. "It would be difficult," says Burgess, " to excel the skill with which the vegetable forms are conventionalised just to the extent required for the purpose." At Agra and Delhi there are some nearly as " fine but none either so extensive or so exquisitely balanced." What make the windows supremely beautiful is the "unerring sense for rhythm with which the artist has filled his spaces and the skill with which he has brought the natural forms of the trees into harmony with their architectural setting." " It is more like a work of nature than any other architectural detail that has yet been designed ever by the best architects of Greece or of the middle ages." This is high praise no doubt but not any way more than it deserves. In the Sidi Sayyid mosque as well as in Bibi Achut Kiki and Ushman Musjids, the Hindu style is predominant, the only exception being the appearance of domes and the spaciousness it afforded. Though the arch and the vault were introduced in some tombs such as the tombs of Qutb-Ul-Alm and Mubarak Sayyid, the Guzrati architects were still working under the spell of ancient traditions of trabeate construction. But if the difficulty of compromising with Islamic ideals were felt over their tombs, still more was it felt over the designing of mosques. An additional stumbling block was provided by the minarets. It has sometimes disfigured notable buildings like the Jami mosque at Champanir by its overpowering heaviness and sometimes it has deadened the general effect of the facade by being placed in the middle. Subsequently as we have seen, the minarets have been removed from their usual place and erected at the extremities

of a building but it was not however until the minaret was transferred into an ornamental appendage that the aesthetic standpoint was successfully solved and then only at the expense of ability. Mosques with this form of ornamental minars made their appearance at Ahmedabad at the opening of the sixteenth century, one of the first specimens being the Shah Khub Sayyid Musjid. But a far more noted example was the Musjid and Ranza of Rani Sipari. It is judged by Fergusson to be the gem of Ahmedabad and in its class, one of the most exquisite buildings in the world, and the judgment is not exaggerated. It is also one of the most perfectly Hindu of the buildings of the city, no arch being employed either constructively or for ornament. The minars, as we have seen, are not minars in reality having no internal stairs and no galleries from which prayer could be recited. "They are pure ornaments, but of the most graceful kind." The charm of the building reside in two things : firstly in the unity of design and secondly in the neat perfection of details. "East or West it would be difficult to single out a building in which the parts are so harmoniously blended or in which balance, symmetry and decorative rhythm combine to produce a more complete effect". If not as great as the Parthenon it is a more perfect building the Erectheum at Athens, and though we have some Gothic chapels of great beauty there probably is not one that would not look coarse and plain if placed side by side with this mosque," (Fergusson). Considering how local tradition dominated the Guzrat architecture it is curious how little it affected the architecture of Mandu. In its main essentials the architecture evolved at Malwa was modelled closely on the principle of imperial architecture at Delhi. Some architects got their inspiration from the virile style of the Tuglaks ; others favoured the later style of Firoz Shah ; some again followed closely the contemporary buildings of the Sayyid and Lodi kings. But this does not mean that the buildings at Mandu were all slavish copies of the models. On the other hand they were truly living and full of purpose, as instinct with creative genius as the latter, and sometimes surpassing them in elegance and grandeur. The original capital of the state was Dhar. Though an old and venerated city Dhar retains no impression of its former greatness except the two mosques built wholly of Hindu remains. The Jami Musjid is an impressive building 119 ft. by 40 ft. and its roof is supported by Hindu pillars richly carved, and the three domes that adorn it are of purely Hindu form. The other one is the Lat Musjid supposed to have been meant for a Jayastambha but more probably for some useful con-

structive purpose. It is a notable example of the employment of large masses of iron by Hindus at a time when they were supposed to be incapable of any such mechanical exertion. The site on which Mandu is placed is one of the most imposing, and Mandugarh is the most magnificent of Indian fortresses. Its wonderful natural scenery, a tapestry of undulating hills and dales, gorgeous ravines and dark blue forest, serves as an apt back-ground for more refined and softer beauty of its buildings, and not the least of its charms lies in the halo of romance that has immortalised the love-story of Baz Bahadur and Rupamoti, the gallant chevalier and his beautiful mistress. But that is another tale. It was Husang Shah who first planned and began the magnificent Jami Mosque ; it was he again who probably built the Darbar hall known as the Hindola Mahall. Modelled as they were on the robust style of the Tuglaks, none of the buildings of the latter could aspire to the imposing grandeur of the Jami Masjid or the Hindola Mahall. The plan of the latter is T-shaped, the stem of the 'T' forming the Darbar Hall and the cross a group of buildings for the zenana. In length the Mahall measures 160 ft., in width, nearly 100 ft. The sloping buttressed walls, projecting balconies and oriel windows present an imposing appearance, and an equally noble effect is produced within by its wide-spanned arches.

The other building, the Jami Mosque is considered by Fergusson to be the finest in Mandu. "All the ornamental adjuncts that it possesses are good in themselves ; but they are wholly subordinate to the structural unity of the fabric. Internally the courtyard is almost a square measuring 162 ft. and in other respects the four sides of the court are similar, each being ornamented by eleven great arches of the same dimension and height, supported by pillars of one single block of red sand-stone. The only variety attemped is that the East side has two facades, the North and the South three; while the West has five, besides being ornamented by three great domes. "Compared to the Jami mosque of Ahmedabad," says Marshall, "the Jami Musjid at Mandu is lacking in poetry and inspiration." "But it is far from being open to the charge of dull monotony..... and if we contemplate the exterior with its arcaded facade and harmoniously proportioned porticoes along with weathering tints of pink and orange, it is impossible not to feel the eloquence of its silent appeal. The tomb of the founder which stands behind the mosque is the first great mausoleum in India which is internally and externally riveted with wide marble and it is really a grand specimen of the last resting place of a

stern old Pathan King. The palaces of Mandu are no less remarkable than its mosques. One of them the Jahaz Mahall probably built by Mahmud Shah is a massive structure 360 ft. long and 40 ft. broad. The splendid edifice with its fine arched halls, its roofs, pavilions and boldly designed reservoirs still forms one of the conspicuous landmarks in Mandu. To the reign of Mahmud can also be traced a college, a tower of victory, as also a tomb for the Khilijis built of white marble and freely adorned with coloured tile works. On the brink of precipice overlooking the valley of the Narbada is another palace called that of Baz Bahadur, of a more elegant character built probably by Nasir-ud-din Khilji. On the hill above, is what is known as Rupamati's Chatri from where this Eastern Juliet used to sing to her gallant Romeo. The Nahar Jharokha is to the north of the Hindola Mahall and outside is Dilwar Khan's Mosque, the oldest of its kind in Mandu. Scattered over the whole plateau are ruins of tombs and buildings of every class and so varied as to defy description. Here as elsewhere the available materials have exercised a marked influence upon the architecture, both red sandstone and marble being freely used in the construction of the buildings. Here we have the prevalence of the so-called arcuate style without admixture of trabeate structural methods. Unlike Ahmedabad the buildings clung steadily to the pointed arch style without any attempts at growing so successfully employed by the Moghuls.

As in the cases of Bengal and Mandu, the local style of Jaunpur was not evolved till its independence under Khwaja-i-Jalian. Most of the buildings of the fourteenth century were destroyed by Sikendar Lodi after his defeat of Husain in 1595 A. D. Only three had survived the shock and of these the Atala Mosque completed in 1408 was the earliest and finest example of the Jaunpur style. "Of all the mosques remaining at Jaunpur," says Fergusson, "the 'Atala Musjid' is the most ornate and the most beautiful." The site on which the mosque stood had been the site of a temple of Ataladevi and it was out of the materials of that temple that the mosque was built. The colonnades surrounding the court are five aisles in depth, the outer pillars as well as those near the court being double square pillars. The four intermediate rows are single but two-storeyed in height, the lower being occupied by three inner aisles belonging to the court and the fourth forming a series of cells opening outwardly with a verandah supported by the other row of pillars. Its typically Hindu arrangement induced Baron Hugel to call it a Buddhist monastery. Its gateways however are

of purely Saracenic style and the western face is adorned by three propylons of exquisite beauty. Marshall, in whose opinion, the mosque with its domes over the prayer chamber and its back wall, the tapering minarets, its 'Kangura Cornices', string courses, present the appearance of the Tuglak style of art, opines that there is nothing in the latter to match the imposing propylon screens of the former. "It is these features of the propylon screens and surface decorations that give the mosques of Jaunpur their distinctive character.....The idea of giving increased height and importance to the prayer chamber by throwing an arched screen across its facade had been initiated in Quwat-Ul mosque at Delhi. It was left however to the Architect of the Atala Mosque to make of the screen a feature so massive as to overshadow the quadrangle. This he did by devising the screen in the form of a gigantic propylon uncommonly like the propylons of ancient Egyptian temples". The main propylon was composed of two square minarets with an arch within the whole relieved by tier upon tier of arched recesses or trellised windows. To hide the glaring disparity between the central propylon and adjoining wings, two smaller ones of similar pattern were added to its right and left. The gateways that pierced the cloisters on three sides of the quadrangle were also designed to match the propylons. "If the object of the architect of the Musjid was to accentuate the importance of the prayer chamber and at the same time to produce something novel there is no doubt he succeeded remarkably well, for there are few mosques so imposing in their proportions or so arresting in style". Two other buildings of the Jaunpur style are of exceptional interest not only for their imposing appearance but also for the controversy which rages over their respective merits. The first of those, the Lal Darwaza, is comparatively smaller. The style is markedly Hindu; its cloisters are only one story in height by two in depth, the prayer chamber consists of only one dome, the ladies' galleries are placed alongside the central hall and the single propylon is lower in proportion to its width than that of Atala Mosque. While Fergusson praises the bold massiveness of its propylon and notes in the whole structure a happy admixture of Hindu and Moslem ideals of art, Marshall condemns it as dull and unimaginative, lacking in vigour and stylishness. The other structure, the Jami mosque, has been similarly pronounced to be of questionable merit. It is raised on a platform raised from 16 to 20 ft. above the ground level and consists of a courtyard 217 ft. by 211 ft. on the western side of which ranges the group of buildings forming the mosque. The prayer chamber of the mosque is

divided into five compartments viz., a square liwan in the centre surmounted by a dome and fronted by a massive propylon ; on either side of it a low pillared chamber supporting a ladies' gallery which thus looked down into the centre liwan, and beyond the gallery, a vaulted hall 30 ft. in length by 40 ft. in depth. The liwan with the dome is indeed of striking appearance and the vaulted wings are well conceived. "But", says Marshall, "no effort had been made to soften their hard silhouettes or to bring them into harmony with the central propylon. The weakness of the composition and the lack of rhythm is one of the glaring defects of the Jaunpur school. Another is the failure to visualise the subject in more than two dimensions at once or to design a building in the mass or with reference to every angle of view....." Few things in Moslem architecture are so anomalous as to the juxtaposition of the flat propylons and of the graceful domes immediately behind them. The architects of the Lal Darwaza and the Jami Musjid were Hindus and as such, they, in Marshall's opinion, failed to appreciate the innate beauty of the dome and the arch. But against this we have the older judgment of Fergusson who holds the mosques to be grand specimens of art. In his opinion, the Jaunpur school marks a happy fusion of Hindu and Islamic conceptions of architecture. Here was to be met in rare unity, appearance of massiveness and refinement "seldom to be met with anywhere and toally free from the coarseness which in other countries usually besets vigour and boldness of design". It is difficult to reconcile these opposing statements. All that can be said with confidence is that if the Jaunpur style was not as refined and chaste as that of Guzrat, it certainly possesses a distinctiveness and originality of its own which can not fail to interest the student of 'Medieval' art.

Jaunpur brings our account of provincial architecture of Indo-moslem India almost to a close. It is indeed difficult to give within this narrow range an adequate idea of all the interesting buildings of the period ; and to describe only those monuments of the Moslems as were situated at the main centres of their power, is to render an incomplete picture of their architectural achievements. Besides the monuments described above, there are scorces of edifices in less important places that are well worthy of attention from an interested student. We have left them out of this short tale, nor have we spoken of Kashmir and of those Deccan States south of the Vindhyas that form an important chapter in the evolution of Indo-Moslem architecture. Apart from these limitations, however, it has been our sole endeavour to enumerate such of those typical buildings as are suffi-

cient to give a general idea of the prevalent Indo-Moslem style of Medieval India, and thus to supply the connecting link between the old Hindu art and Imperial architecture under the Moghuls. This new type of architecture was not an alien growth. It springs from the soil and ripens in the atmosphere of Aryan India. To miss this cardinal factor in the evolution of Indian architecture is to misunderstand altogether its ideals and achievements. To quote Mr. Havell, the most sympathetic as well as the most far seeing of all those foreigners who have devoted themselves to the study of ancient India, 'it was a new Hindu Renaissance'. "The exquisite refinement of contour which Indo-Muhammadan Tomb-Builders achieved, and their comparative reticence in surface decoration, had their counterparts and prototypes in the marvellous profiles and massive generalisations with which the Indian Painter realised his ideal of the divine Buddha at Ajanta ; the inspiration of the Trimurti of Elephanta and of the Bronze Nataraja of the Tanjore temple is evident in the tombs of the Pathan kings and in the dome of the Tajmahall.....the crafts of the Indo-Muhammadan courts revived the finest traditions of Hindu culture in their wonderful mosques and palaces.....Ahmedabad was created by the craftsman of Rajputana ; the Gour of the Musalman Sultans was a new Lakhnauti, Benares was the mother of Jaunpur ; Dhar the mother of Mandu."

Medieval India is politically dead, but her sacred memory still lingers in the precincts of her temples and mosques. The lesson they teach is a glorious one. In sharp contrast to the jarring factions and petty squabblings that vitiate the present atmosphere, they tell us that salvation of India lies not in difference but in unity, in the supreme realisation of that sense of brotherhood, transcending caste and creed, fusing the two mighty races of Hindu and Musalman into one organic whole, permeated with a spirit that searches ever for the Sublime and the Beautiful. Will young India hearken to this clarion call of her past ? She may not ; but if she does, it will certainly be a panacea for all her ills.

OURSELVES

GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

The annual meeting of the Geological Institute was held on the 5th September at 2-30 P.M. Prof. S.L.Biswas took the chair which was afterwards occupied by Prof. H.C. Dasgupta. After the election of the office-bearers, it was decided that students of the 1st year and 2nd year Geography classes should also be included within the society. Mr. J.S.Bhaduri of the Sixth year Geology class read a highly interesting paper on Isostacy. The paper was written in Bengali and was accompanied by interesting lantern-projections. Another paper was read by Mr T. Roy of the Fourth year class dealing with Earth-quakes which is a topic of great interest now in view of the recent experiences. Both the papers were highly appreciated. The meeting dispersed after light refreshments.

J. S. BHADURI
Secretary

BASKET-BALL NEWS

This year we have got two teams competing in the Intermediate League conducted by Calcutta Y. M. C. A. Our 'A' team has played seven games till now out of nine, and has won five of them. The team has got every probability of winning the other two games also. Our 'B' team has played all the nine games and has won four of them. It is to be noted that most of our reverses were sustained early in August, when we could not put up our full team.

Special mention should be made of Santi Dutt, Chintamoni Chatterjee, Anil Sarkar, Susanta Sen and Suren Dutt Gupta. The first two by their skill as guards, and the last three by their skill as scorers have contributed materially to our success.

A long-standing grievance of Basket-ball players in our College is the wretched condition of ring-boards. Mr. S. C. Sen, our popular Physical Instructor, has kindly consented to see to the betterment of the boards next year.

KSHITI BHUSAN SEN
Secretary

OUR CONTEMPORARIES

We *acknowledge* with thanks the receipt of the following of our contemporaries:—

(1) "The Anand Parbat", Ramjas College Magazine, Delhi.
(2) The Benares Hindu University Magazine.
(3) "The Bhagsu", Government Intermediate College, Dharamsala.
(4) The Birla College Magazine, Pilani, Rajputana.
(5) The D. A. V. College Magazine, Lahore.
(6) "The Dayalbagh Herald", Radhasoami Educational Institute.
(7) "The Gordonian", Gordon College, Rawalpindi.
(8) The Maharaja's College Magazine, Ernakulam.
(9) The Narasinha Dutta College Magazine, Howrah.
(10) The Patna College Magazine.
(11) The Student's Chronicle and Serampore College Magazine
(12) St Xavier's Magazine, St. Xavier's College, Calcutta.
(13) "A Government College Miscellany", Government College, Mangalore.
(14) The Chittagong College Magazine.

CORRESPONDENCE

To

The Editor,
Presidency College Magazine.

Sir,

May I be permitted to seek the aid of your esteemed magazine for laying before the authorities a grievance shared with myself by many other students of the College?

It is about the Library. In view of the fact that those books which are most in demand are 'confined to the Library,' I think it would be a clear advantage to the students if Saturdays and Sundays are not treated differently from the other days of the week so far as the Library is concerned.

Thanking you in anticipation for the favour of publication,

I am,
Yours etc.
A Fourth-year Student.

2. 9. 30.

10/1/31

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NOTES AND NEWS

WITHIN a few days the College closes for the Christmas. With us the Christmas time has always been the best part of the year, when, after a hard term's work, a short period of rest and relaxation enables us to turn our eyes to the affairs of the world outside. The sittings of the Indian National Congress and of numerous other conferences, social, political, economic and educational, at this time of the year, have hitherto engaged our main attention and engrossed most of our thought. This year, however, things stand otherwise. The cloud that showed itself on the political horizon of India some time back, still lingers and has not yet transformed itself into the twice-blessed rain of peace and conciliation. Above matters essentially political, appear conspicuously the effects of the trade depression, which are making themselves felt acutely throughout the world and ten times more so in this poor country of ours. The slackening of trade and commerce, the abnormal fall in the price of jute and other agricultural products and generally speaking, the untold misery of the cultivators add such dark colours to the already gloomy picture of present-day Bengal, that none can escape the feeling that something has to be promptly and effectively done to remove the distress which prevails all over the country ; but nobody is sure as to what that something might be. We see the darkest of all pictures before us, but we do not know how to add a tinge of brightness to it. Great brains and powerful organizations, including the Government, are at work ; but no sign is as yet visible of any change for the better.

The depression continues ; the sufferings of the cultivator approaches unfathomed limits ; the bitterness of political strife persists tenaciously; and in the mean time, we 'look before and after and pine for what is not', while the thick mist of despondency closes over us.

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In spite of the abnormal conditions prevailing in the country, and the consequent financial embarassment of the Government of Bengal, we beg to emphasize once again that the high fee rate in the College has been proving a great handicap to the growth of its academic life. The results of Presidency College students in the University Examinations have not, for some time past, been quite worthy of the traditions of this institution; in particular, our performance in the Intermediate Examinations and in some subjects in the Degree Examinations of last year, has admittedly been very poor. The most potent cause that, to our mind, seems responsible for this fall is the high scale of fees charged here. To many a promising student coming from the mofussil, the high tuition fee stands as an unsurmountable bar to admission to the College. The part-fee studentships awarded by the College authorities are not sufficiently large in number to be fully effective ; besides, their distribution, under the present rules, leaves much to be desired. The number of students in the College is gradually falling down, and unless a change is made in the scale of fees before it is too late, the future of the College does not appear to be very encouraging. A lowering of the scale of fees may possibly mean an apparent fall in the income of the Education Department, just at the present moment ; but we have reasons to believe that the ultimate results will justify such a step being taken. As things stand now, the privilege of reading in Presidency College is open only to the rich and perhaps also to the better middle class. Wealth has upto now been sufficiently represented in the College ; it is now time that full representation was given to merit also.

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It falls to the lot of the Editor to record the deaths of some of our distinguished ex-students every time the Magazine appears in print. This time, too, we have to mourn the deaths of several 'old boys' who have shone in different spheres of life. By the death of Rai Jogendranath Sen Bahadur, Pleader, Sambalpore and President of the District Council for over thirty years, the College loses one of those ex-students, who

graduating in the early eighties of the last century, settled in the adjoining provinces and subscribed materially to their social and cultural advancement. The late Mr. Benodbehari Haldar joined business after obtaining his M. A. degree, and rose to be the leading paper merchant in the city. The late Mr. Sasadhar Roy was a lawyer of no mean repute, practising first in the District Courts at Comilla, and later in the Calcutta High Court. By the death of Principal Hemchandra Sanyal of Midnapore College, Bengal loses a veteran educationist, who, since 1888, had been continuously employed in the noble work of teaching.

Three brilliant ex-students of the younger generation have been cut off in the prime of their life. Dr. Gauranganath Banerjee, the news of whose death under most tragic circumstances (along with his wife and son) came to us, and to every one connected with the Univeristy, as a rude shock, was a distinguished old boy of Presidency College, who won the Premchand Raychand Scholarship in 1913 and the Doctorate in 1919. He served the Calcutta University with rare devotion, first as a Lecturer in History and then as the Secretary to the Council of Post-Graduate Teaching in Arts. For about fifteen years, he gave his best to the Department of Post-Graduate Teaching and to the cause of education in Bengal. The late Mr. Naresh Chandra Mitra was a rising advocate at Alipore, and lost his life under equally lamentable circumstances. The late Mr. Mritunjoy Chattejee was a successful lawyer and a reputed advocate of the Calcutta High Court, besides being connected with the activities of the Calcutta University Institute for many years.

Our sincere condolences to the bereaved families in each case.

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We offer our respectful congratulations to Sir Bhupendranath Mitra, K. C. I. E., lately Member in charge of Industries and Labour in the Viceroy's Executive Council and Chairman of the Banking Enquiry Commission, who has been appointed the High Commissioner for India in London to succeed Sir Atulchandra Chatterjee.

Lieutenant Bijay Prasad Singh Ray, M. A., B. L., M. L. C., of Chakdighi has been appointed Minister in charge of Local Self-Government in Bengal. Our cordial congratulations to him.

We congratulate Mr. Sukumar Basu, B. Sc., who graduated in 1929 from our College, on his being successful in the I. C. S. examination held in London in August last. It may be noted that he is the only can-

didate from Bengal who has been successful in the open competitions this year.

The Tata Educational Scheme seems to be generous this year in granting scholarships for study abroad to ex-students of our College. We have already mentioned in the last issue of the award of one of the scholarships to Mr. Nabagopal Das ; we come to learn that two other old boys—Messrs. Birendranath Sen, B. Sc., and Devaprosad Basu, B. Sc., have been awarded two more scholarships. Our congratulations to all the three recipients.

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We welcome Sir Jehangir Cooverji Coyajee back in our midst after two months' absence,—this time as the Principal of the College. He has been here as a Professor since 1911, and it would be presumption on our part to speak of his success as a teacher. The work he has done in connection with the Indian Fiscal Commission, 1921, and the Currency Commission, 1926, will be remembered by every serious student of Economics for a long time to come. We are extremely glad to find him placed at the head of the College which he has served for nearly twenty years now.

We also offer our hearty congratulations to him on his election to the Syndicate of the Calcutta University as one of the nominees of the Faculty of Arts.

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Since April last, there has been in progress a systematic process of sending out some of the very best teachers of our College as Principals to the mofussil,—teachers of whom Presidency College had rightly been so proud. Professor A. K. Chanda was the first member of the staff to be thus deported ; Professor K. Zachariah followed close. And now the final blow (we pray that it may really be the final) has fallen on the Mathematics Department. Professor B. M. Sen has been transferred to Rajshahi as Principal in place of Mr. T. T. Williams, who has gone on leave preparatory to retirement. While we congratulate him on his well-earned promotion, we cannot help feeling that his transfer is a calamity to our College. The Mathematics Department has lost its most distinguished member, the students an inspiring teacher and a sincere friend, and the College an extremely loveable personality. Professor Sen was full of enthusiasm for all corporate activities in the College, like those of the

College Union, the Debating Club, the Dramatic Society and the Rabindra Parishad; and those who had ever had come in contact with him, either within the class-room or outside, realise now, at a very great cost, what Professor Sen had been to them and to the College, all these years. He has been succeeded by Mr. N. C. Ghose as the Head of the Department. His place as an elected representative of the staff on the Governing Body of the College has been filled by Mr. D. G. Chattoraj, the Treasurer of the Magazine, to whom we offer our congratulations.

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There have been other important changes in the staff. Rai Hem Chandra De Bahadur of the Department of Philosophy has also been transferred to Rajshahi, as Vice-Principal and Senior Professor of Philosophy. The Rai Bahadur is a veteran in the Education Department, and was another prominent figure in the College, popular alike with his students and his colleagues. His transfer also means a great loss to us.

Dr. P. D. Shastri has rejoined the Philosophy staff. He is no stranger to us, having been a Professor here from 1912 to 1926, and again in 1928. In welcoming him back in our midst we welcome an old friend. Dr. Jyotirmoy Ghosh, M. A. (Cal), Ph. D. (Edin.), has joined the Mathematics staff as a temporary Professor in the vacancy caused by the retirement of Professor S. P. Das. In him we hail a brilliant ex-student of the College. Mr. Abdul Khaleque, M. A., has joined the Arabic and Persian staff in the post that lay vacant after the transfer of Professor Zia-ul Huq. Mr. Surendra Nath Das, M. Sc., has again been appointed to act in the Bengal Educational Service as a Professor of Mathematics, and Mr. Dwijendra Nath Roy, M. Sc., acts again as the Assistant in the Astronomical Observatory.

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It gives us the greatest pleasure and pride to reprint the following from the "Science News Letters" published from New York:

Beauty From Castor Oil.

Castor oil as a thing of joy and beauty is the promise held in recent experiments in the manufacture of dyes from fat, conducted by (Prof.) Rajendra N. Sen and (Mr.) Ashutosh Mukherji, in the chemical laboratory of the Presidency College, Calcutta.

From castor oil was obtained a brown powder, which gave an orange tint to wool and silk. Cocoanut oil was also tried and yielded a brighter orange color, while olive oil made a brown dye for wools and stained silks in various shades of red.

The method used in the manufacture of the new dye was developed by Mr. Sen. It consists in using (condensing with resorcinol) esters of benzoic, salicylic, and other acids instead of the acids themselves in the process. Chemically, fats are also esters, although they are quite different from the simpler esters of benzoic and salicylic acids.

High yields obtained in the laboratory and the ease with which the dyes may be manufactured from fats suggest that the new process will be of commercial importance. Oil fats have an advantage over coal tar, now widely used in dye making, in that the supply is continually replenished by nature, in the tropics or on farms and plantations. Hence there is no danger of exhausting the supply, even in the remote future. Also many of the oils can be obtained at a much lower price than ordinary dye materials.

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We regret to learn that Professor Asutosh Maitra has relinquished charge of the Treasurership of the Presidency College Athletic Club, owing to pressure of work. The able and efficient way in which he managed the affairs of the Athletic Club has earned for him the admiration of all well-wishers of the College. We understand, Professor M. Mahfuzul Huq has succeeded him as the Treasurer. No better choice could have been made, and we are sure that under his tactful and efficient guidance the Athletic Club will continue to prosper. We take this opportunity to offer him our congratulations on his selection, by the Government of India, as a co-opted member of the Indian Historical Records Commission.

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One of the most pleasant and proud privileges of the Editor is his correspondence with the ex-members of the College staff. Principal H. R. James, to whom the College Magazine owes its origin, has been, all these fourteen years since his retirement, taking the keenest and kindest interest in the affairs of the College in general and in the Magazine in particular. A letter which he has written to us is simply inspiring; we feel, we hear a message from an old friend, philosopher and guide, who, though far away from us, continues to feel passionately for those institutions in the College in the creation of which he played the most important part. Our reference last time to our financial troubles has worried him

very much, and he has hastened to make a nice donation to the Magazine Fund. We do not know how we can adequately express our heartfelt thanks to him.

Principal T. S. Sterling, who is now the Head of the Department of English in the Egyptian University at Cairo, also takes a kind interest in the Magazine. He sends us his best wishes for a happy and fruitful year of office. We feel particularly happy when we get these messages of good will from our well-wishers abroad.

We have also received encouraging letters from Principals A. K. Chanda, K. Zachariah and B. M. Sen. Our best thanks are due to them for having so kindly complied with our request to send us their photographs, which are printed in this issue.

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Calcutta University cannot but feel proud in having as one of her members a scientist whose researches in Physics have won for him the highest honour that any scholar can aspire for. The Nobel Prize for Physics has this year been awarded to Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, F. R. S., Palit Professor of Physics in the University College of Science. The splendid work that Sir C. V. Raman has done to further human knowledge about accoustics and about the molecular scattering of light has brought him fitting rewards from different centres of culture. In 1928, he was awarded the Mattencci Medal by the Italian Society of Science, Rome, and only a few weeks ago it was announced that he was selected for the award of the Hughes Medal. But the greatest was yet to come; and today Sir C. V. Raman is the first Asian to get the Nobel Prize in Physics. It is so very gratifying to find an Indian scientist and a luminary of our own University ranking equally with Rontgen, Marconi and Einstein, the previous recipients of the prize. We convey to Sir C. V. Raman the warmest and the most respectful congratulations from the heart of our hearts.

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The Centenary Celeration of the Scottish Church College, which was held on the 12th of December last, naturally brings back the memory of Dr. Alexander Duff, who, in 1830, started his first educational institution in this city. Dr. Duff was one of those great men, who thought example to be better than precept and practice better than theory. So when Lord William Bentinck, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Lord Macaulay were busy-

ing themselves with schemes for an educational system in India, Dr. Duff took a small house in Chitpore and began to translate their ideas into actual practice. That small school, started on the 13th of July, 1830, has, after passing through various stages, developed into the present Scottish Church College, one of the foremost institutions under the University of Calcutta. Dr. Duff, like David Hare, deserves to be remembered more as one of the makers of educated Bengal than as the founder of any particular institution ; his is a memory which is sacred not only to the students of the College he founded, but also to all who are reaping the benefits of higher education in this province.

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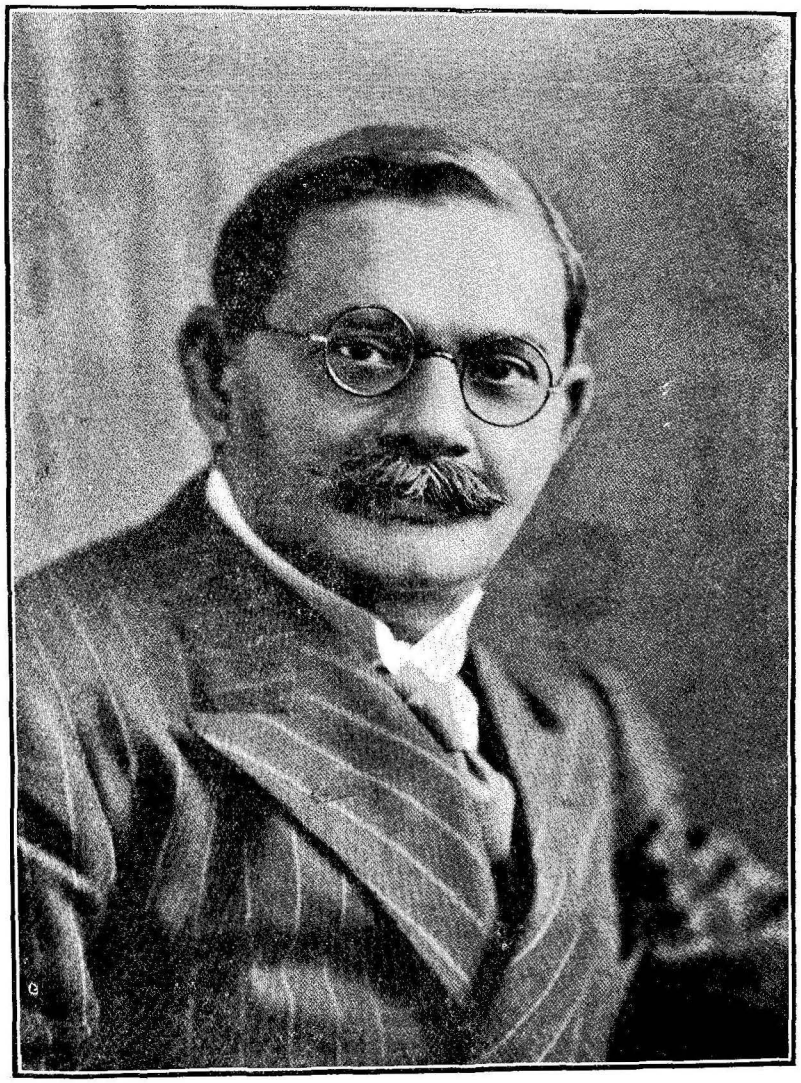
Our "Founders' Day" comes off on the 20th of January. It is a great day for the College. One hundred and fourteen years ago, on this date, the Hindu College was started with the purpose of "tuition of the sons of respectable Hindus in the English and Indian languages and in the literature and science of Europe and Asia." The 'founders', whose memory is recalled every year on that date, were Maharaja Tejchandra Bahadur of Burdwan, Babu Gopeemohan Thakoor, Babu Joykissen Sing, Babu Radhamadhab Banerjee and Babu Ganganarain Doss. The work of these pioneers does not require any encomium from us ; it is only in the fitness of things that we should, at least for one day in the year, invoke the memories of those to whom the College owes its foundation, and to whom all Presidency College men owe the deepest debts of gratitude. The 114th anniversary of the foundation of the College will be celebrated shortly after the Half-yearly and Test examinations are over ; and we expect, students and members of the staff would spare no pains to make the function a complete success.

B. D.



Principal Sir Jehangir C. Coyajee

WEIRDNESS OF ATMOSPHERE IN CHRISTABEL, PART II.

PROFESSOR S. K. BANERJEE, M.A., PH.D.

A strain of criticism, that has almost attained the rank of unquestioned truth, so often has it been voiced by sundry critics, is urged against Christabel. It is to the effect that the atmosphere of foreboding and suspense that is so admirably kept up in Part I has not been carried over into Part II, and that in the latter we miss the spectral quality of the note that haunts every line of the earlier section. The magic web which was woven round about us in Part I,—the carefully subdued and distilled presentation of the real world, the delicate, dream-like quality, and suffusion of a pale moonlight over the whole atmosphere—is snapped asunder; "a flood of daylight is let in upon the spectral landscape" and a much more coarse and realistic note is struck. The change is unmistakable, and it is quite as well to confess to it. But the real question before us is whether it is reasonable to expect that the magic web should be spun on to the very end, and the exact note of enchantment made to persist right through. For one thing, it would be too exacting a demand on the poet; the thin, vague atmosphere of Part I, shot through with weird suggestions, is hardly fit for prolonged breathing; one can hardly expect that the poet should drive the grosser and more realistic elements of his being inside his skin for any protracted spell, and cast no shadow behind him. Nor does this over-refinement, this projection of the spell of midnight hush into the sunny hours of the day seem necessary from the artistic standpoint. Can any one expect that the exact thrill he experienced in a dark hour of the night, when the very breath of a ghostly presence seemed to fan his cheeks as it were, should be carried over by him in all its freezing intensity into the normal hours of the day, with the forces of life stirring busy about him? The sensation must be thinned down into a vague memory, or transformed into, and linked with, the other abiding forces of his soul, as in the case of the Ancient Mariner all his weird and horrible experiences sank down into his nature to emerge as a vital and quickened realisation of a homely moral truth. The ghost that haunts and waylays us in the dark may not need any coarser embodiment than the passing whisper of the night-breeze, a mist that creeps through the wayside bushes, or even the loud beating of one's own heart that sound like a weird foot-fall heard in the distance; the thin-

nest gossamer of fancy is robe enough for it. But the elf that crosses our threshold and installs itself by our hearth, and stalks about our day's works must put on flesh and blood, simulate an affinity to human conditions of life, and spin out human ties with us. It must borrow human accents, and speak under the guise of familiar faces. This is exactly the kind of change that has passed over the atmosphere of Christabel in Part II. The serpent-lady, who, in Part I, casts a pure spell, a bewitching glamour upon us, whose real nature is shadowed forth by ghostly suggestions, and who betrays in the earlier stages a nervous agitation in her dealings and movements, settles down, in the succeeding part to a fixed line of policy, and puts on a permanent mask under cover of which to carry on her insidious campaign. She impersonates the daughters of the estranged friend of the knight, and with true devilish art succeeds in driving a wedge between father and daughter. The first blow is struck, and we wait breathlessly for developments. She is thus transformed from a pure enigma, and undiluted wonder to an active campaigner who knows the weak points of her victims and takes advantage of them with singular adroitness. Hence it is but quite natural that the atmosphere should be more humanised, should breathe more strongly of familiar history and geography, should approximate more closely to the real life of a mediaeval feudal castle, just as the witch becomes more a creature of flesh and blood. Moreover mystery and the normal life of feudal times are but the upper and the under side of the garment of the Middle Ages; it is not rarely that in the real life of the period the brooding enchantment of the night alternates with the coarse, boisterous activities of the day. Hence in Part II we are introduced to a real fedual castle, with the haughty and short-tempered Baron, the Bard of prophetic vision, the retainers and armed retinue and all other accessories complete, and the spell that lay so dense in the night is thinned down into the symbolism of dreams and omens, and takes up a more human and familiar look.

It is scarcely right to expect that the mystery should continue as dense and impenetrable at the end of a long story as at its beginning, and would not allow light even through a single chink. A mystery loses a part of its baffling nature, even when we simply walk round it; for though we may not probe into its deepest secrets, we yet know more about it than at first: we learn to adjust its relations to man, the exact tone of its emotional appeal; in Ancient Mariner we are no nearer the intellectual solution of the mystery towards the end; we do not know the exact causes that set the

supernatural springs in motion; but we know more about its meaning to us, the way in which it can stir us to the depths of our being and bring latent elements of character to the surface ; so that the weirdness of the beginning is considerably thinned down, and its final impression is absorbed into the stock of our human experiences. Thus, from all points, it seems distinctly unfair to complain against the change of atmosphere, as this is quite the normal thing in cases where the supernatural is brought into a prolonged contact with human affairs, and made to revolve round the destinies of man. The Devil in our home is not exactly the same as the Devil straight from the Pit.

It would obviously be unfair to apply to a fragment the test that is brought to bear upon a finished poem; and in the absence of any light it is idle to speculate upon the turn which things would have taken in Christabel, the directions of its development and the nature of its end. It has already been seen how the story has been broken off at a very critical point. The witch lady has insinuated the sacred family circle and has struck her first blow in setting the father against the daughter ; it is now time for the guardian-angels of Christabel to furnish a counter-blast, and we all wait, with breathless suspense, for the other party to lay their cards upon the table. But, as ill luck would have it, we wait in vain ; and in spite of repeated attempts during the remaining years of his life, Coleridge could not resume the thread of the narrative, nor furnish any clue to a possible line of continuation. We are not thus in a position to say how far the change of atmosphere in Part II was practically justified by a reference to the need of the story ; how the mystery would have been adjusted to the various stages of elucidation and in what shape it would have persisted at the end of the narrative.

CALCULATION OF THE YEAR IN ANCIENT INDIA

PROFESSOR NILMANI CHAKRAVARTI, M.A.

MANY of my young readers are not perhaps aware of the different ways in which the year was calculated in the ancient times in our country. They perhaps think that all along there was current a year of 365 days and it was calculated by the revolutions of the Earth round the sun. A long period elapsed since the dawn of civilisation before the present system of calculation came into vogue. Various means were resorted to to calculate the year. In this paper I hope to deal with some of them.

It must be said here that the ancient Aryans made some advance in the study of Astronomy which was considered by them as a *Ved'nga.* They knew the equinoxes, the solstices, the phases of the moon etc. They knew that twelve lunar months which even now with the Mahomedans make a year, fall short of the solar year by about 11 days, and they introduced an *intercalary month* (*malamas*) to equalise the two calculations. They observed the courses of some of the planets and some of the fixed stars. But their astronomy was Geocentric. They believed that the Earth was fixed and the heavenly bodies were moving round the Earth. The credit for the discovery of the diurnal motion of the Earth round its axis is due to Āryabhata who was born in Pātaliputra in 476 A.D. He also explained the causes of the eclipse of the sun and the moon.

The year in India now-a-days begins from the month of Vaiśākha, but in ancient times it was not so. The year used to begin from the Vernal equinox. Now, this equinox is not a fixed day. It has precesion. Now-a-days the vernal equinox falls in the month of Chaitra or in the constellation Chitrā. In one of the Vedic hymns we find that the vernal equinox was in the constellation Mrigaśirā and in another we find that it was in the Krittikā. The year at one time used to commence from the Mārgaśīrsa which is even now popularly called Agrahāyana or the first month of the year. The year was divided into three seasons, twelve months and 360 days. In the Rigveda I. 164 there is a riddle which may be translated thus :—

"Twelve tyres, one wheel, three naves: who knows that?
In it there are altogether about three hundred and sixty movable pegs."
The twelve tyres mean the twelve months, the one wheel is the year, the three naves are the three seasons and the movable pegs are roughly the three hundred sixty days. The name for the month, *masa*, comes from the base *mas* which ultimately comes from the root *ma*, to measure. The base *mas* used to mean the moon which was the measurer of time and has survived in the classical sanskrit base *chandramas* or the delightful or bright measurer. So it is evident that the month was measured by the moon. There were two ways of calculating the month, *viz.*, *Amānta* or ending in the new-moon and *Purnimānta*, ending in the full-moon. The latter form of calculation was probably earlier as the word *Purnamāsa*, which is connected with Pūrnamas, means the full month. Even now the Mahomedan months are calculated with reference to the moon. After the new-moon day when the moon becomes first visible, the month is ended and from the next day the next month commences. The Aryans in very early times however came to know that twelve full moons do not complete the solar year. Therefore as I have said before, they introduced a thirteenth month sometimes. Even at the present day this practice is followed and in every third year we introduce in our almanac a *malamās* or intercalary month to equalise the solar and lunar years. A reference to this thirteenth month is to be found in a hymn in the Rigveda addressed to Varuṇa who is one of the earliest of the Aryan gods. It is difficult to say when this method of calculation was first introduced. Some scholars are of opinion that the Aryans borrowed this from the Chaldeans.

Another interesting method of calculating the year in ancient times was by the performance of sacrifices. The Aryans used to perform various sacrifices, lasting from one day to several years. The bigger sacrifices used to be called *Satras*. One such sacrifice was the *Gavāmayana* (cows' walk). This sacrifice used to last 360 days. The sacrifice was divided into two-halves, each half lasting 180 days and the ceremonies in the first half used to be repeated in the second half almost in the reversed order. The two halves were separated from each other by a central or *Viṣuvan* day which stood by itself and was not calculated within the 180 days. The Gavāmayana sacrifice used to be celebrated in the following way :—

First Half.

1. The introductory *Atirātra* ... 1 day

2.	The Cāturvimśa day (the ārambhanīya or Prāyaniya day) the real beginning of the sacrifice.	1 day
3.	Four Abhiplava followed by one preṣṭhya ṣaḷaha each month for 5 months	150 days
4.	Three Abhiplava and one pṛeṣṭhya ṣaḷaha	24 days
5.	The Abhijit day	1 day
6.	The three Svarasāman days ...	3 days
		180 days
7.	The Viṣuvan day	

Second Half

8.	The three Svarasāman days ...	3 days
9.	The Viśvajit day	1 day
10.	One Pṛeṣṭhya and three Abhiplava ṣaḷahas	24 days
11.	One Pṛeṣṭhya and four Abhiplava ṣaḷaha, each month for four months	120 days
12.	Three Abhiplava ṣaḷahas one Goṣṭoma one Āyuṣṭoma and one Daśarātrā	30 days
13.	The Mahāvrata day ...	1 day
14.	The concluding Atirātra ...	1 day

The most interesting items in the above programme are the ṣaḷahas, or groups of 6 days five of which used to make a month of thirty days. The Saptāha or the week, with the seven days named after the names of the heavenly bodies, was then unknown. The days of the ṣaḷaha used to be differentiated by the performance of sacrifices. The ṣaḷaha was divided into two halves. In the first three days the Jyotiṣṭoma, Goṣṭoma and Āyuṣṭoma sacrifices were performed one after another and in the second three days they were performed in the reverse order, *viz.*, Goṣṭoma Āyuṣṭoma and Jyotiṣṭoma. Thus the ṣaḷaha lasted from one Jyotiṣṭoma to another.

From the above description of the Gavāmayana sacrifice we get a year of 360 or 361 days and 12 months. But in the Jāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa of of the Sāmaveda there is a story from which it appears that the year at one time consisted of ten months. But we do not find any detail of its calculation. A year of ten months with a long night of one month and a long day of one month is possible in some polar region. Nevertheless we find traces of a year of ten months among other peoples also. Plutarch records a tradition that the Romans calculated a year of ten months and that the King Numa added the months January and February. Even now the name of the last month is December or the tenth month. September, October and November imply the 7th, 8th and 9th months.

In ancient times the year used to be calculated by observing the motions of stars and planets also. There are traces of calculations from the movements of Jupiter or *Bṛihaspati*, Saturn or Śaṇi and the Great Bear or *Saptarṣi*. The calculation by watching the movements of the *saptarṣis* is still current in *Kāshmir* and the calculation by the movement of Bṛihaspati is to be found in many parts of India.

Bṛihaspati goes from one *rāśi* or division of the solar zodiac into another in one year and in 12 years performs a complete revolution. This is known as the 12 years' cycle of Jupiter. But there was another bigger cycle of 60 years which corresponded to five 12 year-cycles. Each year of the 60 years' cycle was separately named. It is interesting to note that the Chinese as well as the Tibetans who probably borrowed from the Chinese had a twelve-year-cycle as well as a sixty-year-cycle of Jupiter and the years were separately named. But their method of naming was peculiar. The names of the years of the twelve-year-cycle were derived from the names of twelve beasts, viz., hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, ape, bird, dog, hog, mouse, ox and tiger. In the sixty-year-cycle the names of the animals have been combined with the names Fire, Earth, Iron, Water and Wood, thus making the number sixty. It must be said here that there is a difference between the solar year and the year of the Jupiter. According to Garga 170 solar years correspond to 175 years of Jupiter. According to Varāha 172 years of Jupiter equal $170\frac{5}{11}$ years of the Sun. Thus in every 86 years one year of Jupiter has to be expunged in order to equalise with solar calculation.

The Indians in very early times became acquainted with the movements ofthe saptarṣi stars. According to the Purāṇas, the Great War of

the Bhārata took place when the saptarṣis were in the constellation Maghā. According to the astronomers there are 27 *nakṣatras* and the saptarṣis complete their revolution in 2700 years remaining one hundred years in each nakṣatra. This era is still used in parts of Kashmir, and in the Rājataraṇgiṇi, Kalhaṇa has used this era. Another name for the era is loka-kāla. One peculiarity of reckoning the era is that it is never calculated beyond 100 years. When a century in completed it is dropped and the calculation proceeds from the year 1. In some places we find the year of the Saptarṣi era has been given along with the Śakakāla or Śakābda. Kalhaṇa in one place in the Rājatarangiṇi says that the 24th year of the *loka-kāla* corresponds to the year 1070 of the *śakakāla*. From such synchronous statements the expired centuries of the era can be determined.

In the first chapter of the Manusamhitā we find mention of four varieties of years, *viz.*, *Mānuṣa*, *Pitṛya*, *Daiva* and *Brāhma*. Of these the *Mānuṣa* or human year is known to every one. But what of the other three ? Are they purely mythical or are they based on calculation ? I am unable to give any explanation as to the *Brāhma* year. But regarding the other two, *viz.*, the *Daiva* and *Pitṛya*, explanation can be given. According to Manu a human year makes one day of the gods and the *Uttarāyana* is the day and the Daksināyana is the night. Thirty such days *i.e.* thirty human years make one month of the gods and 12 such months or three hundred sixty human years make one year of the gods. The possible explanation of this is that the gods are supposed to live on the Sumeru Mountain *i. e.*, the North Pole where there is one continuous day for six months and a long night for six months and thus at the abode of the gods or the North Pole one day and night is the same as one human year. Here however the words Uttarāyaṇa and Dakṣiṇāyaṇa are to be taken in a sense different from that which is given to them. Nowadays Uttarāyaṇa means the passage of the sun from the Tropic of Capricorn to the Tropic of Cancer, when the sun takes a northerly course and Dakṣiṇāyaṇa means the passage of the sun from the Tropic of Cancer to the Tropic of Capricorn, when the sun takes a southerly course. But to understand the day and night of the gods we must take the word Uttarāyaṇa to mean the six months during which the sun remains in the north of the equator and is visible from the North Pole and Dakṣiṇayana to mean the six months during which the sun goes to the south of the equator and is invisible at the North Pole.

The day of the Pitṛis is a human month, according to Manu, the day being the dark fortnight and night the bright fortnight. Thirty such days and nights or 30 human months or $2\frac{1}{2}$ years make one month of the Pitṛis and 12 such months or thirty human years make a year of the Pitṛis. An explanation of this is possible. The planet Saturn remains in one *Rāśi* for two years and a half and in thirty years completes the cycle. The year of the Pitṛis may be taken to be measured by the cycle of Saturn.

Thus we find that in ancient times the year was calculated by observing the sun, the moon, the planets Jupiter and Saturn, the star Saptarṣi and by means of the sacrifice *Gavāmayana.*

WORLD PROBLEMS

DEBENDRA NATH GHOSE—*Fifth Year Economics.*

THERE comes in the life of mankind at every stage of its progress the ever recurring question: How will the world outlive the present impasse? History furnishes numerous occasions on which the world stood aghast at the sweep of circumstances threatening the existing order of things. In the throes of the Great War the world panted and gasped and when it was over the world was no less perplexed to bring order amidst the chaos and confusion that prevailed in the relations of different polities and in the world economy. On the downfall of Napoleon, the European powers were confronted with a like situation though of a smaller proportion. But the underlying unity of the occasions indicates a curious fact that in the long and unending path of progress there lies before mankind a stumbling block which wellnigh overwhelms it. To-day also the world stands in such a situation; it looks gloomy and exhausted just as after the Armistice when peace came and the booming of armaments stopped. Problems of far-reaching complexity are now before the world very much in the same way and its future depends on their successful solution. But this time no great war, no revolution nor

the downfall of a great diplomatic personality accounts for this world-wide apprehension under the shadow of thickening problems that threaten to disturb the peace of the world. But the world has got to face them and solve them as best as it can.

A common depressing outlook is the characteristic feature of world business to-day. No country has been lucky enough to escape the clutches of everhaunting unemployment. The nightmare is holding every land in its grip and the ministers of all countries are busy devising means to combat it. But its grip is becoming tighter and a revision of the economic policy stands before the perplexed governments as an insoluble problem. England has been experiencing for years together the growing wail of unemployment and her political parties are engaged in a fretful and lengthening debate as to its redress. After years of uninterrupted prosperity by a successful economic policy which dominated the nineteenth century world, Great Britain seems to awake to-day to this horrible nightmare. Statesmen are seriously out to remedy this state of things by a "big scheme for dominion settlement for curing unemployment." The Imperial Conference which has just concluded its session has been earnestly looked up to to give a shape to the scheme. With the concurrence of the Dominions emigration in mass line and creation in the unsettled parts of the Empire entirely new settlements are expected to be a hopeful remedy for unemployment. Efforts have also been made to devise a developed scheme of inter-imperial trade by mutual tariff preferences. In other countries besides England, not to speak of India, unemployment is more or less on the increase and the U. S. A.—the land of overflowing prosperity, is not an exception. Quite recently the heads of the Bank of England, Bank of France and Reichsbank were going to meet to discuss measures for the alleviation of the worldwide business depression. This gloomy feature has been rendered more so by the unhealthy competition of powers of the world to capture economic markets. And to evade defeat most of them are raising tariff walls to the disadvantage of the world over.

In the sphere of politics the ominous complexity of problems is no less formidable. The conflicting political tendencies have made it well-nigh impossible to secure social peace and tranquility. The policy of the Soviet Russia has almost remained even to this day the "pariah" as it were of the community of states. Except a few most of the governments have not recognised diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union whose doctrine

of socialism or the dictatorship of the proletariat is a veritable dread to all other governments on the globe. Yet despite their utmost vigilance the flow of Bolshevism seems to steal into their states to frighten them out of their senses. Nevertheless Bolshevism remains to-day a very baffling problem and inspite of our complete ignorance of the future we may be sure that the future generations will have much ado to solve it. The Bolsheviks are reported to have started to work a comprehensive scheme of national education and economic development ; the measure of success they have attained in this novel experiment in the history of politics is a thing of varying opinions ; but their methods will fail to meet the approval of all. Poet Rabindranath during his recent visit to Russia commented while paying tribute to their aims that they have still inherited the "legacy of Czarist terrorism". It is not surely a sign of the millennium the Bolsheviks are dreaming. But their influence in some form or other has already exerted its full force in the political life of other countries. Germany lying very close to Russia has of late proved to have imbibed the Bolshevik spirit. Her political matters are moving very rapidly. The recent General Election has brought a complete confusion in Germany's political life. The sweeping victory of the National Socialist party (Fascists) are going to create an unprecedented situation in the Reichstag, which will have over two hundred Deputies of National Socialist, German National and Communist parties. Their proclaimed contempt of parliamentarism is very likely to result in violence. The German Fascists favour, not a monarchy, but a dictatorship on the Mussolinian lines. Herr Hitler, the Fascist leader has recently uttered, "Two or more Reichstag elections and and we have a National Socialist uprising. We will then no longer have a treaty which was compulsorily forced on us. We will take up our position and by complete evasion we shall by all means break the Treaty. We shall then have revolution." Evidently Hitler and his party want to establish in Germany a dictator like Mussolini ; they want to revive military Prussianism ; part of their programme is to repudiate the Versailles Treaty and the Reparations agreement and they are heading straight for revolution. Now this likely revolution will spread—no one knows how far. The violation of the Treaty of Versailles and the Reparations agreement is sure to set the world again ablaze. Added to it is the speculation rife in some quarters of the likely return of the Ex-Kaiser, now an exile in Holland, the law forbidding his return to Germany having been repealed last year.

The ascendancy of a party having a frank predilection for dictatorship in politics raises an interesting question : Is democracy safe ? The answer will be a dark commentary to the governments of Italy, Russia, Turkey, Portugal and some other countries. One of the slogans on which the War was fought was to make the world safe for democracy. But by a strange irony of fate dictatorships are now ruling with a strong hand as an aftermath of the War. The fall of Rivera and that of Irrogoen, the president of Argentine Republic, however, have left an unmistakable sing of interrogation after every dictatorship. But the turn of affairs in Germany and the thinly veiled dictatorships in several other countries signify danger to democracy.

There is also a danger to the general welfare of mankind from the racial exclusiveness which has been systematically influencing the political activities of some states. The present century has seen the triumph of liberal ideas in the creation of the League of Nations and many a peace conference ; but still the narrowing element in nationalism has not departed from the "liberalized" world. The "colour-bar", "whitemanism", "racial antagonism" etc, are the expressions which have not yet become the thing of the past. In South Africa for a long time past Asiatics are being treated very ungenerously. A visit of Gokhale to the Union and the pressure exercised by Lord Crewe, resulted in the passing of an Act of 1913 which met only some of the minor grievances. Then after years of agitation some agreements were reached ; but still the reactionary Colour Bar Bill of General Hertzog could be passed into law in 1926. The Imperial Conference of that year laid down some extenuating conditions, but the fate of the Indians remains anything but satisfactory. At present the Transvaal Asiatic Tenure Bill which is in process of being passed is calculated to bring about "segregation, confiscation and ruination" of Indians. The position of the Indians in East Africa also is growing more and more intolerable every day. "No one who visits Kenya", said the Rt. Hon. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri in his report regarding his mission in East Africa, "can fail to be struck by the utter lack of mutual understanding in political outlook between the Indians and the European communities". Coming nearer home, we find that in Ceylon too the Indians are going to be practically disenfranchised. Mr. Munzru's resolution affecting the Indian franchise in view of the constitutional reforms shortly to the introduced in that land is frankly anti-Indian. In other dominions such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand anti-Asiatic legislation has successfully ousted the

Asiatics. But Canada adopted a novel course of refusing other Asiatics save the Japanese whom the Federal Government refused to antagonize. At present only 150 Japanese are annually admitted into Canada while 400 were formerly.

In the British Empire such antagonism exists inspite of the pious wishes of liberal-minded statesmen to create a common concord and community of interests among the members of the Empire. Apart from the countries which have not received the boon of self-government in the shape of Dominion Status, the Dominions though not on the war-path are not pulling on very well with the Imperial Government. The Empire is not so hale and hearty as one would like it to be. The idea of separation from the Empire has caught the imagination of more than one Dominion. At the Imperial Conference of this year, which has just been concluded, while the premiers of other Dominions uttered sympathy and co-operation, Mr. Gillingham of the Irish Free State sounded a discordant note when he said, "For us the recognition of our position as a free and sovereign state comes before all other considerations". Apart from the internal state of things, this loosely connected Empire with its divergent interests which demand immediate adjustment is itself a great problem in world politics.

Another problem of a similar nature, but of far-reaching consequence, is likely to be generated in near future though it is still in the conception of statesmen. I mean the Briand Scheme of the United States of Europe which has of late attracted the attention of the four corners of the globe to the League Assembly ; in its recent session the delegates of the League-members expected to witness its full-fledged birth. But the originator of the scheme met opposition from different quarters as to the details of its making and could not so impress on the League as he should have done. Besides, statesmen saw through the scheme a real menace to world-peace. Viscount Cecil justly wrote in the Petit Journal, "*Europe contra mundum* would be a more formidable menace to peace than the present rivalry of nations. Even a fiscal union of Europe with the inevitable tariff barriers would be a danger to the world". The Indian delegate to the League Assembly, the Maharaja of Bikanir has also spoken against the Briand Scheme, holding that the unorganized peoples of Asia and Africa cannot but be afraid of a pan-European Federation. The Russian Government too are veiwing the scheme as an European combination against the Soviet Union. Obviously all this does not augur well for the attainment of world-peace.

As to peace the world's optimism may have spent itself already. The time is out of joint and the League of Nations which was born to set it right is in the mood of Hamlet to-day. The League has found itself impotent to solve the great problem for which it came into being. The Kellogg peace pact, the naval and disarmament conferences have not added much to the structure of peace, except rousing some pious intentions and expectations. The question of disarmament which is the first and foremost condition of peace is yet a dream. The Kellogg pact by leaving 'defence' and 'sanction' wars has practically made itself useless and an "airy nothingness" as Mr. Wells would like to call it. Diplomacy so far has only drawn the attention of the several powers to their individual armaments and thereby has only served to encourage "competing building". If an accurate statistical account of the world's armaments be taken we shall see that there has been but insignificant reduction. Then shall we accuse the League for such "unsuccess" in the matter of disarmament and peace? The League itself is strong in proportion as the Governments that belong to it are animated by League spirit. It is weak in proportion as those Governments forget the purposes of the League and subordinate international concord to their own immediate interests. As the years pass and the memories of the Great War begin to fade the negative impulse,—the desire to prevent future War—which led to the formation of the League tends to die away; and unless this negative impulse can be replaced by positive desire to take in hand the creation of peace, the power and authority of the League may also fade. In a sense, Mr. Henderson was right in declaring that "the whole system of the League covenant rests on the cessation of competitive military preparations; it is futile to maintain an institution for the prevention of war if the principal members of that institution go on making preparation for war".

This is quite obvious enough. But there seems to be another reason why disarmament is not progressing. The recognition of neutral rights in some states which other states strive to enter into an agreement has perhaps been the baffling point in the history of all peace conferences. Hitherto disarmament has been approached from the wrong angle. It has been treated merely as a matter of cutting down armies and navies. The main reason for the maintenance and for the increase of armies and navies is fear and this fear has a legitimate source—the neutral states who enjoy rights quite apart from those agreed upon by other states. So war and

neutrality go hand in hand. No war, no neutrality—this should be the conception in any scheme of disarmament. All the states of the world, big or small must be brought into one accord as to this question. The U. S. A. has hitherto remained aloof from the League declaring itself as a friendly neutral. This has created not a little embarrassment to the pacifists of other states. To secure a world-peace the active participation of the U. S. A. is beyond doubt essential and the future of the League and disarmament depends in a large degree on the co-operation of the U. S. A. This should not lead one to conclude that the backward countries who are not classed with great powers have no part to play in the establishment of peace. In fact, they hold the key to peace and the most durable and substantial peace that the world is capable of achieving in future will be by eliminating the grievances of enslaved nations. This may be best done by recognizing the rights of self-determination of those countries whose political subordination will ever stand as a great barrier in the way of peace. Indeed one cannot conceive of an idea that the world will be enjoying peace while the bondaged nations will be pining and fretting with a gathering tendency to burst forth some day to disturb the life of mankind.

Up till now the failure of the world to attain peace sufficiently proves—if it proves at all—that the desire for peace has not yet become a natural part of the psychology of man. The mental background of the world has not been prepared to welcome peace. There is some truth in the words of Mr. Wells whose idealism may be discounted as he says: "A permanent world implies a profound revolution in the nature of every existing government on earth and in the fundamental ideas upon which that government is based.....But what man has made man can remake, and if the real way to peace is to be opened out, if we are indeed to go on towards human federation, this vast complexity of patriotic teaching, emotional appeal, social and political pressure, cultivated hostility and distrust, flag waving, flag saluting and everlastingly reiterated patriotic sentiment which now divides man from man so implacably throughout the world has to be faced, fought and overcome."*

No doubt the essential requisite for peace is peace-spirit which may even take centuries to grow; but it should be admitted that when this spirit will result from prolonged diplomatic practice which is inevitable under the existing circumstances, real peace will be in sight. M. Romain

*From an address delivered in the Reichstag at Berlin on Monday, April 15, 1929.

Rolland envisaged the ultimate triumph of this spirit when he said, "The peace of the world is far off. We have no illusions. We have seen, abundantly, during the course of half a century the hypocrisy, the cowardice and the cruelty of mankind. For even among the worst there is a *nescio quid dei*. We know the material ties that weigh the twentieth century Europe, the crushing determinism of economic conditions, a crust about our souls which light cannot pierce. But we also know what miracle the spirit can work."

These are some of the problems that the world is to face and solve to-day. The longer is their solution deferred the more will be the sufferings of mankind. One fact that stands out to-day amidst the bewildering complexity of secular affairs is the insoluble economic problem. All other problems, political or otherwise, seem to be inextricably bound up with it. In the words of Sir Josiah Stamp, "When we look at politics to-day we find that at bottom practically all political questions are economic, and now we are coming to the point where we can perceive that most economic questions have to be handled, if we are to get to the root of them, by severe statistical methods".* Evidently we are to-day gradually realizing the economic interpretation of history by Karl Marx. In the modern age all political controversies centre round economic problems. Either for the pressure of population on the means of subsistence or the progress of science, economic policy of every Government and of the world as a whole has got to be revised in the light of present circumstances. The scramble for the capture of economic markets and the bitter rivalries consequent on it have surely helped much of the distrust and conflict that yet remains in the affairs of men to debar peace. The Imperial Conference of 1930 was almost an "Economic Conference," as has been observed by the London Observer. In the League too the economic affairs have bulked very large and have greatly absorbed its attention on political issues. If of late the political affairs have hindered the world peace, the economic problems will continue to do so for years to come. The establishment of peace really awaits a satisfactory readjustment of the economic interest of the world. The unemployment problem has roused all over the world "a bad bout of pessimism", which we may be sure will evaporate in course of years as things will gradually cure themselves ; but how long it will take will depend upon how soon the world will feel disposed to co-operate in

*From a lecture recently delivered at the Academy of Political Science, New York.

the work of peace. It is certain that the world is not going to develop a peace-spirit in a year or two. And some sort of organization like the League of Nations will always be needed to work out this spirit. A League of Nations should be a real League of Nations and that the present League falls far short of the ideal will be admitted without controversy. The international law which is still in making may have already acquired a legal force; but its perfection in the sense in which municipal or public law is perfect will mark the dawn of world-peace. Optimists who are enthused by such phrases as "dynamics of world-peace" will do well to remember that diplomacy does not carry things very far and that it may even lead to a dynamic state backward rather than forward.

Of late the attention of the world has been riveted to Gandhi's non-violent movement in India for it has given rise to the interesting speculation whether this movement bears in its bosom the real instrument for disarmament. Apart from its spiritual appeal the struggle inaugurated by Gandhi contains a real source of strength which in the opinion of some philosophers may even overcome armed opposition. It is observed by certain international pacifists that the success of Gandhi—if he succeeds at all—shall render a great service to humanity for it will then prove to the world the futility of armaments. If the world have pitched its hope for peace in the abolition of armaments the hope is foredoomed to disappointment. The coming years will unmistakably show whether the is ready to follow the lead of Gandhi in the matter of disornament on it world will continue in the old traditional way of diplomacy and warfare.

ALL QUIET ?

ASOKANKUR SEN—*Second Year Arts.*

1.

THE GREAT WAR—'ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT.'

And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of man.
—*Wordsworth*

WHEN Tennyson 'dipt into the future.....and saw the Vision of the World,' he heard the world-wide beatings of the war-drum, but I do not know whether he saw how under the lovely blue, amid the beautiful smile of Mother Earth, Man murdered his brother's soul, and destroyed himself by petty bickerings,

Such has indeed been the case. We do not feel it when no fight disturbs the world, though the embers of quarrel smoulder deep down in the hearts of men. Then war comes. At last, through the fields, across the plains, come the groans of the wounded and the dying, the wails of the bereaved, and the sufferings of those that survive, to the lovely grove, where we are dreaming, relieved by the gentle south wind and fascinated by the overflowing scent of the tender blossoms.....

The last Great War was such a tremendous havoc, a terrible onslaught on the soul of humanity. Such groans of agony, of ruined career and murdered soul, would have faded away afar, unheard, but perchance a lost voice carries them into our ears.

Such a tale an unknown youth tells. Its impassioned appeal, its haunting pathos with its ringing melody, keep beating wings in unbearable agony of helplessness. *

They were comrades—Paul, Kropp and others.....They were five miles away from the front, at rest, when the tale begins.

* I do not propose to follow the tale of 'All Quiet on the Western Front' in successive order to the end, but I wish to set forth the picture described in it, of the soldiers' misfortune, and use it for my purpose. Almost all quotations of sections (1) and (2) are from 'All Quiet on the Western Front.'

These youths had lost themselves in the ardour of war. They had been swept by it. To the old people it was but an 'interruption,' but the young men could not see beyond the war, they were overpowered by it. Once indeed they had their own dreams ; their soft, visionary eyes invested the war with a halo of romance. But they came to realize to their grief that what counted was 'not mind, but the boot-brush ; not intelligence, but the system.' In course of time, however, they became used to it.

A fight at the front ! What it means ! The animal instinct rushes in time to save the soldiers. They run, they hide, they kill, some hesitate and fall. People after people collapse ; agonies of the wounded, cries of the dying fill the air ; the wind swishes with the mad fury of the drunkards. The deep thunder of the gun, the burst of the explosives, the crash of the earth—there is a mad whirl in the storm. And after the fight these young soldiers damned war, indulged in bitter, coarse jests to forget, killed the cry of anguish that tried to come out from the heart at times.

The war had ruined these young people. They had begun to love life and the world. But the first experience of the shell tore it to pieces ; they were now flying from themselves and from their lives. They had lost youth—whose iron spirit tries to burst its cage open, which lets a havoc loose on the world, and then laughs with delight. They had become old in youth.

Their chiefs did not understand them ; they merely tried to enforce discipline and command on them. They felt separated from the world of the people at home who did not know what a war looked like. They were alone, severely alone.

War had made them wild beasts. It had made them angry with death, turned them into devils, made them ferocious. greedy and afraid. Their souls had been murdered : their thoughts and sentiments annihilated. They had been wearied to death.

Yet the loneliness, the community of feelings, and common fate, bound them fast by the bond of comradeship. They loved one another.

One of such people,—Kemmerich—was dying—a young lad who was mutely suffering from the disconsolate agonies of his heart, from the thought of separation from his dearest, of the early close of blooming youth, of leaving this sweet world.....When he parted from his mother, she wept very much, and implored Paul to look after him. When after his death Paul returned home on a visit, he saw the same woman—

'Who shakes me and cries out on me: "Why are you living, then, when he is dead?" who drowns me in tears and calls out: "What are you then for at all, child, when you—" who drops into a chair and wails; "Did you see him? Did you see him then? How did he die?"'

So miserable were their lives.

Once after a fight, on a chill evening, Paul was on sentry. Sweet images came to his mind,—a summer eve, a cathedral cloister, the tall rose-trees that had grown there. Then all was quiet, and the sun shed its warmth, which he could feel. The cathedral spire shot forth into the pale blue sky of the evening;—and there he stood, wondering whether he should have felt the emotions of love, the youth of twenty summers.

The touching image fades. Then the old days haunted him—the dear memory of his home, of the line of old poplars standing by a stream between the fields behind his town, where the boys played in childhood, of the bank of the stream where they sat beneath them, of the bright swift waters on which the children hung their feet, of the melody of the wind in the poplars—images that hit his fancy, and made "his heart still pause in its beatings",

These memories of former times were quiet and sad. They did not arouse desires in him—once they had such desires, but now they are gone. In the barracks they felt them, but in the trenches they were dead—mere shadows and memories. Even if these scenes of their lovely youth came back to these soldiers, they would be lost to them.

Now for the moment they were contented with two things—good food and rest. Their lives alternated between the front-line and the country side, and the country-side and the front-line. There in the lines they turned into animals; here in the country-side they became idlers and vagabonds. They wanted merely to live—it was a hard necessity. They would have been destroyed by sentiments and feelings if they had listened to their appeal. They could not reflect on them all at once, for these made very sad reflections. Their comrades were falling fast one by one—soft blooms over whom old age had cast its shadows too early;—the evening of death always hung over them, and their main business was to eat, drink, and sleep...for life was short.

"The days. the weeks, the years out here shall come back again, and our dead comrades shall then stand up and march with us, our heads shall be clear, we shall have a purpose, and so we shall march, our dead

comrades beside us, the year at the Front behind us—against whom, against whom ?"

2

THE SAME TALE.

Then for the first time Paul got leave to visit his home. The love of his dear comrades held him fast and made separation harder than ever.

The homeward journey, the smooth meadows, the lovely country-roads, the pale evening, the passing plain, the old familiar sights of his home-land—all touch him. As he passes on, the old familiar memories jump back to his mind—the boy-hood associations, the way-side scenes, the roaring stream, the mill-bridge beneath which the water gleams, the confectioner's shop, and at last, the loving door where a 'strange coolness' comes to meet him.

There lies his poor mother ill on bed, her eyes beaming with motherly tenderness. She calls him—'dear boy'—addresses him in words behind which gleams a profound expression of maternal love. "Was it very bad out there, Paul ?" she asks him. 'Mother', he cries within himself, 'what should I answer to that ! You would not understand, you could never realize it.'

There at home. a strange feeling of foreignness filled his heart, he felt, there was a veil between him and his home, which could not be undone, a gulf which could not be spanned. Here, beyond the roar of the cannon and the swish of the shell, life could have flown very smoothly. He loved the serene, homely beauty of nature, but he felt himself isolated from the people, who passed very sound views on the war without having ever faced it. He did not understand them, though he envied their peaceful lives. His thought must go back beyond the sky-line, to his comrades... what were they doing now ?

What a yawning chasm between yesterday and to-day ! He had come home with high hopes, but he could not reconcile himself to it. War had crushed him. It is he who had changed, whose mind had felt a havoc as he was at war. Meanwhile his younger days had stolen away and stood as shadows on the dim, distant horizon, which allured him but received him not, however much he cried out to them with helpless agonies.

Once at home he sits at his study where against the walls are shelves of books. He tries to make himself at home with it. There all the things

stand as he saw them, his dear books whose soft, silent whispers he loved not so long ago, the old familiar pictures which touched the rosy fancy of his earlier days, and other things. Through the little window he sees the street as he saw it once ; at the end rises the spire of the church.

He feels excited, but he does not want that. Once again he wants the quiet joy that over-flooded his tender heart as he read books, the old inspiration which led him to talk to the mighty minds of old.

> 'The breath of desire that then arose from the coloured backs of the books, shall fill me again, melt the heavy, dead lump of lead that lies somewhere buried in me, and waken again the impatience of the future, the quick joy in the world of thought, it shall bring back the lost eagerness of my youth. I sit and wait.'

Perchance his thought flies back to Kat and Albert ; he checks it.

Meanwhile, he tries to be in his room as he was before. He entreats the books with mute, eloquent eyes,—

> 'Speak to me—take me up—take me, Life of my Youth—you who are care-free, beautiful—receive me again—'I wait, I wait.
>
> 'Images float through my mind, but they do not grip me, they are mere shadows and memories.
>
> 'Nothing—nothing,—
>
> 'My disquietude grows.'

Meanwhile he feels strange to all this.

> 'I cannot find my way back, I am shut out though I entreat earnestly and put forth all my strength.'

Dejected, he leaves the room in painful silence.

The remaining days are sad. His mother's eyes follow him sorrowfully —she cannot bear him going. Late in the last night before departure she comes into his room with all her pains. She asks questions that writhe with maternal agonies—which torture his heart so wildly as almost to make him cry out, 'Ah, mother, mother !' and to weep out his full heart with his face buried into her lap, as in childhood which slid away not so long ago. He takes her to her room and stays with her for a while. 'Ah, mother, mother ! he mutely cries, 'how is it that I have to part from you, you who love me so well, who alone has a claim on me ; words swell to our throats, but there they stick, my mother !'

He feels he ought not to have come home on leave. He has become a burden to his family, an agony to himself and his mother.....

The Front ! Now his life hovered between the billets and the front. They had became used to it—now they took war as a quite natural thing. Distinctions, education, culture—things that existed

before—had been clean rubbed off. They were soldiers first and anything else afterwards. And in the terror of death and uncertainty of fate—they were bound together by a feeling of comradeship, and enjoyed the fleeting hours as they came. None weighed all this ; life had become mechanical.

Their life is simplified—being confined to the barest need. All other things have been cast into the shade by this consideration, because they meant unnecessary waste of energy. And when the sunny days of the beautiful past come back to his mind and cast their glimmering rays on it, he wonders how life has come to be like that. 'Life is simply one continual watch against the menace of death' ;—it has made them feel dull, to stand the terror of death, held them fast as comrades to escape the horror of solitude. They have become cold like animals, so that inspite of all, they 'perceive the positive in every moment, and store it up as a reserve against the onslaught of nothingness.' Thus their lives have become limited, hard, and superficial. Rarely are they inflamed, but when that dangerous moment comes 'a flame of grievous and terrible yearning flares up.' Their inner forces are directed not to ennoble them, but to their degeneration.

> 'And at night, waking out of a dream, overwhelmed and bewitched by the crowding apparitions, a man perceives with alarm, how slight is the support, how thin the boundary that divides him from the darkness. We are little flames poorly sheltered by frail walls against dissolution and madness, in which we flicker and sometimes almost go out. Then the muffled roar of the battle becomes a ring that encircles us, we creep in upon ourselvs, and with big eyes stare into the night. Our only comfort is the steady breathing of our comrades asleep, and thus we wait for the morning.

One by one his comrades fell away—for this support became thinner and thinner. Detering, to whom a tender branch of cherry blossoms brought back as if by the swish of a whip, the maddening memory of his home with its cherry garden with beautiful blossoms, one day went away none knew where ;—Berger, Muller, Leer, too. Some had fallen before.

The months pass by, but none of them are so terrible as the summer of 1918. The Germans are falling fast ; yet the fight is going on, and the miserable soldiers are dying in numbers untold.—

> 'Summer of 1918.—Never has life in its niggardliness seemed to us so desirable as now ;—the red poppies in the meadows round our billets, the smooth beetles on the blades of grass, the warm evenings in the cool, dim rooms, the black and mysterious trees of

the twilight, the stars and the flowing waters, dreams and long sleep—O Life, life, life'

'Summer of 1918—never was so much silently suffered, as in the moment when we depart once again for the front-line. Wild, tormenting news of an armistice and peace are in the air, they lay hold on our hearts and make the return to the front harder than ever.

'Summer of 1918—never was life more bitter and more full of horror than in the hours of bombardment, when the blanched faces lie in the dirt, and the hands clutch at one thought : No! No! Not now! Not now at the last moment!

'Summer of 1918—breath of hope that sweeps over the scorched fields, raging fever of impatience, of disappointment, of the most agonizing terror of death, insensate question : Why? Why do they not make an end? And why do these rumours of an end fly about?'

The Germans, tired and famished, are decreasing in number. They are crushed by the overwhelming number of English and American forces.

At last Kat dies, Kat his friend, Kat his comrade, from whose voice an air of kind assurance would come out to meet him in his sorrowful moments, who appeared dearest to him once in a half dream as behind him he saw the woods and stars and heard his comforting dear voice that relieved him. Paul is so miserable, so lonely without him to-day—he has no other friend left. No, no, it cannot be that Kat leaves him, that Kat will not come back ever, however piteously may he burst his poor, lonely heart over his dead body, and keep moaning on, ever and ever.

Again the talk of armistice is in the air. Paul is alone—miserably alone. If it again proves false there will be revolution. If it be true he will return home. But here his thoughts halt—they refuse to proceed farther. His heart is set on no aims, but feelings alone whirl in it in tumultuous throng,—'greed of life, love of home, yearning of the blood, intoxication of deliverance, but no aims'.

'Had we returned home in 1916, out of the suffering and the strength of our experiences we might have unleashed a storm. Now if we go back we will be weary, broken, burnt out, rootless, and without hope. We will not be able to find our way any more.'

And he says, men will not understand them—for the older generation will return to their settled life, which they have left for the War and the younger generation well be strange to them and push them aside. They will be a burden unto themselves, they will grow older, a few will adapt

their lives, some will only resign themselves ; while most will be at a loss as to what to do. And at last their lives will be wrecked.

> 'But perhaps all this that I think is mere melancholy and dismay which will fly away as the dust, when I stand once again beneath the poplars and listen to the rustling of their leaves. It cannot be that it has gone, the yearning that made our blood unquiet, the unknown, the perplexing, the oncoming things, the thousand faces of the future, the melodies from dreams and from books, the whispers and divinations of women, it cannot be that this has vanished in bombardment, in despair, in brothels.
>
> 'Here the trees show gay and golden, the berries of the rowan stand red among the leaves, country roads run white out to the sky line, and canteens hum like bee-hives with rumours of peace.'

He does not mourn any more. He is so lonely, so full of despair that he does not fear the coming months and years any longer. His life will lead him whether he knows not—so long as it is in him.

At last he falls, in October 1918, on a day so quiet that the army report expressed itself in the brief, dreary line ; *All Quiet on the Western Front*. There is an expression of peace in his face as if he is glad that he is going away.

He is gone—he has returned to the comrades whom once he clutched so eagerly. And with his death the wave of melancholy that beat against the heart so wildly dies away in the last moaning song of tears, leaving

'the eternal note of sadness in.'

3

NOT SO QUIET.

Men may come and men may go,
But *War* goes on for ever.

Thus a war came and went, a war, which shook man to his very roots, which killed his brother's soul, and whose mad dance shattered his dreams to pieces. The Kaiser began it to all practical purposes, but it was inevitable. M. Rolland does not stop at saying that, "Centuries of brutal national pride, whetted by the idolatrous ideology of the Revolution, spread by the empty mockery of democracies, and crowned by a century of inhuman industrialism, rapacious plutocracy, and a materialistic system of economics where the soul perishes, stifled to death, were bound to culminate in these dark struggles where the treasure of

the west succumbed."* Man's hunger for more room to stretch his elbow to fuller comfort grew bigger and bigger: the frenzy of his lust became more and more hideous in its terrible monstrosity—he glorious consummation was the war. It was strange that Europe with a fair past, Europe with her flourishing Arts and Science, the holy memory of Reformation and Renaissance, Europe of Goethe and Tolstoy, one fine morning found herself confused in the smoke and thunder of a mad warfare, though deep down in the hearts of her children a storm had been brewing, Presently it burst: it carried the earth along with it: "All Europe, Europe that only yesterday was sceptical and apathetic, like a dead wood, was swept by the flames."† It convulsed man's mind right over, wearied him to death, and squeezed him to agonies. In those dark days when clouds were rumbling in the western sky, and thunders were roaring beyond them, when the firmament was 'pale as the pallor of death,' no nation could be found which had the masterful personality to go between the belligerents and stop them. There were great men who raised their voices in protest, but their voices were lost in the howls of the people drunk with the madness of the war.

They were fighting for self-aggrandizement—they gave it a good name and called it championship. They were flying at one another's throats ; they called it a cause of the humanity. One party blamed the other; the latter paid the compliment back. At last America was drawn into it—America where once Whitman rose and sang, where men like Washington and Lincoln guided the destiny of a nation and ennobled it, lowered herself into the vulgar brawls of the market-place.

At last the War ended. Something must be done to keep energy alive. Peace was hailed into the world with loud beat of the drum and big advertizement. The League of Nations was ushered in to bring in a new era on earth. It came, it saw, and it conquered.

Pacts and proposals for disarmament or kindred things, if they included some of the dominant powers of Europe, have been proclaimed aloud, and tears of joy have flown from flattered eyes over them.

But peace could not come, it cannot come, under such circumstances. For, the real atmosphere as well as the will for peace is absent. Pacts, peace proposals, and other things of similar description merely patch up, but never cement, the bond of affection. Thus while the powers propose

*Romain Rolland : Mahatma Gandhi. †Romain Rolland : John Christopher, Vol. IV. p. 504

them and flatter themselves on a very good piece of stage-acting, while they shed tears on them and wax eloquent over them,—competitions, mutual jealousies, and vigorous ship-building go on as smoothly as ever Then the scraps of paper once more lie in the drawers casting mournful eyes at their makers. The spirit behind them has never been observed. Thus the world moves ahead for a fresh war, or a 'Greater War' as Mr. G. K. Chesterton observed some time ago half humorously. Italy may come to swords with France and Jugo-Slavia in future, says Major Newman in the Fortnightly Review of July, 1930 ; Russia hangs like a terror on the world—it may come in clash with the West in the East, says Mr. H. G. Wells*. It is 'the obduracy and stupidity of his own government', as the same eminent writer observes†, in which other governments also have participated that forced Russia to isolation, and to the policy which it has been her fate to follow. Prometheus groans as yet ; the East is in struggle with the West, and the various "*isms*" of this century are sending a shudder through the Powers. Imperialism and the rule of force still hold the field.

They are creating an era of peace. And yet, behind the scenes arms, navies, air forces, are being built as vigorously as ever. Yes, they are creating an atmosphere of peace, but it is the peace of the grave. A horrible emptiness howls within—they are giving it a beautiful appearance, and calling it peace. Yes, but it is the peace of the grave.

The League of Nations has been possessed by powers among whom there is no real bond of friendship, who hold the sway over weaker people and drown the voices of meeker powers. They are typically Homeric. These controlling gods that squat comfortably on the Olympic heights of a golden age, turn into good peace-makers and immediately change into sound warriors whenever they find it expedient. They are

"the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems".

Nor the League's lofty commandments will be enforced on them, nor accepted by them, for it is a house of cards propped up by these Powers.

The Kellogg pact is safely resting at peace behind the memory of the nations. And what shall we say of the thrice-blessed Naval Conference sponsored by the socialist premier Macdonald ? At first five powers assembled to shed tears over it. After some time it was faced with the prospect of dissolution. Powers were found blaming one another, while some

*The Common Sense of World Peace. † Ibid.

would reduce if another would. At last a sort of tripartite agreement was hit upon : it saved their faces, but not their reputation—that was past all possibilities of reparation.

Thus all hopes of peace are being shattered to pieces ; meanwhile might rules the world as ever. 'Half a century ago,' says M. Rolland, 'might dominated the right. To-day things are far worse - might is right. Might has devoured the right.'* All this makes the heart sad. 'Peace, peace,' cries the soul in bitter anguish. And the groan is redoubled by the echoes from about fifteen years' graves—voices of the shadows whose faintly pathetic notes break the heart.

At such times,—over us the night brooding like evil power with its dark forces, the thunder bolts cleaving the mighty heaven, and beyond us the great ocean roaring with rock-beating surges,—a gentle wind hails from the dream-lands of peace and wafts a whiff of smell which carries us away. There the world's seers and dreamers dwell for ever. There peace, for ever peace, reigns under a hundred summers. These people speak of the days that will be ; they are ethereal minstrels of the days that are no more, they are a span between yesterday and to-morrow, beneath which the murmuring rill of eternity flows on for ever.

In the galaxy of stars whose luminous rays faintly reach down to the lower earth, there are many conspicuous personalities to-day. Such are Wells, Rolland, Rabindra Nath and others. Their songs are oil and wine unto our ears, for they hail the dawn of peace. There amongst them eternal summer dwells, the blue sky bends over the green earth with its beautiful smiles, and the wind blows about with soft whispers. Beneath, the nations kill one another in mad ecstasies, and black clouds rumble their ominous roars.

'Men are brothers,' they say, whose fraternity knows no boundaries. They point to the heart, and speak, 'Heal it first, and all will be well.'

Again, and again, Wells condemns patriotism and flies into the creed of cosmopolitanism. Rolland, whose heart transcends all distinctions and clasps all as brothers, preaches harmony. And Tagore, with his visions, his revelations, his sweet songs, Tagore whose saintly face sweeps back to the memory the prophets of old, soars into the highest flights of love and universal brotherhood in his lovely poems and songs nourished by a hundred soft dreams, To Richard's ears a voice from across the

*Rolland : Mahatma Gandhi.

centuries comes rising from the depths of the heart. 'Thou shalt not kill.' He is the bard of equality, and fraternity. So are they all, all. They are beyond comments. In their eyes are fine, 'translunary things that the first poets had', in their minds sweet visions : and in their hearts are love and kindliness.

Beyond them, down below, are clashes and blows, storms and strifes mean quarrels looking uglier in their graceless squalor.

To-day it has been all quiet on the Western Front, but the gulf between the nations yawns wider ever and ever. It is not so quiet.....

ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS BEFORE THE WAR

ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE—*Fifth Year History.*

AN enormous body of War literature has recently grown up. Some of the works deal with the destruction and misery which followed in the train of the War, and directly or indirectly emphasise the necessity of trying to establish peace on earth. Others, again, are written from the historical point of view, and attempt to describe the causes and courses of the War. No historian can accept the clause in the Versailles Treaty which attributes to Germany alone the whole responsibility for originating the catastrophe. The arch-problem has been the division of responsibility among the various Powers. While this very important study is still in progress and must remain so for years to come, it will not perhaps be out of place to attempt a connected survey of Anglo-German relations before the War, in view of the fact that England and Germany were certainly the two most important actors in the terrible drama.

It is necessary to begin with the establishment of the German Empire in 1871. It is well-known how Bismarck, with the help of his adroit diplomacy, unflinching courage and unscrupulous obstinacy, achieved his aim. On the eve of the Treaty of Frankfort, Granville, the British Foreign Secretary, said, "We have done all in our power to obtain peace...

We succeeded in removing the ground of quarrel." It was clear, therefore, that France could not expect any diplomatic assistance from her old rival in the conclusion of the peace. No British protest was made against the cession of Alsace-Lorraine, Gladstone's "effort to speak with other neutral powers against the transfer" being defeated by his colleagues. Gladstone declared that "it will in my opinion be a standing reproach to England" and suspected that "this violent laceration and transfer is to lead us from bad to worse and to be the beginning of a new series of European complications." His forebodings were fulfilled, for, said President Wilson, "The wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine...unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years".

The centre of power and diplomacy had, without dispute, been transferred to Berlin. British statesmen, like all others, had to shape their policy in accordance with their views of the future position and aims of Germany. Bismarck said "that his ambition for Germany was an alliance with England and Austria in preference to Russian alliance" by which he could hope to guarantee all that he had won and to perpetuate the isolation and hopelessness of France. But England could expect no corresponding reciprocity, for Bismarck would not even guarantee the integrity of Turkey.

The Eastern Question re-appeared in 1875. Herzegovina rose in revolt against Turkey, and the movement spread to Bosnia, Servia and Montenegro. Russia was interested in the Balkan problems as the head of the Slavs and the self-made protector of the christian subjects of Turkey. Austria was concerned as a semi-slavic state sensitive to every outside movement directed towards the extension of the Pan-Slavic ideal. Germany's interests required the maintenance of her good relations with both Russia and Austria-Hungary. England was deeply concerned to preserve the Ottoman Empire from dissolution. The main lines of Turkish policy were determined by England, and the belief that England stood behind him ready to protect him to the last extreme against the designs of his enemies encouraged the Sultan again and again in opposing the collective pressure of the Powers. The "Bulgarian Atrocities" occured in 1876. The Constantinople conference of the same year failed. The Russo-Turkish War followed, and triumphant Russia exacted too good terms from helpless Turkey by the Treaty of San Stefano. But an over-powerful Russia excited the alarm of England, France and Austria-Hungary, and they demanded the revision of the treaty on the plea that

the question being an international one all Powers must share in settling it. So the Congress of Berlin sat under the presidency of Bismarck who claimed to play the part of the "honest broker", The congress resolved itself into an intellectual tourney between three outstanding figures. Bismarck, Beaconsfield and Gortchakoff (the Russian delegate). Beaconsfield got for England "peace with honour." Russia was reluctantly compelled to curtail her gains and suspected that the "honest broker" had given too much to Austria-Hungary at her cost. Bismarck, therefore, was able to satisfy England; but he alienated Russia, and, though no open rupture immediately followed, he recognised that he could not rely on the Tsar.

First overtures for an Anglo-German alliance were made in 1879. The movement of Russia had convinced Bismarck that the best days of the Triple *Entente* were over and that for future security Germany must rely on a new combination. The Vienna Convention of 1879 provided a defensive alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. Bismarck tried to bring England into the same partnership: an alliance of the two military Empires with the strongest of naval Powers would be a perfect realisation of his ideal of a "coalition *a trois*". He wrote,—"Russia is preparing to attack Austria; the peace of the world will be threatened..... Peace is necessary to Germany...To secure it she proposes an alliance with Austria and Great Britain.' No definite approach to an alliance was, however, made by England. Beaconsfield was satisfied that England was still "as free as air, and this, too, without showing any want of sympathy with the Austro-German views". Bismarck directed his attention towards Italy, and the Triple Alliance was completed in 1882.

Germany appeared as a Colonial Power in Africa in 1885. Bismarck received, from the outset, help and sympathy from England. German enterprise enjoyed for a time not only a fair field but also "abundant favour". A short time after Bismarck had ceased to be German Chancellor, the Anglo-German Convention of 1890 was concluded.

The renewed friction with France, from 1885 onwards, again turned the thoughts of some British statesmen to Germany. In 1898 Mr. Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, discussed with the German ambassador the possibility of close co-operation between the two powers in world-politics. But owing to William II's discovery that a short time before conciliatory advances had been made by England to Russia the alliance negotiations were broken off. Afterwards, however, a colonial treaty was concluded between the two countries providing for the division of territorries in the

anticipation that Portugal might be disposed to sell some of her possessions. This convention proved inoperative.

The Boer War broke out in 1899. Though Germany professed to have advised President Kruger to come to terms with England, few Englishmen believed that the Boers would have rushed into a conflict, had they not been encouraged to expect tangible help from Germany. In England there was very widespread alarm at the ubiquitous restlessness of William II's policy. His friendship for Sultan Abdul Hamid was rewarded by the permission to construct the Bagdad Railway; this, at any rate, meant much for England. The German Government desired to exploit the Boer War for concluding an alliance with England, the necessity of which had become still more obvious as France had concluded an alliance with Russia. Mr. Chamberlain declared that "every far-seeing English statesman had long desired that we should not remain permanently isolated on the continent of Europe, and that, from the moment that aspiration was formed, it must have appeared to everybody that the most natural alliance is between ourselves and the great German Empire." German public opinion, however, was strongly against any alliance with England. Bulow, the German Foreign Minister, delivered a speech in the Reichstag in which he laid all his stress on the existing Triple Alliance, showed no anxiety for an alliance with England, and emphasised the necessity of securing German interests by strengthening the navy, declaring in conclusion that "in the coming century the German nation will be either hammer or anvil." All negotiations for an alliance were dropped. Germany declined a Russian invitation for intervention in the Boer War with the reply that "German policy could not entertain a suggestion for intervention in the Boer War as long as Germany had to reckon with the hostility of her French neighbour".

Events in the Far East brought home to Germany the value of friendly relations with England. The Boxer troubles in China showed that German Military activities there depended upon the co-operation of the British Navy. The Anglo-German Agreement with regard to China, concluded in 1900, regarded as a notable sign of *rapprochement*. But William II's arrogance and the conflict of opinion among the German and British nations brought to an end the long drawn negotiations for an alliance. German efforts to secure British co-operation in the construction of the Bagdad Railway failed because England asked too high a price to be offered by Germany. The nation which had planned the great enterprise and taken its risks could not be expected to accept a position

which gave the majority of shares, carrying with them the power of control, to England and France. The British attitude was surely an error, the prevention of which might have changed the entire course of recent History.

The main cause of the Anglo-German tension in the years following the Boer War was the resolve of Germany to build a formidable fleet. Though Germany officially announced her pacific intention and friendship with England and always insisted that her programme was calculated only to secure her interest in peace and commerce, yet the provocative utterances of William II and the injudicious tone of the German Press fostered the anxiety of England. Naval rivalry entered on a new and dangerous stage.

The Kaiser visited England in 1907. *The Times* welcomed him as "a personality whose many characteristic qualities are universally admired, and nowhere more than here." William II stated in a speech,—"The main prop and base for the peace of the world is the maintenance of good relations between our two countries, and I shall further strengthen them as far as lies in my power.....The German nation's wishes coincide with mine." The Bagdad Railway proposal was revived, but Germany declined the British suggestion that a conference of England, France, Germany and Russia should decide the question. Still Asquith declared, "Why should there not be an Anglo-German Entente ?" Churchill sounded a similar note when he affirmed,—"There is no collision between Great Britain and Germany in any quarter of the globe, no real cause of difference. They have nothing to fight about, no prize to fight for, and no place to fight in."

Vague speeches, however, often count for less than they seem to do. The anxiety of Englishmen was growing. The speech of Lord Roberts in the House of Lords is significant : "Within a few hours from our coasts, there is a people.....our most active rivals in commerce and the greatest military Power in the world, adding to an overwhelming military strength a naval force which she is resolutely and rapidly increasing.....It is my firm belief that, without a military organisation more adequate to the certain perils of the future, our Empire will fall from us and our power will pass away." In 1909 the English estimates for the navy were defended by selecting Germany as the standard by which to measure the requirements of England. Asquith's appointment

of a standing sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence for "The co-ordination of Departmental action on the outbreak of war," in 1911 is significant enough.

The Balkan Wars broke out in 1913. The success of Russia filled Germany with alarm, and she began to increase her military power. The Balkan problem had very serious repercussions on the policy of Austria-Hungary, because the Habsburg Emperor was observing with alarm the rapid growth of the Pan-Slavic movement which threatened the safety of his Empire. Naturally Germany was concerned in the interests of her ally ; moreover, William II regarded the Serbs as savages and was always prepared to sympathise with the Austrian design of crushing them. The growing cordiality between the two great Central Empires confirmed the suspicion of England, and she prepared herself to meet any contingency.

In 1914, an Anglo-German agreement was concluded regarding the Bagdad Railway. This was in no way due to the growth of any friendly relations between the Powers ; each acted to promote self-interest. England wanted to secure an amount of control over the shortest route to India, and Germany utilised the services of England to exact some very important concessions from Turkey regarding the area to be explored by the Railway. Nevertheless, France was suspicious about the real intentions of England. Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, gave an assurance that "nothing in British policy is altered, that no new relations with other Powers have been entered into, and that the close *Entente* with France exists in its full extent."

Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife were murdered at Serajevo on June 28th, 1914, and the conflagration at once broke out. Here it is neither necessary nor possible to enter into the negotiations which preceded the actual outbreak of the War. Only a few points may be recommended for those who may be interested in the study of Anglo-German relations on the eve of the War. The Triple *Entente* was surely a greater menace to European peace than the Triple Alliance ; while the former was becoming stronger and more closely knit, the latter was gradually disintegrating. In 1914 Germany was the only Power willing to endanger her system of alliance in order to preserve peace. England decided from the beginning of the crisis not to take any step which would threaten the integrity of the Triple *Entente*, though such an attitude meant war. Grey decided to enter into war even before he had learned of German attitude towards Belgium. Finally, Germany refused only one plan of peace—Grey's

proposal of a conference at which Austria would be outvoted. It should be noticed that this plan found favour only with Italy, while both France and Russia rejected it. The significant rapidity with which Russia prematurely mobilised her army does not at least indicate the complete innocence of the Triple Entente. These considerations lead to a conclusion which is obvious enough : Germany *alone* was not, to be sure, responsible for the outbreak of the War.*

It may be worth while to try to find out at least some of the causes which prevented the formation of an alliance between England and Germany. It is quite possible that the world might have been happier had these two Powers been able to reach any mutual understanding. But inspite of the racial affinity between the English and the Germans and the various occasions which both Powers were ready to utilise in concluding an agreement, it is rather strange that they should have remained antagonistic. The gulf, however, which divided them was too wide to be crossed. Democratic England and autocratic Prussia could not have become close friends. The constitutional Premier of England could not reconcile his attitude with that of the essentially impulsive Kaiser of Germany. The colonial interests of the Powers collided in Africa and China, Germany's position in the centre of the continent compelled her to uphold a system of alliances and an arrangement of territories in Europe which England could not reconcile with her interests. There, again, was the omnipotent commercial rivalry. German goods had captured the markets in the British Empire, and the English nation could not tolerate this. Finally, when England found that Germany was too much interested in the construction of a powerful navy, she grew alarmed lest her naval supremacy should be threatened. England was, indeed, to fight with Germany and to fight to the end, not to preserve the sanctity of treaties, not to advocate the right of small states to exist, not even to make the world safe for democracy, but to save her commerce and her Empire from the growing hunger of Germany.

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*These opinions may not commend themselves to all. The strict limitations of space prevent the detailed examination of the questions involved. The writer believes that a critical study of the papers and documents relating to the War which have hitherto been published fully substantiates these remarks.

INDIAN INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS

(CONCLUDED)

SUBODHKUMAR BHATTACHARYYA—*Fourth Year Economics.*

WE now propose to discuss the remaining three factors that are essential for the industrial development of a country. They are: Market facilities, Transport facilities and Skilled labour. Before doing so, however, it would probably be helpful to the reader if we briefly recapitulate what has been said in the previous article. We have seen the weakness of India's economic position. A consideration of India's economic situation convinced us that the cure for India's poverty is industrialisation and that organised efforts both by the State and the people can alone meet the requirements of the times. We saw therein that the conversion of the immense natural resources of India requires huge capital operating in terms of crores and to procure this capital we may, if necessary, welcome foreign capital but not foreign enterprise.

Now to turn our attention to market facilities. It is a known fact that lack of capital and lack of organisation render the Indian marketing operations very ineffective. The process of marketing the produce, that prevails in small scale operations and especially among the cultivators involves much loss of time to the producer. It is the cultivator-producers who suffer most for this lack of capital and organisation. They are often not in a position to take any steps to market their produces to the best advantage, because they are heavily indebted. By selling their produces immediately after harvest and even in some cases by forward transactions these producers of raw food-materials have to suffer loss. Again in the small markets of India there is often little competition amongst the buyers, and the middleman is in a position to take more than his fair share. The small scale operators in India suffer not only from their lack of capital, from their ignorance and from their lack of business capacity, but also from 'any bad management or fraud on the part of others that may take place in the handling of the produce anywhere along the line whether it be on the part of the broker, gin owner, press owner, or railway company.'

To work out an effective system suitable to India and to organize and sustain such a movement as will do away with all these difficulties is a task which requires much patience and management. But this much can be said that the marketing of products will be helped by the establishment of Commerce Museums in all important centres, as well as by opening of shops on the model of the Swadeshi Co-operative Stores and the organisation of Co-operative marketing, which offers so vast a field and so great a reward. Travelling Exhibitions will also render much help to the industries.

Next, the question of the transport of articles deserves careful consideration. This question of transport of articles is of vital importance to the economic and industrial development of trade, commerce and industries of the country. State Railways are eventually meant to exist for the benefit of the country and not for its exploitation. The rates at present charged by the Indian Railway Companies are in the majority of cases prejudicial to the growth of indigenous enterprise. Transport facilities both by land and water, and other special concessions should be given to new ventures to minimise the effects of competition. 'The sea-port-rates work to the advantage of foreign imports and the local manufactures have to contend with very high rates for transporting their goods inland.'* There are other difficulties affecting industrialists e.g. the shortage of waggons, the inconvenient routing of traffic, unnecessary breaks of gauge, losses from careless handling or from dishonesty, the question of risk and the like. It is a matter of great importance that the principal railway systems are being transferred to State management and the Rates Tribunal are created to remedy these grievances. They will make railway administration more sympathetic and helpful to the progress of industrialization. Road Boards have been created in some provinces to improve the defective inland road communication and the Indian Road Development Committee (1928) has made some useful recommendations. All these lead us to hope that the State will make it more and more zealously helpful in the promotion of industrial advance. Let the Indian Railway policy be so maintained that we may not have an opportunity to say with Sir Din Shaw Watcha that "the worst and most inexcusable feature of it is the supreme indifference and neglect to the crying wants and wishes of the public" or with Sir F. S. P. Lelly that

*Mr. V. P. Madhava Ram, C. I. E. The Presidential address to the Indian Industrial Conference.

'the tendency of the Railway authorities is to encourage the import trade and to depress the local enterprise and industry".

Now we come to discuss the last but not the least important question, that is, the problem of skilled labour. It is often said that the supply of labour is scarce in India. There are two factors which effect the supply of labour, viz, change in efficiency and change in numbers of workmen. In the former sense mainly there is a real deficiency in the labour supply in India. An Indian labourer is an honest, labourious, sober and easy-going person but he is generally unskilled, uniformed, unenterprising and heavily indebted. "Indian labour in organised industries is much less efficient than the corresponding classes of labour in western countries.....It is true that inferior physique and tropical conditions contribute to this state of affairs ; but there is grave reason to believe that.....there are factors that unnecessarily increase the difficulties of our labour problem."* Of the little over 2 million persons employed in factories 3 per cent. only are skilled and 97 per cent. are practically unskilled workmen, the problem of inefficiency of labour is a serious factor in the situation. How to make Indian labour more efficient is a problem for serious consideration. It is highly lamentable to see the supply of skilled industrial labour to be meagre though the number of unskilled labour is plentiful. Prof. V. G. Kale in his 'Indian Industrial and Economic Problems' says that, "Ignorance is responsible for many of the habits which mar the economic usefulness of the labourer. Spread of primary education among the people of the country will help to remove at least some of the causes of complaint.....Organization and co-operation for self-government among Indian operatives cannot be thought of until education creates in them a consciousness of their situation and their needs."

Let us, however, dive deep into the heart of the problem and see what are the causes of this inefficiency.

"All authorities who are qualified to speak on the subject agree that Indian lobour is content with a very low standard of comfort".† This secured, the Indian workman does not try to improve his skill. The remedies for this state of affairs are a rise in the standard of comfort and an improvement in public health. Education, improved housing and a

* Industrial Commission Report. Chap. XVI P. 179

† Ibid.

general policy of betterment are necessary for the attainment of these ends. "Facilities for healthy amusement, shorter hours of work and other measures for economic betterment such as cheap shops and co-operative societies are almost equally important."* The rules of health, diet, and sanitation ; the care of children, the evils of intemperance—all these are matters which require to be constantly pressed on the attention of operatives. The latter question is, in particular, one that affects the standard of comfort and the efficiency of labour very deeply.

Libraries and reading rooms, amusements, street or indoor lecturing with occasional opportunities for moral and religious instruction must be provided by employers for imparting knowledge or awakening 'interest' in the works.

"Measures for the welfare of operatives in India fell under the heads of co-operation, the provision of open spaces and other facilities for recreation, medical attendance, and instruction by various methods and in various subjects. Steps in these directions are being taken by Government departments, by the more enlightened mill-owners, and by private associations like the Servants of India Society and the Social Service League."†

Of late organisation of trade unions is going on apace and it is expected that they would develop in course of a short time, those susceptibilities that make for a great industrial people.

Hence, if Indian industrial progress be aimed at, we should bring into existence the institutions of that character that will help us much in our way and frame such labour laws that will stand in good stead. For the betterment of labour we should not depend upon international legislation and sit idle. It has been aptly said that 'no amount of international legislation can be a substitute for the framing by India of her own labour laws. It is only those who are living in this country, who know her interests best, and provided the voice of all classes and interests can be equally heard, legislation based on the deliberation of those persons is infinitely superior to legislation by outsiders."‡

Now we have finished discussing all the questions concerning industrial and economic development of India. This convinces us that the present situation is grave enough, in as much as the weakness of our posi-

*Industrial Commission Report. Chap. XVI. P. 179.

†Ibid.

‡Prof. A. R. Burnett Hurst—Paper read at the Indian Economic Conference at Allahabad.

tion is a danger, both to the State and the people. It paralyses our efforts for advancing the cause of mass-education which alone can bring enlightment to the people at large. This failure to bring about the uplift of the masses reacts unfavourably on the moral and material progress of the country and consequently our political progress is at a standstill. All this leads us, in conclusion, to say that if economic development of our country is truly aimed at, if India is to be a power and a power for her teeming millions, then we are not to waste our time in idle and wild speculations for the amelioration of her condition but to throw ourselves, heart and soul, in the endeavour to get our country industrialized. In this age of industrialism India's interest cannot be safely maintained unless she gets herself industrialized—whether with foreign capital or with indigenous capital, if it be forthcoming adequately. In this age of keen competition, a nation, in order to survive the struggle for existence must take recourse to the use of industrial arm. The feverish activity of other nations, which have brought them into the forefront of industrial nations should be with interest followed. The idea should begin to gain ground in the country that nature has not destined India to remain for ever dependent on other countries for manufactured goods. The backwardness of India in industrial matter should arrest the notice of the Indian patriots and economists. It is time for Young India to consider carefully her position in the world and move about with eyes open. But in this period of economic transition in India, our zeal for her industrial development should not make us forget the most striking characteristic of the economic life in India—the overwhelming preponderence of agriculture over other occupations. Any development, whatsoever, of Indian industries must have agriculture as its basis.

The last point that is to be emphasised in this connection is the political reorganization of the country, since here exists a close relation between politics and economics, the first thing that India needs in the nationalization of the existing government which will achieve her to a great extent industrial efficiency, because bureaucratic government is a hindrance to industry. Only a few years ago, Lord S. P. Sinha, who was the representative at the Colonial Conference in London, stated in a speech delivered there, that the backwardness of Indian industries was due to the bureaucracy, furnishing a concrete example to the abstract statement of General Smuts that : "Bureaucratic administration generally had been a hindrance to industry and commerce in the past, and there was no

reason to think it would be any different in the futures." There were no doubt other contributory causes, for which the people were responsible, but it is idle to deny that Indian industries were subordinated to the interests of the British manufactures. But let the dead past bury its dead ; let us look to the present and the future since we can derive no good by brooding over this dark page of Indian history.

THE GITAGOVINDA—ITS FORM AND TECHNIQUE*

CONTEMPORARY opinion seems to be in favour of the view that the Gitagovinda as a work of art has a significance not very consistent with what is clearly its religious motive. And so it is that there have been critics who want to do away with the dogmatic imposition of a cult-mysticism by denying it altogether. Others, again, go quite the contrary way to declare it as an exposition of Vaisnavism through and through, and hold its artistic expressiveness everywhere subordinate to the realisation of its religious appeal. A third section there is that, while admitting the cult-import, will override it saying that its vogue has passed away and that the whole of the work may well be interpreted by love in the human sense—which would, in their opinion, go a great way to make its charm as a lyric felt and appreciated by people of modern and cultivated taste. It is the ambitious purpose of this and another paper to examine how far, and in what way, such criticisms are justified, if justified at all; and to reconcile, if possible, its religious aspect with its artistic nature and presentation.

But before we enter upon our subject, we needs must face the problem made out by some very reputed European critics (Lassen, Macdonell, and Keith for example), namely, what sort of a work really is the Gitagovinda—a Mahakavya a lyric poem or a lyric drama? To this we shall attempt a brief answer.

* Read before a meeting of the Sanskrit Seminar of session 1928-29.

Let us note at the outset that such a question becomes out of place if we would stick to the familiar conventions of Sanskrit poetics. But the poet, it appears to us, has introduced a bold innovation in the songs, which, really speaking, have set up many speculations. This innovation, however, must not simply be regarded as the product of the genius of the poet by itself. Viswanath, who—we are definitely informed by his quotations of উন্মীলন্মধুগন্ধলুব্ধমধুপ etc. and হৃদি বিসলতাহারো নায়ং etc. from *Jayadev*—was as familiar with the work as any of us, has nowhere made any mention of it as belonging to any class of *Rupakas* or *Uparupakas*. Another point that may emerge out of a consideration of his divisions of *Rupakas* and *Uparupakas* is that some of these sub-divisions were very possibly due to his being influenced by the *Yatra* performances of East India that were having their days quite luxuriantly. And it will not be wrong to suppose, as many scholars have done, that Jayadeva in the twelfth century—a date for whose acceptance there are satisfactory and decisive data—could not remain indifferent to this influence. This influence, though crystallized into another more transcendent form under the unfailing touch of his genius, played its part in his responsive and absorbent mind. And we can very rightly trace the pervading presence of a true romantic air in the songs to this very influence.

But let us not be misunderstood. We emphatically go against the view that the Gitagovinda has anything in common with the Yatra form, but simply say that the breath of its spirit can be caught in the ineffably chiming songs, precursors of the *Padas* of our Candidasa and Vidyapati.

Yet in spite of its romantic spell, it shows an allegiance to the Sanskrit tradition that seems to be surprising, being very much incompatible with the former. Of the manifest signs of such allegiance we notice—(1) that the work is divided into Cantos in the way of a veritable Maha-Kavya, and (2) that the poet often and on indulges experimenting with various metres quite in the epic vein. This points unmistakably to the fact that the poet wished his work to be taken as a Kavya, rather on a small scale. To read into the work the modern Browningesque conception of a dramatic lyric or a dramatic monologue is certainly bold and to say the least, misconstruing the poet's so obvious intentions. Any refusal on our part to see eye to eye with the poet on such a point as this would be overriding the commission of a critic and exhibiting our modernistic preconceptions, an obsession of which might point to an obscurity of vision.

So, taking the cue from the poet and following him in his line of thought, a lurking suspicion peeps out saying if these songs are not as well in the form of Sanskrit stanzas or metrical compositions. Are these songs, we feel inclined to ask, really strange, irregular products of the Sanskrit tongue or are they the rightful fruits of the metrical laws operating in and through them ! Indeed, such a number of songs, all in Sanskrit and yet no Sanskrit metrical law acting behind them—a dead impossibility ! If we have settled this point, we have partly done with our problem.

Now we have been spared the pains and responsibility of settling such a momentous issue. Dr. Candramohan Ghosh in his introduction to the Pingalasavasangraha remarks thus on the very first song of the Gitagovinda, "Is this aria* of Jayadeva" he asks, "a metrical composition or is it not ? The sweetness of its cadence and the regularity of its periods would at once indicate its place there, perhaps not an obscure one either. But where is it to be placed ? It is not a *Samabrittam*, neither an *Ardha-samam*, nor a *Visamam*, for it has no syllabic uniformity whatever, either in number or in uniform sequence. Is it a *Jati* ? It is not an *Aryya* of any kind, neither a *Baitaliyam*, nor any of its varieties. It cannot be classed with any of the *Matrasamakani*. Thus, then, it is excluded one by one from all the groups of measures, described in books. But still the ear would demur to keep it out of the pale of metrical literature. Its metrical character may however be defined thus : Twenty Matras in the first-half, with a caesural pause after the tenth, besides the terminal, and sixteen in the second-half. There is a rhyming harmony also in all the stanzas. It would thus be an additional *Matrachhandas*'. Now, it may be said that this is really making an unwilling horse amenable to its course ; providing for a case which fights shy of all provision. To dispel such doubts one has only to read the appropriate pages of the above-mentioned work, where all the songs of the Gitagovinda have been exhaustively treated and prosodically scanned in their proper stanza forms. Here we take one such instance :—

"রময়তি সুদৃশং কামপি সুভৃশং, খলহলধরসোদরে ।
কিমফলমবসং চিরমিহ বিরসং, বদ সখি বিটপোদরে ॥
ইহ রসভণনে কৃতহরিগুণনে, মধুরিপুপদসেবকে ।
কলিযুগচরিতং ন বসতু দুরিতং, কবি-নৃপ-জয়দেবকে ।"

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*প্রলয়পয়োধিজলে ধৃতবানসি বেদম etc.

Now this stanza is in *Aryya* of the name *Mahabipula* in the category of *Upagiti*, with only this difference that the seventh is a *Jagan*. This is not forcing the song to such a type ; it, by its very form exhibits the family-likeness. And it is not difficult to decide whether Jayadeva was conscious of this fact of his songs being metrical compositions. His *Sarga* division would lead us to the view that he was, and the rimes we may take as instances of *Antyayamaka*. The tenth canto of *Bhattikavyam* for example, has an irregular Aryya and in its metrical variety which comprises *Aryyas*, furnishes the type of a *Sarga* almost approaching to that of the Gita-govinda, as we shall see later on. The songs of Jayadeva by his directions of *tala* and *laya* are as much compositions in a variety of tunes as, in their being portions and parcels of a *Kayya*, they are the works in metres as any other stanza of the Gitagovinda. So that ultimately we see the incompatibility with which we began fading away to nothing. We conclude, therefore, that the Gitagovinda in its manner of execution is a *Mahakavya*, though evidently without its bigger pretensions of size and ornate descriptions.

But this does not preclude us from realizing either its lyrical or dramatic element. For, as we have already noticed, the songs have a spontaneous infusion of romantic spirit in them from whose catching effect there is no escape. And the indelible touch of the dramatist is also there. This dramatic touch lies in the poet's keeping himself almost always in the back-ground and in his appropriating the song to the situation and state of mind of the character in whose mouth it is placed. But one might say that the creation of an atmosphere is as much a property of the lyric as of the drama. But is it not a property of the Kavya as well ? Further, some one may here intervene with the remark—well, even your first characterising mark of the dramatic is from the view point of the artist ; but from a religious angle of vision it must disappear as such. For here the poet has embodied his own religious experiences after having felt within himself that particular state either of Krishna or of Radha or of the Sakhi. The point we would emphasise in this connection is that such touches of the lyric or the drama do not falsify in any way the position we have just now established. They constitute additional charms, largely heightening its ultimate effect.

And now we pass on, to something of a controversial character. And if I am going to deal with my third class of critics first, I can only say this much in explanation that it was my acquaintance with the

introductory pages of Prof. Bejoy Chandra Majumdar's edition of the Gitagovinda that set me on this track. But even so, I confine myself in this paper to discussions of a linguistic character.

In the first place we shall give a summary of Prof. Majumdar's remarks in his own words as far as posible. Says he: "কাব্যের নাম 'গীত গোবিন্দ'; মুখবন্ধের একটী শ্লোকে ও কাব্যের স্বরূপ বর্ণনায়, 'মধুরকোমলকান্ত পদাবলী'র কথা উল্লিখিত আছে। পদাবলী কথাটা নবম শতাব্দী এবং তৎপরবর্ত্তী সময়ের "নববৈষ্ণব" ধর্ম্মের সাহিত্যে গীত বা গান অর্থেই প্রচলিত।.....২৪টী গানই পদাবলী, উহা মাত্রাচ্ছন্দে রচিত সুরতালযুক্ত গান। সেইগুলিই কেবল লালিত্যে প্রসিদ্ধি লাভ করিয়াছে। অন্য শ্লোকগুলি, অক্ষরচ্ছন্দে রচিত; সেগুলি পদাবলী বা গান নহে। আরম্ভ সূচক অনেক কবিতা এবং সর্গভঙ্গের শ্লোকগুলি ললিত বা সরস বলিতে পারি না। কাজেই সন্দেহ হয়, যে কি জানি কোন জয়দেবের শিষ্য গীতগুলিকে অখণ্ডভাবে একখানি "খণ্ডকাব্য" বা মহাকাব্য করিয়া গড়িয়া তুলিবার ইচ্ছায়, গানগুলির প্রথমে ও শেষে অনেক শ্লোক জুড়িয়া দিয়াছিলেন।.....ইহাও বিবেচনার যোগ্য যে, গীতগুলি ভিন্ন অন্য কোন কবিতায় জয়দেবের নামের ভনিতা নাই। "মেঘৈর্মেদুরমম্বরং"টিকে যে মুখবন্ধের প্রথম শ্লোকরূপে সমগ্র কাব্যের ভূমিকার হিসাবে উপযোগী তাহা বলিতে পারি না। "যদি হরিস্মরণে" ইত্যাদি উপযুক্ততর ভূমিকা। তাহা ছাড়া, মূল গীতগুলিতে যুবক-যুবতীর শরীর ও লীলা বর্ণিত; এবং সে লীলা নানা অবস্থায় নানা সময়ে অভিনীত। একটী অন্ধকাররাত্রেই শেষ নয়। মূলে পাই যুবক যুবতীর লীলা, কিন্তু "মেঘৈর্মেদুর"—শ্লোকটীতে "ব্রহ্মবৈবর্ত্তে"র অনুযায়ী শিশু বা খোকা গোপালকে বয়োজ্যেষ্ঠা রাধার সঙ্গীরূপে পাই।" Now it might be thought as transgressing the bounds of decency to criticise any personal opinion as such and I would have nothing to do with it had it not been for the reason that some scholars, (Dr. S. K. Chatterji, for instance) have tried to make a strong case out of it.

Now, *Padavali* as we have it in the phrase, 'মধুরকোমলকান্তপদাবলীং' means just what naturally (i.e. non-technically) it ought to mean, viz. a string of sweet, soft and charming words. The technical interpretation Prof. Majumdar would attach to the terms *Pada* and *Padavali* must have to rest on the authority of what Dr. S. K. Chatterji calls *Caryyapadas* Dr. D. C. Sen in his *Bangabhasha O Sahitya* refrains from even mentioning the name of Jayadeva as a Sanskrit padavali writer; he just begins with

Candidasa. This is because that would be placing oneself in a false position with *regard to* Jayadeva with his (Jayadeva's) Sanskrit associations unscathed. But the analogy with the *Caryyapadas* is so meagre that it fails to convince us that Jayadeva with his Sanskrit taste could mean it so. The *Bhanitas* needs must not frighten us. We have them in the *Naisha lha-caritam* of *Sriharsham* *which shows that it was a sign of the times. There cannot have been any hard and fast rule that such *Bhnaitas* would come always at the end of each *Sarga* ; for, at the time this practice had just set in and in the *padavali* age it became more and more fixed in its position ; it was in all probability left entirely at the mercy of individual angularities. And that Jayadeva has done it at the end of each song shows his predilection for the songs which are undoubtedly the works of his best and concentrated powers. The longed-for *Bhanita* comes out in the last three stanzas of the last canto fittingly enough, and none can certainly reject all the three stanzas as spurious.

After all his characteristic emphasis on the *lalitya* in his *pada* sense, the following words from a foot-note of the same work not only look strange, but are directly contradictory of all that he says above concerning the *Padabali* of the Gitagovinda. We quote it at length : "মুগ্ধ মধুসূদন' নামক তৃতীয় সর্গের এবং 'স্নিগ্ধমধুসূদন' নামক চতুর্থ সর্গের একটী গান ও পদ লালিত্যগৌরবে কিংবা ভাবের মনোহারিতায় প্রসিদ্ধি লাভ করে নাই। পঞ্চম সর্গের প্রথম গান ঐ অপ্রসিদ্ধ অংশের অন্তর্ব্বর্ত্তী। সপ্তম গীতটীর ছন্দ মোটেই জমকাল নয় বলিয়া, সাধারণভাবেই অনুবাদ করা গেল। ইহার সুর দেওয়া আছে গুর্জ্জরী রাগ, যতি তাল। পঞ্চম গীতটী ঐ সুরে রচিত ; অথচ তাহার সহিত ছন্দের মিল নাই।" This will tend to the position we have established before. For, the songs were compositions in *matrcchandas* and were *sloka* first and *gita* next. Any stanza here will tell the same story. Take for instance, 'চিন্তয়ামি তদাননং কুটীলভ্রু কোপভরেণ। শোনপদ্মামিবোপরি ভ্রমতাকুলং ভ্রমরেণ ॥ The *Chandas* and *tal laya* have blended in some places in an unbroken harmony ; in others, they have not. Jayadeva's was a bold experiment in Sanskrit Kavya and it marked a triumph of his transcendent genius. So no discrepancy between the songs and other stanzas suggests to our mind (except that they are in different kinds of metres), in as much

*Who was almost a contemporary of Jayadeva.

as both are equally remarkably representative of the *Goudiya Riti.* And the stanzas have as much justification to exist as the songs have, one group vitally complementing the other. On the explanation of the seeming repitition of ideas in the songs and other verses we shall speak in another place. But that the *slokas* are essential to the thorough understanding of the songs in their proper situations cannot be gainsaid. In this connexion we quote from the very excellent article on "*Goudiya Riti* from the pen of our revered professor Shivaprosad Bhattacharya ; This favouritism for swectness (*Sousabdya* in another way) marks the literary outburst of the next period the Sena ascendancy—which has been called the Augustan age of Sanskrit learning and culture of Bengal. *Umapatidhar Gobardhan, Dhoyi or Dhoyika*and *Joyadeva* reveal each in his own way a harmonious combination of pompousness, sweetness and softness, difficult to be met with elsewhere in Sanskrit literature"

It is really surprising that Prof. Majumdar omits from the list of commentaries on the Gitagovinda that he supplies us with, the very honoured name of *Kumbharaj.* All his enthusiastic talk about the interpretation of the *Sloka* shows that he has forgotten the রসিকপ্রিয়া commentary altogether (I wish I could quote the explanation part of the said commentary : but I am here absolutely held up by space considerations). But for any one who would feel doubtful of a refutation of Prof. Majumdar I quote some part to show how all the objections raised by him were anticipated some 500 years ago and answered quite from the liberal standpoint of Kavya. "এবমেতেন পথা শ্রীজয়দেবেন কবিনা রসমুখ্যে স্থিরীকৃতে তদাশয়ম্ অবুদ্ধা কৈশ্চিদ্ ব্যাখ্যাতং তৎ তাবৎ ন বিচক্ষণপরীক্ষাক্ষমম্ ইক্ষামহে। তথাহি। ইথং নন্দনিদেশতো নন্দাদেশাৎ চলিতয়োঃ কেলয়ো জয়ন্তি। ইথম্ইতি কিম্। রাধা কাচন গোপিকা তস্যা নন্দেন সম্বোধনম্। হে রাধে ইমং মম শিশুং রাত্রৌ ভীরুং ত্বমেব গৃহং প্রাপয় ত্বয্যেব মম বিশ্বাস ইতি।.....অথৈবং নন্দাদেশাৎ অন্য তথা গ্রাম্যতায়াং শৃঙ্গারো বিনাশিতো ভবতি। যথাহ.....'তস্মাদত্র বিভাবানুভাবসঞ্চারিভির্ভবেৎ। শৃঙ্গারো নন্দসামীপ্যান্তয়ে শ্চলিতয়োঃ স্বতঃ ॥.....'তস্মাৎ কাব্যাভিপ্রায়সূচিতশৃঙ্গারপরত্বেনাত্র কৃতং ব্যাখ্যানমেব ন্যায্যম্ ইতি।" We shall try to see in another place the aptness of this sloka as introductory to the work. The less we lean upon the *Radha* portion of *Brahmabaibarttapurana* the better ; for, according to good authorities it is a Nimbarkite interpolation ; and "Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda-Radha* is the mistress, not the consort of *Krishna* as she is in *Nimbark's*" theology.

(Dr. Macnicoll—Indian Theism). The chronology itself is opposed to his being a Nimbarkite and so Prof. Mazumdar's explanation of the first sloka cannot be accepted.

Then we come on to his remarks on the following tenth canto sloka.

বন্ধূকদ্যুতিবান্ধবোঽয়মধরং স্নিগ্ধো মধূকচ্ছবি—
গণ্ডে চণ্ডি চকাস্তি নীলনলিনশ্রীমোচনং লোচনম্ ।
নাসাভ্যেতি তিলপ্রসূনপদবীং কুন্দাভদন্তি প্রিয়ে
প্রায়স্ত্বন্মুখসেবয়া বিজয়তে বিশ্বং স পুষ্পায়ুধঃ ॥"

"সর্গ ভঙ্গের পঞ্চম শ্লোকে যে সকল ফুলের নাম আছে, ঐগুলি পঞ্চশরের পুষ্প নহে। জয়দেব যেমন কবি ছিলেন, তেমনি পণ্ডিত ও আলঙ্কারিক ছিলেন। তিনি কদাচ এ ভুল করেন নাই।" These remarks come with ill grace from a scholar of Prof. Majumdar's repute. This finding of a fault is obviously because he has to save his position. Let us hope that by his remark "জয়দেব যেমন কবি ছিলেন, তেমনি আলঙ্কারিকও ছিলেন" he is not confusing our Jayadeva with the Jayadeva of *Chandraloka*. We say this on purpose because, to establish Jayadeva as an *Alankarist* from his Gitagovinda, the songs, however good they may be in their own way, will not help so much as his other slokas. This very sloka is a case in point. Here the poet lays a clear emphasis on the *Upameyas* and if by keeping himself within the convention in seeking his *Upamanas* he does not violate any rule of poetics, he would have done that if he had substituted the names of conventional flowers for the *Upamanas* given. But in this latter respect, there has been, as *Rasikapriya* explaints it, no error at all on the part of our poet. There the explanation runs on each head thus—(১) অনেন রক্তাকর্ষণবাণঃ উক্তঃ, (২) অনেন পীতো বশীকারবাণঃ উক্তঃ, (৩) অনেন কৃষ্ণবর্ণঃ উন্মাদনবাণঃ অভ্যান, (৪) অনেন দ্রাবণবাণঃ উক্তঃ, (৫) অনেন শোষণবাণঃ উক্তঃ। So the other remark of Prof. Majumdar is beside the mark.

Next we proceed with our consideration of the arguments of Dr. Sunitikumar Chatterji by anticipating an objection to our fundamental position. Any one with a knowledge of Sanskrit poetics might say : "How can you call it a *Sarga* of a *Kavya* in the conventional sense when it is not written all over in the *Britta* metres ? We answer as follows—

We all know that *Manabakakrida* is a Sanskrit *Chandas*. We draw the illustration of it from *Srutabodha*—

আদিগতং । তুর্য্যগতং । পঞ্চমকং । চান্তগতম্ ।
স্যাদ্‌গুরুচেৎ । সঙ্কথিতং । মাণবকা- ক্রীড়মিদম্ ॥

As Prof. Majumdar in his History of Bengali language points out, we have this very rhythm in what are called *Rektachandas* in Bengali. Every one will remember the following nursery rhyme :—

হাত ঘুরুলে। নাড়ু দোবো। নয়ত নাড়ু। কোথায় পাব।

That a section of the Pandits of the day attempted to bring this Bengali rhythm within the pale of Sanskrit metres (specially the *Matracchandas*) cannot be doubted for a single moment. Thus we find in Jayadeva

বদসি যদি। কিঞ্চিদপি। দন্তরুচি। কৌমুদী হরতি দর। তিমিরমতি—। (ঘোরম্)

We see also, that though *Prakrita* had for some centuries since been dwindling away from the status of a written language (see below), the silt it deposited made it possible for the Sanskrit learning to revive and grow so rapidly. The revival period of Sanskrit could not shut itself totally against the *matracchandas* that were raised previous to such an exalted dignity. And at the time of Jayadeva, *Matracchandas*, it may be well presumed, had kept up their originality and importance. Jayadeva, who, as we have seen, was not blind to the working of his age, set his hands to building up a Kavya on a popular basis,—not however on any popular model. His very selection of theme testifies to this fact, as also to his religious outlook of mind. His originality lay in the very copception of such an idea. Well now, again it may be asked, he must then have set aside all convention. instead of acquiescing in it, (as you have said) ? The fact is, he accepted conventions as they suited him and was not the person to be taken in blindfold by these coventions, or to put it bluntly, he acquisced in conventions but not completely. The explanation lies again in the nature and state of languages of the time. It was a time when Sanskrit had fully asserted its claims as a written language in the reaction that set in with the decline of *Prakrita* languages. Jayadeva was a great Sanskrit scholar (কবিরাজ-রাজ) and as one of the court poets of a king, who over and above his being a great patron of Sanskrit learning, was himself no mean a Sanskritist (see below), could not in the nature of things get over his classical bias. The Gitagovinda thus appears to us a unique product, quite representative of the age, where convention has mated with individuality, scholarship with genius. From purely technical considerations binding with the portrait, we cannot deny that it was meant to be Kavya though evidently with a smaller air of ambitiousness.

The first thing I shall bring to your notice in connexion with Dr. S. K. Chatterji is the following statement of his in his Origin and Development of the Bengali Language—"Scholars like Pischel and B. C. Majumdar suspect that these songs were originally composed in some *prakritik* speech." It appears from the reference given there, that he draws this conclusion, so far as Prof. Majumdar is concerned, from the latter's edition of the Gitagovinda with the Bengali verse-translation. But Professor Majumdar,

so far as we can see it, has nowhere in that book maintained any such position. We have given above a summary of his views in his own words that speak for themselves. The evidence of his other work, *viz.*, History of Bengali Language, will show that it not only does not contain any such opinion, but has, on the other hand, many things that go, (as we shall see) quite the contrary way. In both the works he consistently and definitely holds the view that the songs that Jayadeva wrote were in Sanskrit.

Another thing that Dr. S. K. Chatterji says is this ; "During the ninth to twelfth centuries through the prestige of North Indian Rajput princely houses, in whose courts dialects akin to this late form of *Sauraseni* were spoken and whose bards cultivated it, the western Sauraseni *apabhramsa* became current all over Aryan India, from Gujrat and Western Punjab to Bengal; probably as a lingua franca and certainly as a polite language, as a bardic speech which alone was regarded as suitable for poetry of all sorts." This his "bardi speech which alone was regarded as suitable for poetry of all sorts" specially because of the context in which it appears—looks rather ambiguous. The might mean that this bardic speech was adopted exclusively and on all occasions in all court-matters and was also the vehicle of court-poetry—which we have good reasons, as we shall show presently to reject as a general fact. But if it is simply meant for all impromptu slokas of the *Prakritapingala*, nothing can be said against it.

The non-mention of Jayadeva as a poet in the court of *Lakshman Sen* on the part of Dr. Chatterji seems to us to be purposive. Is it that he does not believe in the truth of it ! If so I would refer him to Mr. R. D. Banerji's *Banglar Itihasa* and to Prof. Majumdar's edition of the Gita-govinda in there appropriate places. Further, this is proved by a colophon of an ancient copy of the Gitagovinda discovered by Dr. Butler in Kashmir. Besides we have in the *Birbhumbibarana* a record that there was an exchange of Slokas between *Ballala Sen* and his son *Lakshmana-Sen*. We have nothing to show on historical basis of this quarrel or to prove the authenticity of the Slokas and can disbelieve it if we please. But that Sanskrit Slokas were imputed to *Ballala Sen* and *Lakshmana Sen* could not have been possible but for the fact that both were known in the country to be something of Sanskrit scholars or versifiers. This is proved beyond doubt by some verses of *Lakshmana Senadeva* occuring in the authology of *Sridharadeva* called *Sadiktikarnamruta*. In this connexion we find it useful to quote the following conclusion of Dr. Macdonell: "Thus

by the time of the Muhammadan conquest Sanskrit was almost the only written language of India. But while Sanskrit was recovering its ancient supremacy, the Prakrits had exercised a lasting influence upon it in two respects. They had supplied its vocabulary with a number of new words, and had transformed into a stress accent the old musical accent which still prevailed after the days of Panini. (History of Sanskrit Literature). From the evidence of the epigraphs of Pala kings, Mr. Akshaykumar Maitra in his *introduction* to the *Gaudalekhamala* (প্রথম খণ্ড *Second series*) arrives at the conclusion that whatever may have been the lingua franca, (before the Muhammadan conquest of Bengal) Sanskrit had not ceased to be court language of *Gauda* i. e., Bengal and Greater Bengal. Even in North India this state of things is shown by the appearance of the *Rasikapriya* commentary of *Ranakumbha* in the first half of the fifteenth century.

That the evidence of *Prakritapingalam* is insufficient to establish that Jayadeva wrote his songs in the Prakrit is admitted by Dr. Chatterji himself as very clearly appears from this very characteristic sentence : "And it would have been a great thing if we could have his songs in the language in which he possibly wrote them". But this is really speaking only imagining a thing that has never been. The illustrative slokas that are adduced have really every mark of impromptu, *Bhata* slokas ; while Jayadeva's were songs set with a perfect sense of artistic design and development. Indeed, the early date of 900 A. C. that he establishes is not really due to the exclusive evidence of the so called Jayadeva slokas, which on his own showing of linguistic peculiarities must bear a very late date. Again, a comparison of the পিঙ্গল শ্লোক, "জিণ বে অ ধরিজ্জে মহিঅল লিজ্জে, পিঠ্ঠিহি দন্তহি ঠাউ ধরা "will prove the বেদানুদ্ধরতে, জগন্তি বহতে, ভূগোলমুদ্বিভ্রতে" sloka of the Gitagovinda, on Dr. Chatterji's own hypothesis, to be of Jayadeva's authorship. This will not fit in with the position that the will make for Jayadeva that he wrote only the songs. So we associate urselves with Prof. Majumdar in taking the particular *Pingala* slokas at least to be belonging to any date between 1400 and 1600 A. C, and say with him that these slokas are echoes of Gitagovinda-songs ; and further add—not only of the songs, but of the other slokas as well. That this was when Jayadeva's writings had attained great popularity throughout India can be established on independent evidence and these *Pingala* slokas, containing, as some of them do, a greater element of Bengali than *Apabhramsaprakrita* are proofs of this popularity. Lastly, we feel doubt-

ful if a mere touching will transform beautiful *Prakrita* songs into Sanskrit, keeping inviolate their sweetness, cadence and music.

The most conjectural point in his senas of conjectures is this;—"It seems that even the learned Pandits who would scorn anything composed in a vulgar tongue, were charmed with these padas of Jayadeva" Now this statement is extremely unwarranted. This really springs from a habit of foisting our own taste and ear on an age that is removed from us by some eight centuries. But we find evidence to the contrary—that these songs in Sanskrit even, could not win immediate popularity. As Mr. Kali-prasanna Banerji in his very well-informed book *Madhyayuge Bangla* says;—কৃষ্ণভক্তির বন্যা পরবর্ত্তী যুগেই প্রবাহিত হইয়াছিল। জয়দেব বা চণ্ডীদাসের গীতি-কবিতায় সেকালের সমাজ মুগ্ধ হয় নাই।" The paucity of Gitagovinda slokas in *Saduktikarnamrita* is a clear, indication of this unpopularity with the orthodox Pandits of the day, perhaps owing to strange departures from convention in the form of the work. In one place of his work Dr. Chatterji himself while speaking of the two slokas in the Sikh Adi Granth attributed to Jayadeva remarks, "It seems very likely, they were originally in the western *Apabhramsa* as written in Bengal. *There is strong influence of Sanskrit as well.* "We finish this part of our discussion by a quotation from Dr. Keith: "It has been suggested that the presence of end and middle rime, as well as the *Yamakas* common to Sanskrit poetry, is a proof of origination from an Apabhramsa version, but it would be wrong to imagine that the poem had any popular model. It is instead a most elaborate and a perfect work of art and it owes this result largely to the remarkable beauty of the Sanskrit language, with which Apabhramsa cannot compare." (Classical Sans. Literature 1927).

In the last place we must say a word on the interpolations. That a work, with so much popularity later on, has escaped any interpolation is impossible on the face of it. And we shall speak of one such probability. For this it will be enough to refer to the preiviously mentioned work, *Birbhum Bibaran*, where if we are to believe in traditional evidence and in the evidence of *Banamalidasa's Jayadevacharita*, any three of the four slokas at the end of the eleventh canto have been suggested to be interpolations of *Puriraja*.

So I take leave of my discussions by restating the two points that it has been my endeavour to establish in this paper. Firstly, that both the songs and the slokas are the works of Jayadeva and secondly, that the Gitagovinda is a Mahakavya, though on a small scale.

MAKHANLAL MUKHERJEE—*Fifth Year Sanskrit.*

OURSELVES

FAREWELL TO PRINCIPAL BARROW.

The students of Presidency College assembled in the Physics Theatre on the 18th of September, 1930, to bid farewell to Principal J. R. Barrow. Before the proceedings commenced, a photograph was taken of Principal Barrow with the staff and students of the College assembled on the College lawn.

The hall was packed to the full and almost all students of the College attended. Several ex-students including some expelled students were present to express their sense of regret at Mr. Barrow's premature retirement. The members of the teaching staff were present almost to a man. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice D. N. Mitter presided over the meeting. In a short and neat speech he referred to the many qualities of the out-going Principal and to his activities in connection with the development of the College. After the President's speech, Mr. Sureshchandra Sen Gupta of the Sixth year Economics class, on behalf of the students, read out and presented an address to Principal Barrow. Mr. Barrow's reply to the address was a nice and touching one. He thanked the students for the 'kindness' they had shown to him and asked them to keep before them the high ideal of broad outlook, as distinguished from narrow parochialism. A vote of thanks to the Chair, moved by Mr. Debeshchandra Das of the Fourth year class, brought the proceedings to a close.

After the formal meeting was over, the ex-students presented a private address to Mr. Barrow.

The Autumn Social was held immediately after the farewell meeting and as a part of the farewell. All the students of the College as well as the members of the staff present were treated to light refreshments.

The address presented to Mr. Barrow is printed below :

To

JOHN ROTHNEY BARROW, Esq., M. A. (Cantab.,) I. E. S.,
PRINCIPAL, PRESIDENCY COLLEGE,
CALCUTTA.

Sir,

It is with a heavy heart that we are assembled here tonight to bid you farewell on the eve of your retirement from the College.

Your connexion with our College extends over a period of about six years, and during all this time that you have been here, you have left an indelible impress of your personality and your ideals on this the premier College of the country. In days tranquil or troublous, in times normal or abnormal, you have worked for the College with energy unabated, wisdom unfailing and courage unbedimmed. We, in particular, have found in you one who combined firmness with large-hearted sympathy, and tempered justice with mercy. You have never deviated from your principles and ideals: you have tried unceasingly to create and foster a real academic atmosphere in the College which you have loved so well and which has loved you so well in return. Those of us, who have had the privilege of reading with you, have benefited by your keen literary insight and your vast erudition.

Sir, you are proceeding to enjoy your well-earned rest after twenty-five years' work in a department which you have adorned with your many qualities of head and heart. We lose in your departure one of our best friends and sincerest well-wishers. We give you a hearty send-off, and wish you a long and happy life, hoping that in your retirement you will not forget the College to which for so many years you have given of your best, nor your dear old pupils who part from you today with the profoundest feelings of sorrow.

We beg to remain,
Sir,
Your affectionate pupils
of Presidency College.

September, 18, 1930.

EDEN HINDU HOSTEL NOTES.

Christmas time in Calcutta has special attractions of its own. Amusements and enjoyments of all sorts find a free flow and the mild winter weather permits every one to be in the best of his moods. To the Christians it is *the* time for enjoyment—excellent meals and the best drinks, the nicest films and the most charming plays, all these make them feel that the greatest of their holy days is the best of all holidays. Gay dresses and smiling faces distinguish the Christians from the others during these days. Yet, to these others, Christmas time is no less attractive. This is evidenced in the packed cinema-

halls and theatres, and in the tents of those circus parties which come here only at this period to take away a considerable portion of the citizens' money.

But, unfortunately the boarders of the Eden Hindu Hostel cannot enjoy this time fully this year ; for the examinations begin on the 5th of January, 1931 and they have all, (except however the post-graduate students and those lucky few who will have the good fortune of falling ill just at the nick of time) to sit for it.

* * * *

When the examination knocks at the door, life in the hostel is nothing but the monotonous repetition of the same routine. The study hours are more than zealously observed. The day dawns amidst the musical chimes of alarm-clocks ringing out from different rooms. The morning gossips in the corridors are no more to be seen. The stage and the screen have ceased to attract many of the 'regulars'. A dead silence reigns in the hostel after evening has set in, and every one is busy in his own little corner to prepare himself to settle as best as he can with the imminent examination.

* * * *

But there are some who seem to be undaunted by what their fellow-boarders dread so much. Their number is small, but they are occasionally able to influence the hostel life in their own way. One can feel their presence in the dining-room, where mirth lets itself out in its fulness and whispered talks give place to hearty chattings. One can feel their presence, when from the Highland, a harsh and shrill voice tries its utmost to charm the hostel by sweet 'ghazals'——songs immortalizing the Bohemian stranger who wanders aimless in the woodlands, songs that are sung everywhere, from the society drawing-room down to the cabby's box.

* * * *

In the midst of the dull torpor that prevails all around us, there come days when the hostellers seem to forget for the time being the impending examination and show themselves in their 'pre-puja' elements again. The feast day is one such occasion ; the cricket game on a sunny Sunday occasionally provides another. Again, when a new list of books is added to the already heavy catalogue of the library, some amount of animation manifests itself in that corner-room in the ground-floor, where the Muse of learning sits all the year through.

* * * *

'Lights off' at 11 P. M'!—this has been is the regulations of the hostel for years. Every night at that hour the unearthly krat-krrr-krat of the durwan's extra-thick wooden sandals informs the boarders that the lights are going to be put off in a minute or two. There is immediately in every room a mild bustle and hurry. There are some—of the devil-may-care sort—who seek at this opportune moment the warm welcome and embrace of the blanket. But there is a much larger body of men, to whom the putting off of electric lights means no difference. They go on with their work after the switch has been pushed up, as if nothing has happened. Theirs is simply a match-and-candle affair—Candellizing', as it is popularly known in the hostel, yet the principle behind it stands in open defiance of a certain clause in the regulations.

* * * *

Can any one explain why the water kept in the huge tanks in the bathing sheds attains a temperature which is almost equal to the freezing point? We have tried to find out an explanation, and we have failed. The water kept in these tanks is peculiarly cold; the moment one puts a quantity of it on his body, he feels a sensation which has the incomparable power of taking all other sensations away. Cases of cold, cough and influenza are cropping up in the hostel. Who knows, why?

* * * *

Our best thanks to Mr. E. Milsom. I. C. S., District and Sessions Judge, Bengal, who on the eve of his retirement presented to our library nearly two hundred books from his own collection. We have also to thank the hostel authorities for having arranged to take regular physical measurements of the boarders.

* * * *

Five of our ex-boarders—Messrs. Anilbandhu Bhattacharyya, Devaprasad Basu, Mahadev Hazra, Nabagopal Das and Nanilal Barua have left India for higher studies abroad. Need we tell them that the very best wishes of the Hostel accompany them wherever they go?

* * * *

Dr. Lalit Kumar Ghosh, M. B., of the Bengal Medical Service has been appointed Medical Officer for the Hostel.

* * * *

Those of our friends who have read anything about economics always try to make us realize that something has occurred in the business world which brings in, *inter alia*, low prices. If however there is really something of this

nature about. we ought to have felt it by this time. The College fees, the seat-rents—all these things are exactly where they were last year, and the boarding charges—the only variable item in our monthly expenditure—are increasing ! If our economist-friends can conciliate this fact with low prices, we have nothing to say ; but if hey fail here, for what good on earth do they read economics ?

R. C. R.

MEDALS AND PRIZES.

The following students of our College have won the University Prizes and medals stated against their names on the results of the last Intermedlate, B. A. and B. Sc., Examinations :

Intermediate Examination

Karunaketan Sen

(i) Stephen Finney Silver Medal
(ii) Duff Scholarship in Mathematics
(iii) Duff Scholarship in Chemistry
(iv) Sarada Prosad Prize in Mathematics
(v) Sarada Prosad Prize in Chemistry
(vi) Rai Radhikaprasanna Mukherjee Bahadur, C. I. E., Prize
(vii) Nabakristo Ker Silver Medal.

B. A. and B. Sc. Examinations

Hrishikes Goswami

(i) Eshan Scholarship
(ii) Prabhabati Debi Silver Medal
(iii) Radhakanta Gold Medal.

Dayamay Mukhopadhyay

Prasannakumar Sarbadhikari Gold Medal

Makhanlal Mukhopadhyay

Jyotish Chandra Silver Medal

Pratulkrishna Bandyopadhyay

Vidyasagar Silver Medal

Jagadindra Nath Hor

(i) Kesabchandra Sen Gold Medal and Prize
(ii) Ramtanu Lahiri Gold Medal
(iii) Hemantakumar Gold Medal
(iv) Clint Memorial Prize (half of the total value of the prize)

Ajit Kumar Mukhopadhyay

Pearychand Mitra Silver Medal

Jyotsnanath Chanda

Abinas Chandra Gold Medal (half the total value of the medal)

Abdus Salam
Tawney Memorial Prize

Nabagopal Das
(i) N. N. Ghose Medal
(ii) Shamacharan Ganguli Prize (Arts)

Bhabatosh Datta
Quinlan Memorial Silver Medal

Kiranlal Roy
MacCan Silver Medal

Purnachandra Mukhopadhyay
(i) Tripundeswar Mitra Gold Medal
(ii) Gangaprosad Gold Medal
(iii) Shamacharan Ganguli Prize (Science)

Atindranath Basu Thakur
(i) Thakurdas Kar Gold Medal
(ii) Adharchandra Mukherjee Commemoration Prize
(iii) Bepinbehari Memorial Prize.

GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.

We had three ordinary general meetings after the Puja holidays. In the first meeting some of the rules and regulations of the Institute were changed. In the second general meeting Mr. K. Khader Mohiuddin of the 5th year class read a paper on "The Chromite Deposits of Mysore". The paper was profusely illustrated by lantern slides. The essay was highly appreciated and the President requested the writer to take up the work, he was engaged in, seriously.

The third meeting was held on the 8th of December, when Messrs. Madan Theatres Ltd. entertained us by a cinema show. Two films viz. "The Evolution of Man" and "Tembi" were shown and were enjoyed fully by those present. The secretary, speaking on behalf of the Institute, thanked all the guests in a brief introductory speech.

In all these three meetings, Professor Hemchandra Das Gupta, M. A., F. G. S., presided.

As in other years, we had the occasion to enjoy a few geological tours. The third year students were taken to Barakar and the post-graduate students, accompanied by Prof. Dasgupta went out on an excursion to the Godavari District in Madras. In the first week of December, the third year students were again taken out for a geological tour to Tindheria.

JYOTSNASANKAR BHADURI,
Secretary.

THE HINDI LITERARY SOCIETY.

The first meeting of the year was presided over by Prof. S. N. Lala, when Mr. B. K. Gupta read a paper on poet 'Bhushan.' In the second meeting, held under the presidentship of Mr. R. Lakhotia, there was a debate on the Sarda Bill and a resolution was passed appreciating Mr. Sarda's services to the country. In the third meeting, held on the 20th of September, 1930, the resignation of the former secretary was accepted and Messrs. J. N. Kabra and K. D. Goenka were elected Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively. The fourth meeting was held on the 26th November last with Prof. H. K. Banerjea on the chair. Mr. R. Lakhotia read a paper on "The Origin and Development of Hindi Literature". The paper evoked great interest and was much appreciated by the members present.

JAGANNATH KABRA,
Secretary.

FOOTBALL NEWS.

The outlook of the football season this year all over the country looked rather gloomy. Perhaps it was due to the unrest in the country. But as far as our College was concerned it was found at the close that the season was a complete success.

The only tournament we entered in was the Elliot Challenge Shield Competition and our football team annexed the trophy by defeating a formidable opponent, the Scottish Church College.

This triumph was only due to the College eleven. They contributed their best to the team. But I regret very much to say that other students do not take any interest whatsoever in the College team, nor do we get sufficient encouragement from our professors. It is really depressing.

Mr. S. C. Sen, Physical Instructor, however, rendered his kind help to us and we thank him for that.

PRANAB SEN,
Secretary.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following contemporaries:

1. The Allahabad University Magazine, Allahabad.
2. The Ashutosh College Magazine, Calcutta.
3. The Benares Hindu University Magazine, Benares. (2 issues)
4. The Chittagong College Magazine, Chittagong.
5. The Cotton College Magazine, Gauhati.
6. "The Dayalbagh Herald," Radhasoami Educational Institute, Dayalbagh Agra. (6 issues)
7. The D. A. V. College Magazine, Lahore
8. "The Durbar" Khalsa College, Amritsar (2 issues)
9. The Dayal Singh College Magazine, Lahore.
10. The Ganga, the Hailey College of Commerce, Lahore.
11. The Gordonian, Gordon College, Rawalpindi.
12. "The Gryphon," University of Leeds, (2 issues)
13. The Hooghly College Magazine, Hooghly.
14. The Maharaja's College Magazine. Ernakulam.
15. The Murray College Magazine, Sialkot.
16. The Narasinha Dutt College Magazine, Howrah.
17. The Pachaiyappa's College Magazine. Madras.
18. The Queen Mary's College Magazine, Madras.
19. "The Ravenshavian," Ravenshaw College, Cuttack.
20. "The Ravi," Government College, Lahore. (2 issues)
21. The St. Andrew's College Magazine, Gorakhpur.
22. The St. Paul's College Magazine, Calcutta.
23. The Sanskrit College Magazine, Calcutta.
24. The Sanskrit Collegiate School Magazine, Calcutta.
25. The Scottish Church College Magazine, Calcutta.
26. The Students' Chronicle & Serampore College Magazine, Serampore.
27. The Zamorin's College Magazine, Calicut. (2 issues)

CONCERNING THE LIBRARY.

To

The Editor,

The Presidency College Magazine,

Calcutta.

Sir,

With the idea that every student should be given full facility to derive the maximum benefit from the College library, I venture to draw the attention of the College authorities to the difficulty which some unfortunate students experience in borrowing a book from the library.

The present arrangements allow a student to borrow books between 11-30 A. M. and 12-30 P. M. and again between 2-45 and 4-15 P. M. But some students, particularly the Science students have got routine-work in the classes daily from 10 A. M. to 4 P. M. and occasionally from 10 A. M. to 5 P. M. continually except on Saturdays, and consequently the idea of borrowing books has to be abandoned altogether during the five days of the week. Some students no doubt get some leisure periods; but then these do not necessarily coincide with allotted hours for issuing books for home. The only effective solution would be to keep the lending section of the library open upto 5 P. M. daily.

Expecting sympathetic consideration from the authorities,

I am yours etc.
SHIBCHANDRA SARKAR,
3rd year Science.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A SCIENCE-STUDENT'S GRIEVANCE.

To

The Editor,

The Presidency Colloge Magazine.

Calcutta.

Sir,

I shall be highly obliged if I may be allowed to appear in these esteemed columns of yours with a matter which will be, I am sure, read with the keenest

interest by at least fifty per cent. of my fellow College students, though it may, to some aspiring souls, be rather a bit repulsive.

The long list of editors which adorn the inside of the cover of our magazine are all men with the same academic distinction, at least they were so when the arduous task of leading the destiny of our College magazine fell on them. We have no intention, not in the least, to question the efficiency of any one of those "God's favoured few"—men to whom the magazine owes its present high position of enviable repute. But the same "degree" at the end of the names of each one of them must have struck those high-class brains who spend the most charming and ambitious period of their lives in the lecture theatres and laboratories of the majestic Baker Laboratory Buildings, in the eastern wing of the main building, and in the Astronomical Observatory.

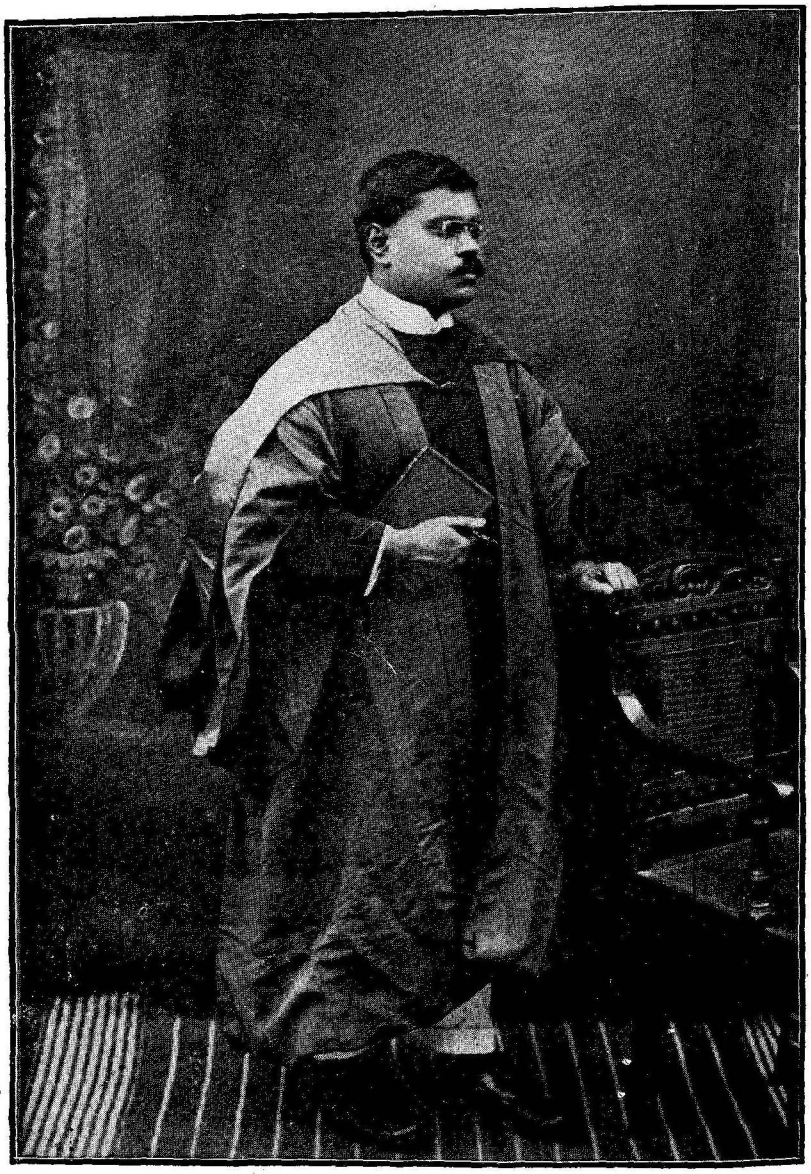
Are these men debarred from enjoying and indulging in the pleasure of being the greatest servant of our College magazine only because they are reading for or have taken the B. Sc. degree ?

I remain,
Most Sincerely Yours,
A. K. M.

[The original letter was a very long one. Want of space compells us to cut it down to its present size. We hope however, the writer's purpose will be served in spite of our clipping away almost half of the letter—Editor, Presy. Coll. Mag.]

A REVIEW

Mr. J. C. Basak of the Jnan Bhandar Museum, Dayalbagh, Agra, has sent ua pamphlet entitled "An Educational Museum in Calcutta" wherein he suggests the establishment in this city of a Museum where articles, charts, pictures etc. of purely educational interest should be kept. The idea, if given effect to, will no doubt be of great help to those connected with educational institutions ; both students and teachers would be able to derive a good deal of profit from it. The scheme, we understand, has been forwarded to the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, and to the Syndicate of the Calcutta University. As matters stand now, we do not know whether it would be possible to make a start within a year or two. If, however, any attempt is even made to establish an Educational Museum of this nature, Mr. Basak's scheme would no doubt help the organizers.



By Courtesy *Calcutta Review*

THE LATE DR. GAURANGANATH BANERJEA

THE PRESIDENCY COLLEGE MAGAZINE

Vol. XVII. MARCH, 1931 No. 3.

NOTES AND NEWS

'OUR FUTURE TAGORES'

'WHERE are our future Tagores?' asked Principal J. R. BARROW in his foreword to the first number of the eighth volume of the Magazine, referring to the dearth of Bengali articles. Mr. Barrow piously hoped that 'future Tagores' would make their appearance sooner or later in the pages of the Magazine. Perhaps, for a time, his hope was fulfilled. The post-war boom in the world's trade and industry had its counterpart in the Magazine, and for a few years, it appeared that a steady acceleration had become associated with it. The Magazine prospered and thrived well; side by side with English articles of the highest standard, shone Bengali contributions from able pens. The steady march towards greater and better progress continued, and filled the College with bright hopes for luminous prospets.

But, the crash has come. For reasons not very difficult to gauge, we are finding real difficulty in filling even the slender issues of the Magazine as are being published these days. Continual efforts to pursuade the students of the College to write resulted in our being able to get only half a score of contributions for this issue, of which, again, not more than three or four were worth publishing. Of the five articles printed in the English section of the Magazine, three come from post-graduate students, one from an ex-student who has been kind enough to remember us, and only one from among more than eight hundred students in the undergraduate classes. While this was our lot with English articles, we were far worse off on the Bengali side. The extreme paucity of Bengali articles compelled us to poke unwilling persons into action, and the result has been far from happy. Tagores of the future are perhaps not in Presidency College.

PRESIDENCY COLLEGE: YESTERDAY, TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

The state in which we now find ourselves can but lead to one of two conclusions: either that capable brains are unwilling to work themselves for the representative organ of their institution, or that there is a general decline in the quality of students, our College is getting at present. The first of these cannot evidently be true, for it is in the nature of able men to help those whom they can help, and we are sure, we have to cling to the rather unpleasant truth of the latter. It is being evidenced on all sides, we wrote so in the last issue, that the results of Presidency College students have not, for some time past, been quite worthy of the traditions of the institution. This fact, coupled with that of the appreciable dearth of suitable articles for publication in the Magazine, emphasizes all the more strongly the conclusion that Presidency College to-day is not what it used to be, her students now are not of the same mettle as were the students of the past.

What is ultimately responsible for all this? We attempted a diagnosis last time by pointing to the inordinately high fees charged in our College. Broadly speaking, one month's fee in Presidency College is nearly equal to twice the normal rate in Calcutta, and to thrice the average fee-rate in the muffassil. Only those who are at present reading in the College and those who are furnishing money to pay their fees, can feel what the payment of sixteen rupees a month as tuition fees means. There is in operation an appreciably large drift of good students from our College to the other colleges in the city where fee-rates are low. Year after year, our predecessors have implored the Government to look up into the matter and to relieve the strain on the poor parents, who would like to see their sons reading in the 'Premier College.' We draw the attention of the Government once again to this important matter, and also earnestly beseech the members of the Legislative Council to leave no ground untrodden in their efforts to lower the scale of fees in this College.

In this connection, we may perhaps be allowed to put forth another pertinent suggestion of a reason of this falling down in the quality of students in the College. The Education Department of Bengal is, we are afraid, pursuing a policy that is having a deterrent effect on the admission of students into our College. We are being gradually deprived of the services of some of our ablest teachers, who have been transferred to other colleges. In most of the cases, the vacancies have been allowed to stand, no appointments having been made upto now to fill them, and in a few cases temporary and make-shift arrangements have been made for providing the

quantitative requisite of service. We, of course, realise that the retirement of senior officers in the department makes it necessary to transfer some of our professors to the muffassil ; but there is nothing to prevent the appointment of fresh professors of high ability in the vacancies. Any recent issue of the Civil List of the Bengal Government would show that a good number of posts in the superior service are lying vacant and there is not even a whisper about their being filled up. We hope, however, that the Government, if they stick to the present scale of fees, would see that the services of the efficient teachers, who have been taken away from us, are replaced by equally efficient ones. The policy of evacuation without corresponding inflow is having a deterrent effect on those who would have liked to come to Presidency College.

OUR LOSSES

It has come to be a normal part of the Editor's duties to record in every issue of the Magazine obituary notices of considerable magnitude. Within the short space of time since the appearance of the December issue, we have had a heavy list of deaths of our ex-students, who had made their mark in different directions. We deeply mourn the death of DR. MAHENDRANATH BANERJEA, C. I. E., who was one of the oldest group of ex-students of our College. After getting his B. A. degree here in 1877, he went to England and completed his medical studies in King's College, London. Since his return in 1886, after having served as Resident Medical Officer at the Royal Free Hospital, London, he had been intimately connected with the spread of medical education in Bengal. He started the Calcutta Medical School just after his return and was the founder (and Principal for several years) of the Carmichael Medical College. He had also been closely in touch with the University affairs, being a Fellow and a member of the Syndicate.

The late MR. DEBENDRANATH BASU had been a far-famed member of the education department. He took his M. A. degree with first class honours in English—(there was no B. A. Honours course in those days)—in 1877, and served as a Lecturer in different government colleges, including Presidency College. He retired as the Principal of Krishnagar College in 1910.

Another 'old boy' of our College, who passed his M. A. examination in 1871, is lost by the death of MR. SRISH CHANDRA CHAUDHURY. He joined the High Court Bar as a vakil and retired as the Junior Government Pleader. He was made an Honorary Fellow of the University and he always kept himself well in touch with the goings-on in the field of education in Bengal.

The course of progress of higher education in Bengal has met a distinct set-back in the death of Principal SATYENDRANATH BASU of Victoria

College, Comilla. It was only through his exceptional constructive power, his untiring energy and his zeal for paving smooth the path of higher education in Bengal, that the Victoria College at Comilla had risen up from a high school to its present position of one of the foremost degree colleges in Bengal. He had been the Principal of the College since 1899, and for these three decades he had not spared himself in his task of keeping alight the traditions and reputation of his college. The students of Presidency College respectfully remember him as one of the most distinguished ex-students of their College.

The last, though not the least, is the late DR. BANWARILAL CHAUDHURY. He graduated from our College in 1891 and later obtained the D. Sc. degree in zoology from the Edinburgh University. The best part of his life he devoted to the study of zoological conditions in India and his name had been, so to speak, synonymous with the development of the scientific knowledge of Indian fauna. He had been the pioneer of zoological studies in India and the push he had given to these studies will never cease to exert its influence. As the Scientific Officer of the Bengal Fishery Enquiry, as the Assistant Superintendent of the Zoological Survey of India, as the President of the Zoological and Anthropological Section of the Indian Science Congress in 1918 and as the Professor of Zoology at the Carmichael Medical College, Dr. Chaudhury had done work of incommensurable value in the world of science. He was closely in touch with the Asiatic Society of Bengal and with the Science Association, and the numerous original works he had contributed are distinct acquisitions to the scientific literature on zoology. Apart from his scientific aptitudes, he was connected with all the humanitarian activities in the city and the philanthropist in him had often manifested itself. The loss his death has put upon the cultural and social life of Bengal, and on the progress of scientific researches cannot be too highly magnified ; his death has taken away one of the motive forces from the path of the study of science in Bengal.

AFFAIRS AT THE TOP

MR. H. E. STAPLETON, Principal of our College, on deputation to officiate as the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, has been confirmed in his present position. It has also been announced that he is going on long leave in April next. We have not had any opportunity of a personal contact with him, but we know and appreciate the attempts he made to bring about definite improvements on all sides in Presidency College. The College improvement scheme owes its coming into operation to him and

all Presidency College men will remember him as one of the greatest benefactors of their institution.

The educational world of Bengal has suffered a severe loss at the departure of MR. R. B. RAMSBOTHAM for Aligarh to fill the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor in the University there. It is no doubt a distinct mark of recognition of the abilities of Mr. Ramsbotham. A deep and erudite scholar, a teacher with the maximum of teaching efficiency, popular alike to his students and colleagues, he had won our regards and our admiration during the short period of his stay here in the session 1928-29 as our Principal. No praise is too high for Mr. Ramsbotham; we, who have known him in our under-graduate days, can feel the magnitude of the gap left by him in the field of higher education in Bengal.

CONGRATULATIONS

A fitting honour was bestowed by the Calcutta University upon Principal HERAMBACHANDRA MAITRA of City College when the degree of Doctor of Literature (*Honoris Causa*) was conferred upon him at the Annual Convocation held in February last. Connected for nearly half a century with the teaching of English literature and reputed far and wide as one of the ablest teachers in the University of Calcutta, Dr. Maitra is one of the oldest living ex-students of our College. We convey to him our most respectful congratulations on his being admitted to this singular distinction.

A honorary degree of Doctor of Science in Engineering has been conferred upon SIR RAJENDRANATH MUKHERJEE. Sir Rajendranath was for sometime a student in the now defunct Engineering department of our College and by his sterling qualities of unceasing enterprise and energy he has at present risen to be in the foremost rank among industrial pioneers in India. We offer our congratulations to him.

Our heartiest congratulations also to MR. SUNIT KUMAR INDRA, M.A., who so ably edited this Magazine year before last, and who has passed the M.A. Examination this year, standing first in first class in English, group B, on his being appointed a lecturer in English at the Krishnagar College.

COLLEGE NEWS

Since we appeared last, there has been only one change in the teaching staff. MR. BASANTA KUMAR CHATTERJEA, M.A., of the Department of Sanskrit and Bengali has left our College for Rajsahi. In Mr. Chatterjea, we had a learned scholar, a good teacher, and an extremely good-natured gentleman. We had often taken undue advantage of this

mild and amiable nature of his, and he will, we are sure, remember his stay here with a feeling, not unmixed with amusement. We extend our hearty welcome to MR. SASANKASEKHAR BAGCHI, M.A., who has come from Rajsahi College to fill Mr. Chatterjea's place.

The Founders' Day way celebrated this year with the usual zeal. A large number of distinguished ex-students were invited and the members of the College were At Home to them in the afternoon. A detailed report of the celebration will be found towards the end of this volume.

The Annual examinations of the first-year and third-year students are near at hand. The University examinations also hang like heavy weights upon the hearts of many of our fellow-students in the College. Our best wishes to all for brilliant success at the examinations.

A PEEP INTO POLITICS

We are glad to-day to share in the expression of relief evinced in all quarters at the recent rapprochement between the Government and the Congress. The bitterness of feeling between the Government on the one hand, and a large and important section of the Indian public on the other, has yielded place to mutual endeavours for peace and co-operative settlement. The Congress has expressed its willingness to lend its assistance in framing up a new constitution for India at the second conference that is going to be held soon. This prospect of a new constitution, which will be instrumental in putting India on the same basis as the dominions within the Empire, has already been showing good effects in different quarters. Already there is a sign of a convalescent stage in the markets and the shattered confidence has been restored. We are having a good ground prepared for the reception of the new constitution of India.

The Report of the Federal Structure Sub-Committee of the last Round Table Conference has put forward a scheme, which, with a few modifications, will commend itself to all for being accepted as the basis on which the deliberations of the second conference would proceed. The complicated nature of ministerial responsibility at the centre, advocated by the Report, 'for the purpose of securing greater stability to the Executive', the absence of any definite stipulation regarding the internal administration of Indian States, which are going to be integral parts of the federation, and a few other like provisions or absences of provisions would no doubt fail to commend themselves to the Indians. But, now that the most important party of opposition has consented to help the British Government to build up the new constitution, we are sure that the best of all courses would be adopted and no place would be left for any misgiving anywhere.

TWO STALWARTS

To-day, when goodwill and co-operation reign everywhere, we feel the loss of two of the stalwarts of the Indian political life all the more severely. The late MAULANA MAHOMED ALI was a sincere and patriotic well-wisher of the country and he had never spared himself in working for her cause. His activities just before his death. at the Round Table Conference, to solve the communal question, and the religious fervour with which he clung to his determination of having a dignifed constitution for India, have left his name all the more indelibly impressed in the history of India's constitutional progress. The late PANDIT MATILAL NEHRU, at one time the leading lawyer at Allahabad, and later, the redoubtable Swarajist leader of opposition in the Legislative Assembly, was one of the veterans in the Congress rank. His would have been an invaluable service at the coming Conference, had he lived long enough to see it come into existence. The Report of the All Parties' Conference, of which he was the Chairman, shows the exceptional ability he possessed in framing constitutions that can practically be given effect to. Next to Mahatma Gandhi, his had been the name which carried the greatest weight and importance to all Indians. India is distinctly the poorer by the death of these two prominent figures in her public life.

IN THANKSGIVING

With this issue our term of office reaches its end. We take this opportunity of offering our grateful thanks to all who helped and encouraged us. To the Principal, and to all the members of the teaching staff, our best thanks are due. To Professors D. G. CHATTORAJ and S. C. MAJUMDAR, we are indebted beyond all measure. We have troubled them whenever we were in difficulties and we have snatched away from them many a leisure hour of theirs. Without their constant help it would not have been possible to publish even such lean issues of the Magazine as these.

We are also indebted to Messrs. Amulya Bhusan Chatterjee, Anil Chandra Banerjee, Ramesh Chandra Roy, Balai Lal Pal, Jnanadhir Sarma Sarkar, Golap Chandra Roy Chowdhury and Muktidaranjan Das for the kind help and encouragement we have received from them from time to time, and to Mr. Dilip Chand Mukherjee for his having helped us in correcting some of the proof-sheets. It is delighting to us at the moment of parting to acknowledge the services we have received from a few of our fellow-students of the College.

OUR EDITORIAL SWANSONG

We embarked upon our editorial career this year with honest and pious hopes ; we saw before us a bright prospect opening itself up and we dreamt of retiring at the end of the session amidst hearty good-wishes and sympathy. It did not, however, take us a particularly long time to find our sweet dreams shattered to pieces. We did not get from the students of the College that amount of co-operation as we expected we would ; and, indeed, a cold reception was accorded to us in the scholars' circles within the College. The 'sense of camaraderie', which it had been the privilege of the Editors of the past to find among the students of the College, showed no sign of existence this year. Want of funds pursued us from the beginning of the session right upto the end, and we offer our sincere apologies to our successors for not having been able to improve the finance in any way. We leave much of our present difficulties for them, and they will, we hope, excuse us, if we have not been able to smooth for them the path.

We would have borne cheerfully the burden of a deficit budget, had we received from our fellow-students of the College a little more of sympathy, a word or two of encouragement, a small bit of co-operation or a decent supply of contributions. Such was the coldness displayed by our friends that we had to find ourselves in difficult position every time to bring together a good number of suitable articles for filling the slender Magazine of a hundred pages or so. Our retirement would have been a happier and a brighter one, if only we had been a little more kindly treated by the members of the College.

However, in spite of all this, we take leave of our readers with the best of all wishes for a bright future of the Magazine. If we have not conducted it as others would have liked us to have, we have at least done the best that our own capacities, modified by external circumstances, permitted. If we have not served the Magazine properly, we have at least served it lovingly.

We have every hope that bright and glorious prospects await the Magazine, that in future, freed of all external troubles, conducted by abler hands, the Magazine would rise far above its past and would find itself worthy of the traditions of Presidency College. Sandwiched between two periods of prosperity this famished year will perhaps be forgotten. We shall consider ourselves sufficiently recompensed if the Magazine lives to be great and to be the foremost in its rank.

B. D.

"THE GREATEST OF HUMAN TRAGEDIES."*

ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE—*Fifth Year History.*

"The war-guilt belongs to all Europe.... Germany's exclusive guilt or Germany's innocence are fairy tales for children on both sides of the Rhine. .....The sum of guilt was in the Cabinets, the sum of innocence in the streets of Europe. .Vienna and Petersburg stand first; Berlin and Paris, their seconds, follow them, although at very different intervals; London comes a long way after."

—Emil Ludwig.

"One must abandon the dictum of the Versailles Treaty that Germany and her allies were solely responsible. It was a dictum exacted by victors from vanquished, under the influence of the blindness, hatred and propagandist misconceptions to which war had given rise... ...It is generally recognised by the best historical scholars in all countries to be no longer tenable or defensible. They are agreed that the responsibility for the war is a divided responsibility. ...The verdict of the Versailles Treaty... should therefore be revised... ... There must come a revision by historical scholars, and through them of public opinion."

—S. B. Fay.

I

ONCE, it is said, a gipsy woman prophesied to Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the imperial throne of Austria-Hungary, that he would lose a great war. He laughed at her. The victor's laurels had no charm for him. Destiny was in the womb of time.

Austria emerged out of the Napoleonic conflict with enlarged prestige and a goodly number of additions in territory. From the glorious day of Waterloo down to the fatal season of revolutions in 1848, Austria controlled the political destinies of Europe. The system of Metternich failed and he himself fled from his capital in 1848. It was in this year that Franz

*The writer has tried to utilise some of the more important original documents. He is particularly indebted to Emil Ludwig's brilliant interpretation of the immediate causes of the war in his *July, 1914* and to Professor S. B. Fay's judicial study of the documents in his book. *The Origins of the World War.* For obvious reasons no detailed analysis of facts can be attempted.

Joseph ascended the imperial throne, and this last of the crowned Hapsburgs died in 1916.

The political organisation of the Danubian Empire was established on the negation of nationalistic principles. The nineteenth century ideals of nationalism and democracy were anathema to the rulers and repugnant to their traditions. Everywhere there was lack of unity. There were the Germans in Austria, the Czechs in Bohemia, the Magyars in Hungary; and in all parts of the Empire there were scattered masses of Serbs, Croats, Roumanians and Poles. It was a unique conglomeration of conflicting elements.

Austria became a constitutional monarchy in 1861. The *Ausglich* of 1867—a compromise concluded between Austria and Hungary—provided that the Empire was henceforth to be a dual monarchy, composed of two distinct, independent, equal states, united in the person of the ruler and for certain common political interests. This arrangement satisfied only the Germans in Austria and the Magyars in Hungary, because it gave them the monopoly of power. In each country there were subordinate and rival races, jealous of the supremacy of these two, anxious for recognition and for power. The conflicting tendencies of these rival races constitute the later history of Austria-Hungary.

It was the existence of a very large Serb population in Austria-Hungary that lay at the root of the War. The Serbs enjoyed no political rights. The Magyars consistently oppressed them, and attempted to uproot their distinct nationality by converting them into Magyars in thought and speech. No wonder, then, that the Serbs thought of escaping from the iron grip of the Hapsburgs. Nationalism and democracy were already triumphant in other parts of Europe.

Serbia, the national state of the Serbs, was a close neighbour of Austria-Hungary. Serbian national poets and historians love to recall to their people the great age of Stephen Dushan in the fourteenth century, when the Greek Orthodox Serbian Empire stretched from the Danube nearly to the Gulf of Corinth, and from the Aegean to the Adriatic. During the decades immediately preceding the war, Serbian nationalists began to dream of again extending their boundaries to include 'Old Serbia.' Serbian unity would not be complete if the Serbs groaning under the Hapsburgs could not be freed. While this idea was preached with much vehemence by the Serbs, the Serbian government encouraged it, probably with the concurrence of Russia, the patron-deity of Slavdom.

The Hapsburgs were trying to preserve their authority over the subject peoples, many of whom had become fired with a nationalistic desire to break away and to unite with their brothers living in independent states bordering on Austria-Hungary. The ambitions of Serbia and other Balkan States to extend their territories to include all peoples of their own nationality brought them into constant conflict with Austria-Hungary. The antagonism between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was increased by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, two provinces of Turkey inhabited mostly by Serbs, by the creation of Albania which turned Serbia into a land-locked power, and by the Serb agitation for national unity at the expense of the Hapsburgs. Austria-Hungary had reasons to be dismayed at the rapid growth of Serbian nationalism and Pro-Russian feeling in the Balkans. The Kingdom of Serbia would act as a dangerous magnet tending to draw away Austria-Hungary's Serb subjects to form the Greater Serbia. Pan-Slav interests were calculated to lead Russia to support Serbia; there was Austria to be humbled, and Constantinople to be won. This would surely encourage the other subject nationalities under Hapsburg rule—the Roumanians, Czechs and Slovaks—to break away. This would spell *Finis Austraiae.* No state could tolerate such a state of things. Austria-Hungary must suppress Serbia for the pressing need of self-preservation. A conflict with Serbia was necessary. The militant doctrine of preventive war prevailed in the Hapsburg capitals where it was generally held that a conflict with Serbia must come sooner or later, and the sooner the better.

The murder of the heir to the throne was eagerly seized upon as a good excuse for trampling upon the Greater Serbia movement. Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, determined to clear up the un satisfactory situation with Serbia and to put an end once for all to danger to the Empire from the Serbian propaganda and the Russian intrigue against Austro-Hugarian interest in the Balkans. Austrians and Hungarians felt free to turn their wrath and revenge against the Serbs, who, they were sure, were obviously guilty. The Treaty of Bucharest, that had increased the territory and power of Serbia, was to be relegated to oblivion. So Emperor Franz Joseph wrote to his ally, Kaiser Wilhelm II: "The assassination of my poor nephew is the direct result of the agitation carried on by the Austrian and Serbian Pan-Slavists, the sole object of which is the weakening of the Triple Alliance and the destruction of my realm. The efforts of my Government must in future be directed

towards the isolation and reduction of Serbia. .....Lasting peace will be ensured only when Serbia is eliminated as a factor of political power in the Balkans."

The demands embodied in the Ultimatum, though very severe, cannot be said to be excessive from the Austro-Hungarian point of view. But having been deliberately framed with the expectation that they would be rejected, and that their rejection would lead to a chance of crushing Serbia, they must be condemned as one of the principal causes of the war.

The Serbian reply to the Ultimatum was more yielding in form than in substance. It is by no means true, as often stated, that Serbia virtually consented to all the demands except one. The analysis of the reply prepared by the Vienna Foreign Office shows clearly that the safeguards which Serbia had introduced were completely inconsistent with Austro-Hungarian interests and demands.

By the suppression and misrepresentation of certain facts and by utilising Germany's wavering promises, Berchtold did much to dupe the Kaiser into War.

Austria-Hungary was more responsible for the immediate origin of the War than any other power. Yet from her own point of view she was acting in self-defence. No state can be expected to sit with folded arms and await dismemberment at the hands of its neighbours.

II

Serbia was not an innocent lamb sacrificed at the altar of the unscrupulous ambition of the Hapsburgs.

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the sway of the Ottoman Turks rapidly spread over a very large part of south-eastern Europe. They had subdued many different races—the Greeks, the Roumanians, the Albanians, the Bulgarians, the Serbians. These peoples were effaced for several centuries beneath their oppression. They only waited for the hour of liberation. That hour seemed to come with the opening of the nineteenth century. All through that period there went on the process of the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire.

The Serbians were the first to rise,—in 1804 under Kara George. The Turks were driven from Serbia for a time; but they regained it in 1813. The Serbians again rose, and in 1820, Milosch Obrenovitch, their leader, secured from the Sultan of Turkey the title of 'Prince of the Serbians of the Pashalik of Belgrade'. He then tried to acquire complete

autonomy for Serbia. This, after long negotiations, and strongly supported by Russia, he achieved in 1830, when the Sultan bestowed on him the title of 'Hereditary Prince of the Serbians'. In this way Serbia became a principality tributary to the Sultan, but self-governing, and with a princely house ruling by right of heredity. By the Treaty of Berlin, 1878, Serbia became completely independent. She proclaimed herself a kingdom in 1882.

Serbia has had a turbulent history in recent years. The scandals of the private life of King Milan utterly discredited the monarchy and led to his abdication in 1889. His son, Alexander I, was murdered in 1903 with Queen Draga, in a midnight palace revolution. The new king, Peter I, who continued to rule even after the War, was suspected of having been an accomplice in that dark business.

In 1908, a swift, sweeping and pacific revolution occurred in Turkey, and the Sultan was forced to restore the Constitution of 1876. But the prospect of a reformed Turkey, animated with a new national spirit, was full of peril for the aggressive powers of Europe. Franz Joseph incorporated Bosnia and Herzegovina definitively within his Empire. These were Turkish provinces, handed over by the Congress of Berlin in 1878 to Austria-Hungary for 'occupation' and administration, though they still remained officially under the suzerainty of Turkey. Bulgaria declared her independence.

Serbia was aggrieved. For years the Serbians had entertained the ambition of uniting Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro, peopled by members of the same Serbian race, thus restoring the Serbian Empire of the Middle Ages, and securing access to the sea. Serbia felt a most natural and justifiable impulse to do what some other countries had done in the nineteenth century, to bring under one national government all the discontented Serb people. This plan was blocked, apparently for ever. Seeing that she may have to become a vassal state of Austria-Hungary, finding all possibility of expansion ended, all hopes of combining the Serbs of the Balkans under her banner frustrated, the feeling was strong that war, even against desperate odds, was preferable to strangulation. The feeling of anger and alarm continued to grow, auguring ill for the future.

Meanwhile, Turkey was oppressing her subject races, in pursuance of a ruthless policy of Turkification of all peoples under her sway. The Turko-Italian War broke out in 1911 and was concluded by the Treaty of Lusanne, which marked the defeat of the Turks. The Balkan Wars soon

followed. In 1912, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece made war on Turkey. They fought to ncrease their own territories and to diminish or end an odious tyranny. Their success was overwhelming. The Treaty of London, 1913, signalised the death knell of Turkish power in Europe. But Austria-Hungary's insistence led to the creation of the new state of Albania, and Serbia was deprived of an outlet to the sea. Intense was the anger of the Serbians, but they were helpless. Disputes soon broke out between Serbia and Bulgaria concerning the division of the remaining territories. A war followed, in which Bulgaria was defeated by the combined forces of Serbia, Greece, Roumania, Turkey and Montenegro. The Treaty of Bucharest, 1913, gave Serbia more than she had anticipated. Consequently Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary considered it of the greatest importance to tear up this treaty.

Suddenly, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was, with his wife, assassinated in the streets of Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia. The agents were Austrian subjects, natives of Bosnia, Serbians by race. By fanatical Serbs the Archduke was blindly hated as being a powerful and determined enemy and oppressor. Princip, who fired the fatal shots, asserted, "He was a German and an enemy of the South Slavs." On that very day, June 28, a few centuries ago, young Milos Obilitch had murdered the conqueror Murad and become a national hero, so that his name lives in song and legend. On that day the forefathers of the Serbians had been crushed on the field of Blackbirds. The ambition of 15,000,000 men, the dream of five centuries, was to be fulfilled.

The Serbian Government always denied that it was in any way responsible for the murder. But Ljuba Jovanovitch, Minister of Education in the Pashitch cabinet in 1914, has described how some members of that cabinet were aware of the Serajevo plot for nearly a month; and yet, in spite of this guilty knowledge, they took no effective steps to arrest the conspirators or to warn the Austrian authorities of the impending danger. This statement of a Serbian minister, and other Serbian revelations tend to confirm what Austro-Hungarian officials suspected, but could not prove in 1914.

The history of the Serbian secret organizations for promoting Pan-Slav interests proves Serbia's guilt. The association known as the *Narodna Odbrana* professed to work for Greater Serbia by cultural agencies. The hot-headed military radicals formed in 1903 a new secret organization named *Ujedinjenje ili Smrt*, commonly known as the 'Black

Hand', which preferred terrorist action. The two societies, however, had the same ultimate goal and they even had many members in common. Again, the association known as the *Mlada Bosna*, the members of which were recruited from the youth of the "small and insignificant classes" in Bosnia, believed that terrorist activities were the best means of throwing off all Austrian control and of realising the Jugo-Slav national ideals. The members of this association were organized into *Kruzhoci*, which were used by the 'Black Hand' for revolutionary agitation and terrorist action in Bosnia. The murderers of the Archduke were members of these bodies. The Serbian Government encouraged, and were responsible for, the activities of the *Narodna Odbrana*. The Serbian Government was surely guilty of withholding information concerning a plot to commit murder, connived at by its own officers—a crime known in municipal law as "compounding a felony."

Serbia, as a result of the Balkan Wars, had grown greatly in territory, population and pretensions. If Austria was eager to settle accounts with her, Serbia too was no less willing to bring down the ramshackle Danubian Empire with Russia's help and thus to provide for the unification of all the Serbs.

So Pashitch sent a guarded reply to the Ultimatum. Before despatching it, however, he had ordered general mobilisation of the whole Serbian army. The conciliatory reply was regarded more as a diplomatic gesture calculated to win the sympathy of other powers than a serious attempt to satisfy Austria-Hungary. Serbia pretended to be an unwilling victim to war.

III

Germany did not plot a European war, did not want war, and made genuine, though too belated, efforts to avert one. She was the victim of her alliance with Austria-Hungary and of her own folly. Austria-Hungary was her only dependable ally ; so she could not throw her over, and often felt compelled to back up her Balkan policy.

The German Empire, the product of the Bismarckian policy of blood and iron, was proclaimed in 1871, in the old palace of Louis XIV. Soon after this epoch-making incident, the League of the Three Emperors of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia was formed in 1873. But Russia felt in 1878 that Bismarck had betrayed her interests in the Congress of Berlin and had been guilty of unpardonable ingratitude in view of her

benevolent neutrality during the Franco-German war. So in 1879, was concluded the Austro-German Alliance which consolidated the central Empires and became henceforth, until their collapse in 1918, the very foundation-rock of German policy.

In 1882 a secret agreement was signed by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. This treaty revived the League of the Three Emperors and converted it into an alliance. The world knew nothing of it until 1918. It, however, ran out in 1887, and was not renewed owing to Russian jealousy of Austria-Hungary. In the same year the Re-insurance Treaty was concluded between Germany and Russia ; but it was not renewed after 1890 when it expired. The Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy was concluded in 1882. In its wording and in its origin it was essentially defensive ; but the secrecy as to its terms, and the exaggerated suspicions to which it gave rise, contributed much towards the embitterment of Franco-German relations.

During the earlier years of the twentieth century there was an increasing crystallization of opposition between the two groups into which the six great Powers of Europe had become divided—the Triple Alliance consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, and the Triple Entente consisting of England, France and Russia. With the French occupation of Fez, the German threat at Agadir, the Italian seizure of Tripoli, Anglo-German naval rivalry,* the failure of the Haldane Mission and the Balkan Wars, it proceeded more and more rapidly. It was reflected in Morocco, Mesopotamia, the Balkans, and in many other matters, varying from European armaments to Chinese loans. Both systems of alliance tended to be deformed from their originally defensive character. In both groups there was a rapid increase of military and naval armaments. In 1907 the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente "had stood side by side ; in 1914 they stood face to face". If one country increased its army, built strategic railways and constructed new battleships, its fearful neighbours were straightway frightened into doing likewise. So the mad competition in armaments went on in a vicious circle.

Still, it is a significant truth that the Triple Alliance went on gradually weakening about 1912, while the Triple Entente was progressing in unity and solidarity, mainly through the efforts of President Poincaré.

*The present writer has discussed in some details the relations of England and Germany during the period 1871—1914 in Presidency College Magazine, December, 1930 (Vol XVII, No. 2.)

Emil Ludwig remarks that without wanting war himself the Kaiser was forced to join it.

There are numerous instances to show how incorrect is the common notion that the Kaiser was always backing Austro-Hungarian aggressions in the Balkans. He prevented Austria-Hungary from crushing Serbia in 1909 and 1913. In fact, he had hitherto generally inclined to protect Serbia from dangerously excessive demands by Austria-Hungary and hoped for a peaceful settlement of their difficulties.

But, after the murder of the Arch-duke, one of his best personal friends, the Kaiser's indignation against the Serbians was thoroughly roused. His emotionalism, the peculiar blind of his psychological motives and political interests, led him to provide for the punishment of the hated nation of regicides. He sincerely felt that the monarchical principle was in danger. He stated. "Austria must judge what is to be done to clear up her relation to Serbia; whatever Austria's decision may turn out to be, Austria can count with certainty upon it, that Germany will stand behind her as an ally and friend." He gave a free hand to revengeful Austria-Hungary, and made the grave mistake of putting the situation outside of his control. He soon found himself involved in actions which he did not approve.

Germany, in so far as she assented to the demands of Austria-Hungary embodied in the Ultimatum, with the knowledge that she intended them to be rejected and to lead to a localized war with Serbia, must share in Austria-Hungary's responsibility for originating the war.

When he received Serbia's reply to the Ultimatum, the Kaiser exclaimed, "A great moral victory for Vienna; but with it every reason for war drops away." But, in spite of all, against his better nature, he was at last impelled to join the catastrophe. Why? For one thing, he was duped by Austria-Hungary. Facts were suppressed and events were misrepresented. Berchtold himself wrote, "The Government at Vienna is entertaining plans which it finds advisable to keep secret from the Kaiser in order to ensure itself of German support in any event." Then, he was ensnared by the Prussian militarists. "In Berlin, where the Generals were more efficient than the diplomats, the Generals ruled." The whole psychological outlook of the influential body of military and naval officers was naturally coloured by the possibility, if not the inevitability, of an early war. The influence of the military upon the civilian authorities was a serious matter in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. And finally,

there was the dread of England. The Kaiser wrote, "From the dilemma raised by our fidelity to the venerable Emperor of Austria, we are brought into a situation which offers England the desired pretext for annihilating us." It was primarily Russia's general mobilisation, made when Germany was trying to bring Austria-Hungary to a settlement, which precipitated the catastrophe, causing Germany to mobilize and declare war.

It is commonly said that England did her utmost to bring about a conference, but that Germany vetoed it and that this places on her a further responsibility for the War. But the documents clearly prove that England did not steadily stick to one clearly defined proposal, that France consistently rejected all overtures, and that Germany accepted all suggestions but one.

The Kaiser himself suggested the 'Pledge Plan' to prevent Austria-Hungary from embarking on war. The "Willy-Nilly" telegrams, through which he appealed to the Czar to "help him in his efforts to smooth over difficulties" were rendered ineffective by the aggressive attitude of Russia.

Germany's military necessities required the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. Moltke said "that even England's neutrality would be too dearly bought at the price of respecting Belgium." Germany's action must be condemned, but there was some truth in her contention that France would have violated Belgium if she herself had not done it. Long before, the Belgian Government had made an arrangement with the British Government, in the event of a German attack, to give all possible help to the expeditionary force of England. Though the German violation of Belgium was of enormous influence in forming public opinion as to the responsibilities for the War after hostilities began, yet it was not a cause of the War, except in so far as it made it easier for Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, to bring England into it. Russia and France had already commenced hostilities, and the British Cabinet had decided on war a few hours before Germany's decision with regard to Belgium was known.

IV

The Czar Nicholas II was "the most peaceable man in the world amid all the clamour around him," and the pathos of the situation is that he allowed himself to be made instrumental in bringing about the tragedy.

Russia was the largest gate in Europe, a still larger Asiatic empire, uniting within herself a large number of dissimilar elements. As a result

of the Russo-Japanese War, concluded by the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905. Russian power and prestige received a sudden and unexpected blow. The history of Russia in the early years of the twentieth century is full of unceasing contests between the forces of progress and reaction, a series that culminated in the unprecedented march of events in 1917.

Russian foreign policy during the whole course of the nineteenth century had been directed by the dominant consideration of her interests in the south-eastern parts of Europe. She persistently desired to acquire increased influence in the Balkans, to secure the possession of Constantinople and to realise her age-long dream for the control of the waterways to the Mediterranean. Her principal aims were, therefore, the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire and the suppression of Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans. So she came into conflict with Turkey, Austria-Hungary, England whose vital imperial interests required the solidarity and security of Turkey, and France and Germany who could not allow Russia to endanger the balance of power in Europe. The history of the Eastern Question illustrates these points.

Russia was the principal Slav state and the head of the Orthodox Greek Church. Her purpose was to utilise these two advantages of her position in order to secure her interests and realise her ambition. It is for this reason that she had made herself the champion of the Christian subjects of Turkey. She always intended to patronise the Balkan States, and in this way make them accustomed to look to her for help whenever any crisis would appear. Her help enabled the Balkan States to free themselves, and, naturally enough, they depended on her.

Serbia, in particular, was much indebted to Russia for the assistance she had always received from her. The Serbs, Slavs by race, were bound by kinship and traditions with the Russians. Russia encouraged Serbian hopes and aspirations.

This accounts for the crisis. Russia felt herself bound to protect Serbia, whom she could not abandon without loss of prestige to herself. Moreover, Austria-Hungary could not be allowed to upset the status quo in the Balkans. Russia was strongly encouraged by France in this attitude, and England did nothing to prevent her ally.

Russia was greatly responsible for Austro-Serbian conflict because of the frequent encouragement she had given to Serbia that Serbian national unity would ultimately be achieved with Russian assistance at Austro-Hungarian expense. Russia, again, was the first among the Great Powers

to order for general mobilisation. Her criminal purposes were revealed when, after the hostilities had begun, she surprised the world by the rapidity with which she poured her troops into Germany and Austria-Hungary. This is why the Czar had rejected the Kaiser's proposals for peaceful settlement.

V

President Poincaré has made a skilful and elaborate plea to prove "*La France innocente,*" but it is not convincing. The unwillingness of France to publish the documents concerning the origin of the War appears to be significant. Why should she hesitate, when both her allies and her enemies have subjected themselves to the judgment of world opinion?

Poincaré's "masterly speech" at the opening of the Peace Conference ran as follows: "Forty-eight years ago to-day, the 18th of January, 1871, the German Empire was proclaimed by an army of invasion in the Palace of Versailles. It was consecrated by the theft of two French provinces. It was thus, from the very moment of its origin, a negation of right and, by the fault of its founders, it was born in injustice. It has ended in opprobrium."

The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine was one of the main underlying causes of the War by its direct and still more by its indirect consequences. The French never became reconciled to their loss, they never accepted the *fait accompli.* The desire for *revanche,* unspoken perhaps, but fixed in the heart, persisted and even went on growing in intensity. There had gradually arisen in a group of French politicians a new national spirit which was personified in Poincaré. They had created the feeling that France had suffered long enough from the German menace from across the Rhine. There had grown up a new determination that in the future it would be better to risk war than to accept a new humiliation. This attitude was embodied in the desire for *revanche* and for the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. Poincaré,—he was from Lorraine—confessed, "During my school years my spirit, oppressed by the defeat, unceasingly crossed the frontier which the Treaty of Frankfort had imposed on us, and when I climbed down from my castles in the air, I saw no reason for existence for my generation but in the hope recovering the lost provinces."

This was not a sudden explosion of an emotional, patriotic character. Poincaré, a Frenchman, had inherited eternal enmity to the Germans. The antagonism between France and Germany had its roots deep in history.

and partly in geography. So long as the Rhine flowed where it flows, there could be no friendship between them, and there could be no peace in Central Europe. When, on the eve of the Franco-German War, the great German historian Ranke was asked, "Against whom are the Germans fighting ?", he replied at once, "Against Louis XIV". He was right. Germany could not cease to be a conglomeration of states so long as the achievements of Louis XIV could not be destroyed. Prussia had not forgotten, and could never forget, Napoleon, the true successor of Louis XIV. Long ago, Francis I of France had fought against the pretensions of the great Hapsburg German Emperor, Charles V. During the Middle Ages, the kings of France had often stood as rivals of the Holy Roman Emperors. Germany was then but a conglomeration of principalities, and it had now collected strength to stand against the legacy of the Bourbons. These were the lessons the boys of France got from their teachers and the youth heard from their orators.

In the bitter years after the Franco-German War, France sat alone among the Powers of Europe, "like a wall-flower at a dance", watching Germany revolve with many partners. Bismarck had understood the value of a French alliance, but he had miscalculated the feelings of the injured nation. During the ten years 1875-85 he made many efforts to win French good-will. But the French were naturally suspicious of Bismarck's "Machiavellian motives", and thought that he wished to embroil them with England. Franco-German tension reached its climax in the agitation connected with the notorious name of Boulanger.

The Franco-Russian Entente of 1891, which ripened into the alliance of 1894, was the natural result of the suspicions, the feeling of isolation and the irritation against Germany which existed in both countries. The "offensive-defensive" character of the alliance, is clearly seen in its provisions as well as in its future workings. The French eagerness for an alliance then led to the tightening of the Triple Entente, which was brought about in 1912 by agreements and understandings between the three allies. In this way England, France and Russia combined their forces against an imaginary attack from Germany and her allies.

Poincaré was undoubtedly the most forceful personality in France about the period just before the War. The story of his life supplies to a great extent the amount of his and his country's responsibility for the War. His visit to Russia just on the eve of the War greatly strengthened the militarist group in that country. He "solemnly affirmed the obligations

imposed by the alliance of the two countries". This assurance was treated by the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg as a blank cheque by which France promised full support to Russia in whatever measures she should take to prevent Austria from carrying out her plans. France had no direct political interests in the Balkans ; but she felt bound to back up Russia, because otherwise the understanding between the two countries would have been threatened, the balance of power destroyed, and the best guarantee and safety from a German attack would have been lost.

The correct attitude of France can be judged from the summary treatment she accorded to all proposals for peace. When the German Ambassador in Russia proposed "direct conversations" between Austria-Hungary and Russia, she rejected it. She also vetoed a proposal for mediation between Austria-Hungary and Russia. She herself suggested no way of amicable settlement. She hastened for general mobilisation even before Germany.

VI

On a memorable day, the day when the British nation finally assented to the proclamation of war, Asquith, the Premier, said in the House of Commons, "We are fighting to vindicate the principles which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong overmastering Power. I do not believe that any nation ever entered into a great controversy with a clearer conscience ; for we are fighting not for aggression, not for the maintenance of our own selfish interests, but in the defence of principles the maintenance of which is vital to the civilisation of the world".

And yet, the Cabinet had decided on War a few hours before they had been informed of Germany's attitude towards Belgium.

The real causes of England's participation in the War will be apparent from an analysis of her foreign policy during the earlier years of the twentieth century. By 1898 England had come to understand the advisability of abandoning the isolation policy. She first turned to Russia, but received no response. Then she turned to Germany ; but Germany held off in the hope of getting better terms, and got nothing. She conclu-

ded the well-known alliance with Japan in 1902. In 1904 she signed with France the treaties which were the first step in the formation of the Triple Entente. These were followed by momentous, but very secret, naval and military arrangements, or, as Sir Edward Grey euphemistically calls them, 'conversations'. It was these 'conversations' which brought England into the World War.

It is significant that Germany was suspicious of an Anglo-French alliance, but British statesmen flatly denied it. Lord Haldane himself reorganized the British army for co-operation with the French. British and French staff officers even thoroughly reconnoitred the ground upon which their armies were to fight in Belgium. Before 1911 the Russians also counted upon Haldane's Expeditionary Force as a certain and essential part of their strategic plans in case of a war against Germany. Already in 1907 there was signed the Anglo-Russian Agreement concerning the Middle East, and the circle for a closer political co-operation between Russia, France and England was complete.

Anglo-German tension was growing in intensity during the years following the Boer War. The principal cause was the resolve of Germany to build a formidable fleet. Though Germany officially announced her pacific intention and always insisted that her programme was calculated only to secure her interest in peace and commerce, yet the anxiety of England went on increasing. The speech of Lord Roberts in the House of Lords is significant ; "Within a few hours from our coasts, there is a people.....our most active rivals in commerce and the greatest military Power in the world, adding to an overwhelming military strength a naval force which she is resolutely and rapidly increasing..... It is my firm belief that, without a military organisation more adequate to the certain perils of the future, our Empire will fall from us and our power will pass away." In 1909 the English estimates for the navy were defended by selecting Germany as the standard with which to measure the requirements of England. In 1911 Asquith appointed a standing sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence for "the co-ordination of Departmental action on the outbreak of war."

Emil Ludwig thinks that "the Liberal Government itself slid rather than walked into war." He finds Grey in "the desperate situation of a man in authority speaking with all the force of his heart and soul to avoid the false step whose fatal consequences he foresees ; and yet fatally doomed, whichever way he turns, to take that false step because, in a

weak moment, he had been led into making half-promises. Small is the guilt, pure the will, great the confusion, true the effort, tragic the end."

On the other hand, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald said at the time, "We are not fighting for the independence of Belgium. We are fighting because we are in the Triple Entente ; because the policy of the foreign office for a number of years has been anti-German, and because that policy has been conducted by secret diplomacy on lines of crediting alliantes in order to preserve the balance of power."

Churchill said, "We were morally bound to come to the aid of France," because Grey, in a letter to the French Ambassador, Cambon, promised, in case France were seriously threatened, to negotiate on the question of common action. An eminent English historian, Dr. G. P. Gooch, speaks of "*de facto* obligations," even where none existed in writing.

Grey made a variety of suggestions for the peaceful solution of the problem ; but he neither adhered steadily to any one clearly defined proposal, nor ever tried to restrain France and Russia. In his own memoirs he reveals his own deep-rooted suspicion of Germany. His psychology might well have been similar to the statement of the Russian Ambassador that "the German Government must be saddled with all the responsibility and all the initiative. English opinion will accept the idea of intervening in the War only if Germany is indubitably the aggressor."

England, after all, must save her commerce and her Empire from the growing hunger of Germany.

THE FOURTH BRITISH EMPIRE. [1]

SACHINDRANATH DAS GUPTA—*Fourth Year Economics.*

IT is a common belief to-day that the British Empire does not exist and that the shadow of unity which it still retains is fading away every day. Was its function then merely to give some more nation states to the world as the Spanish Empire has done before it? Or has it still in it to prove a successful experiment on the super-national plane? Post-War tendencies are not altogether encouraging. It is a most superficial view of things that rejoices that the War has come and gone but the British Empire has remained unaffected. The armies of Prussia have failed to smash the Empire. But the ideas and ideals set loose by the allied attempt to discredit the German ambitions are perhaps eating away the empire from within.

Prior to the World War, the colonies generally preferred isolation from world politics,[2] devoting all their energies to the development of their natural resources. But the War proved to them the impossibility of indefinitely continuing such a position. If they were to be involved in the consequences of the diplomatic policy of the empire, why should they not have a controlling hand in it? When, therefore, the Prime Ministers of the Empire met at the Imperial War Conference of 1917 they deemed it their duty "to place on record their view that any readjust-

1 It is customary to distinguish between the first and the second British Empires, using the American Revolution as the dividing point. But if territory is important, no less is principle. If the loss of the thirteen American Colonies is a landmark in British imperial history, Lord Durham's report is a land mark in the history of imperialism itself. The principle of colonial self-government marks out the British Empire from all its predecessors and all its contemporaries. We may, therefore, regard the year 1839, the year of publication of the report, as another turning point in the history of the British Empire. We thus have the First Empire from 1600-1773, the Second Empire from 1773-1839 (marked by a rapid building up of a still greater Empire than the first), and the Third Empire from 1839 onward (marked by a steady development of Dominion Sovereignty). The Fourth Empire is coming. Its new principle is that of collective control of the common interests of the Empire. Already it may be said to have come. We may take the Imperial Conference of 1926 as the dividing point between the third and the fourth Empires, although rather arbitrarily; for as was claimed by the Secretary of State for the Dominions (though only to avoid the inconvenient question of Sir John Marriott as to the legality of any change of the imperial constitution if it had been involved by the declaration of equality) the conference had only stated explicitly what had already been achieved.

2 There was of course always a tendency to the expansion of sovereignty to its full size. There were always one or two British and Dominion politicians who advocated equality. But the tendency became effectively strong only after the War.

ment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire... should recognise the right of the Dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign policy and foreign relations; and should provide for effective arrangements for continual consultation on all important matters of common imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several Governments may determine". This united claim of the Prime Ministers of the Dominions was of course virtually equal to a sovereign decree; and indeed the rights asserted had been given partial recognition in the formation of the War Cabinet. But the definite declaration of equality came only as late as the Imperial Conference of 1926 which, while admitting the impossibility of an attempt to lay down an imperial constitution, found one thing beyond all doubt, namely, the equality of the self-governing members of the empire, including under that term of course Great Britain and her dominions; "They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their external or domestic affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations".[1]

What gave the Dominions the first definite taste of blood was their recognition as independent members of the League of Nations. They had already had representatives at the Peace Conference and the admission to the League was virtually a recognition of their sovereignty.[2] There is no basis for the supposition that it was merely a manoeuvre to pack the League with British delegates and secure undue weightage. For the Dominions and India have on many occasions voted against the British position, partially inspired perhaps by the eagerness to vindicate to the other nations the claim that the Dominion delegates were not mere duplicates and triplicates of the British representation. And Canada even secured election to the League Council in 1927. And again in 1929, Mr. Dandurand, a French Canadian was elected to serve on the Council.

The right of the Dominions to appoint ministers plenipotentiary to foreign capitals was recognised in 1920. But it was actually exercised only as late as 1924 when Professor Timothy Smiddy was appointed Irish Minister to the United States; and even then the U. S. Government felt doubt as to where things really stood and did not reciprocate the appoint-

1. The Imperial Conference of 1926, Summary of proceedings, p. 14.

2 Similar treatment accorded to India must not be urged against this contention. That was only a matter of courtesy, and perhaps also an anticipation of the future.

ment. But when in 1927 His Majesty the King, at the instance of his Canadian Government, presented Mr. Massey to the President of the U. S. A. "with the special object of representing to the United States of America the interests of the Dominion of Canada", the U. S. A. felt definite of the situation and thought it proper and necessary to reciprocate. Accordingly Mr. William Phillips was appointed U. S. Minister to Canada, and Mr. F. A. Sterling to the Irish Free State. Canada next proceeded to establish full-fledged diplomatic relations with Paris and Tokio. The Irish Free State also established legations at Berlin and Paris. The Union of South Africa, too, hastened to appoint diplomatic representatives at foreign capitals.

The Dominions also enjoy equal power and status in the matter of treaties. When, for example, the Labour Government in 1924 recognised the U. S. S. R. as a Government *de jure* Canada separately intimated to the Russian Representative there its recognition of the Russian Government.[2]

The question of the Dominion navies also is interesting; not only because it shows one important aspect of Dominion Sovereignty, and because it is one of the most important problems of the empire, but also because several Dominions show a curious *volte face* apparently anomalous to their general behaviour. For the two Dominions which are most vociferous in their assertion of sovereignty and most ready to threaten secession, are also the two which are least anxious to build up any dominion navies. While those that are most docile in the matter of international status are the most persistent in their claims on this point. But the anomaly is solved when we remember that the Australasian dominions do not press for their individual navies as symbols of independence, but as insurance against apprehended aggression from Vladivostok and Osaka. The attitude of the hot-potato again is explained by its financial difficulties. South Africa has no neighbours to fear, while

1 Keith, *Sovereignty of the British Dominions*, P. 412-43. This implies a sort of unequal relation between the Imperial representative and the Dominion representative. But this is of course a mere question of theory.

2 Against this, however, is to be set the attitude of the Commonwealth of Australia on the same question, for the prime minister of that Dominion took a strong objection to action being taken on such a vital question without consultation with the Dominions, and received an assurance that there world be no repetition of such an incident. Such proceedings apparently imply that recognition by Britain means recognition by the whole empire. But this does not militate against the right of the Dominions to carry on international relations independently; for Canada was not stopped; nor, has she ever been since in her independent attitude. This really shows the chaos of imperial politics to-day.

Canada, instead of looking with fear and suspicion upon the growing navy of the U. S. A., perhaps regards it as a bulwark of its independence as much as the British navy. [1]

What is most interesting in connection with dominion sovereignty is the position of the Dominions in relation to the territories under their mandatory authority, which authority they exercise subject only to the control of the League ; for mandates are held by the Dominions just like other sovereign states. The mandate, for example, for what was formerly German South-West Africa was conferred upon the King to be exercised by his Government of the Union of South Africa. Australia and New Zealand also have got mandates for islands in the Pacific Ocean, which were formerly German-possessions.

In view of all this achieved and declared equality, many have imagined that the Empire has been dissolved into a mere personal union of sovereign states. But this is an altogether misconceived notion of imperial relations. We do not set much store by legal details and minutiae ; we do not consider it important whether the intervention of a British minister in dominion diplomatic relations is merely formal or not; nor do we regard as relevent the international legal validity or worthlessness of an agreement concluded by Britain in opposition to the Dominions, or by a Dominion in opposition to Britain. Hair-splitting arguments over these trites are mere intellectual gymnastics. We recognise that "in fact, if not always in form, the dominion is subject to no compulsion whatever." [2] But the broad fact remains that every dominion values the unity of the empire, and while the conference of 1926 binds it to intimate its diplomatic activities to other self-governing members of the empire and to recognise their right to be consulted if their interests, they think, are involved, good sense and statesmanship will bind them not to bring about a dead-lock in imperial politics by each persisting in its own way. The Empire is not a mere loose personal union of sovereign states, but is a close association of equals who value their unity and who indeed each possess exclusive sovereign powers, but whose self-love is tempered by consideration for the other members, and whose liberty to go each its own way exists in theory but not in practice owing to the high value each places upon the material and moral gains of all going the same way in all common concerns. Much has been made of the declaration of equality by the Imperial Conference

1 Keith, Sovereignty of the British Dominions, p. 164.
2 Imperial Conference, 1926, Summary of Proceedings, p. 14.

of 1926, but little attention has been given to what come just after that formula : "a foreigner endeavouring to understand the true character of the British Empire by the aid of this formula alone would be tempted to think that it was devised rather to make mutual interference impossible than to make mutual co-operation easy."[1] For, as the Marquis of Lorne[2] noted even half a century ago, equality of the component parts of the Empire is essential to their co-operation. The absolutely voluntary nature of this co-operation has been pointed to as altogether nullifying it. But the Balfour Sub-Committee think that "though every dominion is now and must always remain the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation no common cause will... be thereby imperilled."[3]

Disruptive forces there are indeed within this Empire as within others. While it is natural for a thoughtless jingo to exult over "this Empire over palm and pine" and on which "the sun never sets," geography is decidedly an enemy of imperial unity. The isolation of the different parts of the empire tends to produce among them a diversity, and often indeed a clash, of interests which may at any time prove fatal to the empire, while the individual members are likely to develop new ties and new communities of interest with their respective neighbours. Look at what was formerly the Russian Empire and is now the Union of Socialist Soviet Repubics. Remember its great diversity in race, language, religion, culture and what not. Yet it has withstood two successive revolutions in one year, the bourgeois Menshevik of March, 1917 and the proletarian Bolshevik of November of the same year,—the greatest social, political and economic earth-quake the world has ever known, not excepting even the French Revolution. It has undergone some shrinkage no doubt, but the greater part remains,[4] and this part also is not more homogeneous than the British Empire, containing as it does the White Russian, the Little Russian, the Ukrainian, the Caucasian, the Tartar, the Mongol, and the various tribes of Central Asia, and being composed in religion of Christians, Jews, Muhammadans and various semi-animistic tribes. Imagine such a terrible convulsion to shake the British Empire. Can we hope that it will remain unshattered ? The difference lies in the absolute contiguity and compact-

1 Imperial Conference, Summary of Proceedings.

2 Imperial Federation, by the Marquis of Lorne, sometime Governor-General of Canada.

3 Imperial Conference, 1926, Summary of Proceedings, P. 14.

4 Indeed it is curious that those who were so furious against the Czars, that they did not even hesitate to rename Petrograd, were so anxious to retain the unity of the Empire of the Czars. Petrograd no doubt was literally a city built on skulls but so was also the Empire of the Czar.

ness of the Russian Empire and the geographical isolation of the component parts of the scattered British Empire. The modern "shrinkage of the World" has no doubt done much to fortify the Empire in this respect, but contiguity will always retain its advantage over mere wireless communication.

The close geographical association of Canada with the U. S. A has produced between the two countries a community of interests which may at any time prove fatal to the Empire. "Go where you will in Canada now, you will find the implanted tendrils of the American Octopus. Lines of shops—branches of American Capitalist—extend through her towns... Canada is even forced to read American books."[1] "Two per cent of the capital invested in the dominion is British ; more than seventy per cent is U. S. Capital."[2] The Banking system of Canada is bound up more with that of the U. S. A. than with the English.

The racial composition of the various dominions again is in many respects a disadvantage.[3] The Boer element of the population of the Union of South Africa is very self-assertive and naturally very uneasy at any scent of inferiority. They demand a flag not merely different but altogether unrelated to the Union Jack and have postponed their desire for independence only because they have got all that the word implies except the name. The Boers again feel a sort of brother-hood with the Germans. "They have never 'forgotten the fact that at one time they pinned their faith in the aid of Germany against the United Kingdom so that Germany aided the rebels in 1914-15. There has, therefere, always been a certain tendency to seek in Germany a support against the United Kingdom, and this movement has been strengthened by the issue of South-West Africa."[4] The design of winning over the support of Germany in the League Council for converting the mandatory territory of the former German South-West Africa into a fifth province of the Union strengthened the natural

1 Newton Fowler, in an article entitled "Who Owns Canada?" published in the Sunday Timer (London) June, 1926.

2 Quoted by Mr. Fowler in the above mentioned article from a statement by one of Canada's principal editors in Toronto.

3 The Marquis of Lorne fondly contemplates, "their own immigrants disappeared as Frenchmen, as Germans, as Dutch, or Norseman, only to reappear in their own person or in those of their sons, as Britishers--a result truly distressing to the patriotic foreign mind"--Imperial Federation, P. 4. The Marquis had not known the Boers. But at least he had known the French Canadians. The fact is that they retain their French, Dutch and German sympathies, a result truly distressing to the British 'racepatriot'

4 Keith, Sovereignty of the British Dominions, P. 427.

German sympathies of the Boer in General Hertzog's pro-German trade-policy. Greater complications will be introduced when the German residents of South-West Africa become full-fledged members of the Union. If by the acquisition of this German territory the Empire will gain in size, it is doubtful if it will gain in permanence also.

Turning to Canada we find that one third of the population is of French extraction; and the French character is rather too well-known to allow even of imagining that they will ever look up to London rather than Paris. It was the French-Canadian element that was specially eager that Paris should receive a Canadian legation. But this is by no means to be compared with the attitude of the Boers. As regards Ireland, the irreconciliability of Irish Nationality whose romantic story is almost co-terminous with history itself is too well-known to need emphasising.

All these disruptive forces there are. But against these is to be set the unity of interest on many concerns like defence and the advantages which the dominions derive from association with the Empire. "We may do as we wish only if we do not by our act impair the unity of the Empire. This unity is vital for Australia. I am for the Empire because I know no other way of being for Australia"—Thus said Mr. Hughes in his speech on the Imperial Conference of 1926 on March 22, 1927. Yes, their very self love will induce the dominions to keep within the Imperial fold. A "White Australia" needs a solid naval and military backing and so long as Japan has her over-population, Australia will be in need of the Empire. The yellow-menace will keep the Pacific Dominions attached, if not to England, at least to her navy. The necessity of defence does not perhaps apply with so much force to the other dominions. But they too have considereble expenditure saved by being within the Empire. The following figures[1] of armaments-expenditure will be interesting :—

United States	4,453	million	gold	francs
Great Britain	2,900	,,	,,	,,
Russia	2,440	,,	,,	,,
France	2,286	,,	,,	,,
Italy	1,333	,,	,,	,,

1 Extracted from "Armaments Expenditure of the World", by Mr. Per Jacobsson, Secretary General to the Economic Defence Council of Sweden, and formerly a member of the Secretariat of the League of Nations.

Japan	...	1,215	million	gold francs
India	...	1,069	,,	,, ,,
Germany ...	...	942	,,	,, ,,
Australia ...	...	151	,,	,, ,,
Canada ...	...	93	,,	,, ,,
Irish Free State ...	...	76	,,	,, ,,
New Zealand	...	25	,,	,, ,,
South Africa ..	...	25	,,	,, ,,

Not only is the armaments expenditure of the Dominions very low being about one third that of India but it has hardly increased since the pre-war days :—

Armaments Expenditure (in million £s.)

	1913	1928	Percentage of Increase
Great Britain	77-2	115	+ 48-9
India	22-0	44	+ 100-0
The Dominions all together ...	9-0	12	+ 33-0
Total	108-2	171	+ 58-33

Computed in rupees, the rate of increase in India will be a little lower (owing to change in the par value of the rupee). But even that is more than double that of the Dominions. It is no loss to get all the powers and facilities of an independent state and yet to have to spend so little on armaments.

And even their illegitimate aspiations the dominions have found it easier to pursue from within the Empire than from without. As an instance we may mention the case of the persecutian of Indians. "Before the Boer War the British Government had taken up a most emphatic attitude on the iniquitous character of the disabilities imposed on Indians by the legislation of the state (The Transvaal) in 1885 .....after the conquest of the Transvaal the British attitude underwent a complete change, and the local government pressed for.....the rigid enforcement of the Republican laws, which the prevailing laxness of the Boer administration had failed to make effective.....The concession of responsible government afforded Lord Elgin the necessary excuse for a change of policy..."[1] If again Canada were outside the Empire, she would have at least shown as much consideration for Indians as she showed for the Japanese.[2] Well is England called the mother-country and the Dominions her daughters : for, she is ready to do anything to satisfy their 'ābdārs' (importunities)[3]

The loose organisation and the heterogeneity of the Empire need not, therefore. cause any anxiety to anybody. The Empire is not "in twilight". and no one need be anxious to prove that it is "in eclipse" and that "Eclipse is a temporary obscurity, interrupting an effulgence which will presently return".[4] About thirty years ago a distinguished German Scholar in a lecture upon the British Colonial system said, "The British Empire is held together by a rope of sand. If ever a great war should put pressure upon this jerry-built affair, it will collapse with a crash".[5] Yet when the pressure came, the Empire was not found wanting.

But this confusion of elasticity with weakness is not peculiar to the Continental mind. Many Englishmen have from time to time held up as ideal a more definite, more rigid, and more centralized organisation of the Empire. Hence the cry for "Imperial Federation", which is now about

1. Keith : Sovereignty of the British Dominions, p. 80-81.

2. "In Canada matters were complicated by the reluctance of the Federal Government to antagonise Japan by a too drastic refusal of admission, but legislation was adopted which effectively barred entrance to Indians"—Keith : Sovereignty of the British Dominions, p. 79.

3. It must not of course be supposed that all whitemen concur in advocating the persecution of Indians. Lord Hardinge gained great popularity by his attitude to the question of the position of Indians in South Africa. Lord Crewe made a striking appeal in the Imperial Conference of 1911 in favour of the concession to resident Indians of full civil and political rights. The principle that just treatment should be accorded to Indians lawfully domiciled has been emphasised in successive Imperial Conferences (1917, 1918, 1921, 1923). But resolutions are reduced to pious hopes and nothing comes out when the whiteman's self-interest is involved.

4. Richard Jebb, The Empire in Eclipse : (Introduction.)

5. Munro, Governments of Europe : p. 356 foot-note

half a century old. In 1887 on the occasion of Queen Victoria's *Jubilee*, representatives of all the Dominions and colonies were summoned to London and in the series of conferences that were held between these representatives and the home-government, the project of an all-empire Parliament was cautiously broached ; but nothing came of it. Another conference was summoned and more discussions held ten years later on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee. But this time also there were no tangible results. The project of a neatly forged out federation had therefore to be postponed ; and the visionaries had to remain content with the modest scheme of the Imperial Conference as an institution summoned from time to time to discuss problems of common imperial interets. As things stand at present, the Imperial Conference has no constitutional powers ; its function is merely to deliberate and to secure informal agreements. Imperial enthusiasts cannot of course be for ever at peace with such a modest scheme and are disappointed by the supposed failure of every imperial conference to do something "definite". But they do not realise the difficulties of a federal constitution for so vast and so scattered an empire. An imperial parliament at London would be too distant from Johannesburg, Vancouver and Wellington to command sufficient allegiance. How again would it be organised ? Would the British Parliament be converted into an imperial parliament by admitting a few members from the dominions into the House of Commons and raising a few dominion politicians to the peerage ? Would these dominion-representatives be allowed to vote on imperial questions only or on British domestic affairs also ? In the first case we would have virtually two parliaments, the members of the British provincial council being also the members from Britain to the Imperial Legislature. In the latter case, it would be a flagrant injustice to Britain. If on the other hand a new imperial parliament is created, the British parliament will suffer in dignity. In any case the Dominions will be altogether dwarfed by Britain. A true federation would require that representation from the various parts should be on a population basis and that would mean that Britain would dominate all questions and the Dominions have no adequate voice, being in a permanent and insignificant minority. Any how the speculation about organisation is all idle, for that "wider patriotism" is as yet which alone can be the basis of so close a union as a federation.

The anxiety of these people to hasten the Empire overnight on to the much-desired consummation of a federation reminds one of the

impatient swain who killed the goose that laid golden eggs in order to have at once all the eggs that were in it. Living together for a long time and getting accustomed to consultation and compromise, the component parts of the empire may develop a close fellow-feeling and "wider patriotism," based on common memories and common traditions, to replace their present national patriotism, and the Imperial Conference may gradually evolve into something like an Imperial Parliament. We share with Dicey his "full belief that an Imperial constitution based on goodwill and fairness may within a few years come into real existence". "The ground of the assurance is that the constitution of the empire may, like the constitution of England, be formed to rest far less on statutes than on the growth of gradual and often unnoted customs". Nothing has been more wise than the repeated emphasis of successive Imperial Conferences upon the impossibility and impolicy of framing an imperial constitution; and nothing is more fraught with disaster for the empire than an attempt to lay down a definite imperial constitution, which will set loose a host of insoluble questions of theory and will preclude all future growth.

It is perhaps high time now that we should turn our attention to Imperial trade, a most notable feature of which is the gradual drifting away of the import and export trade of each of the units of the Empire to foreign countries. Whereas before the war the United Kingdom accounted for more than half of Australia's imports, she now accounts only for about forty per cent; and whereas her share in Canada's import trade before the war was more than a fifth, it stands now only at something like a sixth. The little increase of trade between the dominions is but poor comfort against this. Is it economics against the empire? No doubt it is partly so. The old pre-eminence of England in the import and export trade of the dominions is gone beyond recovery. But something may at least be done to prevent the further economic disintegration of the Empire, if not also partly to revive the happy old days. Politics cannot stand long if in flat contradiction to economics; but at least the latter can bend a little. If imperial preference does not mean pounds, shillings and pence to the empire, at least it means no serious loss of them, if applied with moderation and after careful consideration of all issues. Imperial Free Trade no doubt is "too wild a form of kite-flying to be of any use in practical politics;"[1] but a mild relaxation of

1. Robertson, Trade and Tariffs, p. 154.

import duties in favour of the Empire-countries, where not inconsistent with national development, is not surely such. If an Imperial Zollverein as dreamed by statesmen like Disraeli is impossible, surely not so a series of independent fiscal systems tempered by mutual accomodation. In the words of Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, "The British Empire may be regarded as consisting not of an aggregate of separate entities with no mutual relations to each other but a family purpose. Each state in the first instance organises its tariff and its policy to suit its own financial and economic needs, and gives an imperial sanction to its policy by granting to other parts of the Empire as large a measure of trade advantages over foreign countries as conistent with its own economic development." Many thinkers have regarded this fiscal aspect of imperial unity as that which will ultimately stand. The Empire will soon no longer be an Empire, will no longer be even a Federation. It will simply be a combine of industrial and commercial agreements. It will constitute a sort of League of Nations, a particular League of Nations of the English Language—the United States of America not included"[1]—Thus says Pierre Daye, a noted Belgian political writer. We need not again go into the question how far the English language is a bond of unity to the Empire, but the emphasis placed upon the "industrial and commercial agreements" is meet. "The fundamental principle of Britannic integration," says Richard Jebb, "is that of mutual economic preference".[2]Special stress must be laid upon the moral aspect of the tariff wall. It acts in something like the same way as allegiance to a common crown, which has been regarded as a spiritual bond of unity to the Empire.

Canada enjoys the distinction of having been first in the field of Empire trade consolidation. In 1897, she lowered her duties in favour of British goods. In 1898, the preference was fixed at one-fourth of the duty and while it was given to the United Kingdom unconditionally, it was made conditional upon favourable treatment to Canada so far as the other colonies were concerned. The Colonial Conference of 1902 for the first time adumbrated the policy of Imperial Preference as one of general application to all parts of the Empire and invited the other countries to fall into line with Canada. Preferential duties in favour of Great Britain were accordingly introduced by New Zealand and then by Canada. England, however, at first felt reluctant to "put all her eggs into the one imperial

1. In *Le Flambeau*, one of the outstanding monthly magazines of Belgium. The extract is quoted from the abridgement which appeared in the International Digest.
2. The Empire in Eclipse, P. 275.

basket." But really it is not necessary to do so much. Only a little more care has to be given to this basket as distinguished from the South American or Eastern European. Difficulties there are no doubt. But we do not want that an insurmountable wall should rise up all at once between the Empire and the outside world. Only let the currents of trade be just a little diverted and carry with their merchandise love and sympathy from one empire-country to another. Even a commercially insignificant preference would have great force as a symbol of unity. It is a good sign for the Empire that England has recently made notable departures in her fiscal policy which have enabled her to grant preferential reduction of duties on Empire goods. But as yet not much has been done. The Imperial Conference of last year could not carry things very far. But it may be hoped that the Ottawa Conference will do something.

This survey of the present tendencies in imperial politics, this horoscope of the Fourth British Empire, will be far from complete without a reference to the supposed clash between Imperialism and Internationalism. The contention is that the work of the Empire in the political and economic evolution of the world is over, and that in the face of the recent growth of internationalism it has been reduced to the mere negative interest of a formidable clog in the path of progress. Bombastic jingoism based on the selfish domination by one nation over another is of course a lie direct to international brotherhood, and the very reverse of the time spirit. But this need not engage us ; for if this be imperialism, it is dead at least so far as the white part of the Empire is concerned. The real question is how far a more conscious and more intimate fellow-ship within the empire is liable to produce an antagonism to non-empire countries, and how far a penumbra of imperial patriotism is liable to obscure the real issues in international problems. "Misplaced patriotism" is indeed a serious evil almost indissolubly bound up with any community of interests, imperial or national, religious or secular, political or economic ; and indeed, as Plato perhaps over-emphasized, even the family has a certain antagonism to the larger interests of humanity. The question, therefore, is whether there is any special community of interests within the empire, requiring a special treatment by a special organisation, and whose needs must be satisfied even for the effective realisation of the larger ideal, so that we must face the risk of our "imaginations being cramped and our intellect twisted by continual squinting at things under our nose." This perhaps cannot be asserted with as much emphasis in the case of the empire as in the case of the

family or the nation. But the international ideal is perhaps not as yet as near to realisation as the temporary success of a League of Nations in an exhausted and panting world may at first sight seem to imply, and even this success is at least chequered, and partially adulterated with questionable activities which at least suggest occasional lapses into the old 'might is right' policy. In the mean time the empire many serve as "a sort of half-way house," something like a preparatory experiment on the super-national plane.[1]

AN APOLOGIA OF THE POPULAR PRESS OF TO-DAY*

NABAGOPAL DAS B. A.—*Ex-student.*

IT is a commonplace of current criticism that our newspapers to-day are not exactly what they should be, and that the large measure of confidence that had been reposed on them as regards the education of public opinion and the forming of the basis for a sound and stable democracy has not been justified by actual experience. The popular Press, we are told, is vulgarising the mind of the public ; it deals more with a reporter's interviews with Filmland's Famous Four or with Pola Negri's tale of how she finished with love, than with the really burning and thorny topics of contemporary life. Miss Europe's loathing towards the sheik type of men and Lady Langford's pride in being a waitress, we hear, find a greater

1. We have in this essay, concentrated our attention upon the white part of the Empire, upon Great Britain and the Self-Governing Dominions—S. D.

* This apologia is primarily intended as a reply to the cheap sarcasms that are being daily levelled at the popular Press in general ; but the writer has in view the affairs of Great Britain in particular and this will be patent to any one who notes the details & facts quoted. —N. D.

prominence in the popular columns than the debates on Electoral Reform or the vital changes that are being introduced into our economic life by the sweeping measures of the new Trades Disputes Bill. The picture of Maurice Chevalier's shy smile and of ladies rushing towards his car is printed in bold type, but important question on India, Egypt or Palestine are either contemptuously brushed aside or relegated to the background. Surely, assert our serious-minded critics, this is not the proper channel into which the activities of the Press should be directed, and they predict with the airs of a seer that if things go on for long in this way, the nation would soon find itself on the verge of some sort of moral disaster or general bankruptcy.

Now, I do not profess to champion the popular Press as it stands to-day, but I do feel that more aspersions are being cast against the Press than it really deserves. Instances of such unmerited criticism are not lacking in other spheres: the triumphs of Pilsudski, the bombasts of Mussolini or the war-cries of Herr Hitler are construed by many as presages to the overthrow of democracy. And much of the serious allegations against the Press to-day is rather a part of the general tide of dissatisfaction with existing affairs—political, social and economic—a type of discontent that has been manifest in every country and in every era ever since the dawn of civilisation. In truth, every age has its peculiar problems, and if one pauses to think calmly in the light of history and experience, one shall find that such dissatisfaction has throughout been the normal rule, and that in every age reformers and altruists have been vehement in their criticism of contemporary evils. The post-Reformation era had its own problems of Religion versus the State, the early and middle nineteenth century had the problems of unsatisfied democracy; and the late nineteenth century entered upon the arena of economic difficulties, And similarly these thirty odd years of the present century has been engrossed with all those vital problems that arise from the unfulfilled assumptions and unsatisfied bases of the new reforms launched during the last century. Hence there is nothing extraordinary or peculiar in this critical attitude of ours towards the popular Press.

Even apart from this, there are more things to be said in defence of the popular Press. Our life is not all seriousness—nor is it moulded of a kind of strict uniformity and rigidity. A part—and perhaps a good part—of it consists in the idiosyncrasies that a man possesses, and very often a greater insight into a personality or a problem can be had by a sympathetic

study and analysis of these "little things". And the popular Press does to-day a great service in the elucidation of problems and personalities in this novel way—by throwing a new light upon things that we are apt to minimise or overlook, or by emphasising aspects that we feel inclined to ignore. Who does not know Professor Einstein, for example, as the greatest scientist of the day ? When we read of his mysterious theories and the still more mysterious expressions in which he clothes them, we seem to picture him as one of those brooding, weird and gloomy spirits who are never tired of tiring others with their apparently absurd and incomprehensible formulae. But this picture of Einstein the scientist overlooks the man, and we can have an idea of the essentially human joviality and complex simplicity of the theorist of Relativity when we hear him define the modern girl not merely as a perpendicular biological phenomenon in short skirts, but also as an oval mass of bent space being thrown off like electrons from swiftly rotating nicholwatts with all the speed of an idzol. Just imagine the reporter of the popular newspaper standing dumb-founded and murmurring if he would mind running over that again, and how his faces fell when he got the startling reply from Einstein that he would! *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* reveal to us the serious and scientific side of Einstein's life ; but no less credit is due to *The People* or *Poppy's Paper* which has revealed to us the more jovial and human (and hence no less positive) side of Einstein's character. Nobody denies that Henry Ford is a great captain of industry ; but it does help one to understand his philosophy of industry better when one peruses his own story of his associations with Thomas Edison. A moralist may twitch his brows at the story of interviews given by Misses Turkey or Austria but these interviews do reveal those aspects of our life which need more emphasis than is usually given.

This brings us to the more vital aspect of the whole question ; these popular newspapers do minister to the peculiar wants and tastes of a considerable body of people. It is idle to say that these newspapers have their enormous circulation on account of the big competitions and attractive bargain offers that find a prominence on their pages. That this is not wholly or even mainly so is shown by the fact that there is a real competition among these organs of popular opinion in publishing matters that would cater to a variety of tastes and fancies. Here we tread again on psychological aspects. Those idiosyncrasies of personalities to which popular newspapers give a peculiar expression are again

the bulwark on which its effective circulation is based. Human tastes differ—and a good deal of these consist in certain niceties and subtleties that are incapable of cut-and-dried explanation or uniform statement. The poor day-labourer who trudges homeward after a weary day's work, the typist at the office, the nippy at the restaurant, these people who constitute the bulk of our populace find something really attractive and useful in certain quaint humours and storyettes or light editorial chats or suck discussions as "This keeping fit nonsense" by the Rev. Herbert Dunnico. Thus, so long as these wants are manifest and so long as popular organs minister to them, they do contribute towards social utility—however distasteful or nauseating that contribution may seem to the cynical critic.

But, says the critic, should not the popular Press be the vehicle of rational thinking, the moulder of sane public opinion and the inspirer and guide of democracy in a world teeming with pitfalls and dangers ? Should not, they ask, newspapers go in advance of current popular tastes or beliefs and prepare the ground for a rational and sound public opinion ? These are pertinent questions—and here we have some of the responsibilities which confront the journalist to-day. Now, the answer lies entirely in one's concept of the duties of journalists and such duties are always relative to time and circumstances : what our concept of duties is to-day may alter and alter quite radically to-morrow.

I do not want to beg the question by alluding to this relativity. I only want to point out that dogmatic generalisations as regards the present state of the popular Press are specious, but really wrong. Viscount Brentford eloquently preaches the need for a censor ; Mr. Blake deplores the childlike faith of the British public in the veracity of whatever it sees in print ; Lowes Dickinson generalises that the first object of the Press is to appeal to popular idleness, their sensations or their passions—to any thing rather than their reason. But what we seem to overlook to-day is the fact that the popular newspaper has been "pandering" (if I be permitted to use such an expression) towards such idleness, sensations or passions ever since its origin ; only the objective expression of such popular psychology has been different in different times and in different countries owing to the impact of different environments upon the human mind—both in its individual and social phases. We deplore to-day the vulgarity of the popular Press and its over-emphasising of such topics as secrets of beauty culture and niceties of feminine dress ; we fire up against the views of an ex-Cabinet minister on Birth Control, of a divorcée on the Channel Tunnel or of a venerable clergyman on the Agricultural Marketing

Bill. But such complaints were not unknown even in an earlier generation ; people then spoke of the vulgar prominence that was being given to the absurdities of suffragettism or of the too much space devoted to tales of Zola or Reynolds ; even then there were mad outbursts on topics of Irish Emancipation or of German anti-British propaganda, just as we have to-day the unthinkable fusses about Soviet Dumping or Empire Free Trade. In the light of these, it does not seem to me that the distinctly superficial, shallow and vulgar aspects of the popular Press today are a *new* menace or a *novel* misadventure.

Nor should we forget that occasional catchwords like "rational thinking" or "inspirer and guide of democracy" are dangerous expressions—dangerous, not because they point to positive evils demanding attention, but because they carry with them, by their apparent forcefulness, a misguided appeal to a type of thoughtful men. Indeed, it seems to me that no one can be precisely dogmatic about such things as the needs of democracy or the planks of rationalism. I do not however mean to overlook those limitations and dangers in our Press to-day that no candid observer can deny. It has the defects even of its qualites: perpaps it is apt to over-emphasise idiosyncrasies at the expense of generalities ; the dangers of the presentation of distorted truth cannot be too strongly stated ; but what I want to say is that these are but *new* sins for *old* ones, and the sweeping condemnations that are daily hurled upon the popular Press are not always just or fair.

At bottom, it is public opinion that sets the standard—and so long as popular tastes and temperaments remain what they are now, there is no use in sighing for an utopia with a Press with perfect standards of propriety, decency and popular need. I do not deny the formative influences, real and important, exercised and exercisable by newspapers themselves on public opinion. But the impact of public opinion on the popualr Press and *vice versa* is so close and complex that it is idle to hope for an idealism in one with conditions far removed from that in another. The remedy if there is any remedy at all, lies in a simultaneous attack, and not in an exclusive condemnation of the public as a mass of fools preferring titbits to solid fare, headlines to descriptions, sensations to fact,—or in a pure generalisation that Fleet Street to-day has forced upon the county a new and alarming system of values. Only in the solution of the question as to whether we get the paper we *want* or the paper we *deserve* lies the first ray of hope.

THE INDIAN POPULATION PROBLEM

SURESH CHANDRA SEN GUPTA—*Sixth Year Economics.*

THE census work has just been over. Hence a discussion about the population problem of India might be interesting. But we shall discuss only the economic aspect of the problem and will not enter upon that field where heads are numerically more important and biologically less.

European observers in India and some Indian writers also generally speak of the gorgeous East of the dim past and of the famished, lethargic India of the present day, whom starvation, disease, overpopulation and what not have laid low and who is not capable of her former glory over again.

But, as Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar and many other Indian economists have pointed out, India and Europe are going on the same track, only that India is 50 years behind in the march. That is, indeed, a great fact. We have a grace of 50 years to think thrice before committing India to that headlong and frenzied rush towards Western Industrialism which Spencer described as "rebarbarisation". We are to think out means to make India neither an Industriestaat nor an Agrarstaat *par excellence*, but to make her both so that the population might increase four-fold and yet be happy.

In marked contrast to European countries, India has, for good or ill, special features of her population problem :

(*a*) Simplicity of living, early marriage, universality of marriage and large population of widows. The first three causes tend to increase the population and the last tends to check the growth of population ; but it also destroys the balance of such growth, for a large number of females fit to reproduce are left out.

(*b*) The birth and death rates are higher in India than those in any other country. The average expectation of life is 24·79 years in India while it is about 50 in England and Wales.

(*c*) Female mortality is high in India. Mothers with poor physique naturally mean children of poor physique also. Moreover, the movement for female emancipation which according to Bertrand Russel keeps the Malthusian law in check is not particularly noticeable in India. (B. Russel—Principles of Social Reconstruction).

(*d*) A growing pressure on the soil has resulted in chronic under-feeding and, according to many, the natural result of growing population with chronic under-feeding are the famines and epidemics which play untold havoc in India.

(*e*) Emigration as a sociological safety-valve has no promise for India, partly for the stay-at-homeness of the people and partly for the hostile attitude of foreign countries including British Dominions.

(*f*) In marked contrast to the expanding civilisation of Europe, India has a "pent up" civilisation which, according to Prof. Carver, if not guarded against by birth-control as in France, will result in over-population as in China. (Carver—Paper read before the World Population Conference, 1927.)

(*g*) India lamentably suffers from a want of that "saving and investing instinct" which in Western Countries has become, according to Prof. Patten, a constant half-automatic pressure for the accumulation of funds. (Patten—The New Basis of Civilization)

In order to better appreciate the difficulties of the Indian population problem we have given above some of its "undesirable features". But these features make out a strong case for the contention that India is over-populated at present. While the interpretation of "over-population" may be different, *almost all* the authorities who have dealt with the population problem of India are agreed that India is over-populated. Thus Mr. C. F. Masterman holds, "The Malthusian theory still holds by the operation of the Law of Diminishing Returns in such regions as Malthus saw it working, in Ireland and India, where an increasing population is confined to a definite piece of ground which cannot be tilled and furnished into productivity." (*England after the War.*) Sir Theodore Morison recommends birth-control to prevent the ever-recurring subdivision of agricultural holdings and as a remedy for the unrest and over-population in this country. Mr. Harold Wright observes, "In India too, the population is increasing with disquieting rapidity owing to the removal by British rule of the checks to population which formerly prevailed ; and it is probable that the recurrence of famines in that country is partly attributable to this increase. In large parts of India people are entirely dependent upon agriculture, and the harvest is so completely destroyed by a single monsoon failure that the labourer is thrown out of work for a whole year. It is clear, therefore, that an increase of population which absorbs the whole surplus of a normal harvest may transform the effect of a monsoon failure from unemployment into famines." (*Population*) Mr. Wattal of the Indian Audit

and Accounts Service holds that the population has increased faster than the area under cultivation and quotes the Index Numbers of the Prices Enquiry Committee in his support. He recommends our cultivating the habit of cutting the coat accordingly to the cloth as much in the matter of progeny as in every other concern of the life, for the neglect of this principle means that "the hand of death will limit the population to the means of subsistence." (*Indian Population Problem*, 1916). Dr. Pillai holds the same view. (*Economic Conditions in India*). Dr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee says, "The slightest increase in the food-supply is immediately followed by an increase in population which reduces standard of living to the value which represents bare existence.....The primary cause which stabilizes the population is rather a higher death-rate than a falling birth-rate ; as early as the next favourable agricultural season, birth-rate leaps up and the vacuum created by the increase in the death-rate is at once filled up." (Paper on "Optimum and Over-population," *Indian Journal of Economics, January, 1930*). The Report of the Agricultural Commission laments that "No lasting improvement in the standard of living of the great mass of the population can possibly be attained if every enhancement in the purchasing power of the cultivator is to be followed by a proportionate increase in the population." (*Agr. Com. Report*, Page 499). Professors Jathar and Beri hold that "the absence of any effective preventive checks in India taken along with the great power of human fecundity gives a high probability amounting to a practical certainty that overpopulation exists in India both as a tendency and as a state." (*Indian Economics*, Vol. I., p. 83). Professor Hamilton holds the same view. (Proceedings of the seventh Indian Economic Conference, 1924). Mr. Ranadive's *Population Problem of India (1930)* is the latest book on the subject. While all other writers speak with "Chastened optimism" with regard to the future of the population of India, Mr. Ranadive finds no silver lining to the dark cloud. He says, "Misery and poverty, the two hall-marks of an over-crowded country are present here in all their nakedness, and to judge from the effects of the positive checks, they seem to be on the increase. They can be clearly taken as indicating the fact that unlike western nations, India has failed to anticipate the evil of overpopulation, and having allowed things to drift, is now faced with the Herculean task of curing that evil. The population of this country has therefore assumed a menacing aspect. We have all the while been travelling down the inclined plane of poverty, and our downward progress might be expected to be very rapid in the future if things continue in the same manner." (p. 205).

Our only apology for devoting so much space to similar views expressed in different words is that in this way only can be shown the intensity with which the opinion is held that India is overpopulated. We shall now proceed to examine how far that opinion is acceptable and to see with what feelings should our countrymen receive the census figures of the present year.

Besides the economic implications, the problem of overpopulation in India has great political implications also. As Professors Jathar and Beri point out, "The official view has been that overpopulation is a potent cause of India's poverty while the politicians have generally opposed the theory because its acceptance seemed to exonerate Government from all blame or responsibility for the undeniable poverty of the Indian people". Economically speaking, poverty and overpopulation are inter-connected. Overpopulation causes poverty, and poverty by making the people dead to all sense of prudence leads to overpopulation. At this time of the day when poverty of India is an established fact, a controversy about cause and effect can have only an academic interest. But it should be pointed out that a dogmatic assertion that overpopulation causes poverty may lead to many misleading inferences. For example, during the time of famines or epidemics, deaths due to bad administration or insufficient medical aid may be ascribed to lower resisting capacity due to overpopulation. The Malthusian law is preached as a corrective for the overpopulation tendency and the family is left to deal with the problem on a *laissez-faire* basis.

Over-population is a relative term. There may be degrees, tendencies and the state of overpopulation. The extreme state is that in which the people can think of nothing except bare existence. A continued tendency towards over-population is found when a slight improvement in the standard of living is invariably counteracted by a proportionate growth of population so that the standard of living goes down to the subsistence level again. Obviously we cannot speak of *changes* in the standard of living when the population continues at the subsistence level. But when a fairly high standard of living is attained, it is possible to speak of the degrees of over-population. If, under given conditions, growing population means falling standard of living, that is if the growth of population be accompanied by less than proportionate accumulation of wealth, then the degree of over-population may be measured by $S_o - S_a$, where S_o represents the highest possible standard and

S_a the actual standard of living.

In order to prove that India is overpopulated one must show that (*a*) the masses continuously remain at or below the subsistence level *or* (*b*) that a reduction in the number of people will lead to a more than proportionate saving in capital. But no proof supported by figures has been forthcoming. Thus most of the authorities who hold that India is overpopulated do not attempt an analysis of the total food production of the country and show that food per head is *actually* decreasing. They rather point to *the existence of "positive checks" like famines and epidemics* and argue that lower resisting capacity of the people due to shortage of food makes the appearance of these checks possible. Profs. Jathar and Beri, Mr. Ranadive and many others adopt this line of reasoning. Another proof adduced is *the absense of really effective "preventive" checks.* Profs. Jathar and Beri classify all the preventive checks and show that they are absent in India. Dr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee takes the *low average expectation of life* to be the proof of overpopulation. All these arguments may be summarized thus : Propagation, if it is not voluntarily checked, leads to an excess of the population in relation to food supply. The cause of this excess is thus the absence of preventive checks and the effect of this excess is the appearance of positive checks, and high birth and death rates are the symptoms of such an excess.

Now if it can be shown that India produces enough food to support (assuming an even distribution of that food) the vast majority of her population in normal health, we must explain the horror of famines and epidemics not merely by the lower vitality of the people but by other causes. In other words, if the food problem is not very great in India we cannot argue from the so-called positive checks back to overpopulation. "Taking the whole evidence for what it is worth, we cannot either assert or deny with any degree of confidence," write Profs. Jathar and Beri "that the supply of food grains is expanding in proportion to the population, though on *a priori* grounds we should not be surprised if there is an actual falling off of the supply in relation to the demand" (op. cit. p. 91). But *a priori* reasoning should have no place in such serious discussion.

Mr. Lupton* calculated that, in 1919-20, 76·3 million tons of foodstuffs were produced. Deducting 3 million tons for export we find that the population, 247 millions (British India) had to depend on 73·3 million

* Happy India Ch. xiii

tons so that each had 1·82 lb. per diem. Mr. Lupton did not deduct the amount of foodstuffs kept as seed or lost through wastage or cattle food. But on the other hand milk, eggs, fish were excluded from the assets. Dr. Vera Anstey * also compares family budgets and jail-rations and concludes, "In a moderately good year India produces and retains within the country enough food to maintain the population in tolerable health and efficiency, assuming distribution to be approximately equal" (P. 443). Prof. Brij Narain also reaches the same conclusion in his *Population of India* (1925). According to the figures he has brought together, the total outturn of food in 1922 was 84·7 million tons (whole India), the total ordinary consumption was 78·1 million tons, so that there was a surplus of 6·6 million tons. Prof. Brij Narain writes, "These figures are not exact, but they show that India produces enough food for her own population. The margin for export is very little in ordinary years and there is no exportable surplus at all in years of scarcity, but considering the steady rate of expansion of the area under food grains and the present production, it cannot be said that there is any lack of food in India." This self-sufficiency is shown still further by the absence of food imports. The Report of the Indian Fiscal Commission also says that the problem" is not really the insufficiency of the total food supply so much as the fact that certain classes of the people are too poor to buy all the food they require. (para 200). All these observations should disprove the contention that the food supply has fallen short of the requirements of a growing population.

This point may be further illustrated by actual figures : The following table shows the growth of the area and yield of *food crops* :

Area in Million Acres.

	1913-14	'15-'16—'19-'20	'19-'20—'24-'25	'23-'24	'24-'25	'25-'26	'26-'27	'27-'28	'28-'29	'29-'30
Rice	75·43	79·52	80·72	79·11	81·44	82·38	79·70	78·11	80·4†	81·9
Wheat	28·48	30·50	29·57	31·18	31·78	30·47	31·30	32·22		
Barley	7·14	7·62	6·98	7·13	6·90	6·57	6·31	6·77		
Juwar	21·37	21·77	30·04	30·46	31·46	29·59	29·26	29·92		
Bajra	14·76	13·21	13·49	13·67	11·96	12·26	13·79	14·42		
Maize	6·15	6·46	5·90	5·82	5·31	5·44	5·52	5·92		
Gram	8·96	13·00	14·24	14·40	16·47	14·30	14·58	13·92		
TOTAL ...	162·29	172·07	180·94	181·77	185·32	181·01	180·46	181·28		

* Economic Development of India, 1929.

†The figures for rice for 1928-1930 were published in the Statesman of Feb. 28, 1931.

Yield in Million tons.

	1913-14	'15-'16—'19-'20	'19-'20—'24-'25	'23-'24	'24-'25	'25-'26	'26-'27	'27-'28	'28-'29	'29-'30
Rice	28·79	32·02	30·75	28·20	30·07	30·74	29·68	28·18	31·1	31·5
Wheat	8·36	9·29	9·01	9·66	8·87	8·70	8·97	7·74		
Barley	2·69	3·17	2·87	2·94	2·64	2·58	2·55	2·09		
Juwar	40·4	4·94	5·50	5·31	5·82	5·32	5·36	6·41		
Bajra	1·98	2·33	2·29	2·20	2·22	1·98	2·46	2·42		
Maize	2·08	2·33	2·06	2·18	1·69	1·87	1·92	2·25		
Gram	1·94	3·55	4·12	4·46	4·18	3·87	3·99	3.23		

[Source : Area and yield of principal crops of India]

The figures show that on the whole the area and yield of food crops have been increasing year after year though the rate of increase is small after 1916. It should be noted that other important articles of food like fish, fruits, sugar, and milk have not been considered. (For more detailed information see the chart. p. 69 *Agr. Com. Rept*).

The following table shows the relative growth of population and the acreage under food—

	Quinquennial Averages.				
	1890-91 to 1894-95	1895-96 to 1899-1900	900-01 to 1904-05	1905-06 to 1909-'10	Average 1910-11 1911-22
Growth of food area in thousand Acres	101.121	93,978	101,213	103,055	603.332
Index No.	100	92·9	100·1	101·9	102·2
Growth of population in thousands	99.649	100,029	101,008	102,383	103,018
Index No.	100	100·4	101·4	102·7	103·4

These figures were published by the Government of India and show the "precise parallelism between the growth of population and the extension of food cultivation." This conclusion is borne out by the figures for 1921 also.

Year	Population in crores	Percentage Increase	Area under food grains Crores of acres	Percentage Increase
1911	31·5	—	18·8	—
1921	31·9	1·2	19 9	6

[The small percentage of population growth is due the influenza epidemic the normal growth of the Indian population is about 6 to 7 p. c.]

It should be mentioned that operation of the law of Diminishing Returns should make the comparison of *food-areas* meaningless. But after careful consideration of the problem the Agricultural Commission came to the conclusion that "A balance has been established, and no further deterioration is likely to take place under existing conditions of cultivation". (Para 77, chap. IV). Mr. Ranadive's figures pointing to a contrary conclusion appear to be unconvincing.

We suppose that the figures given above go to show that the food-problem (in the sense that population has outstripped food-supply) does not exist in India. What is wanted is more equal distribution of the food-stuff over the whole country. It may still be contended that the uneconomical nature of the population growth is seen in the fact that though there may be sufficient food in normal years, there is nothing to fall back on in adverse times. If such a contention is correct, export of food-grains, manures (like oil-cakes) and the extension of the cultivation of commercial crops must be stopped. For one must live before everything else and gain from international trade in the shape of manufactured luxuries is poor compensation for death for want of food during famines. Nearly 50 million acres were cultivated during the period from 1921-22 to 1925-26 for the production of oilseeds, cotton, jute, fodder and other non-food crops. The total area in the period from 1906-07 to 1910-11 was 40 million acres. Bengal is at present paying dearly for over-commercializing her agricultural lands.

With regard to the export of food crops the Report of the Fiscal Commission argues that "the fact remains that at existing prices the efficient demand of India is satisfied, and that there remains a surplus available for export. Were the export market not open, the surplus would not be produced" (Para 203). But we may tentatively suggest that if we assume that there *are* underfed people who owing to the high prices cannot avail themselves fully of the surplus, and who would buy the surplus if prices were somewhat lower, the case could be made out that there

should be a restriction of export so that the Indian level of prices may not rise to the world-level. Any loss of gain from international trade in this way will, *ex hypothesi*, be compensated for by the increased efficiency of labour. It is regrettable that the Fiscal Commission has not dealt with this side of the question. As to the contention that if the export be restricted the surplus will not be produced we may point out that (1) many food-areas are suitable only for food production and (2) food areas utilized for the production of commercial crops will depress the price of the latter and make the process unprofitable.

The following table shows the amounts of wheat exported:

Wheat	1895-1900	1900-1905	1905-1910	1910-1915	1915-'20	1920-'25	1925-'28
Export in 1000 tons	435	866	756	1239	668	458	229
Percentage of export to total production	7·2	11·3	9·3	12·8	7·2	5·1	2·7

[Source—Area & yield of Principal Crops in India]

It is clear that India has enormous possibilities for the production of food and that if it be a question of food production only India cannot be described as overpopulated at present. The real explanations of the acuteness of the food-problem inspite of these possibilities are (*a*) that food is not evenly distributed, (*b*) that a vast ramification of private charity keeps alive a floating population living on the margin of want and that in adverse times this ramification breaks down and the floating population find themselves at sea; and (*c*) that the Indian peasant's indebtedness is a well known fact. The bulk of the debt, be it noted, is contracted not for bare existence (which would be the case if there was overpopulation) but for such non-productive purposes as marriage ceremonies etc. According to Engels, the poorer is a family in Europe the larger is the proportion of expenditure on bare subsistence. But we have a different state of affairs in India. A lower percentage is found to be spent on food not out of choice but out of necessity, for the repayment of debt is the first charge on the income of the peasant. This means under-feeding inspite of sufficiency of food in the land and expenditure of much capital for unproductive purposes. As Mr. V. N. Mehta, I.C.S. beautifully expresses an ugly truth, "The cultivator thinks that the wheels of his household will get clogged without this lubrication (*i.e.*, expenditure on marriage ceremony, litigation

etc.,) even if it has to be administered at the expense of the internal lubrication of his own bodily machine" [Page 88, India, edited by D. R. Bhandarkar, for the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Sept. 1929].

It is, indeed, an irony of fate that a country which produces enough food for her population, and also exports it, should be unable to bear a rate of increase of population which is much smaller than that of the food-importing countries of the world. Nevertheless great improvements have been made in the matter of food distribution. What Legoyt has said about France has happened in India in that famines have been gradually replaced by Disettes (scarcity), and to-day only Charte's (dearth) are known. No case of starvation was reported during the famine of 1918. (Vera Anstey op. cit. P. 437). It is interesting to enquire what writers like Mr. Ranadive would say regarding the disarming of famines in modern India. If famines are the terrible penalty inflicted by Nature upon the Indians who attempt to do it violence by wishing to sit at the banquet of life when all the places were filled, why has the penalty lost many of its horrors? What the famine-administration has done in combating famines, will be done, let us hope, by improved sanitation in combating epidemics.

We thus come to the important conclusion that Wattal, Pillai, Ranadive and many others have exaggerated temporary or seasonal depressions affecting food-supply and have thereby betrayed a lamentable "sky-is-falling mentality" so well illustrated by old Æsop. India is not overpopulated in the sense of shortage of food, nor can all the horrors of famines and epidemics be ascribed to lower resisting capacity of the population which has outrun the growth of food supply. India is not overpopulated in the absolute sense of the term, that is, we have not arrived at the stage where there is no hope for any immediate increase in the national dividend and where neither a strong government nor a clear national purpose can be expected to exist. Such was the state of Ireland in the first half of the 18th century. India at present may be described as "slightly overpopulated" by which term Prof. Carr-Saunders means that the standard of living is rather depressed and social unrest prevalent and the spur of energy is everywhere. It is up to the leaders and the government in India to feel that spur and make others act up to it.

So much with regard to the food problem. But clearly sufficiency of foodsupply is not the main problem that the population of India has to

solve. Once we assure ourselves that the food-problem need not make us anxious we should try to see if it is possible to raise the standard of living above the subsistence-level and to see if it has already been raised to some extent in that direction.

We have seen that in the opinion of the Agricultural Commission, Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee and many others, a slight improvement in the standard of living calls forth an increased rate of birth so that the slight inprovement is absolutely obliterated. If such a view is correct, two conclusions may be drawn : (*a*) If a long period is taken we should expect the Indian population to be continuing at the same standard of living all the time and (*b*) so long as this "Vacuum-filling process" goes on it is absolutely useless to speak of social, economic and political reforms in India.

But our experience do not support these conclusions. While the view of Dr. Mukerjee and others may be true for a particular area at a given time it is but partially true for India considered as a whole. We need not enter into the controversy as to what is the *per capita* income in India ; but it cannot be denied that the standard of living has been rising during the twentieth century. "It is, I think," says Dr. Gilbert Slater, "Unquestionable that, during the twentieth century, while the average Indian income reckoned in rupees has increased very greatly, the real income measured in commodities, has also risen considerably ; and the standard of living still more, so that with increasing wealth, there has been increasing consciousness of poverty." [Introductory note, p. XIV, Pillai : Econ. Conditions in India.) It is in such discussions that we feel the necessity of more detailed "Villages Surveys" being undertaken by Government and private agencies. Generally speaking, the buying of better clothes and of such articles as electric torches (which, by the way, are widely used in the rural areas of Bengal) by the rural people point to a rising standard of living. Moreover, the report of the various co-operative organizations also support this conclusion. The following table gives the different estimates of the *per capita* income and clearly shows a distinct tendency for the income to rise :

Estimated by	Year	*Per capita* income	Remarks
Dadabhai Naoroji	1870	Rs. 20	
Lord Cromer	1882	Rs. 27	
F. J. Atkinson	1875	Rs. 30·5	These figures perhaps exaggerate the income but they show a rising tendency in the 20 yrs.
"	1895	Rs. 39·5	
Lord Curzon	1901	Rs. 30	Minimum Limit
Findlay Shirras	1911	Rs. 50	
Madras Publicity Bureau	1920	Rs. 102	Madras Presidency only
Shah & Khambatta	1924	Rs.74 (gross)	

Dr. Vera Anstey comes to the conclusion "reached from an examination of the estimates quoted above, and from circumstantial evidence, that there has been a distinct tendency towards an increase in average income since the end of the nineteenth century "(op. cit. p. 441). It is, therefore, difficult to maintain that an increasing birth-rate has been obliterating all improvements in Indian economic life. And since there has been improvement and there is hope for improvement, the Indian birth-rate notwithstanding, people formulate schemes for social and economic uplift of the country and try to carry out those schemes.

But it can never be maintained that the increase of the national income is proceeding at a desirable rate. A country with such great natural resources should have a much higher rate of the increase of the national income. We shall now try to examine how far the growth of population is checking a greater accumulation of wealth.

The following table gives us the rate of increase of population of different countries :

Country	1881-91	1891-190	1901-11	1911-21	Total
England & Wales	11·7	12·1	10·5	4·8	39·1
U. S. A.	25·5	20·7	21·0	14·9	82·1
India	13·2	2·5	7·8	1·2	24·7
India (Real Rate)	9·6	1·4	6·4	1·2	18·6

[Table given by Prof. B. R. Rau in "Population and Economic Progress." Calcutta Review", Nov. 1926. For another table See Brij Narain, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10]

It will be seen that the effective increase of the Indian population is not great as compared with other countries. But although the effective increase is small, the birth and death rates are high in India. This means that many children are born only to die and much wealth is uselessly spent in rearing them up. The following figures give some indication of infant mortality.

Deaths under one year per mille of births	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920
Males	209	212	274	228	201
Females	195	198	260	220	188

This is the real danger spot in the whole situation. The higher birth-rate would suggest a doubt whether the people know the fundamental fact that propogation if it is not voluntarily checked inevitably leads to an excess of population in relation to the means of subsistence.

The following figures give the birth-rates per 1000 inhabitants :

Country	1881-90	1890-1900	1900-1910	1910-1920
France	23·9	22·1	20·6	——
Eng. & Wales	32·5	29·9	27·2	23·1
Italy	37·7	35·0	32·7	——
India	35·8	35·4	38·2	36·4

It is contended that if the death-rate is decreased in India through improved sanitation and disappearance of the "positive checks," the birth-rate *which shows no sign of diminishing* will soon make India an over-populated country. Although we have shown that India has possibilities of food supply to support the normal rate of increase of the population, it is clear that if the birth-rate goes on increasing inspite of a fall in the death-rate all hopes about the economic future of India must be given a must unceremonious go-by. But, as has been pointed out above, high birth-rate is often caused by poverty ; and since a falling death-rate must signify a rise in the general level of income it should also mean a falling birth-rate. If the birth-rate does not fall proportionately a maladjustment between

production and population will appear. Considering the fact of infant mortality and considering the fact that the birth-rate has not fallen inspite of a rise, however slight it may be, in the standard of living we are of opinion that a tendency towards overpopulation can be noticed in India. India is, as we have said, "slightly overpopulated," *so far as population growth is concerned.*

India presents some other features of overpopulation (in the relative sense) not because the population is increasing at a high rate (in fact, the effective increase is small) but because the traditional occupational distribution of the people is being disturbed due to "the impact of the modern on the medieval" (V. Anstey). The growing pressure on the soil is as much due to the natural increase of the population as it is due to the displacement of the artisan classes by the competition of machine-made goods.

The following tables are interesting from this point of view :

	1891-1901	1901-1911	1911-1921
Percentage Increase of Population	1·4	6·4	1·2
„ „ „ Agricultural Population	12·0	14·7	1·8
„ Decrease of Industrial Population	6·0	7·0	6·0

[See Ranadive, *Op. cit.*, p. 184.]

Country	P. C. of total population supported by Agriculture			P. C. of total population supported by Industries.		
	1901	1911	1921	1901	1911	1921
Bengal	71·5	75·4	77·3	12·3	7·7	7·8
Bombay	58·6	64·3	61·6	18·2	12·7	12·2
Madras	69·0	68·7	70·8	17·5	13·4	11·3
India	65·2	69·8	70·9	15·5	11·4	10·7

[See p. 349, Brij Narain, *Indian Economic Life*, 1929.]

It is clear that there has been a consistent process of ruralization since 1891. But what is important to note is that the degree of ruralization is much greater than the natural increase of the population and that the percentage of decrease in the industries roughly equals the percentage

of increase in the agricultural population. In India we are faced with the lamentable paradox that people displaced by industries are not reabsorbed by it. This is due largely to the fact that the "organized industries" are growing at the expense of cottage industries of India while the machinery etc. required by the "organized industries" are supplied by foreign labour. It may well be observed that even a country with stationary population must show symptoms of overpopulation if such a one-sided displacement of labour continues to take place. The displacement of the artisan classes implies loss in four ways : (1) pressure on the soil, (2) destruction of the fixed capital of the artisans (3) India, being forced to be a raw-material producing country fails to get favourable barter terms of trade while trading with manufacturing countries. We shall notice this point later. (4) Greater subdivision of holdings is taking place.

Thus in order to increase the capital resources of the country one cannot single out the growth of population as the main undesirable factor and advise a check to population growth. Mr. Ranadive has attempted the calculation of the surplus population dependent on agriculture. He takes 15 acres per average family to be the economic minimum. On this basis he finds that there should be 445 lakhs agricultural workers ; but actually there were 810 lakhs in 1921 in British India. Hence there was a surplus of 365 lakhs or 44 p. c. of the total workers on land. Again for 365 lakhs active workers there were 710 lakhs dependents (according to the ratio given in the Census of 1921). This is 39 p. c. of the population living on land and 29 p. c. of the total population. This, according to Mr. Ranadive, "is an eloquent testimony to the extent of overpopulation in this country and of the consequent pressure on the soil" (*Op. cit.* p. 192). We have pointed out that a large percentage of this pressure on the soil is due to the displacement of the artisan classes. We should now point out that every active worker on the field requires at least two helpers during the harvest time. This is an accepted principle of agricultural economics. Mr. Ranadive has not taken account of this fact. Hence at least in the busy season the "agricultural surplus" must come down to a lower figure. But what will this "Seasonal helpers" do during the rest of the year ? Obviously, the remedy is to be found not in a lessening of this population but in opening up subsidiary rural industries like cattle-farming for them. Dr. V. Anstey describes the present situation thus, "As the demand for agricultural labour is very unevenly distributed throughout the year, the labour supply has to be sufficient to cope

with the work at the busy seasons, but otherwise has to be maintained in complete or partial idleness." (*op. cit.* p. 156 : See also p. 180).

The poverty of India is a grim fact. Lack of funds is the limiting factor in all schemes of improvement—social or economic. Thus Chap. IV of the Report of the Agricultural Commission describes great prospects of the Indian agriculture. Dr. Vera Anstey says, "It can undoubtedly be said that a veritable agricultural revolution could be effected by simply putting into practice the knowledge that has been gained with regard to improved varieties of crops, implements, cultural methods, and the breeding and care of domestic animals." (*op. cit.* p. 170). But lack of funds prevents the appearance of such an agricultural revolution. The same may be said with regard to industrial and educational improvements.

Broadly speaking, poverty arises when the growth of producers exceeds the growth of capital. This may be brought about by (1) an uneconomic *actual* growth of the population which presses on the means of subsistence and thus loses in efficiency or (2) by the compulsory employment of the productive elements of the community in unproductive or less productive pursuits owing to competition of foreign countries, uneconomic social system, land tenure etc., or (3) by both the processes (1) and (2). With regard to India we have reached the conclusion that the population has not outrun the means of subsistence and, assuming even distribution, the available food may support the people in tolerable efficiency. But the actual growth of the population decreases the national dividend in two ways, *viz.* (*a*) infant mortality and (*b*) failure of the birth-rate to decrease not with the improvement in the standard of living. But the decrease in the national dividend in this way must be less than the decrease brought about by the compulsory employment of productive elements in less productive occupations. The thesis that Dr. V. Anstey proves in her work, Economic Development of India is that "India is in a state of arrested development, owing chiefly to her unhealthy social system, which keeps certain classes depressed, and certain occupations (the most important from the economic point of view) unworthy of the "upper classes" (See Review by Prof. P. J. Thomas, Ind. Jour. of Econ., Oct. 1930). Again, Prof. S. C. Bose points out in an ably written article entitled, "Economic of Foreign Trade," that India being a raw-material exporting and manufactured-articles importing country loses bothways. (Ind. Jour. Econ., Oct. 1930). We do not agree with Bastable when he says, "a consideration of what is the proportion of gain (in international trade) is after all more a question of

scientific curiosity than of practical importance" (Commerce of Nations, pp 20-21). When it is a question of the accumulation of capital an agricultural country certainly loses in international trade—a point which was emphasised by the great Hamilton as early as 1791 in his famous Report on Protectionism.

It is thus rather to the development of industries than to a propaganda for birth-control that we should look for the accumulation of capital in India. We have already got discriminating protection and we are going to have a "national" budget this year. The controversy over the Coastal Reservation Bill has made it clear that capital for financing coastal shipping can be found in India. In fact the industrial possibilities of India are such an obvious fact that he who runs may read it.

The credit of first refuting the stock argument that growth of population prevents the accumulation of capital is due to the late Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji whose words, bereft of their sentimentalism are pregnant with truth, "Let the country keep what it produces and then can any right judgment be formed whether it is overpopulated or not..... The present cant of excuse of overpopulation is adding a distressful insult to agonizing injury. To talk of overpopulation at present is just as reasonable as to cut off a man's hands and then to taunt him that he was not able to maintain himself".

In his Preface to Mr. Ranadive's book Prof. C. N. Vakil writes, "Vague ideas are afloat to the effect that India is not overpopulated, due to the fallacy of taking into account potential resources which are not available at the moment for the existing population." (p. vi. op. cit). It appears that he does not advocate artificial birth-control as a solution but says that a more comprehensive scheme of action with redoubled energy needs to be put into effect, with the promptness and enthusiasm of a Mussolini if the masses of India are to be prevented from desperate remedies." (*ibid*). He thus himself looks to the potential resources (to be worked by a Mussolini into actual prosperity) for the solution of India's economic problems. We agree with him in this respect. Dr. Vera Anstey concludes in the last chapter of her book that India is on "the brink of a great forward movement" and that the factors which limit this movement are (a) increase of population (b) uneconomic outlook of the people and (c) lack of co-operation between the Government and the governed. We have indicated how far in our opinion the actual growth of population limits this

forward movement. Such social reforms as the Sarda Act may remove many of the undesirable elements in the growth of population.

We should now state that for the final success of the "forward movement" our man-power must increase or the normal rate of growth must be as high as in U. S. A. or England and Wales. Hence it is not advisable on economic grounds to raise the bogey of overpopulation and preach artificial birth control as the only remedy as Mr. Ranadive has done. The difficulties of birth-control are that (1) it affects the "upper classes" more readily than the poorer. (2) When it becomes a convention, it becomes absolutely impossible (as in France) to raise the birth-rate even though circumstances may demand it. As a matter of fact the distribution of the population according to age-groups is such that our population within the age-limit, 15—40, have not come up to that limit which is necessary for an effective utilization of India's resources. (See the article by Prof. Rau in Cal. Rev. Nov. 1926, p. 248). We may also mention in this connection that artificial birth-control is generally adopted in order to stabilize a certain standard of living. But at present the Indian masses can have no idea as to what standard of living they should aim at. Again, preachers of the artificial birth-control movement may defeat their own purpose because better spacing of children due to this movement may lead to a higher survival rate. Finally, a consistent propaganda that India is over-populated may produce adverse psychological results.

With regard to population and production India's position is far superior to that of Japan. While India stands on the brink of a "plethora of productivity", Japan has well-nigh reached the limits of her industrial resources. Dr. Shiroshi Nasu, Professor of Rural Economics, Tokyo Imperial University, stated before the Institute of Pacific Relations that half of the entire population of Japan might be said to be in a state of chronic semi-unemployment and that no further gain could be expected from the four remedial measures—expansion of industries, reorganization of the economic system, the decreasing of birth-rate, and emigration.

We may now conclude with these words of Profs. Wadia and Joshi—"To be brief, the problem of population does not depend upon the relation between population and food as Malthus thought, but between population and the total wealth of the country. As Seligman says, 'it is not a question of mere size but of efficient production and equitable distribution.' In India we have neither efficient production, nor equitable distribution—what is worse, all the wealth produced within the country

is not distributed within it. In view of the untold natural resources of the country still awaiting development India can maintain an enormously larger population than at present and it is foolish to argue from the assumption of an over-populated India as cause to the prevailing poverty and misery as effect." (*Wealth of India.*)

JAYADEVA, THE POET-ARTIST AND MYSTIC

MAKHANLAL MUKHERJI—*Fifth Year Sanskrit.*

ON a previous occasion,* we began by saying :—"Contemporary opinion seems to be in favour of the view that the *Gitagovinda* as a work of art has a significance not very consistent with what is clearly its religious appeal." Now that the spade-work of a textual critic is somewhat done and our point of contention *viz.*, that the whole of the Gita-Govinda in Sanskrit is the work of Jayadeva is fairly well-established, it will be our endeavour to take up this our enquiry proper and to deal thoroughly, though succinctly, with the bigger literary issue in examining this statement.

But to do this would require of us to dive down into the first principles, to consider for ourselves what it is that we mean by art and incidentally, a work of art. In this, we shall try the path indicated by one of the greatest of modern philosophers, I mean Benedetto Croce, in his remarkable work, 'The History of Æsthetics.'

After distinguishing between intuitive and logical knowledge, Croce characterises the former as being that which is obtained through imagination, of the individual, of individual things (and not of their relations), andfinally, as being productive of images. So that the distinction between reality and non-reality is extraneous, secondary to the true nature of intuition, where all is real, nothing is real. Again, intuitive knowledge is expressive knowledge. To

*See *Presidency College Magazine*, December, 1930, (Vol. XVII, No. 2) pages 119 *et. seq*

intuit is to express ; and nothing else (nothing more and nothing less) than to express.

The true critical attitude with regard to a work of art is to ask if it be expressive and what it expresses, whether it speaks, or stammers or is altogether silent and not to ask if it obey the law of epic or a tragedy, of historical painting or of landscape. For in æsthetic analysis it is impossible to separate the subjective from the objective, the lyric from the epic, the image of feeling from that of things.

The true artist, in fact, finds himself big with his theme, he knows not how ; he feels the moment of birth drawing near, but he cannot will it or not will it. Thus, while making a verbal pretence of agreeing or yielding a feigned obedience, artists have, however, really always disregarded the so-called Laws of Artistic and Literary kinds. Every true work of art has violated some established kind and upset the ideas of the critics, who have thus been obliged to broaden kinds, until finally even the broadened kind has proved too-narrow owing to the appearance of new works of art. Every true work of art is a standard by itself.

Art, then, is independent both of science and of the useful or the moral. There should be no fear least frivolous or cold art should thus be justifed, since what is truly frivolous or cold is so because it has not been raised to expression, or in other words, frivolity and frigidity come always from the form of the æsthetic treatment, from failure to grasp a content, not from the material qualities of the content itself.

But this attitude should not be misunderstood. It is not scientifically incorrect to talk of tragedies, comedies, dramas, romances, pictures of everyday life, battle-pieces, landscapes, poems, versicles, lyrics and the like, and to draw attention to certain groups of works, in general and approximately to which, for one reason or another, it is desired to draw attention. But here from æsthetics that we were, we have changed into logicians ; from contemplators of expression into reasoners.

Lastly, it follows as a corollary to what we have said above that all translations are impossible in so far as they pretend to effect the remoulding of one expression into another. And one great characteristic of a work of art is the fact of its being un-translatable.

Now religion or 'dharma' as we better understand it, dharma the substance, the self-ness of things and of men, is the inherent or intuitive expression of practical aspirations and ideals. It is not something that is forced upon us from the outside, neither a sort of acquired habit : but it

is something that is immanent in our constitution as human beings; we cannot have it or not have it, according to our sweet will. Every man as such is more or less religious-minded. It is this religious-mindedness that guides us in our conduct and circumstances and largely accounts for the difference in conduct in men even under the same circumstances. One man in affluent circumstances gives away everything for the mitigation of human suffering; another, under as much affluence becomes the more stingy to get his bank-amounts doubled and trebled. The religious sense is never extinct; and it must not be confused with the so-called morality. But if we take morality to be fundamentally the expression of Humanity as a whole through the individual, it merges into dharma as we have conceived it. Every true poet and artist possesses either consciously or unconsciously this religious sense to a high degree. The birth-pangs of creation that they feel cannot but arouse in them the highest religious feeling like the pain of child-birth to the mother.

Especially so was the case with the poets and artists of India, and medieval Europe. As Sister Nivedita in her searchingly synthetic essay very beautifully puts it: "There was a mood when we hold in our hands an old book, an old picture, an old jewel, or even things as a padlock, a piece of brass-work or a fragment of embroidery. It was a mood of leisure and simplicity, to which the work in hand at the moment was the whole aim of life. The craftsman was concentrated upon his labour. The whole of Dhrama lay in the beauty he was bringing forth. His craft was for the moment or for that moment in the existence of humanity that we call a man's life—his religion." It is of this religion as a feeling and not merely as knowledge that we shall speak of.

This religiousness is purely individualistic. And if it starts from the Divine nature, rather than from man and its surroundings, if it does not develop in an ethical reference, it transcends into mysticism, where the dominant note as St. Augustine sounds it, is - "I believe, therefore do I speak. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Speak it out that I may hear thee. Behold, the ears of my heart are before thee, O' Lord, open them and say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation. O' Lord, to whom being and living are not several things, because both to be and to live in the highest degree is of thy very essence. Whatsoever I speak, or write, or read, or number, let all serve thee. O' God, thou light of my soul, thou Bread of the eternal mouth of my soul, and thou Firmest knot, marrying my soul and the bosom of my thoughts together." Mysticism thus main-

tains the possibility of direct intercourse with this Being of Beings—intercourse by a species of ecstatic transfusion or identification, in which the individual becomes in very truth "partaker of the divine nature". God ceases to be an object to him and becomes an experience ; and what may be called the symbolism of religious feeling remains not simply a speculation but comes to be literally or metaphysically true as an endeavour after the realization of an ineffable union. And "it is a marked characteristic" as Evellyn Underhill says, "of mystical literature that the great contemplatives, in their effort to convey to us the nature of this communion with the Super-Sensuous are inevitably drawn to employ some form of sensuous imagery: .....and their fearless employment of homely and physical symbols—often startling and even revolting to the unaccustomed taste—is in direct proportion to the exaltation of their spiritual life." With the mystics the mind is as it were the sixth sense (সর্ব্বেন্দ্রিয়গুণাভাসং সর্ব্বেন্দ্রিয়বিবর্জ্জিতম্ as we have it) and they alone can speak of hearing with the eye, seeing with the ear and so on, which will sound to us extremely absurd and paradoxical. But does not our talk of light and colour sound as absurd to a man born blind ? "Between Nature and ourselves—more, between ourselves and our own consciousness—hangs a veil, a veil dense and opaque for normal man, but thin, almost transparent, for the artist, the poet and the mystic."

To those who still have the incongruity between art and religion lurking in their minds the following words of W. G. Raffe may commend themselves : "Every human need is ended by the satisfaction of union with the object desired. Religion is the process of the attainment of the final satisfaction and religious teaching in every land is the story of the attainment of union. Consequently the symbols of art, which is inspired from the same supernal force, have union as their main subject. All art is the teaching of religion, and the very form of religion itself is created as a work of art by a supreme artist. Each body of teaching is made for its own time and place, addressed to its own people, but all taken from the same origin. But each in its own way stresses the act of union and each uses as symbols the facts of the lower world, and even lower modes of union, as types of the higher."

This general and somewhat abstract outline is drawn, as is apparent, with an eye to the subject in hand. *viz.* the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva. As is clear also from the outline, we shall approach Jayadeva as a poet-artist and mystic. The Gitagovinda is the only work, as far we know, by Jaya-

'deva. It is a whole life time's fruition under the mild-dewed touch of religion ; an ardent mind has burst forth into songs, a mind that has always lost itself in identification with its lover, even as Radha is described as having been. Nothing tells so strongly clearly in a piece of work as its motive. And what one wonders, is the motive of Gitagovinda, so diligent a piece of work ? Its motive is to reveal the joy of self expression of the mystic, and in every rippling dance of the music of his songs we feel the heart-beats of the poet within our heart of hearts and every page of the work is like a petal of his heart unfolded. This song-offering has been his only life-long worship to his lover, the Eternal Flute-player. The work has been his life of life, his religion and it has the supreme honour of creating or at least foreshadowing a religion that was to have its day some centuries later.

It now only remains to fill in this outline. The first thing, as we have stated above, would be to ask what the Gitagovinda tries to express and that with what success. This can be done in no better way than by taking a synopsis of the whole work, by going through every canto of the work, in an appreciative and critical manner. But this is much more than what our space will permit and we shall have to rest content with only a rapid and helpful analysis.

In the first place, there is the মেঘৈর্মেদুরং Sloka over the significance of which a great deal of controversial breath has been expended. But obviously with the reading of the stanza over again after we have finished the work once, we have out first vague idea confirmed that it expresses and embodies within itself the meaning of the whole book. Krishna asks Radha to get for him a shelter and what more fitting shelter can Radha give than her own lap when their perfect union is effected in the twelfth canto ; it is thus that a man finds himself bound within the life of a householder in the love of his own beloved. The stanza has thus a twofold significance. It gives the meaning of the whole work in a nutshell as well as introduces us into the religious atmosphere of the poem. Then follows in three stanzas an account of the poet himself as also of his contemporaries and the class of readers for whom the work is meant. Now the line "যদি হরিস্মরণে সরসংমনঃ যদি বিলাসকলাসুকুতূহলম্", with its apparently contradictory tone at once reveals the mystic, who like Kavir, does not see with approval prescriptions of dry mortifications for spiritual uplift and well-being, and who, conscious of of the divinity of all things, delights in art as a means of service at the feet of his God and beloved. Then comes very

appropriately the first song, singing the glory of God, as ভগবান্ with super-human faculties, and not as the supreme soul, running closely parallel in thought with the 'যদা যদাহিধর্ম্মস্য গ্লানির্ভবতি ভারত। অভ্যুত্থানমধর্ম্মস্য তদাত্মানং সৃজাম্যহম্' verse of the Gita. But after an intervention of one sloka we come to the second song which in general harps on the deeds of the Krishna incarnation alone—and we may add, of the Gopala Krishna as distinguished from the Vasudeva Krishna in which the main note is that he comes not only for the deliverence of mankind but also to realise himself infinitely through his activities. As Dr. S. N. Das Gupta puts it: "The episodes of Krishna's life are often conceived to happen on a non-physical plane, where both Krishna and his partners are thought to play their parts of love and friendship in non-physical bodies. Thus, they are not regarded as particular events that took place at specific points of time in the life of a particular man, Krishna. They are interpreted as the eternal, timeless, spaceless play of God with His own associates and His energies, with whom He eternally realises Himself in love and friendship."

The mystico-philosophical significance that the above excerpt sees into the Krishna episodes has been in another way stated in the Gopala-tapani Upanishad, which may be conveniently taken notice of at this place. The Gopala-tapani is a curious mixture of Upanishadic thought with Tantric rituals and observances. Be this as it may, it adopts the Upanishadic view that Gopala Krishna is nothing but the পরমাত্মন্ (Supreme soul) and the গোপীs his মায়াশক্তি (the manifestations of the material cause) that through নাম and রূপ conceals from the Jivatman (the individual soul) his true indentity which consists in the realisation of তত্ত্বমসি (Thou art That). The play of Krishna with Radha, the chief of the গোপীs, is the eternal play of মায়োপহিতব্রহ্ম or better ঈশ্বর in his desire for self realisation—'সঐক্ষতএকোঽহং বহুস্যাংপ্রজায়েয়'—and the ever-flowing cosmos dances in the music of eternal ওম্—music that finds its echo in the devout heart of the Bhakta, whose mind is the holy বৃন্দাবন and where ecstatic tears, the flow of the sacred কালিন্দী। This may be true so far as it goes, but it smacks too much of abstract philosophy to be in the spirit of a mystic with a keen and profound poetic temperament. As a poet-mystic Jayadeva had no contempt for the physical, which he had taken as the vehicle of his mystic communication. For his mystic vision all aspects of the world possessed equal authority and really the first love of a maiden for a youth is the intensest and purest kind of love that earth has to offer. And his soul as a maiden felt the same yearning for Krishna, the most Divine Youth, as

what his Radha had exhibited. Again, he as a Bhakta has every claim to the love of Krishna, who himself is shown to pine for the love of Radha, that is to say for the love of Bhakta, the most triumphant utterance in this connexion being what is placed in the mouth of Krishna—স্মরগরলখণ্ডনং মম শিরসিমণ্ডলং দেহিপদপল্লবমুদারম্। What soul in the highest devotional mood has not been weary of the delay of His approach, in a fit of divine jealousy thinking Him to be tarrying with others more fortunate than himfelf? This conception very easily explains how it was possible for Krishna to be dallying with so many maidens at the same moment. He is the একো দেবোনিত্যলীলানুরক্তোভক্তব্যাপী ভক্তহৃদ্যন্তরাত্মা and as such he remains the lover of every soul that yearns. The 'অপ্রাকৃত নায়কত্ব' explanation will not do, for the Sloka of the ভগবদ্গীতা—'যদ্যদাচরতি শ্রেষ্ঠস্তত্তদেবেতরোজনঃ। স যৎপ্রমাণং কুরুতে লোকস্তদনুবর্ত্ততে।'—stands as a real and formidable barrier. Nor the philosophical explanation based on the Upanishadic text 'দ্বা সুপর্ণা সযুজা সখায়া সমানং বৃক্ষং পরিষস্বজাতে। তয়োরন্যং পিপ্পলং স্বাদ্বত্ত্যনশ্নন্যোঽভিচাকশীতি॥' meaning that the পরমাত্মন্ stands as a mere spectator, without feeling anything the worse for any kind of enjoyment for nothing can touch it, while it is the individual soul, the Jivatman, that reaps the fruits of its own enjoyments. This really takes its stand on monism, for the পরমাত্মন্ being একমেবাদ্বিতীয়ম্ holding the whole universe within its bosom, whom will it enjoy or seek? But the mystic conception of God is essentially dualistic, if not pantheistic. Bhakta is as much necessary for ভগবান্ as the latter is necessary for the former.

It is very significant that Jayadeva omits from his poem the episode of বেণুবাদন of blowing the lute prior to the রাসলীলা Scene, nor is there the suggestion of the গোপীs, having left their husbands and relations and other household duties of the time, drawn away by its music; although there is always the mention of singing the lute as associated with Krishna. This episode of the শ্রীমদ্ভাগবত is omitted and omitted on purpose. Jayadeva seems not to be a supporter of the cult of পরকীয়া রতি, which was held up as the highest type of love in later Vaisnavism, as evinced, for example, in many places of চৈতন্যচরিতামৃত। Jaydeva did not concern himself with this episode, because he took the whole Krishna legend in his own way, which wears an altogether different outlook. His own treatment bears this out, as will be shown presently. What we mean by our mystical interpretation may be clear if we remember the very deep-toned, familiar song of Rabindranath 'সে যে পাশে এসে বসেছিল, তবু জাগিনি, কি ঘুম তোরে পেয়েছিল হতভাগিনি' and many others, for example, 'আর

নাইরে বেলা নাম্‌লো ছায়া ধরণীতে, চলরে ঘাটে কলসখানি ভরে' নিতে।' etc. But we must not forget that inspite of their almost similar mystical outlook, there is a vital distinction between Rabindranath and Jayadeva as mystics. Rabindranath, like his favourite, Kavir, escapes the excessive emotional ism, the tendency to an exclusively anthropomorphic devotion, which results from an unrestricted cult of divine Personality, especially under an incarnational form. While Jayadeva accepts such an incarnational form, and goes frequently to emotional raptures, more particularly in his songs and it is this anthropomorphic devotion that accounts for the portrayal of the character of Krishna as we have it.

OURSELVES

EDEN HINDU HOSTEL NOTES

The 'sleeper' of H. G. Wells found the world full of activity and emotion when he regained consciousness ; but a 'sleeper' after being awakened would find the life in the Eden Hindu Hostel otherwise. Certainly he would be struck with wonder to find the old place of active leaning towards its 'traditions' turn a veritable 'dreamthorp'.

** **

There is a singular want of facts to write upon. The reason is that we have regularised our life and have accepted dull monotony as its basic principle. The old Hindu Hostel, where life ran gay and enjoyment found variety, is dead ; we are living amidst the ghostly remains of a past glory and are fully unconscious of the charms which Hostel life used to promise to the boarders in the past.

** **

The Saraswati Puja was however performed with usual pomp and splendour. The ceremony was a grand 'success'. The traditional Jatra (about which arises every year a conflict between our 'liberals' and 'moralists') was there. The sad and pitiable fate of Behula perhaps stirred the sympathetic imaginings of our fellow-brethren and the performance was (quite unlike the traditional way of things) audible.

Our able secretaries of the Puja Committee—Mr. Sudhamay Mukherjee, B.Sc., and Mr. Amalendu Bhattacharyya—have done wonderful work in performing their duties in the most satisfactory way. If they failed anywhere, it was because they tried to please every one. They should take the criticisms directed against them more as a laurel of their success than as an indication of failure—for it is only the worthy men who are ever criticised.

** **

The University examinations are fast approaching. Our examinees are working hard—even to the danger of breaking the 'sixty-hour week' law. We invite those who believe that our digressions are more than our concentrations to pay a visit to the Hostel, to allow them opportunity and example for revising their opinion. The announcement of an early date for the annual examinations has thrown cold water upon the jovial and sprightly spirits of the rest. The economist will be much relieved to find how a boom in the business of candles may go hand in hand with a world depression.

** **

The Long Vacation is coming near. We are all "home-ward bound". This sweet expectation serves as a relief even in the midst of our preparations for the ensuing examinations. Long-wanted leisure will follow hard labour—this thought perhaps acts as a spice in our efforts for an onward march towards success in examinations.

** **

Among the latest additions in our Hostel, the weight and height measuring instruments deserve special mention. Our Superintendent really wants to improve the health of the boarders. The weights and heights of all the members of the Hostel have been recorded in specially printed cards. These operations will be repeated three times every year

and our 'falling and failing' brethren will have a chance to special attention of our Medical Officer.

** **

Thanks to the able superintendence of the President of our Mess Committee and his staff, we are getting very good dishes these days. The energetic and efficient Mess Committee have shown how a timely, but cold, rebuff may bring about wonderful change in the psychology of even a tough company of cooks.

** **

Mr. T. S. Sterling has sent us from Cairo some forty books for the Hostel Library. In a letter to the Superintendent he sends his "warm wishes to all at the Hostel and to all Presidency College for great success in the forthcoming examinations." We thankfully accept his nice gift and fully appreciate his kind and loving good wishes.

** **

There is one thing without which no report of the Hostel life is complete. Of late, the demand for charity-contributions from outsiders has increased beyond all proportions. Not a single day passes without three or four persons coming in for collecting money for God-knows-what purposes. It seems that they never consider what their 'earnest appeals' mean to those who are subject to it. The situation becomes most pitiable when persons coming in Austin cars request us to forego our afternoon refreshments and to fill their purses with the money thus saved. We do not know when their jealous eyes will fall upon our daily meals!

A. B. C.

FOUNDERS' DAY

Founders' Day 1931, was celebrated as usual on the 20th January last. The staff and students were At Home to all "Old Boys" of the College. There was a large and distinguished gathering. The guests were received by the Principal, Sir Jehangir C. Coyajee.

Among the ladies present we noticed Lady Coyajee, Mrs. S. N. Mallik, Mrs. R. N. Sen and Miss Moitrayi Das Gupta.

The 'Veterans', who attended this year's function were :—Mr. Basanta Coomar Bose (B.A. 1871), Rai Bahadur Jogendra Nath Mitra (B.A. 1873), Mr. Jogesh Chandra Roy (B.A. 1874), Mr. Mohini Mohan Chatterjee (B.A. 1878) and Sir Deva Prasad Sarbadhikary (B.A. 1882).

Among others noticed by our representatives were the following :—

Mr. S. N. Mallik, Mr. B. B. Ghosh, Mr. Justice D. N. Mitter, Messrs. W. C. Wordsworth, H. E. Stapleton, J. M. Bottomley, A. J. Dash; Rai Bahadur Dr. Sarat Chandra Banerji, Kumar Sarat Chandra Ray of Dighapatiya, Mr. Ramani Kanta Ray of Chaugram, Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, Messrs. Abdul Karim, Amulyadhan Auddy, Satyananda Bose, Jatindra Mohan Ray, Mohini Kanta Ghatak, Jyotish Chandra Mitra, Bishweswar Bhattacharyya, Bejoy Kumar Ganguli; Lt.-Col. Hasan Suhrawardy, Lt.-Col. D. P. Goil, Rai Bahadur Dr. Satish Chandra De, Dr. Upendra Nath Brahmachari, Dr. Haridhone Datta; Principals J. R. Banerji, P. G. Bridge and K. Zachariah; Professors S. Radhakrishnan, D. R. Bhandarkar,

S. C. Mahalanobis, Haran Chandra Banerji : Rai Gopal Chandra Ganguli Bahadur, Rai Sarada Prasanna Das Bahadur, Rai Jnan Chandra Ghosh Bahadur, Dr. Aditya Nath Mukherjee, Dr. Shyamadas Mukherjee, Rai Bahadurs Abinash Chandra Banerji and Bejoy Gopal Chatterjee ; Messrs. Rohini Kanta Mitra, Bimal Chandra Chatterjee, Suresh Chandra Sen, Basanta Kumar Pal, Pasupati Basu, Kiran Chandra Mitra ; Rai Bahadurs Hem Kumar Mallik, Mallinath Ray, Gobindalal Banerjee, Badridas Goenka : Khan Bahadur Ataur Rahaman, Shamsul Ulema, Khan Bahadur Dr. Hidayet Hossein, Khan Bahadur Tassadaq Ahmad, Haji Captain Dabiruddin Ahmed ; Messrs. Ashutosh Datta, Amarendra Nath Pal Choudhuri, Suresh Chandra Sen, Nirod Kirshna Roy, J. K. Biswas, B. B. Sarkar, K. B. Sen, S. C. Nandi, Badruddin Ahmed, Nawabzada A. S. M. Latifur Rahaman ; Mr. K. C. Basak, I.C.S., Hon'ble Mr. B. K. Basu, Messrs. Satyendra Nath Roy, Narendra Kumar Basu ; Dr. Sarat Chandra Basak, Messrs. A. K. Ray, Pramatha Nath Banerjee, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, S. K. Gupta, Sudhis Roy, Sekhar, K. Bose, P. N. Mallik, Baristers-at-law; Mr. Saiyed Nasim Ali, Messrs, Satinath Roy, Narendra Nath Set, Sachindra Nath Mukherjee, Suryya Kumar Guha, Mukunda Behari Mallik, Gopal Chandra Das, Amiruddin Ahmed, Jajneswar Majumdar, Sitaram Banerjee, Ramesh Chandra Pal, Ramendra Mohan Mazumdar, Provat Kumar Sen, Purna Chandra Roy, Zanoor Ahmed, Dwijendra Nath Dutt, Jatinath Ghosh, Pramatha Nath Mukherji, Vidyarnab, Sachindra Nath Banerji, Nirmal Kumar Sen, Jatindra Mohan Banerji, Ramdas Mukerji, Hemanta Kumar Biswas, Amulya Chandra Sen, Advocates ; Messrs. Amiya Nath Mukherjee, Binod Chandra Sen, Sailendra Mohan Datta, Girindra Nath Sen, Ajit Kumar Sen, Debendra Nath Mallik, Solicitors ; Rai Sahibs Revati Mohan Das, Hari Sadhan Mukherjee, Jamini Mohan Ghosh, Hara Chandra Mazumdar ; Messrs. A. B. Chatterjee, N. Ghosh; Professors Nibaran Chandra Ray, Nripendra Chandra Banerjee, D. M. Basu, P. C. Mitter, J. N. Mukherjee, S. K. Mitra, Nikhil Ranjan Sen, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Sushil Kumar Acharyya, Nripendra Nath Sen, Mohendra Nath Goswami, Bidhu Bhusan Ray, Brajendra Nath Chakravarty, Bijali Behari Sarkar, Himadri Kumar Mukherjee, Satish Chandra Ghosh, Sailendra Nath Mitra, Hem Chandra Rai Choudhury, Narayan Chandra Banerjee, Mohini Mohan Mukherjee, Purna Chandra Dey, Udbhatsagar, Debendra Nath Mukherjee, Subodh Kumar Mazumdar, Hari Charan Ghosh, Nirmal Nath Chatterjee ; Mr. J. C. Chakravarty and Dr. B. B. Datta ; Messrs. Brahma Kishor Mukherjee, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee ; Dr. Quodrat-i-Khoda Messrs. 'Dukkha Charan Chakravarty, Prafulla Kumar Sarkar, Nihar Ranjan Chatterjee, Jatindra Mohan Mazumdar ; Dr. Hemendra Narayan Roy, Dr. Jogendra Nath Maitra, Messrs. Siddheswar Chaudhuri, Suresh Chandra Ray, S. N. Mukherjee, S. N. Gupta, S. K. Gupta, Robindra Nath Mitra, Nanda Lal Banerjee, Mafizuddin Ahmed, Pulin Behari Mallik, Hariprasanna Mukherjee, Gopendra Krishna Banerjee, Dharmadas Ghosh, Patit Paban Chatterjee, Ramnath Sen, Nut Behari Banerjee, Asru Kumar Sen, Abanindra Nath Mitra and Khagendra Chandra Ghosh.

The Imperial Restaurant of Hogg Street catered for the guests of the evening. Refreshments in orthodox style were also served in the Peake Science Library. Students of the College were entertained with light refreshments in the Physical and Geological laboratories.

Professors H. K. Banerji, D. G. Chattoraj and S. C. Majumdar were mainly responsible for the arrangements ; their kind help and guidance enabled us to make the function a success. We convey our sincerest

thanks to them and also to the large number of student volunteers who cheerfully helped us all through.

AJITKUMAR GUHA,
SISIRKUMAR DATTA,
Joint-Secretaries.

GEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

The fourth ordinary general meeting of the Institute was held on Friday, the 13th February, 1931 with Professor B. Maitra, M. SC., B.L. in the chair, when Mr. K. Mohiuddin of the 5th year class read a paper on 'The Mysore Iron Works.' The paper was profusely illustrated with photographs and charts projected on the screen. Dr. P. Niyogi of the Chemistry Department took part in the discussion that followed and spoke highly of the paper. Professor N. N. Chatterjee, M.SC., and Mr. B. N. Raghunath Rao continued the discussion to a good length. Mr. J. S Bhaduri complimented the writer of the essay for his nice contribution and spoke about iron-production in India in general. With a vote of thanks to the chair, the meeting dissolved.

The students of the third year and fourth year Geology classes were taken out to Giridih for field-work by Professor B. N. Maitra on the 20th February last. Among other things shown to the students there were (i) a mica peridotite dyke, (ii) a sill and (iii) a fault and an out-coop of coal near Ramnadi Colliery.

The Institute arranged an excursion to the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works at Manicktallah on the 6th March last. Some twenty students joined the excursion party. The processes that particularly attracted the attention of the students were the manufacture of alum from alum shale and sulphuric acid and the manufacture of sulphuric acid.

JOYTSNASANKAR BHADURI,
Honorary Secretary.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Editor begs to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of the following contemporaries :

The American College Magazine, Madura ; *The Asutosh College Magazine*, Calcutta ; *The Brojomohan College Magazine*, Barisal ; *The Carmichael College Magazine*, Rangpur ; *The College Chronicle*, Victoria College, Comilla ; *The Cotton College Magazine*, Gauhati ; *The D. A. V. College Union Magazine*, Lahore ; *The Durbar*, Khalsa College, Amritsar (two issues) ; *The Dayal Singh College Magazine*, Lahore ; *The Gryphon*, University of Leeds (2 issues) ; *The Islamia College Magazine*, Calcutta ; *The Krishnagar College Magazine*, Krishnagar ; *The Maharaja's College Magazine*, Ernakulam ; *The Murray College Magazine*, Sialkot ; *The Nerbudda*, Robertson College, Jubbulpore ; *The Patna College Magazine*, Patna ; *The Rajsahi College Magazine*, Rajsahi ; *The Ravenshaw College Magazine*, Cuttuck ; *The Ravi*, Government College, Lahore (two issues) ; *The Scottish Church College Magazine*, Calcutta ; *Sree Sree Sanskrit Mahapathsala Patrika*, Mysore ; *The St. Andrew's Colonial Home Magazine*, Kalimpong and *The St. Xavier's College Magazine*, Calcutta.

বাংলা

নবজন্ম

শ্রীদেবেশ চন্দ্র দাশ—চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী (কলা বিভাগ)।

জীবন মৃত্যুর মাঝে তারা সম কাঁপিয়া কাঁপিয়া
কাটায়েছি কত নিশি আঁধার ব্যাপিয়া
সুখজ্যোতিহীন,
অসাড় রয়েছি ভুলে যোগনিদ্রালীন ;
সহসা এ কি এ হ'ল—নবীন আলোক
পরিপূর্ণ করে বিশ্বলোক,
ঘুম ভাঙ্গে, মোহ টুটে, মরণ নমিয়া সরে দূরে,
সহস্র জীবনহীন আঁধার জগৎ ঘুরে ঘুরে
চেতনা যে এই লভিলাম ;
লহ এ প্রণাম।

অচল পাষাণ শৈলে কঠিন তুষার
গলিল কল্লোল রোলে, ছুটে পারাবার,
বাঁধন লুটায়ে পড়ে, থর থর কাঁপে দুঃখ ভুল,
প্লাবি' প্রাণকূল
তরঙ্গ দুলিয়া নামে তীরে তীরে ধ্বংসলেশ আঁকি,
মৃত্যুর তাপের দাহ নাহি নাহি বাকী ;
পূরে মনস্কাম ;
লহ এ প্রণাম।

স্বর্গমন্দাকিনী হ'তে ধারা ঝরি' ঝরি'
তুলিয়া লয়েছে পূত করি
মুক্তিস্নানে মম উৎস-মুখ ;
তরঙ্গিত চঞ্চল এ বুক,

অসীম নির্ম্মল নীল ছায়া নিল নিথর গগনে,
জয়যাত্রাক্ষণে
সন্ধ্যার গৈরিক রাগ, ঊষার ঊষসী স্মৃতিদীপ
ক্লান্ত ভালে দিল স্নেহটীপ ;
মলিনতা মুছে লয়ে পূর্ণতায় প্রাণ হ'তে প্রাণে
ছন্দে গানে
আসিয়াছি দীপ্ত মহিমায়
মৃত্যু হ'তে জীবনসীমায়,—
আঁধারের রাজ্য পারে আলো গাহে তব মন্ত্রনাম ;
লহ এ প্রণাম।

অতীত সঞ্চয়গেহে পূর্ব্বজন্মপদচিহ্নগুলি
লেপিয়া মুছিয়াছিল অভিশাপ ঝটিকার ধূলি ;
সে সব অন্বেষি' ধীরে-তপানলে দহি'
আসিয়াছি এই তীরে কত তাপ সহি'
কতদূর জন্মান্তর, নাহি-জানা কত সিন্ধুপার,
অপরিচয়ের পথে লঙ্ঘিয়া প্রাকার
হেথা আমি আসিলাম ; একি মুগ্ধশোভা
ক্লান্ত মনোলোভা !
অনন্ত জীবন স্রোত ঝরে গলি' গলি'
দিনু তাহে আপনা' অঞ্জলি ;
নবপ্রাণ নবপ্রেমে এই সঁপিলাম,
লহ এ প্রণাম
এ প্রাণের পূর্ণ পরিণাম।

"বধূ"

শ্রী————————*

বাঙলাদেশের অসূর্য্যম্পশ্য অন্তঃপুরে কল্পনার রথে যাঁহাদের গতিবিধি আছে, তাঁহাদের মধ্যে রবীন্দ্রনাথের স্থান যে শ্রেষ্ঠ, সে বিষয়ে বোধ হয় কোনও প্রশ্ন উঠে না। যে জিনিসটা সাধারণ লোকের কাছে অত্যন্ত স্বাভাবিক ঠেকে, তাহারই মধ্যে অসাধারণ যে টুকু আছে তাহা ধরিয়া দিতে পারিয়াছেন একমাত্র রবীন্দ্রনাথ। বাঙলাদেশের অন্তঃপুর প্রত্যেক বাঙালীর কাছেই নিতান্ত ঘরোয়া জিনিষ। কিন্তু এই অন্তঃপুরের প্রত্যেক কোণে কোণে যে বহুবর্ষ-সঞ্চিত নিরুদ্ধ বেদনা গুপ্ত হইয়া রহিয়াছে তাহা সকলের চোখে ধরা পড়ে না। আমরা আমাদের নিজকে লইয়াই এতটা ব্যস্ত, যে আমাদের স্বার্থের বাহিরে যে অন্য কাহারো কোন স্বার্থ থাকিতে পারে সেটা সহজে আমাদের কল্পনায় আসে না। তাই আমাদের দুঃখ, কষ্ট, আমাদের অসুবিধা—এই সব বিবেচনা করিয়াই আমরা অসহিষ্ণু হইয়া পড়ি, অন্য কাহারো যে আমাদের চেয়ে অনেক বেশী অসহিষ্ণু হইবার কারণ আছে, সেটা আমরা বিবেচনা করিনা কখনও।

নিজের বেদনা যে সম্পূর্ণভাবে অনুভব করিতে পারে, সে মানুষ; অন্যের বেদনা যে সম্পূর্ণভাবে অনুভব করিতে পারে, সে মানুষের উপরে। রবীন্দ্রনাথ এই শেষোক্ত শ্রেণীতে পড়িতে পারেন। যে ব্যথা বহুকাল ধরিয়া অপ্রকাশিতই রহিয়াছে, সে ব্যথা তিনি মনে প্রাণে অনুভব করিতে পারিয়াছেন। তাঁহার অন্তর্দৃষ্টির সম্মুখে কোন বাধা দুর্লঙ্ঘ্য হইয়া দাঁড়াইতে পারে নাই—সকল ব্যবধান তাঁহার কল্পনার তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি-নিক্ষেপে স্বচ্ছ হইয়া গিয়াছে। তাই বাঙলা দেশের বালিকা বধূর অন্তরের অন্তঃস্থলে যে নিবিড় ব্যথা প্রকাশের পথ না পাইয়া গুমরিয়া ফিরিতে থাকে তাহাও রবীন্দ্রনাথের লেখনীতে আপনাকে জানাইবার সুযোগ পাইয়াছে।

রবীন্দ্রনাথের 'বধূ' বাস্তবের ছায়াহীন নিছক কল্পনার সৃষ্টি নয়। একটু তলাইয়া দেখিলেই বোঝা যায়, এই বধূ অতি স্বাভাবিক,—অত্যন্ত সরল ও সহজ ভাবে ইহার চরিত্র ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে। বালিকা-বধূ বাঙলা দেশে এখনো বিরল হয় নাই—বালিকা-বধূর অন্তরের ব্যথার অবসান এখনো হয় নাই। সাধারণ বাঙ্গালীর ঘরে, বাড়ীর আশে পাশে, পাড়া

* লেখক প্রেসিডেন্‌সি কলেজেরই ছাত্র—নাম প্রকাশে অনিচ্ছুক। —সম্পাদক।

প্রতিবাসীর মধ্যে যে ছোট 'বৌ'টিকে দেখা যায়, রবীন্দ্রনাথের বধূ তাহারই অবিকল প্রতিমূর্ত্তি। সাধারণ মানুষ আমরা, আমরা বধূটিকেই দেখি, তাহার মনের ভিতরে চাহিয়া দেখিবার ক্ষমতা আমাদের নাই। যদি থাকিত, তবে বুঝিতে পারিতাম, যে লজ্জাবনতা, সঙ্কুচিতা বালিকাটি ঘোমটা টানিয়া, মল বাজাইয়া নির্ব্বাক ভাবে সংসারের ছোটখাট কাজকর্ম্ম গুলি করিয়া যায়, তাহার মনের মধ্যে এমন অনেক জিনিস আছে যাহা সাধারণ মানুষের বোধগম্য হইলে, সমাজ আরো অনেক উঁচু স্তরে উঠিতে পারিত। আমরা মানুষের বাহিরটাই দেখি——বাহিরের মানুষের অন্তরালে যে আর একটি মানুষ আছে, তাহা আমরা সহজেই ভুলিয়া থাকি।

আমরা যাহা এতকাল অবহেলা করিয়াছি, রবীন্দ্রনাথ তাহাই জগতের সম্মুখে প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। যে দুঃখ মনে মনে থাকিত, বাহির হইবার পথ পাইত না, তাহা রবীন্দ্রনাথের লেখনী হইতে বাধাবিমুক্ত ভাবে আপনাকে জানাইয়া দিয়াছে। রুদ্ধ নির্ঝরিণী সহসা প্রকাশের পথ খুঁজিয়া পাইয়া আপনাকে নিঃশেষে বিলাইয়া দিয়াছে—অন্তরের গুপ্ত কোণে সে আর কিছু ধরিয়া রাখে নাই। বধূর মনটি পাঠকের সম্মুখে উপন্যাসের খোলাপাতার মতই সুস্পষ্ট এবং অর্থপূর্ণ হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছে।

বধূ বালিকা। তাহার বয়স হয়তো দশ, হয়তো বা এগার। তাহার এই কয় বৎসরের ছোট জীবনটি কাটিয়াছে শান্তশ্যামল পল্লীগ্রামের নিভৃত কোণে, পিতামাতার স্নেহছায়ার অন্তরালে। সকালে ঘুম হইতে উঠিয়া সে তাহার বাড়ীর সম্মুখের ছোট উঠানটিতে আসিয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছে—সম্মুখে দিগন্ত প্রসারিত মাঠ—মাঠের পরে মাঠ। আঁকা বাঁকা গ্রাম্য পথ কোথায় চলিয়া গিয়াছে, সীমাহীন, দিগন্তের দিকে। দূরের গ্রামখানি দিক্‌চক্রবালের সাথে প্রায় মিশিয়া গিয়াছে। বালিকার ক্ষুদ্র অন্তরে কত ভাবনাই খেলিয়া গিয়াছে—দূরবিস্তৃত মাঠ, গ্রাম্য পথ তাহার নিকট কত অজানা দেশের সংবাদই বহন করিয়া আনিয়াছে। দেওয়ালের গায়ে 'বেগুনী ফুলেভরা লতিকা দুটি' অতর্কিতে তাহার মনকে অধিকার করিয়া বসিয়াছে। দেওয়ালের ফাটলে চোখ রাখিয়া সে নির্নিমেষে চাহিয়া থাকে, মন তাহার কোথায় ভাসিয়া যায়।

সন্ধ্যায় সূর্য্য যখন যাই যাই করিয়া শেষ কিরণ সম্পাতে অল্প সময়ের জন্য পৃথিবীর বুক রাঙাইয়া দিত, তখন বালিকা সখিজনপরিবৃতা হইয়া জল আনিতে যাইত। কোনদিন হয়তো রওয়ানা হইতে একটু দেরী হইয়া গিয়াছে—সখীরা আসিয়া তাহাকে ডাকিয়া নিয়া গিয়াছে। গ্রামের দীঘির ধারে ছোট ছোট মেয়েদের জটলা বসিয়াছে—কত কথাবার্ত্তা, কত গল্পই হইয়াছে তাহাদের মধ্যে। জল লইয়া, কলসী কাঁখে তাহারা দু'ধারে ঘন বনের ছায়ায়

ঢাকা পথে ফিরিয়া আসিয়াছে। দিন শেষের স্তিমিত আলোকটুকু কখনো হয়তো তাহাদের মুখের উপরে আসিয়া পড়িয়াছে। কখনো হয়তো আকাশে হঠাৎ চাঁদের সহাস মুখটি দেখা গিয়াছে। দীঘির তীরে কোন্ একটা গাছ হইতে কোকিল ডাকিয়া উঠিয়াছে। এমনি সব খণ্ড খণ্ড বিচ্ছিন্ন স্মৃতি বালিকার অন্তরে চিরকালের জন্য রেখাপাত করিয়া গিয়াছে।

এমন করিয়াই তাহাদের দিন যাইত—সহজ, সরল, সুন্দর। ভাবনা ছিল না, চিন্তা ছিল না। কোন বাধা বা সঙ্কোচ তাহাদের কখনো অনুভব করিতে হয় নাই। ছায়াশীতল পল্লীগ্রামে প্রকৃতির অঞ্চলের নিধি হইয়া তাহারা বাড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে—সংসারের কৃত্রিমতার নাগপাশ তখনো তাহাদের ঘিরিয়া ফেলিতে পারে নাই। স্বভাব তাহাদের যে দিকে নিয়াছে, সে দিকেই তাহারা গিয়াছে—অস্বাভাবিকতার বিকৃত রূপকে বরণীয় বলিয়া তাহারা আঁকড়াইয়া ধরে নাই।

এমন সময় কি যেন একটা উলটপালট হইয়া গেল। একদিন বাড়ীতে বাঁশী বাজিল, অপরিচিত লোকজনের সমাগম হইল,—বালিকা ছিল শুধুই বালিকা, হইল বধূ। বহুকালের বন্ধু পল্লীগ্রামের মায়া ছাড়িতে হইল—নতুন বাড়ীতে আসিয়া নতুন লোকের মধ্যে নতুন জীবন আরম্ভ করিতে হইল।

প্রথম যখন বিবাহের সংবাদ শোনা গিয়াছিল, তখন হয়তো বালিকার আনন্দই হইয়াছিল। বিবাহের অভিজ্ঞতা বাঙালী মেয়ের অল্পবয়সেই থাকে—কিন্তু, তাহার আনন্দের ভাগটাই এতদিন তাহার চোখে পড়িয়াছে। তাই প্রথম যখন আবেশের ঘোরটা কাটিয়া গেলে সে নীরস বাস্তবটাকে দেখিতে পাইল, তখন তাহার মন ভাঙ্গিয়া গিয়াছিল। পল্লীগ্রামে আজন্মবর্দ্ধিতা বালিকা সহরে আসিয়া অনেক খানিই হারাইল ;—'ইঁটের পরে ইঁট, মাঝে মানুষ কীট'—সহরের এই মূর্ত্তিই তাহার চোখে পড়িল। গ্রামের 'খোলা মাঠ, উদার পথঘাট', পাখীর গান ও বনের ছায়ার জন্য তাহার মন ব্যাকুল হইয়া উঠিল। একটি একটি করিয়া তাহার বাল্যজীবনের স্মৃতি মনে উদিত হইতে লাগিল—বাড়ীর সম্মুখের মাঠের স্মৃতি, তাহাদের দল বাঁধিয়া জল আনিতে যাওয়ার স্মৃতি—আরো কত কী!

সহরে আসিয়া সে প্রকৃতির সহিত সংস্পর্শ হারাইয়াছে—আরও হারাইয়াছে স্নেহ। বধূ হইয়া যে বাড়ীতে সে প্রবেশ করিয়াছে, সেখানে তাহাকে ভালোবাসিবার কেহ নাই। কর্ত্তব্য সম্পাদনের জন্যই বাড়ীতে বধূ আনা হইয়াছে, বধূও তাহার কর্ত্তব্যপালন করিতেই সংসারে আসিয়াছে, সকলেরই তাই ধারণা। তাই তাহাকে দেখিবার, যত্ন করিবার লোক হয়তো আছে, কিন্তু দুঃখের ভাগী হইবার কেহ নাই।

বাড়ীতে নূতন বউ আসিয়াছে—দেখিতে আসে অনেকে। সকলেই দেখে—নানাভাবে দেখে, তারপর কত রকমের মন্তব্য প্রকাশ করিয়া চলিয়া যায়। তাহার বাহিরটার ভালোমন্দ সকলেরই চোখে পড়ে—কিন্তু মনের ভিতরেও যে ভালোমন্দ বলিয়া একটা জিনিস আছে সেটা যেন কাহারো চোখেই পড়ে না। আজন্ম পিতামাতার স্নেহের কোলে লালিতা পালিতা বালিকার হৃদয় এখানে আসিয়া এই স্নেহ-ভালোবাসার অভাবে অস্থির হইয়া পড়ে।

চারিদিকে সে তাকাইয়া দেখে— হৃদয় বলিয়া কোনো জিনিষ যেন এখানে নাই; সে আপনার বলিয়া ডাকিয়া নিতে পারে, এমন কাহাকেও যেন এখানে পাওয়া যায় না। তাহার মন ভাঙ্গিয়া পড়ে—চোখে ও মুখে যে আনন্দের দীপ্তি কিছুদিন আগেও তাহার ছিল, তাহা নিষ্প্রভ হইয়া পড়ে। বাড়ীর লোকে বুঝিতে পারে না, বধূর দুঃখ কোথায়। তাহার ম্রিয়মান ভাবকে তাহারা বধূর গ্রাম্য স্বভাবের দোষ বলিয়া ধরিয়া নেয়।

কখনো এমন হয় যে বালিকার হৃদয়ের রুদ্ধ আবেগ ছুটিয়া বাহির হইতে চায়। কৃত্রিমতার নিগড় দূরে ছুড়িয়া ফেলিয়া বালিকা কখনো হয়তো তাহার সঙ্কীর্ণ ঘরের বাহিরে একটু পা বাড়ায়—বাহিরের জগতে সে তাহার দুঃখের দরদী কাহাকেও পায় কিনা তাহা সে একবার দেখিতে চায়। কিন্তু বালিকার আশা সফল হয় না। চারিদিক হইতে শাসনের বাণ ছুটিয়া আসিয়া তাহাকে জানাইয়া দেয় যে পুরাতন জীবনটাকে একেবারেই ভুলিতে হইবে, এখন হইতে তাহাকে জীবনটা নূতন ছাঁচে গড়িয়া তুলিতে হইবে। এখন আর সে পাড়াগাঁয়ের মেয়ে নয়—সে সহরের বধূ।

বাধা—বাধা—যে দিকে যায়, সে দিকেই তাহার বাধা। জীবনের কোনোখানে যে মুক্তির একটু প্রয়োজন আছে তাহা কাহারো চিন্তায় আসে না। সহজ ভাবে সে কাঁদিতেও পারে না—চারিদিকে শাসন ও সমালোচনা তাহাকে জড়ীভূত করিবার চেষ্টায় আছে। বালিকার মনের দুঃখ মনেই থাকিয়া যায়। কাহাকেও যদি সে তাহার দুঃখের কথা বলিতে পারিত তবে হয়তো তাহার কষ্টের অনেকটা লাঘব হইত। কিন্তু এমন দরদী বন্ধু তাহার কোথায়? যখন তাহার মনে তাহার মায়ের স্মৃতি জাগিয়া উঠে, তখন চিত্রটি অধিকতর করুণ হইয়া ফুটে। মায়ের সাথে মেয়ের অন্তরের যে যোগটুকু ছিল তাহা ছিন্ন হইবে না কোনো দিন; মা মেয়ের মনের ভিতরের সবটা দেখিতে পান—মেয়ের কাছেও মায়ের মনের চিন্তার ধারা অজ্ঞাত থাকে না। সন্ধ্যায় যখন চাঁদ উঠিত, তখন মায়ের কোলের কাছে বসিয়া সে রূপকথা শুনিত—এখনো চাঁদ উঠে, কিন্তু তাহাকে আদর করিয়া কাছে বসাইয়া রূপকথা বলিবার তো কেহ নাই! মায়ের কোমল হাতের স্নেহস্পর্শ আর তো তাহার সর্ব্বদেহে পুলকের সঞ্চার করিবে না! মায়ের প্রত্যেক কথাতে যে অকৃত্রিম স্নেহ ভালবাসা ফুটিয়া বাহির হইত, তাহাতো চিরকালের জন্য তাহার কাছে দুষ্প্রাপ্য হইয়া গিয়াছে! বালিকা অভিমানভরে মনে মনে মায়ের কাছে অভিযোগ

করে—মা কেমন করিয়া তাহাকে ভুলিয়া আছেন? তখনি আবার তাহার মায়ের মনের ভিতরটার কথা মনে হয়। তাহার হৃদয়ে যে দুঃখ, মায়ের অন্তরে যে দুঃখ তাহার চেয়ে শতগুণ বেশী। তাহার যেমন সবসময়েই মা'র কথা মনে হয়, মা'রও তো তাহাই হয়। তাহার জন্য মা কত চোখের জল ফেলিতেছেন, কে জানে? কত বিনিদ্র রজনী 'হৃদয় বেদনায়' তাঁহার কাটিয়া যাইতেছে, কে তাহার খোঁজ রাখে? প্রত্যুষে সাজি ভরিয়া ফুল তুলিয়া শিবের মন্দিরে গিয়া মা যে রোজ প্রবাসী তনয়ার কুশল প্রার্থনা করেন, তাহা সকলের চোখে ধরা পড়ে কি?

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বালিকার আর সহ্য হয় না। তাহার মনের ভিতরটা বিরাট শূন্যতায় হাহাকার করিয়া উঠে—তাহার মনের সাথে যোগ দিবার মত আর একটি মন সে খুঁজিয়া পায় না। সে বুঝিতে পারে, এমন করিয়া তাহার দিন কাটিবে না। আবার সে সেই পল্লীগ্রামে ফিরিয়া যাইতে চায়—আবার সে সখিপরিবৃতা হইয়া দীঘিতে জল আনিতে যাইতে চায়। কিন্তু তাহার হৃদয়ের আকাঙ্খা সফল হইবার কোনো আশা সে দেখে না।

তাহার মনে পড়ে, সন্ধ্যার পুরোভাগে সখীরা আসিয়া তাহাকে ডাকিত—'বেলা যে প'ড়ে এল, জল্‌কে চল'। এখন সে তাহার জীবনের শেষ বেলাটির জন্য প্রতীক্ষা করিয়া আছে—কবে পরপার হইতে ডাক আসিবে—'ওগো তোমার জীবনের বেলা শেষ হইয়া আসিয়াছে।' জীবন তাহার পক্ষে নিরানন্দ হইয়াছে—ভবিষ্যতের আশায় সে বীতস্পৃহ হইয়াছে। সহরের এই সঙ্কীর্ণতার অন্তরালে বাঁচিয়া থাকার চেয়ে গ্রামের সেই দীঘির কালোজলের কোলে গিয়া মরণও তাহার নিকট অধিকতর কাম্য মনে হইতেছে।

এমনি করিয়াই বধূর চিন্তাধারা স্তরে স্তরে ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে। প্রথমে তাহার মনে জাগিয়া উঠে তাহার বাল্যজীবনের স্মৃতি—তারপর মনে হয় বর্ত্তমানের কথা। পাশাপাশি এই দুইটা জীবনকে রাখিয়া যখন সে একসাথে দুইটির দিকেই তাকাইয়া দেখে, তখন তাহার দুঃখ শতগুণে বাড়িয়া উঠে। কী সে ছিল, এখন কী হইয়াছে! প্রকৃতির শ্যামল উদ্যানে অবাধে যে খেলা করিয়া বেড়াইয়াছে, আজ তাহাকে ক্ষুদ্র পাষাণ প্রাচীরের মধ্যে আবদ্ধ থাকিতে হইতেছে! আনন্দ ছাড়া পৃথিবীতে আর কিছু যে আছে, তাহা যে কোনোদিন জানিতে পারে নাই, আজ জগৎ তাহার নিকটে নিরানন্দ। আত্মীয়স্বজনের স্নেহ ভালোবাসায় যে বাড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে, আজ তাহাকে শাসন সন্ত্রস্ত হইয়া দিন কাটাইতে হইতেছে। দশ, এগারো বৎসরের বালিকা হঠাৎ যেন ত্রিশ বৎসরের গৃহিণী হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছে। বয়স অল্প বলিয়া তাহার ভুলচুক্ সহজে মাপ হইবে না—বাড়ীর অন্যান্য বয়স্কা বধূদের যে অবস্থার ভিতরে দিন কাটাইতে হইতেছে, তাহাকেও সেই ভাবেই বাঁচিতে হইবে। জীবন এমন দীর্ঘ, একটানা। দশ বৎসর

হয়তো বসন্ত কাল তাহার 'মনের আঙ্গিনায়' আসিয়া তাহার 'মর্ম্মদোলায় দোল' দিয়াছিল —কিন্তু, ভবিষ্যতে বসন্ত কাল তাহার কাছে আর আসিবে না। রুক্ষচুলে ঢাকা হেমন্ত কালই তাহার নিকট সম্পূর্ণ বৎসরের প্রতীক হইয়া দাঁড়াইবে।

জীবনের এক চরম অবস্থা হইতে অন্য চরম অবস্থায় যাইতে গিয়া balance ঠিক রাখা কঠিন। অথচ ক্ষুদ্র একটি বালিকাকে এই গুরু দায়ীত্ব গ্রহণ করিতে হয়। যাঁহারা নিঃসঙ্কোচে বালিকার স্কন্ধে এই ভার চাপাইয়া দেন, তাঁহারা একবার ভাবিয়াও দেখেন না যে তাঁহারা নিজে ঐ অবস্থায় পড়িলে কি করিতেন। জীবনের মধুরতম অংশকে একেবারে ভুলিয়া গিয়া নূতন ভাবে আর একটি জীবন গড়িয়া তোলা ক্ষুদ্র বালিকার পক্ষে কতটা কঠিন এবং কতটা মর্ম্মান্তিক হয় তাহা কখনো কেহ ভাবিয়া দেখেন কি ?

রবীন্দ্রনাথের বধূর মাধুর্য্য ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে তাহার স্বাভাবিক সরলতায়। কবিতাটি পড়িতে পড়িতে কখনো পাঠককে কষ্ট করিয়া মনে করিতে হয় না যে বধূ বালিকা। যতখানি তাহার বয়স, কথাগুলি তারই উপযুক্ত—কোনো বাড়াবাড়ি অথবা কোনো রকমের reserve চোখে ঠেকে না। প্রকাশের পথ পাইয়া বালিকার সরলমনের সমস্ত কথা বাহির হইয়া আসিয়াছে। চারিদিক দেখিয়া শুনিয়া যাহা তাহার মনে জাগিয়াছে সবই সে অকপটে বলিয়া ফেলিয়াছে। এমন কি, তাহার শেষের কামনা টুকুও—যে কামনা মানুষ মনে মনেই রাখে, বাহিরে প্রকাশ করে না—সকলকে জানাইয়া দিতে সে কুণ্ঠিত হয় নাই।

বধূ বুঝিতে পারিয়াছে, তাহার চারিদিকে যে বন্ধন, তাহার মধ্যে কৃত্রিমতাই বেশী। তাহার সহজ বালিকা-বুদ্ধিতে এ নাগপাশের কোনো অর্থ সে বুঝিয়া উঠিতে পারে নাই। তাহার শৈশব জীবন এমন কি অপরাধ করিয়াছে যে স্মৃতির পট হইতে তাহাকে একেবারে মুছিয়া ফেলিতে হইবে ? বাঙালীর ঘরে মেয়ে হইয়া জন্মগ্রহণ করিয়া সে এমন কি পাপ করিয়াছে যে তাহার হৃদয় মনের স্বাভাবিক স্ফূর্ত্তিকে প্রতিপদে প্রতিহত করিতে হইবে ? বালিকা-বধূ এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর খুঁজিয়া পায় নাই ; এ পর্য্যন্ত কোনো প্রবীণ বৃদ্ধ কোনো সন্তোষজনক উত্তর দিতে পারিয়াছেন কি না জানি না।

শেষের দিকে, যখন বধূ বুঝিতে পারিয়াছে যে তাহার এ বন্ধন হইতে মৃত্যুর আগে কোনো মুক্তির আশা নাই, তাহার তখনকার ভাবটি অত্যন্ত করুণ। নিরাশায় তাহার অন্তর ছাইয়া গিয়াছে—পৃথিবীর মধ্যে আনন্দদায়ক যে কিছু আছে তাহা সে ভুলিয়া গিয়াছে। হইতে পারে, বধূ অতিরিক্ত নৈরাশ্যবাদী ; হইতে পারে, বধূজীবনের উজ্জ্বল দিকটা সে দেখিতে পায় নাই। কিন্তু, তাই বলিয়া অল্পবয়স্কা বালিকাবধূকে দোষ দেওয়া যায় কি ? তাহার কাছে জিনিসটা যেমন ঠেকিয়াছে সে তাহা তেমন ভাবেই চিত্রিত করিয়াছে। বন্ধনকেই যখন সে তাহার জীবনের চরম প্রাপ্তি বলিয়া জানিয়াছে তখন তাহার resignation ই স্বাভাবিক।

যে চাঁদ একদিন তাহার কত আপনার ছিল, তাহার মনে হয় আজ সে চাঁদকে আপনার বলিবার অধিকার তাহার নাই। মাঝে মাঝে তাহার মনে হয়, যেন চাঁদের আলো তাহার ঘরের মধ্যে প্রবেশ লাভ করিতে উৎসুক—দেশে দেশে তাহাকে খুঁজিয়া বেড়াইয়া জ্যোৎস্না যেন তাহাকে পাইয়াছে। নিমেষের জন্য বধূ তাহার দুঃখ, তাহার পারিপার্শ্বিক অবস্থা ভুলিয়া যায়, কিন্তু তখনই তাহাকে আবার সচেতন হইতে হয়—তাহার সঠিক অবস্থাটা তাহাকে স্মরণ করাইয়া দিবার লোকের তো অভাব নাই।

এই নিরাশা, এই অন্তরের আকাঙ্খা ও বাহিরের অবস্থার মধ্যে ঘাতপ্রতিঘাত বালিকার জীবনকে দুর্ব্বিষহ করিয়া তুলে; 'দীঘির সেই জল শীতল কালো' তাহার মনে পড়িয়া যায়, সে শীতলজলে গিয়া সব জ্বালা নিবাইতে পারিলেই তাহার তৃপ্তি হয়। নৈরাশ্যের অভিব্যঞ্জনা এমন সুন্দর হইয়া আর কোথাও ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে কি না সন্দেহ।

কয়েক বৎসর পূর্ব্বে কোনো মাসিক পত্রে সুখ্যাতা লেখিকা শ্রীযুক্তা রাধারাণী দত্ত লিখিত একটি প্রবন্ধ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল। প্রবন্ধটির নাম "অন্তঃপুরে রবীন্দ্রনাথ"। শ্রদ্ধেয়া লেখিকা তাঁহার প্রবন্ধে লিখিয়াছিলেন যে রবীন্দ্রনাথ তাঁহার অনেক কবিতাতেই বাঙালীর অন্তঃপুরের ছবি ফুটাইয়া তুলিয়াছেন। কিন্তু তিনি "বধূ" লিখিয়া অন্তঃপুরের বিষয়ে যদি আর কিছু না'ও লিখিতেন, তবেও তাঁহার নাম অন্তঃপুরিকাদের নিকট চিরপ্রিয় হইয়া থাকিত। অন্তঃপুরিকার মনস্তত্ব এমন নিখুঁত ভাবে আলোচনা করিতে বোধ হয় কেহ পারেন নাই।

পৃথিবীর নানাস্থানে বহু রুদ্ধ বেদনা, বহু 'সঞ্চিত অভিমান' পুঞ্জীভূত হইয়া আছে। এই বেদনাকে যিনি রূপ দিতে পারিয়াছেন, তিনিই শ্রেষ্ঠ কবি। বধূর অন্তরের যে বেদনা রবীন্দ্র নাথের লেখার অক্ষরে অক্ষরে ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে তাহা যদি অপ্রকাশিত থাকিত, তবে জগতের মানুষের মনস্তত্বের একটা দিক অনাবিষ্কৃত থাকিয়া যাইত। বালিকাবধূর দুঃখকে ভাষায় রূপ দিয়া, তাহার প্রকাশের পথ বাধামুক্ত করিয়া দিয়া রবীন্দ্রনাথ বাঙলা দেশের অন্তঃপুরের ধন্য-বাদার্হ হইয়াছেন। মানুষকে তিনি সম্পূর্ণ ভাবে বুঝিতে পারিয়াছেন—মানুষের হৃদয়ের গোপন তলের দুঃখকেও তিনি আপনার মনে অনুভব করিতে পারিয়াছেন—তাই আজ জগৎ তাঁহার প্রতিভার সম্মুখে মস্তক অবনত করিয়াছে।

"শ্রেষ্ঠ অর্ঘ্য।"

(ইৎসিং লিখিত বিবরণ অবলম্বনে)

শ্রীসৌরীন্দ্র নাথ রায়—চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী (কলা বিভাগ)

দূরে রাখি' পালেস্থাঙ ছুটিয়াছে তরী
আলোড়ি' সমুদ্র বক্ষে উদ্দাম লহরী।—
চঞ্চল আরোহি-দল উৎসুক অধীর
"তি-য়েন্-চু"* দর্শন লাগি,—বৌদ্ধসন্ন্যাসীর
পুণ্যতম তীর্থ সেই। স্বদেশ তেয়াগি'
চলিয়াছে দলেদলে মুক্তি অনুরাগী।
তরণী মন্দির† মাঝে যাত্রীদল সহ
চীনভক্ত "চাং-মিন", প্রাণে অহরহ
"প্রজ্ঞারত্ন"‡ লাভ আশা রহিয়াছে জাগি'
দীপ্ত বর্ত্তিকার মত;—সংসার বৈরাগী।
নিম্নে আবর্ত্তিয়া ছুটে ক্ষিপ্ত সিন্ধুজল
অশ্রান্ত কল্লোলধ্বনি কল-কল-কল
গূঢ় ক্রন্দনের মত—কখনও উচ্ছ্বাসি'
অবিরল হাসিতেছে খিলখিল হাসি
দুরন্ত শিশুর সম। লঘু ঊর্ম্মি কোলে
দুলিয়া চলেছে তরী ত্বরিত হিন্দোলে।
পশ্চিমে ঢলিল রবি, দূরে যায় দেখা
সুবর্ণ স্বপনাতুর চক্রবাল-রেখা।
কহিলা 'শাসক"§ ডাকি, "তীর নহে দূর,
অস্পষ্ট যাইছে দেখা তাম্রলিপ্তিপুর।"
উঠিল আনন্দধ্বনি; বুদ্ধনাম স্মরি'
দাঁড়াইল যাত্রীদল মহাভিড় করি'

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*ভারতের চৈনিক নাম। †কেবিন। ‡প্রজ্ঞাশাস্ত্র অনুবাদের জন্য জিংমিন ভারতে আসিতেছিলেন। §জাহাজের অধ্যক্ষ বা কাপ্তেন।

পশ্চিমে সতৃষ্ণ দৃষ্টি, পরাণ বিকল
নিশিদিন হেরি' হেরি' রুদ্রনীল জল।

ঘনাইল অন্ধকার; নির্ব্বাপিত যাত্রীকলরব;
শিশুর আনন্দ হাস্য কলধ্বনি থেমে গেছে সব;
গম্ভীর সিন্ধুর ছন্দ আকাশের স্নিগ্ধ শান্ত আঁখি
সন্ধ্যাস্নাত ভিক্ষুদের ব্যগ্রচিত্ত লইতেছে ডাকি
ঊর্দ্ধজগতের পানে। হাসে শশী, লক্ষকোটী তারা
বিতরি অমৃত ভাতি।
অকস্মাৎ সে প্রশান্তিধারা
বিক্ষুব্ধ করিয়া দিয়া মহাশব্দে দিগ্‌বিদিক ভরি'
নামিল অশান্তিঝঞ্ঝা, নভোগাত্র খণ্ডছিন্ন করি';
আকাশ ভরিল মেঘে, চন্দ্রতারা লুফে নিল রাহু,
ঝলকে বিদ্যুৎ অসি লক্ষ দৈত্য আস্ফোটিছে বাহু।
ক্ষেপিয়া উঠিল সিন্ধু গর্জ্জিয়া দুর্দ্দম আক্রোশে
উত্তাল তরঙ্গদল ফুলে ফুলে উঠে মহারোষে।
মাতাল বায়ুর দাপে ঘুরে তরী;—করে টলমল
ছিঁড়ল বস্ত্রের পাল, আতঙ্কে অস্থির যাত্রীদল,
থামিল শিশুর কান্না, নর-নারী স্মরে দেবতারে
ব্যস্ত "রশ্মিবহ"* দল "নিয়ামক †" সামালিতে নারে।
ঝঞ্ঝা ও সিন্ধুর মাঝে বাধিয়াছে দুরন্ত সমর
শব কাঁধে নাচিতেছে ক্ষিপ্ত ক্রুদ্ধ পাগল শঙ্কর
বিশ্বের ধ্বংসের তরে শূলহাতে ভূত প্রেত সহ,
সংহার মেলিল আস্য লোলরক্ত জিহ্বা লহলহ।
দূরে বন রেখা রাখি' ঘন কৃষ্ণ তিমির বরণী
ছুটিল নক্ষত্র বেগে লক্ষ্যহীন আহত তরণী,
নিয়ামক চিৎকারিল পাংশুমুখে "সামাল সামাল
নামাও "ক্ষুদ্রিকা"‡ জলে, রক্ষা নাই--ভেঙ্গে গেছে হাল।"

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*রশ্মিবহ—নৌকার মাল্লা †নিয়ামক—কর্ণধার ‡ক্ষুদ্রিকা—ছোট নৌকা।

ত্রস্ত আরোহীর দল রুদ্ধশ্বাসে চলিল ছুটিয়া
জননী শিশুরে ফেলি বৃদ্ধে যুবা চরণে দলিয়া,
বাঁচিতে—বাঁচিতে হবে, কে চাহে মৃত্যুর আলিঙ্গন ?
মৃত্যুর হিমল হাসি, রূঢ় স্পর্শ ভয়াল ভীষণ ?
প্রত্যক্ষ রবির আলো মধ্যাহ্নের জ্যোতির বাসর
সহস্র হাসির মেলা ফুলগন্ধ পাখীদের স্বর
কে চাহে ছাড়িতে এরে ভয়াবহ কারাগৃহ লাগি
যেথা অন্ধ অন্ধকার, প্রাণবর্ত্তি নাহি রহে জাগি !

মুহূর্ত্তে ভরিল নৌকা তিল স্থান বাকী
রহিল না, হেথা ভিক্ষু ধ্যাননম্র আঁখি
কহিলেন শিষ্যে ডাকি' "করো অবধান
আপনা বিনাশ করি' বৃষ্টি করে দান
জলদ। গৌতম তাই করিলা প্রচার
'সর্ব্ব ধর্ম্ম হতে শ্রেষ্ঠ ত্যাগ ধর্ম্ম সার'।
যে উদার প্রেমমন্ত্র তিয়েঞ্চুর কোণে
প্রথম উদ্গীত হ'ল ; গগনে পবনে
ঘোষিত হয়েছে আজি। ডাকি বিশ্বজনে
সে অমৃত বিলায়েছে পবিত্র ভারত
বিশ্বের কল্যাণ লাগি'। আজি হৃদিনত
আমরা এসেছি ছুটে 'তি-এন্‌চুর' পাশে
বোধিসত্ত্বে উপাসনা করিবার আশে।
মহামানবের লাগি' আত্মবিসর্জ্জন
জেনো দেবতার সেই শ্রেষ্ঠ আরাধন,
মানুষের প্রতি প্রেম শ্রেষ্ঠ উপচার
আজি বুদ্ধপদতলে দিব উপহার।"
সহসা শাসক আসি করিয়া প্রণাম
কহিলা "ক্ষুদ্রিকা মাঝে করিয়াছি স্থান
তোমাদের তরে, দেব,—ছিল কয়জন
নিদারুণ রোগাক্রান্ত, লভিবে মরণ

আজি কিম্বা কালি। রেখেছি তরণী মাঝে
মুমূর্ষু তাদের। জগতের কল্যাণের কাজে
তোমাদেরে হবে প্রয়োজন। স্মিতহাসে
সন্ন্যাসী কহিলা তারে স্নেহ শান্ত ভাষে,—
"বাঁচায় এত কি সুখ? তুচ্ছ তৃপ্তি লাগি'
মরণে হইব ভীত? ভোগ-অনুরাগী
আনিব কাতর অশ্রু মুমূর্ষু নয়নে?
মরিতে চাহেনা তারা;—রঙ্গিন স্বপনে
ধরণীর মোহ মাঝে আছে আকর্ষণ,
নহে তার বাঁচিবার বেশী প্রয়োজন
আমাদের হ'তে? মোরা লিপ্সাহীন নর,
সকল ঝঞ্ঝাট হতে' নিছি অবসর।"
বিষণ্ণ শাসক তাঁরি পদ ধূলি লয়ে'
চলি' গেলা। শিষ্যগণ একান্ত নির্ভয়ে,
বুদ্ধের চরণ তলে লভিতে আশ্রয়,
স্মরি সঞ্জীবনীমন্ত্র মহামৃত্যুঞ্জয়,
যে অমৃত ত্যাগমন্ত্র, যে কল্যাণ বাণী
বোধিসত্ত্ব বিশ্বতরে দিয়াছিলা আনি',
বসিলা পশ্চিম মুখে পুণ্যক্ষেত্র পানে
বদ্ধদৃষ্টি; পূত কণ্ঠে সম্মিলিত তানে
উঠে বুদ্ধ যশোগাথা - গগন পবন
ভরিলা উদারচ্ছন্দে,—সৌম্যদরশন
স্নিগ্ধচ্ছবি ভিক্ষুদল সমুজ্জল দেহ
ভক্তিস্নাত পুণ্য মূর্ত্তি পবিত্রতা গেহ।

দেখিতে দেখিতে ক্ষিপ্ত কালো জলে ভরি'
অনন্ত সলিল গর্ভে মিলাইল তরি
চমকি খেলিয়া গেল বিজলী কিরণ
উঠিল অস্ফুটধ্বনি 'ত্রিরত্ন শরণ।"
তখনো তাণ্ডবোল্লাসে তরঙ্গ নাগিণী

নাচাইছে লক্ষফণা ; মরণ রাগিণী
বাজিতেছে মেঘে মেঘে।—জাগাইয়া ভীতি
সমুদ্রদানবদের পৈশাচিক গীতি।

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ভিক্ষুগণ সেদিনের দুর্য্যোগ আঁধারে
নিবেদিলা শ্রেষ্ঠ অর্ঘ্য বুদ্ধদেবতারে॥

রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ্

তৃতীয় বর্ষ

বিগত ২১শে মাঘ পরিষদের পঞ্চম অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাশগুপ্ত 'মহুয়া' সম্বন্ধে একটি সুদীর্ঘ বক্তৃতা প্রদান করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। অধ্যাপক দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় বহু কবিতা পাঠ করেন এবং 'মহুয়ার' মূলগত ভাব লইয়া আলোচনা করেন। প্রসঙ্গক্রমে তিনি কবির প্রথম বয়সের প্রেমের কবিতার কথা উল্লেখ করিয়াছিলেন।

পরিষদের ষষ্ঠ অধিবেশনে (১১ই ফাল্গুন) শ্রীগিরিশ মুখোপাধ্যায় "বলাকার যুগ" সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। লেখক "মানসী" হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া 'বলাকার যুগ' পর্য্যন্ত কবির বিভিন্ন ভাবধারার কথা লইয়া আলোচনা করিয়াছিলেন।

পরিষদের সপ্তম অধিবেশনে, (২৬শে ফাল্গুন) শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্র নাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয়ের সভাপতিত্বে, শ্রীযুক্ত বিশ্বনাথ চৌধুরী "রবীন্দ্রনাথের নিসর্গ-কবিতা" নামক একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করিয়াছিলেন। প্রবন্ধ পাঠের পরে শ্রীযুক্ত যোগেশ চন্দ্র সিংহ ও অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সদানন্দ ভাদুড়ী বিষয়টি লইয়া আলোচনা করেন।

গ্রন্থাগার প্রতিষ্ঠা ও "বসন্ত-উৎসব" উপলক্ষে ২৬শে চৈত্র পরিষদের একটি বিশেষ অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। সভাস্থল প্রাচ্যরীতি অনুসারে সজ্জিত করা হইয়াছিল। শ্রীযুক্তা ইন্দিরা দেবী চৌধুরাণী সভানেত্রীর আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। কথাপ্রসঙ্গে তিনি বলেন "অশরীরী বন্ধনের গুণেই তোমাদের এই রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ্ গড়ে উঠেছে ; এবং আজ যে রবীন্দ্র-গ্রন্থাগার খোলা হোল, আশা করি তার ফলে সে বন্ধন দৃঢ়তর ও মধুরতর হবে।" শ্রীমতী পুষ্প সান্যাল, শ্রীযুক্ত পঙ্কজ কুমার মল্লিক, শ্রীযুক্ত সুনীল সরকার, শ্রীযুক্ত বিনয় ঘোষ গান গাহিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীযুক্ত কালীদাস নাগ, অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সোমনাথ মৈত্র ও শ্রীযুক্ত প্রবোধেন্দু-নাথ ঠাকুর কবিতা পাঠ করেন। পরিষদের পক্ষ হইতে অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত বিনয় কুমার সেন ও শ্রীরণধীর শর্ম্মা সরকার সভানেত্রীকে কৃতজ্ঞতা জ্ঞাপন করিয়াছিলেন।

শ্রীপ্রতুল গুপ্ত

সম্পাদক।

বঙ্কিম-শরৎ সমিতি।

গত ১৯শে ভাদ্র শুক্রবার সমিতির এক বিশেষ অধিবেশনে অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুবোধ চন্দ্র সেনগুপ্ত "বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র ও শরৎচন্দ্র" শীর্ষক একটি সুচিন্তিত প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। উক্ত প্রবন্ধে বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র শরৎচন্দ্রের ভাবধারার পার্থক্য কোথায় লেখক তাহাই দেখাইতে চেষ্টা করিয়াছেন। বঙ্কিম-চন্দ্রের বিশেষত্ব, প্রাচীন যাহা কিছু তাহা অবাধে মানিয়া লওয়া; দ্বিধাহীন বিশ্বাস ও একান্ত ধর্ম্মনিষ্ঠা তাঁহার ঘটনাবলীকে মূর্ত্ত করিয়া তুলিয়াছে। তাঁহার নারীচরিত্রের বিশেষ গুণ ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে একাগ্রতার মধ্য দিয়া।

শরৎচন্দ্রের লেখায় দ্বিধাখণ্ডিত হৃদয়ের দুর্ব্বলতা নরনারীর মানসিক দ্বন্দ্বের মধ্য দিয়া প্রকাশ পায়। তাঁহার লেখার স্পর্শ পাইয়া মন যেন জাগিয়া উঠে পূর্ণ হইয়া উঠে।

ছাত্রদের মধ্যে শ্রীরণধীর শর্ম্মাসরকার, শ্রীসুনীল চন্দ্র সরকার ও শ্রীদেবেশ চন্দ্র দাস সমালোচনায় যোগদান করেন। শ্রীরণধীর শর্ম্মাসরকার বলেন যে, চেতন ও অর্দ্ধচেতনে যে সংঘাত শরৎচন্দ্র তাহাই ফুটাইয়া তুলিয়াছেন। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র সমাজের দিক দিয়া চরিত্র অঙ্কন করিয়াছেন; শরৎচন্দ্রের লেখায় যদিও সামাজিক সমস্যার অভাব নাই—তাহা হইলেও প্রধানতঃ তিনি মনের মধ্যে যে দ্বন্দ্ব তাহার ভিতর দিয়া ট্র্যাজেডিকে রূপ দিয়াছেন। শ্রীসুনীল চন্দ্র সরকারের বক্তব্য এই ছিল যে দ্বন্দ্ব, সংঘাত এই সব ছাড়াও ট্র্যাজেডিকে ফোটান যায়; বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের ট্র্যাজেডিতে Conflict প্রধান স্থান পায় নাই।

সভাপতি শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় সুন্দর ভাবে প্রবন্ধটি বিশ্লেষণ করেন। তিনি বলেন বর্ত্তমান ও অতিবর্ত্তমান যুগের সন্ধিস্থলে দাঁড়াইয়া বঙ্কিমচন্দ্র বাঙলা সাহিত্যকে নূতন রূপ দিবার চেষ্টা করিয়াছেন। বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের লেখায় মানুষের সহিত ঘটনার যে সংঘাত তাহাই রূপ পাইয়াছে। শরৎচন্দ্রের লেখায় তাহার পরিবর্ত্তে ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে মনের সহিত মনের দ্বন্দ্ব; বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের মত তাঁহাকে ইতিহাসের সাহায্য নিতে হয় নাই।

শ্রীরাধামোহন ভট্টাচার্য্য, শ্রীসুনীল চন্দ্র সরকার ও শ্রীসন্তোষ ঘোষ সভায় গান গাইয়াছেন।

পরিশেষে একটি কথা জানাইতে চাই। সমিতির জন্য পৃথক গ্রন্থাগার শীঘ্রই প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইবে। সকলের সহানুভূতি প্রার্থনীয়।

সম্পাদকীয় কার্য্য হইতে মুক্তির পূর্ব্বক্ষণে যাঁহাদের অবিচলিত নিষ্ঠায় ও পরিশ্রমে সমিতি আজ এত উন্নত তাঁহাদিগকে আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি। আমার সহকর্ম্মী শ্রীগৌরীনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য ও শ্রীজিতেন্দ্র নাথ বসুর অধ্যবসায় ও যত্নের জন্য বিশেষভাবে কৃতজ্ঞতা স্বীকার করিবার সুযোগ গ্রহণ করিলাম।

সম্পাদক—শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়

বাংলা

টমাস্ ম্যান্

অধ্যাপক শ্রীসুবোধচন্দ্র সেনগুপ্ত, এম-এ, পি-আর-এস্

টমাস ম্যান এই যুগের একজন শ্রেষ্ঠ সাহিত্যিক। তিনি কবি-ঔপন্যাসিক ;—তাঁহার শ্রেষ্ঠ উপন্যাসগুলি মহাকাব্যের মত বিস্তৃত পরিসর ; তাহাতে অগণিত নরনারীর কথা লেখা হইয়াছে ; এক পরিবারের একশত বৎসরের ইতিবৃত্ত গ্রথিত হইয়াছে। তিনি অপূর্ণতার কবি। শিল্পী, বণিক, দার্শনিক—সবারই জীবন পর্য্যালোচনা করিয়া তিনি দেখাইয়াছেন যে তাহাদের মধ্যে অপূর্ণতার দৈন্য কত বেশী। শিল্পীর জীবনে সুখ নাই, সুখীর জীবনে মাধুর্য্য নাই ; বাহিরে যে সাফল্যের সন্ধান করিয়াছে, অন্তর তাহার ব্যর্থতায় ভরিয়া উঠিয়াছে ; যে কবিপ্রতিভা ও বুদ্ধিবৃত্তির অনুশীলন করিয়াছে, সে ধর্ম্মের বন্ধন হারাইয়াছে ; আবার ধর্ম্মের অনুশাসন যে বেশী করিয়া মানিয়া লইয়াছে, মানবজীবনের অনন্ত ব্যাপকতা, পৃথিবীর অফুরন্ত সৌন্দর্য্যের আস্বাদ সে পায় নাই। ম্যানের রচনায় অতিশয়োক্তি নাই ; তাঁহার প্রধান লিপিকৌশল এই যে তিনি ধীরে ধীরে নানা ছোট ছোট ঘটনার মধ্য দিয়া চরিত্রের ক্রমবিবর্ত্তন দেখাইয়াছেন। অনাবশ্যক জোর নাই, ত্বরা নাই, আড়ম্বর নাই। তিনি দেখাইয়াছেন যে বড়ছোট সব রকম ঘটনরে মধ্য দিয়া নিয়তির একই বিধান পরিস্ফুট হইয়াছে—তাহা হইতেছে মানব জীবনের একান্ত অপূর্ণতা। যত কিছু চেষ্টাই কর না কেন, পরিপূর্ণ পরিতৃপ্তি মিলিবে না ; আর যদি কখনও তাহা মিলেই, তবে তাহা হইবে একান্ত অনায়াসলব্ধ। এই মন্থরতা টমাস্ ম্যানের রচনার একটা প্রধান গুণ।

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শিল্পকলা অনাদিকাল হইতেই মানুষকে আনন্দ দিয়াছে, শিক্ষা দিয়াছে, চরিতার্থতা দিয়াছে। পৃথিবীতে এমন কোন জাতি নাই, এমন কোন দেশ নাই যেখানে রূপচর্চ্চা হয় নাই। যুগে যুগে শিল্পের মহিমা কীর্ত্তিত হইয়াছে ; বিষয়ী বুদ্ধিমান লোক অবশ্য বলিয়াছে যে আর্টের ব্যবসা লাভের ব্যবসা নহে, বৈজ্ঞানিক আপত্তি তুলিয়াছে যে কাব্য তাহার উক্তি প্রমাণ করিতে পারে না, আরও এমনি কত কি। কিন্তু আর্ট ইহাদের আপত্তিকে অনায়াসে অবহেলা করিয়া গিয়াছে। এই সব আপত্তি তুলিয়াছে অরসিকেরা যাহারা শিল্পের মর্ম্মকথা উপলব্ধি করিতে পারে নাই ; শিল্পী ও অরসিকে রসের নিবেদন করিতে চাহে নাই। কিন্তু ইহা ছাড়া আর এক প্রকারের লোক আছেন, যাঁহারা নিজেরা শিল্পী ; অথচ তাঁহারা এই কথাই বেশী করিয়া বুঝিয়াছেন ও বুঝাইয়াছেন যে শিল্পীকলার ক্ষেত্র স্বল্পপরিসর, তাহার

শক্তি ক্ষীণ, তাহার মৃত্যু অবশ্যম্ভাবী। ইঁহাদিগকে এ কথা বলিলে চলিবে না যে তাঁহারা রসবেত্তা নহেন; ইঁহারা নিজেরাই যে রসের স্রষ্টা। শিল্পকলার মর্ম্ম দেশে প্রবেশ করিতে পারিয়াছিলেন বলিয়াই তাঁহারা বুঝিতে পারিয়াছেন, তাহা কত অন্তঃসারশূন্য। যে সব রূপদক্ষ মনীষীরা রূপচর্চ্চার দীনতা ঘোষণা করিয়াছেন তন্মধ্যে প্লেটো, হেগেল ও টমাস ম্যানের নাম উল্লেখযোগ্য। প্লেটো মনে করিতেন যে বহির্জগৎ হইতেছে বাস্তবের ইন্দ্রিয়গ্রাহ্য রূপ মাত্র। ইহার কোন সত্যিকার সত্তা নাই। আবার শিল্পকলা হইতেছে এই সত্তাহীন জগতের একটা রূপ; কাজেই ইহা অনুবাদের অনুবাদ, অবাস্তবের পরিকল্পনা। ইহার মধ্যে সত্যের লেশ মাত্র নাই। হেগেল মনে করিতেন যে আর্ট হইতেছে নিম্নস্তরের বুদ্ধিবৃত্তির অনুশীলনের ফল। মানব সভ্যতার শ্রীবৃদ্ধির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ইহা লোপ পাইবে। তিনি এই স্বল্পায়ু সত্যবানের গুণ ব্যাখ্যান করিয়াছেন, কিন্তু ইহাকে সব সময়েই নিকৃষ্ট আসনে বসাইয়াছেন। শিল্পের ভক্ত উপাসকেরা কিন্তু ইঁহাদিগকে মার্জ্জনা করিয়াছেন। তাঁহারা প্লেটোকে একজন শ্রেষ্ঠ শিল্পী বলিয়া মানিয়া লইয়াছেন, হেগেলকে একজন শ্রেষ্ঠ সমালোচকের আসন দিয়াছেন আর টমাস্ ম্যানকে নোবেল পুরস্কার দিয়াছেন।

টমাস ম্যানের আলোচনার একটু বৈশিষ্ট্য আছে। প্লেটো বা হেগেল ইঁহারা ছিলেন মুখ্যতঃ দার্শনিক, ইঁহাদের কাছে শিল্পকলা ছিল নিতান্ত গৌণ। ইঁহাদের—বিশেষতঃ প্লেটোর রচনার শিল্পনৈপুণ্য অসাধারণ, কিন্তু এই নৈপুণ্য অবাঞ্ছিত, অনায়াসলব্ধ। টমাস ম্যানের কথা স্বতন্ত্র, তিনি নিজে শিল্পী। তাঁহার কাছে শিল্পের সৃষ্টিই মুখ্য, তাহার সমালোচনা গৌণ। এমন কি তাহার সমালোচনাও প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে উপন্যাসের চরিত্রের মধ্য দিয়া। Assenbach, Spinell, Tonio Kroger ইহারা সবাই আর্টিষ্ট বা রূপদক্ষ। ইহারা রসবেত্তা, রসস্রষ্টা। কিন্তু ম্যান নানান্ দিক দিয়া দেখাইয়াছেন যে আর্ট কত দীন, কত নিকৃষ্ট। শিল্পীর জীবনের প্রথম দৈন্য হইতেছে যে জীবনের গভীরতর সত্যের সঙ্গে, নীতির সঙ্গে তাহার যোগ নাই। আর্টের সঙ্গে নীতির যোগাযোগ লইয়া বহু তর্ক বিতর্ক হইয়া গিয়াছে। বার্ণার্ড্ শ বলিয়াছেন যে আর্ট হইতেছে ধর্ম্মের বাহন এবং তিনি আরও দাবী করেন যে শিক্ষার কেন্দ্র হিসাবে চার্চ্চের স্থান রঙ্গমঞ্চের বহু নিম্নে। নীতির সংজ্ঞা লইয়া তর্ক করিবার সময় এই নয়। মোটের উপর এই কথা মানিয়া লইলেই হইবে যে নীতি ও ধর্ম্ম মানবের কল্যাণ সাধন করিবার চেষ্টা করে। টমাস্ ম্যান Assenbachএর চরিত্রের ও জীবনীর মধ্য দিয়া এই কথাই প্রমাণ করিবার চেষ্টা করিয়াছেন আর্ট মানবের ঋতের পরিপন্থী। কারণ আর্টের লক্ষ্য হইতেছে কল্পনাকে রূপ দেওয়া, সুন্দরকে অভিব্যক্ত করা। সৌন্দর্য্যের অনুভূতি বা অভিব্যক্তিই যাহার লক্ষ্য নীতির সঙ্গে তাহার সংস্রব কোথায়? নীতি বলিবে, ইহা ভাল, ইহা মন্দ, ইহা কল্যাণকর, ইহা অনিষ্টকর। আর্ট বলিবে, ইহা সুন্দর, ইহা কুৎসিত, ইহার

রূপ আছে, ইহার রূপ নাই, ইত্যাদি। ইহাদের মধ্যে সম্পর্ক কোথায়? যাহা সুস্বাদু তাহা স্বাস্থ্যকর নাও হইতে পারে; তেমনি যাহা সুন্দর তাহা মঙ্গলজনক হইবে এইরূপ ভরসা করিবারও কোন কারণ নাই।

আর শুধু তাহাই নহে। আর্ট যে নীতির সঙ্গে সম্পর্কশূন্য তাহা নহে, ইহার গতি হইতেছে অবনতির দিকে। কারণ ইহা সুন্দরের জন্য উন্মত্ত আকাঙ্ক্ষা জাগায় আর সেই আকাঙ্ক্ষা যৌন লালসার মত তীব্র ও অসংযত, আর তাহারই মত পীড়াদায়ক ও ক্ষয়কারক। সুন্দরের জন্য পিপাসা যত তীব্র হইবে, তাহার সম্পর্কে চিন্তা যত ব্যাপক হইবে, ততই ত শিল্পের উৎকর্ষ হইবে। এই উন্মাদনা অন্য কোন উন্মাদনা অপেক্ষা ক্ষীণ নহে, তাই ইহা দেহ ও মনকে তিলে তিলে পীড়িত করে। শান্তি নাই, স্বস্তি নাই, নিষ্কৃতি নাই, অজগর সর্প যেমন করিয়া তাহার আহার্য্যকে গ্রাস করে ইহাও তেমনি করিয়া মানবজীবনকে নষ্ট করে। রূপের জন্য এই যে আকাঙ্ক্ষা—ইহার তীব্রতা কিছুতেই প্রশমিত হইবে না; কারণ ইহাকে শান্ত করিলে শিল্পের অপকর্ষ হইবে। ওয়ার্ডস্‌ওয়ার্থ অবশ্য বলিয়াছিলেন যে অনুভূতির প্রশান্ত পরিকল্পনায় কাব্যের সৃষ্টি। কিন্তু এই প্রশান্ত অবস্থায় উপনীত হইবার পূর্ব্বে একটা তীব্র উন্মত্ততার মধ্য দিয়া যাইতে হয়। কবিপ্রতিভার এই যে বেদনাদায়ক ক্ষয়কারক শক্তি, ইহার অভিব্যক্তি হইয়াছে Assenbachর চরিত্রে। Assenbach একজন বড় সাহিত্যিক। তিনি প্রথমটা ছিলেন মানববিদ্বেষী, তখন নিছক বুদ্ধির চর্চ্চা ছাড়া আর কিছু করিতেন না। পরে তাঁহার মত পরিবর্ত্তন হইল। তিনি বুদ্ধির চর্চ্চা ছাড়িয়া আর্টের মধ্য দিয়া নীতি ও ধর্ম্মের মাহাত্ম্য কীর্ত্তন করিতে আরম্ভ করিলেন। তাঁহার শিল্পনৈপুণ্যের খ্যাতি চতুর্দ্দিকে ছড়াইয়া পড়িল এবং ক্রমে তিনি নাইট উপাধি পাইলেন। পঞ্চাশোর্দ্ধে তিনি একবার ভিনিস্ সহরে বেড়াইতে গেলেন এবং সেখানে যে হোটেলে তিনি থাকিতেন সেখানে Tadzio নামক একটি সুকুমার বালককে দেখিয়া মুগ্ধ হইলেন। Tadzioর রূপের যে মোহ ইহা কামুকের লালসা নহে, ইহা কবির সৌন্দর্য্যপিপাসা কিন্তু এই মোহ তাঁহাকে এমনি করিয়া পাইয়া বসিল যে তাঁহার নিস্তার নাই, তাঁহার পলাইবার উপায় নাই। তাঁহার অন্য চিন্তা নাই, অন্য কামনা নাই, অন্য অনুভূতি নাই। ইহা যৌনবৃত্তির মতই বেগবান, মাতালের নেশার মত অনিষ্টকর। ইহাতে তাঁহার সুখ, স্বাস্থ্য, আনন্দ, সব নষ্ট হইয়া গেল, মন্ত্রমুগ্ধের মত তিনি সেইখানে মৃত্যুর অপেক্ষায় বসিয়া রহিলেন। Assenbach নিজেই বলিয়াছেন রূপের মধ্য দিয়া শিল্পী পরমার্থ লাভ করিতে চায়, কিন্তু তাহার এই চেষ্টা ভ্রান্ত। পরম সত্য রূপহীন, ইন্দ্রিয়ের অতীত। অথচ শিল্পের বাহন হইতেছে ইন্দ্রিয়গ্রাহ্য রূপ। তাই শিল্পীর আকাঙ্ক্ষা ও সাধনা কামাতুরের আকাঙ্ক্ষার মত অসংযত, উচ্ছৃঙ্খল, ক্ষণভঙ্গুর। তাহাতে বিহ্বলতা আনিতে পারে, তাহার মধ্যে উন্মত্ততা আছে, কিন্তু ইহা একেবারে

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এইত গেল শিল্পীদের কথা। ইহারা সবাই জীবনের সাধারণ গণ্ডীর বাহিরে। জীবনের সহজ সাধারণ পথ হইতে ইহারা সরিয়া গিয়াছে ; ইহারা abnormal, ইহাদের মন যে জরা-জীর্ণ। টমাস ম্যান এই জরাজীর্ণদের কাহিনী লিখিতে খুব ভালবাসেন। তাঁহার বিরাট গ্রন্থ The Magic Mountain একটা যক্ষ্মারোগের আরোগ্য ভবনের জীবন লইয়া লিখিত; সেখানে কত রোগী, নানা দেশ হইতে তাহারা আসিয়াছে। তাহারা সবাই কিরূপে এই রোগজীর্ণ মায়াপুরীর ইন্দ্রজালে আবদ্ধ হইয়া পড়ে, কিরূপে ধীরে ধীরে তাহাদের জীবনী-শক্তির ক্ষয় হয়, কিরূপে সুস্থ সবল লোক এই স্বাস্থ্য নিকেতনে আসিয়া জীবনের সমস্ত চিন্তা, সমস্ত কর্ম্ম হইতে বিচ্ছিন্ন হইয়া পড়ে তাহা কবি বর্ণে বর্ণে চিত্রিত করিয়াছেন। তাহাদের দেহের অসুখের অপেক্ষা বড় অসুখ হইতেছে মনের। এই মায়াপুরীতে ছয় মাস থাকিলেই তাহারা সব ভুলিয়া যায়, মনে থাকে শুধু দুটা কথা—দেহের temperature আর প্রেমের আদান প্রদান। এই প্রেম জ্ঞাপন—ইহা একটা বিরাট রোগ। এখানকার নায়ক নায়িকাদের প্রেম নিবেদন সুস্থ সবল প্রণয় সম্ভাষণের মত নহে। ইহা একটা ভীষণ রোগ, তাহা কেবল ক্ষয় করে, তাহা ভূতের মত চাপিয়া ধরে। অন্য কোন চিন্তা নাই, অন্য কোন কামনা নাই, সম্মুখে মৃত্যুর করাল ছায়া—তাহার মধ্যে এই এক প্রবল নেশা। এই নেশায় উন্মাদনা নাই, আনন্দ নাই, অনেক সময় প্রণয়ীর সঙ্গে আলাপ পর্য্যন্ত নাই। Greek Furyরা যেমন করিয়া Orestesকে তাড়না করিয়াছিল এই নেশা তেমনি করিয়া এই বইয়ের নায়ক Hans Castorpকে তাড়না করিয়াছে। সে ছিল শান্ত সুবোধ ছেলে, তাহার ভাইকে দেখিবার জন্য এই মায়াপুরীতে কয়েকদিনের জন্য আসিয়াছিল। ধীরে ধীরে এই সুস্থ সবল যুবক ইহার আবেষ্টনে আবদ্ধ হইয়া পড়িল। তাহার দেহে দেখা গেল যক্ষ্মারোগের লক্ষণ আর তাহার মনে যক্ষ্মার অপেক্ষাও কঠিন রোগের বীজ নিহিত হইল। Clavdia Chauchat নাম্নী এক রমণীকে দেখিয়া সে আকৃষ্ট হইল; আর এই আকর্ষণ তাহার মনকে জীর্ণশীর্ণ করিয়া ফেলিল। ইহা সুস্থ সবল লোকের প্রেমাকাঙ্ক্ষা নহে, ইহাতে হৃদয়বৃত্তি চরিতার্থ হয় না, ইহাতে কোন আনন্দ পর্য্যন্ত নাই। ইহা যক্ষ্মারোগের লক্ষণ, না যক্ষ্মারোগই ইহার লক্ষণ, বুঝা মুস্কিল। প্রণয়িণীর সঙ্গে তাহার পরিচয় পর্য্যন্ত নাই, অথচ তাহার প্রতি পদক্ষেপে ভীত শঙ্কিত প্রেমের ত্রস্ততা ধরা পড়িত।

টমাস ম্যান এই জরাজীর্ণ মনের কথা পুঙ্খানুপুঙ্খরূপে লিপিবদ্ধ করিয়াছেন। ইহা তাঁহার রচনার প্রধান গুণ, আবার ইহাই তাঁহার প্রধান দোষ। তিনি মহাকাব্য লিখিয়াছেন, কিন্তু মহাকাব্যের নায়ক নাই। কোন চরিত্রের মধ্যে তাঁহার সমস্ত মন ধরা দেয় নাই। মহাকাব্য একটা জনসমষ্টির ইতিহাস কিন্তু সেই জনসমষ্টি একটা বিরাট জীবনের মধ্য দিয়া

অভিব্যক্ত হইবে। রামায়ণে রাম, মহাভারতে ভীষ্ম শ্রীকৃষ্ণ ও অর্জ্জুন, ইলিয়ডে একিলিস, Paradise Lostএ সয়তান—ইহার নিদর্শন। টমাস ম্যানের রচনায় কোন নায়ক নাই। তিনি Hans Castorpএর জীবনীতে দেখাইয়াছেন কেমন করিয়া একটা সুস্থ সবল মন স্বাস্থ্য নিকেতনের অস্বাস্থ্যকর হাওয়ায় জীর্ণ হইয়া যায়। কিন্তু Castorp সবল চিত্তের আদর্শ নহে। তিনি যদি ইন্দ্রনাথের মত একজন দুর্দ্দান্ত মানবশিশুকে এই মায়াপুরীর ইন্দ্রজালের মধ্যে ফেলিয়া তাহার মনের বিবর্ত্তন দেখাইতে পারিতেন তাহা হইলে এই আখ্যায়িকা শ্রেষ্ঠ শিল্পের আসন পাইত। সাহিত্য হইতেছে অসাধারণের অভিব্যক্তি, অনন্যসাধারণের মধ্য দিয়াই সর্ব্বসাধারণের আশা আকাঙ্খা সুখদুঃখ আত্মপ্রকাশ করিবে। কিন্তু টমাস ম্যানের কল্পনা সকল সময়েই ব্যাধিজীর্ণ বিকৃত মনকে আশ্রয় গ্রহণ করিয়াছে। The Magic Mountainএ একজন দার্শনিক বলিয়াছে, "জীবনই হইতেছে একটা বিরাট ব্যাধি। নির্জীব পদার্থ পচিয়াই ত প্রথম জীবন্ত পদার্থের উদ্ভব হইয়াছিল। ইন্দ্রিয় বাস্তব পদার্থ—ইহার সৃষ্টিও বোধ হয় অমূর্ত্ত আত্মার বিকৃতিতে।" টমাস ম্যানের নিজেরও কি ইহাই বিশ্বাস?

The Magic Mountainএ তিনটি চরিত্র আছে, তাহারা অসাধারণ, এবং তাহাদের আখ্যায়িকা এই কাহিনীকে গৌরবদান করিয়াছে। Herr Settembrini ইটালীর অধিবাসী। এই ইটালীতে বর্ত্তমান যুগে স্বাধীনতার কথা প্রথম ঘোষিত হইয়াছিল। এই স্বাধীনতা শুধু রাষ্ট্রনৈতিক স্বাধীনতা নহে। ইহা মানব মনের স্বাধীনতা—ধর্ম্মে ভীতি, নীতি, পরকাল, অতীতের অবদান—ইহাদের কবল হইতে মানব স্বাধীন হইতে শিখিয়াছিল এইখানে পঞ্চদশ-শতাব্দীতে। Settembrini সেই জাগরণের বাণীই প্রচার করিত। সে বুদ্ধিবৃত্তির গুণগান করিত, মানুষ সমস্ত শৃঙ্খল কিভাবে ভাঙ্গিবে ইহাই তাহার সাধনার বিষয়। যিশু খৃষ্ট সত্যি সত্যি বাঁচিয়াছিলেন কিনা তাহা লইয়া সে আলোচনা করে নাই, যিশুখৃষ্টের ধর্ম্মবাদ লইয়াও সে তর্ক করে নাই; তাহার পক্ষে ইহাই যথেষ্ট যে যিশুখৃষ্টের নামে যে সব মতবাদ চালান হইয়াছে তাহাতে সকল মানুষ সমান এ কথা ধরিয়া লওয়া হইয়াছে এবং বর্ত্তমান যুগের স্বাধীনতা আন্দোলন ও গণতন্ত্রবাদের মূলও এইখানে। Settembrini বলিত যে মানুষের কাছে ইহাই সবচেয়ে বড় কথা। সে বুদ্ধি দিয়া সব জিনিষকে উপলব্ধি করিবে; ইন্দ্রিয় দিয়া জগৎকে উপভোগ করিবে; সমস্ত প্রকারের উৎপীড়নকে উপেক্ষা করিবে। ইন্দ্রিয়ের নিগ্রহ করা অন্যায়, কারণ তাহা দাসত্ব; কিন্তু দৈহিক সুখলিপ্সা যদি বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিকে আড়ষ্ট করে তবে সেই দাসত্ব হইতেও মুক্তিলাভ করিতে হইবে। বিশ্বচিত্তের সঙ্গে মানবমনের কোন বিরুদ্ধতা নাই; মানবমন বাহিরের ও অন্তরের সকল শিকল ভাঙ্গিয়া ফেলুক, এই ছিল তাহার সাধনা।

তাহার এক সঙ্গী থাকিতেন, সে ছিল সর্ব্ববিষয়ে তাহার বিরুদ্ধ-বাদী। সে নিষ্ঠাবান খৃষ্টান, মধ্যযুগের ধর্ম্ম ও ধর্ম্মযাজকের যে একাধিপত্য গিয়াছে সে তাহারই

পুনরুত্থান চাহে। সে পৃথিবীর মধ্যে দ্বৈধতা দেখিতে পায়—একদিকে মানবের প্রকৃতি গত প্রবৃত্তি, তাহার ইন্দ্রিয়লালসা, তাহার বুদ্ধি, আর অপরদিকে রহিয়াছে তাহার ধর্ম্মজ্ঞান। বুদ্ধি দিয়া সে কিছু পাইবে না; বিহ্বল ইন্দ্রিয়লালসার পরিতৃপ্তি তাহাকে আনন্দ দিতে পারিবে না; তাহার একমাত্র ভরসা রহিয়াছে ধর্ম্মের শাসনে। স্বাধীনতা উচ্ছৃঙ্খলতার নামান্তর মাত্র। মানুষ স্বাধীন হইয়া দেখিয়াছে, তাহার ফল হইয়াছে গণতন্ত্রের উচ্ছৃঙ্খলতা আর Capitalismএর অত্যাচার। তাই আজ আসিয়াছে সাম্যবাদ যার গোড়ার কথা হইতেছে অসংযত স্বাধীনতার নিয়ন্ত্রণ। একথা মনে রাখিতে হইবে যে প্রাচীন খৃষ্টীয় সন্ন্যাসীরা এই সমতামূলক অর্থনীতি প্রচার করিতেন। তাঁহারা ব্যক্তিগত সম্পত্তিরক্ষা গর্হিত বলিয়া মনে করিতেন; তাঁহারা অর্থগৃধ্নুতাকে ঘৃণা করিতেন। পঞ্চদশ শতাব্দীর Renascence ইহারই বিরুদ্ধে অভিযান। আর এই চারশত বৎসরে মানুষ বুঝিয়াছে, বুদ্ধিকে আশ্রয় করিয়া উচ্ছৃঙ্খল বিদ্রোহে সে একদিন গা ঢালিয়াছিল, তাহা কোন স্থায়ী সুখ আনিতে পারে নাই। আজ অধম, ইতর সম্প্রদায় বিদ্রোহী হইয়া উঠিয়াছে, তাহারা গ্রেগরীর কথাই প্রচার করে, তাহাদের মধ্যে রহিয়াছে গ্রেগরীর দৃপ্ত তেজ।

এই দুই সঙ্গী অনুক্ষণ তর্ক করিত; কিন্তু ইহাদের তর্ক Hans Castorpএর প্রেম-অভিনয়ের মত নিষ্ফল, প্রাণহীন। আরোগ্য-নিকেতনে বসিয়া দুই রোগীর তর্ক!—আর এই তর্কে উভয়েই একটা বিশেষ দিক্ লইয়া মারামারি করিত; সমগ্র জীবনটাকে গভীরভাবে অনুভব করিবার শক্তি ছিল না দুইয়ের কারুই। ইহাদের মাঝখানে আসিয়া পড়িল Mynheer Peeperkorn—সে নীতির মাহাত্ম্য কীর্ত্তন করে না, স্বাধীনতারও উপাসনা করে না। সে আনন্দের বাহন; জীবনের রূপরসগন্ধ অঞ্জলি ভরিয়া পান করিবে, ইহাই তাহার কামনা। ভগীরথ যেমন করিয়া গঙ্গা আনিয়াছিল, পৃথিবী প্লাবিত করিয়া ষাটহাজার পূর্ব্বপুরুষের ভস্মের মধ্যে প্রাণ আনিয়াছিল, এই আরোগ্যভবনের প্রাণহীন দেহে Peeperkorn তেমনি প্রাণের স্পন্দন আনিয়া দিল। সে তর্ক করে না; তর্কের ধার ধারে না। তাহার ধারণা, সমস্ত জগৎ নিস্তব্ধ, নির্জীব হইয়া ছিল; বুদ্ধি তাহাকে সাড়া দেয় নাই, ধর্ম্ম তাহাকে জাগাইতে পারে নাই; অনুভূতির আবেগে সে স্পন্দিত হইয়া, জীবন্ত হইয়া উঠিয়াছে। তারপর, এক দেবতা সোমরস আবিষ্কার করিল; আর সেই সোমরস পান করিয়া মানুষ সুসভ্য হইয়া উঠিল। Settembrini মনে করিত মনুষ্যজাতি যুগে যুগে উন্নতি লাভ করিতেছে; Naphta মনে করিত মানুষের উন্নতি অসম্ভব। ফরাসী রাষ্ট্রবিপ্লব ধর্ম্মহীন মানবের উন্নতির জন্য সর্ব্বশ্রেষ্ঠ প্রচেষ্টা; কিন্তু তাহার ফলে আসিয়াছে অর্থগৃধ্নু বুর্জ্জোয়া সমাজ। রোগী পাশ ফিরিয়া শুইলেই উন্নতির দিকে অগ্রসর হয় না। Peeperkornএর কাছে ঐ সব আলোচনা অবান্তর। মানুষ সম্ভোগের সম্রাট। সে সমস্ত মনপ্রাণ দিয়া পৃথিবীকে ভালবাসিবে, ভোগ করিবে, হৃদয়ের আবেগের

মধ্য দিয়াই-ত তাহার দেবত্ব ফুটিয়া উঠিবে। যে Clavdia Chauchatএর সঙ্গে Hans Castorp পরিচয় করিতে পারেন নাই, সে Peeperkornএর প্রণয়িণী হইল। সে যে উপভোগের রাজা—পৃথিবীর সমস্ত আনন্দ ত তাহারই জন্য আহৃত হইয়া থাকিবে। কিন্তু তবু ইহার আনন্দানুভূতির মধ্যে সেই নিবিড়তা নাই যাহা ওথেলো ও ডিস্‌ডিমোনার প্রেমের মধ্যে আছে; ইহার আকাঙ্ক্ষা Paphnutius এর আকাঙ্ক্ষার মত—একাগ্র তীব্র হইতে পারে না। এযে ক্ষয়রোগগ্রস্ত। সন্ন্যাসী Paphnutiusএর কল্পনা সমস্ত Syriaর মরুভূমিকে গণনাতীত নারীর সৌন্দর্য্য দিয়া পুষ্পিত করিতে চাহিয়াছিল, এই মৃত্যুপথের যাত্রীর মধ্যে সেই বিশালতা, উন্মুক্ততা আসিবে কোথা হইতে? ইহার মধ্যে উন্মত্ততা আছে, উদারতা নাই।

(৩)

তাঁহার সৃষ্ট নরনারী অধিকাংশই চিকিৎসাভবনের অধিবাসী। যাঁহারা সহজ সাধারণভাবে জীবন যাপন করে, বাহিরের দিক দিয়া যাহাদের জীবন সাফল্যে মণ্ডিত হইয়াছে, তাহাদের জীবনের অপূর্ণতা ও ব্যর্থতাই তাঁহার চোখে বেশী করিয়া লাগিয়াছে। তিনি দেখাইয়াছেন, তাহাদের উজ্জ্বল বহির্বাসের অন্তরালে রহিয়াছে একটা বিরাট ফাঁকি, একান্ত দৈন্য। বাহিরের সাফল্যের মধ্যে যে অন্তরের দৈন্য—ইহার অপরূপ চিত্র তিনি আঁকিয়াছেন তাঁহার Buddenbrook নামক গদ্য মহাকাব্যে। এই বিরাট উপন্যাসের কতকগুলি বিশেষত্ব আছে। আগেকার দিনে নায়কের ব্যক্তিত্বটা তাহার পারিপার্শ্বিক আবেষ্টন হইতে বিচ্ছিন্ন করিয়া দেখা হইত। ভগবানের সঙ্গে শয়তানের যে কলহ হইয়াছিল, ইহাতে শয়তান সঙ্গী জুটাইয়াছিল সত্য, তাহার বহু সৈন্যসামন্ত ছিল; কিন্তু তাহার আশা, আকাঙ্ক্ষা, প্রচেষ্টা নিতান্ত ব্যক্তিগত। একথা একিলিশ, অডেসিয়ুসের পক্ষেও সত্য। কিন্তু বর্ত্তমান কালে ইহা লইয়া মহাকাব্য রচনা করা যায় না। সত্যিকার কোনো মহামানব আছে কিনা ইহা লইয়াই প্রশ্ন উঠিয়াছে। বর্ত্তমান যুগের সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা ক্ষমতাশালী মানব নেপোলিয়নকে লইয়াও মহাকাব্য রচনা করা কঠিন। তাই টমাস হার্ডি যখন নেপোলিয়নকে কেন্দ্র করিয়া তাঁহার মহাকাব্য রচনা করিলেন, তখনও তাহার প্রকৃত নায়ক হইল কয়েকজন অশরীরী আত্মা—নেপোলিয়ন নহে। নেপোলিয়ন তাহাদের কাছে কলের পুতুল মাত্র। আজকালকার জগৎ মহামানব জিনিসটি মানিতেই চায় না; আর এই গণতন্ত্রের দিনে মহামানবের স্থানও খুব সঙ্কীর্ণ। আজকালকার বিরাট পুরুষ বড় যোদ্ধা বা বড় রাজা নহে; সমাজের নেতা হইতেছে বড় সওদাগর। ইহার মধ্যেও একটা বিশেষত্ব আছে। কোন একজন ব্যবসায়ী একই পুরুষে সমাজের নেতা হইতে পারে না। কিন্তু কোন কোন পরিবার পুরুষানুক্রমে ব্যবসায়ের ক্ষেত্রে উন্নতি লাভ করিতে পারে, আর তখন যে তাহাদের একটা মর্য্যাদা হয়, সে মর্য্যাদা কোনো বিশেষ লোকের নয়। ঐ মর্য্যাদা, বাড়ীঘর, ব্যবসায়, ব্যবসায়ের কর্ম্মকর্ত্তা, তাহার আত্মীয়স্বজন সবাইকে আশ্রয় করে।

যৌথ ব্যবসায়ের শ্রীবৃদ্ধির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ইহারও পরিবর্ত্তন হইতেছে। এখন ব্যবসায়ের শ্রীবৃদ্ধি কোন বিশেষ পরিবারকে আশ্রয় করিবে না। এখনকার নায়ক হইবে Trustবা Controlর Director। যাক্ Buddenbrook ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীর আখ্যায়িকা আর সেই সময় অনেক বড় বড় পরিবারে বংশানুক্রমে ব্যবসায়ে উন্নতিসাধন করিয়া সমাজের নেতৃত্ব লাভ করিয়াছে।

Buddenbrookরা জার্ম্মেণীর এইরূপ একটি সমৃদ্ধ পরিবার। আর এই পরিবার যখন উন্নতির শীর্ষদেশে উপনীত হইতেছে তখন ইহার কর্ত্তা হইল Thomas Buddenbrook। Thomas এই মহাকাব্যের নায়ক। মহাকাব্যের নায়কের একটা প্রধান গুণ হইল এই যে তাহার কাহিনী শুধু ব্যক্তিগত জীবনের সুখদুঃখের কাহিনী নহে, সেই ব্যক্তিগত জীবনের মধ্য দিয়া আরও অনেকের সুখদুঃখের মর্ম্মকথা বাজিয়া উঠিবে। Thomasর পক্ষেও এই কথা খুব বেশী করিয়া খাটে। তাহাকে ব্যবসায়ে উন্নতি করিতে হইবে, সমাজে, রাজনৈতিকক্ষেত্রে জয়লাভ করিতেই হইবে; কিন্তু ইহাই তাহার পক্ষে যথেষ্ট নহে। যাহাতে এই পরিবারের উন্নতির পথ কখনও অবরুদ্ধ না হয়, যাহাতে এই পরিবারের কোন লোক কোনরূপ কলঙ্কলেপন না করিতে পারে ইহাও তাহাকে দেখিতে হইবে। তাহার ব্যক্তিগত সুখদুঃখ এই বিরাট অভিযানের একটি সামান্য অঙ্গ মাত্র। কিন্তু এই যে অভিযান ইহার মধ্যে একটা বিরাট ট্রাজেডির বীজ নিহিত হইয়া আছে, আর টমাসের জীবনে সেই অবশ্যম্ভাবী ট্রাজেডি বোলকলায় পরিপূর্ণ হইয়া উঠিল। আর তাহার জীবনে এই সত্যটা বিশেষ করিয়া প্রতিভাত হইয়াছে যে মানুষের ক্ষমতা কত সীমাবদ্ধ, তাহার চেষ্টার গণ্ডী কত ক্ষুদ্র। সে যেখানে ভাগ্যনির্দ্দিষ্ট সাধারণ পথ অতিক্রম করিয়া অনন্যসাধারণ হইতে চাহিবে; সেইখানেই তাহার দম্ভ চূর্ণ হইবে, তাহার চেষ্টা ভাঙ্গিয়া যাইবে। টমাসের বোন্ Antonie একটি ছেলেকে ভালবাসিত, কিন্তু সে বাধ্য হইয়া বিবাহ করিল Bendix Grunlich নামক এক বণিককে। সে বড় ঘরের মেয়ে, বড় সম্পন্ন ব্যবসায়ী ছাড়া সে আর কাহাকে বিবাহ করিবে? কিছুদিন পরে দেখা গেল Grunlich একজন জুয়াচোর। কাজেই এই বিবাহের পরিসমাপ্তি হইল divorceএ। Tonie যে নিজেকে এম্‌নি করিয়া বলি দিল, তাহা ঐ বড় ঘরের গৌরবের কাছে, Thomasর মর্য্যাদার কাছে। পিত্রালয়ে আসিয়া সে বুঝিতে পারিল যে তাহার দুর্ভাগ্যলিপ্ত দাম্পত্য জীবন তাহাদের মত বড় ঘরের মেয়ের পক্ষে একান্ত অশোভন। ইহা পদে পদে তাহার ভাইকে বিড়ম্বিত করিবে—আবার Thomasর মর্য্যাদা। তাই সে পুনরায় বিবাহ করিল—এবার Herr Permanederকে। এই ভদ্রলোক মানুষ খারাপ ছিল না; কিন্তু তবু Tonieর সঙ্গে তাহার মিল হইল না। একদিন সে তাহার স্ত্রীকে এমন কথা বলিয়াছিল যাহা তাহার মত বড় ঘরের মেয়ের পক্ষে অপমানজনক—আবার সেই বড় ঘরের জাঁক। তাই সে ফিরিয়া আসিল তাহার মা ও ভাইয়ের কাছে। এই যে তাহার জীবনের এই দুর্ভাগ্যময় পরিণতি—ইহার জন্য Thomas

দায়ী নহে, অথচ সে যাহা কিছু করিয়াছে সবই তাহার ভাইয়ের মর্য্যাদার দিকে লক্ষ্য রাখিয়া। আর একটা মজার জিনিষ হইতেছে এই যে Thomasর জীবনের সমস্ত আঘাত আসে বাহির হইতে, যাহাকে বাধা দিবার সামর্থ্য তাহার নাই। তাহার বোন্ কি করিল না করিল তাহার উপরে তাহার গৌরব নির্ভর করে, অথচ ভগিনীর কার্য্যকলাপ সে নিয়ন্ত্রিত করিবে কি করিয়া?

তাহার ছোট ভাই Christianর সম্পর্কেও সেই একই কথা খাটে। Christian উচ্ছৃঙ্খল, অসংযতচরিত্র। সে নানাভাবে পরিবারের উপর কলঙ্ক আনয়ন করিতে লাগিল। এই চরিত্রহীনের প্রতি Thomasর একটুও মায়া ছিল না, তাহাকে কে বুঝাইয়াছে যে সে পরিবারের কলঙ্ক, তাহাকে হাত ধরিয়া তুলিতে একটুও চেষ্টা করে নাই। কাজেই Christian দিনের পর দিন পাপের পথে অগ্রসর হইতে লাগিল, তাহার এই যে অবনতি ইহারও একটি কারণ সেই বড় ঘরের মর্য্যাদা। কারণ সে ত ইহাই বুঝিয়াছে যে সে অধম, সে নগন্য, অধঃপতনের পথই তাহার একমাত্র পথ। তখন সে এক গণিকাকে বিবাহ করিয়া তাহার সন্তানদিগকে নিজের সন্তান বলিয়া চালাইবার প্রস্তাব করিল। গণিকার সন্তানেরা Buddenbrook নামের অধিকারী হইল, Christian তাহার জীবনের সমস্ত আচরণ পরিবারের উপর কলঙ্কলেপন করিল—Thomas ইহাকে বাধা দিবে কি করিয়া? আর শুধু কি ইহাই? এই বড়ঘরের মর্য্যাদার কাছে তাহার নিজের সুখও বলি দিয়াছে, বাহিরের গৌরব লাভ করিতে যাইয়া অন্তরকে দীন করিয়াছে। যৌবনের প্রারম্ভে সে একটি ছোটঘরের মেয়ের সঙ্গে প্রেমে পড়িয়াছিল, তাহাকে সে ত্যাগ করিতে বাধ্য হইল। সে বিবাহ করিল বড় ঘরের মেয়ে Gerdaকে, যে তাহাকে বিরাট যৌতুক আনিয়া দিল। বাহিরের দিক দিয়া এই বিবাহ বেশ ভাল হইল, কিন্তু ইহা সুখের বিবাহ হইল না। Gerda একজন সঙ্গীতশিল্পী, তাহার সমস্ত মনপ্রাণ পড়িয়া থাকিত সঙ্গীতের মধ্যে। Thomas শিল্পের ধার ধারিত না, কাজেই স্বামী স্ত্রীতে কোন দিন সত্যিকার মিলন হইল না। বাহিরে কোন কলহ হইলনা, উভয়ে উভয়কে সুখী করিবার চেষ্টা করিত। কিন্তু ধীরে ধীরে অলক্ষ্যে বণিক যশোলিপ্সু স্বামী ও শিল্পী স্ত্রীর মধ্যে এক বিরাট ব্যবধানের সৃষ্টি হইল। কিছুদিন পরে Von Throta নামীয় এক শিল্পী তাহাদের বাড়ীতে আসিতে লাগিল এবং তাহার সঙ্গে Gerda সঙ্গীত চর্চ্চায় তাহার মন প্রাণ ঢালিয়া দিতে লাগিল। এই যে শিল্পীযুগলের আনন্দ, ইহাতে Thomasর কোন অংশ নাই, কোন দাবী নাই, তাহাকে কেহ গ্রাহ্য করে না, তাহার নিজের গৃহে সে অতিথি। Throtaর সঙ্গে তাহার স্ত্রীর এই যে মিলন, ইহা যৌন মিলন নহে, ইহার মধ্যে স্বামীর প্রতি কর্ত্তব্যের অভাব নাই, কাজেই তাহার স্ত্রীর বিরুদ্ধে নালিশ করিবার কিছুই নাই। অথচ এই যে শিল্পী-যুগলের মিলন যাহার মধ্যে তাহার কোনও ভাগ নাই—ইহাতে তাহার চোখে আঙ্গুল দিয়া

দেখাইয়া দিল যে তাহার স্ত্রীর হৃদয়ে সে চিরকাল আগন্তুকের মত বাস করিয়াছে, কোনদিন তাহাদের মধ্যে সত্যিকার মিলন নাই। অথচ তাহার যৌবনের প্রথম প্রণয়িণী—সেই দীন হীন ফুলওয়ালীকে সে যদি বিবাহ করিত তাহা হইলে তাহাদের জীবন ফুলে ফলে ভরিয়া উঠিত। Gerdaর গর্ভে তাহার যে সন্তান জন্মিল, সেই বালক মায়ের সঙ্গীতানুরাগ পাইল, কিন্তু তাহার পিতার স্বাস্থ্য, কর্ম্মলিপ্সা, উচ্চাকাঙ্খা, ব্যবসায় বুদ্ধি কিছুই পায় নাই। কাজেই বড় বণিক বংশের কোন গৌরবই এই রুগ্ন, অক্ষম সন্তান রাখিতে পারিবে না—Thomas ইহা বেশ বুঝিতে পারিল। সে ইহাকে শিক্ষা দেওয়ার জন্য ইহার মনে ব্যবসায়ের স্পৃহা জাগাইবার জন্য বিশেষ যত্ন করিল, কিন্তু কিছুতেই কোন ফলোদয় হইলনা। প্রকৃতির বিরুদ্ধে নালিশ করিয়া সংগ্রাম করিয়া কি হইবে। ক্রমে তাহার নিজেরও বয়স হইতে লাগিল, শক্তির হ্রাস হইতে লাগিল, ব্যবসায়ে পূর্ব্বের মত উন্নতি হইল না। সে ক্রমশঃ বুঝিতে পারিল যে বাহিরের সাফল্যের উপর চিত্তনিবিষ্ট করিয়া সে তাহার অন্তরকে ফাঁকি দিয়া আসিয়াছে; আজ নিজের হৃদয়ের দিকে তাকাইয়া ছিল সেখানে কোন সঞ্চয় তাহার নাই;—সে নিতান্ত নিঃস্ব, নিতান্ত একাকী। জীবনের প্রান্তদেশে দাঁড়াইয়া সে দেখিল যে কোন দিক দিয়া তাহার গৌরব করিবার মত কিছুই নাই, ইহার অপেক্ষা কঠিন ট্র্যাজেডি আর কি হইতে পারে?

Buddenbrooks টমাস্ ম্যানের শ্রেষ্ঠ গ্রন্থ, এই যুগের ইহা একটা শ্রেষ্ঠ উপন্যাস। ইহাতে যে সর্ব্বগ্রাসী ট্র্যাজেডির চিত্র আছে তাহার তুলনা বিরল, এই ট্র্যাজেডি কাহারও ব্যক্তিগত জীবনের ইতিহাস নহে, ইহা একটা বিরাট্ পরিবারের ধ্বংশের কাহিনী। ইহার নায়ক Thomas Buddenbrook নহে—সমগ্র Buddenbrook পরিবার। Thomas Buddenbrook এই ট্র্যাজেডির কেন্দ্র মাত্র। এই বিরাট উপন্যাসে ম্যানের দুর্ব্বলতাও ধরা পড়ে। শিল্পী এমন চরিত্র আঁকিবেন যাহার মধ্য দিয়া তাঁহার সমস্ত চিত্ত অভিব্যক্ত হইবে। তাঁহার নায়ক আদর্শ মানুষ হইবে এমন কথা বলি না। কিন্তু সেই নায়কের মধ্যে এমন কিছু থাকিবে যাহাতে মনে হইবে সে জীবনটাকে গভীর করিয়া অনুভব করিয়াছে, তাহার কাহিনীতে মানব হৃদয়ের অন্তরতম আশা আকাঙ্খা স্পন্দিত হইয়া উঠিবে। এই যেমন Hamlet, Othello, Brand, Prometheus, Paphnutius ইত্যাদি। টমাস্ ম্যানের দৃষ্টিশক্তি খুব তীক্ষ্ণ, আর তাহার জন্য তাঁহার কল্পনা প্রতিহত হইয়াছে। তাঁহার সর্ব্বপ্রথমে নজর পড়ে মানুষের দুর্ব্বলতা, অপূর্ণতার উপরে। মানবহৃদয়ের বিরাট আকাঙ্খা, তাহার গভীর অনুভূতি, তাহার দুর্দ্দান্ত হৃদয়াবেগ, যাহা সমস্ত দুর্ব্বলতাকে ছাপাইয়া উঠে, যাহা সমস্ত ব্যর্থতাকে গৌরব দান করে; সমস্ত হীনতাকে মহীয়ান করে, টমাস্ ম্যান্ কখনও তাহার সন্ধান করেন নাই।

পল্লী স্মৃতি

শ্রীভবতোষ চক্রবর্ত্তী—প্রথম বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, কলা বিভাগ।

সীমার মাঝে বদ্ধ হেথা স্বর্ণময় পিঞ্জরে,
পক্ষী সম রুদ্ধ বেদনায়
বন্দী মম ব্যাকুল হিয়া স্বপ্নরথে সঞ্চরে
স্নিগ্ধ দূর পল্লী-বীথি-ছায় ;
নিত্য যেথা শান্তি জাগে শ্রান্ত হৃদি নন্দিয়া
মুক্ত চির সকল বাধাহীন,
ৰ্ত্ত মম মাতৃপদে ভক্তিভরে বন্দিয়া
শুভ্র ক্ষীণ নদীর রেখা লীন।
নিম্নে শ্যাম মঞ্জু ছবি ঊর্দ্ধে নীল অম্বর
শীর্ষ ঘেরি, চন্দ্রাতপ সম ;
দিগ্বলয় রেখার মাঝে মধ্যমণি সুন্দর
শান্তিময় পল্লী খানি মম।

নগরবুকের অতৃপ্তি ও দম্ভভরা গুঞ্জন
সেথায় নাহি সুদূর নিরালায়,
শিশুর সম সরল প্রীতি মানস করে রঞ্জন
স্বরগ রচে প্রেমের মহিমায় ;
কুঞ্জ মাঝে উচ্ছ্বাসিত সমীরে গীতি ব্যঞ্জনা,
তটিনী চলে ছন্দে গান গাহি,
অদূর পথে পথিক যেতে ক্ষণেক থামি' আন্‌মনা
পল্লীপানে চমকি' রহে চাহি,
মেঘের কোলে বলাকা সারি, চপল গতি ভঙ্গিমা,
অলকে যেন মুকুতা ভারে ভারে,
শিশির ধোওয়া চরণ পরে অশোক কুল রক্তিমা
কাশের গোছা পথের ধূলি ছাড়ে।

নদীর তীরে সন্ধ্যা নামে গোপন পায়ে চঞ্চলে
লজ্জানত স্নিগ্ধ দুটী আঁখি ;
পল্লীবধূ তুলসীতলে যত্নে ঢাকি' অঞ্চলে
প্রণাম করে প্রদীপ আনি রাখি ;
স্বপন রচে ভূলোক আর দ্যুলোক মিলি নির্জ্জনে
বিদায় ক্ষণে থামিয়া যায় রবি,
চন্দ্র করে আঙিনা আলো অমৃত ধারা সিঞ্চনে
গগন পটে তারকা আঁকে ছবি।
গোধূলিশেষে দূরের পথে পবন ভরে সঞ্চারে
মাঙ্গলিক শাঁখের কলরোল,
ঘনায়ে উঠে আঁধার রাশি নদীর তীরে কান্তারে
স্মৃতিতে জাগে পল্লী মা'র কোল।

মৌর্য্য সাম্রাজ্যের পতন ও ভারতে যবন-আক্রমণ।

শ্রীসৌরীন্দ্রনাথ রায়—চতুর্থ বার্ষিক শ্রেণী, কলা বিভাগ।

মৌর্য্য সাম্রাজ্যের ইতিহাস আলোচনা করিলে দেখা যাইবে, প্রাচীন যুগের অন্য কোনও ইতিহাসপ্রসিদ্ধ সাম্রাজ্যের কাহিনী অপেক্ষা ইহা কম রহস্যময় নহে। কিন্তু রোম সাম্রাজ্যের বিবরণ বা অসুরীয় রাজবংশের ইতিবৃত্ত ইতিহাসপাঠকের চিত্তে যতখানি স্থান অধিকার করিয়া রাখিয়াছে, ভারতের এই গৌরবময় যুগের কাহিনী তাহার অংশমাত্রও করিতে পারে নাই, ইহাই পরম বিস্ময়ের কথা। ইহা অসত্য নহে যে, ভারতবর্ষের প্রাচীন যুগের কোনো ধারাবাহিক ইতিহাস লিপিবদ্ধ হয় নাই (পাশ্চাত্যলেখকগণের সহানুভূতিলেশহীন রচনাকে সাহিত্যশ্রেণীভুক্ত করা গেলেও তাহাকে ইতিহাস আখ্যা দেওয়া যায় না) ;—কিন্তু উপাদানের অভাবকে ইহার প্রকৃত কারণ বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করা যায় না,—প্রকৃত কারণ ইতিহাসরসিকের

এ বিষয়ে নির্লিপ্ততা। প্রাচীন ইতিহাসের যে যে ক্ষেত্রে প্রকৃত ও অকৃত্রিম অনুসন্ধান চলিয়াছে সেই সেই স্থলেই এত নূতন নূতন ঐতিহাসিক তথ্য উদ্ঘাটিত হইয়াছে যে এরূপ আশা করা নিতান্ত অন্যায় হইবে না যে অন্য অন্য স্থলেও অনুরূপ অনুসন্ধানে অনুরূপ ফল পাওয়া যাইবে।

যে সকল ঘটনা পরম্পরা একত্র মিলিত হইয়া এই বিরাট সাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংসসাধন করিয়াছিল তাহা কোন ব্রাহ্মণ্য বা বৌদ্ধ গ্রন্থ দ্বারা যুক্তিসঙ্গতভাবে ব্যাখ্যাত হয় নাই। বিষ্ণু ও ব্রহ্মাণ্ড পুরাণের বিবরণ শুধু যে অকিঞ্চিৎকর তাহাই নহে, অনেকস্থলেই সেগুলি পরস্পর-বিরোধীও বটে। "পুষ্যমিত্র শেষ মৌর্য্যনৃপতি বৃহদ্রথের পরে সিংহাসনাধিরোহণ করিবেন" পুরাণ শুধু এই বিবৃতিটুকু দিয়াই নীরব হইয়া রহিয়াছে। বাণরচিত হর্ষচরিতে লিখিত হইয়াছে যে মৌর্য্যসম্রাট বৃহদ্রথের সৈন্যাধ্যক্ষ পুষ্যমিত্র তাহাকে সৈন্যপ্রদর্শন-ব্যপদেশে হত্যা করেন। ইহা হইতেও আমরা কোনও স্থিরসিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হইতে পারিতেছি না। মহা-মহোপাধ্যায় শাস্ত্রী নিম্নলিখিতরূপে এই রাষ্ট্রবিপর্য্যয়ের বিবরণ লিপিবদ্ধ করিয়াছেন*—"বৎসর বৎসর যবনগণ সাম্রাজ্যের কেন্দ্রাভিমুখে অগ্রসর হইতেছিল। অতএব পুষ্যমিত্র বিশাল মৌর্য্যবাহিনী লইয়া যবনদিগের বিরুদ্ধে অভিযান করিলেন। যবনদিগকে পরাভূত করিয়া বিজয়ী সৈন্যসহ রাজধানীতে প্রত্যাবর্ত্তনকালে অশোকের বংশধর পুষ্যমিত্রের অভ্যর্থনার জন্য বিপুল আয়োজন করিলেন। রাজধানীর বহির্ভাগে পট্টনিবাসশ্রেণী সন্নিবেশিত হইল। মহারাজ বিশাল মৌর্য্যবাহিনী পর্য্যবেক্ষণ করিতে লাগিলেন। উৎসবের কোলাহলের মধ্যে অকস্মাৎ একটী তীর আসিয়া তাঁহার বক্ষে বিদ্ধ হইল। রাজা ভূতলে নিক্ষিপ্ত হইলেন।" ——কিন্তু দৃঢ় প্রমাণ না পাওয়া পর্য্যন্ত শাস্ত্রীমহাশয়প্রদত্ত বিবরণের ঐতিহাসিক মূল্য নির্দ্ধারণ অসম্ভব।

মৌর্য্য সাম্রাজ্যের অধঃপতনের কারণ দেখাইতে গিয়া শাস্ত্রী মহাশয় বলিয়াছেন, এই বৃহৎ ঘটনার মূলে প্রকৃত পক্ষে একটী ব্রাহ্মণ্য প্রতিক্রিয়া ছিল। ভিন্সেণ্ট স্মিথ এই মতেরই প্রতিধ্বনি করিয়া কহিতেছেন,—"অশোকের প্রাণিহত্যা-সংক্রান্ত বিধিনিষেধগুলি শুধু যে ব্রাহ্মণদেরই যাগ যজ্ঞ ও পশুবলিতে বাধা দিয়াছিল তাহা নহে; মৃগয়াজীবী, মৎস্যজীবী প্রভৃতি ব্যবসায়ীদের জীবিকাঅর্জ্জনের পথেও যথেষ্ট অসুবিধা উৎপন্ন করিয়াছিল। ইহা সম্পূর্ণ সম্ভব যে এই অসন্তোষবহ্নিই ক্রমে ক্রমে মৌর্য্যবংশকে ভস্মীভূত করিয়া ফেলিয়াছিল।"† অশোকের অত্যাচারই যে এই ব্রাহ্মণ্য-পুনরুত্থানের কারণ এই মতের স্বপক্ষে শাস্ত্রী মহাশয় নিম্নলিখিত যুক্তিগুলি প্রদর্শন করিয়াছেন।

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* Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1910, p 261.

† Oxford History of India.

প্রথমতঃ—প্রাণিহত্যা ব্যতীত যাগক্রিয়াদি অসম্ভব। প্রাণিহত্যানিবারক বিধি প্রবর্ত্তনের দ্বারা অশোক ব্রাহ্মণদের অসন্তোষ উৎপাদন করিয়াছিলেন;—সাম্প্রদায়িক বিদ্বেষ-প্রণোদিত বলিয়া ইহার ফল বিষময় হইয়াছিল। কিন্তু শুধু এই কথা বলিলেই এই অভিযোগের উত্তর হইবে যে কেবল অহিংসা মন্ত্রের প্রচারই ব্রাহ্মণদের রোষের কারণ হইতে পারে না। উপনিষদের যুগ হইতেই ব্রাহ্মণ্যরক্তসম্ভূত ঋষিদের কণ্ঠে কণ্ঠে অহিংসার বাণী গগনে পবনে উদ্ঘোষিত হইয়াছে। অধ্যাপক ডাঃ হেমচন্দ্র রায়চৌধুরী স্পষ্টই প্রমাণ করিয়া দেখাইয়াছেন যে প্রাণিহত্যানিষেধক বিধি সাম্প্রদায়িক বিদ্বেষ বশতঃ প্রবর্ত্তিত হয় নাই।

হরপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী আরও বলিয়াছেন যে "শূদ্র রাজা কর্ত্তৃক প্রচারিত হওয়ায় ব্রাহ্মণদের বিদ্বেষবহ্নি আরও ইন্ধন পাইয়াছিল।" কিন্তু মৌর্য্যরাজগণ কি প্রকৃতই শূদ্র ছিলেন! ডাঃ রায়চৌধুরী,* ডাঃ ভাণ্ডারকর † ও ডাঃ মজুমদার ‡ প্রমাণ করিয়া দেখাইয়াছেন, মৌর্য্যগণকে শূদ্র বলিবার কোনই হেতু নাই। বাহুল্যভয়ে তাঁহাদের যুক্তিগুলি উল্লেখ করিতে বিরত থাকিলাম কিন্তু কয়েকটী বিষয়ে পাঠকের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করা প্রয়োজন বলিয়া মনে করিতেছি। যদি "মহাপদ্মের পরে শূদ্ররাজগণ পৃথিবী শাসন করিবেন" পুরাণের এই উক্তির অর্থ এইরূপ ধরা হয় যে, মহাপদ্মের পরবর্ত্তী সমস্ত রাজবংশই শূদ্রবর্ণীয় তাহা হইলে পুরাণেই ব্রাহ্মণ বলিয়া বর্ণিত শুঙ্গ ও কণ্বায়ণ রাজগণকেও শূদ্র বলিয়া ধরিতে হয়। গুপ্তযুগে রচিত মুদ্রারাক্ষস নাটক অপেক্ষা গুপ্ত-পূর্ব্বযুগে রচিত মহাপরিনির্ব্বাণ সুত্ত, দিব্যাবদান ও মহাবংশ প্রভৃতি গ্রন্থের ঐতিহাসিক মূল্য অধিক। শেষোক্ত তিনখানি গ্রন্থের উপর নির্ভর করিলে মৌর্য্যদিগকে ক্ষত্রিয়ই বলিতে হয়। মুদ্রারাক্ষসেও চন্দ্রগুপ্তের শূদ্রত্বের একমাত্র প্রমাণ যে চাণক্য তাঁহাকে "বৃষল" বলিয়া সম্বোধন করিতেন। অর্দ্ধ ভারতের অধীশ্বরের প্রতি তাঁহারই নিম্নস্থ কর্ম্মচারী কর্ত্তৃক এই ঘৃণাসূচক সম্বোধন বিশ্বাস যোগ্য নহে। মুদ্রারাক্ষসের কোনও কোনও হস্ত লিখিত পুথিতে, "বৃষল" শব্দের পরিবর্ত্তে "বৃষভ" এই পাঠান্তর দেখা যায়। সুতরাং "বৃষল" শব্দটী সম্পূর্ণ লিপিকর প্রমাদ বশতঃ চন্দ্রগুপ্তের প্রতি প্রযুক্ত হইয়াছে ইহা অসম্ভব নহে। কৌটিল্য বলিয়াছেন যে দেশের রাজা উচ্চবংশ হইতেই নির্ব্বাচিত হইবেন। ইহা হইতেই ডাঃ রায় চৌধুরী যে সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন যে, কৌটিল্যের সমসাময়িক রাজা অভিজাত বংশীয় ছিলেন তাহা নিতান্ত যুক্তিহীন নহে। এ বিষয় ও প্রণিধানযোগ্য যে মহীশূরে প্রাপ্ত একটী প্রাচীন লিপিতে চন্দ্রগুপ্তকে "ক্ষাত্র ধর্ম্মের আধার" রূপে বর্ণনা করা হইয়াছে।

তর্কের খাতিরে যদি ধরিয়া লওয়া যায় যে মৌর্য্যগণ শূদ্র ছিলেন, তথাপি একথা প্রমাণ করা কঠিন যে ব্রাহ্মণগণ শূদ্র নৃপতি মাত্রকেই বিদ্বেষের চক্ষে দেখিতেন। মৌর্য্যদের বহুপূর্ব্বে শূদ্র নন্দরাজবংশের অভ্যুদয় হইয়াছিল, কিন্তু তাঁহাদের শতবর্ষব্যাপী শান্তিপূর্ণ শাসনের বিরুদ্ধে

*Political History of India, †Asoka, ‡Ancient Indian History and Civilisation.

ব্রাহ্মণেরা অভ্যুত্থান করেন নাই। যদি ব্রাহ্মণ্যবিদ্বেষকেই নন্দবংশের অধঃপতনের কারণ বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করিতে হয়, তবে একজন শূদ্র নৃপতিকে সিংহাসন হইতে অপসারিত করিবার জন্য ব্রাহ্মণেরা আর একজন শূদ্র চন্দ্রগুপ্তের সাহায্য করিলেন কেন? বিশেষতঃ ব্রাহ্মণ্য সংস্কৃতি রক্ষকগণের অগ্রণী কৌটিল্য কেন চন্দ্রগুপ্তের সর্ব্বশ্রেষ্ঠ সহায় হইলেন? ইহা হইতে দুইরূপ সিদ্ধান্ত করা যাইতে পারে,—মৌর্য্যেরা ক্ষত্রিয় ছিলেন, অথবা ব্রাহ্মণদিগের শূদ্রনৃপতির প্রতি কোনও সম্প্রদায়গত বিদ্বেষ ছিল না।

আরও অনুমান করা গেল যে প্রাণিহত্যানিষেধক অনুশাসন মাত্রই ব্রাহ্মণের রোষোৎপাদন করিতে পারিত। কিন্তু অশোক সাম্রাজ্যের সর্ব্বত্রই যে প্রাণিহত্যা রহিত করিয়াছিলেন, ইহার স্বপক্ষে কোনও প্রবল যুক্তি পাওয়া কঠিন। যে অনুশাসনটী হইতে শাস্ত্রীমহাশয় পূর্ব্বোক্ত সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হইয়াছেন তাহার পাঠ এইরূপ, "ইহন কিঞ্চি জীবমরভিপ্পা প্রজুহিতব্যম্।" এখানে ভগবানলাল ইন্দ্রজীর মতে 'ইহ' কোন নির্দ্দিষ্ট স্থানকে বুঝাইতেছে (Ind. Antiq. 286)। এই নির্দ্দিষ্ট স্থান যে পাটলিপুত্র সেবিষয়ে কোনও সন্দেহ নাই। গির্ণারে প্রাপ্ত পঞ্চমগিরি-লিপিতে, ধৌলি, কলসী, ও সহরাজগড়িতে প্রাপ্ত পঞ্চম গিরিলিপির "ইদ বহিরেষুচ,' এই পাঠের পরিবর্ত্তে "পাটলিপুত্রেচ বহিরেষুচ" এই পাঠ দেখা যায়। শাস্ত্রীমহাশয় "ইদ" এই শব্দ দ্বারা পাটলিপুত্রকে বুঝাইতেছে কিনা তাহাতে সন্দেহ প্রকাশ করিতেছেন। তাঁহার যুক্তি এই, যে অনুশাসন বিশেষভাবে পাটলিপুত্রের প্রতি প্রযোজ্য তাহা পাটলিপুত্রের বাহিরে খোদিত করিবার কোনও আবশ্যকতা নাই। কিন্তু আবশ্যকতা যাহাই থাকুক, গির্ণার গিরিলিপির সাক্ষ্যের উপর নির্ভর করিয়া একথা বলিতে হইতেছে যে রাজধানী হইতে বহুদূরবর্ত্তী স্থলেও রাজধানী- সম্বন্ধীয় বিশেষ অনুশাসন খোদিত করা অশোকের অভ্যাসের বিরোধী ছিল না।

যে অনুশাসন দ্বারা অশোক ভারতের সর্ব্বত্র প্রাণিহত্যা রহিত করিয়াছেন তাহা সম্রাটের রাজত্বের ত্রয়োদশ বর্ষে খোদিত হইয়াছিল। কিন্তু ইহারও চতুর্দ্দশ বর্ষ পরে খোদিত পঞ্চম স্তম্ভলিপি হইতে আমরা এরূপ প্রমাণ পাইতেছি যে তখনও সাম্রাজ্যের মধ্যে প্রাণিহত্যা প্রচলিত ছিল। ঐ অনুশাসন ছয়মাসের কম বয়স্ক ছাগশিশুহত্যা নিষেধ করিতেছে। ইহা হইতে অনুমান করা যাইতে পারে ঐ বয়স-অতিক্রান্ত ছাগশিশুকে নির্ব্বিঘ্নে হত্যা করা যাইতে পারিত। তাহা হইলে দেখা যাইতেছে যে অশোকের অনুশাসন ব্রাহ্মণ্য অনুষ্ঠানাদিতে কোন প্রকৃত বাধা উৎপাদন করে নাই।

ইহাও লক্ষ্য করিবার বিষয় যে উক্ত অনুশাসনে যে যে প্রাণী হত্যা নিষিদ্ধ তাহার একটী তালিকা দেওয়া হইয়াছে। সুতরাং ঐ তালিকার বহির্ভূত কোন প্রাণীকে হত্যা করা দণ্ডনীয় ছিল না, যেমন শৃঙ্গীবৃষভ ঐ তালিকার বহির্ভূত ছিল।—তালিকা হইতে এই বাদ দিবার কারণ ব্যাখ্যা করিতে যাইয়া স্মিথ্ বলিতেছেন—যে উত্তরাপথবাসী প্রজাগণ সহজে যে

প্রথা পরিত্যাগ করিবে না সে প্রথা রহিত করিতে অশোক অনিচ্ছুক ছিলেন। অশোক-অনুশাসনে লিখিত অবধ্য প্রাণিদিগের তালিকার সহিত অর্থশাস্ত্রে প্রদত্ত অবধ্য প্রাণীর তালিকার আশ্চর্য্য মিল রহিয়াছে।* তাহা হইলে অশোক পূর্ব্বাচরিত প্রথার কি পরিবর্ত্তন করিলেন?

দ্বিতীয়তঃ, শাস্ত্রীমহাশয়ের মতে, ধর্ম্মমহামাত্রের পদ সৃষ্টি করিয়া অশোক ব্রাহ্মণদের সমস্ত অধিকার ও ক্ষমতা হরণ করিয়াছিলেন। স্মিথ্ এখানেও তাঁহার প্রতিধ্বনি করিয়া কহিতেছেন যে, নীতি পরিদর্শকগণের বহুক্ষেত্র-বিস্তৃত কার্য্যাবলী ব্রাহ্মণদের জাতিগত ক্ষমতা পরিচালনার পথে অন্তরায় হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছিল।† কিন্তু পঞ্চম ও দ্বাদশ গিরিলিপি ও সপ্তম স্তম্ভলিপিতে ধর্ম্মমহামাত্রদের যে কর্ত্তব্যের নির্দ্দেশ করা হইয়াছে তাহা হইতে ব্রাহ্মণদের কোন অধিকারচ্যুতির প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায় না। ধর্ম্মমহামাত্রেরা কেবলমাত্র নীতি-পরিদর্শক ছিলেন না, ধর্ম্ম ও নীতি প্রচার ব্যতীত কারাদণ্ড ও প্রাণদণ্ডাজ্ঞা সংশোধন, রাজভ্রাতৃবধূগণের আবাসাদি পর্য্যবেক্ষণ ইত্যাদি নানা কার্য্য—যাহার সহিত নীতির কোন সম্পর্ক নাই—তাহাও ইঁহাদের করিতে হইত। বিশেষতঃ অব্রাহ্মণেরাই যে এই পদে নিযুক্ত হইতেন ইহার স্বপক্ষে কোন যুক্তি নাই।

স্মিথ্ অনুমান করিয়াছেন, ধর্ম্মমহামাত্র পদ সৃষ্টিদ্বারা বিরক্তিকর অনধিকারচর্চ্চা, বিদ্বেষ-প্রসূত অভিযোগ ও উৎকোচ গ্রহণের সুযোগ বাড়িয়া উঠিয়াছিল; কিন্তু ইহা প্রকৃত-পক্ষে তাঁহার কল্পনা প্রসূত।‡ পতিবেদকদিগের প্রতি অশোকের বিশেষ আদেশ ছিল যে ধর্ম্মমহামাত্রদিগের কার্য্য লইয়া কোনরূপ মতবৈপরীত্য উপস্থিত হইলে কেন্দ্রীয় শক্তির নিকট জানাইতে হইবে। বর্ত্তমান বৃটিশ রাজকর্ম্মচারীগণ অপেক্ষা অশোকের কর্ম্মচারীগণের উৎকোচ গ্রহণের বিশেষ কোনও সুবিধা ছিল বলিয়া মনে হয় না।

তৃতীয়তঃ শাস্ত্রীমহাশয় বলিতে চাহেন, অশোক দণ্ডসমতা ও ব্যবহারসমতা অর্থাৎ জাতিবর্ণনির্ব্বিশেষে সমান দণ্ড ও বিচার পদ্ধতি প্রবর্ত্তন করিয়া ব্রাহ্মণ ও অব্রাহ্মণদের মধ্যে সমস্ত পার্থক্য দূর করিয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু পাশ্চাত্য পণ্ডিতেরা বলিয়াছেন, যে সমস্ত অনুশাসনটীর প্রতি লক্ষ্য রাখিলে দেখা যায় দণ্ডসমতা ও ব্যবহার সমতার অর্থ—প্রদেশনির্ব্বিশেষে এক বিচার-পদ্ধতি। অনুশাসনটীর অর্থ এই,—যদিও প্রাদেশিক শাসন বিষয়ে রাজ্জুকদিগের কোন কোন বিষয়ে স্বাধীনতা থাকিল, কিন্তু সমগ্র সাম্রাজ্যব্যাপী এক বিচারপদ্ধতি দ্বারা সমগ্র সাম্রাজ্যের একত্ব ও সমতা রক্ষা করা হইবে। কিন্তু ব্রাহ্মণ ও অব্রাহ্মণের জন্য ভিন্ন ভিন্ন বিধি অশোকের সময় প্রচলিত ছিল একথা বলা আমাদের উদ্দেশ্য নহে। আমরা শুধু দেখাইতে চাহি, যদি ব্রাহ্মণের তথাকথিত কোন অধিকারের কোন হানি ঘটিয়া থাকে, তাহা অশোকের দ্বারা ঘটে নাই।

*Smith: Early History of India † Smith; Oxford History of India, ‡ Op. Cit.

চতুর্থতঃ, শাস্ত্রী মহাশয় যে বলিতে চাহেন যে অশোক ভূদেব (ব্রাহ্মণ)-গণকে অলীক প্রতিপন্ন করিয়াছিলেন, তাহাও ভিত্তিহীন। "ই নমি চ ফলেন অমিস সমন মুনিস জম্বুদিবা'সি' মিস দেবিহি"—ইহার মধ্যস্থিত "মিস" ও "অমিস" সিলভ্যাঁ লেভির মতে "মৃষা" ও "অমৃষার" অপভ্রংশ নহে, "মিশ্র" ও "অমিশ্রের" অপভ্রংশ।* তাহা হইলে সমস্ত পংক্তিটী এইরূপ হইবে—"এতেনতু কালেনামিশ্রা সন্তে মনুষ্যা মিশ্রা (কৃতাঃ দেবৈঃ সহ)।"

তাহা হইলে দেখা যাইতেছে অশোকের অনুশাসন কোন রূপেই ব্রাহ্মণদিগকে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত করে নাই। বরং দ্বাদশ গিরিলিপিতে ভিন্নধর্ম্মের প্রতি তাঁহার এরূপ উদারতা প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে যে বিপরীত প্রমাণাভাবে অশোককে ব্রাহ্মণনিপীড়ক বলিয়া কল্পনাও করা যাইতে পারে না।

কিন্তু ব্রাহ্মণেরা অশোকের দ্বারা নিপীড়িত হইয়াছিলেন এরূপ ধরিয়া লইলেও ব্রাহ্মণ্য অভ্যুত্থানকেই মৌর্য্যসাম্রাজ্যের অধঃপতনের একমাত্র কারণ বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করা যাইতে পারে না। ধর্ম্মবিপ্লবের দ্বারা রাষ্ট্রীয়বিপ্লব সংঘটিত হইবার উদাহরণ ভারতে অত্যন্ত বিরল।

ভারতীয় রাজবংশাবলীর ইতিহাস একটু গভীর ভাবে আলোচনা করিলে এই সিদ্ধান্তগুলি পরিস্ফুট হইয়া উঠে——প্রথমতঃ কোন প্রবল পরাক্রান্ত নৃপতি স্বীয় ব্যক্তিগত শৌর্য্য ও শক্তির প্রভাবে কোন সাম্রাজ্যের প্রতিষ্ঠা করেন। তাঁহার পরে কয়েক পুরুষ পর্য্যন্ত তাঁহার উপযুক্ত উত্তরাধিকারিগণের হস্তে সাম্রাজ্যটী সুপরিচালিত হইয়া ক্রমে ক্রমে উন্নতির শিখরদেশে আরোহণ করে। কিন্তু অবশেষে দুর্ব্বল বংশধরের অধীনে ইহার ধ্বংস সাধিত হয়। কণিষ্কের বিশাল সাম্রাজ্য শতাব্দীর অধিককাল স্থায়ী হয় নাই, গুপ্তসাম্রাজ্যের জীবনকাল সার্দ্ধশতাব্দীর কয়েক বৎসর মাত্র বেশী ছিল। অন্ধ্র, চালুক্য, রাষ্ট্রকূট ও মুসলমান আক্রমণকারীদের দ্বারা প্রতিষ্ঠিত সাম্রাজ্যেরও সেই দশা ঘটিয়াছিল। সাম্রাজ্যের উত্থান ও পতন যে একমাত্র ভারতেরই বিশেষত্ব তাহা নহে। ভারতের বাহিরেও অনুরূপ ঘটনার সন্ধান মিলিতে পারে। মিশর ও পশ্চিম এশিয়ায় যে একের পর এক সমুদ্রতরঙ্গের মত রাজবংশের উদয় ও বিলয় ঘটিয়াছিল তাহার গণনা কে করিবে? এথেনীয় সাম্রাজ্যের স্থিতি অর্দ্ধশতাব্দীকাল অতিক্রম করে নাই। ফিলিপীয় সাম্রাজ্যের অদৃষ্টেও অনুরূপ লিপি লিখিত হয় নাই। আপাতদৃষ্টিতে রোমক সাম্রাজ্যকে এই নিয়মের ব্যতিক্রম বলিয়া মনে হয়, কিন্তু গভীর ভাবে লক্ষ্য করিলে এই ধারণা দূর হইবে। ১৪৬ খৃঃ অব্দে যে বিশাল রোমসাম্রাজ্যের ভিত্তি স্থাপিত হয় তাহা সীজরের মৃত্যুর সহিতই প্রকৃতপক্ষে লয় প্রাপ্ত হয়। অগাষ্টস্ কর্ত্তৃক প্রতিষ্ঠিত দ্বিতীয় সাম্রাজ্য মাত্র এক শতাব্দীকাল তাঁহার বংশধরদের অধীনে ছিল। তাহার পরে যে যে রাজবংশ সিংহাসন অধিকার করে, তাহাদের মধ্যে কোনটীই বিশেষ

* Journal Asiatique.

দীর্ঘকালব্যাপী সৌভাগ্যের অধিকারী হয় নাই। আপত্তি উঠিতে পারে,—ভারতবর্ষ একটি দেশ মাত্র,—সুতরাং জগতের যে সকল সাম্রাজ্য একাধিক দেশ ও একাধিক জাতির উপর আধিপত্য বিস্তার করিয়াছিল তাহাদের সহিত ইহার তুলনা সম্ভবে না। কিন্তু একটু ভাবিয়া দেখিলেই বুঝা যাইবে বর্ত্তমান ভৌগোলিক সংজ্ঞা যাহাই হউক না কেন, আয়তনে, বহিরাকৃতিতে ও অনেক বিষয়ে ইহাকে মহাদেশ বলিলেও অত্যুক্তি হয় না। ইটালিকে বা মিশরকে কেন্দ্র করিয়া যে যে বিরাট সাম্রাজ্য গঠিত হইয়াছিল তাহার কোনটাই অশোকের সাম্রাজ্য অপেক্ষা বৃহত্তর নহে।

যে প্রণালীতে ভারতের ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনাবলী আলোচিত হইয়া থাকে তাহা হইতে সহজেই মনে আসে যে রাজবংশের উত্থান-পতন বিষয়ে ভারতবর্ষ অন্যান্য দেশ হইতে সম্পূর্ণ পৃথক। কিন্তু প্রকৃত ব্যাপার অন্যরূপ। অক্টেভিয়সের সাম্রাজ্য যেরূপ সেনাপতি সার্ভিয়াস্ সালপিসিয়াস্ গালবার করায়ত্ত হইয়াছিল, ঠিক সেইরূপেই মৌর্য্য-শাসিত ভূভাগ কালের আবর্ত্তনে পুষ্যমিত্রের অধিকৃত হইল। অন্ধ্র, কুশান ও গুপ্ত রাজগণের সহিত রোমের পরবর্ত্তী অন্যান্য রাজবংশের তুলনা অসঙ্গত নহে। এই ভাবে লক্ষ্য করিলে পারশ্য ও মিশর সাম্রাজ্যের সহিত ও ভারতীয় সাম্রাজ্যের প্রকৃতিগত অনৈক্য দূর হয়।

অতএব দেখা যাইতেছে, স্বাভাবিক কারণ বশতঃ প্রত্যেক বিশাল সাম্রাজ্যের মধ্যে ধ্বংসের বীজ উপ্ত হয়। এখন পর্য্যন্ত এই সকল কারণ প্রকৃত ভাবে নির্দ্দিষ্ট হয় নাই, কিন্তু অন্ততঃ পক্ষে কয়েকটী কারণ অনুমান করা যাইতে পারে। প্রথমতঃ, একথা মনে রাখিতে হইবে যে যুগে বাষ্পীয় বা বৈদ্যুতিক শক্তি আবিস্কৃত হয় নাই তখন বিশাল সাম্রাজ্য শৃঙ্খলার সহিত পরিচালনা করা বিশেষ কষ্টসাধ্য ছিল। যদি বর্ত্তমান সময়ে মহীশূরে কোনও রূপ গোলযোগের লক্ষণ দেখা যায়, অবিলম্বেই সুদূর দিল্লীতে সেই সংবাদ কর্ত্তৃপক্ষের গোচরীভূত করা যাইতে পারে, এবং শৃঙ্খলা প্রবর্ত্তনের জন্য দুই দিবসের মধ্যেই দিল্লী হইতে যোগ্য পরিমাণ সৈন্য পাঠানো যাইতে পারে। কিন্তু অশোকের সময়ে যদি অনুরূপ ঘটনা ঘটিত, তবে কেন্দ্রীয় শক্তির নিকট সেই সংবাদ পঁহুছিতেই একমাসের অধিক সময় অতিবাহিত হইত এবং তিন মাসকাল গত হইবার পূর্ব্বে উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ সৈন্য পাঠানো সম্ভবপর হইত না। এরূপ ক্ষেত্রে সূক্ষ্মদর্শী, উদ্যমশীল শাসকের উপস্থিতি ব্যতীত সাম্রাজ্য পরিচালনা সম্ভবপর হইতে পারে না। কিন্তু স্বাভাবিক নিয়ম অনুসারে একই বংশে পর্য্যায়ক্রমে এইরূপ সুদক্ষ শাসকের আবির্ভাব আশা করা যায় না। সুতরাং বাহুবলের দ্বারা বিজিত একটি বিরাট সাম্রাজ্য যে কেমন করিয়া ধীরে ধীরে ক্ষীণ হইতে হইতে দ্বিতীয় এক শক্তিমান ও সৌভাগ্যশীল পুরুষের দৃঢ়মুষ্টির ভিতর প্রবেশ করিয়া আবার নবজীবন লাভ করে তাহা দেখিয়া বিস্মিত হইবার কোন কারণ নাই। ঠিক এই কারণেই মৌর্য্য সাম্রাজ্যের বিলয় হওয়া অসম্ভব নহে।

বাহিরের ঘটনা অনেক সময়ে আভ্যন্তরীণ বিশৃঙ্খলার সহিত একত্রিত হইয়া বিশাল সাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংসসাধন সহজ করিয়া তুলিয়াছে। বর্ব্বরগণের দ্বারা আক্রান্ত হইয়াই লুপ্তশক্তি রোম সাম্রাজ্যের মৃত্যু ঘটিয়াছে। অসভ্য-হুন-আক্রমণই গুপ্ত সাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংসের কারণ। ক্ষীণায়মানা মৌর্য্যশক্তি যে বাহলীকবাসী যবনগণ কর্ত্তৃক ধর্ষিতা হইয়া শেষনিশ্বাস ত্যাগ করে নাই একথা কে বলিবে। পলিবিয়াসের সাক্ষ্যের উপর নির্ভর করিলে আনুমানিক ২০৬ খৃঃ অব্দে, সীমান্তপ্রদেশস্থ কোন শাসনকর্ত্তা স্বাধীনভাবে সুদূর সিরিয়ার সম্রাটের সহিত যুদ্ধ ও সন্ধি করিতেছিলেন একথা মানিতে হয়। তাহা হইলে দেখা যাইতেছে, ঐ সময় বা উহার পূর্ব্ব হইতেই মৌর্য্যপ্রভাব সীমান্ত প্রদেশে পঙ্গু হইয়া পড়িয়াছিল; সুতরাং যবনদের পক্ষে সীমান্ত লঙ্ঘনের পথ প্রশস্ত হইয়াই ছিল। গার্গীসংহিতাতে লিখিত হইয়াছে—

"ততঃ সাকেতমাক্রম্য পাঞ্চালাং মথুরাং স্তথা।
যবনো দুষ্টবিক্রান্তঃ, প্রাপ্স্যতি কুসুম-ধ্বজম্॥
ততঃ পুষ্প-পুরে প্রাপ্তে কর্দ্দমে প্রথিতে হিতে।
আকুলা বিষয়াঃ সর্ব্বে ভবিষ্যন্তি ন সংশয়াঃ॥"

এই কয়েকটি পংক্তির অব্যবহিত পূর্ব্বেই "শালিশূক" এই নামের উল্লেখ থাকায় মনে হয় যে লেখক যবন কর্ত্তৃক মৌর্য্যসাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংস বর্ণনা করিতেছেন। গার্গী সংহিতার এই বিবরণের ঐতিহাসিকতা সম্বন্ধে ফ্লীট্ সন্দেহ প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। কিন্তু সমসাময়িক গ্রীক সাহিত্য প্রদত্ত বিবরণ হইতে শুধু যে এই বিবরণের সত্যতা উপলব্ধি হইবে নহে,—গার্গী সংহিতা যে সকল বিশেষতথ্য সম্বন্ধে মৌন রহিয়াছে সে সকল বিষয়ও পরিষ্কার হইয়া যাইবে। যবনরাজ ডিমেট্রিয়স ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করিয়াছিলেন। গ্রীক ঐতিহাসিকগণ তাঁহাকে ভারতের রাজা এই গর্ব্বিত পদবীতে ভূষিত করিয়াছেন। সুতরাং ডিমেট্রিয়স্ ভারতের কয়েকটি প্রদেশ নিজ রাজ্যভুক্ত করিয়া লইয়াছিলেন এইরূপ সিদ্ধান্ত করা অন্যায় হইবে না। ডিমেট্রিয়সের ভারত আক্রমণ ও মৌর্য্যবংশের অধঃপতন প্রায় একই সময় ঘটিয়াছিল; এই দুইটী ঘটনার মধ্যে কার্য্যকারণ সম্বন্ধ থাকা অসম্ভব নহে।

(ক্রমশঃ)

বঙ্কিম-শরৎ সমিতি

শরৎ-জন্মতিথি উৎসব

বিগত ৩১শে ভাদ্র শ্রদ্ধেয় শ্রীযুক্ত শরৎচন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের পঞ্চপঞ্চাশত্তম জন্মোৎসব উপলক্ষে তাঁহাকে সমিতির এক বিশেষ অধিবেশনে লইয়া আসা হইয়াছিল। বাঙলার সর্ব্বশ্রেষ্ঠ কথাশিল্পীকে তাঁহার জন্মদিনে অভিনন্দিত করার ইচ্ছা ছিল; কিন্তু দেশের সঙ্কটকালে তিনি অভিনন্দন গ্রহণ করিতে অসম্মত হওয়াতে, সে সৌভাগ্য আমাদের হয় নাই।

সমিতির কার্য্য আরম্ভ হইবার পূর্ব্বে শ্রীযুক্তা বীণা চক্রবর্ত্তী "বন্দেমাতরম্" গানটী করেন। তৎপরে সভাপতি অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় বলেন—"এই দিনটী আমাদের বিশেষ স্মরণীয়, কেননা, বৎসরান্তে এই একটি দিনেই শুধু আমরা শ্রদ্ধেয় শরৎচন্দ্রকে অভিনন্দিত করবার সুযোগ পাই।...আমরা প্রার্থনা করি যে তাঁর মানসিক শক্তি দিন দিন বৃদ্ধিপ্রাপ্ত হোক...'। কথাপ্রসঙ্গে সভাপতি মহাশয় বলেন, এই সমিতিরই অনুপ্রেরণায় অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত সুবোধচন্দ্র সেনগুপ্ত তাঁর 'শরৎ-প্রতিভা" লিখিয়াছেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত শরৎচন্দ্র বলেন—'ছেলেরা যখন বল্লে, 'আপনার সঙ্গে বৎসরান্তে মিলে' আনন্দ পাই, এবারে বঞ্চিত হব কেন? আমি উত্তরে বলি যে ব্যক্তিগত সম্মানে আমি কুণ্ঠিত, তবে ছেলে-দের ভালবাসা অস্বীকার করা যায় না, সুতরাং আমি যাবো, কিন্তু কোনো আয়োজন কোরো না।...সভাপতি মহাশয় বল্লেন যে যে পঞ্চান্ন বৎসরে চাকুরী-জীবনে একটা মুক্তির আস্বাদ পাওয়া যায়। আমার জীবনে শক্তির বিশেষ ক্ষয় হয়েছে বলে বুঝিনে। কিন্তু এত দুঃসময় পড়েছে—নূতন কিছু দেওয়া এত অনিশ্চিত যে জোর করে কিছুই বলা যায় না। যদি বেঁচে থাকি, আর যদি এ আঁধার কেটে যায়, তবে ছেলেদের সবরকম ক্ষোভ আমি ঘুচিয়ে দেব। আজ কিন্তু আমি কিছু গ্রহণ করিতে অক্ষম। এ ব্যক্তিগত সম্মানের দিন নয়, আনন্দের দিন নয়, এবং মনের এই চঞ্চল অবস্থায় বিশেষ কিছু বলা সঙ্গত হবে না; সময়ও এ নয়।"

পরে অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত চারুচন্দ্র ভট্টাচার্য্য ছাত্রদের পক্ষ হইতে বলেন যে অভিনন্দন না লইয়া শরৎচন্দ্র আরও বেশী শ্রদ্ধা অর্জ্জন করিয়াছেন। শ্রীগৌরীনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য বলেন—"আমাদের মধ্যে তাঁর আসাতেই আমাদের শ্রম সার্থক হয়েছে; দেশের সুদিনে এসে তিনি যেন আমাদের কিছু শোনান। শ্রীসুনীল সরকার বলেন—"দেশের যাঁরা বড়, তাঁদের নিয়ে এই যে আমাদের আনন্দপ্রকাশ, এ শুধু একটা উৎসব নয়, এটা আমাদের সাধনা।"

শ্রীযুক্তা তৃপ্তি মজুমদার, শ্রীযুক্তা শান্তিলতা মৈত্র, শ্রীযুক্তা সুধীরা দাসগুপ্তা, শ্রীযুক্ত হরিপদ রায়, শ্রীযুক্ত সুনীল সরকার, শ্রীযুক্ত ধীরেন্দ্র চট্টোপাধ্যায়, শ্রীযুক্ত ধীরাজ আচার্য্য

প্রভৃতি গান গাহিয়াছিলেন। সভাশেষে শ্রীগৌরীনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য সমিতির পক্ষ হইতে সভাপতি এবং উপস্থিত ভদ্রমণ্ডলীকে ধন্যবাদ জানান।

শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়
সম্পাদক।

গত ৬ই অগ্রহায়ণ অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের সভাপতিত্বে সমিতির ৪র্থ বর্ষের প্রথম অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। প্রবীণ সাহিত্যিক অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয়চন্দ্র মজুমদার মহাশয় "বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের সাহিত্যসাধনা" সম্বন্ধে একটি সুচিন্তিত বক্তৃতা প্রদান করেন। বাঙলা সাহিত্যের একটী ধারাবাহিক ইতিহাসের উল্লেখ করিয়া তিনি বঙ্কিমচন্দ্রের রচনার ভাষা, ভাব ও স্বদেশপ্রীতির বিষয়ে আলোচনা করেন। সভাপতি মহাশয়ও বিষয়টি লইয়া বিশদরূপে আলোচনা করিয়াছিলেন। সমিতির পক্ষ হইতে সভাপতি ও উপস্থিত ভদ্রমহোদয়গণকে ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করা হয়।

শ্রীঅমলেন্দু ভট্টাচার্য্য
শ্রীমন্মথনাথ শিকদার
সম্পাদক।

রবীন্দ্র পরিষদ্

তৃতীয় বর্ষের নবম অধিবেশন।

৩০শে ভাদ্র, পরিষদের নবম অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত নীহাররঞ্জন রায় "শেষের কবিতা" সম্বন্ধে একটী প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীযুক্তা প্রিয়ম্বদা দেবী ও শ্রীযুক্তা ইন্দিরা দেবী চৌধুরাণী সভায় উপস্থিত ছিলেন। প্রবন্ধলেখক বলেন যে রবীন্দ্রনাথ এই বইটিতে আশ্চর্য্য তারুণ্যের পরিচয় দিয়াছেন। তিনি উপন্যাসটির ভাষার অপরূপ ভঙ্গীর কথা উল্লেখ করেন এবং বিশেষ করিয়া কেতকীর চরিত্রের প্রতি সকলের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করেন। প্রবন্ধটি পরিষদের নিজ্রান্তিরূপে প্রকাশিত হইবে।

শ্রীযুক্ত সোমনাথ মৈত্র বলেন যে কবি একটি বিশেষ ভঙ্গী অনুসরণ করিয়াছেন বলিয়া গল্পের গতিভঙ্গী একটু বাধা পাইয়াছে। তাঁহার মতে অমিতর চরিত্র কতকটা অস্পষ্ট—যেন একটা "magnificent literary gesture" শ্রীযুক্ত অতুলচন্দ্র গুপ্ত বলেন যে রবীন্দ্রনাথের বহু গল্প এবং উপন্যাসে সর্ব্বত্র তাঁহার lyrical ক্ষমতা প্রকাশ পাইয়াছে। "কেতকীকে" লইয়া প্রবন্ধকার কাব্যের উপেক্ষিতার সৃষ্টি করিয়াছেন, কিন্তু হয়তো কবির সে উদ্দেশ্য ছিল না।

ছাত্রসদস্যদের মধ্য হইতে শ্রীগৌরীনাথ ভট্টাচার্য্য ও শ্রীরণধীর শর্ম্মাসরকার প্রবন্ধটি লইয়া আলোচনা করেন। সভার শেষে শ্রীপ্রতুল গুপ্ত সদস্যদের পক্ষ হইতে সকলকে কৃতজ্ঞতা জ্ঞাপন করেন। শ্রীবিজয় আচার্য্য সভার প্রথমে "জনগণমনঅধিনায়ক" গানটি গাহিয়াছিছেন।

শ্রীপ্রতুল গুপ্ত
সম্পাদক

প্রবন্ধ প্রতিযোগিতা

রবীন্দ্র পরিষদ্ হইতে একটি প্রবন্ধ প্রতিযোগিতার ব্যবস্থা করা হইয়াছে। প্রথম পুরস্কার—স্বর্ণপদক ; দ্বিতীয় পুরস্কার—রবীন্দ্রনাথের কয়েকটি বই। প্রবন্ধের বিষয়—"সাহিত্য-বিচারে রবীন্দ্রনাথ"। যে কোনো কলেজের ছাত্র, ছাত্রী বা রিসার্চ ষ্টুডেণ্ট্ প্রতিযোগিতায় যোগদান করিতে পারেন। আগামী ১৫ই মাঘের পূর্ব্বে প্রবন্ধ রবীন্দ্রপরিষদের সেক্রেটারীর নিকট বা ১০৪, বকুলবাগান রোডে অধ্যাপক সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত মহাশয়ের নিকট পাঠাইতে হইবে।

17/3.

মৌর্য্য সাম্রাজ্যের পতন ও ভারতে যবন-আক্রমণ।

(পূর্ব্বানুবৃত্তি)

শ্রীসৌরীন্দ্রনাথ রায়,—চতুর্থ বর্ষ, ইতিহাস।

কালিদাসের "মালবিকাগ্নিমিত্র" নাটকে অগ্নিমিত্র বিদিশার রাজা ও পুষ্যমিত্র সেনাপতি বলিয়া আখ্যাত হইয়াছেন। উইলসন্ ও শঙ্কর পাণ্ডুরাং এই মত প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন যে পুষ্যমিত্র পুত্র অগ্নিমিত্রের জন্যই এই সাম্রাজ্য অধিকার করিয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু অনুরূপ ঘটনা ইতিহাসে নাই বলিলেও হয়। পুষ্যমিত্র আপনার উদ্দেশ্যেই একটী রাজসূয় যজ্ঞ করেন, পুত্রের উদ্দেশ্যে নহে। অগ্নিমিত্রের নিকট প্রেরিত পুষ্যমিত্রের পত্রের নিম্নলিখিত পংক্তি টী,—"সোহম্ ইদাণীম্ অংশুমতেব সগর পৌত্রেণ প্রত্যাহৃতাশ্বোযক্ষ্যে"—হইতে অন্যকোন সিদ্ধান্ত করা যায় না। পাতঞ্জলিও মহাভাষ্যে লিখিতেছেন,—"ইহ পুষ্যমিত্রং যজয়ামহে (আমরা পুষ্যমিত্রের দ্বারা যজ্ঞ সম্পাদন করাইতেছি)। ইহা হইতেও পুষ্যমিত্রের নিজ উদ্দেশ্যেই যজ্ঞ সাধনের কথা সূচিত হইতেছে। যাঁহার নিজের স্বার্থে এই বিরাট যজ্ঞ অনুষ্ঠিত হইয়াছিল তিনি তাঁহার পুত্রের সহকর্ম্মী মাত্র হইয়া ছিলেন এরূপ সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করা কঠিণ। পুরাণ ও পুষ্যমিত্রকে শুঙ্গ বংশের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা ও প্রথম নৃপতি রূপে উল্লেখ করিয়াছে। নির্দ্দিষ্টনৃপতিবাচক রাজন্ শব্দের সহিত সভা শব্দের সমাস হইলে সমস্ত পদটী স্ত্রীলিঙ্গ হইবে, এই নিয়মের উদাহরণ দিতে গিয়া পতঞ্জলি "পুষ্যমিত্রসভা" লিখিয়াছেন। ইহা হইতেও পুষ্যমিত্রের রাজত্ব সূচিত হইতেছে, এবং সমসাময়িক বিবরণের উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত বলিয়া এই সিদ্ধান্তের ঐতিহাসিক মূল্য অধিক বলিয়া মনে হইতেছে। দিব্যাবদানেও পুষ্যমিত্র রাজা অখ্যায় ভূষিত হইয়াছেন। এই প্রমাণগুলির উপর নির্ভর করিয়া বলিতে হইতেছে, পুষ্যমিত্র বৃহদ্রথের হত্যার পর রাজসিংহাসনে আরোহণ করেনা।

এখন প্রশ্ন উঠিতে পারে, মালবিকাগ্নিমিত্রে পুষ্যমিত্র কেন সেনাপতি বলিয়া অভিহিত হইয়াছেন? কোনও যোগ্য উত্তর দেওয়া সম্ভব পর নহে। কিন্তু পরবর্ত্তী ইতিহাস হইতে অনুরূপ উদাহরণের সন্ধান মিলিতে পারে। মোগল সাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংসের পর প্রকৃত পক্ষে স্বাধীন প্রদেশীয় শাসন কর্ত্তাগণ অবিলম্বেই রাজউপাধি গ্রহণ করেন নাই। মহারাষ্ট্রের পেশওয়া ও মধ্যযুগীয় ফ্রান্সের মেয়র অব্ দি প্যালেস্ ও আরো দুইটী দৃষ্টান্ত। ইম্পারেটর্ প্রথমতঃ সামরিক উপাধি মাত্র ছিল। সিংহাসনে দৃঢ় প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইবার পরও রোমকসম্রাটেরা এ উপাধি পরিত্যাগ করেন নাই। মগধের বিম্বিসার ও সেনীয় (সেনাপতি) নামে পরিচিত ছিলেন, অথচ তাঁহারই পুত্র সর্ব্বত্র রাজারূপে আখ্যাত হইয়াছেন।* ইহা অসম্ভব নহে যে পুষ্যমিত্রও বালাজী বাজীরাও,

*Bhandarkar: Carmichael Lectures.

চার্লস্ মার্টেন্, অক্টেভিয়াস্ অথবা বিম্বিসারের ন্যায় সাম্রাজ্যের সর্ব্বময় কর্ত্তৃত্ব করায়ত্ত করিয়াও রাজনৈতিক কারণহেতু কিছুকাল পর্য্যন্ত সম্রাট পদবী গ্রহণ করেন নাই। ইহা আরও সম্ভবপর যে, যেসময়ে পতঞ্জলি মহাভাষ্যে "পুষ্যমিত্রসভার" উল্লেখ করেন সেই সময়ে বা তাহার অচির-পূর্ব্বে পুষ্যমিত্র আপনাকে প্রকৃতপক্ষে রাজা বলিয়া ঘোষণা করিয়াছিলেন। আমাদের এই সিদ্ধান্তের অনুকূলে বিবেচনা করিবার আরও কয়েকটী বিষয় আছে।

মেরুতুঙ্গ আচার্য্য থেরাবলীর এক গাথায় বলিতেছেন,—"পালকের রাজ্যকাল ষাট বৎসর, নন্দবংশের রাজত্বকাল ১৫০ বৎসর, মৌর্য্যদের ১০৮ বৎসর, পুষ্যমিত্রের ত্রিশ বৎসর" ইত্যাদি। (প্রাকৃত বহুকাল পূর্ব্বেই জৈন ধর্ম্মসাহিত্যের ভাষাপদ হইতে বিচ্যুত হইয়াছে এই যুক্তিতে অধ্যাপক চার্পেন্টিয়ার মেরুতুঙ্গকে এই গাথার রচয়িতা বলিয়া স্বীকার করিতে অনিচ্ছুক। কিন্তু একশত বৎসর পূর্ব্বেও জৈনাচার্য্য হেমচন্দ্র প্রাকৃতেই কাব্য রচনা করিয়াছিলেন। যদিও মেরুতুঙ্গকে গাথার রচয়িতা বলিয়া স্বীকার না করা যায় তাহা হইলে নিশ্চয়ই মেরুতুঙ্গের পূর্ব্বগামী কোনও জৈনাচার্য্য মেরুতুঙ্গের অনেক পূর্ব্বে এই গাথা রচনা করিয়া থাকিবেন। তাহা হইলে গাথার ঐতিহাসিক মূল্য আরও বৃদ্ধি পাইল।) পুরাণ কিন্তু মৌর্য্যরাজত্বকাল ১৩৭ বৎসর বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করিয়াছে। গাথার বিবরণ অপেক্ষা পুরাণের বিবরণেরই প্রকৃত ঘটনার সহিত অধিকতর মিল আছে। মহাবংশের মতে প্রথম তিন মৌর্য্য রাজা একত্রে ৮৯ বৎসর এবং পুরাণ মতে ৮৫ বৎসর রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন। যদি সম্প্রতির রাজত্বকাল ২০ বৎসর হয় এবং মৌর্য্যদের মোট রাজত্বকাল ১০৮ বৎসর বলিয়া ধরা হয় তাহা হইলে সম্প্রতির পরবর্ত্তী শেষ পাঁচ রাজার জন্য মাত্র তিনবৎসর কাল থাকে বা কিছুই থাকেনা (১০৮—৮৫—২০=৩, এবং ১০৮—৮৯—২০=—১)। এইসকল অসুবিধা দেখাইয়া বোধ হয় স্মিথ্ পৌরাণিক বিবরণের উপর সম্পূর্ণ নির্ভর করিয়া পুষ্যমিত্রের সিংহাসনারোহণ কাল ১৮৫ খৃঃ পূঃ সালে ঘটিয়াছিল বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করিয়াছেন। কিন্তু জৈনমত গ্রহণ করিলে (৩২৩—১০৮=২১৫) ২১৫ খৃঃ পূঃ এই ঘটনা ঘটিয়াছিল বলিয়া মানিতে হয়। এই আপাতঃ বিরোধের কারণ আর কিছুই নয়। মধ্যদেশের রাষ্ট্রনৈতিক ঘটনা বর্ণনা করাই পুরাণের উদ্দেশ্য ছিল, কিন্তু থেরাবলী শুধু অবন্তীর কথা লইয়াই বিব্রত। এইজন্য মনে হয়, মৌর্য্যসাম্রাজ্যের দক্ষিণ-পশ্চিম অংশ ২১৫ অব্দেই পুষ্যমিত্রের করায়ত্ত হইয়াছিল এবং ১৮৫ অব্দের পূর্ব্বে তিনি সম্রাট্ উপাধি গ্রহণ করেন নাই। মেরুতুঙ্গ যে বিশেষ করিয়া অবন্তীর ঘটনা লইয়াই বিব্রত ছিলেন, আরও কয়েকটী বিষয় হইতে তাহার প্রমাণ পাওয়া যাইবে। মেরুতুঙ্গ বলিতেছেন নন্দবংশের রাজত্বের পূর্ব্বে পালক রাজা ছিলেন; কিন্তু হেমচন্দ্র ও পৌরাণিক কাহিনী অনুসারে এই রাজার নাম উদয়। নিশ্চয়ই নন্দেরা উদয়ের পরে মগধের রাজা হন এবং অবন্তীতে পালকের মৃত্যুর পর তাহাদের প্রভাব বিস্তৃত হয়। মেরুতুঙ্গ নন্দবংশের রাজত্বকাল ১৫৫

বৎসর বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করিয়াছেন; কিন্তু হেমচন্দ্রমতে এই রাজত্বকাল ৯৫ বৎসর ও পুরাণ অনুযায়ী ১০০ বৎসর। ইহা অসম্ভব নয় যে চন্দ্রগুপ্ত কর্ত্তৃক মগধের নন্দ প্রভাব বিনষ্ট হইবার পর আরও প্রায় ৫৫ বৎসর অবন্তীতে তাঁহাদের আধিপত্য বজায় ছিল। ষ্টেন কনো বলেন চন্দ্রগুপ্ত ৩১২ খৃঃ পূঃ অবন্তী বিজয় করেন। অতএব তাঁহার মতে চন্দ্রগুপ্ত আরও প্রায় ৫৫ বৎসর পূর্ব্বে মগধ অধিকার করেন। এই সিদ্ধান্ত সম্পূর্ণ অসম্ভব। পৌরাণিক ও জৈন কানীহির গরিমল দূর করিবার জন্য তাঁহার এই চেষ্টা সম্পূর্ণ নিরর্থক হইয়াছে। তাঁহার মতে (৩১২—১০৮ অর্থাৎ) ২০৪ অব্দে পুষ্যমিত্র অবন্তীতে আধিপত্য বিস্তার করেন এবং আরও ৩০ বৎসর পরে অর্থাৎ ১৭৪ অব্দে তিনি মগধেরও সিংহাসন অধিকার করেন। কিন্তু যদি ধরা যায় যে ত্রিশবৎসর তিনি অবন্তীতে রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন, সে ত্রিশবৎসরই মগধে মৌর্য্য-আধিপত্যবিনাশের পর ঘটিয়াছিল বলিয়া নির্দ্দিষ্ট হইয়াছে কেন? ষ্টেন কনো এবিষয়ে নিরুত্তর। কিন্তু পৌরাণিক বিবরণের আলোচনার দ্বারাই ইহার উত্তর মিলিবে। বায়ুপুরাণ মতে পুষ্যমিত্র ৬০ বৎসর রাজত্ব করেন এবং শুঙ্গদের মোট রাজ্যকাল ১১২ বৎসর। কিন্তু শুঙ্গবংশীয় বিভিন্ন নৃপতির রাজত্বকাল যোগ করিয়া ১৪২ বৎসর হয়। তাহা হইলে মোটামুটি ত্রিশবৎসরের গরমিল ঘটিতেছে। পুষ্যমিত্রের রাজত্বকাল ত্রিশবৎসর ধরিলে এ গরমিল ঘটে না। তাহা হইলে মনে হয় পুষ্যমিত্র যে ত্রিশবৎসরকাল মগধের সর্ব্বেসর্ব্বা হইয়াও মৌর্য্যসম্রাটের সেনাপতির মত আচরণ করিতেছিলেন সেই ত্রিশবৎসর পৌরাণিক লেখক গণ শুঙ্গ রাজত্বকালের মোট বৎসরের অন্তর্ভুক্ত করেন নাই, তাঁহারা ১৮৫ খৃঃ পূঃ হইতেই শুঙ্গরাজ্যকাল গণণা করিয়াছেন। অতএব এই সিদ্ধান্ত স্থির বলিয়া মনে হইতেছে যে বৃহদ্রথের মৃত্যুর পূর্ব্বে ত্রিশবৎসরকাল পুষ্যমিত্র মৌর্য্যসাম্রাজ্য তাঁহারই নামে শাসন করেন। পরে মৌর্য্যসম্রাটের মৃত্যু হইলে তিনি আরও ত্রিশবৎসরকাল রাজত্ব করেন। এই সিদ্ধান্তের বিরুদ্ধে একমাত্র আপত্তি এই যে এক ব্যক্তির পক্ষে ষাট্ বৎসরের ন্যায় দীর্ঘকাল রাজা থাকা অত্যন্ত অসম্ভব পর। কিন্তু আমরা যদি ধরিয়া লই যে পুষ্যমিত্র অত্যন্ত তরুণ বয়সে রাজকীয় ক্ষমতা লাভ করেন, বৃদ্ধ বয়সে দেহ ত্যাগ করেন (বিম্বিসার মাত্র ১৫ বৎসর বয়সে লিচ্ছবি প্রভাব লুপ্ত করিয়া মগধ সিংহাসন অধিকার করেন—মহাবংশ) এবং তাঁহার পুত্র ও পৌত্রগণ সকলেই সক্ষম, পিতৃভক্ত ও রাষ্ট্রবিদ্ ছিলেন তাহাহইলে এই ব্যাপারকে অদ্ভুত বলিয়া উড়াইয়া দেওয়া যাইতে পারে না।

উল্লিখিত প্রমাণগুলির উপর নির্ভর করিয়া আমরা আমাদের বক্তব্য এইরূপে সংক্ষেপে বিবৃত করিতেছি :—

মৌর্য্যরাজত্বের শেষভাগে পুষ্যমিত্র বিশেষ ক্ষমতাশালী হইয়া উঠেন। পূর্ব্বহইতেই চারিদিকে সাম্রাজ্যের ধ্বংসের সূচনা হইয়াছিল। দূরবর্ত্তী প্রদেশের শাসনকর্ত্তা বা সামন্ত

নৃপতিগণ সুবিধা পাইয়া একে একে মৌর্য্য অধিনতাপাশ ছিন্ন করিতে লাগিলেন। কালিদাস কর্ত্তৃক "অচিরাধিষ্ঠিত" বলিয়া বর্ণিত, মৌর্য্যমন্ত্রীর আত্মীয় যজ্ঞসেন নামক এক ব্যক্তি বিদর্ভে আপনাকে স্বাধীন নরপতিরূপে ঘোষণা করিলেন। পলিবিয়াসের কথা বিশ্বাস করিতে গেলে শোভগসেন নামক আর এক ব্যক্তি সীমান্ত প্রদেশে স্বাধীন রাজার ন্যায় আচরণ করিতে লাগিলেন। উত্তর-পশ্চিম হইতে যবনগণের আক্রমণ সমস্ত সাম্রাজ্যে বিভীষিকা উপস্থিত করিল। চারিদিকের এই বিশৃঙ্খলাকে উপযুক্ত অবসর বলিয়া মনে করিয়া এই ভগ্নপ্রায় সাম্রাজকে একছত্রতলে সমবেত করিয়া নূতন জীবন সঞ্চারের জন্য পুষ্যমিত্র সম্মুখে অগ্রসর হইলেন। অর্ম্মকণ্য মৌর্য্যনৃপতির সমস্ত শক্তি খর্ব্ব করিয়া তিনি সর্ব্বপ্রথম সাম্রাজ্যের পশ্চিম-দক্ষিণ প্রান্ত অর্থাৎ অবন্তী (বিদিশা) তে আপনার আধিপত্য দৃঢ়রূপে প্রতিষ্ঠিত করিয়া লইলেন; কিন্তু মৌর্য্যসম্রাটকে তখনও তিনি প্রভু বলিয়া স্বীকার করিতে লাগিলেন। অবন্তীতে প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইবার এই কয়টী কারণ নির্দ্দেশ করা যাইতে পারে। (১) সাম্রাজ্যে ঐক্য আনয়ন করিতে হইলে সর্ব্বপ্রথমে এমন একটী স্থানে আপনাকে দৃঢ় প্রতিষ্ঠিত করা আবশ্যক যেখান হইতে ইচ্ছামত চারিদিকে ক্রমে আপনার আধিপত্য ও প্রভাব বিস্তার করা যাইতে পারে। পাটলিপুত্র মৌর্য্য গৌরবের সহিত এরূপ ভাবে সংশ্লিষ্ট ছিল যে সেখানে পুষ্যমিত্রের উদ্দেশ্য সফল হওয়া কঠিন ছিল। পক্ষান্তরে অবন্তী দূরবর্ত্তী স্থান, সেখানে মৌর্য্যমাহাত্ম্য ক্রমশঃ ক্ষীণ হইয়া আসিতেছিল। (২) অবন্তী অধিকারের দ্বারা পুষ্যমিত্র "প্রকৃত্যামিত্র" (প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বী) বিদর্ভরাজ যজ্ঞসেনের কার্য্যকলাপ পর্য্যবেক্ষণ সম্ভব ছিল। সেখান হইতে যজ্ঞসেনের উত্তরাপথ অভিযানের সকল প্রকার চেষ্টা ব্যর্থ্যকরা সহজসাধ্য ছিল। (৩) যবনগণ সীমান্তপার হইয়া চারিদিকে অগ্রসর হইতেছিল। অবন্তী করায়ত্ত থাকিলে অন্ততঃপক্ষে সেই দিকে যবনদিগের গতি অগ্রসর নিরুদ্ধ হইবে। (৪) পুষ্যমিত্র কর্ত্তৃক অবন্তী শাসনে মৌর্য্যসম্রাট্ বা বিদর্ভরাজ কাহারও আপত্তি হইবার কারণ ছিলনা। অন্য শাসকের অধীনে রাজ্য বিশৃঙ্খল হওয়া অপেক্ষা পুষ্যমিত্রের শাসনে সুরক্ষিত ও সুপরিচালিত হওয়া অধিকতর লোভনীয় ছিল। আবার পুষ্যমিত্র অবন্তী হইতে সরিয়া গেলে যবনদিগের সহিত বিদর্ভরাজের সাক্ষাৎ সম্বন্ধে সংঘর্ষ হইবার সম্ভাবনা ছিল। এই সকল কারণেই পুষ্যমিত্র অগ্নিমিত্রকে বিদিশার রাজপদে নিযুক্ত করিয়া স্বয়ং রাজধানীতে সেনাপতি রূপে আপনার প্রভাব ও ব্যক্তিত্ব বিস্তার লাগিলেন। কিন্তু এখন পর্য্যন্তও রাজা প্রিয়দর্শীর বংশকে নির্ম্মূল করিয়া স্বয়ং সম্রাটপদবী গ্রহণের সাহস তাঁহার হইলনা। পরবর্ত্তী ইতিহাসে অনুরূপ ঘটনা বিরল নহে।—যখন মোগল বংশধরগণ তাঁহাদের সমস্ত রাজকীয় শক্তি হারাইয়া ইংরাজের বৃত্তিভোগী মাত্র হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছিলেন তখন তাহাদের বাদশাহ উপাধি ব্যবহারের অনুমতি দেওয়া হইয়াছিল এবং ইংরাজকোম্পানী কেবলমাত্র তাঁহাদের দেওয়ানের মত আচরণ করিতেছিলেন। দ্বিতীয়তঃ যবনদিগের নিকট হইতে পুষ্যমিত্রের

শঙ্কা ছিল; তাহাদিগকে ভারত হইতে দূরীভূত করিয়া আপনার আসন দৃঢ় করিতে না পারা পর্য্যন্ত তাঁহার স্বস্তি ছিল না। এই সংকল্প সিদ্ধ হইলেই তাঁহার পক্ষে নামমাত্র সম্রাটকে সিংহাসন হইতে অপসারিত করিয়া রাজসূয় যজ্ঞেরদ্বারা আপনাকে সমগ্র সাম্রাজ্যের অধীশ্বর বলিয়া ঘোষণা করার পথে দ্বিতীয় বাধা রহিল না।

গার্গীসংহিতার লিখিত যবন আক্রমণের কথা পূর্ব্বেই বলা হইয়াছে। পতঞ্জলির মুণ্ডের উদাহরণ হইতে আমরা এই ঘটনার একটী সমসাময়িক সাক্ষ্য পাইতেছি। * কালিদাসের মালবিকাগ্নিমিত্রেও পুষ্যমিত্রের সৈন্যকর্ত্তৃক যবনদিগের পরাজয়ের উল্লেখ আছে। ষ্ট্রাবো মিনাণ্ডার ও ডিমেট্রিয়স্‌কে, এবং জাষ্টিন্ ও এপলোডরস কেবলমাত্র মিনাণ্ডারকে ভারত আক্রমণকারী গ্রীকরাজা বলিয়া বর্ণনা করিয়াছেন। এইজন্য স্মিথ্, রমাপ্রসাদ চন্দ এবং রাখালদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মিনাণ্ডারের সহিতই পুষ্যমিত্রের সংঘর্ষ ঘটিয়াছিল বলিয়া ধরিয়াছেন। কিন্তু রামকৃষ্ণগোপাল ভাণ্ডারকরের মতে এই নৃপতির নাম ডিমেট্রিয়স্।

এই দুই নৃপতির মধ্যে ভারত আক্রমণের দাবী কাহার অধিক সে কথা বিবেচনা করিয়া দেখা যাউক।

রমাপ্রসাদ চন্দ মহাশয়ের মতে পুষ্যমিত্র ১৮৫ খ্রীঃ পূঃ সিংহাসনারোহণ করেন। যদি ১৭৫ অব্দে ডিমেট্রিয়স ইউক্রেটাইডেস্ কর্ত্তৃক নিহত হইয়া থাকেন তবে তাঁহার পক্ষে ভারত আক্রমণের অবসর থাকিল কোথায়? কিন্তু উত্তরে বলা যাইতে পারে যে পুষ্যমিত্র ২১৫ অব্দেই শক্তিশালী হইয়া উঠেন এবং ডিমেট্রিয়স্ ২০৬ অব্দে ঐতিহাসিক রঙ্গমঞ্চে প্রবিষ্ট হন। দ্বিতীয়তঃ ডিমেট্রিয়স্ যে ১৭৫ অব্দে নিহতই হন ইহার কোনওরূপ প্রমাণ নাই, সুতরাং উভয়স্থলেই তাঁহার ভারত আক্রমণের যথেষ্ট অবসর ছিল।

বিষয়টী পূর্ণভাবে আলোচনা করিলে দেখা যাইবে মিনাণ্ডারের ভারতআক্রমণের অনুকূলে কোন প্রত্যক্ষ প্রমাণ নাই। যেসমস্ত উপাদান আজি পর্য্যন্ত ঐতিহাসিকের করায়ত্ত হইয়াছে তাহাহইতে পুষ্যমিত্রের সহিত তাঁহার সমসাময়িকত্ব প্রমাণ করাই কঠিন হইবে। স্মিথের মতে ১৭৫ অব্দে ইউক্রেটিডেস্ ডিমেট্রিয়সকে বক্ট্রিয়া হইতে বিচ্যুত করেন † (সুতরাং এই ঘটনা পুষ্যমিত্রের রাজ্যলাভের দশবৎসর পরে ঘটিয়া থাকিবে। তাঁহার মতে মিনাণ্ডার ইউক্রেটিডেসেরই বংশধর এবং ১৬০ হইতে ১৪০ অব্দে তিনি কাবুলে রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন)। একই পুস্তকের আর একস্থলে স্মিথ পুনরায় বলিয়াছেন যে মিনাণ্ডার ১৮০-১৬০ অব্দে কাবুল শাসন করিতেন। স্মিথের দ্বিতীয় মত মানিতে গেলে মিনাণ্ডারকে কিছুতেই ইউক্রেটিডেসের বংশধর

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*Bhandarkar: *Peep into the Early History.*

†Smith: *Oxford History of India.*

তৃতীয়তঃ, যদি মিনাণ্ডারই হেলিওক্লেসের অচিরপূর্ব্ববর্ত্তী কপিশানৃপতি হইতেন তবে উভয়ের দ্বারা একত্রে মুদ্রিত মুদ্রা পাওয়া যাইত। সেরূপ মুদ্রা নাই, পক্ষান্তরে ইউক্রেটিডেস্ ও হেলিওক্লেসের মিলিত মুদ্রা যথেষ্ট রহিয়াছে। মিনাণ্ডারকে হেলিওক্লেসের সমসাময়িকরূপে কল্পনা করিলে বিশেষ সুবিধা হইবে না। হেলিওক্লেস ১৪০ হইতে ১৩০ অব্দ পর্য্যন্ত কপিশা শাসন করিতেছিলেন। তাঁহার সমসাময়িক ডিমেট্রিয়স্-বংশধর প্রথম ষ্ট্রেটো পাঞ্জাবের উত্তর-পশ্চিমাংশের শাসক ছিলেন। কিন্তু মিনাণ্ডারের মুদ্রা হইতে জানিতে পারা যায় যে কপিশা ও উত্তর-পশ্চিম পাঞ্জাব উভয় স্থানই তাঁহার বিশাল রাজ্যের অন্তর্ভুক্ত ছিল। সুতরাং এইরূপ সিদ্ধান্ত করা অসঙ্গত নহে যে ষ্ট্রেটো ও হেলিওক্লেসের মৃত্যু হইবার পর মিনাণ্ডার রাজা হন। প্রত্যক্ষ প্রমাণের অভাবে এরূপ অদ্ভুত কল্পনা করা অন্যায় যে ষ্ট্রেটো ও তাঁহার প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বী হেলিওক্লেস্ যখন যথাক্রমে পাঞ্জাবের উত্তর পশ্চিমাংশ ও কপিশা শাসন করিতে ছিলেন ঠিক সেই সময়েই মিনাণ্ডার উভয়ের সহিত মিলিত হইয়া উভয়েরই রাজ্যে রাজত্ব করিতেছিলেন। প্রথম ষ্ট্রেটো তাঁহার পৌত্র দ্বিতীয় ষ্ট্রেটোর সহিত কিছুকাল একত্রে রাজ্য শাসন করিয়াছিলেন। অন্ততঃপক্ষে ৪০ বৎসরও যে তিনি রাজত্ব করিয়াছিলেন সে বিষয়ে কোনও সন্দেহ নাই। প্রথম ষ্ট্রেটোর রাজত্ব খৃষ্টপূর্ব্ব দ্বিতীয় শতাব্দীর শেষভাগে অবসান হইয়াছিল বলিয়া ধরিলে মিনাণ্ডারকে প্রথম শতাব্দীর পূর্ব্বে টানিয়া আনা যায় না।

আর একটী কথা বিবেচনা করিতে হইবে। মিনাণ্ডারের রাজধানী ছিল শগলে। দিব্যাবদান কিন্তু শগল নগরীকে পুষ্যমিত্রের সাম্রাজ্যের অন্তর্ভুক্ত করিয়াছে। যদি মিনাণ্ডার "শগল" হইতে পুষ্যমিত্রকর্ত্তৃক বিতাড়িত হইতেন তাহা হইলে মিলিন্দনংহে তিনি "শগলনৃপতি" রূপে বর্ণিত হইতেন না। তাহা হইলে অবশেষে এই সিদ্ধান্ত হইতেছে যে সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যে যে যবনরাজাকে ভারত-আক্রমণকারী বলিয়া বর্ণনা করা হইয়াছে তিনি মিনাণ্ডার নহেন।

সুতরাং দেখা যাইতেছে ডিমেট্রিয়সই (বক্ট্রিয়ার চতুর্থ নৃপতি) পুষ্যমিত্রের সমসাময়িক ভারত আক্রমণকারী। এই সিদ্ধান্তের অনুকূলে নিম্নলিখিত প্রমাণের উল্লেখ করা যাইতে পারে :—

প্রথমতঃ তাঁহার "ভারতীয়রাজা" এই উপাধিই ভারতের অন্তর্গত কোন কোন প্রদেশের উপর তাঁহার আধিপত্য সূচিত করিতেছে। তাঁহার মুদ্রার গায়ে হস্তীশির চিহ্ন এবং ভারতীয় ও গ্রীক ভাষায় লিখিত আখ্যান দেখা যায়। এই দ্বিভাষায় রচিত আখ্যান তিনিই প্রবর্ত্তন করেন। স্মিথ্ ইহা হইতে অনুমান করিয়াছেন যে ডিমেট্রিয়সের সহিত ভারতের নিশ্চয়ই ঘনিষ্ঠ সম্বন্ধ ছিল। পলিবিয়াস্ এর মতে ২০৬ অব্দে তিনি তরুণ বয়স্ক ছিলেন। জাষ্টিন্ তাঁহাকে মিথ রিডেটাসের (১৭১—১৩৬) সমসাময়িক বলিয়া নির্দ্দেশ করিয়াছেন। সুতরাং ২০৬ অব্দ হইতেই ডিমেট্রিয়সের রাজনৈতিক জীবন আরম্ভ হয় এবং অন্ততঃ ১৭১ অব্দ পর্য্যন্ত

তিনি জীবিত ছিলেন। এই জন্য ২০৬ হইতে ১৮৫ বৎসরের মধ্যে পুষ্যমিত্রের সহিত ডিমেট্রিয়সের সংঘর্ষ হওয়া বিচিত্র নহে। দ্বিতীয়তঃ, বক্ত্রিয়ার রাজগণের মধ্যে ডিমেট্রিয়সের সাম্রাজ্যই সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা বিস্তৃত ছিল। তাঁহার আধিপত্য বক্ত্রিয়া, এরিয়ানা ও পাঞ্জাবের অনেক অংশের উপর প্রসারিত হইয়াছিল। তৃতীয়তঃ, তাঁহার রাজ্য ও মৌর্য্যসাম্রাজ্যকে বিচ্ছিন্ন করিয়া কোন মধ্যবর্ত্তী রাজ্য অবস্থিত ছিল না। চতুর্থতঃ, প্রায় ২০৬ অব্দে সীমান্তপ্রদেশে মৌর্য্যশাসন শিথিল হইয়া আসিয়াছিল। পূর্ব্বেই একথা বলা হইয়াছে।

কিন্তু ঠিক কোন্ সময়ে ডিমেট্রিয়স্ ভারতবর্ষ আক্রমণ করেন—পুষ্যমিত্র সম্রাট্ পদবী গ্রহণের পূর্ব্বে না পরে? এইটুকু স্থির নিশ্চয় করিয়া বলা যাইতে পারে যে এই আক্রমণ ১৭৫ খৃঃ পূঃ অর্থাৎ ইউক্রেটিডেস্ কর্ত্তৃক বাহ্লীক অধিকারের পূর্ব্বে ঘটিয়াছিল। বাহ্লীকভ্রষ্ট হইয়া ডিমেট্রিয়সের নিশ্চয়ই এত শক্তি ছিলনা যে মগধ সম্রাটের বিরাট্‌বাহিনীর সহিত নূতন কলহে প্রবৃত্ত হন। অধিকন্তু একথা ভুলিলে চলিবে না, ১৮৫ অব্দে পুষ্যমিত্র এরূপ ক্ষমতাশালী হইয়া উঠেন যে আপনাকে ভারত সম্রাট বলিয়া ঘোষণা করিতে তাঁহার সঙ্কোচ হয় নাই; সুতরাং নববলদৃপ্ত রাজশক্তির সহিত বল পরীক্ষার সাহস কোনও দুর্ব্বল শত্রুকর্ত্তৃক লাঞ্ছিত নৃপতির পক্ষে সম্ভব নহে। পক্ষান্তরে এরূপ অনুমান করা যুক্তিহীন নহে যে পূর্ব্বেই ডিমেট্রিয়স পুষ্যমিত্রের নিকট সম্পূর্ণরূপে পরাজিত হওয়ায় ইউক্রেটিডেসের পক্ষে তাঁহার রাজ্য জয় করার সাহস হইয়াছিল। উভয় দিক হইতেই শত্রু কর্ত্তৃক আক্রান্ত হওয়ায় তাঁহাকে বাধ্য হইয়া পাঞ্জাবের মধ্যে আবদ্ধ থাকিতে হয়। মালবিকাগ্নিমিত্র অনুসারে যখন সিন্ধুতীরে যবনদিগের বিরাট পরাজয় ঘটে তখনও পুষ্যমিত্র সেনাপতি উপাধি পরিত্যাগ করেন নাই। ইহা হইতে মনে হয় পুষ্যমিত্রের শাস্ত্রসঙ্গত রাজ্যাভিষেকের পূর্ব্বেই যবন আক্রমণ ঘটিয়া থাকিবে। উক্ত নাটক মতে তখন পুষ্যমিত্র একটী বিরাট্ রাজসূয় যজ্ঞের আয়োজন করিতেছিলেন। ষ্টেন কনো বলিতেছেন—যে যবন আক্রমণ ও রাজসূয় যজ্ঞ একই সময়ে ঘটিয়াছিল। কারণ পতঞ্জলির উদাহরণ "অরুণৎ যবনঃ সাকেতম্" ও "ইহ পুষ্যমিত্রং যজয়ামহে" একই সময়ে মহাভাষ্যে লিখিত হইয়াছিল। যখন যজ্ঞ অনুষ্ঠিত হইতেছিল তখনই উদাহরণগুলি লিপিবদ্ধ হইয়াছিল, সুতরাং আক্রমণও সেই সময়েই ঘটিয়া থাকিবে। কিন্তু কাশিকা বলিতেছেন, "ইহ পুষ্যমিত্রং যজয়ামহে" লটের এই উদাহরণে ক্রিয়ার কার্য্য আরব্ধ হইয়াছে কিন্তু সমাপ্তি হয় নাই ইহাই বুঝাইতেছে ("আরব্ধো অপরি সমাপ্তশ্চ") কিন্তু "সাকেতম্ অরুণৎ, বা মধ্যমিকামরুণৎ" ইহাদ্বারা ভূত অনদ্যতন অর্থাৎ সমাপ্ত অতীত ঘটনা বুঝাইতেছে। কাশিকাবিবরণ পঞ্জিকায় জিনেন্দ্রবুদ্ধি বলিতেছেন, ভূত অনদ্যতনের উদাহরণ হইতে ইহা বুঝাইতেছে যে যবনকর্ত্তৃক সাকেত প্রভৃতি স্থান অবরোধকালে পতঞ্জলি জীবিত ছিলেন এবং ঘটনাটী স্বচক্ষে প্রত্যক্ষ করিবার সম্ভাবনা তাঁহার ছিল। "ইহ পুষ্যমিত্রং যজয়ামহে", মনে হয় এই উদাহরণটী পতঞ্জলি যখন পুষ্যমিত্রের

পুরোহিতরূপে যজ্ঞ অনুষ্ঠান করিতেছিলেন সেই সময়ে রচিত। "অরুণৎ যবন সাকেতম্" ইত্যাদি ঠিক সেই সময়েই লিখিত বলিয়া এই বিশ্বাস দৃঢ় হয় যে যজ্ঞানুষ্ঠানের পূর্ব্বেই এই ঘটনা গুলি ঘটিয়া গিয়াছে। যবন আক্রমণ সংক্রান্ত সমস্ত ঘটনাগুলিকে সংক্ষেপে বিবৃত করিতে গেলে এইরূপ দাঁড়াইতেছে। আনুমানিক ২০০ খৃঃ পূঃ অব্দে ডিমেট্রিয়স্ সিন্ধুলঙ্ঘন করিয়া ভারতের বিরুদ্ধে অভিযান করিলেন। পাঞ্চাল, মথুরা, সাকেত, মধ্যমিকা প্রভৃতি প্রত্যেক স্থানই তাঁহার বিজয়দৃপ্ত সৈন্যগণের নিকট মস্তক নত করিল। সমস্ত বিজয় গুলি যে একই অভিযানের ফল ইহার কোন অর্থ নাই। পুষ্যমিত্র অসীম সহিষ্ণুতার সহিত যবনদিগের আক্রমণ প্রতিরোধ করিবার চেষ্টা করিতে লাগিলেন। বিদেশীর হস্ত হইতে ভারত রক্ষা করিবার এই বীরজনোচিত প্রয়াসের জন্য জনসাধারণের মনের উপর তাঁহার অপরিমেয় আধিপত্য জন্মিল। যবন কর্ত্তৃক পাটলিপুত্র আক্রমণকালে তিনি লুপ্তপ্রায় মৌর্য্যসামরিকশক্তি পুনরায় উজ্জীবিত করিয়া লইয়া তাহাদের সে বিভীষিকাসঞ্চার ব্যর্থ করিয়া তুলিলেন। তাহার পর হইতে ক্রমে ক্রমে ভারতবর্ষ হইতে যবন ভীতি অদৃশ্য হইয়া গেল। কিন্তু এই গৌরবময় বিজয়ের ফলে ভারতীয় মাত্রেরই হৃদয়ের মধ্যে পুষ্যমিত্র দৃঢ়রূপে প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইলেন। মগধের যে অকর্ম্মণ্য কাপুরুষ নৃপতি স্বদেশকে শত্রুর হাত হইতে রক্ষা করিবার চেষ্টাও করেন নাই তাঁহার পর লোকের আর শ্রদ্ধা থাকিল না, সুতরাং পুষ্যমিত্র বিনা বাধায় ও বিনা আপত্তিতে তাঁহাকে সিংহাসন হইতে অপসারিত করিয়া নিজেই সম্রাট্‌রূপে সিংহাসনারোহণ করিতে পারিলেন। বোধহয় সিন্ধুনদের দক্ষিণতীরে পুষ্যমিত্র কর্ত্তৃক যবনগণের পরাজয়ের সহিতই এই রণরঙ্গের উপর যবনিকাপাত হইল। সম্ভবতঃ সেই সময়েই ইউক্রেটিডেস্ কর্ত্তৃক বক্ট্রিয়া আক্রান্ত হওয়ায় ডিমেট্রিয়সকে বাধ্য হইয়া দিগ্বিজয়ের আকাঙ্ক্ষা ত্যাগ করিয়া পশ্চিমসীমান্তের দিক মন দিতে হয় এবং পুষ্যমিত্রের সহিত সন্ধি করিতে হয়। এই সন্ধি অনুযায়ী সিন্ধুর পূর্ব্ব ও দক্ষিণ তীরে যবনপ্রভুত্বের অবসান হইল এবং সিন্ধুনদীই ভারতসাম্রাজ্যের উত্তর সীমান্ত হইয়া দাঁড়াইল।

ক্ষণিকের দেখা

.....,প্রথম বর্ষ, আর্ট্‌স্‌।

নীরব মধুরাতে জোছনা ধারা মাঝে
আমার আঙিনাতে কাহার বাঁশী বাজে ?
বিজন পথ বাহি' স্বপন-মায়াসম,
নিশীথে চুপে চুপে কে এলে প্রিয়তম ?
চরণে রণি' উঠে শতেক বীণারব,
হাসিতে পড়ে ঝরি' সুষমা অভিনব ;
বাঁশরী কলতানে ভুলায়ে মনপ্রাণ
সুপ্ত ধরা পরে গোপন অভিযান।
ছলনা বৃথা প্রভু, তোমার আগমনী
আকাশে বাতাসেতে নিমেষে উঠে ধ্বনি' ;
মলয় বহে ধীরে, কুসুম মেলে আঁখি,
সহসা স্বপনেতে ডাকিয়া উঠে পাখী।
অধরে হাসি চাপি' বাজালে বাঁশীটীরে,
নিখিল কাঁপি উঠে, চরণ দুটী ঘিরে ;
হৃদয়দ্বারখুলে পুলক শিহরণে
নবীন অতিথিরে বরিতে সযতনে।
সহসা এ কী, হায় !—আঙিনা পানে চাই—
শূন্য চারিধার কোথায় কেহ নাই !
বাঁশরী রব যেন অবুঝ' সুরে সুরে
নীলিমা পরপারে মিলায় দূরে—দূরে,
গগনে রাকা চাঁদ সমীর ফেলে শ্বাস,
হিয়াতে জাগে শুধু স্মৃতির উপহাস।
কেন এ লুকোচুরি, নিঠুর এ কি মায়া,
ক্ষণিক ধরা দিয়ে, চকিতে সরে যাওয়া ?

জীবাশ্ম (fossil)

শ্রীধরণীধর সেন—চতুর্থ বর্ষ, ভূতত্ত্ব।

বহু শতাব্দী পূর্ব্বে গ্রীক্ ও রোমান্‌দের মধ্যে ধারণা ছিল যে জীবাশ্ম (fossil) প্রাণসৃজনের একটা ব্যর্থ প্রয়াস মাত্র। বসুন্ধরার অন্তর্নিহিত কোন অদৃশ্য শক্তিকে ইহার কারণ বলিয়া তাহারা নিরুপণ করিয়াছিল। পঞ্চদশ শতাব্দীতেও লোকে জীবাশ্মকে 'প্রকৃতির কৌতুক' (lusus naturæ) বলিয়া বিশ্বাস করিত। প্রকৃতিদেবী নাকি ক্রীড়াচ্ছলে জীবাশ্ম সৃষ্ট করিয়াছিলেন, তাহাদের প্রাণসঞ্চার করেন নাই! আর এক অভিনব ধারণা অনেকের মনে অধিষ্ঠান করে যে জীবাশ্ম সৌরশক্তির দ্বারা সৃষ্ট হইয়াছে! বাইবেলপন্থীদের ধারণা একটু বিভিন্ন প্রকারের ছিল। তাহাদের মতে জীবাশ্ম বিশ্বব্যাপী জলপ্লাবনের (Deluge) পূর্ব্বের জীবন কাহিনীর নিদর্শন। ইহা অপেক্ষাকৃত উপযোগী ব্যাখ্যা হইলেও পৃথিবী সৃষ্ট হওয়ার পর যে সময় অতীত হইয়াছে তাহার বিন্দুমাত্র ধারণা ইহাদের নাই। স্যার আর্‌কিবল্ড গিকি এই সূত্রে বলিয়াছেন, যে একশত পঞ্চদশ দিবসব্যাপী বিরাট জলরাশি উচ্চভূমি ও পর্ব্বতসমূহ সমাহিত করিয়াছিল বটে, কিন্তু এই অল্প সময়ের মধ্যে পৃথিবীর সমুদয় জীব প্রস্তরীভূত হওয়া কিরূপ অসম্ভব তাহার তিলমাত্র জ্ঞান ইহাদের ছিল না। যাহা হউক সৃষ্টির এই সমূহ কথা ও কাহিনী এখন লুপ্ত হইয়াছে!

এই জীবাশ্ম বা প্রস্তরীভূত জীবাবশেষ সম্বন্ধে প্রকৃত ধারণা করা বাস্তবিক কঠিন। বর্ত্তমান যুগের (Recent) পূর্ব্বে যে সমুদয় উদ্ভিদ বা প্রাণী প্রস্তরীভূত হইয়াছে তাহাদেরই সাধারণতঃ জীবাশ্ম (fossil) বলা হয়। বহু লব্ধপ্রতিষ্ঠ ভূতত্ত্ববিৎ কাল বা সময়ের সহিত জীবাশ্মের কোন সম্বন্ধ রাখেন নাই। তাঁহাদের মতে বর্ত্তমান যুগের প্রস্তরীভূত উদ্ভিদ বা প্রাণীও জীবাশ্ম বলিয়া গণ্য হইতে পারে। ভূতত্ত্ববিৎ লায়েল্ বলিয়াছেন প্রাকৃতিক কারণে যে সমস্ত প্রাণী বা উদ্ভিদ সমাহিত হইয়াছে তাহারাই জীবাশ্ম।

কিন্তু জীবাশ্ম বলিতে ইহা অপেক্ষা আমরা আরও অনেক কিছু বুঝিয়া থাকি। তৈলক্ষটিকের (amber) মধ্যে মৃত প্রাণীর চিহ্ন, প্রাক্‌যুগের প্রাণীর ডিম্ব (egg-fossil) মলশ্ম (coprolites), হস্তচিহ্ন, পদচিহ্ন প্রভৃতি জীববর্ত্তমানের সাক্ষাৎ বা অসাক্ষাৎ প্রমাণ প্রত্যেকটিকে আমরা জীবাশ্ম বলিতে পারি।

জীবাশ্মকে আমরা আজ যে অবস্থায় সাধারণতঃ দেখিতেছি, বহু আবর্ত্তনের মধ্য দিয়া তাহাকে উক্ত অবস্থায় পরিণত হইতে হইয়াছে। কদাচিৎ ইহাদের অপরিবর্ত্তিত অবস্থায়

দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়। সাইবেরিয়ার জমাট কর্দ্দমের মধ্যে গণ্ডার ও হস্তীজাতীয় প্রাণীদের সম্পূর্ণ অবয়ব পাওয়া গিয়াছে; কিন্তু এরূপ দৃষ্টান্ত অতি বিরল। মেরুদণ্ডযুক্ত (vertebrate) প্রাণীদের চূর্ণ অস্থি, দন্ত প্রভৃতি জীবাশ্ম পাওয়া যায়; মেরুদণ্ডহীন (invertebrate) প্রাণীদের জীবাশ্ম শটিত (shell) অবস্থায় দৃষ্ট হয়। তাহাদের কঠিন দেহাবশিষ্ট রাসায়নিক পদার্থে পরিণত হয়; কোমলাংশ কোনক্রমেই প্রস্তরীভূত হইতে পারে না কারণ তাহা আশু বিশ্লিষ্ট (decompose) হয়। কিরূপ বিভিন্ন অবস্থায় জীবাশ্ম সচরাচর দৃষ্ট হয় তাহার সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ নিম্নে প্রদত্ত হইল—

(ক) মূল অবয়ব সম্পূর্ণ বা অসম্পূর্ণ ভাবে রক্ষিত।—

(১) সম্পূর্ণ অবয়ব সংরক্ষিত।

(২) মমিভূত (mummified) অবয়ব।

(৩) অঙ্গারীভূত (carbonised) অস্থি।

(৪) আভ্যন্তরীণ কোমলাংশ বিশ্লিষ্টপূর্ব্বক উক্ত স্থল খনিজ পদার্থে (mineral matters) পরিবর্ত্তিত।

(খ) অবয়ব সম্পূর্ণ বিরহিত কিন্তু কোমলাংশের অণুপরমাণু রাসায়নিক পদার্থে পরিবর্ত্তিত। (molecular replacement) রাসায়নিক পদার্থের মধ্যে সচরাচর চূর্ণক্ষার (carbonate of lime) ভাস্ফক্ষার (phosphate of lime) ইত্যাদি সাধারণ উদাহরণের মধ্যে গণ্য হইতে পারে।

প্রাণী বা উদ্ভিদের প্রস্তরীকরণক্ষম (fossilisation) হওয়ার প্রধান উপায়, প্রথমতঃ তাহারা কোন প্রকার কঠিন অংশ ধারণ করিবে, (কারণ কোমলাংশ প্রস্তরীভূত হয় না), দ্বিতীয়তঃ দেহাবশিষ্ট যে কোন উপায়ে আশু কর্দ্দমের (sediments) দ্বারা সমাহিত হইবে।

এক্ষণে দেখা যাউক, কোথায় সচরাচর জীবাশ্ম দৃষ্ট হয়? স্থলে বা জমির উপর উহা অতি অল্প পরিমাণে রক্ষিত হয়। স্থলচর উদ্ভিদ বা প্রাণী মৃত অবস্থায় বৃষ্টির জলে বা অন্যান্য উপায়ে লয়প্রাপ্ত হয়। ভূপটল (the earth's crust) সদা সর্ব্বদা অপ্রতিষ্ঠ (unstable), যে কোন বিশেষ স্তর যে কোন সময়ে অপ্রতিষ্ঠ হইতে পারে এবং স্থানান্তরিত হইয়া প্রাণীবিনাশ করিতে পারে। সে স্থল জলমগ্ন হইলে উক্ত প্রাণীবিশেষ সমুদ্রগর্ভ হইতে জীবাশ্ম অবস্থায় পাওয়া যাইতে পারে। স্থলচর প্রাণীদের জীবাশ্ম নদীগর্ভেও (as fluviatile) সচরাচর পাওয়া

যায় কারণ জলের দ্বারা ধৌত হইয়া উহা নদী গর্ভে নিমজ্জিত হয় এবং কালের গতিতে প্রস্তরীভূত হইয়া জীবাশ্মে পরিণত হয়। অবশ্য স্থলচর প্রাণী ও উদ্ভিদের জীবাশ্ম আগ্নেয়গিরির উদ্গমে, জলাভূমিতে, বালুস্তূপে, (sand dunes) ও গুহায় পাওয়া যাইতে পারে, কিন্তু ইহার পরিমাণ অধিক নয়। জলচর প্রাণীর (marine) জীবাশ্ম স্থলচর প্রাণীর জীবাশ্ম অপেক্ষা বহু অধিক পরিমাণে পাওয়া যায়। কারণ সমুদ্রগর্ভ অপেক্ষাকৃত প্রতিষ্ঠ (stable) এবং সমুদ্রের তলদেশ অনুক্ষণ স্তরীভূত হইতেছে। সুতরাং মৃতপ্রাণী সমুদ্রের তলদেশে অনতি-বিলম্বে স্তরীভূত হইয়া জীবাশ্মে পরিণত হয়। সমুদ্র তলদেশ ভূমিকম্পে, আগ্নেয়গিরির উদ্গমে ভূপটলাংশের স্থানপরিবর্ত্তনে বা অন্যান্য উপায়ে সমুদ্র হইতে মুক্ত (regression) হইতে পারে অর্থাৎ সমুদ্র উক্ত স্থান হইতে সরিয়া যাইতে পারে। জীবাশ্মের সামুদ্রিক বিবরণ হইতে কোনও স্থান সমুদ্রগর্ভে নিমজ্জিত ছিল কিনা, তাহা জানা যায়। সচরাচর যে সকল স্তরবিন্যস্ত (stratified) প্রস্তরে জীবাশ্ম দৃষ্ট হয় তন্মধ্যে সাধারণতঃ চূণাপাথর (limestone), বালুপাথর (sandstone) ও সেল (shale) অন্যতম।

জীবাশ্মের দ্বারা আমাদের জ্ঞান আজ বহু প্রকারে প্রগতি লাভ করিয়াছে। বিবর্ত্তনের (evolution) অত্যাশ্চর্য্য উপপাদ্য আজ জীবাশ্মের দ্বারাই সম্পূর্ণ হইয়াছে। বহু আদি যুগ হইতে বর্ত্তমান যুগ পর্য্যন্ত পৃথিবীর ইতিহাস আমরা আজ জানিতে পারিয়াছি। আর্কিক (Archœan) যুগের কোন জীবাশ্ম দৃষ্ট হয় নাই, সুতরাং সে যুগে কোন উদ্ভিদ বা প্রাণী ছিল না। প্রথম জীবযুগ (Palæozoic) হইতে আমরা জীবাশ্ম পাইয়াছি। উক্তযুগের প্রথমভাগে মেরুদণ্ডহীন প্রাণী এবং শেষভাগে মৎস্য ও উভচর (amphibian) প্রাণীর জীবাশ্ম পাওয়া গিয়াছে। তৎপরে সরীসৃপে (Reptiles) যুগ (Mesozoic) আসিল। জুরাসিক (Jurassic) যুগের অতিকায় হাঙ্গর প্রভৃতি হিংস্র প্রাণীর জীবাশ্ম আমরা যথেষ্ট পরিমানেই পাইয়াছি। তাহাদের চূর্ণ বিচূর্ণ অস্থি দন্ত প্রভৃতি সংগ্রহ করিয়া সম্পূর্ণ অবয়ব প্রস্তুত করা হইয়াছে। তৎপরে স্তন্যপায়ী জীবদের (mammals) আবির্ভাব হইল। প্রস্তরীভূত অস্থির দ্বারা সেই বিগত যুগের অতিকায় প্রাণীদের পরিচয় আমরা পাইয়াছি। সিভাথেরিয়ম্, ম্যাষ্টডন্ প্রভৃতি এই সকল লুপ্ত প্রাণীদের অন্যতম। তৎপরে বানরের যুগ আরম্ভ হইল এবং অনুগতিতে মানব আসিল।

ভূপটলের বিভিন্ন স্তরবিন্যাস ও জীবাশ্মের তালিকা নিম্নে প্রদত্ত হইল--

ভূপটল বিভিন্ন স্তর	আধুনিক	মানবজাতি ও বর্ত্তমান সভ্যতার সূচনা।
	উপআধুনিক	পর্য্যাবর্ত্তক তুষারপাত
	প্রাগাধুনিক	বানর ও মানবের আবির্ভাব। বিশেষ স্তন্যপায়ী জীবের আবির্ভাব। সরীসৃপ এবং অতিকায় স্তন্যপায়ী জীবদের তিরোধান।
	সরীসৃপ যুগ	পুষ্পময় উদ্ভিদের আবির্ভাব। উদীয়মান্ সরীসৃপ ও পক্ষীদের আবির্ভাব। অতিকায় ডাইনোসরের (Dinosaurus) প্রাধান্য।
	প্রথমজীবযুগ	স্থলচর উদ্ভিদ, প্রবাল, মৎস্য, বর্ম্মধারী ও উভচর প্রাণীদের আবির্ভাব। মেরুদণ্ডহীন প্রাণীর সংখ্যা অধিক। এককৌষিক (unicellular) আদ্যপ্রাণীর (Protozoa) প্রাধান্য।
	আর্কিক যুগ	কোনও জীবাশ্ম অদ্যাবধি পাওয়া যায় নাই।

পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসের সূচনা।

পৃথিবীর বিভিন্ন স্তরের এই বিভিন্ন জীবাশ্মের দ্বারা ভূপটলের আনুপৌর্ব্বিক বা কালক্রমানুগত (chronological) ভাগবিভাগ সম্ভবপর হইয়াছে। এতদ্ব্যতীত আমরা প্রাগ যুগের আবহাওয়া, জলস্থলের বিভাগ, তটরেখার সীমানির্দ্দেশ, সমুদ্রের গভীরতা প্রভৃতি জানিতে পারিয়াছি। সুতরাং পৃথিবীর প্রায় সম্পূর্ণ ইতিহাস আজ আমাদের গোচরীভূত হইয়াছে!

বিজ্ঞানের অগ্রদূতগণ আজ জীবাশ্মের এই অত্যাশ্চর্য্য আখ্যানমঞ্জরী উপলব্ধি করিয়া নব উদ্যমে নূতন অনুসন্ধানে প্রবৃত্ত হইয়াছেন। প্রাণীবিজ্ঞান, উদ্ভিদবিজ্ঞান, ভূগোল, ভূতত্ত্ব প্রভৃতি বিষয়ের নূতন সূচীপত্র উন্মুক্ত হইয়াছে। কি পরীক্ষাগারে, কি বহির্জ্জগতে—ভূতত্ত্ব বিষয়ক অনুসন্ধান বর্দ্ধিত হইয়াছে! পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসের আশ্চর্য্য যাদুঘরে জীবাশ্ম

অশ্রুতপূর্ব্ব অদৃষ্টপূর্ব্ব ঘটনাবলী বিবৃত করিয়াছে। কিন্তু আজ একটি মাত্র প্রশ্ন বৈজ্ঞানিক-দিগকে বিহ্বল ও হতপ্রায় করিয়া তুলিয়াছে! কেমন করিয়া পৃথিবীতে প্রথম প্রাণ (first life) আসিল? এ প্রশ্নের জবাবে জীবাশ্ম নির্ব্বাক, নিস্তব্ধ। সম্ভবতঃ সেই প্রথম প্রাণীর কোন কঠিনাংশ ছিল না, কিম্বা প্রস্তরীভূত হইবার তাহার কোন উপায় ছিল না। যাহা হউক ভূতত্ত্বজনিত কোন দুর্ঘটনা প্রারম্ভেই ঘটিয়াছে। সেই মহা অমানিশাপূর্ণ প্রেক্ষা-গৃহে এই রহস্যাবৃত নাটকের প্রথম দৃশ্য কে অভিনয় করিল? পর্দ্দার অন্তরালেই সেই নিরতিশয় আশ্চর্য্য দৃশ্যের যবনিকা পতন হইয়াছে।

অনুবাদ-সাহিত্য

শ্রী.....

সভ্যতার অগ্রগতির সাথে সাথে বিভিন্ন দেশের মধ্যে সংযোগগ্রন্থি ক্রমশঃই দৃঢ়তর হইতেছে। ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীতে ভারতবর্ষের লোক ইংরেজ, ফরাসী বা জার্ম্মানকে যতটা দূরসংস্থিত মনে করিত, বিংশ শতাব্দীতে ততটা আর করে না। দেশে দেশে আজ সম্বন্ধ নিকটতর হইয়াছে; এক দেশের মানুষ অন্য দেশের মানুষের সুখদুঃখ, চিন্তাধারা, আশা আকাঙ্খা বুঝিতে শিখিয়াছে।

দেশ হিসাবে সাহিত্যে যে একটা শ্রেণী বিভাগ ছিল, তাহাও আস্তে আস্তে উঠিয়া যাইতেছে। সাধারণ ভাবে বলিতে গেলে, সাহিত্য জিনিষটা কোনো একটা দেশের নিজস্ব জিনিষ নয়। মানুষের অন্তরের শ্রেষ্ঠতম ভাবের প্রকাশ সাহিত্যে; মানুষের জীবনকে উজ্জ্বলতর করিয়া তুলিবার সোণার কাঠি আছে সাহিত্যের ভিতরে। এই ভাবে দেখিতে গেলে প্রাদেশিক সাহিত্য বলিয়া কোনো জিনিষের সার্থকতা খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় না। যে সাহিত্য কেবল স্থানীয় পাঠককেই আকৃষ্ট করিতে পারে, সঙ্কীর্ণ সীমার বাহিরে গেলেই যাহা পঙ্গু, বিকল হইয়া পড়ে, তাহা বিশ্বসাহিত্যের দরবারে খুব উচ্চ স্থানের দাবী করিতে পারে না।

মানুষে মানুষে সম্বন্ধ নিকটতর হওয়াতে, পৃথিবীতে আজ একটা ভাব ও চিন্তাধারার সাম্য আসিয়াছে। তাই ইংল্যাণ্ডের সাহিত্যিকের ভাব অনুসরণ করিতে ভারতীয় পাঠককে

খুব বেগ পাইতে হয় না, সিন্‌ক্লেয়ার লুইস্‌ এর মার্কিন জীবনের ক্রূর সমালোচনা ফুলের দেশ নিপ্পনেও আদর পাইয়া থাকে। অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের প্রসারের ভিত্তি এইখানেই। বিদ্যুৎশক্তি, বেতার প্রভৃতির সাহায্যে আমেরিকা ও অস্‌ট্রেলিয়ার মধ্যে দূরত্ব যেমন কমানো হইয়াছে, ইয়াঙ্কি ও অস্‌ট্রেলিয়ানের মধ্যে ভাবগত, রুচিগত ও অনুভূতিগত একটা সামঞ্জস্য আনাও তেমনই সম্ভবপর হইয়াছে।

তাই সাহিত্যের প্রাদেশিক শ্রেণী বিভাগ আজ বিলীয়মান। প্রত্যেক দেশের সাহিত্যেই সভ্যজগতের অন্যস্থানের সাহিত্যের অনুবাদ একটা বিশিষ্ট স্থান অধিকার করিয়া আছে; একদেশের সাহিত্য অনেক ক্ষেত্রে অন্য দেশের সাহিত্যের সাথে অঙ্গাঙ্গীভাবে জড়াইয়া গিয়াছে। অনুবাদ সাহিত্যকে বর্ত্তমানে আর স্থানীয় সাহিত্য হইতে পৃথক করিয়া দেখা হয় না; অনুবাদ-সাহিত্য মৌলিক সাহিত্যের সমান আসন পাইতে চলিয়াছে।

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সমগ্র ইউরোপ একটা বিরাট সাহিত্য গোষ্ঠির অন্তর্ভুক্ত। ইউরোপে আজ দেশে দেশে আলাদা আলাদা সাহিত্যের অস্তিত্ব নাই বলিলেই চলে। একদেশের লেখক অন্যান্য দেশে যথেষ্ট সমাদর পাইয়া থাকেন। আনাতোল ফ্রাঁস ফ্রান্সে যতটা আদৃত হইয়াছিলেন, ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ডে তাহার চেয়ে কম হন নাই; রুষদেশে বসিয়া টলস্‌টয় যাহা লিখিয়া গিয়াছিলেন, ইউরোপের অন্যান্য দেশেও প্রত্যেক ঘরে তাহা রামায়ণ-মহাভারতের মত বিরাজ করিতেছে। য়োহান্‌ বোয়ার বা নুট্‌ হামসুন্‌ শুধু স্ক্যাণ্ডিনেভিয়ার সাহিত্যিক বলিয়া খ্যাত হন নাই; ইউরোপীয় সাহিত্যের চরম উৎকর্ষের প্রতীক্‌ বলিয়াই ইঁহাদের রচনা মূল্যবান।

ইউরোপের প্রদেশগুলির মধ্যে অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের বহুল প্রচারের কারণ একটি নয়। প্রথমতঃ, ইউরোপের পূর্ব্বপ্রান্ত হইতে পশ্চিম প্রান্ত পর্য্যন্ত, একটা চিন্তা এবং রুচির সাম্য বেশ পরিষ্কার ভাবেই দেখা যায়। দৈনন্দিন জীবনে, চলাফেরায়, আচার পদ্ধতিতে প্রদেশগুলির মধ্যে বেশ সাদৃশ্য আছে; সাহিত্য সেই সাদৃশ্যের প্রভাব এড়াইতে পারে নাই। ধর্ম্ম বিষয়েও সমগ্র ইউরোপে একটা একতা আছে। ক্রিসটিয়ান ধর্ম্ম সাহিত্যের উপরে প্রভাব বিস্তার করিয়াছে যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে; ইউরোপে ধর্ম্মগত সমতা থাকাতে সাহিত্যে সমতা সহজেই আসিয়াছে। দ্বিতীয়তঃ, প্রদেশগুলির মধ্যে দেশগত দূরত্ব বেশী না হওয়ায় এক দেশের সাহিত্য সহজেই অন্যদেশে যাইতে পারিয়াছে। ইউরোপের প্রদেশগুলির মধ্যে একটা লোক চলাচলের স্থায়ী প্রবাহ আছে; এই প্রবাহের সাথে সাথে সাহিত্যের আমদানী রপ্তানী সহজতর হইয়াছে। তৃতীয়তঃ, ইউরোপের পাঠক সমাজে অন্যদেশের ভালো জিনিষের জন্য একটা তীব্র আকাঙ্খা আছে। দেশের মধ্যে যে সাহিত্য পাওয়া গেল, তাহা তো চিরকালের জন্যই

আপনার হইয়া রহিল ; বাহিরের জিনিসকেও আপনার ক্রোড়ে আনিয়া ফেলিবার চেষ্টা করিতে ইউরোপীয় ত্রুটি করে না। তাই প্রাচ্য ও প্রতীচ্যের যে স্থানেই মূল্যবান সাহিত্যের সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে, তাহার সবগুলিরই ইউরোপে অনুবাদ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে। আমাদের প্রতিবেশী পারস্যদেশের অমর কাব্য ও গীতিকবিতার আদর আমরা করিবার বহু পূর্ব্বেই ইউরোপ করিয়াছে ; সেই সাহিত্যের আস্বাদন আমরা করিয়াছি ইউরোপীয় সাহিত্যের ভিতর দিয়া।

ইউরোপীয় সাহিত্যের ইংরেজী শাখার সাথেই আমাদের পরিচয় ঘনিষ্ঠ ; কিন্তু অন্য শাখার রস ইংরেজীর সাহায্যে গ্রহণ করিতে আমাদের অসুবিধা হয় নাই। বর্ত্তমান ইংরেজী সাহিত্যে ওয়েল্‌স্, বার্ণার্ড শ', টমাস্ হার্ডি, গল্‌স্‌ওআর্থি প্রভৃতি জীবিত বা মৃত সাহিত্যিকেরা যে স্থান অধিকার করিয়াছেন, রোহান বোয়ার, নূট হাম্‌সুন্ , টমাস্ ম্যান্, বিয়র্ণসন, রোলাঁ, গ্রাৎসিয়া দেলেদা প্রভৃতির স্থান তাহার অপেক্ষা নীচে নয়। বর্ত্তমানে ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ডে জীবিত নামজাদা সাহিত্যিক মাত্র অল্প কয়েকজনই আছেন ; কিন্তু তাহাতে ইংরেজী সাহিত্যের নূতন সম্পদ দিন দিন বৃদ্ধি পাওয়ার কোন বিঘ্ন ঘটিতেছেনা। স্ক্যাণ্ডিনেভিয়া, ফ্রান্স, রাশ্যা, ইতালী, স্পেন, বেলজিয়াম, জার্ম্ম্যাণি—যে দেশেই উচুদরের সাহিত্য সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে, ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ডে তাহার অনুবাদ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছে সঙ্গে সঙ্গেই। রিমার্কের অল কোয়ায়েট অন্ দি ওএষ্টার্ণ ফ্রণ্ট্ জার্ম্ম্যানীতে মুটে মজুর সকলেই পড়িয়াছে, ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ডে লক্ষ লক্ষ বিক্রয় হইয়াছে। টমাস্ ম্যান্ গত বৎসর নোবেল প্রাইজ পাইলেন—তাঁহার ম্যাজিক মাউণ্টেন, বাডেন ব্রুক্, আর্লি সরো প্রভৃতি বইয়ের অনুবাদ একবৎসরের মধ্যে ইংরেজী ভাষার কৃপায় ভারতবর্ষের সাধারণ সাহিত্যরসিকেরও হাতে আসিয়া পৌঁছিয়াছে। গ্রাৎসিয়া দেলেদা বা সিগ্রিদ উণ্ডসেৎ এর লেখা ইংরেজী ভাষাকে বাহন করিয়া ইংরেজী ভাষাভাষীর দ্বারে আসিয়া উপস্থিত হইয়াছে। রাশ্যাকে মুখে ইংরেজ গালাগালি যতই দিক্ বর্ত্তমান রাশ্যার ধর্ম্ম, সমাজ রাষ্ট্রের প্রতি রোষদৃষ্টি ইংরেজ যতই নিক্ষেপ করুক ম্যাক্‌সিম্ গোর্কির লেখার অনাদর ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ডে হয় নাই ; ক্রপোট্‌কিনের বিপ্লবাত্মক রচনা ইংরেজের গ্রন্থাধারে বিশেষ স্থান অধিকার করিয়া আছে। জার্ম্ম্যানীতে এমিল লুডুইগ কাইসারের গুণগান করিয়াছেন, ইতালীতে মুসোলিনি রাষ্ট্রপরিচালনের সাথে সাথে ইংরেজ সমাদৃত আদর্শের বিরুদ্ধে লেখনীও চালনা করিয়াছেন ; ইংরেজ তাঁহাদের মতবাদ গ্রহণ করিতে সম্মত হয় নাই ; কিন্তু তাঁহাদের রচনাকে ইংরেজীতে অনুদিত করিয়া সাহিত্যের সমৃদ্ধি বর্দ্ধন করিয়াছে।

শুধু ইউরোপীয় সাহিত্য নয়, প্রাচ্য সাহিত্যকেও ইংরেজ সমাদরে গ্রহণ করিয়াছে। সংস্কৃত সাহিত্য হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া রবীন্দ্রনাথের রচনা পর্য্যন্ত, সুসাহিত্য যাহা আছে, ইউরোপের অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের প্রসার বিস্তারে সবগুলিকেই গ্রহণ করা হইয়াছে। ওমরখৈয়াম বা ফারদৌসী পারস্যের সঙ্কীর্ণ সীমার আবেষ্টন ছাড়িয়া, ইউরোপের সাহিত্য-

কাশে আলোক বিতরণ করিতেছে, ইউরোপের সাহিত্যপিপাসুর গীতিকাব্যের সৌন্দর্য্য উপভোগের আকাঙ্খা মিটাইয়া দিতেছে।

দেশ বিদেশের সাহিত্যকে নিজেদের সাহিত্যের অন্তর্ভুক্ত করিয়া নিয়া ইঙ্‌ল্যাণ্ড, ফ্রান্স, জার্ম্মাণী আজ সমৃদ্ধ হইয়াছে; নিজেদের আবেষ্টনের মধ্যে বিশ্বের সৌন্দর্য্য তাহারা আজ ডাকিয়া আনিয়াছে; ভালো জিনিষ যেখানে যাহা পাওয়া গিয়াছে তাহাকে একান্ত আপনার করিয়া নিতে ইউরোপের কোনো দেশই চেষ্টার ত্রুটি করে নাই। অনুবাদ-সাহিত্য তাহাদের নিজেদের সাহিত্যের মধ্যে বিশিষ্ট স্থান অধিকার করিয়া বসিয়াছে; অনুবাদ-সাহিত্য ঘরোয়া সাহিত্যের সাথে মিশিয়া এক হইয়া গিয়াছে। দেশ বিদেশের উজ্জ্বলতম রত্ন সংযোগে ইউরোপের প্রত্যেক দেশই আজ কাল সাহিত্যে সমৃদ্ধিশালী।

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বাঙ্‌লা দেশে বিদেশীয় সাহিত্যের অনুবাদের সমাদর বাড়িতেছে বলিয়া মনে হয়। বাঙ্‌লা সাহিত্যে বর্ত্তমান যুগ সুরু হইবার সাথে সাথেই ইংরেজী সাহিত্যের সম্পদের প্রতি বাঙালী লেখকের দৃষ্টি পড়িয়াছিল। বহু বৎসর পূর্ব্বে বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয় শেক্‌স্‌পীয়রএর কমেডি অফ্‌ এররস্‌ এর বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ করিয়াছিলেন ভ্রান্তিবিলাস নাম দিয়া। তাঁহার পূর্ব্বে বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় অন্যভাষার অনুবাদ আর কিছু বাহির হইয়াছিল কি না জানিনা। বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয় সংস্কৃত হইতেও বাঙ্‌লাতে অনুবাদের আমদানী করিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার বেতাল-পঞ্চবিংশতি, সীতার বনবাস, শকুন্তলা প্রভৃতি মুখ্যতঃ অনুবাদ হইলেও আজ এইগুলি বাঙ্‌লা-ভাষায় মৌলিক সাহিত্যের শীর্ষস্থানে অবস্থিত।

বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের প্রসারের ধারাবাহিক ইতিহাস দেওয়া এখানে সম্ভবপর হইবে না। নানা দিগ্‌দেশ হইতে অনেকে বাঙ্‌লাভাষার জন্য মূল্যবান সম্পদ আহরণ করিয়াছেন—সাহিত্যের দুর্ভাগ্য, এই সব আহরণের সম্পূর্ণ বিবরণ কোনো ইতিহাসের বা প্রামাণ্য-গ্রন্থের পাতায় ধরিয়া রাখা হয় নাই। তাই বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের পর্য্যালোচনায় আমাদের বিচ্ছিন্নভাবে কয়েকজন গ্রন্থকারকেই দেখিতে হইবে।

বাঙ্‌লা সাহিত্যে একটা যুগ গিয়াছিল যখন কবিযশঃপ্রার্থীরা ইংরেজী কবিতার অনুবাদ করিয়া সাহিত্য-সৃষ্টির হাতেখড়ি করিতেন। তখন ইলিয়াড্‌, প্যারাডাইস্‌ লস্‌ট্‌, মারচেণ্ট অফ্‌ ভেনিস্‌ প্রভৃতির অনুবাদ পয়ার ছন্দে বাহির হইয়াছিল। সে যুগের কথা আমরা ভুলিয়া যাইতে বসিয়াছি—তাহার কারণ তৎকালীন অনুবাদক-কবিরা সাহিত্যে কোন স্থায়ী সম্পদ রাখিয়া যাইতে পারেন নাই।

মাইকেল মধুসূদন দত্ত প্রভৃতি খ্যাতনামা কবি অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যকে মূল অবলম্বন বলিয়া গ্রহণ না করিলেও, তাঁহাদের লেখায় বিদেশীয় সাহিত্যের প্রভাব দেখা যায় চারিদিকে।

মেঘনাদবধ কাব্য মিল্টনিক আদর্শে লেখা—কাব্যের বহুস্থান ইংরেজী ও ল্যাটিন কাব্যের অনুকরণে রচিত। হেমচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের ছায়াময়ী এবং বৃত্রসংহার বিদেশীয় আদর্শে লেখা। নবীনচন্দ্র সেনও এই ইংরেজী কাব্যের অনুকরণের প্রলোভন এড়াইতে পারেন নাই; নবীনচন্দ্রের 'অমিতাভ' বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের উজ্জ্বল রত্ন।

যাহাই হউক, বাঙ্‌লার অনুবাদ সাহিত্যে মধুসূদন বা হেমচন্দ্রের স্থান কোথায় তাহা আমাদের আলোচ্য নহে, কারণ তাঁহাদের রচনা ঠিক অনুবাদ বলিলে যাহা বুঝায় তাহা নহে। তাই ইহাদের ছাড়িয়া বর্ত্তমানের দিকে আর একটু অগ্রসর হইলে গিরিশচন্দ্রের নাটকে আমরা খাঁটি অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের পরিচয় পাই। গিরিশচন্দ্র বিশেষ করিয়া শেক্‌স্‌পীয়রকেই অবলম্বন করিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার অনুদিত ম্যাক্‌বেথ, রোমিও জুলিয়েট্ বাঙ্‌লার অনুবাদ সাহিত্যে নূতন যুগ আনিয়া দিল। হইতে পারে, গিরিশচন্দ্রের রচনা আজকালকার বাঙালী পাঠক খুব শ্রদ্ধার সাথে পড়িয়া দেখেনা; হইতে পারে, গিরিশচন্দ্র যে ছন্দ, যে ভঙ্গী অনুসরণ করিয়াছিলেন, তাহা আধুনিক পাঠকের রুচিসঙ্গত নয়; কিন্তু তাঁহার অনুবাদের সৌন্দর্য্য কেহ উপেক্ষা করিতে পারিবে না। অনুবাদের সবচেয়ে বেশী দরকার মূলানুসরণ। বাঙ্‌লাভাষার অঙ্গহানি না করিয়া, ছন্দ, তাল, মাত্রা প্রভৃতি হইতে চ্যুত না হইয়া গিরিশচন্দ্র শেক্‌স্‌পীয়রের নাট্য-কাব্যের যে সুন্দর অনুবাদ করিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহা স্থান ও কালবিচারে অপূর্ব্ব।

গিরিশচন্দ্র অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের দুয়ার খুলিয়া দিলেন——বাঙ্‌লায় অনুবাদ আসিতে লাগিল বিস্তর। এ কথা সত্য যে উচ্চাঙ্গের সাহিত্যে স্থান পাইবার মত অনুবাদ প্রকাশিত হইয়াছিল খুব কমই। সাহিত্যের আধুনিক যুগে আসিবার পূর্ব্বে স্থায়ীভাবে নাম রাখিবার মত অনুবাদ খুব কমই বাহির হইয়াছে। প্রাগাধুনিক যুগে রবীন্দ্রনাথ বিদেশীয় কবিতার অনুবাদ করিয়াছিলেন অনেকগুলি, কিন্তু তাঁহার মৌলিক কবিতার ঔজ্জ্বল্যের আড়ালে এগুলি ঢাকা পড়িয়া গিয়াছে। সত্যেন্দ্রনাথ, চারু বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় এবং মণিলাল গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় জাপানী সাহিত্যের অনুবাদ করিয়া বাঙ্‌লা দেশের পাঠক সমাজে চালাইতে চাহিয়াছিলেন। কয়েক খানা খুব সুন্দর অনুবাদ বাহির হইয়াছিল, কিন্তু পাঠকের রুচির সাথে খাপ খাইল না বলিয়াই হউক বা অন্য যে কারণেই হউক, জাপানী উপন্যাস বাঙ্‌লা দেশে খুব ভালো চলে নাই। সত্যেন্দ্রনাথ বিদেশীয় কবিতার অনুবাদ করিয়াছিলেন অসংখ্য। চীন, জাপান হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া স্পেন, পর্টুগাল প্রভৃতি স্থান হইতে তিনি তাঁহার কাব্যের সম্পদ সঞ্চয় করিয়াছেন। তাঁহার সকল অনুবাদ পাঠক সাধারণের মনোযোগ আকর্ষণ করিতে পারে নাই। কিন্তু এমন কয়েকটি কবিতা তিনি অনুবাদ করিয়া গিয়াছেন, যাহা বাঙ্‌লা সাহিত্যে চিরদিনের জন্য স্থায়ী সম্পদ হইয়া থাকিবে। কীট্‌স্ এর La Belle Dame Sans Merci র 'নিষ্ঠুরা সুন্দরী' নাম দিয়া সত্যেন্দ্রনাথ যে অনুবাদ করিয়াছিলেন, তাহা বাঙ্‌লা কাব্যসাহিত্যে অনুপম।

অনুবাদের প্রধান লক্ষ্য যদি হয় মূলের সৌন্দর্য্য পূর্ণভাবে রক্ষা করা, তবে সত্যেন্দ্রনাথের 'নিষ্ঠুরা সুন্দরী'কে নিঃসন্দেহে ফুলমার্কস্ দেওয়া চলে। তারপর, তরুদত্ত'র 'যোগাদ্যা', নোগুচির 'বরভিক্ষা' এবং সম্রাট সাজাহানের 'জগৎ-সার! চমৎকার! প্রিয়ার শেষ শেষ!' সত্যেন্দ্রনাথের হাতে বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় সজ্জিত হইয়া অনবদ্য সৌন্দর্য্যে ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে।

বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ সাহিত্যে নূতন যুগ আসিল ওমরখৈয়ামের ভিতর দিয়া। সুকবি অক্ষয় কুমার বড়াল বহুদিন পূর্ব্বে ওমর খৈয়ামের বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ প্রকাশ করিয়াছিলেন; কিন্তু পাঠক সমাজে তাহা খুব বেশী আদৃত হয় নাই। শ্রীযুক্ত কান্তিচন্দ্র ঘোষের ছোট অনুবাদ বাঙালী পাঠক সাধারণকে পারস্যদেশীয় কাব্যের অপূর্ব্ব আস্বাদের নমুনা দিয়া গেল। কান্তিচন্দ্র ঘোষের অনুবাদ সকল দিক হইতে সুন্দর হইয়াছিল; কিন্তু তাহাতে রুবাইয়ের বিশেষ ভঙ্গীটি ছিল না। নরেন্দ্র দেবের অনুবাদ কবির রচনাসৌন্দর্য্যে, চিত্রকরের অঙ্কনচাতুর্য্যে, প্রকাশকের প্রকাশ-নৈপুণ্যে বাঙ্‌লা দেশে সমাদর পাইয়াছে খুব বেশী; কিন্তু তাঁহার অনুবাদেও রুবাইগুলি ঠিক 'রুবাই' হয় নাই। নরেন্দ্র দেবের পরে শ্রীযুক্ত হিতেন্দ্র মোহন বসু এবং শ্রীযুক্ত হেমেন্দ্র কুমার রায় রুবাই ভঙ্গীতে অনুবাদ প্রকাশ করিয়া মূলের সকল সৌন্দর্য্য একাধারে বাঙালী পাঠকের দ্বারে উপস্থিত করেন। ওমর খৈয়ামের অসংখ্য অনুবাদের মধ্যে কোনটি ভালো, কোন্‌টি মন্দ তাহা আমাদের আলোচ্য নহে; শুধু এই টুকু মনে রাখিলেই চলে যে ওমর খৈয়াম বাঙ্‌লা দেশের অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যে নূতন ইম্পেটাস্ আনিয়া দিয়াছে; কয়েক বৎসরের মধ্যে ওমর-খৈয়ামের ভিতর দিয়াই বাঙলা সাহিত্যে বিদেশীয় সম্পদ প্রভূত পরিমাণে বাড়ানো হইয়াছে।

শ্রীযুক্ত নরেন্দ্র দেব সম্প্রতি "মেঘদূতের" "অনুবাদ" বাহির করিয়াছেন। মেঘদূত ভারতবর্ষের নিজস্ব জিনিস—ভারতীয় ভাব, ভারতীয় পাত্র প্রভৃতির সমন্বয়ে ভারতবাসীর একান্ত আপনার। 'মেঘদূতে'র অনুবাদ প্রকাশ করিয়া দেব মহাশয় বাঙ্‌লা সাহিত্যের উন্নতি কামীদের ধন্যবাদার্হ হইয়াছেন। কিন্তু রুবাইয়াতের মতো, এই বইয়েও কালিদাসের ছন্দ ধরা পড়ে নাই সম্পূর্ণ ভাবে। মেঘদূতের অর্দ্ধেক সৌন্দর্য্য মন্দাক্রান্তা ছন্দ—নিখুঁত ভাবে মন্দাক্রান্তা ছন্দে অনুবাদ না করিলে মেঘদূতের সৌন্দর্য্য অনেকটা কমিয়া যায়। প্রবাসীতে শৈলেন্দ্রকৃষ্ণ লাহার অনুবাদ দেখিয়া ছিলাম, বিচিত্রাতে দেখিয়াছিলাম সুধাংশুকুমার হালদার নামক একজন সিহিবলিয়ান কবির রচিত অনুবাদ। শৈলেন্দ্র বাবুর অনুবাদ পড়িতে চমৎকার হইলেও সংস্কৃত শব্দ বাহুল্যে জর্জ্জরিত হইয়া পড়িয়াছে; বিচিত্রাতে প্রকাশিত অনুবাদে কাব্য-রস ছিল চমৎকার।

বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ সাহিত্যে লক্ষ্য করিবার একটা জিনিস আছে। বাঙালী অনুবাদক বিদেশীয় কাব্য ও কবিতার উপরেই নজর বেশী দিয়াছে—গদ্য সাহিত্যের দিকে মনোযোগ

ততটা দেয় নাই। অবশ্য, বিশেষ কোনো একটি সাহিত্য মন্দিরের কৃপায় একশ্রেণীর বিদেশীয় গদ্য সাহিত্য বাঙ্‌লায় অনূদিত হইয়া অল্প শিক্ষিত অসাহিত্য-অনুরাগী পাঠকের মনোরঞ্জন করিতেছে। বাধ্য হইয়াই এইগুলিকে অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের সম্পদের তালিকা হইতে বাদ দিতে হইতেছে। যাহাই হউক বিদেশীয় সীরিয়াস রচনার কথা ছাড়িয়া দিলেও, উপন্যাসের দিক দিয়াও বাঙ্‌লাদেশ বিদেশ হইতে নূতন ঐশ্বর্য্য আমদানী বেশী করিতে পারে নাই। লা মিজারেব্‌ল্‌ এর বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ দেখিয়াছি। কিন্তু বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় 'জীন্‌-ভলজীন' যেন প্রাণ পায় নাই; সাইলাস মার্ণার এর ও বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ বাহির হইয়াছিল, কিন্তু তাহাতে জর্জ্জ এলিয়টের গ্রাম্যচরিত্রের নিখুঁত বর্ণনার প্রতিবিম্ব পড়ে নাই। আর বাঙ্‌লার উপন্যাস যাহা অনূদিত হইয়াছে তাহা ভিক্টর হ্যুগো, জর্জ্জ এলিয়ট প্রভৃতি প্রাগাধুনিক সাহিত্যিকের গ্রন্থ হইতে সংগৃহীত হইয়াছে। আধুনিক উপন্যাস সাহিত্য এখনো বিদেশে হইতে আমাদের দেশে আসিয়া বাঙ্‌লা পোষাক পরিয়া উঠিতে পারে নাই।

সম্প্রতি একটু পরিবর্ত্তন দেখা যাইতেছে। নূট হামসুনের 'হাঙ্গার' এর সুন্দর অনুবাদ করিয়াছেন শ্রীযুক্ত পবিত্র গঙ্গোপাধ্যায় 'বুভুক্ষা' নাম দিয়া। য়োহান্‌ বোয়ারের 'গ্রে'ট হাঙ্গার' এর বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ দেখিয়াছিলাম অধুনা লুপ্ত একটি তথা কথিত তরুণদলের মুখপত্রে। এই রকম, বাঙ্‌লা দেশের তরুণ-সাহিত্যিক বিদেশের রত্ন ঘরে তুলিবার চেষ্টায় আপনাদিগকে নিযুক্ত করিতেছেন বলিয়া মনে হয়। সাহিত্যের পক্ষে ইহা একটা খুব বড় সৌভাগ্য।

বিদেশীয় সাহিত্যে বিজ্ঞান, দর্শন, ন্যায়, ধনবিজ্ঞান, রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান প্রভৃতি বিষয়ে যে বিরাট সমৃদ্ধি গড়িয়া উঠিয়াছে এখন পর্য্যন্ত তাহার কোনো অংশ আমাদের দেশে বেশী পরিমাণে আসিয়া পৌছায় নাই। পাশ্চাত্য ধনবিজ্ঞানের অনেক বইই জাপানী ভাষায় অনূদিত হইয়াছে; আমাদের দেশের লেখক সম্প্রদায় ইংরেজীতে ধনবিজ্ঞানের 'নোট' লিখিয়াছেন পাঁচখানা বইয়ের সার সংগ্রহ করিয়া; কিন্তু নোট্‌ না লিখিয়া ঐ পাঁচখানা বইয়ের একখানারও বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ করিলে কত কাজ যে হইতে পারিত তাহা লেখকরা অর্থলিপ্সায় স্বভাবতঃ ভুলিয়া যান। পদার্থ বিজ্ঞান, রসায়ণ এ প্রাথমিক বই দুই চারিখানা বাহির হইয়াছে, কিন্তু জোরগলায় নাম করিবার মতো বই এখন পর্য্যন্ত খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় নাই।

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বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের ভবিষ্যৎ উজ্জ্বল এবং বিস্তৃত পরিসর। পাশ্চাত্য সাহিত্যে বিরাট ক্ষেত্র পড়িয়া রহিয়াছে, বাঙলা সাহিত্য সেই ক্ষেত্র হইতে আমদানী করিবার জিনিস অনেক পাইবে। ইউরোপের দেশে দেশে উৎকৃষ্ট কাব্য, গদ্য সাহিত্য, দর্শন, বিজ্ঞান প্রভৃতি সৃষ্ট হইয়াছে

ও হইতেছে—বাঙ্‌লা দেশে আসিয়া বাঙালীর বেশে সাজিবার জন্য এইগুলি প্রতীক্ষায় আছে। বার্ণার্ড শ'র 'মিসেস্ ওয়্যারেন্‌স্ প্রোফেসন এর বাঙ্‌লা অনুবাদ আংশিকভাবে 'ভারতবর্ষে' বাহির হইয়াছিল; সেলমা লেগারলফের 'মৃত্যুদূত' প্রবাসীতে দেখিয়াছিলাম। পাশ্চাত্য সাহিত্যের বিরাটখনি হইতে এখনো বাঙ্‌লা দেশের গ্রহণ করিবার জিনিস অনেক আছে। গল্‌সোআর্থি এতগুলি নাটক লিখিলেন, বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় একখানারও অনুবাদ বাহির হইল না, (একটি সাপ্তাহিকে লিট্‌ল্ ম্যানের অনুবাদ দেখিয়াছিলাম, সেটি সম্পূর্ণ হইয়াছিল কিনা জানিনা) বার্ণার্ড শর নাটক গুলি অনূদিত হইলে বাঙ্‌লা ভাষায় সম্পদ বহুল পরিমাণে বাড়িয়া যাইবে; তেমনি স্ক্যাণ্ডিনেভিয়ান, জার্ম্যাণ, ফরাসী, ইতালীয়, ও আমেরিকান সাহিত্যে অমূল্য রত্ন পড়িয়া আছে—বাঙালী সাহিত্যেকের দৃষ্টি সেদিকে আকর্ষণ করিতেছি।

অনুবাদ সৃজন ও একটা খুব বিশেষ নৈপুণ্যের পরিচয়। শ্রেষ্ঠ সাহিত্যিকেরা অনুবাদ রচনার দিকে হাত দেন নাই বলিয়াই এখনো বাঙলা অনুবাদ সাহিত্য ঐশ্বর্য্যশালী হইয়া উঠিতে পারে নাই। যাঁহাদের সাহিত্যের আর কোনো দরজায় প্রবেশের ছাড়পত্র জুটিল না, তাঁহারাই বেশীর ভাগ অনুবাদ করিয়াছেন; ফল হইয়াছে, বাঙ্‌লাদেশের অনুবাদ সাহিত্য পঙ্গু হইয়া দাঁড়াইয়াছে। বাঙলার তরুণ সাহিত্যিকদের লক্ষ্য করিয়াই কথাটা বলিতেছি। তাঁহাদের অতুলনীয় লিখনশক্তির কিয়দংশও যদি এই দিকে ব্যয়িত করেন, তবে বাঙ্‌লা সাহিত্যের একটা দিক ওজনে ভারী হইয়া উঠিতে পারে।

বাঙ্‌লাদেশে একরকমের নূতনধরণের অনুবাদ সাহিত্যের সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে, যাহার উল্লেখ না করিলে প্রবন্ধ অসম্পূর্ণ থাকিয়া যাইবে। ঔপন্যাসিকেরা মুখ্যতঃ অনুবাদ সৃষ্টিকে পেশা বলিয়া গ্রহণ না করিলেও, বিদেশীয় সাহিত্য হইতে প্লট আনিয়া বাঙ্‌লা ছাঁচে ঢালিয়া 'মৌলিক' বাঙ্‌লা উপন্যাস লিখিয়াছেন। তা'ছাড়া, 'মোপাস্যাঁর গল্পের ভাব অবলম্বনে', 'ন্যাথানিয়েল হথর্ণএর ছায়াপাতে' ইত্যাদি ফুটনোট যুক্ত লেখা বাঙ্‌লা মাসিকের পাতায় পাতায় দেখা যায়। বিদেশীয় গল্প হইতে প্লট নিয়া বাঙ্‌লা উপন্যাস লিখিবার প্রলোভন অনেক সুখ্যাত ঔপন্যাসিকও এড়াইতে পারেন নাই। কিন্তু এইরূপ সাহিত্য সৃজনে বাঙালীর কল্পনার দৈন্যই বুঝায়, আর কিছুই বুঝায় না। অনুবাদ যাহা তাহা সত্যিকারের অনুবাদই হউক; বাঙালীপাঠক যখন বাঙালী পাত্র লইয়া গল্প লিখিবেন, তখন বাঙলাদেশের স্বাভাবিক জীবন যাপন হইতেই যেন তিনি প্লট গ্রহণ করেন, ইহাই সাহিত্যানুরাগীর কাম্য।

অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের বহুল প্রচার কামনার অর্থ একথা যেন কেহ না মনে করেন যে দেশের অরিজিন্যাল সাহিত্যকে অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের নীচে স্থান দেওয়া হইতেছে। দেশের মৌলিক সাহিত্যের উন্নতি না হইলে অনুবাদ-সাহিত্যের উন্নতি হইতে পারে না কখনো; তাই অনুবাদ-

সাহিত্য মৌলিক সাহিত্যের পাশাপাশি চলিবে, একটু পিছনে চলিলেও ক্ষতি নাই। বাঙ্‌লা দেশের মৌলিক সাহিত্য যাহা, যাহা বাঙ্‌ালীর নিজস্ব জিনিস, তাহা তো চিরকালের জন্যই আপনার হইয়া রহিল ; এখন বাহিরে যে রত্ন পড়িয়া রহিয়াছে, তাহাতেও বাঙালীর অংশ যদি না থাকে, তবে অন্য দেশের তুলনায় বাঙ্‌লা দেশ সাহিত্যসম্পদে পিছাইয়া পড়িবে। সমস্ত পৃথিবীতে আজ মানুষে মানুষে সাম্যভাবের সূচনা দেখা যাইতেছে ; একদেশের সাহিত্য যদি অন্য সকল দেশেই ছড়াইয়া পড়ে তবে ইণ্টারন্যাশনেল ভাবসাম্য গড়িয়া তোলা অনেক সহজ হইয়া যাইবে।

রবীন্দ্র-পরিষদ্

চতুর্থ বর্ষ।

গত ৯ই অগ্রহায়ণ পরিষদের চতুর্থবর্ষের প্রথম অধিবেশন হইয়া গিয়াছে। শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন। শ্রীযুক্ত বিশ্বপতি চৌধুরী গীতালি, গীতিমাল্য, গীতাঞ্জলি সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। বৈষ্ণব কবিতার সঙ্গে গীতালি, গীতিমাল্য, গীতাঞ্জলির তুলনা করিয়া লেখক বলেন, "পদাবলী সাহিত্য ভগবানকে নিকটে আনিয়া পার্থিব করিয়া সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে। তত্ত্ব বাদ দিয়া পড়িলে তাহাত অতীন্দ্রিয়তা পাওয়া যায় না। রবীন্দ্রনাথ অতীন্দ্রিয়তাকেই প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। কবির নিকট অসীম ও সসীমের সুনির্দ্দিষ্ট রূপ নাই। ভগবান স্বরূপেই কবির নিকট ধরা দেন কবি ইহাই চান।"

শ্রীযুক্ত দেবেশ দাশ, গোলাম মুস্তাফা ও অধ্যাপক বিনয়কুমার সেন আলোচনায় যোগদান করেন। শ্রীমতী সতী গুপ্ত, শ্রীযুক্ত সুনীল সরকার ও বিনয় ঘোষ গান গাহিয়াছিলেন।

১৮ই অগ্রহায়ণ পরিষদের দ্বিতীয় অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত প্রশান্তচন্দ্র মহলানবিশ "ক্ষণিকা" হইতে পাঠ ও আলোচনা করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন।

বক্তা বলেন, "ক্ষণিকাটা বেশীরকমের lyric, খুব বেশী দর্শন হয়ত এর পিছনে নেই। ক্ষণিকাতে মোটামুটি তিনটি স্তর আছে। একটার সঙ্গে এর আগেকার লেখা "কল্পনার" কিছু

কিছু মিল আছে। দ্বিতীয়টিতে ঠিক ক্ষণিকার যা আসল কবিতা। আর একটি স্তরে "জীবন দেবতা" ধরণের কবিতাগুলিকে ফেলা যায়।"

শ্রীযুক্ত সুনীল সরকার, জসীমুদ্দিন ও অজিত মজুমদার আলোচনায় যোগদান করেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী বলেন "'ক্ষণিকার' মূল সুর—ক্ষণিকের মুক্তিতে এবং সহজের ভিতর রসে ও আনন্দে। বারবার পড়লেও আবার পড়তে ইচ্ছা হয়।"

শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয় আচার্য্য ও বিনয় ঘোষ গান করেন।

তৃতীয় অধিবেশনে (১৫ই মাঘ) শ্রীযুক্ত সোমনাথ মৈত্র "ক্ষণিকা" সম্বন্ধে অতি সুলিখিত একটী প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশগুপ্ত সভাপতির আসন গ্রহণ করিয়াছিলেন।

আলোচনা প্রসঙ্গে অধ্যাপক শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন "বড় কবিতা পড়ে অনেক সময় সুরটা অতি ভারাক্রান্ত মনে হয়। বড় কথার পর একটা ছোট অভাব, একটা ছোট অতৃপ্তি সঞ্চিত থাকে; 'ক্ষণিকাতে' এই চিরন্তন অভাবটা মিটেছে।"

শ্রীযুক্ত জসীমুদ্দিন, অধ্যাপক নলিনীকুমার ব্রহ্ম, সদানন্দ ভাদুড়ী এবং শশাঙ্ক বাগচীও আলোচনায় যোগদান করিয়াছিলেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত বিজয় আচার্য্য গান করেন।

৫ই ফাল্গুন পরিষদের চতুর্থ অধিবেশনে শ্রীযুক্ত সুবোধচন্দ্র সেন গুপ্ত "সাহিত্য বিচারে রবীন্দ্রনাথ" সম্বন্ধে একটি প্রবন্ধ পাঠ করিয়াছিলেন। সভাপতির আসন শ্রীযুক্ত সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশ গুপ্ত গ্রহণ করেন। লেখক বলেন "রবীন্দ্রনাথ সাহিত্যে নিত্যবস্তুর অন্বেষণ করিয়াছেন, নিখিল বিশ্বের একটা ঐক্য উপলব্ধি করিয়াছেন। তবে যে সাহিত্য এমন কোন ঐক্যের অন্বেষণ করে নাই, যাহা দৈনন্দিন জীবনের সুখ দুঃখকে ছাড়াইয়া উঠিতে পারে নাই তাহা কি সাহিত্য নয়?"

শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী, নরেন্দ্র দেব, নীহার রঞ্জন রায়, অজিত চক্রবর্ত্তী প্রভৃতি উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

প্রবন্ধ প্রতিযোগিতা—প্রথম অধিবেশন সভাপতি "সাহিত্য বিচারে রবীন্দ্রনাথ" শীর্ষক প্রবন্ধ প্রতিযোগিতা ঘোষণা করিয়াছিলেন। ২৯শে মাঘ প্রবন্ধ পাঠাইবার শেষ দিন ছিল।

শ্রীযুক্ত প্রমথ চৌধুরী, সুরেন্দ্রনাথ দাশ গুপ্ত ও সোমনাথ মৈত্র প্রাপ্ত প্রবন্ধগুলির বিচারক পদ গ্রহণ করিয়াছেন।

শ্রীযুক্ত প্রশান্তচন্দ্র মহলানবিশের উদ্যোগে "আলোচনা মণ্ডলী" প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছে। শুক্রবার একটা হইতে দুইটার মধ্যে ইহার অধিবেশন হয়। "লিপিকা" সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা হইতেছে।

শ্রীশিশিরকুমার দত্ত,
আলমগীর কবির,
সম্পাদক।

বঙ্কিম-শরৎ সমিতি

চতুর্থ বর্ষ

বিশেষ অধিবেশন

বিগত ৪ঠা পৌষ শনিবার সমিতির গ্রন্থাগার উদ্বোধন উপলক্ষে এক বিশেষ অধিবেশন হয়। শ্রদ্ধেয় কথাশিল্পী শরৎচন্দ্রের গ্রন্থাগার উদ্বোধনের কথা ছিল—হঠাৎ অসুস্থ হইয়া আসিতে না পারায় অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় সভাপতির আসন অলঙ্কৃত করেন। শ্রীযুক্ত শরৎচন্দ্র সমিতির উৎসবে যোগদান করিতে না পারায় দুঃখ প্রকাশ করিয়া এবং সমিতির মঙ্গল কামনা জানাইয়া অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়কে একখানা পত্র পাঠাইয়াছিলেন—তাহা তিনি অধিবেশন আরম্ভ হইবার পূর্ব্বে পাঠ করেন।

শ্রীযুক্তা মোহিনী সেন গুপ্তার পরিচালিত মহিলাদের দ্বারা যন্ত্র এবং কণ্ঠ সঙ্গীত হওয়ার পর সমিতির কার্য্য আরম্ভ হয়।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত নৃপেন্দ্রচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় গ্রন্থাগার উদ্বোধন করেন। তিনি বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্য সম্বন্ধে সবিশেষ আলোচনা করেন এবং পরে বিশেষভাবে গ্রন্থাগারের প্রভূত প্রয়োজনীয়তা সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করেন।

অধ্যাপক শ্রীযুক্ত শ্রীকুমার বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ও শ্রীযুক্ত নরেন্দ্র দেব এবং ছাত্র সদস্যদের মধ্য হইতে ২।১ জন সাহিত্য সম্বন্ধে নানা আলোচনা করেন।

সমিতির এই উৎসবে বাঙ্গালা সাহিত্যের লেখক ও লেখিকাদের মধ্যে কয়েকজন আসিয়া আমাদের উৎসাহিত করিয়াছেন ; তাঁহাদের মধ্যে শ্রীযুক্ত রাজশেখর বসু (পরশুরাম) ও শ্রীযুক্তা রাধারাণী দত্তের নাম উল্লেখ যোগ্য।

শ্রীযুক্তা মোহিনী সেন গুপ্তা, শ্রীমতী সুরুচি সেন, কুমারী সবিতা মুখার্জ্জি, কুমারী রেণুকা মিত্র, কুমারী বিজলী সেন প্রভৃতি মহিলাগণ সমিতির উৎসবে গান গাহিয়া ছিলেন এবং শ্রীশৈলেশ দাশ গুপ্ত আবৃত্তি করিয়াছিলেন।

সভার শেষে শ্রীফণিভূষণ চট্টোপাধ্যায় সমিতির পক্ষ হইতে সকলকে কৃতজ্ঞতা জ্ঞাপন করেন।

শ্রীঅমলেন্দু ভট্টাচার্য্য,
সম্পাদক।